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DiPIC

Dipartimento di Diritto Pubblico
Internazionale e Comunitario

PADOVA UNIVERSITY - DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC LAW, INTERNATIONAL AND EU LAW

ProTECTO(Law)

6 Months Grant for a Research on Renewable Energy Communities

Advance Notice of a Forthcoming Call For Applications
and
Informal Call for Expression of Interest

1.1 ProTECTO(Law) : a 6 Months Research Grant at UNIPD - DiPIC

In the framework of an interdisciplinary research project, carried out by a team including lawyers, engineers and economists at the University of Padua (UNIPD), the Department of Public Law, International and EU Law at the University of Padua (DiPIC) is going to call a **6 months / 9.000 EUR research grant** (“borsa per lo svolgimento di attività di ricerca”), for a research to be carried out under the supervision of Prof. Bernardo Cortese, focussing on legislative, regulatory, organizational and other conditions in which Renewable Energy Communities (RECs) might flourish.

The research project, called **ProTECTO(Law)** is part of a wider research project called ProTECTO (Prosumers in Transition - Energy Communities Trade Offs. Investment Decisions and Participation in Energy) funded by the University of Padua and the Fondazione Cariparo Research Excellence fund, foreseeing research activities to be carried out at DiPIC (Law Unit coordinator Prof. Bernardo Cortese), as well as at DICEA (Department of Civil Environmental and Architectural Engineering - Leading Department of the ProTECTO Project; Engineering Unit coordinator and PI of the whole project Prof. Chiara D’Alpaos) and at DSEA (Department of Economics and Management; Economics Unit coordinators Prof. Fulvio Fontini and Prof. Michele Moretto)

The ProTECTO(Law) research should be conducted by the grant holder under the direct supervision of the ProTECTO(Law) unit coordinator (Prof. Cortese), in close collaboration with the rest of the team involved in the ProTECTO project, formed by the Engineering and Economics coordinators, and two postdocs in Engineering and in Economics. It will also profit from coordination with PhD students working under the supervision of the project coordinators.

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1.2 The Forthcoming Open Call for Applications and the (informal) Call for Manifestation of Interests

The Department of Public Law, International and EU Law of the University of Padova will soon publish an open call for applications for the ProTECTO(Law) research grant.

The call has already been deliberated by the DiPIC. However, in order to ensure that the best candidates apply, as well as to foster the chances that such applications could open paths for future collaboration between the ProTECTO team at UNIPD and other research teams in Europe, the formal call is now anticipated by an informal call for manifestation of interests, at the initiative of the ProTECTO(Law) unit coordinator.

The content of the project and the main elements of the forthcoming Open Call for Applications are outlined below (1.3-1.6). The content and rationale of the informal call for manifestation of interests are explained at point 1.7 below, to be read in connection with the previous points.

1.3 The Goals of the Project

ProTECTO Working Packages

Under the 2018/2001 Directive on the promotion of renewables Member States are bound to “provide an enabling framework to promote and facilitate the development of renewable energy communities”, by i.a. removing “unjustified regulatory and administrative barriers”, making available “tools to facilitate access to finance”, providing “regulatory and capacity-building support [...] to public authorities in enabling and setting up renewable energy communities, and in helping authorities to participate directly” (Dir. 2018/2001, Art. 22.4), they still enjoy wide discretion in choosing how to regulate ECs and how to foster such desirable outcomes.

In view of the extreme variability of (ECs and especially) RECs numbers in different MSs, and in view of the low number of them in Italy, the research should concentrate on a bunch of MSs (Austria, Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands, ...), plus Italy, to find out possible ways to foster the development of RECs in Italy, with a special attention to RECs with social dimension, and to middle size cities committed to a Zero emission goal - as Padova is.

In the ProTECTO(Law) research, the contribution of the grant holder should fit into the following pattern of actions (**ProTECTO** Working Packages 1 and 2, to be conducted in coordination with engineers and economists in the team):



WP 1

- 1.1) review of laws, norms, and regulation at EU, national and regional level;
- 1.2) SWOT analysis of existing cases studies;
- 1.3) identification of barriers and critical decision nodes to RES penetration and ECs development;
- 1.4) identification of key information and factors in the implementation of case-based reasoning approaches;
- 1.5) identification of potential scenarios for a change in legislative and regulatory frameworks, which may contribute to accelerate consumers' and prosumer's engagement in the energy transition.

WP 2

- 2.1) identification and valuation of net benefits, including social and environmental benefits (e.g., increase in energy savings and solidarity and consequent reduction in fuel poverty and emissions reduction), generated in current legislative and regulatory frameworks compared to net benefits generated in different legislative and regulatory frameworks;
- 2.2) analysis and design of optimal schemes for benefits sharing within community members and between EC members and aggregators;
- 2.3) analysis and design of optimal schemes for ensuring citizens' acceptance of local energy projects (including municipality-driven ones);
- 2.4) contributing to related EU State aid (SA) issues, such as (i) setting the threshold for the EU concept of SA in municipal government/participative involvement schemes, and (ii) better defining the approval conditions of such measures, when they constitute SA.

ProTECTO(Law) implementation

A reasonable way to implement ProTECTO WP 1 and 2 might involve, inter alia, the following steps by the ProTECTO(Law) grant holder

- a) single out one/a couple of examples of RECs projects, with clear social dimension (combating energy poverty; including vulnerable consumers/tenants, ...) in each member State considered
- b) describe the relevant legislative, regulatory, politico-administrative framework, including subsidizing- or other support-schemes ("the applicable framework")
- c) stress the strengths and weaknesses of the singled-out RECs projects, in light of the applicable framework
- d) analyze the applicable framework in Italy / the Veneto region / the city of Padova
- e) single out the obstacles present in that framework, in order to be able to suggest appropriate corrective measures



Expected Research Outputs

The grant holder should work under the direct supervision of the ProTECTO(Law) scientific coordinator, and envisage the production of two kinds of research outputs.

First, she/he will produce an extensive internal report, articulating the various findings of the research, and including as appropriate relevant legal materials, quantitative data, interviews, contacts ...

The report will have to address the following milestones

- M1) report on EU and selected EU-MSs legislation, relevant for EC design and support schemes;
- M2) inventory of existing case studies on ECs;
- M3) SWOT analysis of case studies;
- M4) production of new case studies based on the selection performed by the grant holder under ProTECTO team supervision/guidance;
- M4) identification of scenarios for a change in legislative and regulatory frameworks

Second, that report will form the basis of a scientific co-authored working paper to be presented in two workshops (Italy, EU) and disseminated among relevant academics / stakeholders /authorities for comments, at the end of the grant period.

On the basis of the working paper and of the reactions thereto, the ProTECTO team, under the responsibility of the scientific supervisor of the ProTECTO(Law) project, might decide to publish a scientific article, coauthored with the ProTECTO(Law) grant holder. Such a coauthored article will be proposed for publication to a specialized (legal) journal of international renown.

Should the selected grant-holder be part also of another research group, subsequent special agreements between the two research groups might lead to a different decision concerning the final scientific output.

1.4 Admissibility Requirements + Optionals (Open Call for Applications)

Alternative Requirements (A or B)

A) Bachelor Degree + Master Degree

The candidate should have a bachelor+master equivalent degree in law, or in other disciplines involving however a good command of the law, and a specific study or other experience in EU law.



B) Bachelor Degree + Advanced Position in a Master Program

Candidates with a bachelor degree in law, who are enrolled and have progressed to an advanced position in a master program substantially relevant to the subject matter of the research will also be considered, even if they haven't yet got a master degree.

The same applies for candidates with a bachelor degree in a field substantially relevant to the subject matter of the research, other than law, who are enrolled and have progressed to an advanced position in a master program in law.

C) Desired Specialization (Optional - No Strict Requirement)

Specific experience in environmental law / management will be considered a plus, and in particular a specific experience in the study / management / design of ECs and RECs.

1.5 Selection Criteria (Open Call for Applications)

Candidates will be evaluated on the basis of their **titles**, referring to the Admissibility Requirements and the Desired Specialization, or to any other titles relevant for assessing the capability of successfully conducting the research, and on the basis of a **project implementation proposal** they have to submit.

Up to two **recommendation letters** drafted by university professors / researchers or persons holding a comparable position will be also considered. Such letters should include an hypothesis of coordination between the work of the candidate in the ProTECTO(Law) project, and her/his work in a different research project of which the letter's author happens to be in charge (PI or Unit Coordinator), should the candidate be already part of that research project.

Titles, project implementation proposals and possible letters of recommendation will be assessed with a view of determining the capability of the candidates to successfully complete the ProTECTO(Law) project, as well as to connect it to other existing research projects in a mutually beneficial way.

1.6 Incompatibilities and Other Relevant Information (Open Call for Applications)

According to applicable University of Padua regulations, the beneficiary of the grant cannot be, at the same time, recipient of a senior research grant ("asegni per attività di ricerca", as foreseen by art. 22 of Italian Law n. 240/2010, or of any other research grant, except if specifically granted in order to foster the international mobility of the grant holder.



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According to applicable University of Padua regulations, the beneficiary of the grant can maintain a parallel employment position or an autonomous activity, if the scientific coordinator of the research deems that situation compatible with the research grant activities.

The research grant is not subject to taxation by Italian tax authorities.

1.7 Informal Call for Expression of Interest

With immediate effect, an informal Call for Expression of Interest is launched, in order to evaluate the existence of suitable candidates and, where relevant, the possibility of a cooperation between the ProTECTO team at UNIPD and other research teams.

Possible Candidates

Prospective candidates are invited to signal their interest by sending a short CV and a motivation letter to the ProTECTO research team at ProTECTO.dipic@unipd.it.

They might be subsequently invited by the ProTECTO research team to join an informal online meeting to discuss how they intend to implement the research, should they be selected by the jury of the forthcoming Open Call for Candidature.

As soon as the formal phase of the Open Call for Candidature is launched (official notice being given at <https://protocollo.unipd.it/albo/viewer>), those who expressed their interest in reply to the present informal Call for Expression of Interest will receive an alert by email, insofar their application appears to have some chance of success. Any such alert will in no way bind the jury appointed to select the successful candidate of the formal Open Call for Candidature, nor will previous contacts with the ProTECTO team give rise to any legitimate expectation of being selected.

Research Projects' PIs / Unit Coordinators

Interested Principal Investigators / Unit Coordinators leading similar research projects and willing to discuss the possibility of a cooperation with the ProTECTO team, including through one of their teams' member introducing a candidature under the terms of the upcoming Open Call for Candidature as outlined above, could reach Prof. Bernardo Cortese and the ProTECTO research team at ProTECTO.dipic@unipd.it for further information and for discussing any form of possible collaboration.

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