How to prepare project proposals for HORIZON 2020

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Introduction

1. Sources of information prior to proposal preparation
2. Structure and content of proposals
3. Evaluation process
4. How and when commencing proposal writing
5. The ‘big picture’
1. Sources of information prior to proposal preparation
Official website of HORIZON2020:

http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/
PARTICIPANT PORTAL:


1-Funding opportunities (http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/index.html)
2-How to participate (http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/funding/index.html)
EU POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

• Europe 2020 strategy [http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/index_en.htm]

• EU policies in all areas [http://ec.europa.eu/policies/index_en.htm]

• The European Semester [http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/making-it-happen/index_en.htm]

The European Semester (yearly cycle of economic policy coordination: detailed analysis of EU Member States' programmes of economic and structural reforms including recommendations for the next 12-18 months)
2. Structure and content of proposals
Structure of a Horizon 2020 proposal:


PART A: administrative forms

PART B: research proposal
PART A: administrative forms

• Administrative and organisational information

• key words

• abstract

...are crucial!!!
PART B: research proposal

• 1- Excellence (science)

• 2- Impact

• 3- Quality and Efficiency of the Implementation

• 4- Members of the Consortium

• 5- Ethics and Security Issues
1- Excellence (science)

- Objectives
- Relation to the work programme: addressing the challenge and scope
- Concept and approach: TRL! trans-disciplinary approach, methodology
- Ambition: ground-breaking nature of the objectives, concepts involved, issues and problems to be addressed beyond state-of-the-art = innovation potential!}
2- Impact

Expected impact on:

• impact indication in the work programme

• enabling and improving innovation capacities (new knowledge, knowledge transfer, evidence based policy making, policy innovations) EU-level!!!

• barriers/obstacles/assumptions/risks (impact level, not project level)
Measures to maximise impact:

• dissemination and exploitation of R&D results

• transfer of R&D results

• sustainability of impact?

• knowledge management strategy (data management, IPR?, open access!)
Communication strategy:

- communication, promotion, dissemination and networking
3- Quality and Efficiency of the Implementation

- Work plan — Work packages, deliverables and milestones

- WP-objectives, timeline, description, deliverables, lead partner and role of partners and risk analyses (including mitigation measures)

- Management structure

- Consortium description (multi-sector, geographical)

- Resources needed (direct and indirect)
4- Members of the Consortium

- Description of partners (profile, tasks, why they are the match?)

- Curriculum vitae of lead persons (gender!)

- Description of publications, services, products, achievements and projects relevant for the project (background, qualification, credibility)

- Available infrastructure

- Third parties involvement (subcontracting? affiliated entities?)
5- Ethics and Security Issues
Typical grant/consortium:

- > 10 (8-15 partners)
- > 5 countries (geographical component)
- Multi-sector
- 100% direct cost funding (by EC = no co-financing)
- 25% flat rate indirect costs
Finances & budget

• Based on elaborated WORKPACKAGES: activities, deliverables and partner roles within the project
  
  ▪ preliminary budget estimation (at the very beginning)
  
  ▪ determination of the budget after elaboration of respective WP (1-2 months before submission)
3. Evaluation process
ELIGIBILITY CHECK:

deadline, number of partners, form A/B, budget, etc.
Evaluation step I: external evaluators

previous slide: PART A: administrative forms (key words and abstract!)

Key words = selection of evaluator!

Abstract = first impression (determines the entire assessment)
Evaluation step I: external evaluators  (three assessment reports)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Excellence (Science)</th>
<th>up to 5</th>
<th>min. 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Impact</td>
<td>up to 5</td>
<td>min. 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementation</td>
<td>up to 5</td>
<td>min. 4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximum</td>
<td>15 (Threshold 10)</td>
<td>14.5</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Evaluation greed

Evaluation step II: EC + experts

- Consensus meeting 3 external evaluators (consensus report)
- Panel review and ranking of proposals (commission: EC and experts)
- Selection: “political priorities” in hierarchical order:
  1. Excellence
  2. Impact
  3. Implementation
  4. SME involvement
  5. Country balance
  6. International partner
4. How and when commencing proposal writing
Preparation phase

STEP 1: first draft (= project concept) – **before open call**

STEP 2: Answer the evaluation questions in 2-3 sentences!!

STEP 3: Project summary (ONE PAGE PROPOSAL) – **open call**
## ONE PAGE PROPOSAL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Title/ACRONYM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Objective</strong></td>
<td>The aim of the proposal is to...&lt;br&gt;The key research question/challenge is to...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Background/short description</strong></td>
<td>1 Why bother? What problem are you trying to solve?&lt;br&gt;2 Is it a European priority? Could it be solved at National level?&lt;br&gt;3 Is the solution already available?&lt;br&gt;4 Why now? What would happen if we did not do this now?&lt;br&gt;5 Why you? Are you the best people to do this work?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Results/impact</strong></td>
<td>Expected results - what will come out of the project?&lt;br&gt;Who will use the results?&lt;br&gt;Why do they want to use the results?&lt;br&gt;How are you planning the transfer of results?&lt;br&gt;What will be changed? Post project situation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Activities/phases (science part)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Project consortium</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Duration/costs</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Purpose of ONE PAGE PROPOSAL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Before the call</th>
<th>Research idea / First draft</th>
<th>Colleagues</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>FPZG RO &amp; management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Potential project partners</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Open call</th>
<th>One page proposal</th>
<th>National Contact Point</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Project partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>=lobbying document!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FROM THE IDEA TO THE CALL

IDEA

• anytime, min. 6-9 months before deadline
• contact your support service
• detect potential project partners
• meet your NCP
• commence the ONE PAGE PROPOSAL
• allocate funds for project proposal writing (meetings/travel, editing and proof reading)

OPEN CALL
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st stage</td>
<td><strong>Consortium meeting</strong>&lt;br&gt;Aim of the project, research question, distribution of work&lt;br&gt;(Science, Management and Editors!!)</td>
<td>5-6 months before deadline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd stage</td>
<td><strong>Homework</strong>&lt;br&gt;Proposal writing&lt;br&gt;(inputs from partners – WP leaders and coordinator!)</td>
<td>4-5 months before deadline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd stage</td>
<td><strong>Preparation of first draft of Proposal</strong>&lt;br&gt;First proposal draft&lt;br&gt;(summarised by lead scientist and support service: science, impact, implementation)</td>
<td>3 months before deadline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th stage</td>
<td><strong>Core group meeting</strong>&lt;br&gt;IN or OUT&lt;br&gt;Final agreement&lt;br&gt;(aim and research question, WP, timeline, outputs/deliverables, budget, etc.)</td>
<td>3 months before deadline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th stage</td>
<td><strong>Full proposal completion</strong>&lt;br&gt;Proposal writing (including editing, proof read and external review)&lt;br&gt;(Lead scientist, Support service, External experts)</td>
<td>Last two months</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WHY this timeline?
1. Average time spent by coordinator: 350-450 hours = 45-60 working days (full time)

2. Average time spent by Work package leader: 70-100 hours = 9-14 working days (full time)

3. Approx. 50% Emailing (!!!)

= 2-3 months, full time ???

= 4-5 hours Emailing per day???
Bear in mind...

...proposal must be relevant to FPZG plans and direction

...available resources for sound preparation?

...proposal by researchers that never worked together? Never met before?

...proposal must be relevant to EU strategies / EU level
5. The big picture
## "Technology readiness level – TRL"
*(applied for social sciences and humanities)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>TRL</strong></th>
<th><strong>Development Stage</strong></th>
<th><strong>Implementations</strong></th>
<th><strong>Policy</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Actual system proven in an operational environment</td>
<td>IMPLEMENTATION</td>
<td>Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>System completed and qualified</td>
<td>DECISION MAKING</td>
<td>Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>System prototype demonstrated in an operational environment</td>
<td>Policy formulation and dissemination (advocacy!)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(POLICY MAKING)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Technology demonstrated in a relevant environment</td>
<td>Piloting, simulating, validating</td>
<td>R&amp;D SSH and transfer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Technology validated in a relevant environment</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Technology validated in the laboratory</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Experimental Proof of concept</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Technology concept formulated</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Basic principles observed</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• Where is my project?

• Where are my ideas?

• Where are my expected results?

• Where are the users of project results?

• Where are the end users? The final beneficiaries?
<table>
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<tr>
<th>TRL 9</th>
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<td>TRL 7</td>
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<td>Policy</td>
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<td>Technology demonstrated in a relevant environment</td>
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<td>TRL 5</td>
<td>Technology validated in a relevant environment</td>
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<td>Experimental Proof of concept</td>
<td>Proof of concept/idea/methodology</td>
<td>R&amp;D SSH</td>
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<tr>
<td>TRL 2</td>
<td>Technology concept formulated</td>
<td>Idea formulated, methodology chosen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRL 1</td>
<td>Basic principles observed</td>
<td>IDEA</td>
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## Project results & impact

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scientific R&D
vs.
policy/advocacy R&D
= balance
HORIZON 2020

Project partners
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099-4994799