



The Lifecycle of EU Funded Projects

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Horizon Europe in a nutshell

HORIZON EUROPE

EURATOM

SPECIFIC PROGRAMME: EUROPEAN DEFENCE FUND

*Exclusive focus on
defence research
& development*

Research
actions

Development
actions

SPECIFIC PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTING HORIZON EUROPE & EIT*

Exclusive focus on civil applications



Pillar I EXCELLENT SCIENCE

European Research Council

Marie Skłodowska-Curie

Research Infrastructures



Pillar II GLOBAL CHALLENGES & EUROPEAN INDUSTRIAL COMPETITIVENESS

Clusters

- Health
- Culture, Creativity & Inclusive Society
- Civil Security for Society
- Digital, Industry & Space
- Climate, Energy & Mobility
- Food, Bioeconomy, Natural Resources, Agriculture & Environment

Joint Research Centre



Pillar III INNOVATIVE EUROPE

European Innovation
Council

European innovation
ecosystems

European Institute of
Innovation & Technology*

WIDENING PARTICIPATION AND STRENGTHENING THE EUROPEAN RESEARCH AREA

Widening participation & spreading excellence

Reforming & Enhancing the European R&I system

Fusion

Fission

Joint
Research
Center

* The European Institute of Innovation & Technology (EIT) is not part of the Specific Programme

Goals and visions of Horizon Europe

The ambitious EU research and innovation framework programme (2021-2027)



fuel EU's **scientific and technological excellence** and the strengthen the European Research Area (ERA)

**Science
& technology**



tackle policy priorities, including **green and digital transitions** and Sustainable Development Goals

Society



boost Europe's **innovation uptake, competitiveness and jobs**

Economy

Characteristics of EU projects

Varying funding
amounts

At least 3 participants
(consortium)

Top-down / work
programmes

(Multi-)disciplinary

Application & exploitation

Intersectoral



Open to the world

Project duration from
2 to 5 years

Peer-review

Applied and basic research

Online proposal
submission

Fixed deadlines

Different kinds of EU projects

Collaborative Projects (Pillar 2 and 3, Widening)

- ❖ „Typical“ EU projects: consortia of usually minimum 3 partners from 3 different EU member states or associated countries (at least 1 from a member state)
- ❖ Open to the world: partners from non-EU countries can join the consortium, but not all countries can be funded
- ❖ Usually top-down: topics are pre-defined by the EU with a political agenda

Career possibilities for researchers:

- Early career stage: hire as a student assistant or PhD student in a running project
- Later career stage: position as a PostDoc in a project
- Advanced Career Stage: project leader at your institution or Coordinator

+ Manifold networking opportunities
+ International / intersectoral exchange
+ Improve your project management and communication skills

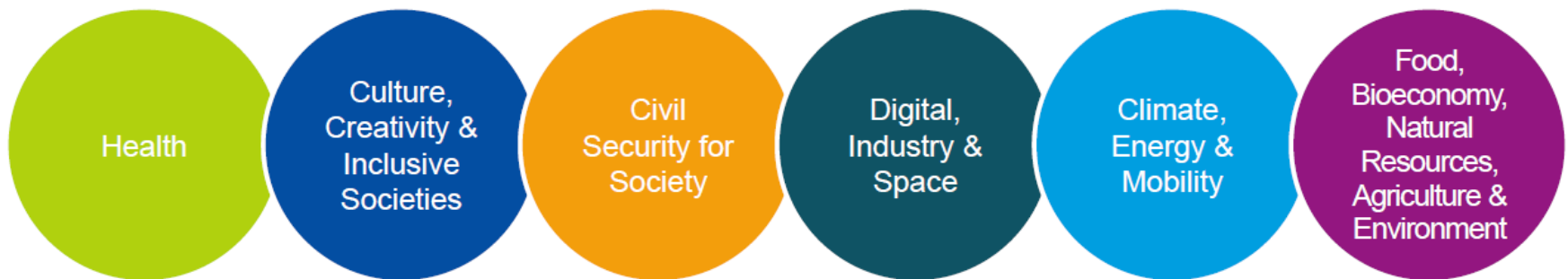
- Bureaucratic hurdles
- Timesheets
- A lot of reporting duties
- Many responsibilities as Coordinator

Different kinds of EU projects

Collaborative Projects (Pillar 2 and 3, Widening)

Overview on Clusters in Pillar 2

boosting **key technologies** and solutions underpinning **EU policies & Sustainable Development Goals** (6 clusters and JRC – non-nuclear direct actions)



€53.5 billion

Different kinds of EU projects

Collaborative Projects (Pillar 2 and 3, Widening)

Budget for the Clusters in Pillar 2

in current prices

Cluster 1	Health	€8.246 billion (including €1.35 billion from NGEU)
Cluster 2	Culture, Creativity & Inclusive Societies	€2.280 billion
Cluster 3	Civil Security for Society	€1.596 billion
Cluster 4	Digital, Industry & Space	€15.349 billion (including €1.35 billion from NGEU)
Cluster 5	Climate, Energy & Mobility	€15.123 billion (including €1.35 billion from NGEU)
Cluster 6	Food, Bioeconomy, Natural Resources, Agriculture & Environment	€8.952 billion

Collaborative Projects (Pillar 2, Pillar 3, Widening)

Overview on Pillar 3 - Innovative Europe:

Support to innovations with breakthrough and disruptive nature and scale up potential that are too risky for private investors (**70% of the budget earmarked for SMEs**)

**European
Innovation Council –
a one-stop-shop**

- Helping researchers and innovators create markets of the future, leverage private finance, scale up their companies
- Innovation centric, risk taking & agile, pro-active management and follow up
- Mostly 'bottom up', but also targeting strategic challenges
- EIC Programme Managers to develop visions for breakthroughs and steer portfolios

Complementary instruments bridging the gap from idea to market

PATHFINDER

R&I grants
(from early technology
to proof of concept)

TRANSITION

R&I grants
(proof of concept to
pre-commercial)

ACCELERATOR

Grants & investment (via EIC Fund) for
single SMEs & start-ups
(from pre-commercial to market & scale-up)

Different kinds of EU projects

Collaborative Projects (Pillar 2 and 3, **Widening**)

Spreading Excellence and Widening Participation: Collaborative Projects with the aim to strengthen research and innovation in countries with a low participation rate



‘Widening countries’ in Horizon Europe
(Can be Coordinator!):

Blue = 15 Member States: Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia.

Yellow = 12 Associated Countries: Albania, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Faroe Islands, North Macedonia, Georgia, Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia, Tunisia, Türkiye and Ukraine.

Funding of Collaborative Projects

- **Research and Innovation Actions (RIA) - 100% funding**

New knowledge and/or testing the feasibility of new or improved technologies, products, processes, services or solutions (basic and applied research, technology development and integration; testing and validation with smaller prototypes in the laboratory or under simulation conditions).

- **Innovation Actions (IA) - 70% funding (public bodies 100% funding)**

New, modified or improved products, processes or services (prototypes, tests, demonstrations, pilot projects, large-scale product validation and marketability development).

+ **Coordination and Support Actions (CSA) - 100% Funding, no direct support of research**

Direct costs

100/70 %

(e.g. personnel, travel costs, consumables, equipment)



Indirect costs

25 % of direct costs

(Overhead costs, e.g. office supplies, electricity, room rent)

Different kinds of EU projects

Best Practice of Managing Collaborative Projects (Pillar 2 and 3, Widening)

As Coordinator:

- Be familiar with the call topic and the political goals behind it;
- Select your partners according to their expertise matching the project (ideally you know them, otherwise you can search for matching partners e.g via the [EU Portal](#));
- make sure there is a good atmosphere in the Consortium, distribute the tasks and money fair among the partners with respects to their role and expertise ;
- clarify misunderstandings before a conflict arises;
- Keep an eye on the budget, hold regular meetings and monitoring sessions (e.g. a budget breakdown every 6 months - although it means a lot of additional work);
- set realistic deadlines for the partner's contribution to reports and deliverables (with a time buffer of at least one week if someone is late); send reminder (if necessary), inform the EU project officer if a delay becomes apparent, ask for an extension of deadline;
- if a partner is „sleeping“: be kind but strict, if necessary: hold the money back and talk to your EU Project Officer in Brussels how to deal with the situation.

Best Practice of Managing Collaborative Projects (Pillar 2 and 3, Widening)

As Partner :

- Get in touch with the Coordinator in any cases of questions, doubt or delays (do not apply to Brussels first – that is the task of the Coordinator!)
- Each partner is solely responsible for it's share of budget, so establish an internal financial controlling, fill and sign the timesheets of the staff regularly (also applies to the Coordinator)
- Keep a timetable with the project deadlines (if the Coordinator forgets to remind your)

Best Practice of Managing Collaborative Projects (Pillar 2 and 3, Widening)

What can go wrong in Collaborative Projects?

- A partner is leaving the Consortium → Re-distribute the tasks and budget among the remaining partners (provided that the project can be implemented without this partner)
- The Coordinator seems to be unsuitable → Try to solve conflicts amicably together as a consortium, otherwise start procedure for a change of coordinator.
- Partners spent more or less money than planned → distribute it in the consortium
- The Consortium at the whole spent more or less money than planned → The Partner are solely responsible for the overdrawing of our account and have to balance it. In case of less spending partners have to transfer remaining money back to the Coordinator. Over- and underspendings must be justified in the periodic reports (especially, if tasks are affected).
- There are deviations from the work plan → identify the reason for the deviations, inform the EU Officer, check if contractual changes are necessary.
- A mistake in the distribution of money was made by the Coordinator.
- A deadline can not be made → ask the EU Officer for an extension (mostly approved)

Different kinds of EU projects

Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions - MSCA (Pillar 1)

- ❖ Consortia of minimum 3 partners from 3 different EU countries (Doctoral Networks, Staff Exchange) as well as individual project funding (Postdoctoral Fellowship)
- ❖ Strong Focus on career development via Doctoral Networks (for PhD Students), Postdoctoral Fellowships or secondments to other countries in a Staff Exchange project
- ❖ Bottom-up: free choice of your research topic

Career possibilities for researchers:

- Early career stage: apply for a PhD position in a Doctoral Network or a Secondment
- Later career stage: apply for a Postdoctoral Fellowship or a Secondment
- Advanced Career Stage: Supervisor or Project Coordinator; Secondment

+ Individual research topics funded
+ International / intersectoral exchange
+ Extensive career development plan
and soft-skills trainings

- A lot of reporting duties
- Limited employment contracts (max. 2-3 years) and salaries (amounts are pre-defined by EU)

Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions - MSCA (Pillar 1)

Doctoral Networks (DN):

- ❖ Purpose of training doctoral researchers in a structured manner to increase their competences in an international, interdisciplinary and intersectoral research and training programme. Participation of both the academic and the non-academic sector is crucial.
- ❖ Standard Doctoral Networks: at least 3 partners from 3 different EU countries
- ❖ Special conditions for Industrial Doctorates (PhD candidates have to spend at least 50% of their fellowship time in the industry / non-academic sector) and Joint Doctorates (joint and double degrees must be awarded)
- ❖ Project duration usually 4 years, 3 years employment contracts for the researchers (exception: Joint Doctorates with max. 60 months duration and 4 years employment)
- ❖ All doctoral candidates must be enrolled in a PhD programme.
- ❖ Mobility rule: At the time of first recruitment, researchers must not have resided or carried out their main activity (work, studies, etc.) in the country of their host organisation for more than twelve months in the three years immediately before the reference date.
- ❖ Job vacancies must be published on <https://www.euraxess.de/jobs/search> .

Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions - MSCA (Pillar 1)

Postdoctoral Fellowships (PF):

- ❖ Postdoctoral Fellowships promote individual research projects of Postdocs at research institutions in Europe and abroad (no consortium).
- ❖ Postdocs of any nationality whose host organisation is located in a Member State or Associated Country may apply.
- ❖ “Age limit”: at the date of the call deadline the candidates must have of a doctoral degree (successfully defended PhD thesis) and max. 8 years full-time research experience
- ❖ European Fellowships: max. 2 years of employment at an EU Host Institution.
- ❖ Global Fellowships: a 1-2-year stay in a Third Country and a mandatory 1 year return phase at a European host institution. → max 3 years project and employment duration.
- ❖ Mobility rule: Researchers must not have resided or carried out their main activity (work, studies, etc.) in the host organisation's country for more than twelve months in the three years immediately before the call deadline (does not apply on the European host Institution for the return phase in a Global Fellowship).

Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions - MSCA (Pillar 1)

Staff Exchange (SE)

- ❖ Exchange between European and Third Country institutions as well as the academic and non-academic sector with the objective to strengthen partnerships and promote knowledge transfer. This is implemented by secondments, i.e. the exchange of researchers as well as technicians, administrative and management staff (no undergraduate students).
- ❖ Secondments of 1 – 12 months from and to Third Countries and/or different sectors
- ❖ Seconded staff must be engaged full-time, linked to the activities of the project.
- ❖ Consortium of at least 3 partners from 3 different EU countries.

Other MSCA Actions:

- ❖ COFUND: Co-funding of existing or planned national funded mobility programmes for doctoral students and Postdocs.
- ❖ MSCA and Citizens: Publicity measures in the framework of the European Researchers' Night, addresses the general public.

Best Practice of Managing Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions

As Coordinator or Partners:

- same as in Collaborative Projects and ...
- Be aware that there is a narrow timeframe to hire the researchers in doctoral networks
- For staff exchange: be aware that the secondments are eligible (there are strict rules which staff can be seconded – e.g. personnel must be engaged full-time during the secondment, must be employed at the institution for a while ...)

What can go wrong?

- Same as in Collaborative projects and ...
- The main risk that you do not find the right candidates or they resign:
 - Doctoral Networks: hire another candidate as soon as possible, so you don't lose money
 - Postdoctoral Fellowships: get in touch with the EU Officer and prepare for the termination of the project.

Different kinds of EU projects

European Research Council - ERC (Pillar 1)

- ❖ Usually individual project funding (exceptions, e.g. Synergy Grants with 2-4 applicants)
- ❖ Strong focus on excellence and ground-breaking research
- ❖ The project stands and falls with the Principal Investigator(s)
- ❖ Bottom-up: free choice of your research topic

Career possibilities for researchers:

- Early career stage: hire as a student assistant or PhD student in a running project
- Later career stage (2-12 years after PhD) : Starting Grant or Consolidator Grant
- Advanced Career Stage: Advanced Grant or Synergy Grant

+ Individual research topics funded
+ High reputation and career boost for an ERC Grantee and his/her co-workers
+ Portability of a grant

- Many reporting duties (but less than in other EU projects)
- Usually timesheets
- High competitive

European Research Council - ERC (Pillar 1)

Starting Grants:

- ❖ For excellent researchers of any nationality and age (applies to all ERC grants), 2-7 years after their PhD (under certain conditions, this time frame can be extended)
- ❖ up to 1.5 million euro can be awarded for a period of up to 5 years
- ❖ Host Institution can be changed after the grant is awarded, but must be in an EU Member state or associated country (Portability) → applies to all kinds of ERC Grants
- ❖ Track record: applicants should have produced at least one important publication as the main author or without the participation of their doctoral supervisor.

Consolidator Grants:

- ❖ Any researchers 7-12 years after certified successful defence of their first PhD degree
- ❖ up to 2 million euro can be awarded for a period of up to 5 years
- ❖ Track record: several impactful first-author publications (without supervisor), publications in leading international journals, monographs, patents, presentations at international conferences or receiving national and international science awards.

European Research Council - ERC (Pillar 1)

Advanced Grants:

- aimed at established leading scientists, regardless of nationality, who have an outstanding scientific track record (e.g. publications, expeditions, patents, science awards)
- up to 2.5 million euro can be awarded for a period of up to 5 years
- Host Institution can be changed after the grant is awarded, but must be in an EU Member state or associated country (Portability) → applies to all kinds of ERC Grants

Synergy Grants:

- A group of 2 – 4 outstanding researchers who build a perfect synergy
- up to 10 million euro can be awarded for a period of up to 6 years

Proof of Concept:

- Only for applicant who already have an ERC Grant (aim to explore the commercial or societal potential of an ongoing or completed ERC project).
- A Lump Sum of 150.000 euro can be awarded for a period of up to 18 months

What are the main stages of the EU project lifecycle?

1. **The proposal preparation stage** (have an idea, find your partners, find a call ...)
2. **The proposal writing and submission stage** (define your work plan, research objectives, tasks, milestones, deliverables, budget ...)
3. **The evaluation and grant agreement preparation stage** (prepare and sign the contract)
4. **The project implementation stage** (research, reporting, communication ...)
5. **The project completion stage** (final report, audit, follow-up ...)

Before you start writing your proposal

... ask yourself several important questions:

- What are your professional goals?
- Who do you need to involve in your Consortium?
- What activities will you implement through the project?
- What will your deliverables and milestones be?
- How much funding do you need to deliver these activities?
- Do you need to recruit additional staff through the grant?
- Which EU policies need to be addressed (e.g. Green Deal)?

The proposal preparation stage

The main steps of proposal preparation:

- **Call identification:** The journey begins with identifying the right calls for proposals that align with your project idea. These calls provide comprehensive details about the types of projects to be funded. These calls are highly competitive with a success rate of 10-20%, so it is very important to select the call that best matches your project idea!
- **Consortium building:** Given the collaborative nature of many EU projects, forming a consortium with the right partners is a crucial step. It is essential to assemble a diverse team that brings a variety of expertise and resources to the table.
- **Conceptualisation:** Once your team is in place, the next step is to develop a concept note (i.e. a “1-page proposal”). This document outlines the core aspects of your project, including its objectives, expected outcomes, and a preliminary plan. As the next step, go deeper into timelines, deliverables, and other critical details of the project.
- **Timetable:** make a plan and set yourself a deadline for each step. On average, the **preparation stage can last from 6 to 12 months**, so take your time for the proposal, don't wait until the call is open!

The proposal preparation stage

Be aware that Horizon Europe is a very political programme, so for your success it's essential to pay attention to the EU Commission's political targets:

Targeted impacts for the von der Leyen political guidelines



- ❖ A European Green Deal: Europe aims to be the first climate-neutral continent
- ❖ A Europe fit for the digital age: active participation with a **new generation of technologies**
- ❖ An economy that works for people: Social justice and well-being by creating quality jobs
- ❖ Promoting our European way of life: protect our citizens **core values**.
- ❖ A stronger Europe in the world: Strengthen our leading responsible global role
- ❖ A new push for European democracy: promotion, protection and strengthening our **democracies** from external interference

The proposal preparation stage

Work Programmes

- **Political priorities of the EC are reflected in Work Programmes, which the EC publishes at regular intervals for 1-2 years, so read these documents carefully!**

Seperate Work Programmes are published for (non-exhaustive list):

- Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions and research infrastructures (Pillar I);
- The European Research Council (Pillar 1)
- Each cluster in Pillar 2;
- The European Innovation Council (Pillar 3);
- Widening participation and spreading excellence

Work Programmes contain:

- Description of call topics (specific conditions, expected outcome, scope)
- Call deadlines and budget per topic / call
- Annexes, which set out general rules of application
- Standard admissibility conditions, eligibility criteria, selection and award criteria

The proposal preparation stage

Work Programmes – understand the structure

General introduction

- **Get an overview/understand major drivers**
- Provides overall intervention logic behind the WP, points out major EU policies, initiatives and goals that drive the call topics. Also shows up synergies with other EU programmes and the link to the overall Horizon Europe Strategic Plan.

Destination

- **Know the expected impacts and results for the Destination**
- Describes socio-economic challenges to be addressed and the related expected impact
- (e.g. Cluster 1, Destination 3 - Tackling diseases and reducing disease burden)

Call for proposals

- **Groups a number of topics** that share the deadline for the opening of the topic for submission of applications.
- (Call - Staying Healthy (Two stage - 2024))

Topic

- Describe the **expected outcomes** and the **scope of the research and innovation activities** to be supported.
- (e.g. Planetary health: understanding the links between environmental degradation and health impacts)

The proposal preparation stage

Call topics and how to read them:

Topic description

ExpectedOutcome:

Projects' results are expected to contribute to some or all of the following outcomes:

- Improved understanding of motivation of women and girls for supporting extremist ideologies, such as grievance and stigmatisation
- Improved understanding of the role of masculinity in men and boys' motivation for the support of extreme ideologies;
- Better understanding of the group dynamics at play during processes of radicalisation, including factors for factionalism and potential
- Development of strategies aimed at enhancing the use of motivation factor in detection, prevention and de-radicalisation efforts;
- European Police Authorities, Prison Authorities, social care workers, teachers and other P/CVE practitioners benefit from modern and validated tools, skills and training curricula to identify early symptoms of radicalisation;
- Identification and assessment of best practices that are transferable across Member States improving and developing modules and trainings, strengthening adaption of local community policing in diverse communities; and
- Design girls and women's empowerment approaches through legal, financial and/or cultural means aimed at tackling the root causes of radicalisation and extremism.

Proposals **should address at least four of the following activities:**

ExpectedOutcome:

Projects' results are expected to contribute to some or all of the following outcomes:

Technology
Readiness Levels

Specific Topic Conditions:

Activities are expected to achieve TRL 5-6 by the end of the project – see General Annex B.

Gender

In this topic the integration of the gender dimension (sex and/or gender analysis) in research and innovation content is not a mandatory requirement, however, should you consider it to be of relevance for your specific proposal, you are strongly encouraged to do it.

Clustering
activities

In order to optimise synergies and increase the impact of the projects, all projects selected for funding from this topic will form a cluster and be required to participate in common networking and joint activities. Without the prerequisite to detail concrete joint activities, proposals should allocate a sufficient budget for the attendance to regular joint meetings and to cover the costs of any other potential common networking and joint activities.


Finally ...

- ✓ You found a call which perfectly matches your scientific approach, your project idea, your consortium and your professional goals.
- ✓ You found the right partners.
- ✓ You understand the call topic, the budget and the funding criteria.
- ✓ Your time schedule is feasible and realistic.
- ✓ You are in touch with the EU Office at your Host Institution.

... so go to the EU Funding and Tenders Portal and register:

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

Proposal writing and submission stage




European Commission | EU Funding & Tenders Portal

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Discover the funding & tenders opportunities

Find out how to participate by following [these key steps](#).

Find calls for proposals

Explore the available EU funding opportunities by searching for calls for proposals within your topics of interest, find partners and submit a proposal.

View projects and results

Browse through EU funded projects and learn about the results. Invest in opportunities and get inspired by the highlights and success stories.

Find calls for tenders

Find business opportunities in the calls for tenders managed by EU institutions, bodies and agencies.

Work as an expert

Proposals and projects need evaluations, monitoring and domain-specific knowledge advice from experts.

Prososal writing and submission stage



Horizon Europe Programme

Standard Application Form (HE RIA, IA)

Application form (Part A)
Project proposal – Technical description (Part B)

Version 7.0
27 September 2023

Structure:

- Part A (Online forms)
- Part B (Text, uploaded as pdf)
 - Full proposals RIA/IA: 45 pages
(Lump Sum: 50 pages)
 - Two-stage procedure: 10 pages pre-proposal
 - Coordination and Support Actions: 30 pages
(Lump Sum: 33 pages)
 - Three Chapters:
Excellence, Impact and Quality and efficiency of
the Implementation (Pre-Proposal: Excellence +
Impact)

Prososal writing and submission stage

A standard EU proposal contains 3 sections:

- 1) **Excellence:** This section should demonstrate the capacity of the project to produce results that go beyond the state of the art, adopting the suited methodology to reasonably achieve the project's results, the general and specific objectives of the call. Address horizontal aspects such as AI, environmental considerations, gender dimensions, ethics, and Open Science practices.
 - 2) **Impact:** outline the benefits for the European research area, economy and society in alignment with European Commission policy priorities and scope of the call.
 - 3) **Implementation:** present a comprehensive plan to ensure the overall feasibility of the project, including management structure and work package description.
- Familiarize yourself with the **evaluation criteria** provided in the work programme for the specific funding instrument. Make sure that each section of your proposal will address these criteria **comprehensively**.

Prososal writing and submission stage

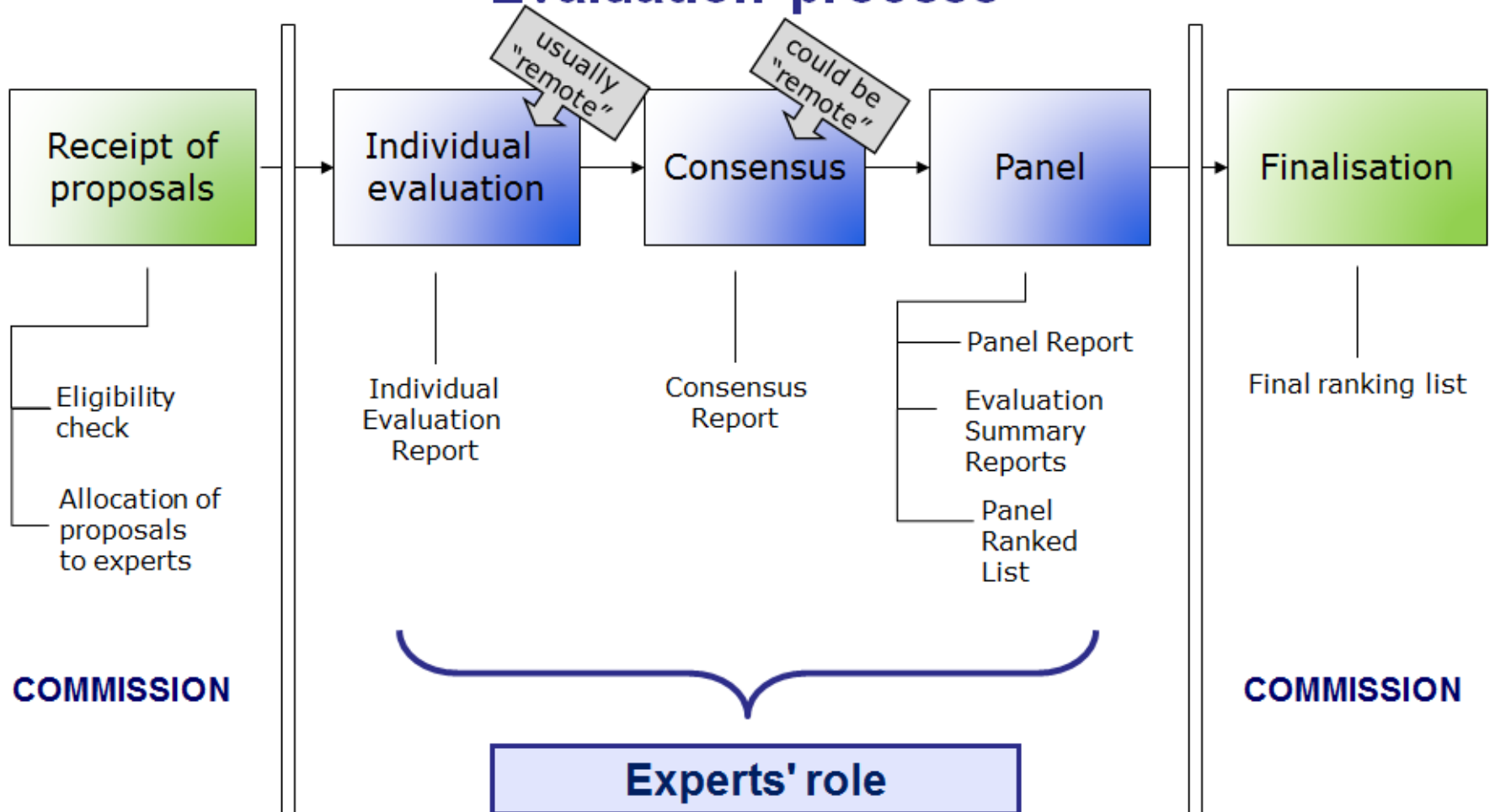
The process of collaborative budgeting and proposal writing:

- Designing a detailed project work breakdown with concrete task for each partner.
- Defining together deliverables (e.g. publications and other results) and milestones.
- Creating a precise and realistic budget by analysing estimate project expenses.
- Ensuring compliance with the EU's financial rules and regulations.
- Identifying and justifying the financial contributions and resources of each consortium partner. Note, that each partner is responsible for his own budget, so consider carefully the feasibility of your budget plan.
- Ensuring that the proposal aligns perfectly with the objectives and priorities of the specific call. Adapt Part B to the call topic, if necessary.
- Monitoring the proposal submission deadline and ensuring that all required documents are completed in a timely manner (especially as Coordinator!)

EU-calls are very competitive, with thousands of applications and a success rate of 10-20 %, so even good proposals are often not funded.

Evaluation and GA preparation stage

Evaluation process



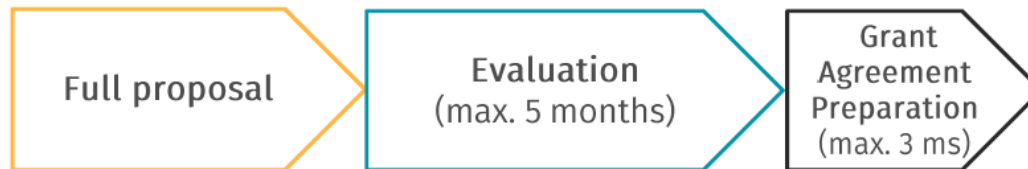
Evaluation and GA preparation stage

Yeah, you got it! But hard work is just beginning ...

Time-to-Grant (from deadline): normally 5 + 3 months



Single-stage
procedure



Two-stage
procedure



Grant Agreement preparation

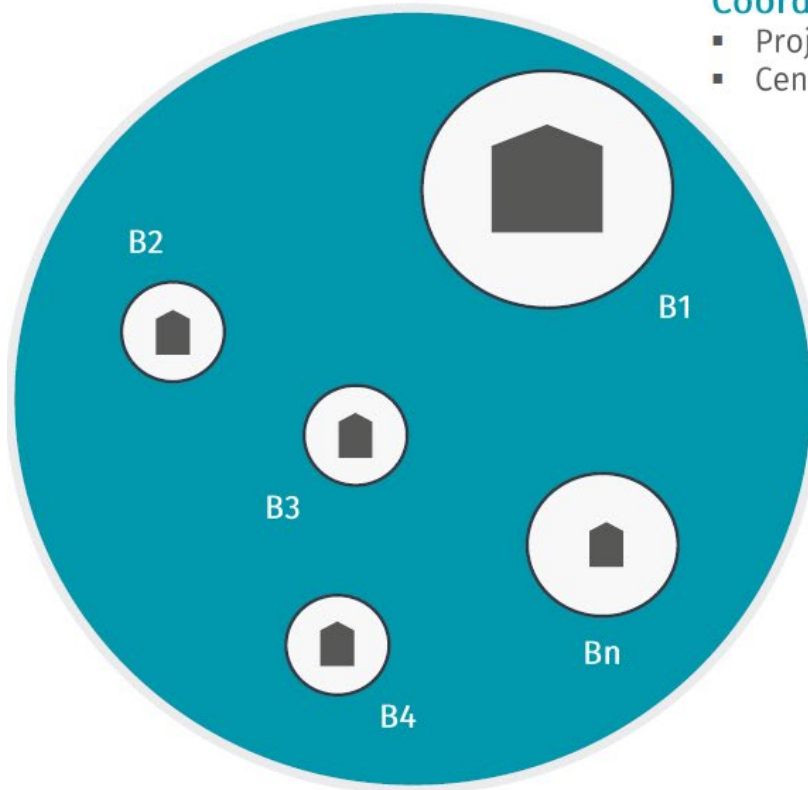
If a project has been evaluated as “good enough” for funding, the Project Coordinator receives a formal invitation from the European Commission for the Grant Agreement Preparation (GAP) together with the evaluation results for the project proposal (Evaluation Summary Report, ESR) and further instructions. These tasks will be done via EU Funding and Tender Opportunities Portal mainly by the Coordinator:

- Transfer of the work description of the proposal (Description of the Action, DoA) to Annex 1 of the future Grant Agreement
- Transfer (and maybe adaption) of the project budget plan
- Implementation of any follow-up requirements (e.g. with regard to ethics or security)
- Completion of the registration and validation of all institutions involved in the project
- Digital signature for the Declaration of Honour (DoH) by all partners
- Digital signature of the core Grant Agreement by EU and Coordinator
- Digital signature of the Accession Form by all Partners

Evaluation and GA preparation stage

Coordinator

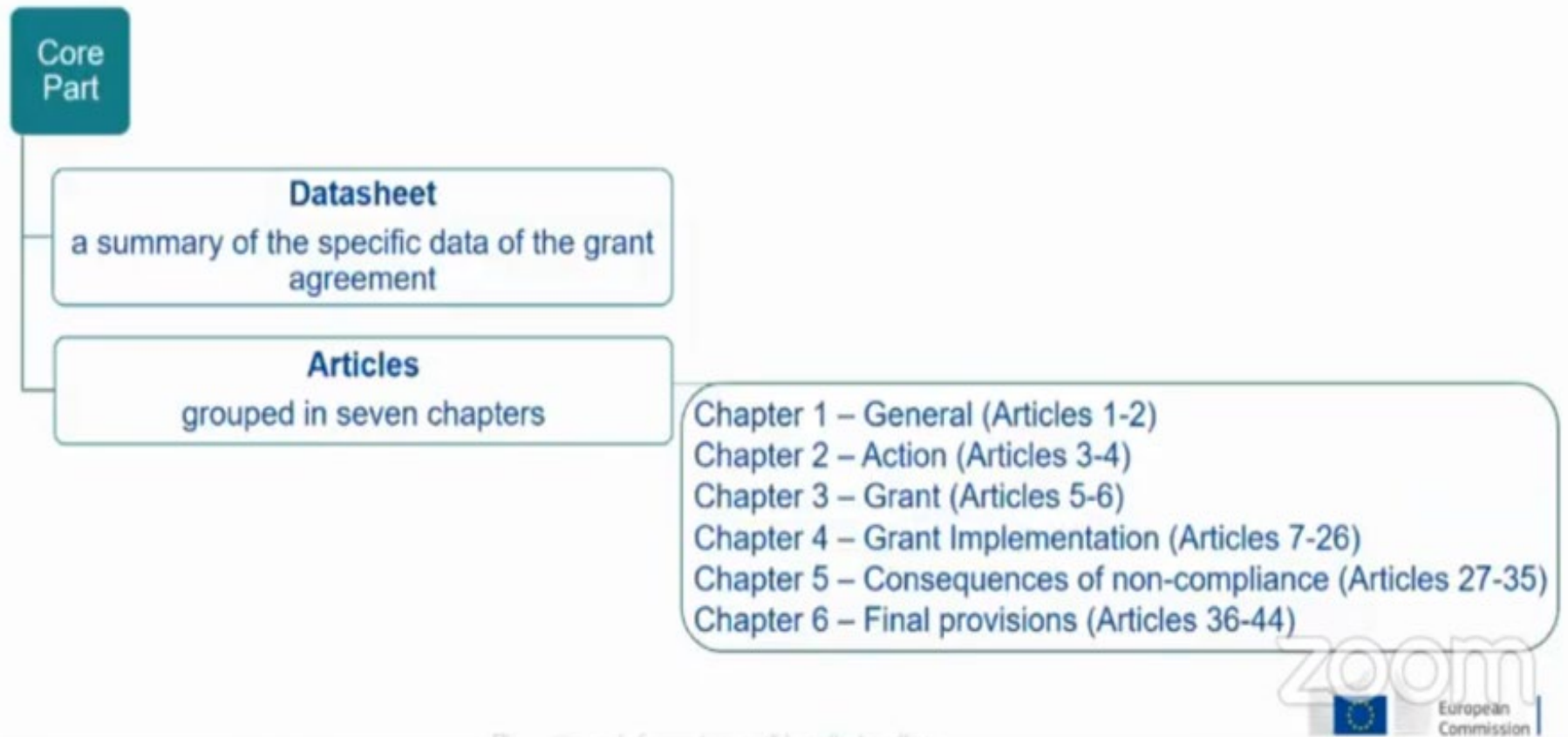
- Project coordination and management
- Central contact for the project



Beneficiaries

= Signatories of the Grant Agreements (GA)

Structure of the Grant Agreement



Structure of the Grant Agreement – Annexes:



Annex 1 – Description of work (the proposal)

Annex 2 – Budget table

Annex 3 – Accession Form for the partners

Annex 4 – Financial Report Template

Annex 5 – Specific Rules for Horizon Europe

Negotiation of the Consortium Agreement

In many projects, a Consortium Agreement is mandatory and should be negotiated parallel to the GA preparations, it regulates the relationship between the partners, e.g.:

- The internal organization of the consortium: This concerns the management structures and decision-making processes within the project.
 - Rules and conditions for the distribution of EU funding between the partners
 - Intellectual property rights
 - Dispute resolution / dealing with internal conflicts
 - Liability, indemnification, and confidentiality agreements between participants.
-
- **Even if a Consortium Agreement is not mandatory, it can be very helpful to define regulations for governance and prevention of internal conflicts!**
 - **The European Commission is not Party of the Consortium Agreement.**
 - **There are templates for the agreement available, e.g. www.desca-agreement.eu**

A well-implemented project starts with a good Kick-Off meeting:

- With the funding secured, the consortium kick-starts the project. This often begins with a formal initiation meeting to align all members and set the project into motion. It is the first day where the consortium officially starts to work on the project and report costs. It is usually the first day of the month following the signature of the Grant Agreement.
- **Once the project officially begins, holding a kick-off meeting is paramount. Several months will have passed since the proposal was submitted and most will have lost focus on what the proposal promised to deliver. Use the kick-off meeting (typically two or three days) to ensure everyone is clear on the project objectives, budget, a timeline for delivery, and most importantly, what they promised to deliver!**
- The project, as outlined in the proposal, is now executed. This involves adhering to planned methodologies, achieving set milestones, and meeting deadlines.

Good communication and collaboration within the consortium:

- Establishing effective project management tools, systems, and processes.
- Defining clear governance structures, decision-making processes, and communication channels within the consortium (should be stated in the Consortium Agreement).
- Ensuring regular information and knowledge exchange (e.g. via Zoom-Meetings)
- Coordinating activities and tasks among project partners, ensuring that everyone is aligned and contributing as required.
- Staying on track with the project timeline.
- Addressing any issues or challenges that arise promptly and implementing solutions to keep the project on course.
- Ensuring feasible milestones and deliverable deadlines in a timely and quality manner.
- Monitoring progress against milestones and taking corrective actions to address delays or deviations.
- Keeping an overview of the entire project progress, ensuring activities are on schedule and resources are being efficiently utilized.

Project Monitoring:

Budget management (as Coordinator):

- Monitoring and managing the budget throughout the project's lifecycle, ensuring alignment of project expenses with the allocated budget.
- Identifying and assessing potential risks and uncertainties that may impact project objectives, timeline, and budget.
- Adhering to all administrative and financial rules, as well as the eligibility criteria for expenses set by the European Commission → make a handout for your partners with a summary of the essential rules.
- Optimising resource and funds utilisation, balancing deadlines and budget constraints.
- Handling unexpected costs or reallocation needs between different budget lines.
- Tracking partners' time and expenses regularly (e.g. every 6 months), to determine whether partners' costs are in alignment with the planned budget
- **Get in touch with the EU Project Officer, if there are any uncertainties!**

Project Monitoring:

Regular Meetings:

- Regular steering group meetings (usually every 6 months in presence) are an effective way to ensure you maintain sufficient progress throughout the project.
- Less formal monthly or at least quarterly online meetings are also useful for small-scale updates, which may be work package specific.
- To stay focused and efficient, consider splitting these meetings into several Work Package and task group sessions, separate management topics from scientific topics.
- Use the steering groups as an opportunity for partners to highlight the work they have been doing. This tends to be most effective on a work package by work package basis.
- Other key items for the agenda would include updates with intellectual property,, risk assessment review, updates with communication and dissemination, an input from the monitoring office (e.g. EU Project Officer, if present), reviewing the Timetable, reviewing the deliverables (both past and upcoming) and financial resources.
- Collecting relevant updates and accurate documentation from partners to demonstrate the project's impact and outcomes.

Reporting:

» **Project reporting** is a crucial part of project management, and equally important to the actual execution of the tasks.



Project Officer chasing the coordinator

Reporting:

Continuous Reporting:

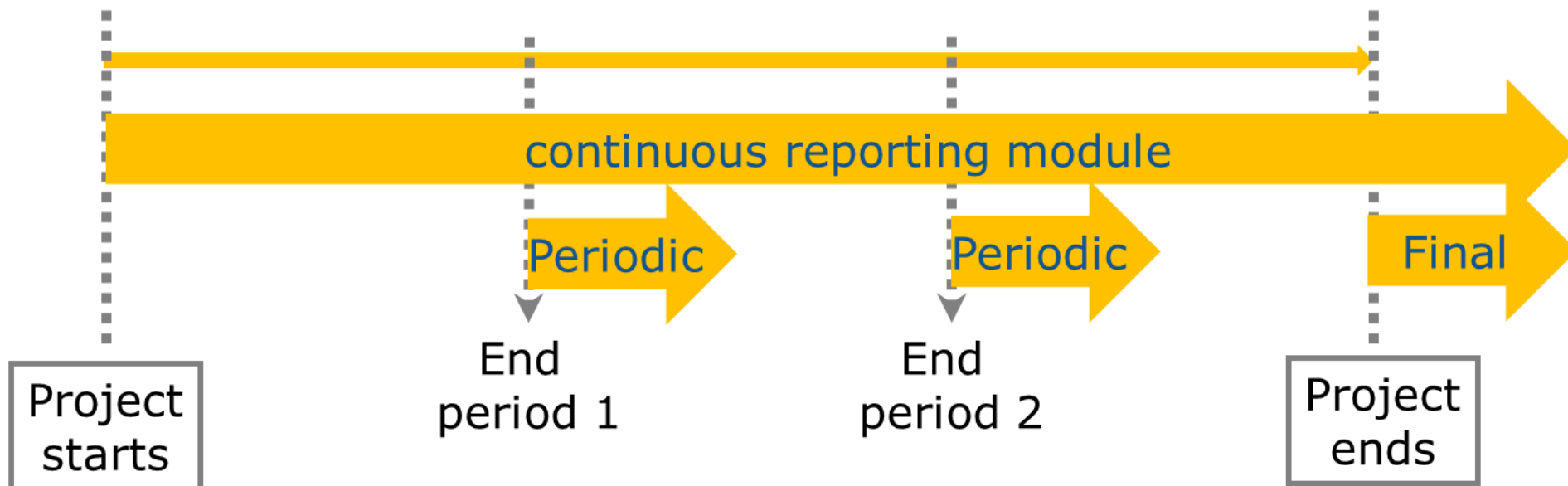
- Submit deliverables and milestones via the EU portal (deadlines for each milestone / deliverable are defined in the Grant Agreement, Annex 1)
- Fill additional sections on risk management, gender balance, ethical requirements ...

Periodic Reporting:

- Usually 2-3 reporting periods in an project, reporting every 18 months → exceptional cases: ERC (every 30 months), MSCA Doctoral Networks (every 24 months), in some collaborative projects the first report is due after month 12
- The periodic report contains a technical and a financial part
- The coordinator is mainly responsible for the technical report, partners will be asked for their contribution.
- The financial statements must be filled and signed by each partner, they contain the costs spent per category and the person months per work package

Reporting:

- *Continuous reporting module*
- *Periodic reporting module*



It's finally done ... or not???

➤ Final reporting:

- 60 days after the official ending of the project, the consortium has to submit through the Funding & Tenders portal all pending deliverables, financial statements, and certificates of CFS audits for Horizon Europe projects if requested.
- After the final report was evaluated and accepted, EU will launch the final payment for the project.

Audits:

- For Horizon Europe projects, if the beneficiary received more than 430.000€ of grant, it will have to pass through an audit certificate. This certificate must be submitted together with the final report.
- Apart from this, any project and institution can be selected for a technical or financial Audit by the European Commission via random sample till 2 years after the final payment for the project! So keep your records up-to-date!

... in any stage of the project lifecycle!

Service points on site
(e.g. EU-Referate)



KOWI: <https://www.kowi.de/en/kowi.aspx>

- The EU Liaison Office of the German Research Organisations" (KoWi) is the joint service platform of the major German science organisations
- Dynamic information hub on all aspects of European research funding - for science organisations, German universities and researchers in Germany

German National Contact Point (NKS): <https://www.eubuero.de/>

- Belongs to the German Ministry of Education and Research
- Providing services in the field of European innovation and research policy
- Several contact points for each funding programme

We can help you with (non-exhaustive list):

During the proposal preparation and writing stage

- Identification of a specific programm / funding instrument to finance your research idea
- Advice while building up the Consortium of Partners
- Support with the elaboration of the proposal, specifically with the European and the University administrative requirements and with the horizontal issues (legal and financial, dissemination, open-access...)
- Elaboration of the budget
- Proof-reading your proposal
- Support with the use of the Participant Portal

EU project management and consultation at UP

We can help you with (non-exhaustive list):

During the grant preparation, implementation and project conclusion stage:

- Support with the preparation and signature of the Grant Agreement
- Support with the preparation and negotiation of the Consortium Agreement
- Hold an internal Kick-Off Meeting for the colleagues at the institution who are involved in the project (Project Leader, project co-workers financial and human resources department, faculty administration ...)
- Keep reporting deadlines in mind.
- Be available for all administrative and financial questions.
- Prepare and submit the financial reports.
- Help with the preparation of audits.

Thank you very much for your attention!

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