



# MARA GABRIELA DIACONU

EU Collaboration | Coordinator IDUN project Gender balance in top research positions |  
PhD Candidate: Sustainable Innovation in Engineering and Education

## CONTACT

+ 47 45 661 129

[diaconumara@gmail.com](mailto:diaconumara@gmail.com)

Trondheim, Norway

[LinkedIn.com/in/mara-diaconu](https://www.linkedin.com/in/mara-diaconu)

## EDUCATION

### **MSc Project Management for International Projects / MASTER**

Communication and Public Relation  
Faculty, SNSPA, Bucharest,  
Romania 2007 -2009

### **Communication and Public Relation Specialist / BACHELOR**

Communication and Public Relation  
Faculty, SNSPA, Bucharest,  
Romania 2003 -2007

## SKILLS

### PROFESSIONAL

- Project writing
- Project implementation
- Analytical thinking
- Communication
- Negotiation
- Multicultural adaptability

## PROFILE

I am an energetic, mature, and hardworking professional constantly looking for new challenges and inspiration in my work. I have been part of the innovation development, coordination and management in large organisations from governments to private sectors and universities. I have coordinated more than 15 projects and various teams, some arriving at commercial solutions in various stages of development and market readiness.

I am highly interested in the field of sustainable innovation, AI readiness of market, governments and public, and how to bring forward cutting-edge research from universities to industry, public sectors, and society. I am passionate about the creation of new knowledge, entrepreneurship, increase of innovation understanding: transfer the research in innovative technologies and bring them closer to commercialization. I have presented ideas, solutions, and articles at international events, taught in two masters and two certification courses in various countries and languages.

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

**PhD Candidate - Sustainable Innovation in Engineering and Education**, Faculty of Engineering /NTNU/ starting 30 August 2022, 3 years

**Innovation and Project Development Coordinator**, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, Department of Neuromedicine and Movement Science August 2017 - present

- Managing the teams for project writing and the project implementation.
- Establishing long-lasting partnerships and agreements with international and national partners.
- Developing business, exploitation, feasibility studies, impact and innovation management strategies, building stakeholders and community networks.

**EU Collaboration | Coordinator [IDUN project](#) Gender balance in top research positions | Empower Women in Innovation** Faculty of Information Technology and Electrical Engineering / NTNU / September 2021 – July 2022

- Lead the project activities in engaging women in ICT and STEM research.
- Coordinate the mentor programme.
- Organise events and build on the national and international networks.
- Support Women innovators.
- Create opportunities for increasing the number of female scientists in top positions at NTNU's Faculty of Computer Science and Electrical Engineering.
- Build initiatives at national and international level to empower women in Computer sciences to follow their career path as professor and innovator.

## SKILLS

- Strategic planning
- Critical thinking
- Leadership
- Pro-active
- Risk Management
- Mediation
- Financial Management

## ORGANISATIONAL

- Project manager
- Team Leader
- Solution-oriented
- Teamwork
- Scrum and Agile Methodologies

## TECHNICAL

- MS Office
- Social Media
- Web design
- Adobe Suite
- Trello, Slack

**Norway Member Committee and WG Lead - [NET4AGE-FRIENDLY](#) International Interdisciplinary Network on Smart Healthy Age-friendly Environments**  
(COST Action 2020-2024)

- **Coordinator WG1: User-centred inclusive design of age-friendly environments and communities**
- Coordinating the activities: to synthesise existing knowledge and critically assess the practices of the inclusive design of innovative solutions of SHAFE.
- Organisation of meetings and working groups,
- Presentation of results in conferences, networking events.
- Building cooperation with other networks.
- Co-Coordinate the national efforts for research and networking in the field

**COMMUNITY MANAGER – [Mobilise-D](#) project  
(H2020 - Innovative Medicines Initiative IMI)**

Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences/NTNU/April 2019 – present (20%)

Main projects/tasks under coordination:

- Managing the Communication and Dissemination activities of Mobilise-D project a 34 partners consortium and more than 250 researchers working.
- Impact and innovation monitorization inside the project to reach the overall goals and expected impact for the patients, MedTech industry and society.
- Coordination of the development of the project identity, project website, and Social media accounts; organising the events and workshops.
- Monthly updates of the tasks status to the Project Executive.
- Development of the Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement (PPIE) Strategy for Mobilise-D project; participation in the PPIE Board.
- Collaboration in writing various articles and project social media messages.
- Participation and developing the annual project reporting to EC.
- Coordination of the activities for the [MobilNOR](#) national financed project by The Research Council of Norway.

**EU Cooperation | SENIOR EU ADVISOR**

Norway Health Tech / Oslo/ September 2020 – September 2021

Strategic development and implementation of Norway Health Tech EU projects, Cluster members advisory for EU funding and innovation. Bring innovations in companies and academia with multicultural and international teams, grow new opportunities, build sustainable partnerships, and bring research to market.

Achievements: 1 won proposal (European Digital Innovation Hub), become member of 2 international networks - ECHAlliance and Digital Innovation Hub label from the European Commission, 7 EU applications submitted, 2 national applications submitted (FORINFRA – Research Infrastructure, Pilot Helse), 3 fully organised and presented webinars in Norway to present the funding opportunities to cluster members, more than 500 participants

My key responsibilities and tasks:

- Actively support for the Norwegian industry and research, health providers and larger organizations with identifying relevant funding instruments, run the awarded projects, project management.
- Organise workshops, events and meetings with the Cluster members - more than 270 members SMEs, universities, hospitals, and municipalities to explore the possibilities for applying for national and international funding.

## LANGUAGES

Mother tongue: Romanian

English – Proficiency

Spanish – Proficiency

Norwegian –Basic

French - Intermediate

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE CONTINUED

- Support the R&D institutions, entrepreneurs and health providers in proposal development for EU and national funding, engaging internal resources and external support.
- Coordinate the H2020 European projects (SMILE and CareMatrix) awarded to Norway Health Tech, organise the team, manage the technical and finance reporting, grant agreements, amendments, meetings, events.
- Coordinate with national, and international funding instruments and innovation agencies for achieving larger synergies and ensuring maximum impact.
- Meetings with Research Council of Norway and Innovation Norway to discuss strategies, programmes and funding in Norway.

### **EU PROJECT DEVELOPER – Health Technologies**

Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences/NTNU/August 2017 – August 2020

Project development activities:

Coordination of teams and development of proposals and project ideas in the field of Health Technology for Active Ageing and Self-Management of Health with international finance (e.g. Horizon 2020, AAL, EEA Grants, Horizon Europe) and national funding (e.g. SFI, SFF) for Prof. Ulrik Wisløff, Prof. Jorunn Helbostad, Prof. Beatrix Vereijken and Prof. Artur Serrano.

- Initiation project ideas and bridge the gap between the academic and business sector, by finding the right partners to develop the project idea and pushing the innovation to market.
- EU positioning for the NTNU's researchers in various platforms, forums, associations and strategic partnerships.
- Managing the teams for project writing and the project implementation.
- Establishing long-lasting partnerships and agreements with international and national partners.
- Writing together with the academic and business partners project concepts, feasibility studies, impact and innovation management strategies, building stakeholders and community networks.
- Organising workshops and coaching sessions with NTNU's researchers to develop their skills in project writing.

Achievements:

- August 2017 – August 2020: 44 EU applications and one SFI submitted, out of which 9 successful - 2 as coordinator awarded.
- Sense-Garden project to innovation product and Association in Norway
- Contracted: 4,5M EUR in grants for NTNU. See the CV annex for details about the projects and my contribution to writing and implementation for each of them.
- Part of the implementation teams:
  - [Mobilise-D](#) (IMI2-H2020) - Community Manager;
  - [LIFEBOTS Exchange](#) (MSCA RISE, NTNU Coordinator) – Consortium Network Coordinator;
  - [MobilNOR](#) (Forsterkningsmidler NFR, Internasjonalisering, start-2020, NTNU sole coordinator); - Coordinator together with Beatrix Vereijken
  - SELF (AAL) – part of NTNU team;
  - PAIR (ERASMUS+ Sport action) – contracting and implementation.

## CERTIFICATIONS

### **Certified Community Manager**

Fundación UNED, Madrid, Spain  
2016 - 2017

### **Certified Project Manager**

National Centre for Life Long Learning (CNFPA) Bucharest, Romania  
2011

### **Graduation Certificate of Young Professional Scheme**

National Institute of Public Administration, Bucharest, Romania  
2009 - 2010

### **Internship work experience – Project Manager**

Scottish Government, Edinburgh, Great Britain  
2010 (six months)

### **Certified Train of Trainers**

National Centre for Life Long Learning (CNFPA) Bucharest, Romania  
2008

### **Erasmus Graduation Certificate**

KATHO – Katholieke Hogeschool Zuid-West-Vlaanderen Associatie K.U. Leuven, Belgium  
February 2006-July 2006

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE CONTINUED

### **ERC PROJECT MANAGER & COMMUNITY MANAGER**

Laboratorio de Innovación en Humanidades Digitales (LINHD), The National Distance Education University (UNED) /Spain / June 2016 – July 2017

Managed the implementation of the ERC Starting Grant [POSTDATA](#). In addition, I have been the Community Manager for the LINHD keeping the communication in the social media and updates on the website and blog.

- Coordination of two teams of six senior researchers and professors, three junior researchers and two interns from two faculties: Philology and Computer Sciences.
- Implementation of the project plan to fulfil the technical, administrative and financial requirements, EC reporting and administration.
- Presenting the project at four International conferences in English and Spanish with a public speech about the project: Krakow, Salamanca, Granada and Lyon.
- Organizing of workshops with the project partners and advisory board.
- Organizing of two Summers Schools in Madrid (2016 and 2017) with more than 50 students and 10 international lecturers.
- Developing new projects with the research team at the national and international level: two national applications, four applications for Horizon 2020 and preparing for a future ERC PoC.
- Coordination of the start of the project **Horizon 2020 INFRADEV– [DESIR](#)**.
- Lector Collaborator for two courses held by the School of Computer Science, UNED in English and Spanish: Technical English and Training and career counselling.
- Research activities: writing two papers and participating in various conferences linked with the project POSTDATA. I have an interest in research in linked open data in cloud and platform building. During my work in the project, I have done research on standardization, interoperability and multilingual challenges for digital humanities.

### **R&D PROJECT DEVELOPMENT CONSULTANT & PROJECT MANAGER**

COMPEXIN S.A / Romania / December 2015 – December 2018 (part-time)

I have been working with two Romanian companies in growing their business and writing projects to develop innovative products for Romanian and international markets.

- Coordination of development and implementation of new projects and opportunities for the companies – four new projects won: [SENIOR-TV](#) (AAL, 2015-2018); [Many-Me](#) (AAL, 2017-2020); [SENSE-GARDEN](#) (AAL, 2017-2020); [Coachmylife](#) (AAL, 2019 – 2022).
- Managing the implementation team and monitoring and control of project throughout the project life- cycle.
- Develop the business plan and manage the IPR issues related to the project results.
- Participation in events and create a network of collaborators.

- Reading
- Travel and explorations
- Dancing
- Biking

**CONSULTANT**

Self-employed / Spain / August 2014 – May 2016

I have worked with various companies in the field of technology development and tourism to develop their business through EU funding or investment from private sources.

- Identification of project opportunities related to Horizon 2020, AAL, Erasmus+ and including participation at events and conferences.
- Developing partnerships with R&D organizations for two major clients, writing and submitting five projects proposal, 2 winning projects.

**EUROPEAN FUNDING ADVISOR / TEAM LEADER**

TEAMNET WPS / Romania / August 2012 – July 2014

I have started working as European funding advisor with the aim of building a team to write and submit projects. After 17 months, I became the Team leader coordinating three EU Advisors, the communication with the technical team and the top management. Research and development fields: ICT, Health, robotics, transport, security and e-learning, FP7, CIP, AAL, Eureka, LifeLong, Horizon 2020.

- Coordination and guidance for the European Programs team based on management direction, coach and support the team members.
- Developing strategic alliances and partnerships with R&D organizations at the national and international levels.
- Development of projects: 10 projects as Coordinator, 20 projects as a partner; 8 projects awarded, with a 4.5 million € budget for the company.
- Monitoring and control of project implementation, throughout the project life-cycle including IPR agreements and exploitation of products.

**EUROPEAN FUNDS CONSULTANT**

UTI Security and Fire / Romania / June 2011 – July 2012

- Development of proposals, feasibility studies and business plans for projects funded from European Programmes.
- Management of two EU funded projects, including reimbursement, procurement, intermediate and final reports, audit visits.

**EUROPEAN PROJECT EXPERT**

Indice Consulting and Management / Romania / September 2010 – May 2011

- Provision of expertise to public and private clients of the company to identify funding opportunities from national and European Programmes.
- Development of project pipeline with over 20 proposals, the total value of submitted proposals exceeded 11 million euros.
- Management of three EU funded projects, including reimbursement, reports, development, and delivery of training materials.

**COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC RELATION OFFICER**

Ministry of Public Finance / Romania / May 2007 – May 2009

- Monitoring the implementation of projects funded by the EU pre-accession programmes in Romania, including the approval of the communication plans and promotion materials and activities.
- Design and delivery of training sessions for final beneficiaries of grants.
- Development and implementation of the internal communication strategy of the organization.

## CONFERENCES AND PRESENTATIONS

### **LECTOR, European Joint Master's In Strategic Border Management**

FRONTEX European Border and Coast Guard Agency / **2018 - present**

Module 5: Innovation and Technology in Border Security - EU priorities and funding for Innovation and R&D and Innovation and creative approach in writing and implementation on EU project

### **LECTOR, Master of Science in Physical Activity and Health**

NTNU, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences / Norway/ 2018 - 2020

Module 2: Writing and communication for Norwegian students - EU Policy, Technology Innovation and How to write a grant application

Yearly – attending more than ten conferences for presenting the research and projects, finding collaborations and partnership opportunities. Below highlighted some of the presentations of articles

Type of presentation	Title	Event/Course	Organisation / Location	Year
Chair two sessions at World Building Congress	Sustainable Facility Management and Maintenance	<a href="#">World Building Congress 2022</a>	Melbourne, Australia	27-30 June, 2022
Guest Lecture presentation	Mission oriented Innovation – Dream bigger!	Experts in Teams, NTNU course	NTNU, IV Faculty	Feb. 2022
Organiser seminar and presentation	Build your career with Grants and Innovation	IDUN Seminars	Online, NTNU, IE Faculty	Jan. 2022
Seminar PhD IE	How a mentor programme could bring gender balance and equality Lessons learned from the IDUN project	IE PhD Seminar   Completing your PhD track	Online, NTNU IE Faculty	Dec. 2021
Invited speaker	“How a mentor programme could bring gender balance and equality in Computer science and Engineering”	IT Kvinner@Nav	NAV, Oslo	Nov. 2021
Invited speaker	Enablers and hindrance factors for video and audio-based AAL solutions	Webinar GoodBrother COST Action	Online	Oct. 2021
Guest speaker tutorial	Attracting, retaining, encouraging, and inspiring women to pursue a career in Computer Science -a Norwegian best practice.	<a href="#">Celebration of Women in Computing womENCourage 2021</a>	Association for Computing Machinery, Prague Conference Online	Sep. 2021
Invited speaker	Innovation and career path	ACM womENCourage pre-event, UIT Tromso	UIT and NTNU IE, Tromso	Sep. 2021
Co-Chair Workshop	<a href="#">From PhD to professor</a>	ACM womENCourage pre-event, UIT Tromso	UIT and NTNU IE, Tromso	Sep. 2021



Article presentation Main author	User centre design in living environments is the way into a healthy environment	<a href="#">The 6<sup>th</sup> Conference of Interdisciplinary Research on Real Estate CIRRE</a>	Online, Netherlands	Sept. 2021
Article presentation Co-author	Toward understanding of Gender and Software as factors impacting sustainability of real estate sector	<a href="#">The 6<sup>th</sup> Conference of Interdisciplinary Research on Real Estate CIRRE</a>	Online, Netherlands	Sept. 2021
Panelist	Connect with leading healthtech startups, investors and thought leaders	KiwiTech HealthTech Venture Fair	Online, KiwiTech	Apr. 2021
Panel organiser and coordinator	Robotic solutions in healthcare	<a href="#">Robotics and Artificial Intelligence Cross-Sectoral Innovation Conference (RAIC 2021)</a>	Online, Norway	Jun. 2021
Organiser of webinar and speaker	Innovation and product development with grants, Norway Health Tech support	<a href="#">Untangling EIC Funding for Start-ups, SMEs, and Spin-outs</a>	Norway Health Tech, Oslo	Mar. 2021
Organiser of webinar and speaker	Norway Health Tech support for innovation and funding	<a href="#">AAL Programme Info Day for Norwegian Stakeholders</a>	Norway Health Tech, Oslo	Jan. 2021
Invited speaker	How NHT can help you understand the Brussel jargon and be successful in projects	<a href="#">DIGI-B-CUBE Cross-sectoral Workshop and Matchmaking</a>	Online, Oslo, Norway	Jan. 2021
Article presentation First author	Health and well-being in the urban environment - Creating inspiring active cities for the future	The 4 <sup>th</sup> Conference of Interdisciplinary Research on Real Estate CIRRE,	Trondheim, Norway	Sep. 2019
Guest speaker interview	Interview about innovation and health technologies <a href="#">video interview</a>	AAL forum	26-28 September, Aarhus, Denmark	Sep. 2019
Abstract presentation	EVI-LINHD: the Virtual Research Environment for the Digital Humanities projects	<a href="#">First International Conference "Digital Territories", Constructing Digital Social Sciences and Humanities</a>	29-20 June, Granada, Spain	Jun. 2017
Article presentation	From syllables, lines and stanzas to linked open data: standardization, interoperability and multilingual challenges for digital humanities	<a href="#">The Fourth International Conference on Technological Ecosystem for Enhancing Multiculturality</a>	2-4 November, Salamanca, Spain	Nov. 2016