



State Research
Agency Annual
Action Plan 2020



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1 PRESENTATION

Royal Decree 1067/2015 of 27 November 2015 created the State Research Agency (hereinafter the Agency) and approved its Statute. Its effective constitution took place on 20 June 2016, with the constitutive meeting of its Governing Council.

The Agency was created with the mission of contributing to the promotion of scientific and technical research in all areas of knowledge through the competitive and efficient allocation of public resources, the monitoring of funded actions and their impact, and advice on the planning of actions or initiatives through which the R&D policies of the General State Administration are implemented.

The Royal Decree creating the Agency envisaged that until the Management Contract was approved by joint ministerial order of the Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness and the Ministry of Finance and Public Administrations, the Agency's actions would be developed in accordance with the criteria and guidelines established in the Initial Action Plan that is incorporated into the Report referred to in article 3 of Law 28/2006, of 18 July, as well as the actions to be carried out derived from the approval of the scientific and technical research and innovation plans as established by Law 14/2011, of 1 June, and their corresponding annual action programmes.

However, Law 40/2015, of 1 October, on the Legal Regime of the Public Sector, abolishes the State Agencies, which have a period of three years from its entry into force to modify their statutes and become one of the entities that, in accordance with this Law, constitute the institutional public sector.

For this reason, and not having approved a management contract in view of the expected extinction of the legal regime of the State Agencies, and while it proceeds to adapt to Law 40/2015, of 1 October, the Agency has been approving an Annual Action Plan since 2017, in accordance with article 23 of its statute, thus updating year by year the strategic lines contained in its Initial Action Plan.

The Annual Action Plan for 2020 should now be approved, covering the new actions to be carried out this year, giving continuity to those included in the Initial Action Plan and in the previous annual plans.

The Annual Action Plan is the Agency's planning instrument that sets out, on the basis of the resources available, the activities to be carried out in the corresponding year in order to achieve its objectives. Its regulation is developed in article 15 of Law 28/2006, of 18 July, on State Agencies for the improvement of public services and in article 23 of the Statute, according to which:

"The annual action plan shall include, inter alia, the following activities:

- a) Those of a training and methodological nature and those for determining management indicators for the Agency's activities.
- b) Those of management, monitoring and control of the actions that correspond to the Agency in matters of scientific, technical and innovation research, in accordance with its purpose and functions.
- c) The organisation and management of the scientific and technical evaluation of proposals requiring funding under the programmes and instruments assigned to the Agency or resulting from collaboration agreements and conventions.

The Annual Action Plan is structured in this document around six main lines of action, describing the activities through which the Agency's functions will be carried out and its objectives achieved, as well as the indicators that will make it possible to quantify their degree of fulfilment.

This Annual Action Plan for 2020 has been approved by the Agency's Governing Board, as provided for in Article 23 of the Agency's Statute, at its meeting on 23 January 2020.

2 CONTEXT

2.1 OBJECTIVE AND AIMS

According to Article 2.1 of the Statute, "the Agency's own purpose is the financing, evaluation, management and monitoring of scientific and technical research activity aimed at the generation, exchange and exploitation of knowledge promoted by the General State Administration on its own initiative or in concurrence with other Spanish Administrations or entities or those of other countries or international organisations".

For its part, Article 2.2 establishes that "the Agency's aims are the promotion of scientific and technical research in all areas of knowledge through the efficient allocation of public resources, the promotion of excellence, the fostering of collaboration between the agents of the System and support for the generation of knowledge of high scientific and technical, economic and social impact, including those aimed at resolving society's major challenges, and the monitoring of the activities financed as well as the necessary advice to improve the design and planning of the actions or initiatives through which the R&D policies of the General State Administration are implemented".

2.2 FUNCTIONS

Article 5 of the Agency's Statute provides that for the fulfilment of its objects and purposes, the Agency shall perform the following functions:

- a) The management of the programmes, instruments and actions awarded to it within the framework of the State Scientific and Technical Research and Innovation Plans, any others expressly assigned to it by the General State Administration or those deriving from collaboration agreements entered into with other entities or from other actions, through the objective and impartial allocation of the available resources.
- b) The organisation and management of the ex-ante and ex-post scientific and technical evaluation of proposals, actions or initiatives when appropriate, using evaluation criteria based on internationally recognised scientific and technical merits, as well as those criteria established in the corresponding calls for proposals.
- c) The verification, monitoring and ex-post evaluation of the activities financed by the Agency and their scientific, technical and socio-economic impact, as well as the control of the justification of the fulfilment of the conditions and objectives of the grants received.
- d) The communication and dissemination of the results of the evaluations carried out.
- e) Monitoring the management, financing, justification and results of all actions directly executed by the Agency, as well as advising on them.

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- f) Participation in national and international meetings and forums related to the matters pertaining to its object and purposes, and representation in R&D&I policy forums when so determined by the Ministry of Economy, Industry and Competitiveness. The Agency's actions in international forums will take place in coordination with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation when so determined necessary.
 - g) Dissemination and communication of the results of its activities and of the results of the research funded by the Agency.
 - h) The management of actions aimed at fostering collaboration, exchange, circulation, dissemination and exploitation of scientific and technical knowledge among the agents of the System.
 - i) The performance of activities or the provision of services entrusted to it by the General State Administration or, by virtue of contracts, agreements and, in general, legal business, by other entities.
 - j) The management of R&D actions financed with European funds and those resulting from Spanish participation in international programmes.
 - k) Economic and budgetary management and economic-financial control of the instruments and actions for which it is responsible.
 - l) Any other function entrusted to it.

2.3 BASIC PRINCIPLES OF ACTION

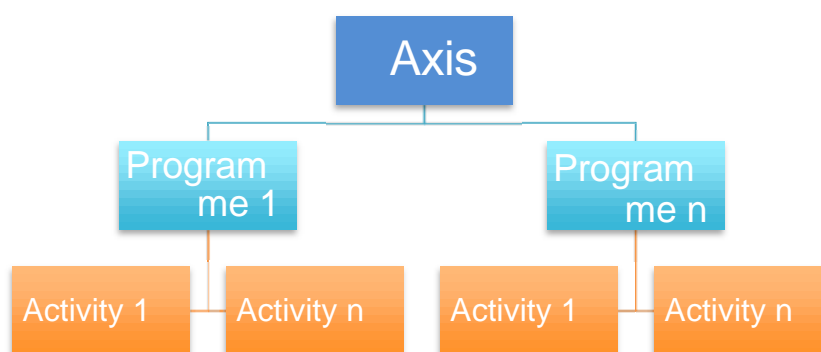
The Agency shall observe the principles of general interest by which the actions of public administrations must be governed. In the exercise of its specific functions, it shall also be governed by the following basic principles in accordance with Article 6 of its Statute:

1. Autonomy, understood as the Agency's capacity to manage the means placed at its disposal to achieve the committed objectives.
2. Technical independence, based on the training, specialisation, professionalism and individual responsibility of the Agency's staff, who shall observe the applicable values of competence, professional ethics and public accountability.
3. Objectivity in the evaluation of scientific, technical and innovative merit in all its actions, which will be carried out using previously established criteria, known to all and based on international and commonly accepted standards.
4. Transparency in all administrative activities and compliance with good governance obligations by the Agency's public officials, as well as accountability and commitments to present accurate and complete information on all results and procedures used in management.

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5. Effectiveness in its actions, using all means to achieve the object and purpose defined in its Statute.
 6. Efficiency in the allocation and use of public resources and continuous evaluation of the quality of management processes and action procedures, which will be carried out in accordance with the criteria of legality, speed, simplification and e-accessibility and without prejudice to the necessary rigour.
 7. Inter-institutional cooperation, understood as the principle that seeks synergies in collaboration with other public or private, national and international administrations, agents and institutions for the promotion of knowledge in all its fields.
 8. Gender equality, promoting the gender perspective and a balanced composition of women and men in its bodies, councils and committees and activities in accordance with the provisions of Organic Law 3/2007, of 22 March, for the effective equality of women and men, and the thirteenth additional provision of Law 14/2011, of 1 June.

3 THE SIX LINES OF ACTION

The Agency's programming has been divided into six main lines of action, each of which has defined a number of main activities, mostly grouped into programmes. Each of the activities is composed of different phases and tasks, according to the following scheme.



An indicator has been associated with each defined activity and, whenever possible, an estimate of the real existing workload has been established for each of these indicators, as well as a value, in percentage, for the effective compliance target of the indicator over the real defined workload. A table with the following information has been included in each programme:

Activity	Workload estimation	Actual workload indicator	Objective
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The column *Workload estimate* indicates the actual workload for the defined activity. This value may include, depending on the activity in question, both the workload arising from the powers and functions subrogated from the former Directorate General for Scientific and Technical Research and Directorate General for Innovation and Competitiveness of the Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness (first additional provision of Royal Decree 1067/2015, of 27 November), and those corresponding to the Agency's own powers and functions from the time of its entry into operation, or the sum of both.

All indicators are defined in relative terms, i.e. referenced to the estimated actual workload. The *Target* column indicates the degree of compliance in percentage that is expected to be achieved by 2020 for the indicator.

In some programmes the Target is not defined as a percentage of compliance with the actual workload of the activity, but in absolute terms. In these cases, the *workload estimation* parameter is omitted and the information given per programme is:

Activity	Indicator	Objective
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3.1 LINE 1. STRUCTURAL CONSOLIDATION AND DEVELOPMENT of the Agency.

Programme 1. Adaptation of the Agency to Law 40/2015 of 1 October.

During 2020, the Agency must address the adaptation to Law 40/2015, of 1 October, as required by the fourth additional provision of this Law.

Law 40/2015, of 1 October, abolishes the State Agencies, which have a period of three years from its entry into force to modify their statutes and become one of the entities that, in accordance with this Law, constitute the institutional public sector.

Activity	Indicator	Objective
Drafting, processing and approval of the modification of the Agency's statute to adapt it to Law 40/2015.	Publication of the statutory amendment in the BOE (Official State Gazette)	1

Programme 2. Development of the multiannual action plan.

In parallel to the actions foreseen in programme 1, in order to adapt to the provisions of article 85 and transitional provision 2.2 of Law 40/2015, of 1 October, the Agency will undertake during 2020 the preparation of a multi-annual action plan for the period 2021-2023, which will update the strategic lines contained in its initial action plan.

This plan, which shall be drawn up under the coordination of the Services Inspectorate of the Department of assignment, shall follow the methodological guide of the General Services Inspectorates of the Ministerial Departments for the control of efficiency referred to in articles 85 and 86 of Law 40/2015, of 1 October, on the Legal Regime of the Public Sector.

Likewise, as far as possible, the plan will take into account as a starting point the structure, objectives and indicators set out in the proposed management contract for the period 2018-2021 approved by the Governing Board on 28 June 2018.

The plan must be approved by the Agency's Governing Board and the seconding department.

Activity	Indicator	Objective
Preparation, approval and publication of the Agency's multi-annual action plan for the period 2021-2023.	Development, approval and publication of the plan	1

Programme 3. Human Resources Management

This programme aims to advance in the design of the general framework for action in the area of human resources, which focuses on determining the working conditions of the Agency's public employees, including aspects relating to the organisation, structure and framework for action in the area of human resources, remuneration, etc., with the participation of the relevant staff representatives and trade union organisations.

The activities included in this programme are the following:

1. Approval and implementation of a productivity system for meeting objectives.

The Agency's Governing Board approved on 26 November 2019 a proposal for a multi-annual performance-based productivity programme (PCO), covering the years 2019 to 2022.

This programme aims to incentivise the productivity and performance of the Agency's staff, which will favour the fulfilment of its objectives, rewarding effort and dedication.

The aim is also to make jobs in the Agency attractive in order to help fill existing vacancies and to retain qualified staff currently on secondment.

The PCO is based on the definition of objectives to be met and on the indicators for the achievement of these objectives and will be remunerated on a small part of the income generated annually from the reimbursement of grants and the provision of services.

In 2020, the OCP was submitted to the Ministry of secondment for approval by the Ministry of Finance. If the OCP is approved, the payment of the amounts for 2019 will be implemented.

2. Development and implementation of the 2020 Training Plan. A Training Plan will be drawn up to improve the skills necessary for the correct functioning of the organisation and the efficient provision of services. The Plan will be drawn up in coordination with the Ministry of Science and Innovation and with the participation of workers' representatives.

3. Drawing up and implementing the 2020 Social Action Plan. The 2020 social action aid plan for the Agency's employees will be drawn up and implemented, covering both individual measures (aid for staff studies, health protection, descendants and ascendants, transport, disability, situations of gender violence and exceptional situations) and collective measures (medical check-ups, canteen aid, etc.).

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4. **Measures for the incorporation of new staff into the Agency.** A general competition and a specific competition will be approved, published and resolved during 2020 for the provision of civil servant posts in the Agency, which will allow a minimum of 60 currently vacant posts to be offered. Likewise, a study and proposal of posts to be included in the Public Employment Offer for 2020 will be carried out.

Activity	Indicator	Objective
Approval and implementation of the PCO	Approval of the programme by the Ministry of Finance and implementation of Productivity 2019	1
Elaboration and implementation of the Training Plan	Approval and implementation of the plan	1
Elaboration and implementation of the Social Action Plan	Approval and implementation of the plan	1
Measures to recruit new staff	Approval, publication and implementation of two transfer competitions and preparation and submission of a proposal for the EPO.	3

Programme 4. Adaptation of administrative, management and monitoring processes.

The Agency's top priority is to substantially improve the efficiency and transparency of the integrated management procedures used in the allocation of public funds for R&D activities, for which it is necessary to address the simplification of procedures related to the implementation and monitoring of all its actions. To this end, this programme includes as a main activity in 2020:

1. **Basic Procedures Manual.** This manual shall include the Agency's catalogue of basic procedures, and within each of them it shall describe, among other aspects, the activities included, the units involved, the IT tools to be used, the applicable regulations and the associated deadlines.

The manual should contribute to the efficiency, agility and simplification of procedures, as well as to ensuring audit control. Likewise, efforts will be made to standardise IT systems and to identify indicators that will enable an assessment of the achievement of objectives.

The manual shall include the development of procedures in the following management areas:

- a. Procedures associated with the management of R&D&I grants.
- b. Financial and budgetary management procedures.
- c. Procedures for HR management.

The development of this manual, already included in the Annual Action Plan for 2017, 2018 and 2019, is well advanced in terms of procedures associated with the management of R&D&I grants. During 2020, these procedures will be completed and work will be carried out on the development of those relating to the organisation of economic and budgetary management and human resources management.

2. **Acceleration and simplification committee.** The aim is to identify and analyse the aspects that limit the agility in the life cycle of the calls for proposals and the rest of the procedures that accompany the implementation of grants, or that could be simplified. It will improve external visibility and optimise procedures for users and for the Agency's own work.

This will be done through a targeted consultation of all Agency staff and grant beneficiaries. The institutions benefiting from grants, research centres and other relevant stakeholders will also be consulted.

Finally, a report will be drawn up with a set of problems and possible solutions, analysing those that are technically and legally feasible, those that would have an acceptable cost and a high impact on the implementation of our aid.

The proposal and approach for the consultation was initiated in 2019 and internal testing was carried out to check its correct functioning. Once approved by the Governing Board on 26 November 2019, the way has been cleared for its launch in 2020, so that its conclusions and proposals can contribute to the development of the new State Plan.

Activity	Indicator	Objective
Basic Procedures Manual	Preparation of the document	1
Acceleration and Simplification Committee	Commissioning	1

Programme 5. Communication and visibility of the Agency's activities.

The Agency's Communication and Transparency Plan was approved at the Governing Board meeting of 4 December 2017. This document sets out the communication and dissemination instruments that will make the Agency's activities and actions visible to the outside world and to its employees. Likewise, the Plan includes the lines of action that mark transparency in administrative activities and compliance with the obligations of good governance by the Agency's public officials, as well as accountability and commitments to present accurate and complete information on the results and procedures used in management. The specific measures for implementing this plan for 2020 are set out in Axis 6.

Within this programme 5 and as a necessary instrument to be able to execute the Communication and Transparency Plan, in 2020 the Agency's website and intranet will be created and put into operation. In 2017, a specific space was made available to the Agency on the website of the Secretary of State for R&D&I (subsequently, Secretary of State for Universities, Research, Development and Innovation), which has been useful for communicating and giving visibility to its activities to date. However, it is considered essential to have its own portal, which is easy to access and serves as a reference point as a source of information and communication, as well as to consolidate the Agency's institutional image. This measure was included in the 2018 Annual Action Plan, although, due to the fact that the corresponding award process was not successful and the need to incorporate the changes derived from the new ministerial assignment, it has not been possible to implement it.

On the other hand, we must continue to make progress in involving employees in the Agency's activities and issues of common interest, either through corporate mailings and/or general or Unit meetings. We consider it important to maintain regular contacts, in which all employees are informed, while at the same time allowing for interaction with the concerns and proposals of all staff.

Activity	Indicator	Objective
Design and implementation of the Agency's website	Implementation of the action	1
Design and implementation of the Agency's intranet.	Implementation of the action	1
Internal communications and briefings	Corporate mailings and meetings	10

Programme 6. Consolidation of common services.

During 2019, the Agency moved to new premises in the building at Calle Torrelaguna, 58 bis, in Madrid.

The transfer has implied the implementation of the necessary horizontal services with its own resources, as the system of shared services that had been in place up to then with the Ministry of State has ceased to be in force.

In this way, during 2019, the necessary services for the equipment and maintenance of the building have been contracted and work has begun on the ICT structure.

In order to consolidate the services necessary for the functioning of the Agency, the following activities will be mainly undertaken in 2020:

1. Implementation of computing and storage infrastructures, and associated support, security, backup and systems services, to be shared with the Ministry of Attachment.
2. Preparation of a feasibility study for the development of a new computerised system for the processing of aid. This study, once completed, will allow, once the necessary funding is available, the tendering and development "ex novo" of a harmonious and modern aid management system. This study has been commissioned to the company TRAGSATEC.

Pending the preparation of this study and the implementation of the new computer system, the current computer applications for aid management will be maintained jointly with the Ministry of State.

3. Signing of a joint protocol with the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, to regulate the joint use of the common facilities of the complex at Calle Torrelaguna, 58 and 58 bis.

Activity	Indicator	Objective
Implementation of computing and storage infrastructures, and associated support, security, backup and systems services.	Awarding of the service and commissioning.	1
Preparation of a feasibility study for the new computerised system for processing aid.	Preparation of the study and its reception by the Agency.	1
Signing of a joint protocol with the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training for common building services.	Approval of the protocol	1

3.2 LINE 2. MANAGEMENT of financing instruments.

The Agency's functions include the management of the programmes, instruments and actions awarded to it within the framework of the State Scientific and Technical Research and Innovation Plans, any others expressly assigned to it by the General State Administration or those deriving from collaboration agreements entered into with other entities or from other actions, through the objective and impartial allocation of available resources (article 5a of the Statute).

Within the framework of these State Plans, the Annual Action Programmes (hereinafter AAP) are the documents containing the actions programmed to promote and boost R&D&I, and the budget appropriations allocated for their financing through different funding bodies, including the State Research Agency, generally by means of competitive calls for proposals.

In turn, the Agency is responsible for the economic and budgetary management and the economic and financial control of the instruments and actions for which it is responsible [Article 5 k) of the Statute].

Therefore, the Agency's activity in this area has been subdivided into Programme 1: Instruction of the procedure for awarding calls for proposals and Programme 2: Economic and budgetary management. The indicators provided in these two programmes depend entirely on the actions programmed in the AAP and the available budget, so they have been estimated based on 2017 data.

Programme 1. Instruction of the procedure for the awarding of calls

This programme has been divided into 4 key activities consisting of the different phases and tasks described below:

1. **Drafting and publication of calls for proposals.** This includes, in addition to drafting the texts of all calls for proposals, requesting the mandatory reports and authorisations, signing and publication in the BOE (Official State Gazette) and in the National Grants Database (hereinafter BDNS).

Qualitatively, the aim is to achieve homogenisation in the wording of the calls for proposals and in the data to be included in the BDNS in order to facilitate the process of submitting applications for aid and access to information for potential beneficiaries.

2. **Instruction.** This activity includes the technological configuration processes of the communication interfaces with the beneficiaries and internal processing applications, the administrative review of the applications, the rectification and processing of possible withdrawals and the notification of the provisional and final decision proposal.

Qualitatively, the aim is to standardise notifications to beneficiaries and to improve procedures in order to shorten processing times.

3. **Maintenance of the system of entities.** The System of Entities is the repository where the entities applying for grants from the Agency must register, providing the necessary documentation to accredit both their legal nature and the valid representation of the natural persons designated as their legal representatives.

This repository is connected to all the systems for processing aid, so it is essential that all the information is kept up to date and that a system for registering new entities is allowed.

4. **Advice to applicants.** Throughout the application submission process and instruction of the calls for applications, it is essential to provide correct advice to the entities on the configuration of the application reports, the correct allocation of eligible costs, responsible declarations, hearing procedures, etc. This advice will be provided through the manuals and FAQ files published on the institutional website, as well as through e-mail accounts.

Activity	Estimated burden of work	Actual workload indicator	Objective
Drafting and publication of calls for proposals	16	No. of calls published	100%
Instruction	17.800	No. of files processed	100%
Maintenance of the system of entities	3.800	No. of applications for registrations/deregistrations/modifications processed	100%
Advice to aid applicants	14.000	No. of emails answered	100%

Programme 2. Economic and budgetary management

This programme has been divided into 5 key activities consisting of the different phases and tasks described below:

1. **Prior audit of the calls for aid that require it.** The number of calls for proposals subject to prior audit by the Delegate Auditor of the Ministry of Science and Innovation corresponds to those with chapter 8 available for funding.

This process includes, for each of the different accounting phases necessary to execute the expenditure (listed in point 4), the preparation of the documentation which, as regards the basic requirements for ex ante control, is set out in the Council of Ministers' Agreement of 30 May 2008.

2. **Review of the requirements for obtaining the status of beneficiary and for the payment of multi-annual aid.** This activity includes both the review of the responsible declarations and certificates provided by applicants and, in the event that prior authorisation has been given, verification through the web servers set up for this purpose of compliance with obligations to the Tax Agency and Social Security.

This review is carried out only once for each entity, irrespective of the number of grants awarded.

3. **Issuance of accounting documents.** The documents required to process the calls managed by the Agency are, depending on the stage of the procedure, the following:

Type of accounting document	Phase of the call
RC	Withholding of appropriations document accompanying the expenditure proposal for authorisation
A	Expenditure approval document, once the call has been authorised and published.
D	Commitment of expenditure, this document is used once the call has been resolved and the beneficiaries are known.
OP/OK	Recognition of the obligation and payment of the obligation or recognition of the obligation and proposal for payment (depending on whether the appropriations are Chapter 7 or Chapter 8 appropriations)

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- 4. Payment of grants.** In the payment of aid, as in the entire procedure for the financial management of aid, a distinction must be made between the Agency's own budget and the budget of the Secretariat of State, i.e. Chapter 7 or 8.

In the first case, once the aid reflected in the respective OP document has been accounted for, it will be transferred to the unit in charge of managing the Agency's Treasury, in order to order the necessary transfers, always taking into account the situation of the Treasury.

In the case of Chapter 8 transactions, once the accounting document has been recorded by the Financial Controller's Office, payment is authorised by the Treasury, a process in which the Agency does not intervene at any time.

All grants awarded, regardless of their form, must be registered in the National Grants Database.

- 5. Advice to applicants for assistance.** Advice will be provided to beneficiaries, especially with regard to the presentation of guarantees and the characteristics of bank accounts. This advice will be provided through e-mail accounts available on the institutional website.

Activity	Estimated burden of work	Actual workload indicator	Objective
Prior audit of the calls that require it	4	No. of calls audited	100%
Revision of eligibility requirements and payment of multiannualities	7.000	No. of revisions	100%
Issuance of documents accounting derived from the concession	30.000	No. of accounting documents issued	100%
Payment of aid	13.000	No. of transfers	100%
Advice to the beneficiaries	800	No. of mails answered	100%

3.3 LINE 3. SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL EVALUATION of proposals.

The Agency is responsible for the organisation and management of the ex ante and ex post scientific and technical evaluation of proposals, actions or initiatives, where appropriate using evaluation criteria based on internationally recognised scientific and technical merit, as well as those criteria established in the corresponding calls, as set out in its Statute (Article 5b).

The scientific-technical evaluation of the proposals and their internationally contrasted development protocols are the fundamental pillars that guarantee the correct functioning of competitive concurrence based on criteria of excellence and the correct allocation of budgetary funds.

This line of action is divided into three programmes of activities: the first programme includes the activities corresponding to the evaluations of the instruments included in the AAP, the second programme includes the evaluations corresponding to the collaboration agreements and the order of public prices with other entities external to the Agency. Finally, the third programme refers to the development of the protocols to be used in the internal processes related to evaluation, which will be duly disseminated.

Programme 1. AAP-derived evaluations

This programme includes four activities:

1. **Management of individual peer reviews.** This activity starts with the search for the best available experts in each of the thematic areas to which the proposals correspond, with the aim of obtaining a peer review evaluation of each application. This process in turn involves close monitoring of the execution of the evaluations themselves and the reassignment of proposals to new evaluators in cases where the evaluators assigned in the first instance reject the proposal, or where there is a discrepancy between the evaluations issued.
2. **Management of the technical evaluation commissions.** This activity includes tasks such as the appointment of the members of the commissions themselves, as well as the organisation of the technical and human resources necessary to hold the commissions.
3. **Preparation of final evaluation reports.** This activity consists of the generation of the final reports that gather the information obtained from all the applications submitted and from the technical reports produced by the peer review and the technical commissions, all with the main objective of achieving the final prioritisation of all the proposals.
4. **Elaboration of allegation reports.** Possible allegations submitted by applicants, related to the scientific-technical evaluation of their proposals, must be studied in detail by experts or external collaborators, and the corresponding technical reports must be issued.

Activity	Workload estimation	Actual workload indicator	Objective
Management of individual peer reviews	32.000	No. of individual evaluations carried out	100%
No. of applications assessed	17.000	No. of applications assessed	100%
Management of the Technical Evaluation Commissions	160	No. of technical evaluation commissions held	100%
Final evaluation reports	16.000	No. of final evaluation reports completed	100%
allegation and appeal reports	3.500	No. of allegation reports carried out	100%

Programme 2. External evaluations (COORDINATION AND EVALUATION SUBDIVISION)

This programme refers to the evaluations of calls external to the Agency, both with public and private entities, with which a collaboration agreement has previously been signed for this purpose or in application of the order of public prices for evaluation activities (See Axis 5). Once these institutions transfer the projects or actions to be evaluated to the Agency, the process followed is equivalent to that used in the evaluations derived from the AAP indicated in Programme 1, except for the development of the technical evaluation committees, which usually correspond to the entities or bodies responsible for funding these calls, depending on the particular characteristics of each of them.

Activity	Estimation of workload	Overload indicator actual work	Objective
Management of individual peer reviews	4.000	No. of individual evaluations carried out	100%
No. of applications assessed	6.000	No. of applications assessed	100%
Final evaluation reports	2.000	No. of final evaluation reports completed	100%
Allegation reports	150	No. of allegation reports carried out	100%

Programme 3. Development of protocols

The **protocol for the selection of collaborating experts** was finalised in 2017. The definition of the new scientific-technical areas and the necessary consensus with the Scientific Committee together with the excessive evaluation burden and the implementation of the new coordination teams have not allowed the evaluation protocol to be updated, which will be carried out in 2020.

Updating the procedure for the evaluation of R&D actions. The aim is to increase quality standards, promote rigour and consistency of results, and simplify procedures, all in the interests of greater process efficiency. To this end, a detailed procedure will be drawn up that includes all the calls of the State Research Agency and the evaluations requested by external institutions.

Activity	Indicator	Objective
Updating the procedures for the evaluation of R&D actions.	No. of protocols developed	1

3.4 LINE 4. Aid FOLLOW-UP.

The Agency's functions include monitoring and advising on the management, financing, justification and results of all actions directly implemented by the Agency [Article 5 e) of the Statute].

In turn, the same statute establishes that the Agency's functions shall include the verification, monitoring and subsequent evaluation of the activities financed by it and their scientific, technical and socio-economic impact, as well as the control of the justification of compliance with the conditions and objectives of the aid granted (Article 5 c) of the Statute) [Article 5 c) of the Statute].

The Agency's activity in this area has therefore been subdivided into Programme 1 for the scientific and technical monitoring of the implementation of grants and Programme 2 for the economic monitoring of the implementation of grants.

Programme 1. Scientific and technical monitoring of the implementation of grants.

Grants awarded following the proposal evaluation processes must be monitored to ensure that they are actually being implemented at the levels of excellence that justified their award. Furthermore, the assessment of the development of the aid programmes must serve to progressively improve the definition of these programmes. For all these reasons, the scientific and technical monitoring of the implementation of grants is one of the fundamental components of the Agency's activity.

This programme has been divided into six key activities covering the phases and tasks described below:

- 1. Management of the scientific-technical monitoring programmed in each call.** This scientific-technical monitoring process includes tasks such as the preparation of the computer applications for the presentation of the execution reports by the beneficiaries of the grants, the claiming of the reports not received or the correction of those that are not complete, among others. Subsequently, these reports must be made available to external scientific and technological collaborators and finally, in the case of intermediate execution reports, when the result of their assessment is favourable, the corresponding certificates of conformity necessary for the release of subsequent payments will be issued. On the other hand, in cases where the assessment is unfavourable, the processing of the corresponding forfeiture of the right to payment or the proceedings for the reimbursement of the aid, as the case may be, will be initiated. The final implementation reports are also made available to the partners for assessment. This assessment is transmitted to the PIs and may be taken into account in the assessment of applications for actions submitted by the same PI or research group.
- 2. Assessment of grants in follow-up meetings.** This activity consists of the development of face-to-face meetings for the presentation and intermediate monitoring of the state of implementation of the funded activities under assessment. The face-to-face monitoring meetings will be led by the scientific and technological partners and may be attended by the external experts who carried out the evaluation, as well as officials from the monitoring subdivisions (thematic or transversal) for administrative support.
- 3. On-site monitoring visits.** When foreseen in a call for proposals, inspection visits will be carried out as scheduled.
- 4. Resolutions of authorisation/refusal of modifications to the conditions of the aid.** Those requests for modification of the conditions of the aid that are justified and appropriate in each case will be processed for authorisation. To this end, the scientific and technological collaborators will issue the technical reports that support the decisions to authorise or reject the modifications to the initial grant resolution.

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- 5. Citizen information and advice to beneficiaries.** Throughout the process of monitoring the scientific and technical implementation of the grants, it is essential to provide beneficiaries with correct advice on the completion of implementation reports, the submission of incidents, procedural doubts, etc. This advice will be provided primarily through e-mail accounts created for this purpose.

Activity	Workload estimation	Actual workload indicator	%
Management of the scientific and technical monitoring of grants	17.512	No. of aid monitored	50%
Assessment of aid in follow-up meetings	2.876	No. of aid assessed in follow-up meetings	30%
On-site monitoring visits	274	No. of on-site visits	25%
Decisions authorising/refusing changes to the conditions of aid	8.176	Number of decisions modifying the conditions of the aid	100%
Citizen information and advice to beneficiaries	17.285	No. of mails answered over the number of mails received	100%

6. Improving the definition of target indicators.

A working group has been set up in conjunction with the Directorate General for Research, Development and Innovation to improve the models of the scientific-technical monitoring reports and the models of the evaluation reports of these reports, so that the indicators of compliance with objectives are clearly and quantifiably identified.

The proposal includes actions on IT applications to allow the exploitation of information on indicators and results, so as to improve the information systems necessary for the ex-post evaluation of aid programmes.

Activity	Indicator	Objective
Improving the definition of target indicators	Preparation of the document	1

Programme 2. Economic monitoring of the implementation of grants.

A total of eight main actions are considered within this programme:

- 1. Administrative review of the supporting account and economic audit of the expenditure** of all files finalised by 31 December 2017. The phases of verification of the validity of the expenditure charged by the beneficiaries will depend on the type of supporting account, and may include from the verification of the ROAC (Official Register of Auditors) auditor's report to the exhaustive verification of all the supporting documents of expenditure provided by the beneficiary and, where appropriate, the processing of the request for rectification.
- 2. Monitoring visits.** When so established in the general calls for proposals or in the regulations governing the European Structural Investment Funds (ESIF), on-site verification will be carried out, at the headquarters of the beneficiary entities, of the accounts and supporting documents of the expenditure provided, as well as, where appropriate, of the tangible fixed assets financed. This activity is envisaged for calls from 2013 onwards.
- 3. Reimbursements.** This procedure includes issuing the agreement to initiate the reimbursement, opening the hearing, assessing the allegations presented by the beneficiary and notifying the final reimbursement decision. It includes the issuing of payment letters from the SRA, in the case of grants, or the request for payment document form 069 to the Delegated Comptroller's Office in the case of loans and repayable advances, and the corresponding transfer to the beneficiary.
- 4. Preparation of reports in relation to appeals for reconsideration against reimbursement decisions.** Beneficiaries have one month from the day following notification to file an appeal for reconsideration against reimbursement decisions. These appeals must be reported on before being sent to the General Secretariat, together with a copy of the file, for study by the legal department.
- 5. Maintenance of the National Grants Database (BDNS).** All reimbursement files that are initiated must be registered in the BDNS.
- 6. Cancellation of guarantees and seizure of guarantees.** The procedure for the cancellation of guarantees submitted to the Caja General de Depósitos includes the issuance of the cancellation order in accordance with the models of the Caja General de Depósitos and the referral to the same, as well as the notification to the beneficiary that said referral has been made so that the latter may proceed to cancel the guarantee. The procedure for the seizure of guarantees includes notifying the beneficiary of the start of the procedure, as well as the opening of the hearing, the assessment of the allegations and, in the event that these are rejected, issuing the request for seizure and sending it to the Delegated Comptroller for audit and to the General Depositary's Office (Caja General de Depósitos).

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- 7. Certification of European Structural Funds.** The certification of structural funds implies the justification before the Managing Authorities of the European Regional Development Fund and the European Social Fund of the eligible expenses of the co-financed projects, in order for the European Commission to proceed with the payment of the aids with these structural funds.
- 8. Advice to beneficiaries.** Advice will be provided to beneficiaries at all stages of the procedure, especially with regard to the submission of the supporting account. This advice will be provided through e-mail accounts available on the institutional website.

Activity	Workload estimation	Actual workload indicator	%
Administrative review of the supporting account and audit of expenditure	38.088	No. of files reviewed	25%
Follow-up visits	179	No. of visits made	100%
Start-up Agreements	37.797	No. of start-up agreements	18%
Resolutions	40.497	No. of resolutions of	18%
Analysis of appeals for reconsideration	740	No. of reports sent to the General Secretariat	81%
No. of files cancelled/seized	950	No. of guarantees cancelled in full or in part or seized	100%
Certification of EIE funds	7.000	No. of operations certified	100%
Advice to beneficiaries	18.500	No. of emails answered	100%

3.5 LINE 5. MANAGEMENT OF AGREEMENTS, MANAGEMENT COMMISSIONS AND PROVISION OF SERVICES.

The Agency is responsible for carrying out the activities or providing the services entrusted to it by the General State Administration or, by virtue of contracts, agreements and in general legal transactions, by other entities [Article 5 i) of the Statute]. Also, for the exercise of its functions, the Agency may enter into the necessary management agreements and entrustments (Article 24 of the Statute).

The activities envisaged under this line are as follows:

1. **Collaboration agreements, management commissions and other legal instruments** with other public and private non-profit institutions.
2. **Provision of services**, mainly in the field of scientific and technical evaluation of R&D&I activities of other institutions.

Activity	Indicator	Objective
Signing of agreements, entrustment of management and other legal instruments	No. of instruments signed	16
Activities for the provision of scientific and technical evaluation services	No. of activities carried out	30

3.6 LINE 6. COMMUNICATION, DISSEMINATION and REPRESENTATION in R&D FORA.

One of the Agency's basic principles of action is transparency in all its administrative activities, accountability and commitment to present accurate and complete information on all results and procedures used.

In turn, its Statute establishes as one of the Agency's functions the management of actions aimed at promoting collaboration, exchange, circulation, dissemination and exploitation of scientific and technical knowledge among the agents of the System [article 5 h) of the Statute].

In order to respond to these requirements, this main line of action is divided into two distinct sets of activities: firstly, communication and dissemination, and secondly, representation at R&D meetings and forums.

Programme 1. Communication and dissemination

Communication and dissemination activities aim to give visibility and transparency to all of the Agency's actions through participation in events by its management and technical staff, and through media presence, including social media.

In short, the aim is to disseminate the Agency's activities in order to improve the scientific community's view of its work and that of the rest of Spanish society, and to adopt the necessary measures to guarantee maximum transparency in the exercise of its functions.

Presence in the media:

Activity	Indicator	Objective
Media references	No. of references	2
Press releases	No. of press releases	16
Social media: SRA activity	No. of content communicated through social networks	250
Media interviews	No. of interviews	2

State Research Agency events and briefings at events aimed at the scientific community and the management bodies of the beneficiary entities.

Activity	Indicator	Objective
Active participation in events	No. of papers and conferences	80
Conference with the presidents and coordinators of the scientific areas	No. of days	1
Conference with the presidents of the scientific areas	No. of days	2
Seminars Agency	No. of seminars	10

Transparency measures in accordance with section 4.2 of the State Research Agency's Communication and Transparency Plan.

Activity	Indicator	Objective
Website advertising: updating and inclusion of new content	No. of publications	90
Advertising in the National Database of subsidies	No. of publications	16
Translation into English of documents relevant to the Agency's activity.	No. of documents	2
English translation of extracts from the calls	No. of documents	16
Advertising on the Transparency Portal of documents relevant to the Agency's activity	No. of documents	2
Annual Accounts of the State Agency for Research	No. of documents	1

Programme 2. Representation at national and international fora

Given the importance of maintaining and strengthening the national and international dimension of the Agency's activities, representation activities will be developed in national and international meetings and forums related to matters within its scope of action, as well as representation in R&D policy forums when so determined by the Ministry of Science and Innovation. International activities include participation in the governing bodies of ERANETs and specialised working groups within the European Commission. National activities include boards of trustees, commissions, working groups and other specialised forums.

Activity	Indicator	Objective
Participation in international forums	No. of forums in which active participation takes place	55
Participation in national forums	No. of forums in which active participation takes place	50

4 HUMAN RESOURCES.

The staff of the State Investigation Agency as of 1 January 2020 is as follows.

Unit	No. of jobs		
	Filled	Vacancies	Total
Support Unit	4	3	7
General Secretariat	38	8	46
Division of Coordination, Evaluation and Scientific and Technical Follow-up	6	1	7
Coordination and Evaluation Subdivision	16	9	25
Scientific and Technical Thematic Programmes Subdivision	27	7	34
Cross-cutting Scientific and Technical Programmes, Strengthening and Excellence Subdivision	19	10	29
Division of Programming, Economic and Administrative Management	3	0	3
Planning and Administrative Management Subdivision	31	17	48
Economic Management Subdivision	15	2	17
Grant Monitoring and Justification Subdivision	30	34	64
European Funds Grants Management Subdivision	13	5	18
TOTALS	203	95	298

5 BUDGETARY RESOURCES.

The budget of the State Research Agency for 2018, extended for 2020, in application of Article 134.4 of the Spanish Constitution, is as follows:

EXPENDITURE		REVENUE	
Chapter 1 (Staff)	11.624.960	Chapter 3 (Public Fees and Prices)	1.200.000
Chapter 2 (Current Expenditure)	13.862.130	Chapter 4 (Current Transfers)	24.347.090
Chapter 3 (Financial Expenditure)	50.000		
Chapter 4 (Current Transfers)	10.000		
Total current expenditure	25.547.090	Total current revenue	25.547.090
Chapter 6 (Real investments)	120.000		
Chapter 7 (Capital Transfers)	614.437.900	Chapter 7 (Transfers from Capital)	614 ,557,900
Total capital expenditure	614.557.900	Total capital income	614.557.900
Total expenditure	640.104.990	Total income	640.104.990

6 BASIC REGULATION

The basic regulations applicable to the management processes of the State Research Agency are as follows:

- Law 38/2003 of 17 November 2003 on General Subsidies.
- Law 28/2006, of 18 July 2006, on State Agencies for the improvement of public services.
- Law 14/2011, of 1 June, on Science, Technology and Innovation.
- Royal Legislative Decree 3/2011, of 14 November, approving the revised text of the Public Sector Contracts Act.
- Law 39/2015, of 1 October, on the Common Administrative Procedure of Public Administrations.
- Law 40/2015, of 1 October, on the Legal Regime of the Public Sector.
- Royal Decree 1067/2015, of 27 November, creating the State Research Agency and approving its Statute.