

CERIC-ERIC

A multi-technique Research Infrastructure

CERIC-ERIC in brief

CERIC is a **distributed open access** research infrastructure

CERIC has facilities in 8 countries in **Central and Eastern Europe** + 6 Associated Facilities

CERIC offers access to **over 60 instruments** via a for multidisciplinary research in all fields of **advanced materials, biomaterials and nanotechnology**



Added value of the multi-technique approach

- Excellent research (complementarity of the techniques offered)
- Expansion of professional network (EU projects)
- Prioritisation on national level (pan-EU RI)
- Prioritisation on EU level (pan-EU RI)
- Infrastructure development
- Central support (ILO, communication)
- Better allocation of funds and resources

Open Access to multiple facilities: the traditional (separate) way

BNC

**Deadline
May**

Review Panel

Access procedures

Report

www.bnc.hu

Elettra

**Deadline
March**

Review Panel

Access procedures

Report

www.elettra.eu

NMR

**Deadline
open**

Review Panel

Access procedures

Report

www.nmr.chem.uu.nl

Open Access to multiple facilities: the CERIC (single) way

- **Support** in proposals preparation;
- **One entry point** to over 60 techniques;
- Possibility to ask for **several instruments** in a single proposal;
- Availability to **support laboratories**;
- **Mobility support** (2 users per measurement for each site);
- **Dissemination** of research results



Proposal submission workflow

Proposal
Submission

1st Technical
Evaluation

Proposal
Editing & New
Submission

2nd Technical
Evaluation

Scientific
Evaluation

Results of the
Call for
Proposals

CERIC is currently using VUO (Virtual Unified Office) to manage the submission of the proposals and their management with several unique dedicated tools and features developed to:

- Allow the submission and the management of multi-technique proposals
- Have 2 individual deadlines for the submission of the proposals with 2 technical evaluations
- Run semi-automatic assignments of the proposals for the scientific reviewers based on their expertise in terms of field and instrumentation
- Access unified scheduling calendar among all CERIC Partner Facilities

Proposal submission workflow



Workflow

- Open the Call and set deadline: disables the link to submit new proposals.
- End of submission: check if proposals are complete; if unique, complete and in editing status, submit. Make them visible for technical evaluators

The submission form in the VUO has been adapted to allow the selection of multiple beamlines and instruments in a single proposal with dedicated sub-forms for each of them.

Users are invited to contact beamline and instruments scientists in advance before submitting their proposals to discuss their planned experiments.

Proposal submission workflow



Proposals submitted within the first deadline undergo a technical evaluation to define their feasibility and in case of a negative evaluation useful comments are given to the proposer on how to improve the proposal.

Workflow

- End of first technical evaluation: checks if all proposals have been evaluated. Put all the already evaluated proposals in editing for improvement. Send email to users with comments.

In case of multi-technique proposals each beamline / instruments is evaluated individually.

Proposal submission workflow

Proposal Submission

1st Technical Evaluation

Proposal Editing & New Submission

2nd Technical Evaluation

Scientific Evaluation

Results of the Call for Proposals

Proposals evaluated after the first deadline are put back in editing in order to be updated by the proposers based on the feedback received from beamline and instruments scientists and be then re-submitted within the final deadline. More expert users can submit their proposals directly to the final deadline without the necessity to be pre-evaluated.

Workflow

- End of final submission: check if proposals are complete; if unique, complete and in editing status, submit. Make them visible for technical evaluators.

Proposal submission workflow



The final technical evaluation will define the feasibility of all the proposals submitted in both the deadlines.

Workflow

- End of final technical evaluation: checks if all proposals have been evaluated. Assigns "feasible" to all non evaluated proposals, makes them visible for scientific evaluators, generates pdf document for offline evaluation

In case of multi-technique proposals each beamline / instruments is evaluated individually.

Proposal submission workflow

Proposal Submission

1st Technical Evaluation

Proposal Editing & New Submission

2nd Technical Evaluation

Scientific Evaluation

Results of the Call for Proposals

Review Panel chairman assigns proposals to reviewers, by instrument, according to their field of expertise.

Workflow

- Sends email to reviewers with the list of proposals to evaluate. Scientific evaluators have access to the publications and previous proposals of the proposer. They assign a score to the proposal and justify their score in the comments for the users.

Assignment of the proposals to the reviewers:

Each member of the PRP have to complete a competence matrix (scientific areas versus techniques) that is used to run a semi-automatic assignment of the proposals to evaluate. In the same table reviewers can indicate the maximum amount of proposals they would accept to evaluate and the societal challenges the reviewer works on. The system will automatically assign the proposals to evaluate based on the information provided by each reviewer with the necessity to a minor supervision on the process in order to adjust possible inconsistencies in the automatic assignments.

Proposal submission workflow

Proposal Submission

1st Technical Evaluation

Proposal Editing & New Submission

2nd Technical Evaluation

Scientific Evaluation

Results of the Call for Proposals

Assignment

Workflow

- Close of the scientific evaluation: calculates the final score as mean value of the averages. Creates report with scores and assigned hours for ranking. Assignment is done manually based on interaction with directors. Useroffice completes manually the number of hours assigned and concatenated comments.
- Sends email to users for assigned / not assigned time. Comments become visible to users

Scheduling

Instrument responsables agree a date for the measurements with users and insert it in the calendar. It becomes visible for the user and for the travel office.

Workflow

- Sends email to users with the data of his/her measurements, generates a report for the travel office to organise bookings and contact users, and for the communication to interact with users.

Experiments management

Proposals
Scheduling

Access Request

Travel &
Samples
Shipment

Reimbursement

Experimental
Report &
Publications

CERIC is currently using VUO (Virtual Unified Office) also to manage the experiments from their scheduling to the final reports and publications, with several dedicated tools and features developed to:

- Manage the physical access of the users to some of the facilities
- Manage user's travels or the shipment of their samples to the selected facilities
- Manage users' reimbursement requests and their procedure
- Allow the submission of a single experimental report per proposal
- Submit and track publications' information related to the proposals

Experiments management

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Each beamline / instrument is scheduled in the common calendar. The scheduling of the single measurements, parts of multi-technique proposal, in the same facility or in different facilities is done taking in consideration the other schedulings in order to reduce the number of travels and/or resources necessary to complete the entire project.

The scheduling information include, apart the dates dedicated to the measurements, the modality in which they will be performed:

- In presence
- Remote/sample mailin

Experiments management

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Every user participating in the measurements have to submit an access request through VUO. Based on the beamtime mode indicated in the scheduling the user is requested to fill in a form with the necessary information.

In presence

Information necessary to plan the travel to the selected facility

Remote / sample mailin

Information necessary to book the shipment of the sample to the selected facility

Partial support for user's mobility will be available through funding provided to CERIC from the Italian Ministry for Education, University and Research.

A maximum of two users for measurement may benefit from travel and accommodation support. Each of them should submit an access request as "CERIC funded User". All the other participating users have to submit an access request as "CERIC User".

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Experiments in presence:

The travel office, based on the information provided by the funded users in the access request will plan the trip to the selected facility making the necessary bookings and providing the support needed.

Experiments in remote:

- Users sending samples from EU countries can directly book their shipment pick-up using the dedicated tool through VUO indicating the sender and recipients' details and selecting the preferred pick-up day and time. The system will generate the necessary transport documents that will have to be printed and attached to the parcel.
- Users sending samples from non EU countries have to organize the shipment using their local resources and later request the reimbursement of the shipment.

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Users requesting the reimbursement for expenses incurred during their travels or the shipment of their samples that are in line with the User Support Policy have to fill in the dedicated online form in VUO attaching the electronic receipts. The increased number of electronic invoices circulating nowadays, that can be attached to the electronic form, reduces the necessity to send by surface mail the originals to the accounting dept. making the reimbursement process easier to handle and quicker.

The reimbursement tool follows the entire reimbursement procedure changing the status visible to the user and informing him with semi-automatic emails about missing information to complete the procedure.

Experiments management

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Experimental report:

A single experimental report for all the measurement on different beamlines and instruments planned in a proposal has to be submitted through VUO.

Publications:

The published materials generated as a result of the work carried out wholly or partially at the CERIC Facilities have to acknowledge CERIC. The information related to any publication has to be uploaded to the dedicated VUO publication section that later will have to be validated by a CERIC responsible. The publications' details along with the related DOI will be published on the CERIC website and in case of particularly interesting topics the information may be used by the communication dept. for promotional purposes.

Thank you