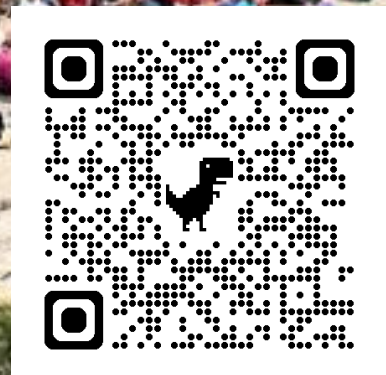


# HOW/WHY VIMAS GOT MSCA FUNDING?

***VIMAS - Visitor monitoring and management in  
protected and recreational areas: new challenges,  
novel solutions for the Anthropocene  
(Nov 2023-Nov 2027)***

Presentation, Norwegian Research Council, 12th June  
2025

Øystein Aas, Erica Maremonti & Hans Chr. Tyldum  
Norwegian University of Life Sciences (NMBU)



# Øystein Aas – background and experience with MSCA

- Interdisciplinary (social sciences and ecology), applied environmental scientist
- Natural resource management and conservation
- Fisheries, wildlife, protected areas, ecotourism/recreation, renewable energy....
- (Close to) 30 years in NINA (Research Institute in Norway)
- 15+ years in University sector (visiting professor, full time professor)
- Participated in MSCA ITN “Impress” (ID 642893) 2013-17 (NMBU lead).
- PI and social science WP lead in “Impress”, good learning!
- Also participated in a couple other MSCA application (no success)
- Started planning VIMAS in 2021

# Purpose of MSCA – DN projects – not like any other research project

Objective of Doctoral Networks ...

**partnerships of organizations** from different sectors across Europe and beyond **to train highly skilled doctoral candidates**, stimulate their creativity, [...] **boost their employability in the long-term.**

What I see as **attractive** in MSCA projects:

**Simple application**, **fits** very well for **Universities**, **international cooperation**



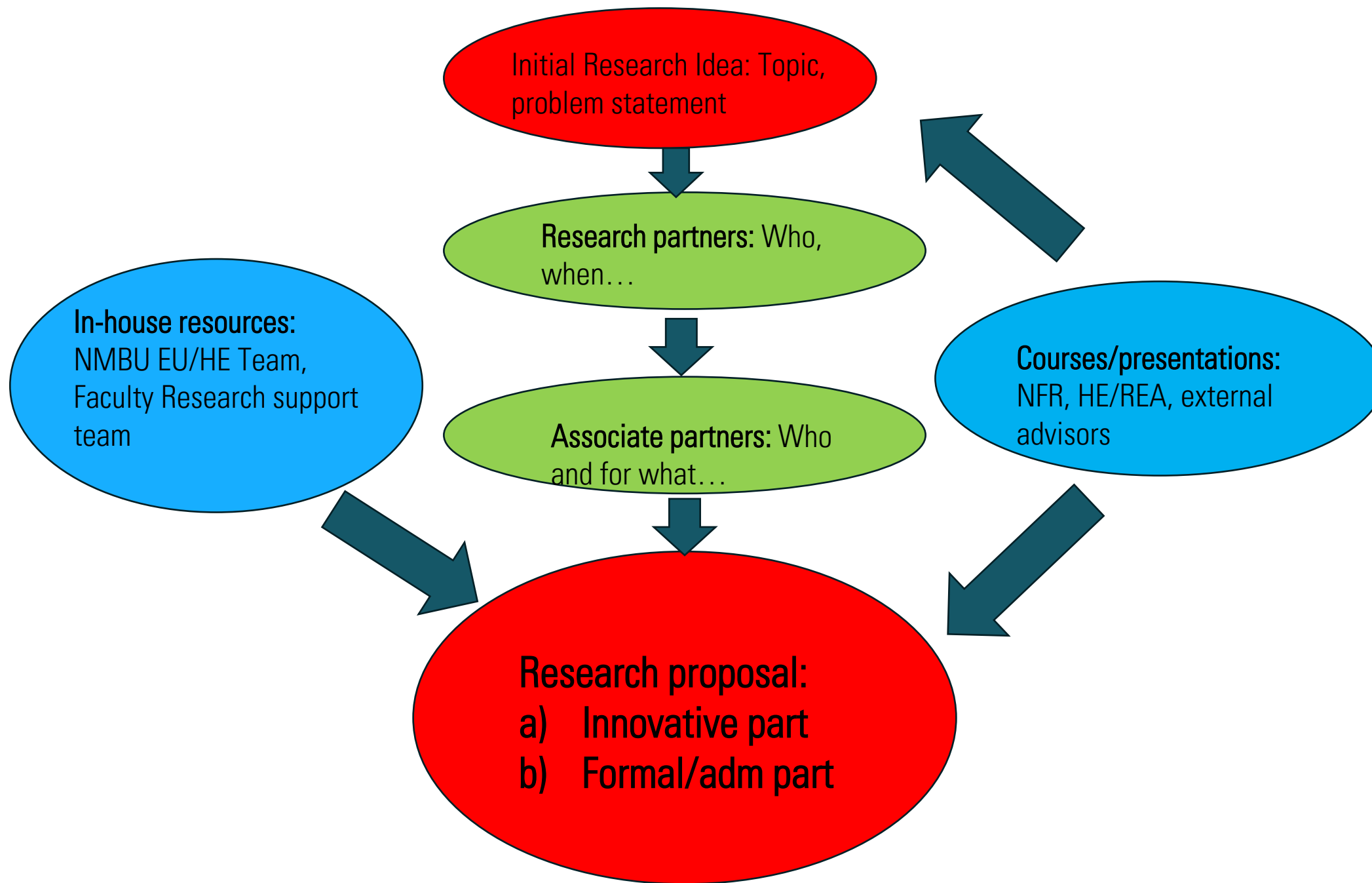




## **VISITOR MONITORING IN NATURE AREAS**

– a manual based on experiences  
from the Nordic and Baltic countries

- Outset/background for VIMAS:
- Existing European/Nordic network on the topic, Nordic – Baltic cooperation over nearly 20 years
- Chaired MMV10, a biannual int. conference series on visitor mgt, in 2021, which also added to the motivation
- MSCA an great opportunity for me to build a bigger group of Phd students as I moved to a full time University position



# Timeline from idea to start of project



August 2021 - MMV10:  
Idea launched

New year 2022:  
Decision to start,  
building core team

**Spring Summer Autumn 2022**  
Regular biweekly meetings  
**Proposal development**

15 Nov 2022  
**Submission**

April 2023  
**Approval**

November 2023  
**Start of project**  
Total score: 96 % of 100 %

## Seven Universities in Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Iceland and Latvia

**Associate partners: A total of 14 institutions from Europe and America in research, management agencies, businesses and NGOs**





# VIMAS OBJECTIVES

**TRAIN AND QUALIFY** THE NEXT GENERATION OF **VISITOR MONITORING AND MANAGEMENT EXPERTS**

MSCA WITH STRONG EMPHASIS ON “**TRANSFERABLE SKILLS**” PREPARING PHD CANDIDATES FOR FUTURE JOBS IN BUSINESS AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION (AS WELL AS IN ACADEMIA)

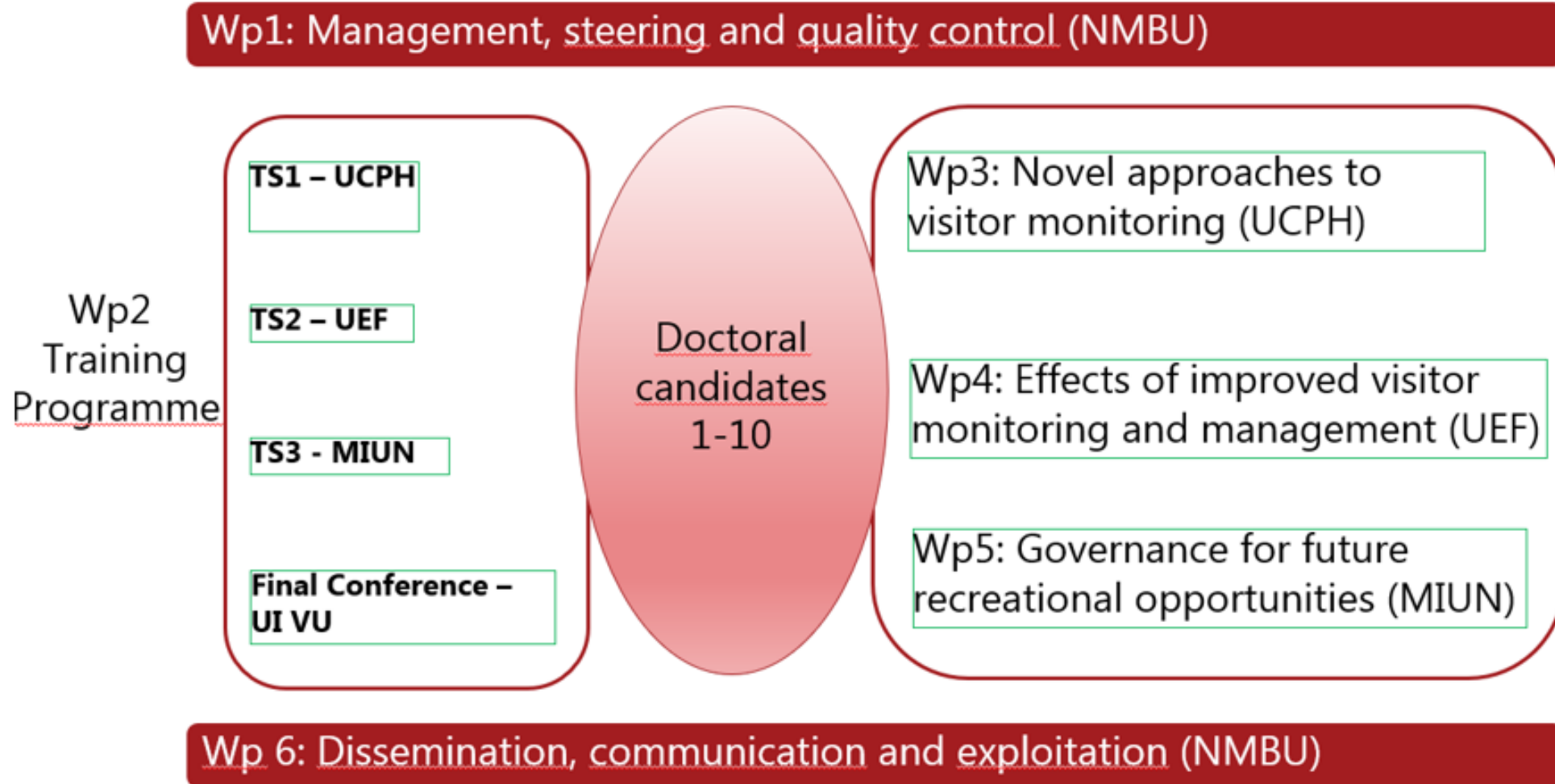
VIMAS HAS DEFINED **RESEARCH, TRAINING AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES**, INCLUDING IMPROVED **COOPERATION** AMONG STAKEHOLDERS FROM ACADEMIA, BUSINESS, PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND NGOS

BESIDES COOPERATION ON TRAINING THE **10 DOCTORAL CANDIDATES (DCs)**, VIMAS AIMS TO STRENGTHEN EXISTING NETWORKS AND COOPERATIONS, AND ESTABLISH NEW





# VIMAS – PROJECT STRUCTURE



## *VIMAS SUCCESS FACTORS (?)*

- **Planning started early** (from thoughts/idea generation in 2021 to intense development work spring-summer-autumn 2022)
- Active use of, and support from **in-house knowledge** and **experience** (NMBU's EU office, Faculty research Support team, including review by external consultant)
- **Former knowledge** of the MSCA project and **former experience** as PI and WP leader in IMPRESS
- Not too ambitious geographical scope
- Effective decisionmaking and few controversies among beneficiaries
- Novelty – **original topic**
- A really good pitch/start of the application text (thanks to HC!)
- Active use of condensed tables and figures to highlight key issues in the proposal

# EXAMPLES

*“Success! and, Joy! are the reflections published immediately on Instagram by a group of people who just ascended a mountain, while the breakneck speed on a forest trail is recorded and broadcasted on Strava, and every single step through a nature reserve is tracked by the FitBit adorning a person’s wrist.”*

Disciplines	WP3: Novel approaches to visitor monitoring	WP4: Effects of improved visitor monitoring and management	WP5: Governance for future recreational opportunities
Environment and Society	✓	✓	✓
Document last modified: 15.11.2022	✓	✓	✓
Geography	✓	✓	✓
Computer sciences and informatics	✓		
Political sciences			✓
Ecology		✓	
Psychology		✓	
Management			✓
Economics		✓	

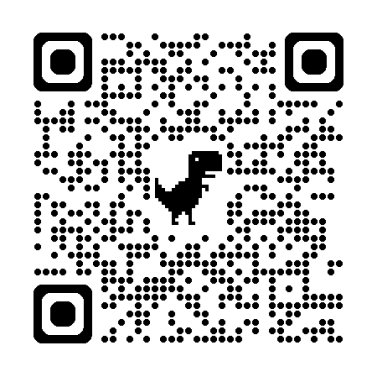
Figure 1.1. Interdisciplinarity of VIMAS’ research activities.



## *OTHER ADVICES AND RECOMMENDATIONS*



- Secure funding for project admin support (we placed 10 % of B1 funding and 60 % of B2 funding in a central adm and support pot)
- Start recruitment early and make sure you cooperate (VIMAS beneficiaries have struggled to “exchange” applicants between them, besides that, recruitment went smooth)
- Involve the DCs actively in project management and provide clear tasks for them to follow up from the start



Visitor monitoring and management in  
protected and recreational areas

# GOOD LUCK WITH YOUR MSCA APPLICATION!

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