The project ABC4E wants to improve open innovation in ERI science-driven projects. To achieve this goal, we will design and test behavioral training that develops scientists' psychological flexibility, a key entrepreneurial skill, and empower knowledge exchange in open innovation processes.

In an open innovation context, scientists display different degrees of openness, with different open innovation attitudes. Scientists' disposition to evaluate external knowledge and to share internal knowledge will affect how the results of their research will be open or closed, impacting programs’ performance such as ATTRACT. To adopt knowledge from the outside and share knowledge from the inside, knowledge boundaries need to be dismantled.
Open innovation literature studied negative attitudes such as the Not Invented Here (NIH) connected to knowledge absorption behavior, and the Not Sold Here (NSH) connected to knowledge sharing behavior. Literature shows which construct (e.g. perspective taking) acts as countermeasures to those attitudes at the individual level, to increase knowledge exchange behaviors, but does not provide practical tools and interventions that support individuals in modifying their behaviors on constructs such as perspective taking and recategorization. The latest inputs from management scholars identified, as countermeasures, specific elements that behavioral psychology connects to psychological flexibility.

Acceptance Commitment Therapy (ACT) works at the level of behaviors to improve individuals’ psychological flexibility. In this study, we experiment at the individual level to try to modify scientists’ behaviors with psychological training, integrating two different disciplines. We will test whether it is possible to train scientists at developing entrepreneurial skills by targeting their psychological flexibility and whether such training improves scientists’ open innovation performances. To do this, we will adapt ACT to ERI contexts for open innovation in science. ACT is already used not only in clinical environments but also in contexts of high performance as distress’ management, in work and sports contexts.

The results of the study will consist of the definition of training for scientists that want to improve their open innovation competencies and their capabilities to transfer the results of basic research to society. The training will be a helpful tool for ERI managers as well since they will be able to assess the scientists in their organization who need support to develop open innovation competencies. Finally, policy makers will benefit from the study since they will be able to use the training tool as another tool or proxy to maximize funded projects’ success.

The research assistant will support the team in the project development, both in terms of project goals achievement and research development.