



Creating a Centre of EXCELlence on sustainable Energy at NCSR Demokritos

Deliverable 1.5 – Composition of the Int. Advisory Board and of the Int. Recruitment Panel

List of the members of the International Advisory Board and of the International Recruitment Panel

Management Board, NCSR

EXCELLEND – A HORIZON Coordination & Support Action funded under HORIZON-WIDERA-2023-TALENTS-01-01 - ERA Chairs

Grant no. 101185742

Start date: 01/02/2025

Duration: 60 months

Project coordinator: National Centre for Scientific Research “Demokritos” (NCSR)

Coordinator contact: George Kosmadakis, gkosmad@ipta.demokritos.gr



**Funded by
the European Union**

Deliverable title		Deliverable No
Composition of the Int. Advisory Board and of the Int. Recruitment Panel		D1.5
Author(s)		Pages
Management Board, NCSR		10
		Date of delivery
		04/10/2025 – M9
Summary The deliverable <i>D1.5: Composition of the Int. Advisory Board and of the Int. Recruitment Panel</i> is a public document of the EXCELLEND project, produced in the context of WP1, <i>Task 1.5: Forming the International Advisory Board and International Recruitment Panel</i>. Task 1.5 will form two external bodies that will assist the Center of Excellence (CoE) with its recruitment and further more with an effective and sustainable operation. More specifically, the Recruitment Panel will follow the open recruitment procedure and assist on the selection of the new personnel of the CoE. On the other hand, the Advisory Board will provide its feedback and advice to the CoE regarding its operation, such as research priorities, possible collaborations, services to industry, intellectual property (IP) handling and strategic alliances with other Chairs and projects (including WIDERA ones). These two external bodies will be chaired by Professor Tsatsaronis who - with the support from the Management Board - will finalize the initially formed list of members and send invitations to potential members. Once agreements are concluded and signed, the two bodies will be formed and led by Prof. Tsatsaronis. The International Recruitment Panel (IRP) has been formed by M6 to enable the recruitment in WP4. Main interactions with the International Advisory Board (IAB) will be included in Tasks 10.4 and 11.4 and with the International Recruitment Panel in Task 4.3.		
Confidentiality		Type
PU – Public		R — Report
<i>Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or REA. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.</i>		

Document history

Version	Date of issue	Content and changes
1	11/09/2025	First draft
2	22/09/2025	Second draft and review
3	25/09/2025	Final draft
4	04/10/2025	Final version

Table of Contents

1	Introduction	4
2	International Advisory Board	5
3	International Recruitment Panel.....	8
4	Conclusions and next steps	10

List of Abbreviations

BTU	Brandenburgische Technische Universität
CoE	Centre of Excellence
DEC	Dissemination, Exploitation, Communication
ER	Exploitable Result
GA	Grant Agreement
IAB	International Advisory Board
IP	Intellectual Property
IRP	International Recruitment Panel
KER	Key Exploitable Result
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
NCSRD	National Centre for Scientific Research “Demokritos”
NDA	Non-Disclosure Agreement
NTUA	National Technical University of Athens
ORC	Organic Rankine Cycle
R&D	Research and Development
R&I	Research and Innovation
TUM	Technical University of Munich

1 Introduction

The deliverable D1.5 provides the list of the selected members of two key Boards of EXCELLEND, which will assist the project on its activities. The two Boards are the following: (1) the International Advisory Board (IAB), and (2) the International Recruitment Panel (IRP). The main duties of the IAB are to support the project team with feedback related to research priorities, new services to third parties and networking. Its main role is to contribute in improving the processes and strategy of the Centre of Excellence (CoE), expanding its network and reputation and enhancing its capacity. The main duty of the IRP is to assist the recruitment process of the CoE, in order to select the most appropriate candidates for the team. Moreover, the IRP will communicate the tenders to their networks so that they become visible to a wider audience and follow an international call of tenders to select external talents that best match the required expertise of each position.

These two Boards have been formed during the early stages of the project, also updating the project website. The list of the members is provided next.

2 International Advisory Board

The Management Board of EXCELLEND concluded early in the project a list of potential members, starting from the ones that have been defined in the Grant Agreement (GA). The selection process focused on covering all research topics and a wide geographical area. Initially, it was intended to form a 5-member Board, but it was decided to include 6 members, to increase the chances of having more than 4-5 members during the online meetings that are scheduled to take place every 6 months. The IAB members are all of diverse skills and backgrounds and will assist the CoE strategic planning and networking, among others. Energy-related Chairs in EU will be included to explore their best practices and potential integration in the CoE regarding the organizational structure and approaches to industry.

As mentioned before, the IAB will provide its feedback and advice to the CoE regarding its operation, such as research priorities, possible collaborations, services to industry, IP handling, and strategic alliances with other Chairs and projects. Two online meetings per year will be scheduled so that its members are up to date about the CoE activities, progress and achievements, and provide their valuable feedback.

The role of the IAB will also be valuable in evaluating and improving the structural changes at NCSR D. More specifically, the IAB will be tracking the scheduled changes to NCSR D structures and processes. The planned changes of *Task 5.1 CoE structures within NCSR D* and *Task 5.2: Innovation Office as a hub for new projects and DEC*, will be monitored by the CoE via questionnaires (once per year) with the results processed and any possible improvement will be evaluated by the Management Board via a set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) with the support of the IAB. The above will be used to fine-tune the CoE strategy and plan until the project end.

Finally, the IAB will provide its feedback on Dissemination, Exploitation & Communication (DEC) activities, including the detailed definition and evaluation of the Key Exploitable Results (KERs). This process will be on-going, and initiated once a Key Exploitable Result (KER), or even an exploitable result (ER) is defined and ranked. The IAB members will contribute with valuable advice throughout the whole action to also assist the CoE to expand its network.

After further communication and process, the Management Board has concluded to 6 members, with minor changes compared to the ones identified in the GA. The project coordinator has sent invitations to the potential members in M3 and after positive feedback, a Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA) was signed with each of them. The final members of the IAB with their short CVs are given in Table 1 (in alphabetical order). The IAB members have been also added in the dedicated part of the project website¹, including a link to their full CV.

¹ <https://excellend-era-chair.eu/advisory-board/>

Table 1. Members of the IAB

1. Andrea Lazzaretto (Professor, Italy)

Prof. Andrea Lazzaretto is a Mechanical Engineer and he is currently a Full Professor of Energy Systems at the Department of Industrial Engineering at the University of Padova since 2019. During his 30-year academic career, he is continually searching for new methods and their engineering applications. His main research interests concern experimental and theoretical aspects related to the energy-economic-environmental simulation and optimization of the design and operation of energy production and recovery systems powered by renewables and fossil fuels, such as supercritical CO₂ cycles, combined cycles, fuel cells, and others. Recently, the main focus of his research is on “multi-energy” conversion systems composed by several conversion and storage units. He has applied the proposed methods to a wide variety of systems fed by traditional and renewable sources. He has authored or co-authored more than 280 publications, 115 of which in main peer-reviewed energy journals.



2. Michael Papapetrou (Senior consultant, Ireland)

Michael is a co-founder and Executive Director at ERINN Innovation in Ireland with responsibility for all pre-award services. He has over 20 years’ experience in research and innovation (R&I), having worked in developing concepts, putting together consortia, raising funds and managing R&I projects. Michael has coordinated 10 European funded projects in the fields of clean energy and alternative water sources, and has been directly involved in hundreds of other projects, proposals and grant funding courses. He holds a Ph.D. on reverse electrodialysis for heat-to-power conversion from University of Palermo, he has over 40 peer-reviewed publications and he is a co-inventor of 6 patents.



3. Miguel Ramirez (Scientist/Integrator, the Netherlands)

Dr. Miguel Ramirez holds a Ph.D. on high-temperature heat pumps (2023). Over the past 15 years, he has worked across various research organizations (UK, Spain, the Netherlands) focusing on renewable energy technologies and industrial processes. He is currently an R&D engineer at the Energy and Materials Transition unit of TNO, where he specializes in the integration of sustainable technologies, with a particular focus on decarbonization of industrial processes. His experience includes participation in several EU-funded research projects involving industrial heat pumps, thermal energy storage and waste heat recovery systems, including Organic Rankine Cycle (ORC) solutions.



4. Panagiotis Stathopoulos (Professor/Research Director, Germany)

Dr. Panagiotis Stathopoulos studied Mechanical Engineering at the National Technical University of Athens and holds a Ph.D. on process engineering from ETH Zurich (2013). In the last 12 years he has been working at TU Berlin and DLR in Germany performing research on the decarbonization of industrial processes. He is currently Head of the Department for high temperature heat pumps at DLR Institute for low carbon industrial processes, developing unique concepts. This research unit is the largest research department in Europe that is solely dedicated in the R&D and demonstration of high temperature heat pumps. At the beginning of 2025, Panagiotis has been appointed Professor at Brandenburgische Technische Universität (BTU) Cottbus-Senftenberg – Chair of high temperature heat pumps.



5. Christoph Wieland (Chair of Energy Process Engineering and Energy Systems, Germany)

Dr. Christoph Wieland is a Professor of Energy Process Engineering and Energy Systems at the University of Duisburg-Essen (since 2023) and serves as the Scientific Director of the Gas- und Wärme-Institut Essen e.V. Trained as a mechanical engineer with a specialization in energy and process engineering, he completed his Ph.D. at the Chair of Energy Systems at the Technical University of Munich (TUM), focusing on coal combustion and associated particulate matter emissions. Following his doctorate, he established a research group on thermodynamic power cycles at the Chair of Energy Systems starting from 2011. From 2018 to 2021, Christoph Wieland also served as Managing Director of the Munich School of Engineering, where he contributed to the coordination and strategic development of TUM's energy research.



6. Guillermo Zaragoza (Director of Plataforma Solar de Almería, Spain)

Dr. Guillermo Zaragoza has a Ph.D. in Physics, he is director of Plataforma Solar de Almería, a center of the Spanish research organization CIEMAT, and director of the Sustainable Desalination Living Lab. He is board director of EDS, ambassador of Water Europe and leader of the Expert Group on Desalination. He is also co-leader of the “Desalination and Photosynthesis” R&D Unit of CIESOL (joint center of University of Almería and CIEMAT). His main research is focused on the application of solar energy to desalination in the water-energy-food nexus and has extensive academic experience and participation in international R&D&I projects.



3 International Recruitment Panel

The International Recruitment Panel is a 3-member external Panel formed to assist the recruitment process and select the most appropriate candidates for the team. Moreover, the Recruitment Panel communicates the tenders to their networks, so that they become visible to a wider audience and follows an international call of tenders to select external talents that best match the required expertise.

The IRP will get involved in the recruitment procedure and ranking, and will follow the open recruitment procedure to recruit new personnel with the final aim of the recruitment of 3 experienced and 5 early-stage researchers. For selecting the new personnel of the CoE, the open recruitment procedure will follow the EU and national regulations and guidelines of the NCSRD Research Office. All vacancy notices will be published in international platforms (Euraxess has been selected for that purpose) in addition to the NCSRD website. Prof. Tsatsaronis will be leading the procedure, and initially screen all applications to ensure that they fulfil the minimum requirements. Then, the short-listed CVs will be reviewed by the formed IRP, and provide scores for the defined selection criteria. The person with the highest score will be recruited with all justifications included in the evaluation report, which is then confirmed and signed by 3 members of the NCSRD staff that becomes public.

Another function of the IRP members is to communicate the vacancy notices to their networks, in order for them to become visible to a wider audience, for excellent researchers interested to work in the CoE.

Moreover, the IRP will be responsible to review the applications, providing their suggestions of the most suitable person to take over the tasks of Prof. Tsatsaronis, during the change of the Team leadership. This open recruitment procedure will be initiated from the project start for the permanent Team leader of the CoE. The IRP will provide its recommendation based on the submitted CVs of the applicants.

Finally, the IRP members could be shifted to the IAB once their duties are completed. In other words, when all researchers have been recruited, which is expected to be achieved by M15.

After further communication and process, the Management Board has concluded to 3 members, with minor changes compared to the ones identified in the GA. The project coordinator has sent invitations to the potential members in M3 and after positive feedback, an NDA was signed with each of them. The final members of the IRP with their short CVs are given in Table 2 (in alphabetical order). The IRP members have been also added in the dedicated part of the project website², including a link to their full CV.

² <https://excellend-era-chair.eu/recruitment-panel/>

Table 2. Members of the IRP

1. Stefano Barberis (Assistant Professor, Italy)

Stefano Barberis received his Ph.D. in Turbomachinery and Advanced Energy Systems Engineering at University of Genova in 2016. He is a Senior Mechanical Engineer with expertise in renewable energy sources, project management, techno-economic feasibility studies, research activities on energy storage, hydrogen and renewable energy systems, due diligence, innovation and technology transfer. He is currently appointed as Researcher and Assistant Professor at University of Genova in the Thermochemical Power Group, (<https://tpg.unige.eu/>) where he leads R&D activities on energy storage and use of hydrogen in innovative environment.



2. Christopher Schiffler (Research group leader, Germany)

Christopher Schiffler studied Mechanical Engineering at TU Delft and has been working as a researcher for the Technical University of Munich since 2018. Christopher is currently a research group leader for thermodynamic cycles at the Chair of Energy Systems at TUM, where he leads R&D activities on waste heat utilization, geothermal energy systems and thermodynamic processes. He is involved in various national and European research projects and is the coordinator of the European Horizon project FlexGeo.



3. Sotirios Karellas (Professor, Greece/Germany)

Sotirios Karellas is a Professor at the School of Mechanical Engineering at NTUA and a visiting Professor at TU Munich and at University of Bayreuth. The main areas of his work are in waste heat exploitation solutions, centralized and decentralized power plants, energy storage, biomass applications, thermal processes and hydrogen, involved in many research and innovation projects (national and EU funded).



4 Conclusions and next steps

The Composition of the International Advisory Board and of the International Recruitment Panel provides the list of the selected members of the two key Boards of EXCELLEND, which will assist the project on its activities. The IAB will contribute in improving the processes and strategy of the CoE, expanding its network and reputation and enhancing its capacity, and in supporting the project team with valuable feedback. The IRP will assist the recruitment process of the CoE, in order to select the most appropriate candidates for the team and communicate the tenders to their networks so that they become visible to a wider audience, with the final aim to select external talents that best match the required expertise of each position.

Other duties of the two boards include the support of dissemination and communication processes, evaluation of structural changes in NCSRD, feedback on the selection process of the new Team Leader and others.

Further steps include main interactions with the International Advisory Board, included in Tasks 10.4 and 11.4 and with the International Recruitment Panel in Task 4.3.