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EU project proposal writing

Corso dottorato in Scienze sociali

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Part I - Basic principles

Project idea

The request for funding starts with the development of a **project idea**

The project idea can arise from different needs:

- scientific curiosity
- idea for development a new product / service / process that can improve productive activities, services or the quality of life of citizens
- face global challenges
- ...

The project logic

To pass from the initial idea to the project hypothesis it is necessary to summarize:

✓**main objective**

Contribution of the project to the **objectives of the funding programme**

✓**specific objectives**

Sub-objectives through which the final result is intended to be reached– They must be SMART

Specific – target a specific area for improvement

Measurable – quantify or at least suggest an indicator of progress

Achieavable – Realistic

Relevant – coherent both with your mission and with the funder's one

Time-bound – specify when the result(s) can be achieved

✓**expected results**

Outputs that allow to verify the achievement of the objectives

✓**activities**

Concrete actions to produce the expected results

All you need is…

To carry out the project activities you need funding!

The main funding sources are:

✓National and local funding agencies (e.g. MIUR, Region, University)

✓National and international foundations and organisations

✓European Commission

Aims and objectives of the EC

Commissione Europea

EC is not the researchers' good fairy

It finances projects for the pursuit of **its own institutional goals**

It is important to be familiar with the **strategic objectives of EC funding programs** in order to be able to write competitive project proposals

Horizon 2020

Horizon 2020 is the European Commission's **main instrument** for the **funding** of **research and innovation activities** within the European Research Area

It covers the 2014-2020 period, with a budget of **80 billion euros**

It funds research and innovation projects through the publication of calls for proposals

Horizon Europe is the next framework programme (2021-2027), with a budget of 120 B euros

H2020 main goals

The program is based on the **Europe 2020 strategy** (and then the Agenda 2030) and on the **Innovation Union flagship initiative**

- smart, sustainable and inclusive **growth objectives**
- research and innovation as **key drivers** of social and economic prosperity as well as environmental sustainability,
- aim to increase research and development expenditure in order to **attract private investments**

WP 2018-2020

«The final Horizon 2020 work programme has the potential to make a real and sustainable difference to the quality of life in the EU, as well as the EU's position in the world such as the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)»

H2020 main principles

...To put in your suitcase towards Horizon Europe

Carlos Moedas, 2015 - 3 O Strategy:

- Open science
- Open innovation
- Open to the world

Responsible Research and Innovation - RRI

Open Science

Principle according to which **every step of the research** should be made **open and available** to everyone for **free**

Obligation to publish in **Open Access** for **all** *peer-reviewed publications*

✓**Knowledge** must be for **everyone**

✓The **results** of **publicly funded research** must be made **public**

✓**Transparency** of the research process

✓Capitalize on research results - **New business opportunities**

Open Innovation

Open Innovation concerns the **involvement** of many more actors in the **innovation process**, from **researchers, entrepreneurs, users, governments** and **civil society**

We need open innovation to **capitalize on the results** of European research and innovation

This means creating the right **ecosystems**, increasing investments and bringing more companies and regions into the knowledge economy

Carlos Moedas, 3 O Strategy Launch Conference, 22 June 2015

Open to the world

Participants from all over the world, regardless of their place of origin or residence, can participate in most H2020 calls

Automatically eligible for funding:

- EU Member States
- Countries associated with the program (e.g. Switzerland, Israel, Norway)
- Developing countries

Not automatically eligible for funding

- Industrialized countries and emerging economies

Some industrialized third countries created mechanisms to co-finance their participants in the H2020 actions. Funding is possible in exceptional cases

And what about UK????

UK: 2 scenarios

Deal?

No deal?

Participants from the UK can continue to submit proposals as partners and as coordinators also for 2020 calls

UK government committed itself to fund projects approved in H2020 that have submitted proposals until 2020

Participants from the UK continue to be funded until the end of ongoing projects

UK government committed itself to continue to fund these projects until their end

RRI

Responsible Research and Innovation:

Social actors (researchers, citizens, policy makers, companies, third sector organizations, etc.) must **work together** during the entire research and innovation process in order to better align both the process and its results with **values, needs** and **expectations** of the society

Key elements

- public engagement
- open access
- gender
- ethics
- science education

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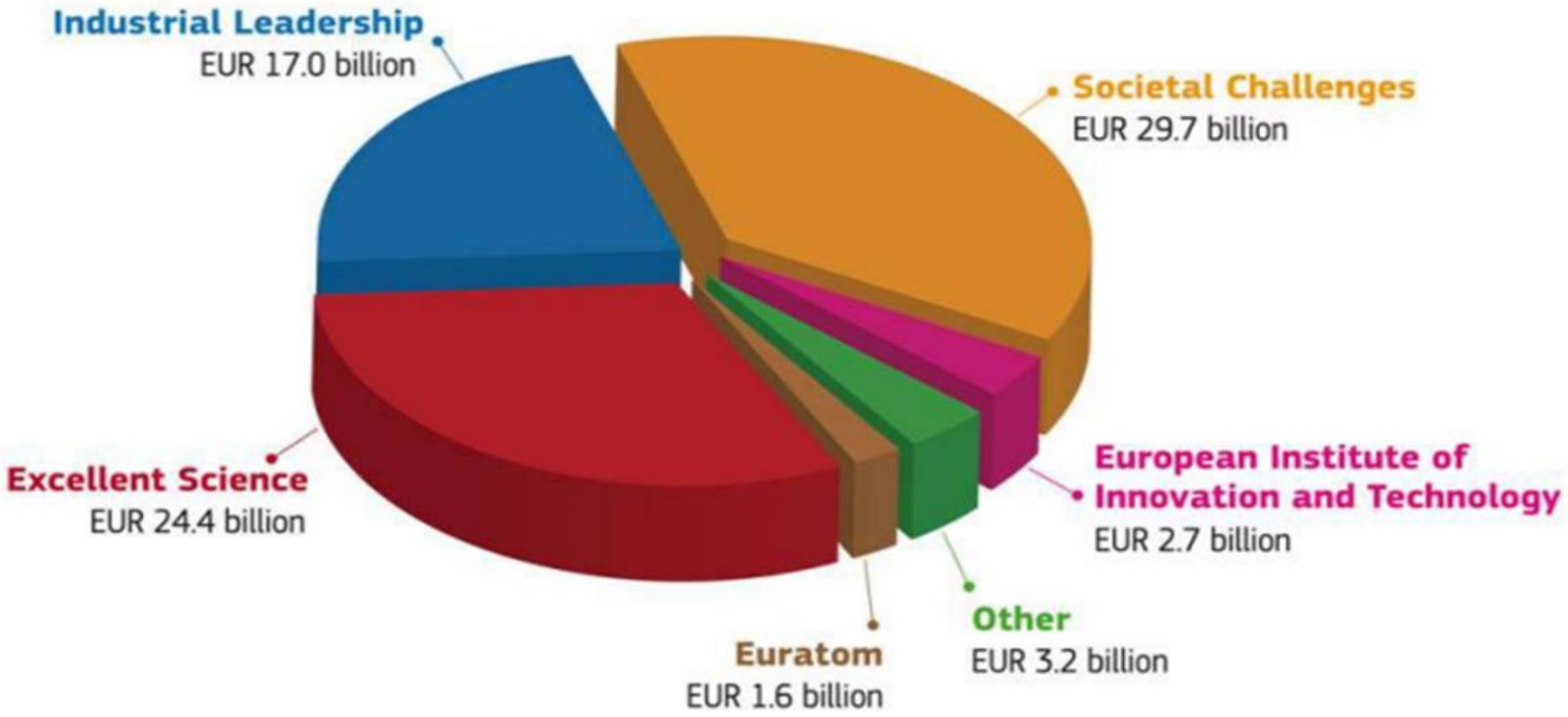
The structure of Horizon 2020

3 Pillars

Excellent science	Industrial Leadership	Societal challenges
• European Research Council (ERC) • Future & emerging technologies • Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions • Research infrastructures (including e-infrastructure)	• Leadership in enabling & industrial technologies (LEITs) - *ICT, nanotechnologies, materials, biotechnology, manufacturing, space* • Access to risk finance • Innovation in SME	• Health, demographic change & wellbeing • Food security, sustainable agriculture and forestry, marine/maritime/inland water research and the bioeconomy • Secure, clean & efficient energy • Smart, green & integrated transport • Climate action, environment, resource efficiency & raw materials • Inclusive, innovative & reflective societies • Secure societies
European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT)		
Spreading Excellence and Widening Participation		
Science with and for Society		
Non-nuclear direct actions of the JRC		

HORIZON 2020 BUDGET (EUR 78.6 billion, current prices)



Excellent science

World class science is the basis for **creating technologies, jobs** and the **well-being of tomorrow**

Europe must **develop, attract and retain research talent**

Researchers need **access to the best infrastructure**

Actions:

- **European Research Council (ERC)**

  Frontier research by the best **individual teams** (ERC Starting Grant, Consolidator Grant, Advanced Grant)

- **Future & emerging technologies**

  Collaborative research to open new fields of innovation

- **Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions (MSCA)**

  Opportunities for training and career development

- **Research infrastructures (including e-infrastructure)**

  Ensuring access to world-class facilities

Industrial Leadership

Strategic investments in **key technologies** (such as advanced production, microelectronics) support innovation between existing and emerging sectors

Europe must **attract more private investment** in research and innovation

Europe needs more **innovative SMEs** to create **growth** and **jobs**

Actions:

Leadership in enabling & industrial technologies (LEITs)

(ICT, nanotechnologies, materials, biotechnology, manufacturing, space)

Access to risk finance

Leveraging private finance & venture capital

Innovation in SMEs

Fostering all forms of innovation in all types of SMEs

Societal challenge

The **concerns** of **citizens** and EU **policy objectives** (climate, environment, energy, transport, etc.) cannot be addressed without **innovation**

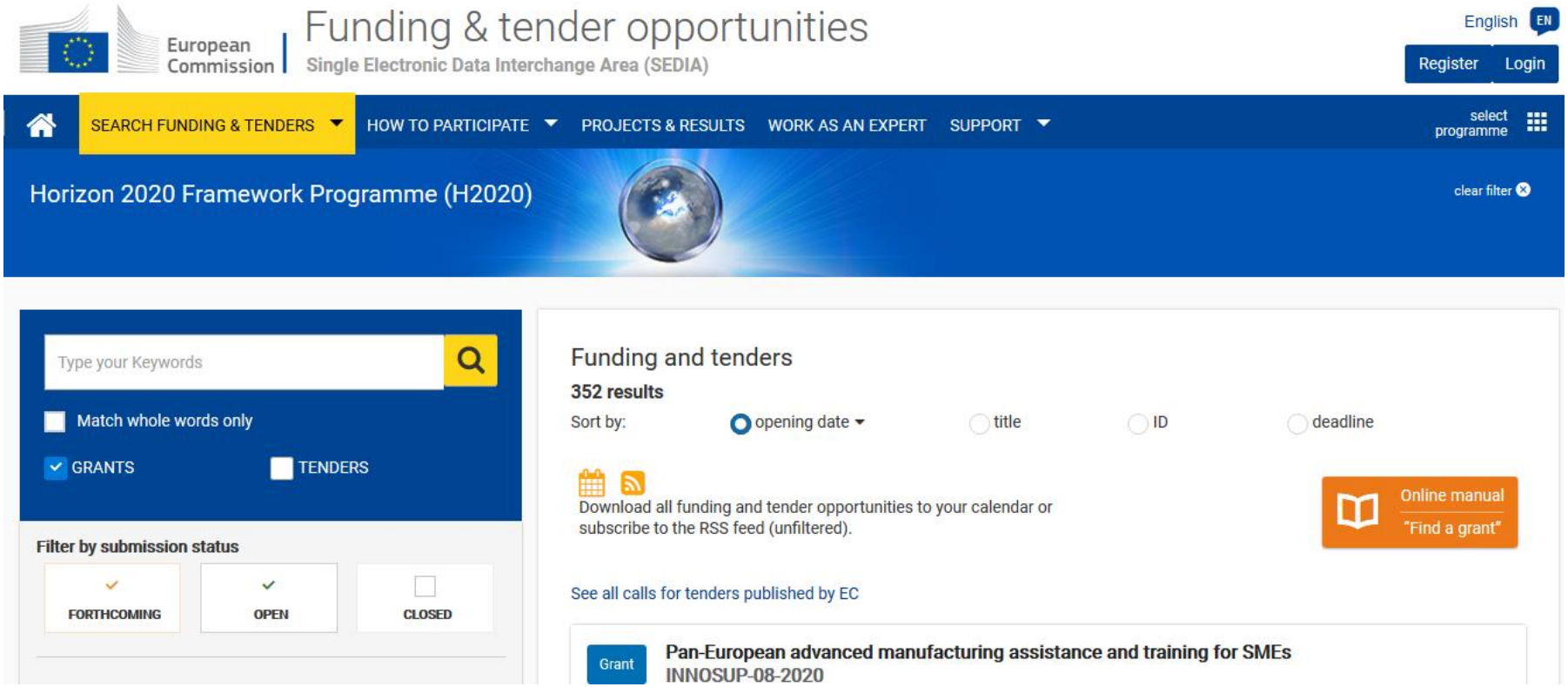
Innovative solutions come from **multidisciplinary collaborations**, including social sciences and humanities

The promising solutions must be tested, demonstrated also on a large scale

Actions:

- Health, demographic change & wellbeing
- Food security, sustainable agriculture and forestry, marine/maritime/inland water research and the bioeconomy
- Secure, clean & efficient energy
- Smart, green & integrated transport
- Climate action, environment, resource efficiency & raw materials
- **Europe in a changing world: Inclusive, innovative & reflective societies**
- Secure societies

How to find the call



https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/home

Calls approach

H2020 Calls for proposals can have:

Bottom up approach

There are **no predefined themes,** it is possible to present proposals in **any disciplinary field**

Measures that work with the bottom-up approach:

- ERC
- Marie Skłodowska-Curie Action
- FET Open
- SME Instrument (now EIC Pilot)

Top down approach

The Commission identifies the TOPICs covered by the calls, described in the **Work programmes**

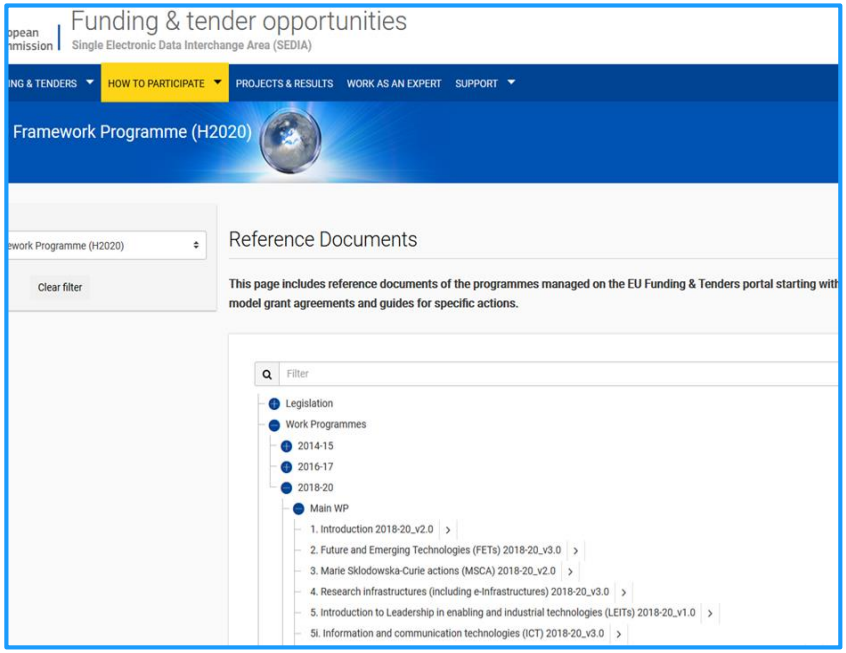
Prevailing in:

- Industrial leadership
- Societal challenge

Work Programmes

Funding opportunities under Horizon 2020 are established in **multiannual Work Programmes** (WPs)

WPs are prepared by the EC through a **strategic planning** process that integrates **EU policy objectives** in setting priorities



Call - Topic

Horizon 2020 - Work Programme 2018-2020
Europe in a changing world – Inclusive, innovative and reflective societies

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Call - MIGRATION **10**

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MIGRATION-03-2019: Social and economic effects of migration in Europe and integration policies 12
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Topic

Topic description

MIGRATION-09-2020: Narratives on migration and its impact: past and present

Specific Challenge

The way we collectively discuss about migration has an impact on the production of policies and responses to address this phenomenon. Narratives on migration -be it in the media, public or political discourses- affect political processes across Europe, influence our perceptions on migration dynamics and ultimately have an effect on the integration of migrants in our societies...

Scope

Proposals should address the dynamics and developments of migration narratives at local, national and EU level...

Expected Impact:

Practitioners will be informed by the new knowledge produced on the consequences of discourses on migration. This may have an impact on their conduct and policy choices when relevant. Projects will improve access and dissemination of information on narratives of migration and their effects including their scale, patterns and the social and economic impact on host societies...

Total budget: 9 million euro. Suggested size per project: 3 million euro

Proposal template

Part A – Administrative form

Part B – Scientific proposal

Part B – Section 1-3

1. Excellence

1.1 Objectives

1.2 Relation to the work programme

1.3 Concept and methodology

1.4 Ambition

2. Impact

2.1 Expected impacts

2.2 Measures to maximise impact

a) Dissemination and exploitation of results

b) Communication activities

3. Implementation

3.1 Work plan — Work packages, deliverables

3.2 Management structure, milestones and procedures

3.3 Consortium as a whole

3.4 Resources to be committed

Part B – Section 4-5

Section 4: Members of the consortium

4.1. Participants (applicants)

4.2. Third parties involved in the project (including use of third party resources)

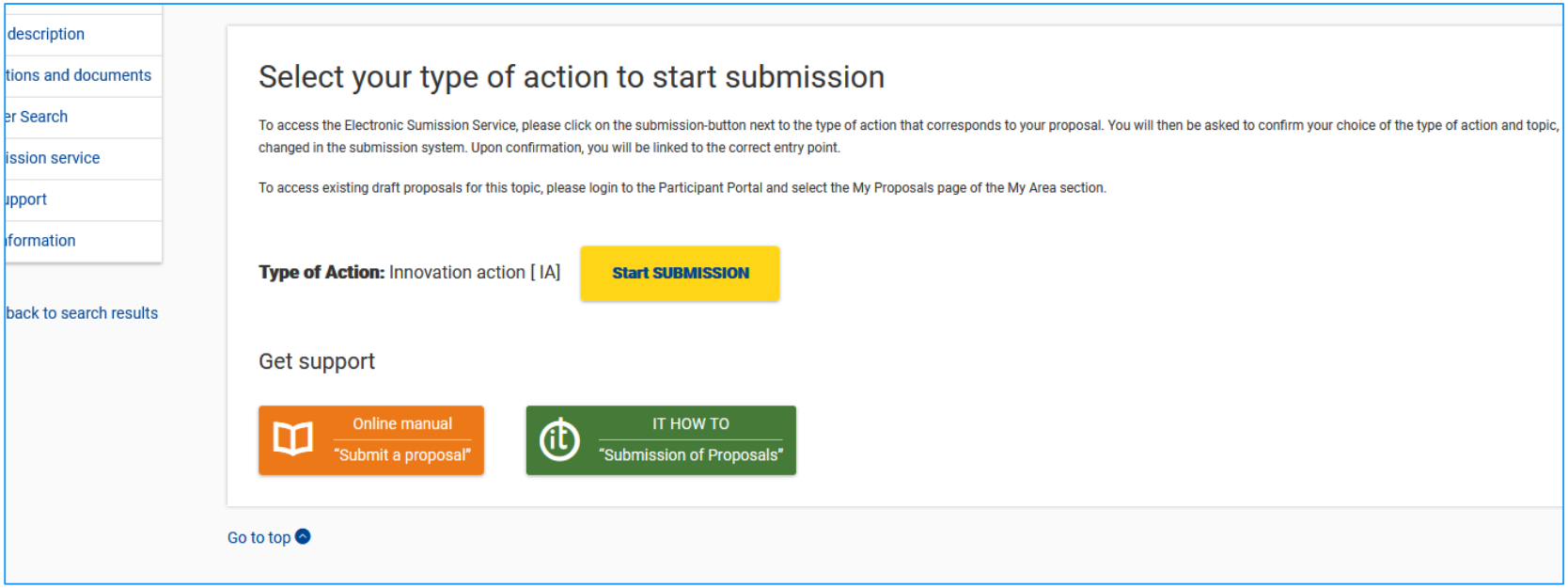
Section 5: Ethics and Security

5.1 Ethics

5.2 Security

Proposal submission

Proposals must be submitted electronically, through the Submission System of the Funding and Tender portal



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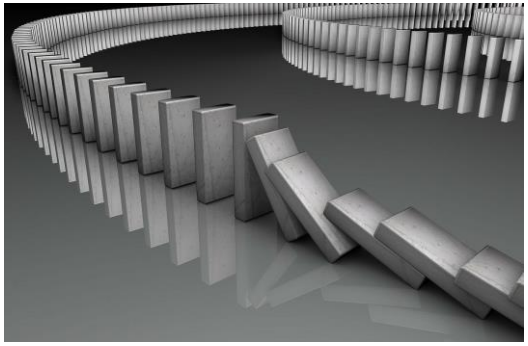
Part II – Evaluation criteria

3 evaluation criteria

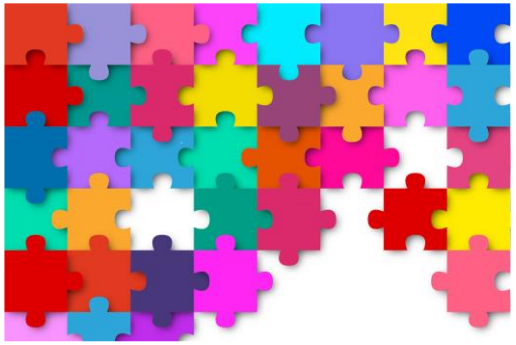
H2020 Proposals are evaluated by panels of independent experts against:

Excellence

Impact



Implementation



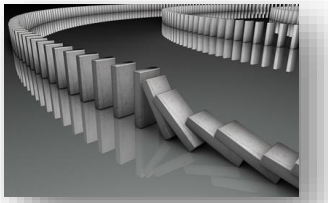
Excellence

Clarity and **relevance** of the **objectives**

Demonstration that the proposed work goes **beyond the state of the art** and demonstrates the potential for innovation (for example innovative objectives, new concepts and approaches)

Appropriate consideration of **interdisciplinary approaches** and **gender aspects**

Impact

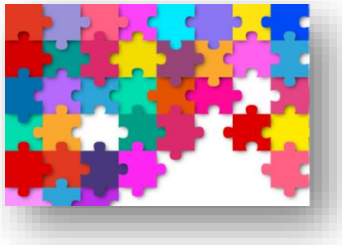


The extent to which project results would **contribute** to each of the expected **impacts** mentioned in the work program under the relevant topic

Any impacts not mentioned in the WP, which may:

- increase the **capacity for innovation**, **create new market opportunities**,
- strengthen the **competitiveness** and growth of businesses,
- address issues related to **climate change** or the environment,
- make other important **societal benefits**

Implementation



Quality and **effectiveness** of the **work plan**, including the extent to which the resources assigned to the work packages are in line with their objectives and results

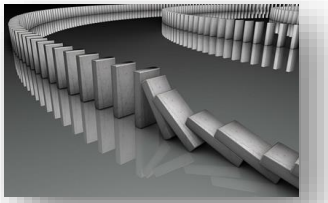
Adequacy of the **management structure** and procedures, including **risk management** and **innovation**

Complementarity of the **participants** and the extent to which the overall consortium brings together the necessary skills

Common errors - Excellence

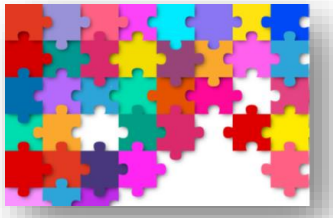
- The underlying concept of using an XXX approach is, in general, sound. However, the **methodology**, although overall credible, **lacks some important details**
- How **stakeholder** knowledge will be incorporated is **not well described**
- The **individual objectives** are generally clearly described and they are adequate for the proposed work. Each objective is convincingly matched to the specific challenges in the work programme. However, a minor weakness is that the **overall objectives** are **not explained in sufficient clarity**
- The **progress beyond state of the art** is not sufficiently elaborated
- Some **objectives are not** sufficiently **quantified**

Common errors - Impact



- **Indicators** to measure impact are not appropriately addressed
- **Plans to exploit** the results of the project are not well elaborated
- The description of the **communication activities** is too general
- The proposal does not convincingly present substantial **impacts not mentioned in the work programme.** The proposal states that new companies and business models would emerge, but it does not address the commercial aspects in sufficient detail
- The and exploitation plans are adequately presented, but there aredissemination some shortcomings in terms of identifying the **target groups and communication channels**
- The proposal carefully analyses the barriers which could affect the achievement of the expected impacts. However, some of the expected impacts mentioned in the work programme are not sufficiently addressed
- However, the **joint exploitation** of results by the consortium is insufficiently addressed
- The exploitation approach is adequate, however the **IPR strategy is not sufficiently detailed** in the proposal which is a shortcoming

Common errors - Implementation



- The work plan is, overall, coherent. However, there are a number of issues. For example, **the proposal does not** adequately **justify** the large amount of **effort** allocated to dissemination and project management
- **Risk management plans** are underestimated and not well elaborated. **Mitigation measures** are not sufficiently convincing. **Innovation management** is not well addressed, given the ambition of the proposed work.
- However, the **risk analysis** is too generic and incomplete.
- **Innovation management** is not convincingly described
- However, the **duration** of some tasks is not quite aligned with the envisioned time plan for their outputs. Some work package leaders have **low resources** per WP they lead which could pose an **implementation risk**.
- Some relevant **risks** in relation to the **project implementation** are not sufficiently identified

commercial
innovation-management
methodology
exploitation
business-models
project
task
innovation
weakness
results
achievement
analysis
plan
exploit
stakeholder
explained
channels
measures
risk
beyond
indicators
IPR
challenges
knowledge
effort
time
barriers
approach
progress
strategy
clarity
implementation
companies
objectives
target
state-of-the-art
communication
dissemination
management
impact
expected
resources
mitigation

Thank you for your attention!

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