How to write a good proposal

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Get prepared to submit a proposal...

Study the call documentation

Select your partners

Plan your project and prepare the Technical Description (Template Part B)
How to write a good proposal

Horizon Europe + CBE JU requirements

Horizon Europe (HE) conditions

Evaluation criteria

Annual Work Programme 2023
- Topics
- Specific requirements
- Cross-cutting elements
- Budget

Proposal structure

Part A
- HE Programme Guide
- HE Online Manual
- HE General Annexes
- HE Annotated Model
- Grant Agreement

Part B
- Evaluation criteria
- Horizon Europe Evaluation Form (HE RIA and IA)

Proposal template Part B: technical description
- Part of the Proposal
- Technical description
- Background
- Literature review
- Methodology
- Results
- Discussion
- Conclusions
- References

F&T Portal
A competitive bioeconomy for a sustainable future

How to write a good proposal

Topic - Proposal - Evaluation

1. Excellence
   1.1 Objectives and ambition
   1.2 Methodology

2. Impact
   2.1 Project’s pathways towards impact
   2.2 Measures to maximise impact

3. Implementation
   3.1 Work plan and resources
   3.2 Capacity of participants and consortium as a whole

Expected outcomes
1. Excellence

Are the objectives
- clear?
- pertinent to the topic?
- measurable and verifiable?

Is the state-of-the-art well presented? Is it clear to what extent the proposal goes beyond the state-of-the-art?

Is the proposed work ambitious enough to be innovative, but not so ambitious that it is unrealistic?

Is the initial and targeted Technology Readiness Level (TRL) properly described and realistically achievable within the proposed project?

⚠️ The targeted TRL of a topic is required for at least the core technology, process or product developed.
1. Excellence

Does the proposal show that the proposed methodology is appropriate and effective for achieving the objectives (incl. overcoming challenges)?

⚠️ New! If AI-based systems/techniques are used, is their robustness demonstrated?

Does the proposed work comply with the Do No Significant Harm principle?

Is the feedstock to be used in the scope of CBE JU and in respect of food-first & cascading principles?

Does the proposal demonstrate improved environmental performance of the proposed processes/products? (sustainability, circularity and, if applicable, carbon removal)
1. Excellence

Proposal – Part B

1. Objectives and ambition
1.2 Methodology

Are relevant initiatives identified (incl. BBI/CBE projects) and, when meaningful, appropriate interactions considered?

Are relevant digital technologies used?

Are relevant interdisciplinary approaches taken?

Are social, economic, behavioural, institutional, historical and/or cultural dimensions of the proposed innovations considered, e.g. via contributions from Social Sciences and Humanities?

(only for IA incl. Flagship topics and selected RIA and CSA topics)

Does the proposal describe how key actors will be involved via the so-called multi-actor approach?

In case of R&I activities with a relevant gender dimension: has it been considered in the proposal?
1. Excellence

Does the proposal demonstrate open science practices?

⚠️ In HE, ‘open science’ is more than ‘open access’: It is an approach to science based on open, cooperative work and sharing of knowledge and tools as early and widely as possible.

*(only for IA incl. IA-Flagship topics)*

Does the proposal’s open science strategy include the **publication of LC(S)A output**?

Does the proposal provide details on **data management** in line with the FAIR principles (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable)?

⚠️ In the grant, there will be mandatory deliverables “Data Management Plan”.
2. Impact

Is it clear which **unique contributions** would be made to:
- the **outcomes** specified in the topic text? (medium term)
- the wider **impacts** beyond the immediate scope and duration of the project? (longer term)

Is it clear which **target groups** will benefit?

Have the **scale** and **significance** of the contribution been indicated?

Have relevant **requirements** and potential **barriers** to outcome and impact been determined?

Have appropriate **mitigating measures**, within or beyond the project, been described?

⚠ ≠ **management risks** (3.1 Work plan and resources)
2. Impact

⚠️ First version of the Dissemination, Exploitation and Communication plan = admissibility criterion
(In the grant, there will be mandatory D&E&C deliverables.)

Is the plan to disseminate results to audiences who might use the results appropriate?

Are actions included to communicate project activities and results to multiple audiences (beyond project’s community)?

⚠️ Targeted D&C: Increasing awareness of potential benefits of bio-based solutions.

Is the strategy to exploit the project’s results appropriate?

⚠️ Describe the main background IPR needed to carry out the project.
2. Impact

(for RIA topics)
Is an assessment of the **economic viability** of the products and processes to be developed included?

(for IA topics)
Is a **business case** presented? Does it specify an inclusive **business model** that covers all actors of the value chain?

+ (only for IA Flagship topics)
Is a detailed preliminary **business plan** included as separate annex?

**Tip!** Provide quantified measures, targets whenever possible and meaningful.
# 2. Impact

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specific needs</th>
<th>Expected results</th>
<th>D&amp;E&amp;C measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What are the specific needs that triggered this project?</td>
<td>What do you expect to generate by the end of the project?</td>
<td>What dissemination, exploitation and communication measures will you apply to the results?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target groups</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Impacts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Who will use or further up-take the results of the project? Who will benefit from the results of the project?</td>
<td>What change do you expect to see after successful dissemination and exploitation of project results to the target group(s)?</td>
<td>What are the expected wider scientific, economic and societal effects of the project contributing to the expected impacts outlined in the respective destination in the work programme?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Implementation

Does the **work plan** have a good and clear structure?

Have the different **work packages** (WP) been scheduled and linked appropriately? Are their inter-dependencies clear?

Are **milestones** and **deliverables** well defined and appropriately timed?

Are the WPs and associated tasks **sufficiently described** to provide a good understanding of the work involved and justify the proposed resources to be allocated?

- Table 3.1a List of work packages
- Table 3.1b Work package descriptions
- Table 3.1c List of deliverables
- Table 3.1d List of milestones
- Table 3.1e Critical risks for implementation
- Table 3.1f-j Staff effort, Different costs, Contributions
3. Implementation

Are the described organisational **structure** and decision-making **mechanisms** appropriate to the scale and complexity of the project?

Are the **management procedures**, including quality management and conflict resolution, appropriate to the scale and complexity of the project?

Are critical **internal and external risks** related to project implementation described with appropriate mitigation measures and severity/probability estimates?

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3. Implementation

Is an **ex-post assessment** of environmental sustainability and circularity planned, incl. improvements compared with benchmark(s), of all the developed products/processes? 

*(for RIA topics)* **Task** to use **early-stage data** to assess improvement of environmental performance

*(for IA topics)* **WP** or **task** to assess environmental impacts and circularity using:

- *(IA)* life-cycle assessment *(LCA)* methodologies
- *(IA-Flagship)* life-cycle-sustainability assessment *(LCSA)* methodologies?

⚠️ LCA and LCSA methodologies should be based on widely used **standards** and certifications and use accepted and validated approaches.

⚠️ Open science: **Publication** of LC(S)A output is important!
3. Implementation

Does the work plan include an action to develop **recommendations to targeted stakeholders**, such as:

- policymakers
- national/regional stakeholders
- investors
- brand owners …

CBE specific requirement
3. Implementation

Does the consortium bring together the necessary **expertise** for the project?

Has the **complementarity** of the participants been convincingly described?

Does **each partner** have a valid role and adequate resources (both effort and budget) to fulfil that role?

⚠️ If a participant requesting funding is based in a **third country** not eligible for funding: Is clearly explained why participation by this entity is essential to carry out the project?
Build a strong consortium

Map elements of Topic (Scope) and Part B (Excellence) to individual partners in the consortium.

- Are there any competence gaps in the consortium?

Use the networking opportunities offered by the Funding & Tenders Opportunities Portal, CBE JU and BIC

During proposal writing:

- Significant level of upfront commitment from all partners is crucial, as costs are not eligible before project start.
- High level of confidence between partners is key.
- Talk early about handling of IPR – these will need to be confirmed formally in the Consortium Agreement before signature of the Grant Agreement.
Annexes

(IA topics incl. Flagships)
- BIC membership certifications
- optional and indicative during evaluation phase, required only upon Grant Agreement Preparation: IKAA plan ‘Overview of the total Additional Activity investments planned by participants and third parties to this action that are BIC members’

(IA-Flagship topics)
- Detailed business plan

(CSA, only if applicable)
- Template ‘Financial Support to Third Parties’
A competitive bioeconomy for a sustainable future

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Aim for total “Topic eclipse”

Topic$^+$ = Topic text + HE requirements + CBE JU specific requirements + CBE JU cross-cutting elements

every single word in topic text counts!
every requirement & cross-cutting element counts!
Thank you for your attention!