



Success stories in SSH - STEM collaboration

The contribution of Social Sciences and Humanities to health research

As a cross-cutting issue of broad relevance, Social Sciences and Humanities (SSH) research was not only fully integrated into each of the priorities of **Horizon 2020**, but the effective integration of Social Sciences and Humanities will also be a principle through the programme cycle in **Horizon Europe** including clusters, missions, and partnerships.

Integrating the socio-economic dimension of grand societal problems into the design, development and implementation of research itself, and of new technologies, can help find solutions to societal issues and enhance the impact of such activities for society.

SSH can provide essential contributions to **Health research**:

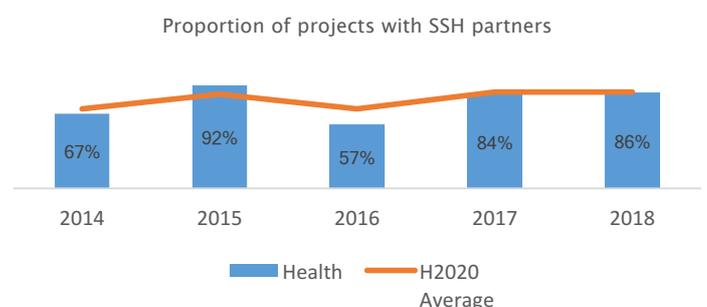
- ✓ To understand the **social relationships, interpersonal processes and cultural factors** that lead people to engage in healthy and unhealthy behaviours
- ✓ To reform public health systems, because **economic and social analysis** is crucial
- ✓ To understand demographic change, wellbeing and adaptive behaviour
- ✓ To support the design of health care delivery practices and interventions that acknowledge and adapt to **social, cultural, and economic barriers**

FACTS & FIGURES

Collaboration between SSH and STEM researchers in H2020 has been gradually increasing in the period 2014–18: the proportion of projects funded under SSH-flagged topics with at least one SSH partner increased from 67% to 86% while the budget going to SSH partners went from 12% to 18%.

In terms of SSH expertise across the 56 projects funded under SSH-flagged topics in 2018, Political Science (19%), Economics (12%), Business/Marketing (10%) and Sociology (10%) represented the most prevalent disciplines.

Source: Monitoring reports (2014–18) on Integration of Social Sciences and Humanities in Horizon 2020 (EC)



SSH: Social Science and Humanities

STEM: Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics

ECoWeB: a success story of collaboration between SSH and STEM researchers



Interview with Ed Watkins, Project coordinator of ECoWeB project

Why did you decide to integrate SSH in your project ?

SSH was integrated into the project from the beginning, because it was necessary to include SSH competences to investigate the questions under study. In particular, when conducting clinical trial research it is now recognised that multiple competencies and disciplines are required, including treatment delivery, clinical trial methods, statistics, **economics and qualitative research and implementation science**. The latter two elements typically involve SSH research, and are thus a necessary aspect of the project.

How did the process of SSH integration go from proposal writing to project implementation?

SSH integration occurred throughout the lifecycle of the project from initial design, proposal writing and grant preparation to delivery and implementation of the research. It was easy to establish contacts with SSH organisations because contacts were made on the basis of existing networks and based on logical choices to investigate our research questions. Because of the ongoing dialogue between all elements of the project and their explicit outline in the proposal and the recognition that the research would benefit from harmonious working of quantitative and qualitative approaches, there have not been any major challenges to integrating SSH.

What is the added value of integrating SSH in your project and what is the contribution from SSH partners?

SSH research will **facilitate our understanding of the experience of users** of the proposed self-help digital mental health app and what will increase the ability to have young people continue to use it after the research, so this is an important added value.

Which are the factors that facilitate collaboration between different disciplines?

The factors that facilitate collaboration include:

1. **Close involvement of all parties** from the beginning of preparing the grant proposal
2. **Shared understanding** emerging from psychology as a core discipline
3. A well-established approach to conducting clinical trials research that utilises **multidisciplinary teams**, including SSH approaches

What would be your main recommendation for both researchers and EC?

Ensure there is a **good shared understanding and framework** for working in advance of project launch.

ECoWeB



The ECoWeB Project aims to develop and disseminate a mobile application (App) to provide engaging and personalized tools and psychological skills to promote emotional wellbeing and prevent mental health problems in adolescents and young adults.

<http://www.ecowebproject.eu/>