



Project no. 018340

Project acronym: EDIT

Project title: Toward the European Distributed Institute of Taxonomy

Instrument: Network of Excellence

Thematic Priority: Sub-Priority 1.1.6.3: “Global Change and Ecosystems”

C8.3.2.1 Interim report on the pilot expert-in-training programme

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Actual submission date: Month 30

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Organisation name of lead contractor for this component: 13-RBINS

Revision [Final]

Project co-funded by the European Commission within the Sixth Framework Programme (2002-2006)		
Dissemination Level		
PU	Public	X
PP	Restricted to other programme participants (including the Commission Services)	
RE	Restricted to a group specified by the consortium (including the Commission Services)	
CO	Confidential, only for members of the consortium (including the Commission Services)	

Programme description

EDIT provides a limited number of short-term traineeships for graduate students and early career researchers working in the field of taxonomy. EDIT is able to cover the costs of travel, accommodation, and to provide a per diem to contribute towards living costs and training-related costs.

The traineeships are offered (1) to trainees affiliated by their study or research to an EDIT partner institution as a Masters student, PhD student or researcher and (2) for training in an EDIT partner institution different from the applicant's EDIT institution.

The main objectives of the expert-in-training programme are:

- to provide trainees with a firsthand experience of working in an EDIT institution;
- to provide the opportunity to put into practice knowledge acquired during their studies, and in particular in the field of taxonomy;
- to enable trainees to develop and to strengthen their taxonomic research skills through an on-the-job training.

The trainee will join a project team and will be coached by an expert who will instruct her/him on 'how to do the job'. The training will also include lectures given by the mentor to the trainee.

Further objectives of the programme are to encourage mobility, to promote integration by establishing new contacts with other researchers in their own and related research fields and to contribute to building capacities in the trainee's institution.

Training-on-the job offers and calls for applications will be announced periodically (2008, 2009, 2010) on the EDIT website.

The applications will be evaluated by the EDIT Selection Committee. The main selection criteria used to assess applicants will be their scientific merit, their motivation and usefulness of the training for their career.

As decided by the EDIT Network Steering Committee, the criteria for the establishment of the selection committee were as follows:

- 1) selection committee is decided *ad hoc*
- 2) composed of at least 3 EDIT members (max 4)
- 3) members are not represented in the Network Steering Committee
- 4) members are not affiliated with an EDIT institution that is part of any submitted training proposal.

Trainees will complete an evaluation form within two weeks after the end of the traineeship and send this form by e-mail to EDIT.

Trainees who have completed the traineeship will receive, after their training period, a certificate specifying the dates of their training period, specification of the training and the institution where they received the training.

It is the purpose to integrate this pilot expert-in-training programme as a training component of the Distributed European School of Taxonomy.

Launch and results of the First Call

The expert-in-training programme was launched in June 2008 on the EDIT website. <http://www.e-taxonomy.eu/node/60>

Twenty-one trainings on-the-job are offered at nine EDIT partners institutions:

Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle, Paris (2)
Natural History Museum of Denmark (1)
National Herbarium Netherlands (8)
National Herbarium Netherlands & Natural History Museum Naturalis (1)
Centraalbureau voor Schimmelcultures/Fungal Biodiversity Centre (1)
Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences (2)
Royal Museum for Central Africa, Tervuren (3)
National Botanic Garden of Belgium (1)
Museum and Institute of Zoology, Polish Academy of Sciences (2)

Depending on the training subject, the training period lasts from one week up to 4 weeks. The complete list of traineeships offered during the first call and a detailed description are available at: <http://www.e-taxonomy.eu/node/32>

The initial application deadline of 15 August 2008 was extended to 25 August 2008 due to the restructuring of the EDIT website.

In total 10 applications were received: CSIC-MNCN, Madrid (1), CSIC-RJB, Madrid (1), CSIC-ICM, Barcelona (2), NHM, London (2), ULB, Brussels (1), MO, USA (1), IBCAS, Beijing (1), Anadolu University, Turkey (1). One application is not eligible because the applicant is not affiliated to an EDIT institution and in addition the application is incomplete.

Training offers from the National Herbarium Netherlands were the most solicited by the applicants (7) followed by the training offered by RMCA on 'Cybertaxonomy' (3).

For the first call, the composition of the Selection Committee of the expert-in-training programme, as agreed by the Network Steering Committee, is composed of the following members:

- Dr Sandrine Ulenberg, Universiteit van Amsterdam
- Dr Karol Marhold, Institute of Botany, Slovak Academy of Sciences
- Dr Simon Mayo, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew

At the moment of this reporting, the applications are being evaluated by the Selection Committee.

Future perspectives: expanding the training offer and broadening the user base

In the first call, the traineeships are offered in an EDIT institution for trainees affiliated to an EDIT institution. There was a considerable interest from applicants with no affiliation to EDIT institutions to apply for the traineeships. Hence, it is the intention in subsequent calls to open the traineeships to non-EDIT partners and to involve more EDIT partners and non-EDIT partners as well in the training offer. In addition, this will give a cogent visibility to the European potential of taxonomy training resources.

To help us to define and evaluate training needs in taxonomy, applicants have the possibility on the website to express their needs for a specific training if not on the list offered by EDIT.