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OPEN-ASIA: Boosting engagement of HEIs in Open Science in India and Malaysia

QUALITY ASSURANCE REPORT

Deliverable D2.2

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The present Quality Assurance Report (D2.2) provides a comprehensive assessment of the implementation progress, operational performance, quality of outputs, governance arrangements, stakeholder engagement, dissemination, visibility, risk management, and external quality assurance of the **Erasmus+ CBHE project OPEN-ASIA – Boosting Engagement of HEIs in Open Science in India and Malaysia (Ref. No. 101128493)**, covering the implementation period M1–M32 (January 2024–August 2026). The assessment confirms that the project has achieved substantial strategic progress toward all five Specific Objectives, while implementation progress appropriately varies across Work Packages according to their sequencing and the revised 45-month project timeline. WP1 and WP3 reached **100% completion** with an aggregated quality score of **4.8/5.0 (Excellent)**, while WP2 reached **75% completion** with **4.8/5.0 (Excellent)**. WP4 demonstrated **50% task completion** and a score of **4.46/5.0 (Very Good)**, WP5 approximately **40% completion** with **4.67/5.0 (Very Good)**, and WP7 approximately **60% completion** with **4.42/5.0 (Very Good)**. WP6 remains at the planned preparatory stage, with its principal outputs scheduled for M35–M45 and therefore not yet subject to qualitative assessment. Overall, the completed outputs demonstrate consistently strong relevance, methodological and technical quality, institutional applicability, stakeholder value, and sustainability potential.

Project management, coordination, monitoring, and quality assurance mechanisms provide a solid framework for effective consortium implementation, supported by multi-level quality control, regular Consortium and Online Consortium Meetings, internal evaluation, and digital coordination tools. Capacity-building and stakeholder engagement were also assessed positively, with 11 major project events engaging 664 participants and demonstrating Excellent overall quality and relevance. Communication and visibility performance were assessed as Very Good to Excellent, supported by the OPEN-ASIA website, LinkedIn presence, five institutional webpages, and 46 dissemination and communication activities implemented at international, national, and institutional levels.

The implementation period also required important corrective measures. **Amendment No. 1**, approved on 20 June 2025, addressed regulatory constraints affecting the original coordinator's ability to transfer project funds and resulted in the transfer of coordination responsibilities to the University of Malaya. **Amendment No. 2**, effective from 17 April 2026, extended the project duration by nine months to **30 September 2027**, providing the necessary timeframe for the completion, validation, institutional adoption, and sustainable uptake of interconnected project results. These measures are assessed as appropriate and quality-oriented responses that safeguard implementation continuity rather than indicating strategic underperformance. The independent external evaluation further confirms the positive implementation trajectory, rating Relevance, Coherence, and Sustainability as Excellent, and Effectiveness, Efficiency, and Impact as Very Good.

The principal priority for the remaining implementation period is therefore to move from methodological development and institutional planning toward full operationalisation and institutionalisation of OPEN-ASIA results. Particular attention should be devoted to finalising and operating institutional Open Science platforms, completing and piloting formal and informal curricula, adopting the five institutional Open Science policy packages, establishing and operationalising Science Shops 2.0, strengthening exploitation and result-oriented dissemination, and implementing systematic impact measurement. Continued monitoring of the revised implementation timeline and sustained institutional ownership will be essential to ensure that the strong foundations already established are converted into fully operational, sustainable, and measurable Open Science practices within Partner Country HEIs in India and Malaysia.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Purpose and Scope of the Quality Assurance Report

The present Quality Assurance Report (D2.2) has been elaborated within the framework of the Erasmus+ Capacity Building in Higher Education (CBHE) project **OPEN-ASIA – Boosting Engagement of HEIs in Open Science in India and Malaysia** (Ref. No. 101128493), funded by the European Union under the Erasmus+ Programme. The report has been developed with the purpose of providing a structured internal evaluation of the implementation quality, operational effectiveness, institutional coherence, and overall progress of the OPEN-ASIA project during the reporting period under assessment. As a core quality assurance instrument of the project, the report supports the systematic monitoring of project implementation against the objectives, indicators, deliverables, milestones, timelines, and expected results established within the approved project framework.

The report further aims to assess the adequacy and functionality of the internal governance, coordination, monitoring, and quality assurance mechanisms established by the consortium in order to ensure compliance with Erasmus+ CBHE implementation requirements and institutional quality management principles. In this regard, the evaluation focuses not only on the degree of completion of planned activities and outputs, but also on the quality, relevance, consistency, usability, and sustainability potential of the project results produced during the implementation period.

The scope of the evaluation encompasses all Work Packages of the OPEN-ASIA project, including the assessment of project management structures, internal communication and reporting procedures, quality assurance mechanisms, implementation of tasks, achievement of deliverables and milestones, dissemination and visibility activities, stakeholder engagement processes, and capacity-building interventions implemented by the consortium partners. Particular attention is devoted to evaluating the effectiveness of consortium cooperation, operational coordination practices, implementation compliance with predefined quality standards, and the alignment between planned objectives, implemented activities, and achieved results.

The evaluation additionally integrates evidence collected through the monitoring and assessment mechanisms established within the OPEN-ASIA quality assurance framework, including internal review and peer-review procedures, consortium consultations, participant feedback instruments, dissemination monitoring records, implementation documentation, and other relevant project monitoring evidence. Where applicable, findings and observations derived from independent external evaluation processes are additionally incorporated into the assessment. Through the triangulation of qualitative institutional assessment and quantitative implementation indicators, the report provides a comprehensive and evidence-based overview of the project's implementation performance and quality assurance maturity.

From an institutional perspective, the report functions as a strategic management and continuous improvement instrument intended to support transparent decision-making, strengthen consortium-level accountability, facilitate adaptive project coordination, and contribute to the long-term sustainability and impact orientation of the OPEN-ASIA project. The report therefore constitutes an important analytical reference for the ongoing consolidation of project activities and for strengthening the engagement and institutional capacities of Higher Education Institutions in Open Science in India and Malaysia.

1.2. Methodological Framework and Quality Assurance Principles

The methodological framework of the present Quality Assurance Report is based on the internal monitoring and evaluation mechanisms established within the OPEN-ASIA project and aligned with Erasmus+ CBHE quality assurance requirements. The methodology combines qualitative assessment with quantitative monitoring to evaluate implementation quality, operational effectiveness, and progress toward planned objectives and results.

The methodological framework of the evaluation included the following assessment components:

- **analysis of implementation progress** against the approved project work plan, implementation timeline, objectives, indicators, and expected results;
- **assessment of deliverables and milestones** against predefined quality indicators, technical requirements, and success criteria;
- **review of internal monitoring and reporting documentation** developed within the consortium;
- **evaluation of consortium coordination**, communication, and governance mechanisms;
- **analysis of dissemination, visibility, exploitation**, and stakeholder engagement activities;
- **assessment of participant feedback** collected through questionnaires, evaluation forms, event reports, and other feedback instruments;
- **review of implementation challenges**, **identified risks**, **corrective actions**, and **mitigation measures**;
- where applicable, **review of findings and observations** derived from independent external evaluation processes.

The evaluation process was supported through the use of multiple **quality assurance and monitoring instruments**, including:

- internal quality review and validation procedures;
- consortium-level consultations and coordination mechanisms;
- internal peer-review mechanisms for deliverables and milestones;
- monitoring checklists and reporting templates;
- participant feedback forms and event evaluation reports;
- dissemination and communication monitoring records;
- project implementation documentation and supporting evidence;
- risk monitoring and corrective action mechanisms.

The quality assurance processes within OPEN-ASIA were guided by the principles of transparency, accountability, participatory evaluation, evidence-based monitoring, consistency, and continuous quality improvement. These principles were implemented through structured review and validation procedures, clearly defined responsibilities, standardized monitoring instruments, and multi-level quality control mechanisms. Feedback from consortium partners, target groups, stakeholders, and external experts was integrated into the monitoring process to ensure institutional relevance, methodological consistency, compliance with Erasmus+ CBHE requirements, and the sustainable integration of Open Science practices within Higher Education Institutions in India and Malaysia.

2. QUALITY ASSURANCE GOVERNANCE AND IMPLEMENTATION STRUCTURE

2.1. Internal Quality Assurance and Quality Control Framework

The OPEN-ASIA project applies a structured, multi-level quality assurance and quality control framework designed to ensure the consistent implementation, monitoring, review, and validation of project activities and outputs. The framework supports compliance with Erasmus+ Capacity Building in Higher Education (CBHE) requirements while promoting transparency, accountability, methodological consistency, and continuous improvement throughout the project implementation process.

The internal quality assurance system integrates project governance structures with operational monitoring and review procedures. Responsibilities for implementation, supervision, quality verification, and final approval are distributed across different consortium structures, ensuring that project outputs are assessed at several levels before their formal validation and submission.

The OPEN-ASIA **quality assurance and quality control framework** involves the coordinated participation of the following structures and responsible actors:

- **Project Strategic Steering Committee (SSC);**
- **Quality Assurance Team (QAT);**
- **Project Coordinator;**
- **Work Package (WP) Leaders;**
- **Task Leaders;**
- **Responsible Partners for Deliverables and Milestones;**
- **Quality Assurance Responsible Partners assigned to review specific project outputs;**
- **External Evaluator.**

The internal quality control process follows a four-level review and validation mechanism, combining operational supervision, internal peer review, quality verification, and consortium-level approval. This approach ensures that deliverables and milestones are reviewed for completeness, methodological and technical quality, compliance with project requirements, and alignment with the overall objectives of OPEN-ASIA before their final submission.

Level 1: Task and Work Package Review

The first level of quality control is carried out by the respective Task Leaders and Work Package Leaders. At this stage, attention is focused on coordinating the preparation of project outputs, consolidating contributions received from consortium partners, verifying their technical and operational consistency, and ensuring compliance with the established requirements and implementation deadlines.

Level 2: Quality Assurance Team (QAT) Review

The second level involves an internal quality review performed by the Quality Assurance Team. The QAT assesses the quality and completeness of the respective output, verifies methodological consistency and compliance with established quality standards, and identifies potential shortcomings or areas requiring improvement. Where necessary, comments and recommendations are communicated to the responsible partner for revision before the document proceeds to the subsequent validation stage.

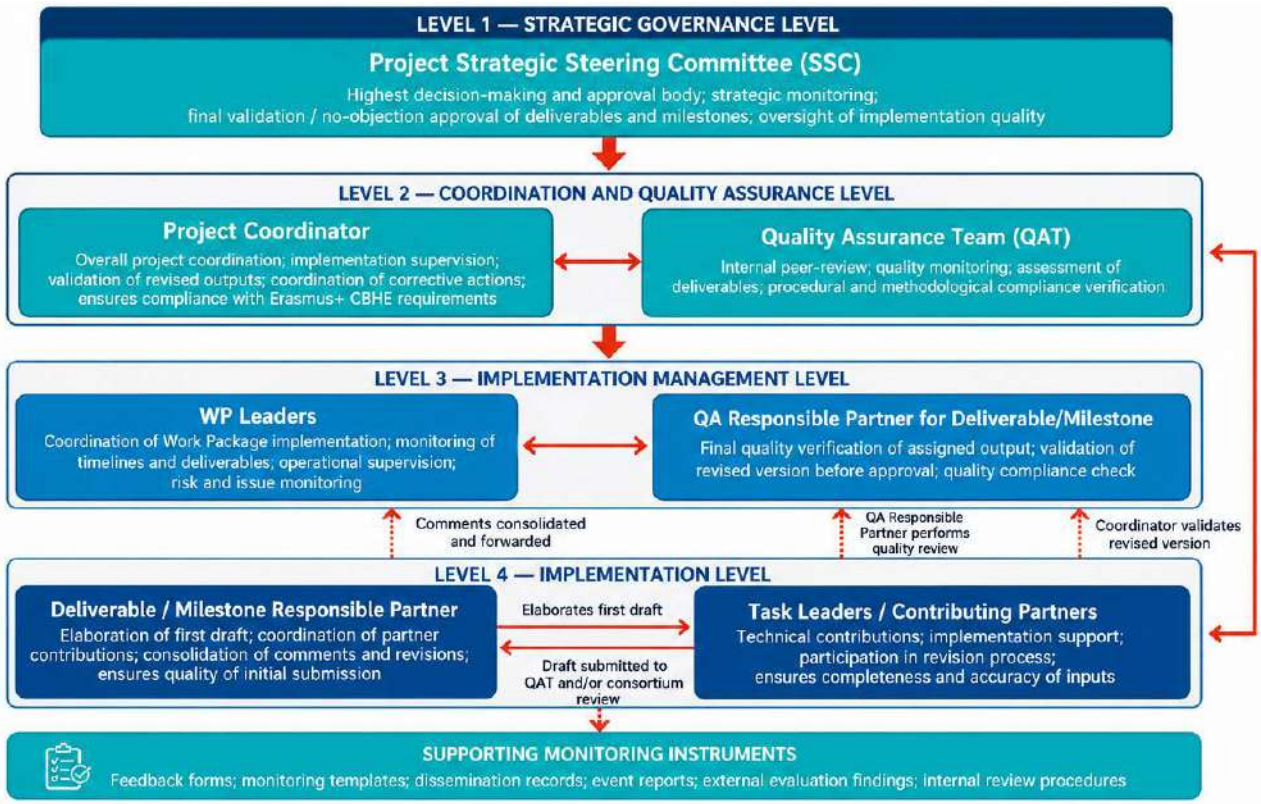
Level 3: Project Coordinator Validation

Following the internal quality review, the revised output is submitted to the Project Coordinator for validation. This stage focuses on verifying overall implementation compliance, consistency with the project objectives and consortium-level requirements, and readiness of the output for final approval. Where inconsistencies or implementation issues are identified, the Coordinator facilitates the necessary corrective actions in cooperation with the responsible partners.

Level 4: Strategic Steering Committee (SSC) Approval

The final level of quality control is ensured by the Project Strategic Steering Committee, acting as the principal consortium-level decision-making and validation body. The SSC provides final approval of major project outputs, monitors their alignment with project objectives and strategic priorities, and oversees the overall quality and relevance of project implementation.

Figure 2.1. OPEN-ASIA Internal Quality Assurance and Quality Control Framework



Source: Elaborated by the authors based on the OPEN-ASIA Monitoring and Evaluation Manual

The quality assurance framework is complemented by continuous monitoring mechanisms, including regular consortium consultations, internal reporting, implementation monitoring records, stakeholder and participant feedback, and periodic review of progress against the approved project work plan and expected results. These mechanisms facilitate the timely identification of implementation challenges, support corrective actions where required, and contribute to continuous improvement across all Work Packages.

In practical terms, each OPEN-ASIA deliverable and milestone is assigned to a responsible lead partner coordinating its preparation and consolidation. Draft outputs are circulated for internal review and consultation, after which comments and recommendations are incorporated by the responsible partner. The revised version undergoes the relevant quality verification and Coordinator

validation procedures before being submitted for final consortium-level approval. This sequential approach ensures transparency, shared responsibility, traceability of the review process, and consistent application of quality standards across project outputs.

Overall, the established governance and quality control framework provides OPEN-ASIA with a systematic mechanism for maintaining implementation quality, strengthening consortium accountability, and ensuring that project activities and results remain aligned with the project objectives and Erasmus+ CBHE requirements.

2.2. Monitoring and Reporting Procedures

The OPEN-ASIA project applies a structured monitoring and reporting system to ensure continuous oversight of implementation progress, timely identification of deviations or challenges, and compliance with the approved project work plan, implementation schedule, and Erasmus+ CBHE requirements. The system supports evidence-based project management, accountability, transparency, and continuous quality improvement throughout the project lifecycle.

Monitoring is implemented as a continuous process combining progress tracking, internal reporting, review of deliverables and milestones, consortium coordination, stakeholder feedback, and verification of supporting implementation evidence. Regular communication between the Project Coordinator, Work Package and Task Leaders, partners responsible for project outputs, and quality assurance structures enables the consortium to assess progress and address implementation issues in a timely and coordinated manner.

The main monitoring and reporting mechanisms applied within OPEN-ASIA include:

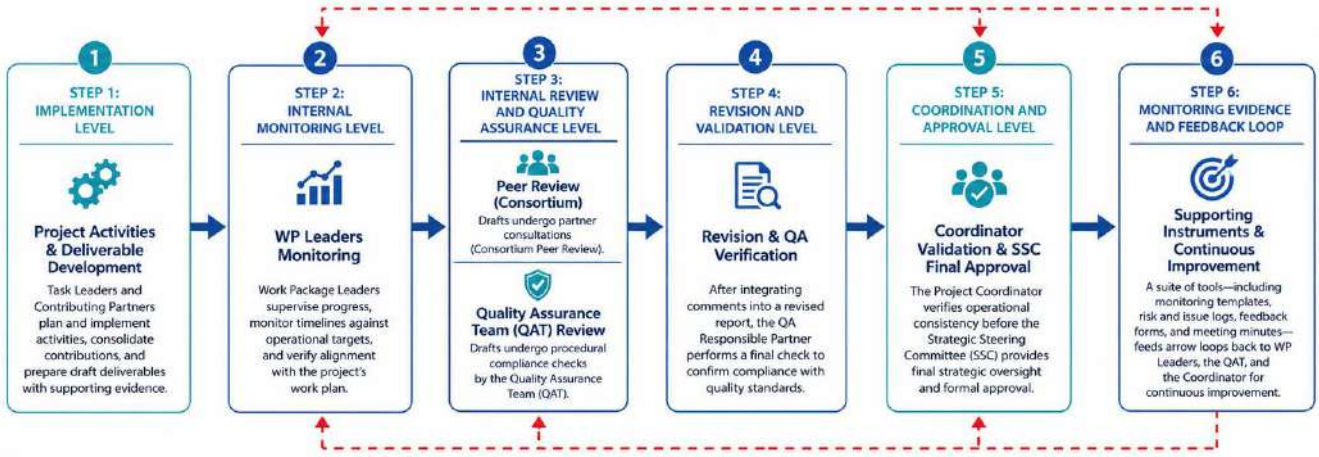
- periodic review of implementation progress against the approved work plan, timeline, objectives, indicators, and expected results;
- continuous monitoring of tasks, deliverables, and milestones by WP Leaders and responsible partners;
- regular consortium meetings and operational coordination consultations;
- internal review and quality verification of deliverables and milestones;
- collection and analysis of participant and stakeholder feedback;
- monitoring of dissemination, communication, visibility, and stakeholder engagement activities;
- collection and verification of implementation evidence and supporting documentation;
- monitoring of risks, implementation challenges, and corrective actions;
- integration, where applicable, of findings and recommendations resulting from external evaluation.

The reporting process follows a multi-level workflow designed to ensure the completeness, consistency, and quality of project documentation. Responsible partners coordinate the preparation of deliverables and milestones in cooperation with contributing partners and the respective Work Package Leaders. Draft outputs are subsequently circulated for internal consultation and peer review, allowing comments and recommendations to be consolidated and incorporated before formal quality verification.

In operational terms, the reporting workflow comprises the following stages:

1. **Preparation of the initial draft** by the responsible partner, based on contributions and implementation evidence provided by relevant consortium partners;
2. **Internal review and consultation** involving WP Leaders, contributing partners, and/or the wider consortium, as appropriate;
3. **Quality assurance review** by the Quality Assurance Team (QAT) and/or the partner assigned responsibility for quality verification of the respective output;
4. **Revision and finalisation** by the responsible partner based on comments and recommendations received;
5. **Validation by the Project Coordinator**, confirming consistency with project requirements and readiness for approval;
6. **Final consortium-level approval**, where applicable, through the Project Strategic Steering Committee (SSC).

Figure 2.2. OPEN-ASIA Monitoring and Reporting Workflow



Source: Elaborated by the authors based on the OPEN-ASIA quality assurance framework and consortium implementation procedures.

To ensure consistent monitoring and reporting practices across the consortium, OPEN-ASIA applies standardized documentation and monitoring instruments throughout project implementation. These include:

- deliverable and milestone templates;
- monitoring and reporting tools and checklists;
- attendance sheets and meeting minutes;
- participant feedback questionnaires;
- event evaluation reports;
- dissemination and communication monitoring records;
- risk monitoring and corrective action records;
- other supporting implementation evidence and documentation.

Overall, the monitoring and reporting procedures ensure systematic follow-up of project implementation, effective communication between consortium structures, and traceability of decisions, revisions, and quality verification processes. They provide the evidence base required to assess implementation performance and support timely corrective action and continuous improvement throughout the OPEN-ASIA project.

3. OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION, OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE, AND QUALITY OF OUTPUTS

3.1. Assessment of Implementation Progress, Operational Performance, and Quality of Outputs

3.1.1. WP1 - PROJECT MANAGEMENT PREPARATION

Work Package 1 (WP1) focused on establishing the managerial, operational, and communication framework required for the effective implementation and visibility of the OPEN-ASIA project. During the reporting period under assessment, the activities foreseen within WP1 were successfully implemented, providing the consortium with the necessary management structures, operational planning instruments, project identity, communication tools, and visibility mechanisms. Particular attention was devoted to the elaboration of the Project Management Handbook and Brand Book, establishment of project governance and management arrangements, development of the project website and institutional webpages, and creation of dedicated social media channels. Overall, WP1 established a solid operational and communication foundation supporting coordinated project implementation and consistent visibility across the consortium.

Table 3.1. Overview of WP1 Tasks Implementation Progress and Operational Performance

Task Ref.	Task Title	Implementation Status	Operational Assessment
T1.1	Elaboration of Project Handbook	Achieved	The Project Management Handbook was successfully elaborated, providing the consortium with the management, governance, planning, risk management, and operational arrangements required for coordinated project implementation.
T1.2	Elaboration of Project Brand Book	Achieved	➢ The project visual identity and communication framework was successfully established. ➢ The Brand Book and promotional package were developed; ➢ OPEN-ASIA project website created; ➢ institutional project webpages established by five Partner Country HEIs; ➢ dedicated project social media channel created and maintained.

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on the OPEN-ASIA project implementation records and internal monitoring documentation.

Table 3.2. Overview of WP1 Deliverables and Milestones Achievement Status

Ref. No.	Deliverable / Milestone	Status	Technical Specification / Note
MS1	Management Documents	Achieved	1 × project management structure; 1 × project bodies structure; 1 × project timeline; 1 × operational plan; 1 × risk management plan; 1 × advisory plan
MS2	Promotional Package	Achieved	1 × project identity/logo; 1 × promotional package including T-shirts, bags, pens, folders, notebooks, banners and roll-ups, posters, leaflets and other promotional materials
D1.1	Project Management Handbook	Achieved	1 × document / English version / digital format / minimum 30 pages
D1.2	Project Brand Book	Achieved	1 × document / English version / digital format / minimum 30 pages

DI.3	Project Webpage	Achieved	1 × OPEN-ASIA project webpage, complemented by institutional project webpages and dedicated social media communication channels

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on the OPEN-ASIA project implementation records and approved project documentation.

➢ MS1. Management Documents

MS1 focused on establishing the managerial, governance, operational planning, and risk management framework required for the effective implementation of the OPEN-ASIA project. The milestone was successfully achieved through the elaboration of the project management structure, project governance bodies, implementation timeline, Operational Plan, Risk Management Plan, and Advisory Plan. Collectively, these documents provide a coherent framework defining institutional responsibilities, decision-making and coordination mechanisms, implementation schedules, operational procedures, and approaches for identifying and managing project risks. The quality assessment confirms a high level of methodological consistency, operational applicability, and alignment with the objectives and implementation requirements of OPEN-ASIA, providing the consortium with a solid management foundation for coordinated implementation across all Work Packages.

Table 3.3. Assessment Matrix – MS1 Management Documents

Assessment Criterion	Evaluation
Relevance and Alignment with Project Objectives	Excellent
Methodological and Technical Quality	Excellent
Operational Usability and Institutional Applicability	Excellent
Governance, Planning and Risk Management Framework	Excellent
Consortium Coordination and Management Value	Excellent
Sustainability and Implementation Support Potential	Very Good

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on internal quality assessment procedures, project management documentation, and implementation monitoring records.

➢ MS2. Promotional Package

MS2 focused on establishing a coherent project identity and promotional framework supporting the communication, dissemination, and visibility of OPEN-ASIA at consortium, institutional, national, and international levels. The milestone was successfully achieved through the development of the OPEN-ASIA visual identity and a comprehensive set of promotional materials, including T-shirts, bags, pens, folders, notebooks, banners and roll-ups, posters, leaflets, and other communication materials. The promotional package demonstrates strong visual consistency and practical applicability, supporting recognition of the OPEN-ASIA identity across project events, institutional activities, stakeholder engagement initiatives, and dissemination actions. The quality assessment confirms that the milestone provides a professional and coherent communication basis for maintaining project visibility and supporting consistent application of the OPEN-ASIA identity throughout the project lifecycle.

Table 3.4. Assessment Matrix – MS2 Promotional Package

Assessment Criterion	Evaluation
Relevance and Alignment with Project Objectives	Excellent
Visual and Technical Quality	Excellent
Consistency of Project Identity and Branding	Excellent
Operational Usability and Dissemination Applicability	Excellent
Compliance with Project Visibility Requirements	Excellent
Stakeholder Communication and Visibility Value	Excellent
Sustainability and Continued Use Potential	Very Good

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on internal quality assessment procedures, promotional materials review, and project dissemination records.

WP1 demonstrated an implementation completion rate of 100%, with all planned milestones and deliverables successfully achieved, while the aggregated qualitative assessment score of the evaluated outputs reached 4.8/5.0, corresponding to an overall Excellent performance level. The assessment confirms a high level of methodological and technical quality, operational applicability, effective management and coordination arrangements, and consistent project branding and visibility. Overall, WP1 successfully established the managerial, operational, and communication foundation required for the effective implementation and visibility of the OPEN-ASIA project.

3.1.2. WP2 - PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND QUALITY CONTROL

Work Package 2 (WP2) focuses on ensuring effective project coordination, continuous implementation monitoring, quality assurance, and reporting throughout the OPEN-ASIA project lifecycle. During the reporting period under assessment, the management and quality control mechanisms established within WP2 were systematically implemented through regular face-to-face and online consortium meetings, continuous communication between project partners, use of shared digital management tools, and application of internal monitoring and quality assurance procedures. These mechanisms supported coordinated implementation across all Work Packages, timely exchange of information, monitoring of project progress, and continuous supervision of project outputs and implementation requirements.

Table 3.5. Overview of WP2 Tasks Implementation Progress and Operational Performance

Task Ref.	Task Title	Implementation Status	Operational Assessment
T2.1	Communication for coordination and implementation purpose	Ongoing	Continuous project coordination and communication mechanisms have been maintained throughout the reporting period. Four face-to-face Consortium Meetings were successfully organised: ➢ **CM1**, hosted by P4-NMIMS in Mumbai, India (19–20 March 2024); ➢ **CM2**, hosted by P1-UM in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia (21–22 October 2024); ➢ **CM3**, hosted by P2-TIET in Thapar, India (24–25 February 2025); ➢ **CM4**, hosted by P5-UMS in Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia (22–23 September 2025). Four Online Consortium Meetings were additionally conducted: ➢ **OCM1** (January 2024), ➢ **OCM2** (16 May 2024),

			➢ **OCM3** (5 September 2024), ➢ **OCM4** (11 March 2026). Continuous internal coordination and document exchange are additionally supported through the Trello project management platform and other digital communication channels used by consortium partners.
T2.2	Financial Management and Reporting	**Ongoing**	Financial monitoring and reporting were implemented through the established interim reporting cycle. All nine partner institutions finalised: ➢ **Interim Financial Report No. 1**, due on 30 September 2024 (M9), ➢ **Interim Financial Report No. 2**, due on 30 June 2025 (M18). Both reporting exercises were coordinated by **P4-NMIMS and P8-EPDRI**, with partner submissions reviewed for completeness and accuracy.
T2.3	Elaboration of Monitoring and Evaluation Manual	**Achieved**	The Monitoring and Evaluation Manual was successfully elaborated, providing the methodological and operational framework for project monitoring, quality assurance, evaluation, and continuous improvement.
T2.4	Regular Internal Evaluation	**Ongoing**	The **Consortium Quality Team (CQT)** was formally established to support continuous internal quality assurance. Three Quality Assurance Meetings were organised: ➢ **QAM1** – April 2024, during the Study Visit to Tampere University, Finland; ➢ **QAM2** – November 2024, during the Study Visit to the University of Celje; ➢ **QAM3** – February 2025, during CM3 in Thapar, India. **1st Internal Evaluation Report (IER-1)** was elaborated by P8-EPDRI, covering the implementation period M1–M17 (01/01/2024–31/05/2025) and supporting preparation of the project Progress Report.
T2.5	External Evaluation	**Ongoing**	An independent external evaluator was selected and subcontracted in accordance with the project requirements. The **Mid-term External Evaluation Report** was subsequently elaborated and presented, providing an independent assessment of project implementation progress, quality, effectiveness, and performance. The external evaluation process will continue with the Final External Evaluation Report during the subsequent implementation phase.

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on OPEN-ASIA internal monitoring records, consortium meeting documentation, and project implementation records.

Table 3.6. Overview of WP2 Deliverables and Milestones Achievement Status

Ref. No.	Deliverable / Milestone	Status	Technical Specification / Note
MS3	Operational Plan and QA Measures	Achieved	1 × document / English version / digital format
MS4	Final External Evaluation Report	Not Due	1 × document / English version / digital format; scheduled for the subsequent/final implementation phase
D2.1	Monitoring & Evaluation Manual	Achieved	1 × document / English version / digital format
D2.2	Quality Assurance Report	In Progress	1 × document / English version / digital format / minimum 20 pages; currently under elaboration in accordance with the project reporting framework
D2.3	Progress Report	Achieved	1 × progress report comprising technical and financial components / English language / submitted through the e-reporting platform

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on OPEN-ASIA project implementation records and internal monitoring documentation.

➢ MS3 Operational Plan and QA Measures

MS3 focused on establishing a structured operational planning and quality assurance framework to support the coordinated implementation, monitoring, and supervision of OPEN-ASIA activities. The Operational Plan provides a comprehensive implementation framework covering project activities across the Work Packages, with clearly defined tasks, expected outputs and KPIs, implementation deadlines, responsible partners, and designated quality assurance partners. The document effectively translates the project work plan into concrete operational actions and integrates monitoring and quality assurance responsibilities into the implementation process. Particular attention is given to project coordination, financial reporting, internal evaluation, Quality Assurance Meetings, and external evaluation mechanisms, supporting systematic monitoring, institutional accountability, and timely implementation of planned activities. Overall, MS3 demonstrates **excellent quality and strong operational applicability**, providing the consortium with a clear and practical framework for managing and monitoring project implementation throughout the remaining project period.

Table 3.5. Assessment Matrix – MS3 Operational Plan and QA Measures

ASSESSMENT CRITERION	EVALUATION
Relevance and Alignment	Excellent
Methodological and Technical Quality	Excellent
Operational Usability and Institutional Applicability	Excellent
Compliance with Internal QA and Visibility Requirements	Excellent
Stakeholder and Consortium Value	Excellent
Sustainability and Impact Potential	Very Good

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on internal monitoring records and implementation assessment procedures.

➢ D2.1 Monitoring & Evaluation Manual

D2.1 focused on establishing the methodological and operational framework for systematic monitoring, evaluation, and quality assurance throughout the OPEN-ASIA project lifecycle. The 48-page Monitoring & Evaluation Manual, finalised on 30 April 2024 following internal quality control, defines quality expectations, responsibilities, and procedures for internal and external monitoring,

stakeholder feedback, risk management, and technical and financial reporting. Particular value is provided by the four-level quality control mechanism and the practical monitoring instruments, templates, indicators, and success criteria applicable across all seven Work Packages. Overall, D2.1 demonstrates excellent methodological quality and operational applicability, providing a comprehensive framework for consistent quality control, evidence-based monitoring, and continuous improvement of project implementation.

Table 3.6. Assessment Matrix – D2.1 Monitoring & Evaluation Manual

ASSESSMENT CRITERION	EVALUATION
Relevance and Alignment	Excellent
Methodological and Technical Quality	Excellent
Operational Usability and Institutional Applicability	Excellent
Compliance with Internal QA and Visibility Requirements	Excellent
Stakeholder and Consortium Value	Excellent
Sustainability and Impact Potential	Very Good

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on internal quality assessment and document review procedures.

➢ D2.2 Quality assurance report

D2.2 constitutes the present internal Quality Assurance Report elaborated under WP2 consolidates the results of project monitoring and evaluation, implementation progress assessment, quality review procedures, and analysis of activities, deliverables, milestones, and overall operational performance during the reporting period under assessment. D2.2 is being elaborated in accordance with the revised submission deadline established in the SIGMA platform, following the formal Amendment extending the overall project implementation period and consequently adjusting the deliverable submission schedule.

➢ D2.3 Progress Report

D2.3 constitutes the OPEN-ASIA Progress Report covering the implementation period from 1 January 2024 to 30 September 2025. The deliverable was submitted within the established deadline and provides a comprehensive account of project implementation across all Work Packages, including the status of individual tasks, achievements, deliverables and milestones, critical risks, implementation deviations, and adjustments introduced during the reporting period. The report demonstrates a systematic evidence-based approach, clearly documenting responsibilities, implementation status, timelines, and means of verification, while also transparently addressing adjustments resulting from the Amendment process and confirming that these changes do not compromise achievement of the project objectives. Overall, D2.3 demonstrates excellent technical quality, completeness, and operational relevance, providing a clear and traceable overview of OPEN-ASIA implementation progress and a solid basis for subsequent monitoring, quality assurance, and final reporting.

Table 3.7. Assessment Matrix – D2.3 Progress Report

ASSESSMENT CRITERION	EVALUATION
Relevance and Alignment	Excellent
Methodological and Technical Quality	Excellent
Operational Usability and Institutional Applicability	Excellent
Compliance with Internal QA and Visibility Requirements	Excellent
Stakeholder and Consortium Value	Excellent
Sustainability and Impact Potential	Very Good

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on internal quality assessment and document review procedures.

WP2 demonstrated an implementation completion rate of 75% for outputs due or under implementation within the evaluated reporting period, while the aggregated qualitative assessment score of the evaluated outputs reached 4.8/5.0, corresponding to an overall Excellent performance level. The assessment confirms strong performance in project coordination, monitoring and reporting, methodological and technical quality, operational applicability, and compliance with the established quality assurance framework. The remaining outputs are either being implemented in accordance with the revised project schedule or are not yet due, with no identified quality-related issues affecting the overall performance of the Work Package.

3.1.3. WP3 - BOOSTING INCLUSIVE, RESPONSIBLE AND COLLABORATIVE OPEN SCIENCE ECOSYSTEM

Work Package 3 (WP3) focuses on strengthening an inclusive, responsible, and collaborative Open Science ecosystem in India and Malaysia through systematic mapping of existing Open Science capacities, practices, skills gaps, and institutional needs, complemented by awareness-raising, stakeholder engagement, and consensus-building activities. During the reporting period under assessment, substantial progress was achieved in both components of the Work Package. The mapping activities generated an evidence base for understanding the existing Open Science landscape and institutional development needs, while a series of Open Science Forums created structured opportunities for dialogue among HEIs, public authorities, research organisations, and other relevant stakeholders. Overall, WP3 has established a strong analytical and participatory foundation for the subsequent institutional and national-level Open Science interventions of the project.

Table 3.8. Overview of WP3 Tasks Implementation Progress and Operational Performance

Task Ref.	Task Title	Implementation Status	Operational Assessment
T3.1	Mapping Open Science	In Progress	The task focuses on assessing the Open Science landscape within Indian and Malaysian HEIs by mapping institutional capacities, identifying Open Science skills gaps, documenting good practices, and examining Citizen Science approaches. Therefore was achieved: ➢ A Debriefing Workshop was organised on **23 October 2024** in Kuala Lumpur to agree on the scope, methodology, and sequencing of the institutional assessment process. ➢ The **Self-Evaluation Open Science Tool (MS5)** was developed,

			➢ **Benchmark Report on Best Practices of OS Implementation in HE (MS6)** elaborated, ➢ **Survey Report on OS Skills Gaps in PCs (MS7)** elaborated, ➢ **Survey on Citizen Science Practices (MS8)** elaborated, ➢ Needs Analysis (D3.3) incorporating MS7 and MS8 elaborated.
T3.2	Running Awareness-Raising & Building Consensus Activities	Achieved	The task successfully established a structured dialogue and consensus-building process around Open Science principles, priorities, and implementation pathways in India and Malaysia. Four **Open Science Forums (OSFs)** were organised as two-day hybrid events: ➢ **OSF1** – P4-NMIMS, Mumbai, India (21–22 March 2024); ➢ **OSF2** – P1-UM, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia (23–24 October 2024); ➢ **OSF3** – P2-TIET, Thapar, India (26–27 February 2025); ➢ **OSF4** – P5-UMS, Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia (22–23 September 2025). Each Forum engaged more than 100 participants representing relevant stakeholder categories. The consultation process culminated in **MS9 – Recommendations to Mainstream Open Science at National and University Level**, coordinated by P8-EPDRI with contributions from the consortium and submitted within the established deadline.

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on OPEN-ASIA internal monitoring records and WP3 implementation documentation.

Table 3.9. Overview of WP3 Deliverables and Milestones Achievement Status

Ref. No.	Deliverable / Milestone	Status	Technical Specification / Note
MS5	Self-Evaluation Open Science Tool	Achieved	1 × self-evaluation tool designed / digital format
MS6	Benchmark Report on Best Practices of OS Implementation in HE	Achieved	1 × report / English language / digital format / minimum 40 pages
MS7	Survey Report on OS Skills Gaps in PCs	Achieved	1 × report / English language / digital format / minimum 40 pages
MS8	Survey on Citizen Science Practices	Achieved	1 × report / English language / digital format / minimum 40 pages
MS9	Recommendations to Mainstream Open Science at National and University Level	Achieved	4 × Recommendations elaborated / English language / minimum 10 pages
D3.1	Open Science Country Profile – India	Not Due	1 × document / English language / digital format / minimum 50 pages
D3.2	Open Science Country Profile – Malaysia	Not Due	1 × document / English language / digital format / minimum 50 pages
D3.3	Needs Analysis	Achieved	1 × document / English language / digital format / minimum 10 pages

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on OPEN-ASIA project implementation records and internal monitoring documentation.

➢ MS5 Self-Evaluation Open Science Tool

MS5 focused on developing a comprehensive institutional self-evaluation instrument to assess the current status and level of implementation of Open Science across Partner Country HEIs in India and Malaysia. The tool demonstrates strong methodological coverage and is structured around three core dimensions: Open Science Policies and Incentives; Open Science Infrastructure and Practices; and Open Engagement, Awareness and Knowledge Needs. It combines institutional and national-level assessment and addresses key areas including OS policies and incentives, alignment with international frameworks, research data management and FAIR principles, repositories and infrastructure, institutional support, societal engagement, training needs, recognition mechanisms, and indigenous/local knowledge. The instrument also identifies the relevant institutional respondent categories and incorporates appropriate data protection and anonymity provisions. Overall, MS5 demonstrates excellent methodological quality, relevance, and operational applicability, providing a robust evidence-collection instrument for identifying institutional strengths, gaps, and development needs and informing subsequent OPEN-ASIA country profiling, capacity-building, and policy development activities.

Table 3.10. Assessment Matrix – MS5 Self-Evaluation Open Science Tool

ASSESSMENT CRITERION	EVALUATION
Relevance and Alignment	Excellent
Methodological and Technical Quality	Excellent
Operational Usability and Institutional Applicability	Excellent
Compliance with Internal QA and Visibility Requirements	Excellent
Stakeholder and Consortium Value	Excellent
Sustainability and Impact Potential	Very Good

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on internal quality assessment and document review procedures.

➢ MS6 Benchmark Report on Best Practices of OS Implementation in HE

MS6 provides a comprehensive benchmarking analysis of Open Science implementation practices relevant to OPEN-ASIA Partner Country HEIs. Using a comparative case-study approach and a common analytical framework, the report examines key dimensions of Open Science implementation and identifies common success factors, challenges, innovative practices, and transferable approaches. The findings are translated into practical recommendations addressing OS governance, infrastructure, OS-Hubs, capacity building, incentives, collaboration, and long-term sustainability. Despite minor structural and editorial inconsistencies, the report demonstrates high methodological and strategic value, providing a strong evidence base for subsequent institutional Open Science development activities within OPEN-ASIA.

Table 3.11. Assessment Matrix – MS6 Benchmark Report on Best Practices of Open Science Implementation in Higher Education

ASSESSMENT CRITERION	EVALUATION
Relevance and Alignment	Excellent
Methodological and Technical Quality	Very Good
Operational Usability and Institutional Applicability	Excellent
Compliance with Internal QA and Visibility Requirements	Very Good
Stakeholder and Consortium Value	Excellent
Sustainability and Impact Potential	Excellent

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on internal quality assessment and document review procedures.

➢ MS7 Survey Report on OS Skills Gaps in PCs

MS7 provides an evidence-based assessment of Open Science skills, institutional readiness, training needs, and implementation barriers across five stakeholder groups in Malaysia and India, based on 247 responses. The report combines quantitative and qualitative analysis and identifies key gaps related to training, infrastructure, incentives, monitoring, policy frameworks, and Citizen Science. These findings are translated into practical recommendations for institutional governance, capacity building, infrastructure development, recognition, and sustainability. While limitations related to uneven response rates and self-selection somewhat affect representativeness, MS7 demonstrates very strong methodological and operational value and provides an important baseline for subsequent OPEN-ASIA capacity-building, curriculum, and policy development activities.

Table 312. Assessment Matrix – MS7 Survey Report on Open Science Skills Gaps in PCs

ASSESSMENT CRITERION	EVALUATION
Relevance and Alignment	Excellent
Methodological and Technical Quality	Very Good
Operational Usability and Institutional Applicability	Excellent
Compliance with Internal QA and Visibility Requirements	Excellent
Stakeholder and Consortium Value	Excellent
Sustainability and Impact Potential	Excellent

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on internal quality assessment and document review procedures

➢ MS8 Survey on Citizen Science Practices

MS8 provides an evidence-based assessment of Citizen Science (CS), Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR), and public engagement practices within OPEN-ASIA Partner Country HEIs. The report combines comparative qualitative analysis of institutional practices with a quantitative survey involving 182 respondents from India and Malaysia, enabling assessment of awareness, participation, perceived value, and existing approaches to community engagement. A key strength is the comparison of partner practices with established approaches at VU Amsterdam, which supports identification of transferable practices and concrete areas for institutional improvement, including Science Shops, curricular integration, interdisciplinary collaboration, stakeholder engagement, and impact assessment. While acknowledged limitations related to self-reporting, sample representativeness, and survey-based data somewhat constrain generalisability, MS8 demonstrates strong methodological and operational value and provides a relevant evidence base for strengthening Citizen Science and public engagement within OPEN-ASIA HEIs.

Table 3.13. Assessment Matrix – MS8 Survey on Citizen Science Practices

ASSESSMENT CRITERION	EVALUATION
Relevance and Alignment	Excellent
Methodological and Technical Quality	Very Good
Operational Usability and Institutional Applicability	Excellent
Compliance with Internal QA and Visibility Requirements	Very Good
Stakeholder and Consortium Value	Excellent
Sustainability and Impact Potential	Excellent

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on internal quality assessment and document review procedures

➢ MS9 Recommendations to Mainstream Open Science at National and University Level

MS9 provides a comprehensive and practically oriented framework for mainstreaming Open Science, translating evidence and stakeholder insights from the Open Science Forum into recommendations at both national and institutional levels. The recommendations address the main enabling dimensions of Open Science, including governance and policy, research infrastructure, incentives, capacity building, public engagement, and monitoring, while maintaining alignment with FAIR principles and the UNESCO Open Science framework. Particularly strong is the institutional dimension, which translates these principles into concrete measures such as Open Science policies and committees, repositories, researcher incentives, training, stakeholder collaboration, and institutional roadmaps with KPIs. Overall, MS9 demonstrates high strategic relevance and strong potential to guide sustainable Open Science institutionalisation, although implementation will require further contextualisation by individual institutions and national stakeholders.

Table 3.14. Assessment Matrix – MS9 Recommendations to Mainstream Open Science at National and University Level

ASSESSMENT CRITERION	EVALUATION
Relevance and Alignment	Excellent
Methodological and Technical Quality	Very Good
Operational Usability and Institutional Applicability	Excellent
Compliance with Internal QA and Visibility Requirements	Very Good
Stakeholder and Consortium Value	Excellent
Sustainability and Impact Potential	Excellent

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on internal quality assessment and document review procedures

➢ D3.3 Needs Analysis

D3.3 provides a comprehensive assessment of the Open Science needs, existing capacities, skills gaps, institutional practices, and development priorities of Partner Country HEIs in India and Malaysia. The deliverable consolidates evidence generated through the preceding WP3 mapping activities and translates the identified gaps into clearly defined priorities for subsequent OPEN-ASIA interventions. The document is professionally structured, analytically coherent, and demonstrates strong alignment between identified needs and the project's planned capacity-building, infrastructure, policy, and institutional development activities. Overall, D3.3 is assessed as an excellent-quality deliverable, providing a robust evidence base for the subsequent implementation phases of the project.

Table 3.15. Assessment Matrix – D3.3 Needs Analysis

ASSESSMENT CRITERION	EVALUATION
Relevance and Alignment	Excellent
Methodological and Technical Quality	Excellent
Operational Usability and Institutional Applicability	Excellent
Compliance with Internal QA and Visibility Requirements	Excellent
Stakeholder and Consortium Value	Excellent
Sustainability and Impact Potential	Excellent

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on internal quality assessment and document review procedures

WP3 demonstrated an implementation completion rate of 100% for outputs due within the evaluated reporting period, while the aggregated qualitative assessment score of the evaluated outputs reached 4.8/5.0, corresponding to an overall Excellent performance level. The assessment confirms particularly strong relevance and alignment, operational applicability, stakeholder and consortium value, and sustainability potential of the WP3 outputs, while minor methodological, representativeness, and editorial limitations identified in selected outputs did not affect their overall quality or usability. Collectively, WP3 has established a robust evidence base for subsequent OPEN-ASIA capacity-building, policy, infrastructure, and institutional development activities.

3.1.4. WP4 - ADVANCING UNIVERSITY OPEN SCIENCE INFRASTRUCTURE AND PRACTICES

Work Package 4 (WP4) focuses on strengthening the institutional conditions required for sustainable Open Science implementation within Partner Country HEIs through the development of Open Science infrastructure, acquisition of equipment, establishment of institutional Open Science platforms, and integration of Open Science into formal and informal curricula. During the reporting period, substantial progress was achieved across these interconnected areas, supported by dedicated University Working Groups, international capacity-building activities, common methodological frameworks, and institution-specific development plans. While selected activities remain under implementation in accordance with the revised project timeline, the major methodological, infrastructural, and institutional foundations foreseen under WP4 have been successfully established.

Table 3.16. Overview of WP4 Tasks Implementation Progress and Operational Performance

Task Ref.	Task Title	Implementation Status	Operational Assessment
T4.1	Elaboration of OS-Infrastructure Development Plan	Achieved	➢ Five **University Working Groups 1 (UWG1)** were established by PC HEIs to support institutional Open Science infrastructure development. ➢ **Capacity Building Workshop 1 (CBW1)** was organised and hosted by P9–Tampere University, Finland, on 15–19 April 2024. ➢ **Concept Note on the OS-Infrastructure Development Plan (MS10)** elaborated; ➢ Science Shop 2.0 Model (MS11) elaborated. ➢ Institutional Open Science Infrastructure Development Plans (D4.1–D4.5) developed and submiteed by PC HEIs;
T4.2	Design and Maintenance of University Open Science Platform	In Progress	The establishment of institutional University Open Science platforms is currently in progress across Partner Country HEIs. The activity builds upon the institutional infrastructure planning undertaken under T4.1 and is intended to provide the digital and organisational environment necessary to support access to Open Science resources, services, tools, and institutional practices. Implementation continues in accordance with the revised project timeline.
T4.3	Purchase of Equipment for Strengthening OS-Infrastructure	Achieved	Equipment procurement for strengthening institutional Open Science infrastructure has been finalised. The acquisition process initially experienced delays following the first project Amendment concerning the

			change of Coordinator, as the corresponding transfer of project funds to partners was consequently delayed. The second Amendment extending the overall project duration provided the necessary implementation timeframe for completing the procurement procedures. As a result, the planned equipment purchases were successfully finalised within the revised project implementation period.
T4.4	Embedding OS in Formal and Informal Curriculum	In Progress	Five University Working Groups 2 (UWG2) on OS Awareness and Capacity Building were established to support institutional curriculum development. Capacity Building Workshop 2 (CBW2) was organised by P3–VU in Amsterdam on 17–21 June 2024, providing the methodological basis for integrating Open Science into formal and informal learning. The common Requirements for OS Formal and Informal Curriculum (MS12) were subsequently elaborated. Partner Country HEIs are currently developing their institutional formal and informal Open Science curricula based on the agreed requirements and institutional contexts, with the consolidated D4.6 Open Science Formal and Informal Curriculum Report scheduled for the subsequent implementation period.

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on OPEN-ASIA internal monitoring records and WP4 implementation documentation.

Table 3.17. Overview of WP4 Deliverables and Milestones Achievement Status

Ref. No.	Deliverable / Milestone	Status	Technical Specification / Note
MS10	Concept Note of the OS-Infrastructure Development Plan	Achieved	1 × document / English version / digital format
MS11	Science Shop 2.0 Model	Achieved	1 × Science Shop 2.0 Model / English language / digital format / minimum 10 pages
MS12	Requirements for OS Formal and Informal Curriculum	Achieved	1 × document / English version / digital format
D4.1	Open Science Infrastructure Development Plan – P1-NMIMS	Achieved	1 × report / English language / digital format / minimum 10 pages
D4.2	Open Science Infrastructure Development Plan – P2-TIET	Achieved	1 × report / English language / digital format / minimum 10 pages
D4.3	Open Science Infrastructure Development Plan – P4-UM	Achieved	1 × report / English language / digital format / minimum 10 pages
D4.4	Open Science Infrastructure Development Plan – P5-UMS	Achieved	1 × report / English language / digital format / minimum 10 pages
D4.5	Open Science Infrastructure Development Plan – P6-UNIMAS	Achieved	1 × report / English language / digital format / minimum 10 pages
D4.6	Open Science Formal and Informal Curriculum Report	Not Due	1 × report / English language / digital format / minimum 50 pages

➢ MS10 Concept Note of the OS-Infrastructure Development Plan

MS10 provides a concise common framework for guiding Partner Country HEIs in the preparation of their institutional Open Science Infrastructure Development Plans. It addresses the main relevant areas, including policy, repositories and research data management, FAIR principles, Open Access, collaboration, capacity building, stakeholder engagement, monitoring, resources, and

implementation planning. The document is relevant and practically structured; however, its methodological depth is relatively limited, with several sections formulated primarily as general instructions rather than detailed planning instruments. Overall, MS10 is assessed as a Very Good milestone, providing an appropriate common basis for institutional planning while leaving substantial methodological and contextual development to the individual HEIs.

Table 3.18. Assessment Matrix – MS10 Concept Note of the OS-Infrastructure Development Plan

ASSESSMENT CRITERION	EVALUATION
Relevance and Alignment	Excellent
Methodological and Technical Quality	Good
Operational Usability and Institutional Applicability	Very Good
Compliance with Internal QA and Visibility Requirements	Very Good
Stakeholder and Consortium Value	Very Good
Sustainability and Impact Potential	Very Good

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on internal quality assessment and document review procedures.

➢ MS11 Science Shop 2.0 Model

MS11 develops a context-sensitive framework for adapting the Science Shop 2.0 model to Partner Country HEIs in India and Malaysia. The document applies the four Science Shop phases—preparation, design and implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and dissemination—to existing community and public-engagement practices across all five HEIs, while examining institutional support, stakeholder involvement, training, challenges, and future ambitions. Its main strength is the extensive use of concrete institutional practices to demonstrate how Science Shop principles can be embedded in different university contexts. However, the document is stronger as a mapping and contextualisation exercise than as a fully standardised operational model, with some variation in the depth and structure of institutional contributions. Overall, MS11 is assessed as a Very Good milestone with strong institutional and stakeholder value.

Table 3.19. Assessment Matrix – MS11 Science Shop 2.0 Model

ASSESSMENT CRITERION	EVALUATION
Relevance and Alignment	Excellent
Methodological and Technical Quality	Very Good
Operational Usability and Institutional Applicability	Very Good
Compliance with Internal QA and Visibility Requirements	Very Good
Stakeholder and Consortium Value	Excellent
Sustainability and Impact Potential	Very Good

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on internal quality assessment and document review procedures.

➢ MS12 Requirements for OS Formal and Informal Curriculum

MS12 provides a structured framework for guiding Partner Country HEIs in the development of formal and informal Open Science curricula. The document appropriately covers target groups, learning outcomes, core OS thematic areas, pedagogical approaches, assessment methods, informal learning activities, accreditation, implementation responsibilities, piloting, and quality assurance. Its phased implementation approach also establishes a useful connection between curriculum development, institutional accreditation, piloting, feedback, and subsequent refinement. However, the document functions primarily as a requirements outline/template, with many sections

formulated as instructions rather than fully developed methodological guidance. Overall, MS12 is assessed as a Very Good milestone, providing a relevant and practical foundation for subsequent institutional curriculum development.

Table 3.20. Assessment Matrix – MS12 Requirements for OS Formal and Informal Curriculum

ASSESSMENT CRITERION	EVALUATION
Relevance and Alignment	Excellent
Methodological and Technical Quality	Good
Operational Usability and Institutional Applicability	Very Good
Compliance with Internal QA and Visibility Requirements	Very Good
Stakeholder and Consortium Value	Very Good
Sustainability and Impact Potential	Very Good

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on internal quality assessment and document review procedures.

➢ D4.1 Open Science Infrastructure Development Plan – PI-NMIMS

D4.1 presents a comprehensive and institutionally grounded Open Science Infrastructure Development Plan for Universiti Malaya, covering existing digital and research infrastructure, RDM and FAIR data services, the institutional OS platform, Science Shop 2.0, physical resources, governance, institutional integration, and sustainability arrangements. The Plan is particularly strong in documenting existing operational capacity and clearly assigning institutional structures and responsibilities, while its endorsement by the UM Open Science Steering Committee and alignment with the UM Strategic Plan 2026–2030 reinforce institutional ownership. Sustainability is also substantively addressed through institutional operational funding, staffing, infrastructure maintenance and potential external funding mechanisms. Overall, D4.1 is assessed as an Excellent institutional deliverable, although some implementation elements could benefit from more explicit measurable targets and time-bound performance indicators.

Table 3.19. Assessment Matrix – D4.1 Open Science Infrastructure Development Plan – PI-UM

ASSESSMENT CRITERION	EVALUATION
Relevance and Alignment	Excellent
Methodological and Technical Quality	Very Good
Operational Usability and Institutional Applicability	Excellent
Compliance with Internal QA and Visibility Requirements	Excellent
Stakeholder and Consortium Value	Very Good
Sustainability and Impact Potential	Excellent

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on internal quality assessment and document review procedures.

➢ D4.2 Open Science Infrastructure Development Plan – P2-TIET

D4.2 presents a highly developed and operationally oriented Open Science Infrastructure Development Plan, combining TIET's substantial existing digital and AI infrastructure with concrete institutional measures for Open Access, research data management, FAIR practices, Science Shop 2.0, capacity building and community engagement. The Plan establishes measurable targets, a clear governance structure and implementation timeline, and detailed monitoring arrangements with defined responsibilities and data sources. Overall, the deliverable demonstrates excellent institutional applicability and strong potential for sustainable implementation.

Table 3.20. Assessment Matrix – D4.2 Open Science Infrastructure Development Plan – P2-TIET

ASSESSMENT CRITERION	EVALUATION
Relevance and Alignment	Excellent
Methodological and Technical Quality	Excellent
Operational Usability and Institutional Applicability	Excellent
Compliance with Internal QA and Visibility Requirements	Excellent
Stakeholder and Consortium Value	Very Good
Sustainability and Impact Potential	Excellent

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on internal quality assessment and document review procedures.

➢ D4.3 Open Science Infrastructure Development Plan – P4-UM

D4.3 provides a comprehensive and institutionally grounded Open Science Infrastructure Development Plan, building on NMIMS's existing library, digital and high-performance computing infrastructure and defining four planned infrastructure pillars covering repositories, Open Access publishing, research datasets and interdisciplinary collaboration. The Plan demonstrates strong technical and institutional applicability, while its monitoring framework, resource planning and long-term sustainability arrangements would benefit from further operational specification.

Table 3.21. Assessment Matrix – D4.3 Open Science Infrastructure Development Plan – P4-NMIMS

ASSESSMENT CRITERION	EVALUATION
Relevance and Alignment	Excellent
Methodological and Technical Quality	Very Good
Operational Usability and Institutional Applicability	Very Good
Compliance with Internal QA and Visibility Requirements	Excellent
Stakeholder and Consortium Value	Very Good
Sustainability and Impact Potential	Very Good

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on internal quality assessment and document review procedures.

➢ D4.4 Open Science Infrastructure Development Plan – P5-UMS

D4.4 presents a well-developed and operationally oriented institutional plan, combining Open Science governance, digital infrastructure, research data management, capacity building, stakeholder engagement and monitoring. A particular strength is the translation of strategic objectives into a phased roadmap and action plan with responsible units, deliverables and measurable indicators. Some technical infrastructure specifications and concrete financial allocations, however, remain relatively general.

Table 3.22. Assessment Matrix – D4.4 Open Science Infrastructure Development Plan – P5-UMS

ASSESSMENT CRITERION	EVALUATION
Relevance and Alignment	Excellent
Methodological and Technical Quality	Very Good
Operational Usability and Institutional Applicability	Excellent
Compliance with Internal QA and Visibility Requirements	Excellent
Stakeholder and Consortium Value	Very Good
Sustainability and Impact Potential	Very Good

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on internal quality assessment and document review procedures.

➢ D4.5 Open Science Infrastructure Development Plan – P6-UNIMAS

D4.5 is a strong, evidence-based and highly operational institutional plan. It combines a clear baseline assessment with already functioning Open Science infrastructure, defined governance responsibilities, concrete monitoring indicators, budget allocations and a phased implementation roadmap. The document also clearly distinguishes existing achievements from components still under development, strengthening its credibility and practical applicability.

Table 3.23. Assessment Matrix – D4.5 Open Science Infrastructure Development Plan – P6-UNIMAS

ASSESSMENT CRITERION	EVALUATION
Relevance and Alignment	Excellent
Methodological and Technical Quality	Excellent
Operational Usability and Institutional Applicability	Excellent
Compliance with Internal QA and Visibility Requirements	Excellent
Stakeholder and Consortium Value	Excellent
Sustainability and Impact Potential	Excellent

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on internal quality assessment and document review procedures.

WP4 demonstrated an overall task completion rate of 50%, with two of four tasks fully achieved and the remaining two progressing in accordance with the revised implementation timeline. At output level, 8 of 9 planned milestones and deliverables have been completed, while D4.6 remains under development. The aggregated qualitative assessment score of the eight evaluated outputs reached 4.46/5.0, corresponding to an overall Very Good performance level. Overall, WP4 demonstrates strong progress in establishing institutional Open Science infrastructure and practices, while completion of the OS platforms and formal and informal curricula remains a priority for the subsequent implementation period.

3.1.5. WP5 - REFORMING UNIVERSITY OPEN SCIENCE REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Work Package 5 (WP5) focuses on strengthening the institutional regulatory environment for Open Science across Partner Country HEIs through the development of institutional policies and a common methodology for monitoring Open Science implementation. During the reporting period, the principal methodological and organisational foundations for policy development were established through dedicated institutional working groups, targeted capacity building, and the elaboration of common requirements. The institutional Open Science policies and monitoring methodology remain under development in accordance with the project implementation timeline.

Table 3.24. Overview of WP5 Tasks Implementation Progress and Operational Performance

Task Ref.	Task Title	Implementation Status	Operational Assessment
T5.1	Developing University Open Science Regulatory Framework	In Progress	➢ Five **University Working Groups 3 (UWG3)** were established by Partner Country HEIs to coordinate institutional Open Science policy development. ➢ **Capacity Building Workshop 3 (CBW3)** was organised and hosted by P7–ISSBS in Celje, Slovenia, on 18–22 November 2024, providing methodological and practical guidance for the

			development of institutional regulatory frameworks. ➢ **Requirements for OS Policy Development at Institutional Level (MS13)** were elaborated, providing a common framework for partners. The Methodology for Monitoring OS (MS14) and the five institutional University Open Science Policies (D5.1–D5.5) are currently under development in accordance with the revised project timeline.

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on OPEN-ASIA internal monitoring records and WP5 implementation documentation.

Table 3.25. Overview of WP5 Deliverables and Milestones Achievement Status

Ref. No.	Deliverable / Milestone	Status	Technical Specification / Note
MS13	Requirements for OS Policy Development at Institutional Level	Achieved	1 × document comprising 4 templates / English version
MS14	Methodology for Monitoring OS (Set of Indicators)	Not Due	1 × document / English version / digital format
D5.1	University Open Science Policies – P1-NMIMS	Not Due	1 × report / English version / digital format / minimum 50 pages
D5.2	University Open Science Policies – P2-TIET	Not Due	1 × report / English version / digital format / minimum 50 pages
D5.3	University Open Science Policies – P4-UM	Not Due	1 × report / English version / digital format / minimum 50 pages
D5.4	University Open Science Policies – P5-UMS	Not Due	1 × report / English version / digital format / minimum 50 pages
D5.5	University Open Science Policies – P6-UNIMAS	Not Due	1 × report / English version / digital format / minimum 50 pages

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on OPEN-ASIA internal monitoring records and WP5 implementation documentation.

➢ MS13 Requirements for OS Policy Development at Institutional Level

MS13 provides a well-structured and methodologically robust framework for developing consistent institutional Open Science regulatory instruments across the five Partner Country HEIs. A major strength is its two-layer approach combining common consortium requirements with institution-specific localisation, supported by a maturity-based self-assessment, structured gap analysis and clearly differentiated MUST/SHOULD/MAY requirements. The framework is strongly aligned with UNESCO Open Science principles and provides practical requirements for four complementary instruments: OS Strategy, OS Policy, DMP Template, and Recognition & Rewards Scheme. However, the institutional baseline remains to be completed, meaning that some gaps are currently generic rather than institution-specific. Overall, MS13 is assessed as a Very Good milestone with particularly strong methodological and operational value.

Table 3.26. Assessment Matrix – MS13 Requirements for OS Policy Development at Institutional Level

ASSESSMENT CRITERION	EVALUATION
Relevance and Alignment	Excellent
Methodological and Technical Quality	Excellent
Operational Usability and Institutional Applicability	Very Good
Compliance with Internal QA and Visibility Requirements	Very Good
Stakeholder and Consortium Value	Very Good
Sustainability and Impact Potential	Excellent

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on internal quality assessment and document review procedures.

WP5 demonstrated an overall task **completion rate of approximately 40%,** reflecting the successful establishment of the methodological and organisational foundations for institutional Open Science policy development, while the core regulatory outputs remain under development. At output level, 1 of 7 planned milestones and deliverables has been completed (MS13), with MS14 and D5.1–D5.5 not yet due under the revised implementation timeline. The **qualitative assessment score of the completed and evaluated MS13 reached 4.67/5.0,** corresponding to an overall Very Good performance level. Overall, WP5 demonstrates satisfactory progress at its current implementation stage, with completion of the monitoring methodology and five institutional Open Science policy packages representing the principal priority for the subsequent period..

3.1.6. WP6 - FOSTERING PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATORY MECHANISMS IN SCIENCE

Work Package 6 (WP6) focuses on strengthening public engagement and participatory research mechanisms through the establishment of Science Shops 2.0 (OS Hubs) and the organisation of Open Science Stakeholder Engagement Workshops. Following the approved extension of the project duration to 45 months, the main WP6 activities and outputs are scheduled for the later implementation period, primarily M35–M45. Accordingly, WP6 is currently at a preparatory stage, with initial progress including discussions on OS Hub operations, preparation of draft establishment and regulatory documents, and development of methodological recommendations for future stakeholder engagement activities.

Table 3.26. Overview of WP6 Tasks Implementation Progress and Operational Performance

Task Ref.	Task Title	Implementation Status	Operational Assessment
T6.1	Establishment of Science Shops 2.0	In Progress / Preparatory Stage	Preparatory activities for establishing Science Shops 2.0 (OS Hubs) have commenced. Operational arrangements were discussed during CM4, while draft acts of establishment and regulatory documents have been prepared and are undergoing further development. The Science Shops' Operational Plan (MS15) and Science Shop 2.0 Handbook (D6.1) are currently under development. The main implementation activities are scheduled for M35–M45.
T6.2	Organisation and Realisation of Open Science Stakeholder Engagement Workshops	Preparatory Stage	Recommendations for the Organisation and Evaluation of Open Science Stakeholder Engagement Workshops (SEWs) were elaborated by P3-VU, establishing a methodological basis for the forthcoming engagement activities. The

			workshops and related participatory activities are scheduled for the third project year, in accordance with the revised implementation timeline.

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on OPEN-ASIA internal monitoring records and WP6 implementation documentation.

Table 3.27. Overview of WP6 Deliverables and Milestones Achievement Status

Ref. No.	Deliverable / Milestone	Status	Technical Specification / Note
MS15	Science Shops' Operational Plan	Not Due	1 × document / English version / digital format
MS16	Recommendations to Mainstream Citizen Science	Not Due	1 × document / English version / digital format / minimum 20 pages
D6.1	Science Shop 2.0 Handbook	Not Due	1 × document / English language / digital version / minimum 50 pages

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on OPEN-ASIA internal monitoring records and WP6 implementation documentation.

WP6 demonstrated an overall completion rate of 0% at output level, as none of the three planned milestones and deliverables (MS15, MS16 and D6.1) are due within the reporting period. This status does not indicate implementation delay or underperformance, as the principal WP6 activities are scheduled for M35–M45 following the approved extension of the project duration to 45 months. Preparatory activities have already commenced, including development of institutional and regulatory arrangements for Science Shops 2.0 and methodological preparation for stakeholder engagement activities. As no WP6 outputs are currently due, no qualitative assessment score or performance level is assigned at this stage.

3.1.7. WP7 - DISSEMINATION, EXPLOITATION, AND IMPACT MAXIMIZATION

Work Package 7 (WP7) focuses on ensuring the visibility, dissemination, exploitation, sustainability, and long-term impact of OPEN-ASIA results at international, national, and institutional levels. During the reporting period, substantial dissemination activities were implemented across the consortium, supported by the Dissemination and Exploitation Strategy, regular institutional and external communication activities, inter-project cooperation, and sustainability planning. Activities related to exploitation, establishment of the Asian Network of Science Shops 2.0, and systematic measurement of project impact remain ongoing or are scheduled for the later implementation period following the project extension.

Table 3.28. Overview of WP7 Tasks Implementation Progress and Operational Performance

Task Ref.	Task Title	Implementation Status	Operational Assessment
T7.1	Organisation and Running of International Dissemination Campaign	Ongoing	➢ The Dissemination and Exploitation Strategy (D7.1) was developed and provides the framework for project communication and dissemination. ➢ Two inter-project coaching activities were realised: the first in March 2024 during OSF1 of the OSCAR 2.0 project in Zambia, and the second in April 2025 during OSF1 of the FOSTER project in Kenya.

			➢ **International dissemination activities** have also been implemented by all five Partner Country HEIs: P1-UM – 2 activities; – P2-TIET – 1; – P4-NMIMS – 1; – P5-UMS – 1; – P6-UNIMAS – 1. ➢ The **concluding conference** is scheduled for September 2027.
T7.2	Organisation and Running of National Dissemination Campaign	Ongoing	**National-level dissemination** has been implemented primarily through mass-media and online publications: ➢ P1-UM published 1 newspaper article; ➢ P4-NMIMS published 1 national mass-media article and 1 LinkedIn post; ➢ P5-UMS published 3 national mass-media articles; ➢ P6-UNIMAS published 2 articles. ➢ No national mass-media article has yet been reported by P2-TIET, indicating the need to strengthen its contribution during the subsequent period.
T7.3	Organisation and Running of Institutional Dissemination Campaign	Ongoing	**Institutional dissemination activities** have been actively implemented across the Partner Country HEIs as follows: ➢ P1-UM organised 3 events involving 104 participants; ➢ P2-TIET – 3 events/100 participants; ➢ P4-NMIMS – 1 event/35 participants; ➢ P5-UMS – 1 workshop/35 participants; and ➢ P6-UNIMAS – 4 workshops/132 participants. **Institutional media dissemination** additionally included: ➢ 7 articles/press releases by P4-NMIMS, ➢ 6 articles/press releases by P5-UMS, ➢ 2 articles/press releases by P6-UNIMAS.
T7.4	Organisation and Running of Exploitation and Multiplier Activities	Not Yet Due / Preparatory Stage	The exploitation activity concerns the piloting of formal and non-formal Open Science courses, which is foreseen for M35–M45. Implementation therefore depends on completion of the curricula currently being developed under WP4.
T7.5	Organisation and Running of Sustainability Activities	Ongoing	➢ **Sustainability Plan (MS19)** was successfully elaborated, establishing the framework for continuation and institutionalisation of OPEN-ASIA results. ➢ **The Asian Network of Science Shops 2.0** is currently under development and will support longer-term cooperation and exchange among participating institutions.
T7.6	Measure the Impact of OS on Direct and Indirect Target Groups	Ongoing / Preparatory Stage	Development of Impact and Satisfaction Survey Tools is ongoing. Satisfaction surveys addressing Open Science implementation outcomes and impact, as well as institutional and national OS advancements, are foreseen for Year 4 (M37–M45) and will provide evidence for the final assessment of project impact.

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on OPEN-ASIA internal monitoring records and WP7 implementation documentation.

Table 3.29. Overview of WP7 Deliverables and Milestones Achievement Status

Ref. No.	Deliverable / Milestone	Status	Technical Specification / Note
MS17	Dissemination and Exploitation Report – Part 1	Achieved	1 × document / English version / digital format
MS18	Dissemination and Exploitation Report – Part 2	Not Due	1 × document / English version / digital format
MS19	Sustainability Plan	Achieved	1 × document / English version / digital format
D7.1	Dissemination and Exploitation Strategy	Achieved	1 × document / English version / digital format / minimum 20 pages
D7.2	Sustainability and Impact Maximisation Plan	Not Due	1 × document / English version / digital format / minimum 20 pages

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on OPEN-ASIA internal monitoring records and WP7 implementation documentation.

➢ MS17 Dissemination and Exploitation Report – Part 1

MS17 consolidates OPEN-ASIA dissemination activities implemented at international, national, and institutional levels, demonstrating broad project visibility and stakeholder outreach across the consortium. The report provides a structured overview of dissemination actions and partner contributions, while further strengthening of impact-oriented monitoring would enhance future reporting. Overall, MS17 is assessed as a Very Good milestone, providing a solid basis for continued dissemination and exploitation activities.

Table 3.30. Assessment Matrix – MS17 Dissemination and Exploitation Report – Part 1

ASSESSMENT CRITERION	EVALUATION
Relevance and Alignment	Excellent
Methodological and Technical Quality	Very Good
Operational Usability and Institutional Applicability	Very Good
Compliance with Internal QA and Visibility Requirements	Very Good
Stakeholder and Consortium Value	Very Good
Sustainability and Impact Potential	Good

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on internal quality assessment and document review procedures.

➢ MS19 Sustainability Plan

MS19 establishes a comprehensive strategic framework for sustaining and expanding OPEN-ASIA results beyond the funded project period, addressing institutionalisation of Open Science practices, continuation of project structures and outputs, stakeholder ownership, regional cooperation, and long-term impact. The Plan demonstrates strong alignment with the project's sustainability objectives and provides a solid basis for embedding Open Science within participating HEIs and supporting continued regional collaboration. Overall, MS19 is assessed as an Excellent milestone, with strong strategic relevance and long-term institutional and consortium value.

Table 3.31. Assessment Matrix – MS19 Sustainability Plan

ASSESSMENT CRITERION	EVALUATION
Relevance and Alignment	Excellent
Methodological and Technical Quality	Very Good
Operational Usability and Institutional Applicability	Excellent
Compliance with Internal QA and Visibility Requirements	Very Good
Stakeholder and Consortium Value	Excellent
Sustainability and Impact Potential	Excellent

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on internal quality assessment and document review procedures.

➢ D7.1 Dissemination and Exploitation Strategy

D7.1 provides a comprehensive and operational framework for project communication and dissemination, clearly defining target groups, dissemination levels and channels, partner responsibilities, visibility requirements, reporting procedures, monitoring mechanisms and a detailed dissemination plan linked to project outputs. Its strongest elements are the structured dissemination arrangements and monitoring/reporting procedures; however, the exploitation dimension is considerably less developed than the dissemination component, with exploitation mainly addressed through references to result uptake and the later T7.4 Exploitation and Multiplier Plan rather than through a dedicated exploitation methodology within D7.1 itself.

Table 3.32. Assessment Matrix – D7.1 Dissemination and Exploitation Strategy

ASSESSMENT CRITERION	EVALUATION
Relevance and Alignment	Excellent
Methodological and Technical Quality	Very Good
Operational Usability and Consortium Applicability	Excellent
Dissemination Planning, Monitoring and Reporting Framework	Excellent
Exploitation and Results Uptake Framework	Good
Compliance with Internal QA and Visibility Requirements	Excellent
Stakeholder Reach and Impact Potential	Very Good

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on internal quality assessment and document review procedures.

WP7 demonstrated an overall implementation completion rate of approximately 60%, reflecting substantial progress in international, national and institutional dissemination activities and sustainability planning, while exploitation, multiplier, networking and impact-assessment activities remain ongoing or are scheduled for the later project period. At output level, 3 of 5 planned milestones and deliverables have been completed (MS17, MS19 and D7.1), while MS18 and D7.2 are not yet due. The aggregated qualitative assessment score of the three evaluated outputs reached 4.42/5.0, corresponding to an overall Very Good performance level. Overall, WP7 demonstrates strong dissemination and visibility performance, with the next implementation period requiring increased focus on exploitation, sustainability structures and systematic measurement of project impact.

3.2. Strategic Progress toward Project Objectives

The assessment of implementation progress across the seven Work Packages demonstrates substantial strategic progress toward the achievement of the OPEN-ASIA project objectives. During the evaluated implementation period, the consortium established the principal analytical, methodological, institutional, infrastructural, regulatory, dissemination, and sustainability

foundations required to strengthen Open Science ecosystems in India and Malaysia. At the same time, several implementation components, including completion of Open Science platforms, formal and informal curricula, institutional Open Science policies, Science Shops 2.0, exploitation activities, and systematic impact measurement, remain ongoing in accordance with the revised implementation timeline following the extension of the project duration to 45 months.

The assessment of individual Work Packages confirms that implementation progress varies according to their respective schedules and output structures. Earlier-stage activities related to project governance, needs assessment, benchmarking, capacity building, infrastructure planning, dissemination, and sustainability have reached an advanced level, while several institutionalisation and impact-oriented activities are concentrated in the later implementation period. Accordingly, differences in WP completion rates should be interpreted in relation to the approved implementation timeline rather than as implementation deficiencies. Figure 2 illustrates the consolidated implementation progress and qualitative performance of the seven OPEN-ASIA Work Packages, reflecting the different stages of implementation while confirming consistently high quality across the outputs evaluated to date.

Figure 2. OPEN-ASIA Project Performance Dashboard: Work Package Progress and Quality Assessment



Source: Elaborated by the authors based on internal quality assessment and Work Package implementation monitoring results.

The strategic progress toward the achievement of the OPEN-ASIA project objectives, including the contribution of individual Work Packages and completed or ongoing project results to the implementation of the five Specific Objectives (SO1–SO5), is summarised in Table 3.33 below.

Table 3.33. Strategic Progress toward OPEN-ASIA Project Objectives

Specific Objective	Strategic Progress Achieved	Evidence / Key Results	Assessment Status
SO1. To promote Open Science culture and to build national and university consensus of the key actors in India and Malaysia.	Significant progress achieved in establishing a common evidence base on Open Science readiness, skills, practices and development priorities and in strengthening awareness and engagement among institutional stakeholders.	✓ Self-Evaluation Open Science Tool (MS5); ✓ Benchmark Report on Best Practices of OS Implementation in HE (MS6); ✓ Survey Report on OS Skills Gaps (MS7); ✓ Survey on Citizen Science Practices (MS8); ✓ Recommendations to Mainstream Open Science (MS9); ✓ Needs Analysis (D3.3); ✓ awareness-raising and consensus-building activities.	On track
SO2. To enhance university transition for sustainable Open Science practices in India and Malaysia.	Strong institutional and methodological foundations established for the transition of Partner Country HEIs toward sustainable Open Science practices through institutional structures, capacity building, planning and sustainability mechanisms.	✓ University Working Groups established; ✓ three Capacity Building Workshops implemented; ✓ Science Shop 2.0 Model (MS11); ✓ Requirements for OS Formal and Informal Curriculum (MS12); ✓ five institutional OS Infrastructure Development Plans (D4.1–D4.5); ✓ Sustainability Plan (MS19); institutional curricula and policies under development.	On track
SO3. To advance university Open Science infrastructure in India and Malaysia.	Substantial progress achieved, with the strategic and institutional planning phase completed and implementation of Open Science infrastructure advancing across Partner Country HEIs.	✓ Concept Note of the OS-Infrastructure Development Plan (MS10); ✓ five institutional OS Infrastructure Development Plans (D4.1–D4.5); ✓ equipment acquisition finalised; ✓ University Open Science Platforms under development; ✓ Institutional governance and sustainability arrangements established.	In progress according to revised implementation timeline
SO4. To embed Open Science in university policies and to advance national regulatory framework in India and Malaysia.	Important methodological and organisational foundations established for embedding Open Science within institutional regulatory frameworks, while development and adoption of the institutional policy packages remain ongoing.	✓ Five UWG3 established; CBW3 implemented; ✓ Requirements for OS Policy Development at Institutional Level (MS13); ✓ common requirements and templates for institutional OS regulatory instruments; ✓ D5.1–D5.5 under development; ✓ MS14 scheduled for the subsequent implementation period.	On track / In progress

SO5. To foster Citizen Science initiatives in India and Malaysia.	Strong conceptual and methodological foundations established for Citizen Science, while the principal operational and participatory mechanisms are scheduled for the later implementation period.	✓ Survey on Citizen Science Practices (MS8); ✓ Citizen Science recommendations integrated into MS9; ✓ Science Shop 2.0 Model (MS11); ✓ preparatory activities for Science Shops 2.0/OS Hubs initiated; ✓ draft establishment and regulatory documents prepared; ✓ recommendations for Stakeholder Engagement Workshops developed.	On track / Preparatory implementation stage

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on the OPEN-ASIA Operational Plan, project implementation records, internal monitoring documentation, and Work Package assessment results.

The overall assessment indicates that the OPEN-ASIA project has achieved substantial strategic progress toward all five Specific Objectives during the evaluated implementation period. The completed analytical, methodological, capacity-building, infrastructure-planning, regulatory, dissemination, and sustainability activities have established a strong foundation for the subsequent implementation phase. The principal priorities for the remaining period concern the operationalisation of Open Science platforms and Science Shops 2.0, completion and implementation of formal and informal curricula, adoption of institutional Open Science policies, strengthening of exploitation mechanisms, and systematic measurement of project outcomes and impact.

3.3. Consortium Cooperation, Communication, and Coordination Efficiency

The assessment of consortium cooperation, communication, and coordination efficiency demonstrates a **high level of institutional engagement, operational collaboration, and implementation responsiveness** among OPEN-ASIA partners during the evaluated reporting period. Cooperation has been supported through regular face-to-face and online coordination meetings, continuous information exchange, digital project-management tools, and systematic follow-up of activities, milestones, deliverables, and reporting requirements. These arrangements have supported implementation continuity and coordinated decision-making across the seven Work Packages.

Particular emphasis has been placed on maintaining **structured and transparent communication** through complementary digital tools. The OPEN-ASIA website and LinkedIn page support external communication and project visibility, while the shared Google Drive repository provides centralised storage and exchange of working documents, deliverables, templates, meeting documentation, and implementation evidence. Trello is used for operational planning, task and deadline monitoring, and implementation follow-up, while Zoom supports online consortium meetings and operational consultations. This structure follows the communication logic applied in the reference QA framework, combining centralised document management, project-management tools and virtual coordination mechanisms.

Table 3.34. Digital Coordination and Communication Tools Applied within the OPEN-ASIA Project

Coordination / Communication Tool	Purpose and Operational Use
OPEN-ASIA Project Website	Public communication and dissemination platform supporting project visibility, stakeholder outreach, publication of project activities, results, news, and relevant project information.
OPEN-ASIA LinkedIn Page	External communication and dissemination channel supporting visibility of project activities, events, achievements, and results among professional and stakeholder communities.
OPEN-ASIA Shared Google Drive Repository	Centralised storage and exchange of project documentation, deliverables, milestones, templates, reporting materials, meeting documentation, and implementation evidence.
OPEN-ASIA Trello Project Management Platform	Operational planning, task allocation and follow-up, monitoring of deadlines and outputs, and coordination of implementation activities at consortium level.
Zoom	Organisation of Online Consortium Meetings, operational consultations, implementation follow-up, and coordination among project partners.

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on OPEN-ASIA project coordination and implementation records.

The operational coordination framework has additionally relied on **regular Consortium Meetings and Online Consortium Meetings**, providing structured opportunities to review implementation progress, coordinate Work Package activities, address operational issues, monitor deliverables and milestones, and agree on subsequent implementation priorities. Four face-to-face Consortium Meetings were organised alternately in India and Malaysia, complemented by four Online Consortium Meetings, ensuring continuity of consortium-level coordination throughout the implementation period.

Table 3.35. Consortium Meetings and Coordination Activities Implemented during the Reporting Period

Meeting / Activity	Date	Format	Location / Platform	Main Purpose
1st Consortium Meeting (CM1)	19–20 March 2024	Face-to-face	Mumbai, India – P1-NMIMS	Launch and coordination of project implementation, operational planning, governance arrangements, and initial implementation priorities.
2nd Consortium Meeting (CM2)	21–22 October 2024	Face-to-face	Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia – P4-UM	Review of implementation progress, coordination of WP activities and outputs, and planning of subsequent implementation activities.
3rd Consortium Meeting (CM3)	24–25 February 2025	Face-to-face	Thapar, India – P2-TIET	Implementation monitoring, coordination of ongoing activities, quality assurance follow-up, and planning of subsequent project outputs.
4th Consortium Meeting (CM4)	22–23 September 2025	Face-to-face	Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, Malaysia – P5-UMS	Review of project progress, coordination of ongoing institutional activities, and preparation for the subsequent implementation phase.
Online Consortium Meeting (OCM1)	January 2024	Online	Zoom	Initial consortium coordination and preparation of project implementation activities.
Online Consortium Meeting (OCM2)	16 May 2024	Online	Zoom	Follow-up of implementation progress and coordination of ongoing project activities.
Online Consortium Meeting (OCM3)	5 September 2024	Online	Zoom	Monitoring of implementation progress and preparation for subsequent consortium activities and outputs.
Online Consortium Meeting (OCM4)	11 March 2026	Online	Zoom	Review of implementation status and coordination of activities under the revised project implementation timeline.

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on OPEN-ASIA project meeting and internal coordination records.

Overall, the established communication and coordination mechanisms are assessed as effective and appropriate for the scale and geographical composition of the OPEN-ASIA consortium. The combination of regular face-to-face meetings, online coordination, centralised document sharing, operational task monitoring, and continuous digital communication has supported transparent information exchange and effective cooperation between partners. The regular coordination framework is consistent with the reference approach, in which consortium meetings and digital coordination instruments serve as the principal mechanisms for implementation monitoring, decision-making, and operational follow-up.

4. QUALITY ASSESSMENT OF CAPACITY-BUILDING, DISSEMINATION, AND VISIBILITY ACTIVITIES

4.1. Assessment of Project Events, Capacity-Building Activities, and Stakeholder Engagement

The assessment of project events, capacity-building activities, and stakeholder engagement demonstrates strong implementation performance during the evaluated reporting period. As a Capacity Building in Higher Education project, OPEN-ASIA relies substantially on consortium cooperation, knowledge transfer, institutional learning, stakeholder dialogue, and exchange of European and Partner Country Open Science practices. The implemented activities combined project coordination meetings, large-scale Open Science Forums, and specialised capacity-building workshops addressing Open Science infrastructure, curriculum development, institutional policies, and participatory approaches.

Overall, 11 major face-to-face project events were implemented, involving 664 participants. These included four Consortium Meetings with 98 participants, four Open Science Forums reaching 495 participants, and three Capacity Building Workshops involving 71 participants. The programmes and supporting documentation demonstrate a consistent connection between the events and the project's objectives, Work Package activities, and expected institutional reforms.

Table 4.1.1. Overview of Project Events Implemented During the Reporting Period

Work Package	Event	Date	Host Institution	Participants
WP2	Consortium Meeting 1 (CM1)	19–20 March 2024	P1-NMIMS	33
	Consortium Meeting 2 (CM2)	21–22 October 2024	P4-UM	24
	Consortium Meeting 3 (CM3)	24–25 February 2025	P2-TIET	16
	Consortium Meeting 4 (CM4)	22–23 September 2025	P5-UMS	25
WP3	Open Science Forum 1 (OSF1)	21–22 March 2024	P1-NMIMS	88
	Open Science Forum 2 (OSF2)	23–24 October 2024	P4-UM	212
	Open Science Forum 3 (OSF3)	26–27 February 2025	P2-TIET	102
	Open Science Forum 4 (OSF4)	22–23 September 2025	P5-UMS	93
WP4	Capacity Building Workshop 1 (Open science infrastructure)	15–19 April 2024	P9–TAU	20
	Capacity Building Workshop 2 (Curriculum Development)	17-21 June 2024	3–VU	26
WP5	Capacity Building Workshop 3 (Open Science Policies)	18–22 November 2024	P7–ISSBS	25

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on OPEN-ASIA event documentation, attendance records, and project implementation records.

Following the quantitative overview presented in Table 4.1.1, the qualitative assessment focused on **event organisation, programme relevance, institutional and stakeholder participation, supporting documentation, knowledge transfer, capacity-building value, and contribution to project objectives**. Since structured participant satisfaction surveys were not systematically administered during the assessed events, the evaluation is based on programmes, attendance records, technical reports, meeting documentation, presentations, and internal monitoring evidence rather than numerical participant satisfaction ratings.

- **Consortium Meetings (CM1–CM4).** The four Consortium Meetings served as the principal face-to-face governance and coordination mechanism of OPEN-ASIA. CM1 established the project implementation, management, financial reporting, and quality assurance arrangements, while the subsequent meetings progressively focused on implementation review, Work Package progress, quality assurance, financial management, exploitation, sustainability, and planning of upcoming activities. CM3 maintained this structured implementation-review approach across all seven Work Packages, complemented by dedicated sessions on financial management, quality assurance, exploitation, and sustainability. CM4 further consolidated WP-level progress review and consortium discussion during the later implementation stage. Overall, the meetings are assessed as **Excellent in organisational and coordination quality**, providing a consistent platform for consortium decision-making and implementation follow-up.

- **Open Science Forums (OSF1–OSF4).** The four Open Science Forums represented the project's principal large-scale stakeholder engagement and awareness-raising mechanism, reaching **495 participants** in India and Malaysia. OSF1 combined senior institutional and external expert participation with discussions on Open Science and formally supported the public launch and visibility of the OPEN-ASIA initiative, including inauguration of the project logo and website. OSF2 substantially expanded stakeholder outreach and addressed Open Science as an inclusive framework for accessibility, transparency, collaboration, and societal engagement. OSF3 combined expert input with stakeholder discussion on practical topics such as Open Source practices, Open Data, and FAIR principles. Together with OSF4, the Forums provided a strong platform for awareness raising, institutional dialogue, stakeholder interaction, and development of recommendations subsequently reflected in WP3 outputs. Overall, the Forums are assessed as **Excellent in thematic relevance and stakeholder reach**.

- **Capacity Building Workshop 1 – Open Science Infrastructure**. CBW1 provided a focused five-day learning programme on Open Science infrastructure, governance, FAIR principles, research data management, national coordination mechanisms, and institutional implementation. The programme brought Partner Country participants into direct contact with Finnish Open Science experts and specialised organisations, including national coordination actors and research-data specialists. The workshop is assessed as **Excellent**, particularly in terms of technical relevance, exposure to European good practices, and contribution to subsequent institutional infrastructure planning.

- **Capacity Building Workshop 2 – Curriculum Development**. CBW2 combined expert input, interactive workshops, institutional reflection, and international learning activities related to Science Shop 2.0, community service learning, curriculum development, and institutional integration of Open Science. Participants worked on institutional visions and discussed different international approaches to service learning and societal engagement. The workshop is assessed as **Excellent in programme relevance and learning design**, providing a strong methodological basis for subsequent development of formal and informal Open Science curricula.

- **Capacity Building Workshop 3 – Open Science Policies**. CBW3 combined expert presentations, institutional visits, discussions, and hands-on group work related to Open Science strategies, institutional policy frameworks, accreditation, research data

management, Open Access, and curriculum development. The programme also incorporated practical policy-drafting and institutional planning activities, strengthening its direct applicability to subsequent OPEN-ASIA regulatory outputs. The workshop is assessed as **Excellent**, particularly in terms of institutional applicability, practical orientation, and contribution to policy-development activities under WP5.

The consolidated quality assessment of the implemented events is presented below.

Table 4.1.2. Quality Assessment of Project Events and Capacity-Building Activities

ASSESSMENT CRITERION	EVALUATION
Implementation of Planned Activities	Excellent
Compliance with the Operational Plan	Excellent
Quality of Event Organisation	Excellent
Quality and Relevance of Programmes	Excellent
Participation and Institutional Representation	Excellent
Quality of Supporting Documentation	Very Good
Stakeholder Engagement and Interaction	Very Good
Learning Outcomes and Knowledge Transfer	Very Good
Contribution to Capacity Building	Excellent
Contribution to Project Objectives	Excellent
Overall Assessment	Excellent

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on internal monitoring records, event programmes, attendance documentation, technical reports, and quality assessment procedures.

Overall, the assessment confirms that the Consortium Meetings, Open Science Forums, and Capacity Building Workshops constituted a highly successful component of OPEN-ASIA implementation, engaging a total of 664 participants and providing strong support for consortium coordination, stakeholder dialogue, knowledge transfer, institutional capacity development, Open Science awareness, infrastructure planning, curriculum development, and policy reform. While the absence of systematic participant satisfaction surveys prevents quantitative assessment of participant perceptions, the available implementation evidence supports an overall Excellent performance level for the organisation, relevance, and strategic contribution of the project events.

4.2. Evaluation of Project Website, Communication Activities, Dissemination Outputs, and Visibility Compliance

4.2.1. Project Web and Social media Pages

The assessment of OPEN-ASIA digital communication infrastructure focused on the functionality, accessibility, content quality, visibility performance, and stakeholder outreach potential of the central project website, social media presence, and institutional project webpages. Following the communication approach established within the project, the consortium has developed a multi-channel digital environment supporting dissemination of project activities and results, visibility of Open Science initiatives, and communication with academic and external stakeholder communities. This structure follows the same evaluation logic applied in the reference section, which considers central project communication channels together with institutional-level visibility mechanisms.

The official OPEN-ASIA project website serves as the central public communication and information platform of the project. It provides access to information on the project objectives, partnership, activities, events, Open Science developments, and implementation progress and

supports dissemination of project news and results to external audiences. The platform represents the principal digital reference point for OPEN-ASIA and contributes to maintaining a coherent project identity and visibility throughout implementation.



The consortium additionally maintains a dedicated OPEN-ASIA LinkedIn page, which complements the project website by disseminating project news, event information, achievements, and Open Science-related content through a professional networking environment. The combination of website-based communication and LinkedIn dissemination supports broader visibility among higher education staff, researchers, students, Open Science practitioners, institutional stakeholders, and other professional communities.

In addition to the central project communication channels, all five Partner Country HEIs have established **dedicated institutional webpages for OPEN-ASIA**, ensuring that project information is also accessible through institutional communication structures:

- ✓ P1-UM – Universiti Malaya: OPEN-ASIA institutional webpage
- ✓ P2-TIET – Thapar Institute of Engineering and Technology: OPEN-ASIA institutional webpage
- ✓ P4-NMIMS – Narsee Monjee Institute of Management Studies: OPEN-ASIA institutional webpage
- ✓ P5-UMS – Universiti Malaysia Sabah: OPEN-ASIA institutional webpage
- ✓ P6-UNIMAS – Universiti Malaysia Sarawak: OPEN-ASIA institutional webpage

The institutional webpages strengthen local ownership and institutional visibility by communicating OPEN-ASIA objectives, activities, events, Open Science initiatives, and institutional contributions directly to university communities. Their establishment across all five Partner Country HEIs represents a particularly positive element of the communication framework, ensuring that dissemination does not rely exclusively on the central project website but is embedded within participating institutions.

Overall, the assessment confirms that OPEN-ASIA has successfully established the core digital communication infrastructure foreseen for the project. The central website, LinkedIn presence, and five institutional webpages provide broad digital coverage and support project visibility at

consortium and institutional levels. Further improvement during the remaining implementation period should focus on regular updating of content, systematic publication of approved public outputs and resources, and stronger monitoring of digital outreach and engagement indicators, in line with the continuous-improvement approach applied to communication activities. This is consistent with the reference assessment framework, which identifies continued updating, publication of outputs, and monitoring of digital engagement as important elements of long-term communication performance.

Table 4.2.1. Quality Assessment of Project Website, Social Media Channel, and Institutional Webpages

ASSESSMENT CRITERION	EVALUATION
Functionality and Accessibility	Excellent
Content Quality and Relevance	Very Good
Visibility of Erasmus+ and EU Support	Excellent
Website Structure and User Experience	Very Good
Social Media Presence and Outreach	Very Good
Institutional Webpage Coverage	Excellent
Compliance with Communication and Visibility Requirements	Excellent
Support for Dissemination and Stakeholder Engagement	Very Good
Sustainability and Long-Term Accessibility	Very Good
Overall Assessment	Very Good

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on review of OPEN-ASIA digital communication channels, institutional webpages, dissemination records, and internal monitoring documentation.

4.2.2. Dissemination and Communication Activities

The assessment of dissemination and communication activities focused on the extent to which OPEN-ASIA consortium partners implemented the dissemination measures foreseen within the project and contributed to raising awareness of **Open Science principles, project objectives, activities, and results** among higher education institutions, researchers, students, policymakers, and other relevant stakeholders. Following the approach applied in the reference assessment, the evaluation considered dissemination records, institutional communication evidence, project and institutional webpages, social media activities, event documentation, and other communication outputs produced during the reporting period.

Table 4.2.2. Summary of Dissemination and Communication Activities Implemented During the Reporting Period

Type of Activity	Number of Activities
Inter-Project Coaching Presentations	2
International dissemination activities	6
National Mass-media Dissemination	8
Institutional dissemination events	12
Institutional publications (website, social media, newspapers)	18
Total Dissemination Activities Reported	46

Source: Elaborated by the authors based on OPEN-ASIA dissemination records, institutional communication evidence, and project monitoring documentation.

The analysis demonstrates **active dissemination at international, national, and institutional levels**, combining inter-project cooperation, external presentations, mass-media communication,

institutional events, website publications, and social media activities. In total, **46 dissemination and communication activities** were reported, with particularly strong implementation at institutional level through 12 dissemination events and 18 publications. The two inter-project coaching activities additionally supported exchange of experience and visibility beyond the immediate OPEN-ASIA consortium.

Overall, the implemented activities demonstrate a **broad and diversified dissemination approach**, contributing to project visibility, stakeholder awareness, promotion of Open Science principles, and communication of project progress and emerging results. The combination of face-to-face engagement and digital communication has enabled the consortium to reach both institutional communities and wider external audiences, consistent with the dissemination approach applied in the reference quality assessment framework.

4.2.3. Visibility Compliance and Overall Assessment

The assessment of visibility compliance focused on the extent to which OPEN-ASIA partners adhered to the Erasmus+ communication and visibility requirements and the common project identity established through the OPEN-ASIA Brand Book and Dissemination and Exploitation Strategy. The review covered the project website, institutional webpages, LinkedIn communication, publications, event programmes, presentations, promotional materials, reports, and other communication outputs produced during the evaluated period, following the scope applied in the reference assessment.

The assessment confirms a **high level of visibility compliance across the consortium**. Reviewed communication and dissemination outputs consistently apply OPEN-ASIA visual identity elements and provide appropriate acknowledgement of European Union funding and Erasmus+ support. The central project website, LinkedIn page, and dedicated institutional webpages established by all five Partner Country HEIs further contribute to coherent project visibility at consortium and institutional levels.

The implementation of **46 reported dissemination and communication activities**, complemented by the established digital communication infrastructure, demonstrates strong institutional commitment to promoting OPEN-ASIA and strengthening awareness of Open Science in India and Malaysia. The communication framework provides a solid basis for continued dissemination and subsequent exploitation of project results. During the remaining implementation period, particular attention should be given to maintaining regular digital communication, strengthening international outreach, systematically publishing approved project outputs, and further monitoring the reach and impact of dissemination activities.

Overall, the assessment confirms a **Very Good to Excellent level of communication**, dissemination, and visibility performance, characterised by broad institutional engagement, diversified dissemination channels, consistent project branding, and strong compliance with Erasmus+ visibility requirements. The next implementation period should increasingly shift the emphasis from communication of project activities toward the dissemination, exploitation, and demonstrated uptake of completed OPEN-ASIA results, thereby strengthening the longer-term visibility and impact of the project.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND CORRECTIVE ACTIONS

5.1. Implementation Challenges and Mitigation Measures

During the evaluated implementation period, the OPEN-ASIA project encountered several administrative and implementation challenges requiring corrective measures at consortium and Grant Agreement level. These challenges did not affect the relevance of the project objectives or the consortium's commitment to their achievement; however, they influenced the sequencing and timing of selected activities and outputs. The principal corrective measures were formalised through two amendments to the Grant Agreement.

The first major challenge concerned the coordination and financial management of the project. The original coordinating institution, P4-NMIMS, encountered regulatory constraints under the Indian Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA), which prevented the transfer of received EU grant funds to other consortium institutions. The restriction became evident after receipt of the project funds and made it impossible for NMIMS to continue performing the financial responsibilities associated with the coordinator role. Following consultation with EACEA and agreement within the consortium, University of Malaya (P1-UM) assumed the role of project coordinator. The corresponding Amendment No. 1 concerning the change of coordinating institution was approved on 20 June 2025. The measure ensured continuity of project management and enabled compliant redistribution and management of project funds.

The coordinator transition nevertheless affected the timing of several implementation processes, particularly activities dependent on the transfer and availability of project funds, including equipment procurement and infrastructure development. These consequences were addressed through reinforced coordination, regular monitoring of pending activities, adjustment of implementation schedules, and follow-up with the institutions concerned.

A second implementation challenge concerned the time required to complete, validate and formally institutionalise the interconnected outputs planned for the later stages of the project. Several activities depend on institutional approval cycles, stakeholder engagement, operationalisation of Open Science infrastructure and Science Shops 2.0, curriculum piloting, and collection of sufficient evidence for impact assessment and final evaluation. The consortium therefore requested a nine-month extension, changing the project end date from 31 December 2026 to 30 September 2027 and extending the overall duration to 45 months, without modification of the project objectives, partnership structure or approved budget. The corresponding Amendment No. 2 became effective on 17 April 2026.

The project extension represents a preventive and quality-oriented mitigation measure, providing sufficient time to complete, validate, and institutionalise the remaining Open Science policies, infrastructure, curricula, Science Shops 2.0, stakeholder engagement, and impact-assessment activities. Together, the two approved amendments and revised implementation planning have effectively addressed the identified coordination and timing challenges, ensuring continuity of implementation and safeguarding the quality, sustainability, and achievement of the overall OPEN-ASIA objectives.

6. EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE AND INDEPENDENT REVIEW

6.1. Independent External Evaluation and Quality Review

The independent external evaluation of the OPEN-ASIA project was conducted within the quality assurance framework established under **WP2 – Project Management and Quality Control**. Following the evaluation mechanism applied within comparable Erasmus+ CBHE projects, the review was structured around the OECD DAC evaluation criteria of relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability and considered implementation progress, quality of project outputs, governance and coordination arrangements, dissemination and stakeholder engagement, risk management, and progress toward the project objectives.

The evaluation methodology combined desk review of project documentation, assessment of completed milestones and deliverables, analysis of implementation and monitoring records, review of dissemination and communication activities, and examination of project governance and quality assurance mechanisms. Particular attention was given to the extent to which OPEN-ASIA is contributing to the development of sustainable Open Science practices, infrastructure, institutional policies, and participatory mechanisms within Higher Education Institutions in **India and Malaysia**. This approach is consistent with the external review methodology applied in the reference QA framework.

The independent review confirms that OPEN-ASIA demonstrates **a** strong level of strategic relevance, implementation quality, institutional engagement, and progress toward its objectives. The project has established substantial analytical, methodological, infrastructural, regulatory, and capacity-building foundations for institutional Open Science transformation. While several operational and institutionalisation activities remain ongoing under the revised 45-month implementation timeline, the overall implementation trajectory remains positive.

Table 6.1. Summary of Independent External Evaluation Assessment

EVALUATION CRITERION	OVERALL ASSESSMENT
Relevance	Excellent
Coherence	Excellent
Effectiveness	Very Good
Efficiency	Very Good
Impact	Very Good
Sustainability	Excellent

Source: Independent external evaluation based on OECD DAC evaluation criteria and OPEN-ASIA project implementation evidence.

➢ RELEVANCE

The external evaluation confirms a high degree of alignment between the OPEN-ASIA objectives and the institutional and systemic need to strengthen Open Science practices in India and Malaysia.

Key observations include:

- ✓ The project addresses institutional needs related to Open Science governance, infrastructure, skills, policies, research practices, and stakeholder engagement.
- ✓ The analytical activities undertaken through WP3 provide an evidence-based foundation for subsequent institutional interventions.

- ✓ Capacity-building and institutional development activities respond directly to identified needs of Partner Country HEIs.
- ✓ The project maintains strong relevance to wider developments concerning Open Access, FAIR research data, responsible research practices, and Citizen Science.

External Assessment: OPEN-ASIA demonstrates excellent strategic relevance, with project interventions closely aligned with identified institutional needs and the broader transition toward sustainable Open Science practices.

➢ COHERENCE

The evaluation confirms a strong internal coherence between the project objectives, Work Packages, activities, and expected results, with outputs designed to progressively support institutional Open Science transformation.

Key observations include:

- ✓ WP3 analytical outputs establish the evidence base for infrastructure, curriculum, policy, and Citizen Science interventions.
- ✓ WP4 translates identified needs into infrastructure development plans, curriculum requirements, and institutional implementation mechanisms.
- ✓ WP5 builds upon these foundations through development of institutional Open Science regulatory frameworks.
- ✓ WP6 extends institutional transformation toward public engagement and participatory Open Science mechanisms.
- ✓ WP7 provides complementary dissemination, exploitation, sustainability, and impact-maximisation mechanisms.

External Assessment: OPEN-ASIA demonstrates excellent coherence, with a logical progression from analysis and capacity building toward institutional implementation, regulatory reform, stakeholder engagement, and sustainability.

➢ EFFECTIVENESS

The external review confirms very good implementation effectiveness, with the majority of outputs due within the evaluated period completed and several subsequent activities already under development.

Key observations include:

- ✓ Project management, quality assurance, analytical, benchmarking, and capacity-building activities have been successfully implemented.
- ✓ Major WP3 milestones and analytical outputs have established a strong evidence base for institutional transformation.
- ✓ Five institutional Open Science Infrastructure Development Plans have been completed, while Open Science platforms and curricula are progressing.
- ✓ The methodological foundation for institutional Open Science policy development has been established, with institutional policies currently under development.
- ✓ Dissemination, stakeholder engagement, and sustainability activities demonstrate substantial implementation progress.

Areas requiring continued attention include:

- Completion and operationalisation of institutional Open Science platforms.
- Finalisation and piloting of formal and informal Open Science curricula.
- Completion and institutional adoption of Open Science policies.
- Establishment and operationalisation of Science Shops 2.0.
- Implementation of systematic impact and satisfaction measurement.

External Assessment: The project demonstrates a Very Good level of effectiveness and remains well positioned to achieve its objectives within the revised implementation period.

EFFICIENCY

The evaluation confirms that OPEN-ASIA has established effective governance, monitoring, communication, and quality assurance mechanisms supporting implementation across a geographically distributed consortium.

Key observations include:

- ✓ Consortium Meetings and Online Consortium Meetings provide regular mechanisms for strategic and operational coordination.
- ✓ Trello, Google Drive, Zoom, and other digital communication tools support continuous implementation monitoring and document exchange.
- ✓ Internal monitoring and quality control mechanisms provide structured review of project activities and outputs.
- ✓ The change of coordinator and related financial-transfer constraints represented a significant implementation challenge but were addressed through formal corrective measures and Amendment No. 1.
- ✓ Amendment No. 2 and the extension to 45 months provided an appropriate mechanism for safeguarding the quality and institutionalisation of remaining outputs.

External Assessment: OPEN-ASIA demonstrates Very Good efficiency, with appropriate management and corrective mechanisms supporting continuity of implementation despite administrative and timing challenges.

IMPACT

Although several institutional transformation activities remain under implementation, the external review identifies strong emerging impact and considerable potential for longer-term institutional and systemic effects.

Key observations include:

- ✓ Awareness and institutional understanding of Open Science have been strengthened through Open Science Forums, capacity-building workshops, surveys, benchmarking, and dissemination activities.
- ✓ Institutional Open Science planning has advanced across the five Partner Country HEIs.
- ✓ Capacity-building activities have strengthened institutional competencies in infrastructure development, curriculum design, policy development, and participatory Open Science.
- ✓ The project has created methodological and organisational foundations for Open Science platforms, institutional policies, curricula, and Science Shops 2.0.
- ✓ Stakeholder engagement and dissemination activities have extended project visibility beyond the immediate consortium.

External Assessment: OPEN-ASIA demonstrates Very Good emerging impact, with substantial potential for institutional transformation and wider advancement of Open Science practices in India and Malaysia.

➢ SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability represents a particularly strong dimension of OPEN-ASIA project, with sustainability considerations progressively embedded within infrastructure, policy, curriculum, dissemination, and stakeholder-engagement activities.

Key observations include:

- ✓ Institutional Open Science Infrastructure Development Plans provide a foundation for continued development beyond the project period.
- ✓ Open Science policies and curricula are designed for institutional adoption and integration into university structures and practices.
- ✓ The Science Shop 2.0 model provides a mechanism for sustained university–society engagement.
- ✓ The Sustainability Plan establishes a strategic framework for continuation and exploitation of project results.
- ✓ Development of the Asian Network of Science Shops 2.0 provides additional potential for continued regional cooperation and exchange.
- ✓ The revised implementation timeline provides additional time for institutionalisation and validation of key project results before project closure.

External Assessment: OPEN-ASIA demonstrates Excellent sustainability potential, supported by institutional ownership, sustainability planning, and the integration of project results into longer-term university structures and practices.

OVERALL EXTERNAL EVALUATION CONCLUSION

The independent external evaluation concludes that OPEN-ASIA demonstrates a high level of strategic relevance, implementation quality, institutional commitment, and sustainability potential. The consortium has successfully established the analytical, methodological, infrastructural, and organisational foundations required for sustainable Open Science transformation in India and Malaysia. While several important components remain under implementation, particularly institutional policies, curricula, Open Science platforms, Science Shops 2.0, and impact-measurement activities, these are progressing within the revised implementation framework. Overall, the project is assessed as performing very well and remaining well positioned to achieve its expected objectives and generate sustainable institutional and wider Open Science impact.

7. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1. Strategic Recommendations for Continuous Quality Improvement and Project Implementation

The overall assessment conducted through the internal quality assurance framework and independent external evaluation confirms that the OPEN-ASIA project is progressing successfully toward its five Specific Objectives and demonstrates strong strategic relevance, implementation quality, institutional engagement, and sustainability potential. The consortium has established substantial analytical, methodological, infrastructural, regulatory, capacity-building, dissemination, and sustainability foundations for advancing Open Science in India and Malaysia. At the same time, several key institutionalisation and impact-oriented components remain under implementation within the revised **45-month project timeline**, requiring focused follow-up during the remaining project period.

Based on the findings of the internal and external evaluation processes, the following strategic recommendations are proposed:

- **1. Complete and Operationalise Institutional Open Science Infrastructure**

Following the completion of the five institutional Open Science Infrastructure Development Plans and equipment acquisition, priority should shift from planning toward full operationalisation. Partners should:

- finalise and ensure functionality of the institutional Open Science platforms;
- implement the measures and institutional responsibilities established within D4.1–D4.5;
- ensure appropriate technical maintenance, institutional ownership, and allocation of resources;
- systematically monitor implementation against the indicators and targets established within institutional plans.

WP4 has completed eight of nine planned outputs, while institutional OS platforms and curriculum-related activities remain under implementation.

- **2. Prioritise Completion and Implementation of Formal and Informal Open Science Curricula**

The consortium should ensure that the methodological foundations established through MS12 are translated into operational institutional curricula. Particular attention should be devoted to:

- finalising institutional formal and informal Open Science curricula;
- completing relevant institutional validation and approval procedures;
- ensuring alignment with identified Open Science skills gaps and institutional needs;
- preparing systematic piloting, participant feedback, evaluation, and subsequent curriculum improvement.

- **3. Accelerate Institutional Open Science Policy Development and Adoption**

The next implementation period should place particular emphasis on moving from the common methodological framework established under MS13 toward formal institutionalisation of Open Science regulatory frameworks. Partners should:

- finalise D5.1–D5.5 in accordance with institutional contexts and requirements;
- ensure formal consultation, validation, and adoption through the relevant university governance structures;

- complete the common methodology and indicators for monitoring Open Science implementation;
- establish clear institutional responsibilities for policy implementation, monitoring, and periodic review.

This is particularly important because SO4 remains at the institutional development stage, with the five Open Science policy packages and monitoring methodology still under development.

4. Ensure Effective Establishment and Operationalisation of Science Shops 2.0

As WP6 moves from preparation toward implementation, the consortium should ensure that the Science Shop 2.0 concept is translated into sustainable institutional mechanisms for Citizen Science and public engagement. Priority should be given to:

- finalising institutional establishment and regulatory arrangements for the OS Hubs;
- completing the Science Shops' Operational Plan and Science Shop 2.0 Handbook;
- defining operational responsibilities, stakeholder-engagement procedures, and monitoring mechanisms;
- implementing the planned Stakeholder Engagement Workshops and documenting their results;
- establishing practical links between Science Shops, academic communities, students, civil society, and external stakeholders.

These activities are appropriately scheduled for **M35–M45** under the revised implementation timeline and should therefore become a central implementation priority during the forthcoming period.

5. Strengthen Exploitation and Result-Oriented Dissemination

OPEN-ASIA has already achieved substantial visibility through international, national, and institutional dissemination. During the remaining period, communication should increasingly focus on the uptake and exploitation of completed project results. Partners should:

- systematically publish and promote validated public project outputs;
- increase targeted dissemination toward university leadership, policymakers, researchers, students, and other relevant stakeholders;
- strengthen international dissemination and inter-project cooperation;
- document how project outputs are being used, adopted, or integrated within participating institutions;
- ensure continued consistency with Erasmus+ and OPEN-ASIA visibility requirements.

The QA assessment specifically identifies the need to move from communicating project activities toward demonstrating the dissemination, exploitation, and uptake of concrete OPEN-ASIA results.

6. Strengthen Impact Measurement and Evidence-Based Monitoring

As OPEN-ASIA enters a more implementation- and institutionalisation-oriented phase, monitoring should increasingly focus on **results and impact rather than activity completion alone**. The consortium should:

- finalise and systematically apply the planned impact and satisfaction survey instruments;
- monitor institutional uptake of Open Science infrastructure, policies, curricula, and participatory mechanisms;
- collect comparable quantitative and qualitative evidence across Partner Country HEIs;

- use monitoring findings to identify necessary corrective measures and support evidence-based institutional decision-making;
- ensure that sufficient evidence is generated for the final quality assurance and external evaluation processes.

Systematic impact measurement remains one of the principal priorities identified for the remaining implementation period.

7. Consolidate Sustainability and Institutionalisation of Project Results

The strong sustainability potential identified by the evaluation should be converted into concrete institutional commitments before project closure. Partners should:

- embed Open Science infrastructure, policies, curricula, and Science Shops 2.0 within permanent institutional structures;
- define responsibilities and resources for maintaining project results beyond EU funding;
- continue implementation of the Sustainability Plan;
- advance the establishment and functioning of the Asian Network of Science Shops 2.0;
- pursue further institutional, national, and international partnerships supporting continuation and scalability of OPEN-ASIA results.

The external evaluation identifies sustainability as an **Excellent** dimension of the project, supported by institutional infrastructure planning, policy and curriculum integration, the Science Shop 2.0 model, sustainability planning, and regional networking mechanisms.

8. Maintain Strengthened Monitoring of the Revised Implementation Timeline

Following the two approved project amendments, particular attention should be given to ensuring that the additional implementation period is used effectively for completion, validation, and institutionalisation rather than merely extending activity implementation. The consortium should maintain close monitoring of remaining outputs, institutional approval processes, interdependent activities, and critical deadlines. Amendment No. 2 provides the necessary timeframe for completing the remaining policies, infrastructure, curricula, Science Shops 2.0, stakeholder engagement, and impact-assessment activities; systematic follow-up will therefore be essential to ensure their timely and high-quality completion.

Overall, the evaluation concludes that OPEN-ASIA is well positioned to achieve its intended objectives within the revised implementation period. The principal priority should now be the transition from methodological development and institutional planning toward full operationalisation, formal institutional adoption, exploitation, impact measurement, and sustainable integration of project results. Consistent implementation of the above recommendations will strengthen the quality of the remaining activities and support the long-term institutionalisation of Open Science practices across Partner Country HEIs in India and Malaysia.

Annex 1. Deliverables and Milestones Assessment Summary Table

Table A1. Summary Assessment of Deliverables and Milestones

WP	Deliverable / Milestone	Type	Status	Completion Rate (%)	Assessment Score (1–5)	Performance Level
WP1	MS1. Management Documents	Milestone	Completed	100	4.8	Excellent
	MS2. Promotional Package	Milestone	Completed	100	4.9	Excellent
	WP1 Overall			100	4.8	Excellent
WP2	MS3. Operational Plan and QA Measures	Milestone	Completed	100	4.8	Excellent
	D2.1 Monitoring & Evaluation Manual	Deliverable	Completed	100	4.8	Excellent
	D2.2 Quality Assurance Report	Deliverable	In Progress	80	N/A	Not Assessed
	D2.3 Progress Report	Deliverable	Completed	100	4.8	Excellent
	WP2 Overall			75	4.8	Excellent
WP3	MS5. Self-Evaluation Open Science Tool	Milestone	Completed	100	4.8	Excellent
	MS6. Benchmark Report on Best Practices of OS Implementation in HE	Milestone	Completed	100	4.7	Excellent
	MS7. Survey Report on OS Skills Gaps in PCs	Milestone	Completed	100	4.8	Excellent
	MS8. Survey on Citizen Science Practices	Milestone	Completed	100	4.7	Excellent
	MS9. Recommendations to Mainstream Open Science at National and University Level	Milestone	Completed	100	4.7	Excellent
	D3.3 Needs Analysis	Deliverable	Completed	100	5.0	Excellent
	WP3 Overall			100	4.8	Excellent
WP4	MS10. Concept Note of the OS-Infrastructure Development Plan	Milestone	Completed	100	4.0	Very Good
	MS11. Science Shop 2.0 Model	Milestone	Completed	100	4.3	Very Good

	MS12. Requirements for OS Formal and Informal Curriculum	Milestone	Completed	100	4.0	Very Good
	D4.1 Open Science Infrastructure Development Plan – P1-UM	Deliverable	Completed	100	4.7	Excellent
	D4.2 Open Science Infrastructure Development Plan – P2-TIET	Deliverable	Completed	100	4.8	Excellent
	D4.3 Open Science Infrastructure Development Plan – P4-NMIMS	Deliverable	Completed	100	4.3	Very Good
	D4.4 Open Science Infrastructure Development Plan – P5-UMS	Deliverable	Completed	100	4.5	Very Good
	D4.5 Open Science Infrastructure Development Plan – P6-UNIMAS	Deliverable	Completed	100	5.0	Excellent
	WP4 Overall			89	4.5	Very Good
WP5	MS13. Requirements for OS Policy Development at Institutional Level	Milestone	Completed	100	4.5	Very Good
	WP5 Overall			14	4.5	Very Good
WP6	*No deliverables or milestones due and assessed during the reporting period*	—	Not Due	0	N/A	Not Assessed
	WP6 Overall			0	N/A	Not Assessed
WP7	MS17. Dissemination and Exploitation Report – Part 1	Milestone	Completed	100	4.2	Very Good
	MS19. Sustainability Plan	Milestone	Completed	100	4.7	Excellent
	D7.1 Dissemination and Exploitation Strategy	Deliverable	Completed	100	4.4	Very Good
	WP7 Overall			60	4.4	Very Good

Table A2 Summary of Work Package Performance

Work Package	Completion Rate (%)	Assessment Score	Performance Level
WP1 – Project Preparation	100	4.8	Excellent
WP2 – Project Management and Quality Control	75	4.8	Excellent
WP3 – Boosting Inclusive, Responsible and Collaborative Open Science Ecosystem	100	4.8	Excellent
WP4 – Advancing University Open Science Infrastructure and Practices	89	4.5	Very Good
WP5 – Reforming University Open Science Regulatory Framework	14	4.5	Very Good
WP6 – Fostering Public Engagement and Participatory Mechanisms in Science	0	N/A	N/A
WP7 – Dissemination, Exploitation and Impact Maximization	60	4.4	Very Good
Overall Project Performance	61	4.6	Very Good to Excellent