

Project generation and proposal writing

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NCP ENVIR


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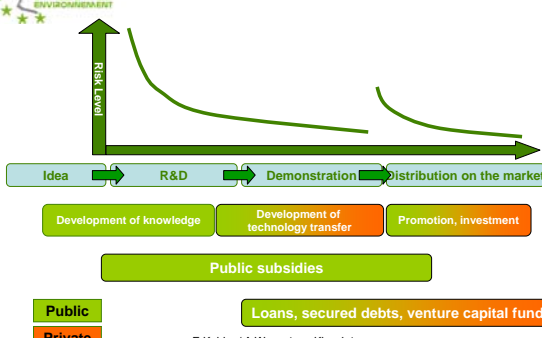
 

From the Idea to the Project

Fit to the call


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 **Public subsidies for innovation**



Public Loans, secured debts, venture capital fund
Private


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Choose the right subject

- **Read carefully the Workprogramme (in English)**
 - ▶ **Split by Activity/Domain :**
 - **Topic :**
 - » Content/scope: relevance of your idea compared to the wording of the topic become an eligibility criteria
 - » Funding scheme: kind of project asked and size of the EC contribution
 - » Expected impact: evaluation criteria
 - » Other information: SME's participation, international cooperation


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Participation and eligibility

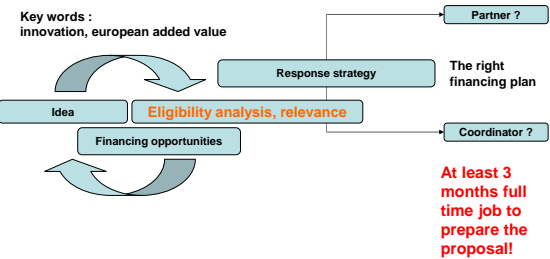
- **Who can participate?**
 - Any legal entity from a Member State, Associate State, third country
 - Public research organisations, private research centers
 - Enterprises (including SMEs), innovative or not
 - Associations, regional actors
- **Minimum conditions of participation**
 - At least 3 Partners from 3 different Member states (EU 27) or Associated countries (MS/AC)
 - Except for International cooperation actions : 2 MS/AC + 2 ICPC
- **Eligibility criteria ?**
 - Partners from Member states and Associate states
 - Partners from International Cooperation Countries (ICPC)
- **Various schemes of financing :**
 - Large scale Collaborative Projects (LCP): one project per topic; 4-7 M €/project (except if specified otherwise)
 - Small collaborative research projects(SCP); 2 projects/topic; max. 3.5 M €/project (except if specified otherwise)
 - Specific Support and Coordination Action (CSA); No maximum number of proposals for CSA; max. 1 M€ / project

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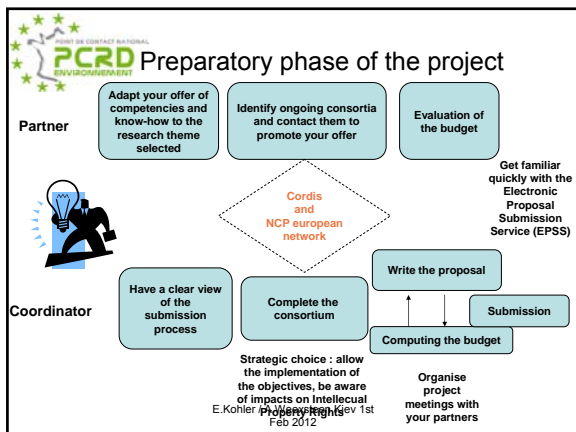
Orientation phase of the project

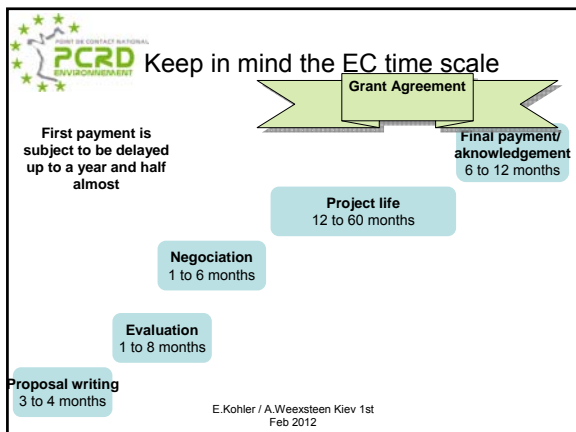
Key words :
innovation, european added value





At least 3 months full time job to prepare the proposal!

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How to write a good proposal

Proposal structure


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1: Scientific and/or technical quality, relevant to the topics addressed by the call : 1.1 Concept and objectives

- **Formal Guidance**
Explain the concept of your project : what are the main ideas that led you to propose this work?
Describe in detail the S&T objectives.
Show how they relate to the topics addressed by the call, which you should explicitly identify.
The objectives should be those achievable within the project, not through subsequent development.
They should be stated in a measurable and verifiable form, including through the milestones.

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A case study

- **ENV.2011.1.1.6-1 Impacts of a global temperature increase of 2°C from pre-industrial level, in Europe and most vulnerable regions of the world**
 - The proposed research activities should enhance **knowledge** and quantify the **impacts of climate** change in **selected areas** of Europe (including regional seas where relevant) and a set of most vulnerable regions arising from a global averaged surface temperature change of 2°C from pre-industrial level. The scope of activities should include the identification of projected impacts related to more ambitious **mitigation** targets (e.g. 1,5 C) and consider the impacts from **climate air-pollution** interactions. Climate change impacts on the **natural environment and society** should involve **observations**, global and regional climate **modelling**. An updated assessment of the **economic costs** of the impacts should also be carried out. Options for **adaptation** in the regions covered should be proposed and assessed. The project will include a **dissemination and awareness raising** programme towards society and policy-makers.

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Concept

The X project sets out to investigate global warming and its impacts at critical sites in Europe and in some hotspots in the world.

Urgent questions need to be addressed such as :

- what will be the impact of climate change on land-use, marine ecosystems, coastal cities or natural hazards?
- what are the direct effects of man's impact and how can we adapt or mitigate these impacts?

Answering these questions will require complex experiments combined with long-term monitoring of sensitive environments

Be aware that the topic here is **not** dedicated to climate change but impacts of climate change

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Objectives

- To better understand global climate change in connection with air pollution and anthropogenic pressures by optimizing data mining and modelling protocols
- To investigate global warming at regional level
- To quantify impacts on the natural environment and society through relevant thematic approaches
- To provide stakeholders and policy-makers with scientific knowledge and economic cost models to support mitigation and adaptation measures

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Good practice

- Address the key questions:
 - What problem are you trying to solve?
 - Is it a European priority? (Could it be solved at National level?)
 - Is the solution already available? (Products, service, technology transfer?)
 - Why now? (What would happen if this research was not completed now?)
 - Why you? (Do you have the best consortium to do this work?)
- Start off with a single high level objective that will enable the evaluator to immediately see that the proposal is related to the topic of the call.
- If the project is not for a demonstration call, avoid the use of the term 'demonstration' and use instead terms such as 'trial', 'systems test' etc.

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Evaluators' expectations

- The evaluator wants to quickly understand what the proposal is about, its objective, scope and relevance to the call. This should be apparent both in the abstract and right at the beginning of the first section.
- The project idea has to match the call – refer to the call text and the expected impacts described by EC in the Thematic Work Programme.
- The project should have a substantial research content that will make clear and verifiable advances beyond the state of the art. The proposal should not be a sales and marketing document, nor a product development plan.

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1.2 Progress beyond the state-of-the-art

- **Formal Guidance**
- *Describe the state-of-the-art in the area concerned, and the advance that the proposed project would bring about. If applicable, refer to the results of any patent search you might have carried out.*

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Good practice

- Describe the relevant state of the art of the science and knowledge in the area being addressed by the proposal.
- Define the **added value** of your project in relation with the state of the art (lean on catalogs of existing projects and on recent publications in your scientific field)
- **Highlight any related EU-funded work** (previous and current). If necessary describe how the project differs or is better.
- Clearly indicate **gaps** in the state of the art that currently prevent the achievement of the objectives targeted by the project.
- Clearly indicate how these gaps will be filled, and link this to the methodology.

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Evaluators' expectations

- A convincing argument that what is proposed extends beyond the current state of the art.
- A demonstration that the proposer is aware of the latest developments in the field and the contribution that the proposed project will make to the body of knowledge.
- The development of appropriate methodologies for filling the current gaps in the knowledge and science in order to achieve the objectives of the project.
- Links to the work plan for the project – not just a literature review, but with a clear coherency and consistency with the rest of the proposal.

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1.3 S/T methodology and associated work plan

- **Formal Guidance**
A detailed work plan should be presented, broken down into work packages (WPs) which should follow the logical phases of the implementation of the project, and include consortium management and assessment of progress and results. (Please note that your overall approach to management will be described later, in section 2).
Present your plans as follows:
Describe the overall strategy of the work plan (maximum length: 1 page).
Show the timing of the different WPs and their components (Gantt chart or similar)
Provide a detailed work description broken down into work packages:
Work package list:
Deliverables list:
List of milestones:
Description of each work package:
Summary effort table
Provide a graphical presentation of the components showing their interdependencies (Pert diagram or similar)
Describe any significant risks, and associated contingency plans.


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Workpackage list

- WP1 : Project management
- WP2 : Data management
- WP3 : Land-use
- WP4 : Marine ecosystems
- WP5 : Coastal cities
- WP6 : Natural hazards
- WP7 : Integrated mitigation and adaptation strategies
- WP8 : Economic cost models
- WP9 : Dissemination and awareness raising

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Workpackage description

WP1 Project Management

Work package number	1	Start date or starting event:		Month 1
Work package title	Project Management			
Activity type	MGT			
Participant number	1			
Participant short name	CRIS			
Participants per participant	10			
Objectives				
Description of work (possibly broken down into tasks), and role of participants				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Task 1.1 – Operational project management Task 1.2 – Meeting organization Task 1.3 – Project Reporting 				
Deliverables (brief description and month of delivery)				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> D1.1: Consultation agreement (M 1) D1.2: Project Management Plan (M 2) D1.3: Reporting to the Commission (M 12, 24, 36, 48) 				


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Good practice

- The break down into work packages is achieved by thinking through the project from start to finish and identifying the key chunks of work.
- How many WPs depends on the size and complexity of the project, but a good guide would be to have 5 or 6 WPs in addition to the Management and Dissemination WPs.
- The project should have a phased start up
- Have PERT and GANNT charts that are really consistent with the work programme as described in the text and in the tables.
- Ensure the manpower effort for each partner and WP is credible, without seriously under/over estimating.
- Ensure that there are no resources required which appear not to be foreseen.


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Evaluators' expectations

- A rationale for the implementation method.
- A description of the alternatives considered.
- Adequate phasing and check points.
- The system is designed as appropriate.
- An assessment of the technical risks and contingencies.
- Reference to other work and other funded projects.


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2. Implementation
2.1 Management structure and procedures

- **Formal Guidance**
- Describe the organisational structure and decision-making mechanisms of the project.
- Show how they are matched to the complexity and scale of the project.
- *(Maximum length for Section 2.1: five pages)*


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Good practice

- The implementation section should describe:
 - how the project will be managed,
 - what are the decision making processes in the project management,
 - how the consortium will communicate,
 - how quality will be assured,
 - how conflicts will be resolved, and
 - how legal and ethical obligations will be met.
- The proposal should provide a clear and convincing description of the quality and skills of the key individuals in the management structure.
- Each of the key management bodies and teams should be described, including how they will interact with one another.

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Evaluators' expectations

- A concise and complete description of the management structure and procedures for the project that is appropriate to the size and complexity of the project.
- Well qualified individuals for the key project management positions – multi-partner collaborative and international projects are complicated and extensive experience is required of the project manager to ensure that they do not fail.
- A convincing description that communications within the project will be effective and efficient.

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2.2 Individual participants

- **Formal Guidance**
- *For each participant in the proposed project, provide a brief description of the legal entity, the main tasks they have been attributed, and the previous experience relevant to those tasks. Provide also a short profile of the staff members who will be undertaking the work.*
- *Maximum length for Section 2.2: one page per participant. However, where two or more departments within an organisation have quite distinct roles within the proposal, one page per department is acceptable.*
- *The maximum length applying to a legal entity composed of several members, each of which is a separate legal entity, is one page per member, provided that the members have quite distinct roles within the proposal.*

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Good practice

- Provide concise and relevant information on the partners and key individuals from the partners. Omit irrelevant information or details that undermine the case for including the partner. The one sheet format will force to be very practical
- Provide particular information on the skills and experience of the Project Manager and Project Coordinator, demonstrating experience of successful international project management


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Evaluators' expectations

- A brief description of each partner that clearly demonstrates their role in the project.
- A description of key individuals from each partner that demonstrates appropriate levels of skills, competencies and experience.


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2.3 Consortium as a whole

- **Formal Guidance**
- *Describe how the participants collectively constitute a consortium capable of achieving the project objectives, and how they are suited and are committed to the tasks assigned to them. Show the complementarity between participants. Explain how the composition of the consortium is well-balanced in relation to the objectives of the project.*
- *If appropriate describe the industrial/commercial involvement to ensure exploitation of the results, and how the opportunity of involving SMEs has been addressed.*


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Good practice

- Detail who the partners are, what their roles and functions in the consortium are, and how they complement each other.
- Divide the consortium into key groups, such as Scientific Providers/Experts, Research Integrators, Technology Providers, and End Users etc.
- Avoid token partners: such as SMEs, large companies, famous research groups, or partners that are clearly there just for cosmetic reasons
- Good geographical and technical balance

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Evaluators' expectations

- A concise description of how the consortium has been built up and how it provides the correct mix of organisations to meet the project's objectives.
- A description of how the partners together are capable of achieving the project's objectives, that no one organisation could otherwise do.
- A demonstration of the complementarity between partners.
- The consortium represents a true collaboration – there is not a single partner in each WP, or all partners in all WPs, or one partner doing all of the work.

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2.4 Resources to be committed

- **Formal Guidance**
- Describe how the totality of the necessary resources will be mobilised, including any resources that will complement the EC contribution. Show how the resources will be integrated in a coherent way, and show how the overall financial plan for the project is adequate.
- In addition to the costs indicated in Part A3 of the proposal, and the staff effort shown in section 1.3 above, please indicate any other major costs (e.g. equipment).
- **Please ensure that the figures stated in part B are consistent with those in Part A.**
- *(Maximum length for Section 2.4 – five pages)*

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Good practice

- Ensure a well balanced budget with no partners being allocated a disproportionate amount of the budget.
- Justify key items of expenditure, particularly high equipment costs.


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Evaluators' expectations

- A well-balanced budget in terms of its spread across partners and across Member States.
- Properly justified key expenditure items.
- Appropriate management costs (up to, say, 7 or 8% of the overall budget).


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3. Impact
3.1 Expected impacts listed in the work programme

- **Formal Guidance**
- Describe how your project will contribute towards the expected impacts listed in the work programme in relation to the topic or topics in question. Mention the steps that will be needed to bring about these impacts. Explain why this contribution requires a European (rather than a national or local) approach. Indicate how account is taken of other national or international research activities. Mention any assumptions and external factors that may determine whether the impacts will be achieved.


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Good practice

- Demonstrate how the project will fill knowledge gaps at a European level and create or maintain a European lead (competitive advantage).
- Provide supporting evidence in the form of figures and qualitative indicators.
- Demonstrate relevance to European policies.

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Evaluators' expectations

- A comprehensive description of how the proposed project will impact at various levels – scientific, environmental, economic, social and policy.
- A comprehensive description of how the proposed project will **contribute to implement EU policies**, action plans, regulations...
- Arguments backed-up by market research and figures.
- A section that puts the proposal into context and describes the bigger picture.

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3.2 Dissemination and/or exploitation of project results, and management of intellectual property

- **Formal Guidance**
- Describe the measures you propose for the dissemination and/or exploitation of project results, and how these will increase the impact of the project. In designing these measures, you should take into account a variety of communication means and target groups as appropriate (e.g. policy-makers, interest groups, media and the public at large).
- For more information on communication guidance, see http://ec.europa.eu/research/sciencesociety/science-communication/index_en.htm or CORDIS.
- Describe also your plans for the management of knowledge (intellectual property) acquired in the course of the project.
- *(Maximum length for the whole of Section 3 – ten pages)*

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Good practice

- Provide a description of the range of applications, which might arise from the project and how they may be disseminated to key audiences and used by them.
- Identify the key stakeholders and End User Groups that will be targeted.
- The partners' capacity to exploit the results of the project should be described, including how intellectual property will be handled.


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Evaluators' expectations


- A credible and comprehensive description of how the results arising from the proposed project will be disseminated to key stakeholders and how they will be exploited within and beyond the consortium, both during the project and afterwards.

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Project evaluation


Guidelines



Who are the evaluators?

- Evaluations are performed by a panel of independent experts approved by the EC
 - Not all evaluators are experts in your field (also management skills, technology transfer, cross-cutting issues)
 - Don't write your proposal like a scientific paper
 - Register on the cordis website to become an evaluator!


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Evaluation procedure

- Individual evaluation
 - Remote evaluation by at least three experts
- Consensus meeting
 - Once the experts have completed their individual evaluation report they convene for the consensus meeting moderated by a representative of the EC. They agree on a consensus score for each criteria. The outcome is the consensus report.


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Evaluation procedure

- Panel review (chaired by the EC)
 - Reviewing cases where a minority view was recorded in the consensus report
 - Recommending a priority order for proposals with the same consensus score
 - Making recommendations on possible clustering or combination of proposals
 - Outcomes:
 - Evaluation summary report
 - Ranking list and reserve list (depending on budget)
 - List of evaluated proposals having failed

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Evaluation criteria


Criteria:

- 1) Scientific and/or technology excellence
- 2/3) Management quality and consortium
- 3/2) Impacts

Thresholds for potential financing are shown in the workprogramme; usually

- scores are ranging from 0 to 5 for each criterion
- The threshold for individual criteria will be 3
- The overall threshold will be 10.

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Why contacting the NCP?

- **3 bad reasons to contact a NCP**
 - Ask the NCP to build your business plan
 - Ask the NCP to write your proposal
 - Ask the NCP to push a proposal before or after evaluation results
- **3 good reasons to contact a NCP**
 - The NCP can help to identify the right topic in the FP7
 - The NCP can give feed back on the quality of your project
 - The NCP can help to find partners through dedicated websites or the network of NCPs

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