D.T1.2.8

Smart KET access point at RTO: Validated Model profile

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Table of Contents

1. Executive Summary

This deliverable aims to guide applied research institutes and KETs technology centres willing to join the KETGATE network to understand the selection criteria (Section 3.1), the staff requirement (Section 3.3), the benefits and the commitments (Sections 3.4-3.5).

This document is the upgraded version of a previous guideline (D.1.2.7) improved and fine-tuned after the Pilot phase. It takes into account the feedback collected by all the KETGATE partners (both Business Support Organisations – BSOs and Research Technology Organisations - RTOs) and their suggestions to improve the RTO model in the KETGATE network.

2. Introduction

As established by the Partnership, this document is addressed to RTOs (Research Technology Organisations) interested in joining the KETGATE network as knowledge and services providers. Another guideline (D.T1.2.6) is available to describe the features and the role of the KETGATE Point.

The D.1.2.8 includes the feedback collected through an online survey launched after the pilot phase to all KETGATE Partners. In the survey four specific questions were dedicated to validate the RTO model both from the BSOs and RTOs point of view. A last open question allowed partners to provide specific suggestions and hints to improve the model.

The outcomes, as well as the insights grasped during the physical and virtual meetings have been also integrated in this document, which shows with highlights any change or addition introduced in this document, in order to improve the model profile.

3. The KETGATE Point model and the RTOs role

The KETGATE Point (originally mentioned as SKAP) is the dedicated access point acting as trusted bridge to foster the cooperation among companies and KETs service providers (RTOs). Typically, the role that the KETGATE Point plays in both the local context and for the services it provides is associated to Business Support Organisations,   for instance regional/national development agencies, Enterprise Europe Network centres, technology centres, cluster support organisation or other business support agencies.

In the frame of the KETGATE project the three RTOs partners of the consortium acted as KETGATE Point during the pilot phase and therefore they performed the same tasks and role specified in the T1.2.6 (Smart KET access point at BSO: Validated Model profile). Anyway, normally, the role played by the RTOs members in the network is more specifically connected to the task of knowledge providers. Moreover, the RTOs officially accredited as Members are the privileged KETs reference for the KETGATE access points to jointly provide the KETGATE service package.

3.1. RTO FEATURES AND ACCREDITATION

The success of the KETGATE-network is substantially dependent on the quality of service it can provide for SMEs. For that purpose, it is imperative to ensure that the participating RTOs meet international scientific excellence standards. This assessment will be done by the KETGATE-Board. However, there are also other important criteria to consider when evaluating the capabilities of potential follower RTOs, concerning SME service provision.

Accordingly, to the EU definition[1] RTO are public or private organisations carrying out applied research and close-to-market innovation in Key Enabling Technologies.

Moreover, based on a classification proposed by the EU, the KETGATE-network has decided to use the following criteria to decide whether a follower-RTO is suitable or not during the start-up phase of KETGATE:

1.   Technology centres have to comply with 3 qualitative criteria

  o   Provide services to industry and SMEs;

  o   Be active in at least one Key Enabling Technology;

  o   Be active in the higher Technology Readiness Levels (TRL) - have activities in TRL5, TRL6, TRL7 or TRL8.

These three criteria (services, KET, TRL) are mandatory for all follower-RTOs willing to join the network.

2.   In addition, Technology centres have to comply with at least 2 additional quantitative criteria among the following 4:

  o   More than 10 projects with SMEs in the last two years;

  o   More than 2 major investments in equipment for close-to-market R&D activities with industry in the last 3 years. The Centre should provide a short description of these investments (type, functionality and investment amount);

  o   At least 15% in the total annual funding of the Centre in the last 2 years, must comes from industrial projects;

  o   At least 7% in the total turnover of the Centre in the last 2 years derives from projects with SMEs.

The second set of criteria should be fulfilled, however if a RTO does not achieve these key figures at the time of the application for membership, the KETGATE-board can decide to admit the follower-RTO on a trial membership. In this case, after three years an evaluation is done to award full membership, if the criteria are then fulfilled.

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1 https://ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databases/kets-tools/kets-tc/map#criteria_inclusion_mapping

In any case, for the later stages of the KETGATE-network (after the end of the funded project) an additional methodology is devised to determine the respective capabilities and suitability of an applicant follower-RTO for the KETGATE-network. A detailed description of the criteria to select new RTO members is included in Deliverable D.T2.3.1 (RTO ready for upgrade: Potentials and challenges of follower RTO).

3.2. RTO AVAILABILITY

The RTO part of the network should guarantee a contact point, which KETGATE points and companies themselves could refer to receive qualified information and prompt support. Therefore, a telephone and mail contact should be assured and promoted in the frame of the KETGATE marketing package.

3.3. RTO STAFF REQUIREMENT

At least one **KET FACILITATOR (KF) is present at the RTO**. The KF is a typically a researcher or a KETs expert acting as pivot among the researchers in his/her institute, the KETGATE point's staff and the companies directly asking for services.

The KET FACILITATOR:

- has both a technical profile (KET Technologies competences) and a commercial profile (as it will be in charge of negotiate contracts), a result-oriented attitude and the proper skills to deal with both companies and researchers;
- is able to deepen the information collected by the Business Advisor (and included in the Service Request form), further contacting the company (in cooperation with the BA) and being the interface with the KETGATE point on behalf the RTO;
- is keen to cooperate with other RTOs in order to provide joint propositions and solutions for companies;
- is able to act as team leader in charge of supervising and managing the technical projects/services performed for companies assuring the achievement of results within the established timing;
- is capable to deal with IPR topics and to drawing up contracts.

3.4. RTO BENEFITS

- As a member of the network, the RTO is accredited as KETGATE RTO and therefore included in the marketing and promotional activity;
- The competences, the technologies and the projects developed by the RTO are promoted by the individual KETGATE point and toward the companies located in Central Europe through the KETGATE website;

- The RTO has a reserved access to the intranet and is able to see the Services Requests[2] collected by all the BAs of the network. If interested the RTO could respond and submit a proposal that will be transferred to the client with transparent and fair procedure;
- The RTO could have access to the services specially targeted for the RTOs and to the tools and good practices developed by the network;
- The RTO is invited to be present to the brokerage event organised by KETGATE in order to meet face to face companies and other RTOs, to discuss potential opportunities.

3.5. RTO COMMITTMENT

- The RTO undertakes to comply with the standardised procedures established at the network level and to answer to the clients/KETGATE point request promptly and professionally;
- The RTO agrees to track the services provided to the company, using the templates and the procedures defined in the KETGATE quality system;
- The RTO provides the needed information to map and promote its competences (profile, competence, infrastructure);
- The RTO updates properly and consistently publishes this information in the KETGATE website

3.6. RTO COMMUNICATION and PROMOTION

The RTOs in the network use the marketing package made available by the network (see chapter 3.6 in the KET information strategy – D.T3.1.1) and accomplish in using the established coordinated image.

3.6.1. Corporate design

The corporate design is based on the one of the KETGATE project. Accordingly, the main colours to be used in promotion and communication activities are the following ones (Interreg Central Europe Project Brand Manual page 26-27):

REFLEX BLUE

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COLOUR CODES
CMYK : C100 M80 Y00 K00
Pantone : Reflex Blue
RGB : R00 G51 B153
Web : #0d428d

INNOVATION AND KNOWLEDGE DEVELOPMENT

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COLOUR CODES
CMYK : C00 M24 Y93 K00
Pantone : 109 U
RGB : R253 G198 B8
Web : #fdc608

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2 The Service Request is a form through which the Business Advisor collects and describe the company's needs so that the RTOs in the network can check if they have the requested services and are interested to make a technical offer

Other colours are described in the Interreg Central Europe Project Brand Manual (pages 23-26). It is also recommended to use these colours for the communication and promotion activities.

If available, the font Trebuchet MS should be used for written promotion materials.