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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

DCoE	Digital Centre of Excellence
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
LS	Life Sciences
NGO	Non-governmental organization
SER	Socially Engaged Research
SME	Small and medium-sized enterprises

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Strategic and Governance Plan for Digital Centre of Excellence for Socially Engaged Research in Life Sciences

This plan is intended to set up the goals and outline the procedures guiding the process of fostering excellence to position Digital Centre of Excellence (next as BETTER Life DCoE or only DCoE) for socially engaged research (SER) in life sciences (LS) as a world leader in socially engaged research in life sciences. The plan was developed thought using the outcomes of the activities implemented in Work package 2 of the project BETTER Life. These activities and their deliverables (outcomes) are not presented in detail in this text, but they are available as deliverables of the tasks underpinning this plan at https://betterlifehorizon.eu/.

The underpinning materials used for this plan concern mapping of existing current state of art (based on the literature scanning texts targeting socially engaged research named "Status Quo Report on Socially Engaged Research" (Deliverable 2.1) and on the "Examples of Innovative Practices in Life Sciences". Significant support was derived from the results of consultations/interviews/focus groups with the stakeholders acting in quadruple helix. The plan was also supported by frameworks for SER in LS and by the frameworks of the Digital Centre of Excellence for SER in LS. These frameworks were simultaneously developed together with the standards for socially engaged life sciences which will be the deliverable produced by the activities in work package 3). The most important activity for the development of this plan was a series of workshops designed to co-create this strategy and governance. The online workshops described in the following section were supplemented by two other online workshops aiming at co-creating the frameworks for SER in life sciences and for DCoE (these frameworks are needed for WP 3).

1. INTRODUCTION

Background of the Strategic and Governance plan

Strategic plan, if to be successfully implemented and to achieve defined goals, must be accompanied by plan of managing its implementation. The management of the strategic plans might be either of vertical type or horizontal type. A vertical type of management refers to the government with the hierarchy of position separating stakeholders. Horizontal type of plan management echoes the governance with equal position brining all actors equally into decision making processes. Although governance type of management might be less time efficient the strategic actions in the plan are joined with the principles of governance. The governance principles are selected because they echo some principles of socially engaged research. Through the governance, the plan is intended to utilize horizontal principles of managing the activities enabling various actors (stakeholders) to participate, instead of vertical governance which uses strict separation of roles, positions and activities. Such separation goes against participative essence of socially engaged research.

The strategy is intended as living document. It means it might be changed and fine-tuned as much as the project implementation indicates new or better possibilities to go ahead (e.g. the development of the agenda of artificial intelligence). The development of this document will be therefore step-by-step procedure but always under governance activities to achieve mutual consensus of all partners.

1.1 Vision of BETTER Life Digital Centre of Excellence

Socially engaged research will form a leading paradigm (or at least a high-potential growth area) in life sciences, indicating the way how to bring life sciences and society together. Life sciences which will work in the mode of SER. Such research will be performed by researchers (especially the early career ones) with the necessary knowledge, skills and competencies about such types of life sciences together with other segments of the society operating within the quadruple helix. They will be skilled

in interdisciplinarity and transdisciplinarity. Both researchers and citizens will utilise all necessary infrastructure developed for such kind of life sciences (namely digital infrastructure) to make the interface life sciences – society as beneficial as possible both for researchers in life sciences and for all members of society. Such a digital based centre will enable the consortium to undertake projects that meet international excellence standards. To do so, high standards of research, leadership, collaboration, capacity building, funding attraction, and creating innovative mechanisms to promote knowledge and scientific advancements in life sciences will be used.

1.2 Mission of BETTER Life Digital Centre of Excellence

The mission of the BETTER Life Digital Centre of Excellence is to serve and support both researchers (above all early researchers who will conduct necessary change in life science paradigm) and society (forming quadruple helix) with the best and up-to-date facilities and conditions enabling SER in LS. The centre recognizes the importance of early researchers who will be at the forefront of change in the life science paradigm and seeks to provide them with the necessary tools and resources to drive progress in the field.

BETTER Life DCoE is committed to forming a quadruple helix of stakeholders that includes academia, industry (mostly industries connected with life sciences, and namely bio-economy), government, and civil society. By working collaboratively with these groups, the centre aims to foster a culture of collaboration and innovation that will drive progress in socially engaged research in life sciences.

One of the key objectives of BETTER Life DCoE is to become a globally leading centre for SER in LS. To achieve this goal, the centre is dedicated to staying at the forefront of the field by continuously monitoring and incorporating new research findings, tools, and methodologies into its practices. The outcomes of the centre's activities, experience learned, and facilities developed through the digital centre will provide examples of best practices for those who want to foster and utilize SER in LS.

BETTER Life DCoE recognizes the importance of serving and supporting society through its work in SER in LS. The centre is committed to addressing the most pressing challenges facing society and to fostering innovation in life sciences research. By bringing together diverse perspectives and

resources, BETTER Life DCoE aims to drive progress in socially engaged research in life sciences that has real-world impact and relevance.

1.3 Strategic goal of the BETTER Life Digital Centre of Excellence

Based on the outcomes of the workshop underpinned by other deliverables developed in WP2 of the project a strategic goal was formulated:

- To strengthen existing capacities, develop needed facilities and utilize them to be the world leader in SER in LS with a special focus on providing support to early career researchers to conduct such kind of research.

In order to successfully position the BETTER Life Digital Centre as a world leader in SER in LS, it is essential to perform several operational goals that have been identified in the plan. The details and steps required for each operational goal are presented below (chapter 3) to guide the successful implementation of the plan.

2. WORKSHOPS

In order to establish a clear and defined strategic goal for the project, a series of workshops were conducted. Through these workshops, the necessary steps were taken to set up and specify the objectives, ensuring that the project was on track towards successful completion.

2.1 Workshop 1: Refining the Meaning of Socially Engaged Research in Life Sciences

The first workshop conducted on-line using the platform of MS-Teams was intended to fine-tune and refine the concept of socially engaged research in life sciences. The participants of the workshop individually worked upon two questions: What is it Socially Engaged Research? How does socially engaged research in life sciences look like?

The general agreement was in line with "Status Quo Report on Socially Engaged Research" (deliverable 2.1) and its glossary of terms: SER is a strategic approach to the definition, planning, management, and execution of a research agenda in which there are meaningful interactions among the quadruple helix stakeholders: science (academia), policy (public sector), industry (businesses and SMEs) and civil society (NGOs and other community organizations), to address societal challenges.

The workshop indicated that socially engaged research needs a strategic orientation of a research agenda in which the guiding principle is to create social values and meaningfully interactions with societal stakeholders (quadruple helix). Such type of research has a clear conceptual and social aim, it has mechanisms for social participation. The research must be based on clearly identified social stakeholders. The outcomes of the research should contribute to the creation of new scientific discoveries blended with social values. Various examples were discussed. The examples demonstrated that socially engaged research concerns both basic and applied research carried out with and for the citizens (public). It is achieved by participative ways of doing research. The ways of co-created/co-designed research activities are used for improving citizens' quality of life.

2.2 Workshop 2: BETTER Life Digital Centre

The second workshop addressed the ideas about the BETTER Life Digital Centre of Excellence. A kind of brain-storming approach was used to get the opinions of the workshop participants on the nature of the DCoE for SER in LS. Questions such as how such centre should look like or what platform can/shall we use were discussed.

The preferences were for an interactive online database (platform) with toolkit instructions which will also be oriented towards capacity building (through supportive elements such as case studies). It means training courses and tools (tool-kids) and other teaching activities such as webinars will be used to promote participation, social justice (diversity and inclusiveness towards early career researchers in life sciences) and community empowerment through the BETTER Life DCoE. The database will be used also for sharing the best practices or case studies.

The website of the BETTER Life Digital Centre of Excellence should be divided into local centres/local sections of participating organizations (to enable participation of the public/citizens who are not fluent in English; the DCoE should be based on using a combination of English and local languages). The web page should have sections such as Strategic support section, Resources provider section, and Discussion and Communication support (incentives to use the discussion) section. User-friendly, open-access web platform is needed. The platform will necessitate responsive administrative persons and experts in social media and engagement support.

The Centre must facilitate connections among various types of stakeholders. To provide such connections, different entry points for various stakeholders should be provided. The centre should also serve as an information point for citizens in each region of the participating organization, informing them what they can do (a sort of “science shop”). The interaction among stakeholders must be supported to achieve a sort of communication forum for all involved (participating), including questions and answers.

2.3 Workshop 3: Science and Life Sciences in the Future (2030)

This workshop was of forecasting type and was considered essential to build the plan because the strategic and governance plan should be tailored to the future needs and future situations. The main

questions addressed were: Where do you want science to be in 2030? Where do you want life sciences in 2030? These questions were linked to socially engaged life sciences.

The science in 2030 should be based on open, friendly, and collaborative communication (interaction) with public/citizens. It means research findings must be easily accessible and understandable by common citizens (not too much complicated or sophisticated, at least in the communication process, to be present "everyday language" in the public debate). Citizens (public) will be included in the whole research agenda, not only as a target of the research but as co-creators of the research agenda and as those who are doing research. Such science in 2030 will be more collaborative with other domains of society (not only within science but outside sciences - transdicsiplinarity). Mutual links and mutual communication science-public/citizens will enable and support the science to be more present in the political arena (agenda) and influence development on community levels, regionally or nationally. Such situation will generate more trust in science among the public (often eroded by recent post-covid-19 development) because collaboration will facilitate to react in resilient way on current or emerging challenges. There will be an established agency to connect quadruple helix actors at European and global levels.

The science, incl. life sciences, in 2030 will be open-data oriented. This concept will be fully accepted and used because science will produce an enormous amount of data at all its levels.

The life sciences will be more personalized and tailored type of sciences (e.g. personalized medicine, One Health initiative, personalized accessible information, tailored to communities). As the outcome, life sciences will be in touch with social needs. Such a situation will fully reflect the nature of sustainability in a proper understanding of this concept (bringing environmental, social and economic dimensions of activities together to build a socially fair, economically viable and environmentally resilient world). The concept of sustainability will be fully embedded into science (a sort of sustainability science will emerge). It will be beneficial for individuals and help communities (regions) to develop in an efficient way because of raising (supporting and fostering) citizens' actions.

The sciences in 2030 will be disseminated through the entire educational cycle (from kindergarten to higher education institutions), that is why the education in sciences must be bordered to various age categories. The strong links between education in schools and "doing research" in sciences will be developed. It will necessitate researchers trained in socially engaged life sciences.

Artificial intelligence and machine learning will play important roles in science and must be under full control – to be a tool for the development of SER in LS not a goal. Since the theme of artificial intelligence is a new topic (and was not addressed in the project proposal), the conclusion of the workshop was to address this issue also by the BETTER Life DCoE.

2.4 Workshop 4: Stakeholders in Socially Engaged Research in Life Sciences

Workshop No 4 targeted the actors in socially engaged life sciences. That is why questions like: "Who should do socially engaged research in life sciences?" or "Who are the stakeholders (who should be involved)" were discussed and developed.

Through the workshop, the participants were split into small groups. The outcomes of the discussions within the small groups were similar. Apart from life scientists (at universities or research institutes) who should be important stakeholders, the workshop identified that policymakers (from national, regional, or local governments/municipalities) must be attracted together with businesses people (especially from businesses related to life sciences), media and communication experts, educators and their students/pupils (elementary, secondary schools), associations (mediators), NGOs, youth. Obviously also "common citizens" must be considered as highly important stakeholders. Generally speaking, the quadruple helix actors (government, academia, civil society, businesses) are the stakeholders. Communication among these actors was highlighted across small groups participating in the workshop.

2.5 Workshop 5: Mission, Vision and Operational Goals of BETTER Life Digital Centre of Excellence

The last workshop utilised previous ideas from already conducted workshops and from other activities and deliverables already existing or being in the stage of development at this phase of the project implementation (ending activities of WP 2 and beginning with WP3 activities). It is because it asked the questions about forming the essence of this Strategic and governance plan for the DCoE for SER in LS: "How are we going to implement socially engaged research in life sciences:" - setting up the operational goals; "How are we going to work in the BETTER Life Digital Centre of Excellence for SER in LS – setting up the measures to achieve the goals.

The outcomes of this workshop are presented in the next sections of this plan (namely in operational goals in this documents).

3. OPERATIONAL GOALS

Based on the conducted workshops, research, analysis, and produced materials, there were outlined nine operational goals for the development of socially engaged research in life sciences. These goals are aimed at fostering collaboration between stakeholders in the quadruple helix (academia, industry, government, and civil society) to guide and orient the development of SER.

3.1 Operational Goal 1

To activate the network of regional stakeholders working in quadruple helix who will orient and guide the development of the socially engaged research in life sciences.

Measure to achieve the goal: To achieve the strategic goal, the regional centres forming BETTER Life DCoE must develop, continually support, and utilize the networks of those who are working as actors in quadruple helix. The members of such networks should be cooperative partners interested in the development of SER in LS. They must have the experience with such kind of research, but they should also expect to learn from new activities of such type of research and they should also benefit from such research. As members of the networks of stakeholders they will guide the centre through providing the management of the BETTER Life DCoE with strategic ideas and other strategic inputs for future development of SER in LS. It means they should support and contribute to the design, development, and steering of SER in LS. Their work in the networks is supposed to be voluntarily driven by the desire (and ethical commitment) to promote SER in LS. The benefits resulting for these stakeholders from the participation in the network will be symbolic rewards and appreciation from organizations forming BETTER Life DCoE. Another benefit will be access to the advances of socially engaged research in life sciences collected by DCoE. The stakeholders might utilize the knowledge and information shared through the networks for their benefits and they will be in the first line of contact with early career researchers with whom they might communicate.

Resources needed: No financial resources are needed. Social capital in combination with human capital and cultural capital (generally symbolic capitals) are important resources for achieving this goal. Building networks necessitates time which is the main resource needed

Time and assessment (evaluation): Continuously with annual evaluation (assessment) of the outcomes (measurable outcomes of activities), results, (immediate changes brought by the outcomes of activities) and impact (long term changes). The evaluation (assessment) will be done according to the standards for SER in LS and standards for the DCoE for socially engaged research in life sciences.

3.2 Operational Goal 2

Continuing in gathering, analysing and using the examples of good practices in socially engaged research in life sciences and to incorporate them into the BETTER Life Digital Centre of Excellence to demonstrate tangible and intangible results of socially engaged research in life sciences.

Measure to achieve the goal: BETTER Life DCoE will operate as a hub to inform about the achievements in socially engaged life sciences (demonstrating the results of such type of life science for the public/citizens). Therefore, it must continuously monitor the development of this kind of research in life sciences (and simultaneously also observe the achievements of socially engaged research in other sciences). DCoE will be established on the results from the project BETTER Life. The experience learnt during work packages (especially work package 2) will be used to define tasks for individual partners what kind of information is needed and how to search for this information. The experience will also suggest what format of the work with the information will be used to deliver it as the best-communicated results of SER in LS to serve both the education of early career researchers and public citizens.

Resources needed: Initial financial funding will be provided by the project BETTER Life. It is assumed that after the end of the project, the financing of the staff working under this goal in BETTER Life DCoE will be provided by the participating organizations and activities generating income. Fostering interdisciplinarity, transdisciplinarity and enhancing university-multistakeholder collaborations, will attract the funding needed for the sustainable operation of DCoE.

Time: The first outcomes will be available in the mid of the project. Annual evaluation (assessment) of the outcomes (measurable outcomes of activities), results, (immediate changes brought by the

outcomes of activities) and impact (long-term changes). The evaluation (assessment) will be done according to the standards for SER in LS and standards for DCoE for socially engaged research in life sciences.

3.3 Operational Goal 3

Setting up the communities of education in socially engaged research in life sciences targeting early career researchers.

Measure to achieve the goal: Fostering early career researchers in life sciences will be done through a kind of community education. Such kind of education reflects some principles of socially engaged research (namely equal participation of all stakeholders and direct involvement of all in the activities aiming towards the benefits of the whole community), therefore also the preparation of early research careers should be done in a similar way. The communities of educators will be formed based on the frameworks and standards of SER. The community of education will hold similar principles as communities of practice. They will be composed of those who have experience with socially engaged life sciences and of those without such experiences but being interested in such kind of research. The communities will be open to everybody to learn how to conduct SER in LS. The activities will contribute to educating and preparing such researchers who will be able to undertake projects that meet international excellence standards.

Resources needed: Voluntarily activities. It is assumed that the success of this type of education will attract additional financial funding for the operation of the communities of education.

Time: Once such communities are established annual evaluation (assessment) of the outcomes (measurable outcomes of activities), results, (immediate changes brought by the outcomes of activities) and impact (long-term changes). The evaluation (assessment) will be done according to the standards for SER in LS and standards for the DCoE for socially engaged research in life sciences.

3.4 Operational Goal 4

To develop the sensibility for the benefits of socially engaged research in life sciences among early career researchers.

Measure to achieve the goal: Early career researchers will be exposed through BETTER Life DCoE to such research tasks that will either mimic the need and use of socially engaged life sciences or will directly participate in such research activities. This will also necessitate the engagement of mentors from various sectors of quadruple helix who will bring the research cases that will necessitate principles of socially engaged life sciences formulated by strategic frameworks. These mentors will work with early carer researchers towards incorporating the elements of socially engaged research (defined by frameworks and standards for SER in LS) into their activities (from designing the research through data gathering to interpreting the results and presenting the results of the research. Fostering such sensitivity among early career researchers will constitute the future of life sciences and the toolkits development within the project will be used to accomplish this measure.

Resources needed: Established networks involving early career researchers and their mentors from quadruple helix. The provisions of the cases are needed. The cases provided by stakeholders are important resource to achieve this goal. The mentors should benefit from the activities and research done by early career researchers, therefore financial resources for this goal might be minimal (because of mentor-early career research mutual in-kind /knowledge, information, results of research/ benefits).

Time: Will start after completing the tasks in work package 3 of the project.

3.5 Operational Goal 5

To create a platform of communication between the public and researchers in life sciences.

Measure to achieve the goal: Communication platform where the public and sciences (more generally all actors of quadruple helix) meet is one of the essential elements if socially engaged life sciences are to be successful. Such a platform will support dual-way communication between the public and sciences. The platform will reduce the distrust among the public towards the results of the sciences as bringing the views of the elite disregarding the public needs (we have seen such distrust from the public during the Covid-19 pandemic) and researchers towards the public as being not equipped with inadequate methods and tools to investigate the reality. Dialogue is seen as the tool to support the trust. The platform will facilitate communication and will bring together various types of stakeholders and other participants. Different entry points for various stakeholders should be provided. The platform within BETTER Life Digital Centre of Excellence should also serve as an

information point for citizens in each region of the participating organization informing them what they can do (a sort of "science shop"). The interaction among stakeholders must be supported to achieve a sort of communication forum for all involved (participating), including questions and answers (FQA) or upstream user testing. Advanced technologies enabling to connect partners worldwide will support the translation of research into tangible outcomes and understandable agenda among the public. The outcomes of workshop 3 described in this Plan outline the ideas about the platform which will be essential for the BETTER Life DCoE. It must be interactive with online databases and toolkit instructions supporting the development of SER in LS. The website of the DCoE should be divided into local centres/local sections of participating organizations under the umbrella of one joint centre. Local languages should be combined with English. User-friendly, open-access web platform is essential.

Resources needed: The platform will necessitate responsive administrative persons and experts in social media and engagement support. The centre must be able to attract funding for its development after the project is over. At the end of the project BETTER Life its "funding-attraction capacities" will be tested.

Time: Starting the first year of the project BETTER Life. Annual evaluation (assessment) of the outcomes (measurable outcomes of activities), results, (immediate changes brought by the outcomes of activities) and impact (long-term changes). The evaluation (assessment) will be done according to the standards for SER in LS and standards for the DCoE for socially engaged research in life sciences.

3.6 Operational Goal 6

To include regional elementary and secondary schools and other organizations and bodies participating in education (e.g. NGOs, companies through life-long learning education) into appropriate activities conducted by socially engaged life sciences and to foster gender dimensions into such research.

Measure to achieve the goal: Early career researchers will benefit in their development towards properly conducting socially engaged life sciences if they cooperate with local educators acting in a wide scope of educational activities (from schools to NGOs and businesses). The participants in educational activities will see directly the benefits from research and the early career researchers

will work hand-in-hand with the people who are targeted by socially engaged research. Such inclusions of various local educational bodies (organizations) will rotate around the concept of sustainability. They should be such educational bodies (organizations) which address elements of sustainability expressed in UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) in their activities. Bringing SDGs into the agenda of BETTER Life DCoE will support the ethical principles of diversity (including gender dimension of the research). The detailed manuscript (guidelines) how to operate in this kind of inclusion of local educators into DCoE and how to work with local educators will be prepared. These participants in the education are important mediators of SER because they target not only children but also their parents, both young and older generations and various genders.

Resources needed: Most of the resources should be on in-kind type form local educators. They will benefit from cooperation with early career researchers. The main resource needed it is the willingness to participate. Early career researchers might participate in educational schemes provided by the educational partners and in the same time they can work with the educational organization in the research as a part of the educational activities. In means the main resource needed is social capital (the inclusion is based on cooperation) that will substitute financial assets

Time: The outline of these inclusions should be available at the end of 2024. The evaluation (assessment) will be done according to the standards for SER in LS and standards for the DCoE for socially engaged research in life sciences.

3.7 Operational Goal 7

To develop living labs in socially engaged research in life sciences.

Measure to achieve the goal: The BETTER Life DCoE will utilize the concept of living labs in its activities. These laboratories are used to experiment with new approaches. The same will be done in the living lab centre for socially engaged life sciences. The labs will benefit from other measures in this plan (the living labs under DCoE will use the outcomes of the measures achieved under other goals in this plan). The centre will therefore experiment with various approaches to socially engaged research. Such type of the centre will be based on standards in SER in LS and innovation to provide adequate learning components. Mechanisms how to guarantee the durability of such living labs will be tested. These labs will be utilized in the projects implemented by BETTER Life Digital Centre of Excellence. It means they will also be offered to other research teams needing to use such a facility

in their research. It is assumed living labs in socially engaged research in life sciences will bring real actors in quadruple helix into research activities (e.g. the living labs will provide such research settings of research-societal actors scheme that will not need to be newly established in any new research)

Resources needed: Since DCoE will enable the consortium and other teams interested to undertake projects that meet international excellence standards which necessitate the involvement of societal stakeholders, the implementation of the concept of living labs in SER in LS will be open to all who will contribute to the work of such facilities through the support of project money.

Time: The concept of living labs will be ready by the end of 2024 to start with their implementation in 2025. The evaluation (assessment) will be done according to the standards for SER in LS and standards for the DCoE for socially engaged research in life sciences.

3.8 Operational Goal 8

To utilise as much as possible new ICTs, new applications (developed by the Digital Centre of Excellence for socially engaged life sciences) to train early career researchers and to use the new digital technologies and applications as the ways how to facilitate SER in life sciences.

Measure to achieve the goal: The new IT applications are considered to advance socially engaged research in life sciences. ICT and applications are seen as the tool that brings researchers and public (incl. societal shareholders) together. They facilitate cooperation and communication. They will be considered as tools – i.e., elements improving the abilities and skills of people participating in SER in LS. An inventory of existing ITCs and available applications will be done as the first step. Afterwards, the development of the various toolkits for the activities of the BETER Life DCoE starts. The toolkits will be based on elaborated standards and will benefit from joint activities conducted by the participating organizations in the projects supported by causal activities implemented by participating partners. Since the BETTER Life DCoE is to be developed at the time when artificial intelligence becomes a new theme in the discourses in society and targes also science, there will also be a need to work on the agenda of artificial intelligence (although the project BETTER Life does not explicitly address this issue in its proposals)

Resources needed: A review of existing toolkits using ICT and applications available at partners' universities will provide information about available material resources. The project activities of

BETTER Life DCoE will generate financial resources supporting the development of new-tool kits. Experts in ICT and experts in communication will be essential for this operation goal.

Time: Starting with Work Package 3 activities. Annual evaluation (assessment) of the outcomes (measurable outcomes of activities), results, (immediate changes brought by the outcomes of activities) and impact (long term changes). The evaluation (assessment) will be done according to the standards for SER in LS and standards for the DCoE for socially engaged research in life sciences.

3.9 Operational Goal 9

To establish the governance structure of BETTER Life Digital Centre of Excellence which will reflect the nature of such centre.

Measure to achieve the goal: The governance will echo the principles of socially engaged research in life sciences embedded in the standards for such kind of research and standards for the DCoE will be implemented through modern ICT technologies. It means the measures will support digital technologies as the main tool for the governance of the centre, for activities done within the centre and for consulting early career researchers. There will be necessary to set up a governance network which will monitor the achievements of the plan and together with other teams involved in BETTER Life Digital Centre of Excellence. A new system of project management will be used: a horizontal approach using the principles of networks. The BETTER Life DCoE will be organized as a network (inspired by networks of Local Action Groups acting in rural development). The networks do not have a strict hierarchy, but they have a fluid and flexible system of management resulting from the interplay of various teams. It will be framed by the Project management rules.

Resources needed: No financial resources are needed.

Time: Mid of 2024. Annual evaluation (assessment) of the outcomes (measurable outcomes of activities), results, (immediate changes brought by the outcomes of activities) and impact (long-term changes). The evaluation (assessment) will be done according to the standards for SER in LS and standards for the DCoE for socially engaged research in life sciences.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The Strategic and Governance Plan for Digital Centre of Excellence for Socially Engaged Research in Life Sciences is a comprehensive document that outlines the procedures and goals for BETTER Life DCoE to become a world leader in socially engaged research in life sciences. The plan is based on thorough research and analysis, including mapping of the current state of the art and examples of innovative practices in life sciences, as well as extensive consultations, interviews, and focus groups with stakeholders in the quadruple helix.

To develop this plan, the team conducted a series of workshops designed to co-create the strategy and governance for BETTER Life DCoE, as well as frameworks for SER in life sciences and for DCoE. These frameworks will be essential for the success of work package 3, which will produce standards for socially engaged life sciences.

As a living document, this plan may be updated throughout the process to ensure BETTER Life DCoE's continued success in achieving its goals. The team will continue to review and refine the plan based on feedback from stakeholders, new developments in the field of socially engaged research in life sciences, and progress made in work packages.

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