

Date	15.02.2017	Overall rating	2
Panel	STN17 Changing society and active citizenship		
Experts	Andersson, Bentivegna , Harju, Jönsson, Lægreid, Majoinen, Maloney, Mickwitz, Millard, Salmela-Aro, da Costa, van den Besselaar		
Support reviews			
Application No.	312104		
Call	SRC 2017 Changing Society and Active Citizenship, letters of intent 01.12.2016 - 11.01.2017		
Applicant	Jouni Tuomisto		
Research topic	Co-creation of shared understanding tools with climate and air pollution policies (Corshu)		

1 Strategic Research Programme Call: Letter of Intent Review Questions:

- 1.1 - Why and how does the proposed research match the programme?
- To what extent is the research idea promising?
 - How does the project show high scientific quality? Do the research plan and the work packages support a multidisciplinary approach and what added value does the chosen approach bring?
 - How significant is the contribution to policy or practice? Are the plans for interaction sufficient?
 - How do the consortium and its distribution of work promote project implementation? Is the consortium suitable for multidisciplinary work?

The proposal's aims fit the general purpose of the program. However, the description of the project emphasizes that information about values and (dis)agreements needs to be taken into account - and not only scientific information. Therefore the panel would expect the proposal to show some understanding of the dynamics of conflict and compromise leading to decision-making rather than assume consensus based on expertise. Yet, in the work packages the idea of consensus seems dominant.

The ambition to create tools of shared understanding concerning climate change and air pollution is laudable, but the letter of intent appears as overly optimistic. It does not take into account the degree of polarization in contemporary societies, and underestimates the spreading "fact resistance" and aversion to "experts" and "elites". The goal of developing tools "for systematically describing, analysing and synthesising values and statements into a coherent ontological structure" (Letter of Intent, p 10) thus seems unrealistic. Nor does the project account for the fact that most policy-making is the result of compromise rather than genuinely shared understanding. Semantic modelling and "citizen science" no doubt are valuable tools, but as such they do not transform the political process.

The proposed research aims at developing tools based on sophisticated research techniques. The proposal's theoretical base is missing apart from brief references; nor does it propose to test explicit hypotheses.

As is, in the opinion of the panel, the aims of the proposal do not have a clear scientific base and the project comes across more as a development project than a research project. Instead of an interaction plan the proposal includes a communication plan, which is too general and abstract. It is very unlikely that the project can accomplish its goals as the implementation plan does not have any clear theoretical base and seems to reflect a technocratic view on policy making, the use of knowledge and the production of understanding.

The consortium is multidisciplinary, but without the social science expertise which would be important for its aims and envisioned outcomes. Last but not least, some of the core participants have only publications in Finnish, which one would not expect in such a large research project.