

# International cooperation with EU Universities on scientific research

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# Why collaborate?

## For Academic Staff

- Personal development and stimulation, cross-cultural experience, acceleration of career
- Opportunities
  - Research training
  - Exposure to new techniques and new equipment
  - Experience contribute to a developed Research Culture
  - Ongoing collaboration
  - Research publications
  - Joint students

# Why collaborate?

## For Departments/Faculties

- Rapid updating of academic staff
- Motivation of staff
- Research publications
- Possible research contracts
- Rise in reputation
- Higher status within University – more resources, higher investment

# Why collaborate?

## Research students

- Experience a developed research culture
- Learn new techniques
- Access to modern equipment
- Cross-cultural experience
- More chance to get international publications
- Kick-start academic career

# Why collaborate?

## EU Researchers

- Collaboration is the “norm” in academia
- All active research labs have visiting academic and research students
- Opportunity to have “more pairs of hands” in the lab – there is always more research to do than hands to do it!
- Brings research income to the lab (lab costs/bench fees)
- But not without costs! – international visitors often need training and close supervision

# How to collaborate

- Research Sabbaticals of Uzbek Staff
- Invited Sabbaticals to EU Staff
- Research Students
  - Visiting students for periods of research: 3/6/12 months
- Collaborative Research degrees
  - Co-tutelle Agreements
  - Joint or Double degree Agreements
  - Off-site research degree Node in Uzbek

# Dangers of collaborative policies For Ministers/Universities

- Raises expectations of staff/future staff
- If do not get encouragement/facilities when returns then staff will be frustrated
- Some staff/research students will not return (Brain Drain) – can be counteracted by contracts and expectations to return

# Barriers to collaboration

- Establishing the correct contacts
  - Normally academic to academic
  - Academics need to work at their networks
  - Departments/Faculties/Universities can send delegations to establish contacts – but these need to be research active delegates, not administrators!
  - Top-down vs Bottom-up

# The Top-down approach

- University or group of Universities identify EU Universities that they think they may like to collaborate with
  - Should have commonality in Mission
  - Should have similarity of Faculties
  - Should have some overlap of research strengths
- Top-level contact established
- Delegation is made from Uzbek to EU
- Invitation is made for visit from EU to Uzbek

# The Top-down approach (2)

- Have to convince the EU University(s) that there is something in the collaboration for them!
  - Has to be a win:win proposition
  - One of the most effective things to offer are research students
  - Alternatively research money
  - Opportunities for sabbaticals for EU University staff (Visiting Professorships)
  - Joint venture e.g. joint degree/joint campus

# The Top-down approach (3)

- Visit is made and MoU signed
- This is the beginning not the end!
- Need next to transfer the enthusiasm and opportunity to key Departments in the University and fund them to make academic follow-up visits with a view to determining scientific collaboration
- This phase is more expensive and needs to be budgetted for

# The Top-down approach (4)

- Needs to be strategic and targeted – requires a good level of research beforehand
- Needs a good level of sustained funding
- Needs a good international officer/team
- Has only a moderate success rate
- Often stops at the MoU stage
- Often expects the EU University to collaborate without offering something to make it worth their while

# The Bottom-up approach

- An individual academic establishes a contact with an EU academic
- Individual gets the backing of Department/Faculty to make a visit
- Academic either:
  - Takes up opportunity personally – sabbatical
  - Agrees to share a research student
- Academic takes the opportunity to senior managers in their University to build to something bigger

# The Bottom-up approach (2)

- Often good for the individual
- More numerous than Top-down approaches requiring less funding
- Rarely leads to an institutional level agreement or widening of the collaboration

# Focus on outcomes

- Not simply a cultural experience
- Must have tangible outcomes
  - Publications
  - Joint research students
  - Exchanges of academic materials
  - Joint funding

# Why choose EU Universities to collaborate with?

- Close by
- Some of the best Universities in the world and most are very good at research
- Probably the best research student training in the world
- Highly committed to R&D and well funded
- Have the capacity to collaborate – many actually rely on visiting staff and students to maintain their research activity
- Have the will to collaborate – collaboration is the norm
- Access to some mobility funding