

Host organization: CBS

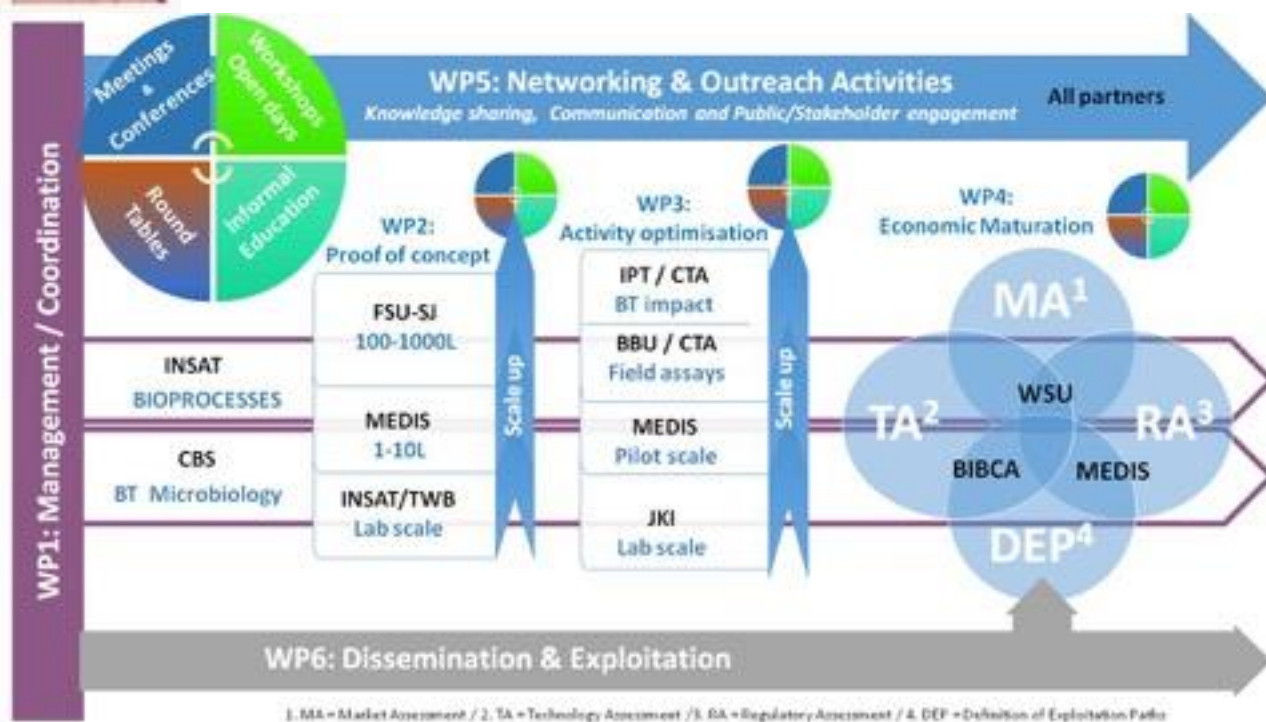
Country: Tunisia

Organization role: Coordinator, WP leader and the initiator of the project

Project Acronym: IPM-4-Citrus

Project start and end date: April 2017 - April 2021

Type of MSC action, H2020: RISE



Your story:

Project objectives and research field:

Citrus-IPM focuses on two promising, newly identified strains producing two biopesticides which were shown to be more efficient than the commercial ones. The consortium composed of academic and non-academic partners based in 4 European Member States, 2 Associated Countries and 1 Third Country, worked on a new process to develop these biopesticides, improve their potential and scale them up from lab to market.

Tell us why the topic is important and/ or how it brings to advancement in your research field:

The topic was a priority for our laboratory since it offers us an opportunity to develop a new solution based on our research result and to bring it close to market through the establishment of a strategic partnership with an industrial leader at national level and with collaboration of international experts.

What are the benefits of participating in a MSC action?

This project gives an opportunity to young graduates from many countries involved in the project to work with experienced researchers in very important fields like bioprocess, fermentation and research exploitation. They also get profit from the different outreach activities to meet together and to improve their skills thanks to these networking events. Thanks to this project, young PhDs and engineers specialized in biotech get the opportunity to be seconded to the industry and it allows other early-stage scientists to develop new profiles such as business developer. This project has also very important impact on society since it helps raising awareness about the negative effects of insecticides on environment and human health and the advantages of biopesticides in the integrated pest management strategies.

Did you encounter any challenges during application/ implementation and did you get any help?

Yes we encountered three main challenges during the implementation of this project that had a negative impact on it since they delayed the realization of secondments and obliged the consortium to introduce many modifications in the project Gantt chart in order to reflush the non-realized secondments:

1/ the Tunisian financial rules don't allow the public structures to give the whole amount of 2000 euro to a secondee to realize their secondment;

2/ the Tunisian administrative rules do not allow the employees of public bodies to perform long-duration missions/secondments of more than 12 days; also PhD students, as well as researchers at postdoc positions, are not allowed to perform secondments in the frame of Horizon 2020 projects in public bodies related to the Ministry of Higher Education. All these problems obliged us to split the long duration secondments to short ones.

3/ As the RISE action is based on mobility, we had to apply multiple times for visa authorization by the different countries involved in the project. These applications were rejected many times since Embassies are rarely aware of these European projects and it takes time to ask for the assistance of national authorities to get visas.

Would you recommend others to apply? What useful advice/ tips can you give them?

I do not recommend to Tunisian researchers to apply for RISE calls before having a solution to the problems we have encountered.

What strategies did your organization use to attract the fellow/s? Are they in line with national strategies supporting the widening EC policy?

In our organization we are not aware of the benefit of attracting fellows and especially Tunisian researchers that prepared their PhD in European countries.