

## **An approach to Project Management through International Collaboration.**

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### **Summary.**

International collaboration is an important ingredient of today's scientific research. It is an important element in the internationalization of science. Developing countries seek their integration within the international scientific community and their participation in world scientific progress. The development of institutional projects has been possible through the development of International Collaboration. It is in this context that the projects have found their most complete definition, by approaching their development through the search for alternatives by interacting with governmental, non-governmental, financial and private entities and agencies. The concept of International Collaboration has changed in recent years as the term helping from developed countries to developing countries to be transformed into bilateral collaboration, on which the parties involved participate in the project and obtain mutual benefits. International Collaboration allows the capture of material and financial resources, access to new technologies, scientific, information and knowledge exchange; that allow us to make a qualitative and quantitative leap in the development of our main objectives and become a way to publicize our biotechnological potential.

Keywords: International Collaboration, projects, financing

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## **I.- Introduction.**

The word project is perhaps one of the most heard today in the language of businessmen, bankers, merchants, researchers, scientists, academics and dissimilar professional profiles (1). But it is perhaps in the context of international collaboration that this word has found one of its most complete definitions, when addressing development projects as a systemic method of searching for alternatives (2) by interacting with various organizations that finance projects. ranging from agencies and organizations of the United Nations System, regional interstate entities such as the European Union or state institutions such as government agencies that are members of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) to private organizations such as Foundations, Associations and Non-Governmental Organizations for Development (NGDO) that have proliferated in recent years. (2)

International Collaboration is located in a new world scenario, characterized by the phenomenon of globalization, which accentuates the extension and deepening of interdependencies and interconnections between states and societies that make up the world system. (1, 2, 3, 4) In this framework, the tendencies towards regionalization, constitution of regional and subregional blocs, open up new and innovative possibilities to strengthen regional cooperation. That is why one of the main objectives of these blocs is to advance in new forms of cooperation. (5)

Traditionally, International Collaboration has been associated, almost automatically, with the concept of "aid"; more specifically to what is called "development aid". However, the concept of collaboration tends to be broader, responding to the growing complexity of International Relations, where elements of aid and solidarity are combined with those of commercial promotion and political and economic interests. (3, 4, 6) Collaboration can also be understood as the set of actions through which it is attempted to coordinate policies or join forces in order to achieve common objectives at the international level. (Work jointly with one or others for the same purpose). The concept of Collaboration is clearly situated at the international level, reaffirming the fact that it is part of the foreign policy of governments (7). As such, the Collaboration allows the incorporation of

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relations between states a component that transcends the strategic - economic, making room for spaces of solidarity, interdependence and search for a network of international common good. (3, 4, 7)

Although the concept of Collaboration is generalized as aid, be it faith-based or non-reimbursable funds, it should not be understood as a one-way process in which a country or group of countries, which are the donors, supports another country, which is the recipient or beneficiary. Rather, it should be understood as a two-way process in which each of the countries involved, both donors and recipients, agree to cooperate to solve a certain problem and, in doing so, satisfy objectives that each of them has proposed. previously. (8). In this sense, cooperation generates "mutual benefits" which are not necessarily associated with obtaining economic dividends. (3, 7)

Due to the established typology, at the level of the formalized relationship, cooperation can have different characters: (1, 2)

## **II.- Characters of International Collaboration. (1, 3)**

Due to the established typology, at the formalized relationship level, International Collaboration can have different characteristics:

**Multilateral character:** (It can be vertical) When it is granted by international organizations made up of a group of countries in order to meet specific objectives for which they were created and is made up of services (training, planning assistance, scientific, technological and cultural studies) and resources ( experts, equipment and supplies, financing).

**Bilateral Character:** The CTI is of a bilateral nature when it is granted by governmental, para-governmental or non-governmental organizations, generally from developed countries, in charge of this activity in a determined country and includes experts, training programs and scholarships, equipment and materials and technical information.

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**horizontal character (CH):** When cooperation is established between developing countries, or between institutional networks of them. It is a two-way modality, where the country can give or receive technical assistance from countries with comparative advantages.

**informal character (CI):** Corresponds to activities achieved spontaneously or accidentally between companies or public or private institutions, without the existence of formal instruments between them.

## **II.- Projects management**

The management of international projects has been one of the main lines of work of the biotechnology centers in our country. In the context of International Collaboration, the Finlay Institute has worked since its inception generating opportunities for carrying out projects by approaching them through a systemic method of searching for alternatives by interacting with various first world organizations that finance projects, ranging from agencies and organizations of the United Nations System, to private organizations that have proliferated in recent years in the socioeconomic fabric of developed countries. (9)

The formulation of the steps to follow in the execution of a scientific project and how to subscribe it to the sphere of international collaboration to achieve its execution and financing, based on the establishment of legal agreements that protect both the inventiveness of the specialists, as well as the foundation of cooperation, is one of the main steps in an adequate Management of International Projects. (1, 9)

Project management through International Collaboration encompasses several stages. Or phases that are essential to fulfill to achieve success.(9, 10). The first stage is project identification. This phase includes the phases: identification of the project, contextualization of the project, protagonists in the identification, the feasibility study (technical, environmental, socio-cultural, institutional, economic, financial), etc. The second stage is the design of the project. This includes the phases Background and Foundation, Project Action Program, Definition of Objectives, Information Related to the Actors, Organization and Administration of the Project, Schedule of Activities and General Information of the context

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in which the project will be developed. This is what is known as the Logical Framework (9, 10, 11, 12, 13). A third stage is the negotiation of the project, which includes the negotiation phase of the project itself, its reformulation, and the evaluation of the project (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, viability, ability to replicate in other contexts). (14, 15, 16). They also include the analysis of the evolution of the action, discovering harmonies during the execution, elaborating and proposing alternatives when the situation requires it, collecting useful lessons for the application in the execution of subsequent stages of the execution of the project or other projects that go to implement by the same actors. (17, 18). A fourth stage includes the main financial institutions of development cooperation. (1, 4, 7, 19) At this point it is important to identify and know which are the institutions and entities that have financing programs, through international collaboration, as well as how to present the project in an attractive way. This includes Government, Multilateral and Regional Intergovernmental Organizations, Bilateral Governmental Organizations, Multilateral and Bilateral Non-Governmental Organizations, Foundations, Societies, etc. (1, 3, 7, 20)

Other important aspects to take into account and that are not collected in the literature but rather in experience are: teamwork, flow of information and communication, coordinating role of the project leader, flexibility, among others

The distribution of the phases is very diverse, but they address for their study: identification, design-formulation, execution-monitoring and evaluation. (22, 23) In this way, the project document already written becomes a tool for the development of the entire cycle (18,19) of actions, a mean of analysis and interpretation, an organization mechanism for decision-making. for the administration of the project in question, which gives us the possibility of working to modify the environment and to improve the life and conditions of existence of the social sphere on which we are going to influence.(1, 8)

The identification of agencies or institutions that, due to their characteristics, priorities, objectives, can become financiers of the projects that need to be executed is one of the main stages. Here comes to play the fundamental role of International Collaboration (1, 3, 4, 7, 24) in order to offer the identification of financing sources and cooperation modalities

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to apply to the development of projects and academic improvement. (1, 2) Mainly, it is an action that, due to its importance, requires a detailed analysis and a rigorous selection. It is not about selling an idea to everyone who knocks on our door, although it often happens in practice. Another important aspect is the reformulation of the project. (9, 10, 14) It is common, even when it is not desirable, for the project to be assigned fewer financial and material resources than those foreseen in its formulation, which imposes a redesign based on the allocated funds in which it must be used. prioritize the most relevant actions of the project taking into account the objectives and expected results. (1, 3, 7, 16)

The delay in the approval time can cause changes in the situational conditions that originated the project by the time the funds are allocated, in this case a reformulation of the project is imposed to readjust it to the new existing conditions. (8, 9, 15)

In recent years, the international actors that move in the world of Collaboration have multiplied and diversified. (2, 3, 4, 7, 8) There are several governmental, non-governmental, financial and private organizations worldwide that enable the development of International Collaboration in the academic-scientific field. The programs of these organizations range from aid to multilateral and bilateral cooperation programs and co-financing schemes.(2, 3, 4, 7, 8) Each program includes requirements that the parties involved must meet. In general, they do not differ much, although each one has some particular aspects.

### **Organizations and potentialities of the International Collaboration system**

These organisms have been classified as follows:

#### **Multilateral financial organizations:** (3, 4, 8)

Among these are the World Bank, Inter-American Development Bank. This type of cooperation is based on loans and non-reimbursable technical cooperation. There are also the Organizations of the United Nations System, whose collaboration is based on non-reimbursable technical cooperation, co-financing schemes and bilateral / multilateral programs.

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Among these organisms is the PNUD, PNUMA, UNESCO, ONUDI, UNCTAD, FAO, OPS, OMS, OTI, OIM, etc. (3, 4, 15)

**Bilateral Government Cooperation.** This type of collaboration is based on non-reimbursable technical cooperation, donations, co-financing schemes, bilateral agreements (mixed commissions), closed cooperation offer programs, à la carte cooperation, cooperation agencies: AECI, AID, JICA; Government agencies: SIDA, Para-governmental organizations: IDRC, DFG, DAAD, NSF. (1, 2, 3, 7)

**regional blocks:** Non-reimbursable technical cooperation, Donations, Bilateral and multilateral programs, Closed cooperation offer programs: European Union, Mercosur. (2, 3, 4)

**Multilateral Organizations and Programs:** Non-reimbursable technical cooperation, Donations, Multilateral Activities: OEA, SECAB, CYTED. (2, 3, 4)

**Government Funds:** Central, Regional, Local Governments, Cooperation Promotion Programs, Bilateral/Multilateral Agreements, Participation in co-financing schemes. Promotion of participation in international activities (2, 3, 4, 7, 8)

**Financing of development cooperation:** Cooperation offer programs, Bilateral Agreements (2, 3, 4, 7, 8)

**Own Institutional Funds:** Financing inter-institutional agreements, A la carte cooperation programs, Participation in co-financing schemes, Promotion of participation in international activities (1, 3, 4, 7, 8)

**Private Funds:** Foundations, Donations, Cooperation à la carte.  
Examples: Foundation KONRAD ADENAUER, EBERT, VONHUMBOLDT, FORD, KELLOG, ROCKEFELLER, TINKER. (3, 4)

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**Non-governmental organizations:** Development cooperation projects. Investigation action. Societies. (1, 3

Royal Society of London.

International Council for Science (ICSU)

**International Collaboration in the Cuban sphere.**

It is significant to point out that collaboration in our country has its peculiarities and is not always adapted to the context that governs this activity internationally. (25). Some internationally well-known financing agencies such as the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, the Organization of American States or dozens of North American Specialized Agencies and lately European agencies are totally closed. (3, 4, 8)

In Cuba, a series of principles that govern International Collaboration are adopted. These principles are: Ownership of facilities in Cuba is not negotiated, Agreements for specific areas are negotiated, Negotiates on the basis of ongoing research projects, Negotiates on the basis of defined projects and products, not on the entire portfolio of a center. (Each project will be treated as a separate negotiation or collaboration) (25)

The environment of development cooperation in the case of Cuba cannot be removed from the peculiarities of the national context, in which an entire nation is governed by a constant threat of economic aggression that affects all spheres of life in the country, in which the essential form of ownership is socialist and the economy is centrally organized. As a consequence of this and based on the proven thesis of the political nature of international collaboration actions in general, it became necessary to create national coordination mechanisms for the implementation of these actions, which in a considerable percentage are executed with institutions that respond to different political, ideological and social criteria.(25)

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This internal scheme of national coordination at the governmental level seeks to establish the rules and procedures for interaction with foreign institutions that cooperate with Cuba, so that the Cuban State can guarantee the optimal use of the resources received, the diversification and generalization of the results and experiences that are obtained and at the same time the government granting of facilities for the execution both to national and foreign institutions for the sake of the success of the projects that are developed. (25)

Logically, this scheme finds its fundamental pillars in the different Ministries of the Central Administration of the State that are responsible for establishing the priority lines of development based on the needs of their institutions and in correspondence with the country's development strategies for the different branches. However, the fundamental weight of this complex coordination framework falls on the Ministry for Foreign Investment and Economic Collaboration (MINVEC), which since its creation in 1994 assumed the responsibility of becoming the country's focal point for international collaboration, although some other institutions also play a leading role, such as the Ministry of Science, Technology and the Environment (CITMA) for scientific-technical projects and the Ministry of the Armed Forces (MINFAR) given the necessary compatibility with the defense interests that for these purposes the Council of Ministers stipulates. (25)

In the institutional sphere, the development of International Collaboration aims to understand the management of contributions from abroad that are applicable to its objectives, in order to facilitate its development and international projection. These resources are aimed at raising the professional and academic level of our specialists to help strengthen the capacity of science, technology and innovation through the management of international resources, the consolidation of scientific and technological relationships and the search for spaces new for international scientific cooperation. This favors scientific exchange; access to information, to new techniques and state-of-the-art technologies, Attracting material and financial resources, Fostering contacts and work links, Exchange of experiences, information and knowledge, Access to new technologies,

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Mobility of our professionals abroad and vice versa, and publicize the professional potential of Cuban scientific institutions among other possibilities. (25)

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