

Document History

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1. Introduction

The EPoS Project Handbook has two main functions. Firstly, it acts as a reference source for all Consortium members, covering many of the day-to-day activities and providing links to further information where required. Secondly, it aims to standardise various elements of the project e.g. project reports, deliverables, file naming conventions etc. through the use of agreed procedures and templates where relevant.

This Handbook is a living document and will be updated regularly throughout the project.

For the avoidance of doubt, the Grant Agreement and Consortium Agreement take precedence over this document.

2. Legal Basis

The project operates within the Horizon 2020 Framework Programme.

The Grant Agreement with the Commission No. 634413 is in operation. The current version of the Grant Agreement is file “Grant Agreement-634413-EPoS.pdf” and is dated 06/03/2015 on the top of each page.

A Consortium Agreement has also been signed by all partners.

3. Important Contacts

3.1. EPoS Coordinator

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3.2. EPoS Project Manager

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3.4. RAIS EC Project Officer

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Please note that the details of the Project Officer are provided here for information. However, all contact with the Project Officer relating to the project should be through the Coordinator.

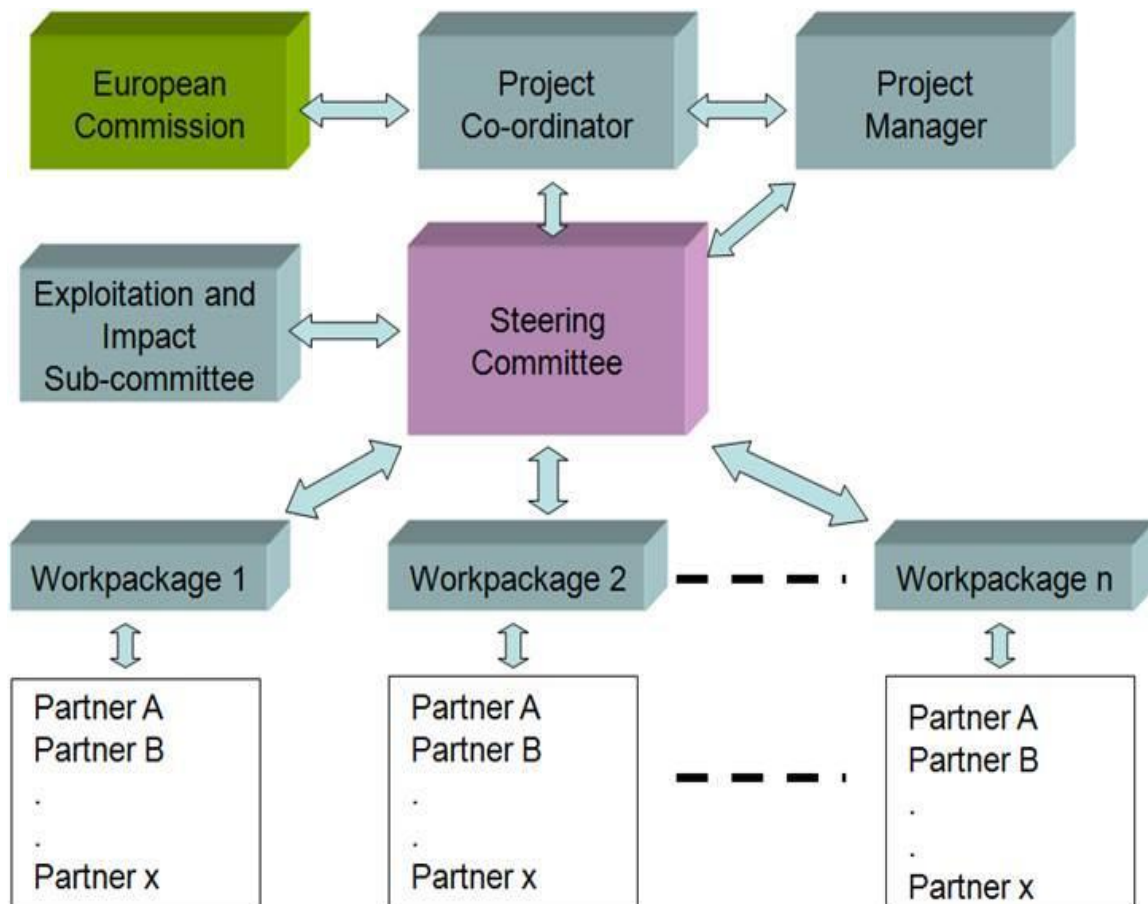
4. Consortium Partners

The following table shows the current EPoS partners. E-mail contact details for all partners can be found on the project filestore under “Mailbases”.

No.	Partner	Start	End
1	University of Newcastle upon Tyne (UNEW)	M0	M48
2	The Chancellor, Masters and Scholars of the University of Cambridge (UCAM)	M0	M48
3	Institute of Cardiometabolism and Nutrition (ICAN)	M0	M48
4	Helsingin Yliopisto	M0	M48
5	Steno Diabetes Center (SDC)	M0	M48
6	Universita Degli Studi Di Torino (UNITO)	M0	M48
7	Consiglio Nazionale Delle Ricerche	M0	M48
8	Universitätsmedizin Der Johannes Gutenberg – Universität Mainz (UMC)	M0	M48
9	Nordic Bioscience Compound Development (NB)	M0	M48
10	iXscient Ltd (iXscient)	M0	M48

5. Management and Governance

The following diagram illustrates the overall project management structures. Members of the various project bodies are listed below.



5.1. Project Coordinator

The Coordinator is Dr Quentin Anstee from UNEW. The primary responsibilities for the Coordinator are:

- Monitoring overall implementation of the project
- Acting as primary contact for the European Commission
- Chairing meetings of the Steering Committee
- Submitting reports and deliverables to Project Officer
- Collation and submission of cost claims and audit certificates
- Receiving and distributing payments from the European Commission
- Financial and contractual administration
- Acting upon decisions of the Steering Committee
- Producing financial reports as per H2020 reporting requirements

5.2. Project Manager (PM)

The Project Manager is David Wenn from iXscient. The primary responsibilities are:

- Acting as secondary contact for the European Commission
- Acting as Secretary for the Steering Committee meetings
- Collating WP reports to produce overall quarterly project reports
- Reviewing progress in conjunction with Coordinator and Steering Committee
- Checking that progress and deliverables are produced according to the work plan
- Advising the relevant bodies on delays, project issues and problems
- Risk Management
- Formulating project documentation and templates
- Providing advice and information to consortium partners
- Writing periodic management reports

5.3. Steering Committee

The top level of decision making within the consortium is the Steering Committee. This will be composed of one representative from each partner organisation and will be chaired by the Project Coordinator. The Steering Committee is responsible for reviewing and approving project reports and for making decisions regarding strategy, budgets and resource allocations. It will also be responsible for day-to-day decisions across WPs and will be strongly influential, having a major impact on the overall outcomes and success of the partnership, as decisions concerning the best technological developments to pursue in order to meet the needs of the end users will be taken here. The Steering Committee will meet at least on a six-monthly basis to review project status for the previous 6 months and plans for the following year. Intermediate communication may be held via e-mails and conference calls. Every partner is entitled to submit resolutions to the Committee for consideration.

The Steering Committee is currently made up of the following nominated representatives:

- Quentin Anstee (UNEW)
- Toni Vidal-Puig (UCAM)
- Vlad Ratziu (ICAN)
- Hannele Yki-Järvinen (UHEL)
- Matej Orešič (SDC)
- Elisabetta Bugianesi (UNITO)
- Amalia Gastaldelli (CNR)
- Detlef Schuppan (UMC)
- Morten Karsdal (NB)
- David Wenn (iXscient)

However, any partner representative is able to attend meetings of the Steering Committee, subject to the limitation that each partner only has one vote. Each representative listed above shall be deemed to be duly authorised to deliberate, negotiate and decide on all matters listed in Section 6.3.6 of the Consortium Agreement. The Consortium Agreement contains details of the working voting rules and procedures for the Steering Committee and should be used as the reference document. In summary:

- Decisions shall be taken by the representatives of at least two-thirds (2/3) of the consortium partners present or represented
- Each partner shall have one vote
- Defaulting partners may not vote
- Any partner may appoint a substitute or a proxy to attend and vote at any meeting

- Decisions shall be taken by a majority of two-thirds (2/3) of the votes of the partners present or represented

5.4. Workpackage Leaders

Each Workpackage has a nominated leader, as shown in the table below, who is responsible for the deliverables and milestones for that WP. They are also responsible for reporting to the Steering Committee primarily through the PM and they should hold reviews with the WP partners, as required. As they are ultimately responsible for the delivery of the WP, they will be required to implement a project management regime consistent with this responsibility.

WP	Title	WP Leader
WP1	Patient cohorts: Clinical Samples & Epidemiology	Vlad Ratziu, ICAN
WP2	Genomics, Epigenomics & Transcriptomics	Ann Daly, UNEW
WP3	Metabolomics	Amalia Gastaldelli, CNR
WP4	Metagenomic characterisation of the NAFLD Microbiome	Karine Clément, ICAN
WP5	Integrative Systems Biology & Data Management	Matej Orešič, SDC
WP6	Metabolism: functional studies	Elisabetta Bugianesi, UNITO
WP7	Injury & Inflammation	Toni Vidal-Puig, UCAM
WP8	Fibrosis & Repair	Fiona Oakley, UNEW
WP9	Serum Biomarkers of NASH Progression and Reversal	Detlef Schuppan, UMC
WP10	Dissemination and Exploitation	Chris Day, UNEW
WP11	Consortium Management	Quentin Anstee, UNEW

5.5. Exploitation & Impact Sub-Committee (EIS)

An Exploitation & Impact Sub-Committee (EIS) will be setup to review both the technology within the consortium and the market drivers affecting its exploitation. Its role will be to identify potential areas of exploitation over and above those already identified and provide market guidance to steer the direction of work. This panel will include members encompassing the exploitation and industrial partners, knowledge management partners and the Coordinator.

The Exploitation Committee is currently made up of the following nominated representatives:

- Quentin Anstee – UNEW
- Chris Day – UNEW
- Dave Wenn – iXscient
- Vlad Ratziu (ICAN)
- Detlef Schuppan (UMC)
- Morten Karsdal (NB)
- Prof Helena Cortez-Pinto* (University of Lisbon)
- Prof Jean-Francois Dufour* (University of Bern)

* – External members

However, all other partners are welcome to join the committee and/or attend meetings.

6. Communications

6.1. E-mail & E-mail Etiquette

When sending e-mails, it should be remembered that many people may be working on a number of different projects and are likely to receive numerous e-mails every day. This can make it difficult to quickly recognise the significance of an e-mail and also to find and segregate related e-mails. In order to ease this problem, EPoS related e-mails should **always** include in the subject title the name of the project (i.e. “EPoS”) followed by a more specific description of the subject.

When sending e-mails with file attachments, please consider the size of the attachment. Very large attachments may not be accepted by the recipient server and even modest size attachments (around several MB) might rapidly cause e-mail quotas to be exceeded, particularly where recipients are away from the office for an extended period. Therefore, consideration should be given to uploading the relevant file to the project filestore instead of attaching it to the e-mail. When replying to an e-mail with a file attachment, please ensure that you delete the attachment unless the attachment is still required (e.g. if the reply is copied to a new group of people).

Finally, as a courtesy, please include your contact details on every e-mail that you initiate.

6.2. Mailbases

To facilitate rapid e-mailing of different sub-groups within the consortium, the following e mail reflectors have been implemented:

Reflector name	Members	Address
ALL	All technical project participants	all@epos-nafl.d.eu
MGT	Management team	mgt@epos-nafl.d.eu
Admin	Partner administrative contacts	admin@epos-nafl.d.eu
Legal	Partner legal contacts	legal@epos-nafl.d.eu

In addition to these, an e-mail reflector for each Workpackage WP1 – WP10 has been set up, in the form of wpx@epos-nafl.d.eu (where *x* is the number of the Workpackage). Also, there is a reflector for each partner in the form name@epos-nafl.d.eu where *name* is the short name of the partner. Further e-mail reflectors may be set up on request. Any queries related to these mailbases, requests for additions or for new mailbases should be addressed to the Project Manager.

A current list of the members of each mailbase is maintained on the project filestore under “Mailbases”. Note that, if you send an e-mail to a mailbase that you are a member of, you will not receive a copy.

6.3. Conference Calls

It is recommended that all individuals who are able to do so should install an internet-based voice, video and chat facility for conference calls, e.g. Skype or WebEx, so that all members of the consortium are able to communicate freely and directly with each other. Skype provides a facility for limited conference calls (up to 25 users) with video and screen-sharing facilities. Skype can be downloaded from www.skype.com.

7. Project Website

An EPoS project website will be set up and will be regularly updated (see www.epos-nafld.eu). Partners are encouraged to add a link from their own website to the EPoS home page.

Every partner will be provided with one or more login accounts in order to access the secure pages on the website and to allow updating of their organisation details.

8. Project Filestore

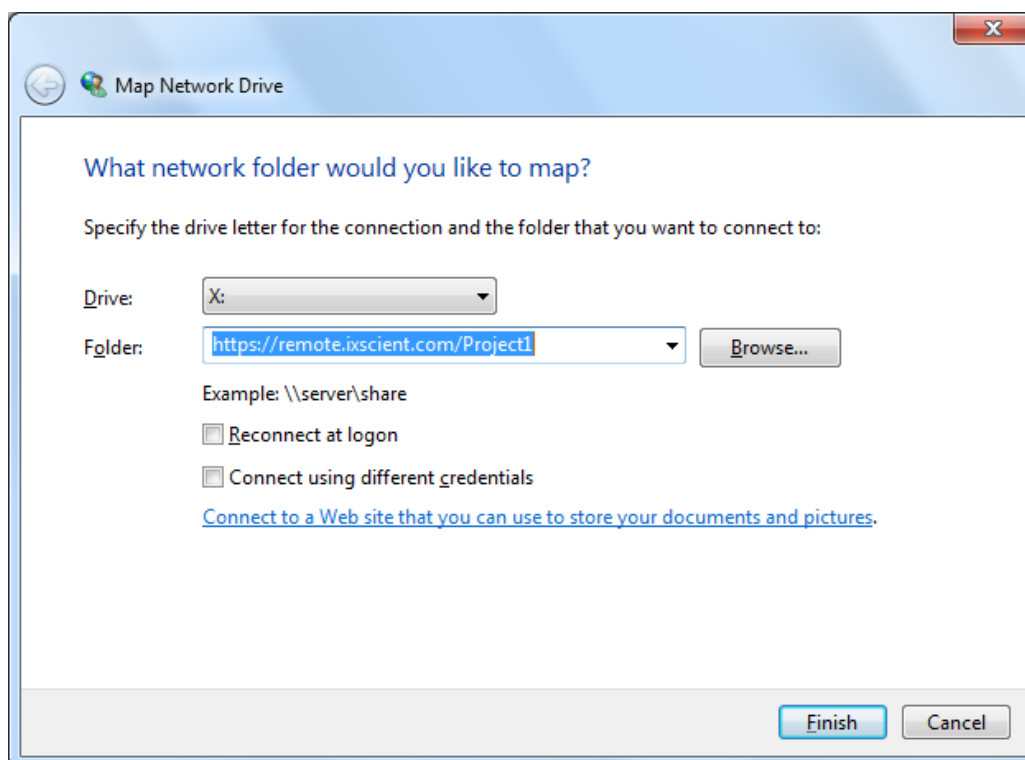
A project filestore has been set up. This will act as a file transfer and archive facility. Access to the filestore is controlled via a username and password. These are notified to users separately and are not included here in order that this document may be widely disseminated.

Important project files will be stored and maintained on the filestore, e.g. the current version of the Grant Agreement, current budget allocation, formal deliverables, minutes of important meetings, etc.

The filestore includes a folder structure and most project related files will fit within this. Partners should not delete any of the existing folders. However, partners are encouraged to add further sub-folders where relevant, e.g. for each additional meetings or for technical WP information. Folders may also be created for storing temporary files where, for example, these are too large to circulate by e-mail. The filestore is accessed through WebDAV, not ftp. In order to do this, you will need to use Windows Explorer to map a network drive to “<https://remote.ixscient.com/EPOS>”. Instructions for how to do this are given below. **Do not** click on this link because it will open in Internet Explorer or other browser and you cannot access the filestore this way.

INSTRUCTIONS

In Windows Explorer, click the Alt key to see the menu, select Tools, Map Network drive and then fill in as follows, except instead of “Project1” type “EPOS”:-



You will be prompted to enter your username and password.

If you are using a Mac, from OS X, go to Finder, then “Go” and “Connect to server...”, enter “https://remote.ixscient.com/EPOS” (etc).

9. Financial

Details of the individual partner budgets are given on page 231 of the Grant Agreement. A spreadsheet detailing the distribution of the payments to partners, including the pre-financing, is available on the project filestore under the “Financial” folder.

10. Project Reporting Requirements

All partners are required to complete a quarterly partner report detailing progress against each task. Templates will be provided for these quarterly reports which should be sent to the Project Manager and the relevant WP leaders by the 15th of the month following the end of the quarter.

The Project Manager will compile the quarterly partner reports into an overall quarterly project report. This will also include information on actual effort expended vs predicted.

Copies of the relevant templates will be available on the project filestore under “Templates”. The templates will be designed to provide the information that is required for the Periodic Report for the Commission. This will simplify the reporting at the end of each period.

The consortium will submit a Periodic Report to the Commission (within 60 days after the end of each reporting period) containing the following:

- Publishable summary
- Project objectives for the period
- Work progress and achievements during the period
- Deliverables and milestones tables
- Details of Project Management activities
- Financial statement (Form C) from each partner including an explanation of use of resources
- Audit certificates (if required)

More details on the reporting requirements can be found in the H2020 Reporting Guidelines, a copy of which will be placed on the filestore under “EC Guidelines”.

10.1. Reporting Periods

The project has three formal reporting periods, as follows:

- 1) 1st May 2015 (Month 1) – 31st October 2016 (Month 18)
- 2) 1st November 2016 (Month 19) – 30th April 2018 (Month 36)
- 3) 1st May 2018 (Month 37) – 30th April 2019 (Month 48)

10.2. Certificates of Financial Statements & Cost Claims

Each partner must provide a Certificate of Financial Statements (CFS) for each period unless the financial contribution that they are claiming (for all periods for which a certificate has not been provided) is less than €325,000.

A guide to the CFS is available on the filestore under “EC Guidelines”.

11. Deliverables and Milestones

Deliverables and milestones should be completed on time. Progress on deliverables or milestones should be reported in the quarterly partner reports and WP reports for the period in which they are due. If any deliverables or milestones due in the period are late, an explanation for this **MUST** be given, as well as any mitigation actions and the anticipated completion date. For deliverables which are not written reports (e.g. prototypes), a brief written summary should nevertheless be produced to accompany the deliverable. A template for the deliverable reports will be produced and will be available on the filestore under “Templates”.

11.1. Approving Deliverables

To ensure that deliverables are of an appropriate standard, all deliverables will be reviewed by someone who has not been part of the core team developing the deliverable. The prime responsibility of a reviewer is to ensure that the deliverable is complete and of an appropriate standard. Typically, the Project Manager or Coordinator will act as reviewer. Alternatively, the PM will nominate a reviewer. The reviewer will then receive the final draft of the deliverable and provide the partner responsible for the deliverable and the relevant WP leader with a written response by e-mail indicating that the deliverable is ready for release or that elements of the deliverable require further attention giving details. The reviewer may also make minor corrections and format adjustments directly. The reviewer should respond within 5 working days of receiving the draft deliverable. If revisions are required then the above process is repeated. Once the deliverable has been accepted the date of sign-off will be added to the cover page, together with details of the reviewer.

The review process is part of the preparation of the deliverable and WP leaders should take appropriate steps to ensure that the review is completed and the deliverable issued before the due date. The due date is the last day of the month that is specified for the deliverable in the DoA.

The Project Manager will circulate the final deliverable to the consortium and also place a copy on the project filestore. The Coordinator will submit all deliverables to the Commission.

If the WP leader and the reviewer cannot agree to release the document, the matter will be referred to the Steering Committee for a binding decision.

12. File Naming Conventions & Version Control

It is essential that every document circulated to other partners in the consortium includes a version number and date. This will help to avoid the situation where partners are working with old or obsolete versions of documents.

In terms of file names, it is difficult to have a fixed file naming convention which can cover every situation. However, the guidelines below should be followed as much as possible:

1. The filename should be descriptive of the contents and should include the project name e.g. “EPoS_UNEW_EASL_2015.pptx” for a presentation by UNEW at an EASL conference in 2015.
2. Where a document is specific to a particular date, this date should be included in the filename in the form ‘dd-mm-yy’. For example, minutes of a WP4 meeting on 1st October 2015 will be called “EPoS_WP4 Minutes_01-10-15.docx”.
3. Where a document is likely to be produced in a similar format by various partners, the partner short name should be included in the filename e.g. “EPoS_Q1 Report_UCAM” for UCAM’s first quarterly partner report.
4. Where different versions of a document are used, e.g. for deliverables and reports, the version number should be included at the end of the filename. For draft documents, the

version number should start at v0.1, and increment in 0.1 steps. Once the document is formally issued, the version should change to v1.0 and then increment in 0.1 steps for minor changes. For a major change, the version will change to v2.0. For example, “EPoS_D2.1_v0.1.docx” will be used for the first draft version of deliverable D2.1.

5. When commenting on a document provided by another partner, the filename should be changed to include the initials of the person or short name of the partner making the changes e.g. “EPoS_D6.1_v0.1_dw.docx” if changes to D6.1 have been made by Dave Wenn or “EPoS_D6.1_v0.1_SDC.docx” if changes have been made by SDC.
6. When suggesting changes to a document, the use of the track changes feature in Word is recommended to assist the document author/owner.
7. Only the originating author or owner of a document should increment the version number i.e. when the author has received and implemented all changes to the first draft version of deliverable D2.1, it becomes “EPoS_D2.1_v0.2.docx”.

13. Conflict Resolution

In the case of a technical, financial or procedural conflict arising among partners, there is a principle of amicable settlement whenever possible at the lowest decision making body. If there is a dispute within a Workpackage, the WP leader should in the first instance try and resolve the issue, with the aid of the Project Manager if necessary. Only if a resolution is not possible should the matter be raised with the Steering Committee. The Project Manager and the Coordinator should help in the conflict resolution as necessary. Failing such a resolution, the Steering Committee will discuss the issues and vote on a resolution to achieve a binding solution. If necessary, individual partners can seek to convene an extraordinary meeting of the Steering Committee, and all partners are able to put resolutions to that Committee.

14. Grievance Procedure

Should a partner wish to complain about any member of the Consortium, the first action should be to document, in detail, the grievance, communicating this in private to the Coordinator and the Project Manager. The individual concerned will then be given a right to reply to the complaint, again, in private. The Coordinator and Project Manager will then work to resolve the complaint to the satisfaction of both parties. Partners should refrain from making personal attacks or remarks against any individual.

15. Publication Clearance Procedure

Some information on the publication clearance procedure is contained section 8.3 of the Consortium Agreement. The preliminary procedure is detailed below.

During the course of the project many partners will disseminate information about the project through:

- presentations at public events
- posters at public events
- submission of articles for publication in professional and other journals
- other means

There is a duty within the consortium to ensure that information is not disclosed that partners would regard as proprietary, or that they may be using to prepare patent applications. If this type of information inadvertently becomes public, then any subsequent patent applications relying on this information would be invalid. Any information prepared for public dissemination must be made available for review by all partners in advance of its submission for publication, i.e. in good time to review it and make comments and changes if necessary.

The partner wishing to publish, present or disclose information about the project must follow the correct procedure as summarised below. This is documented in more detail in the Consortium Agreement, which takes precedence.

- The partner wishing to publish shall forward an abstract and/or draft presentation to the whole consortium.
- As a general rule, the time-limit for prior notice of any such dissemination activity to be given to the other partners shall be twenty one (21) days.
- Following receipt of the aforementioned notification, any of the partners may object to such dissemination activity within fifteen (15) days from the date on which they received such notification.
- Should any partner fail to reply within the said period, it shall be deemed that such partner does not object to the relevant publication.

An objection is justified if:

- The objecting partner's legitimate academic or commercial interests would be significantly harmed by the publication; or
- The protection of the objecting partner's Foreground or Background is adversely affected.

The objection has to include a precise request for necessary modifications. If an objection has been raised, the involved partners shall discuss how to overcome the justified grounds for the objection on a timely basis (for example by amendment to the planned publication and/or by protecting information before publication).

A partner shall not include in any dissemination activity another partner's Results or Background without obtaining the owning partner's prior written approval, unless they are already published.

Please note that all publications MUST acknowledge the funding from the EU. A suitable form of words is "The research leading to these results has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 Programme under the EPoS project (grant agreement no. 634413)".

16. Procedure for IP Protection and Exploitation

Intellectual Property protection and access rights are detailed in the Grant Agreement, the Consortium Agreement and Guide to IP in Horizon 2020, all of which can be found on the project filestore.

Any partner within the consortium has the right to protect knowledge it has generated within the project. Partners should however declare their intention of seeking protection for IP generated within the EPoS project to the consortium. Partners must also take into account the contributions of other partners in the generation of such knowledge and come to an amicable and reasonable decision on its sole or joint ownership.

Partners wishing to seek IP protection should follow this procedure:

- Partners should initially discuss their intention to seek protection with partners that have been involved with the generation of that knowledge.
- After this the partner must inform the consortium by e-mail of the intention to seek protection, giving as much detail as possible without compromising the application.
- A minimum of 21 days prior notice of application shall be given by the party wishing to seek protection.
- Any partner may object within 15 days of receipt of the notice on the grounds that it has a legitimate claim to be included in the application or for some other good reason.

- The partner wishing to seek protection should address the concerns of the objecting partner and, if the claim is legitimate, negotiate a reasonable solution.

17. Minutes of Meetings

The keeping of minutes for all project related meetings is extremely important as they are a record of decisions taken and actions required by partners in the project. It is the responsibility of the chair of the meeting to organise the taking of minutes.

A suggested template for minutes is located on the project filestore under “Templates”. The template has space for attendees, minutes, actions from the meeting and for the meeting agenda to be attached. The minutes are to be written up and circulated to all members of the meeting for comment and correction as soon as possible after the meeting. The author should set a deadline for response, e.g. 5 working days. After this period the minutes can be circulated to other relevant partners and uploaded to the filestore as a permanent record of the meeting. Minutes of all meetings should also be sent to the Coordinator and Project Manager.

18. Useful Links

Project Website: www.epos-nafld.eu

General information from the Commission including contractual documents and guidelines is available on the Participant Portal at:

<http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/home.html>