



Governo dos Açores



*EU FUNDING FOR RESEARCH AND INNOVATION IN THE OUTERMOST REGIONS  
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# Steps & tips to prepare a successful proposal

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# Key steps

Before submission

After submission

1

Getting Ready

2

Establish Consortium

3

Prepare Research Proposal

Submission

Evaluation & Ethical Review

4

Contract Negotiation & Signature

5

Management of the Proposal

6

# 1

## Getting Ready

### Know:

- **The funding body (Europe):** read Green papers, White papers, Action plans, all relevant policy papers on European strategies;
- **The Framework programme** and the **specific programmes** : be aware of the priorities, of the participation rules, ...
- **Your subject:** relevant documents, *i.e.* **text of the call, work programme, funding schemes, etc.**
- **Yourself:** **what do you want to do?** what are your strengths and your weaknesses.  
Play to your strengths!
- **The evaluation process :**

**Know how your proposal will be evaluated before you write it**

# Calls Service

All calls are published in the **Official Journal** of the EU and the **CORDIS FP7 web site**. They give you access to:

- **Call fiches**
- **Call texts**
- **Work programmes**
- **Participation guides**



**All documents can be downloaded or sent by e-mail**

## 2

## Establish Consortium

### What is a project?

A project is a **unique set of coordinated activities**, with definite starting and finishing points, undertaken by an individual or organization **to meet specific objectives** within **defined time, cost and performance parameters**. *From ISO 10006.*

### What is an EC project?

- ❑ **Partnership**; partners will depend of each other, jointly responsible;
- ❑ **Foreigners** with **different cultures**.



# Partner Search

- Via current project partners
- Via CORDIS partner search
- Via Eol data base (beginning of FP6)
- Via NCPs' network as Ideal-IST partner search for ICT
- Via Commission events in your area
- Via current project data bases as CORDIS Projects
- Via brokerage events
- Etc.

# What is project management? Overview

## Four basic elements:

### **1 – Project scope**

Project size, objectives

### **2 – Ressources**

People, equipment, material

### **3 – Time and schedule**

Task durations, dependencies, critical path, timeline

### **4 – Money and reporting**

Costs, contingencies, meetings and reporting

### 3

## Prepare Research Proposal

### Key points:

- ☐ Formulate (an) appropriate **research objective(s)**;
- ☐ State your (research) objective(s) and (research) **strategy** clearly in your proposal;
- ☐ Develop a realistic **research plan**;
- ☐ Frame your project around the work of others;
- ☐ Develop a realistic **management plan**;
- ☐ Format, brevity, grammar and spelling are important;
- ☐ More common reasons for failure of proposals.



# Structure of a proposal

**Part A:** In part A you will be asked for certain administrative details that will be used in the evaluation and further processing of your proposal. Part A forms an integral part of your proposal. Section **A1** gives a snapshot of your proposal, section **A2** concerns you and your organisation, while section **A3** deals with money matters :

- Section **A1**: Summary
- Section **A2**: Participants (a form per participant)
- Section **A3**: Budget

**Part B:** Scientific work and project management

- Section **1**: Scientific and/or technical quality, relevant to the topics addressed by the call
- Section **2**: Implementation
- Section **3**: Impact
- Section **4**: Ethical Issues

# 4

## Evaluation & Ethical Review

### Evaluation criteria

- **Criteria adapted to each funding scheme**
  - specified in the work programme
- **Divided into three main criteria:**
  - ***S&T Quality*** *(relevant to the topic of the call)*
    - Concept, objective, work-plan
  - ***Implementation***
    - Individual participants and consortium as a whole
    - Allocation of resources
  - ***Impact***
    - Contribution to expected impacts listed in work programme
    - Plans for dissemination/exploitation

**New for FP7**

## From the NIAID-NIH web site:

<http://funding.niaid.nih.gov/researchfunding/grant/cycle/pages/part04.aspx#d3>

**Many writing labs are available on the web**

- **Write a topic sentence for each main topic:** then write a topic sentence for each sub topic in the outline;
- **Make one point in each paragraph:** this is key to creating text that's easy to read;
- **Divide the document into sections and subsections.** This organizes your text and, together with paragraph headers, creates white space;
- **Include bullets and lists:** they draw attention to key facts and create a visual break;
- **Use short sentences with a basic structure:** subject, verb, object;
- **Include transitions:** at the beginning of a new paragraph or concept;
- **Keep related ideas and information together:** e.g. put clauses and phrases as close as possible;
- **Use strong, active verbs:** write "We will develop a cell line," not "A cell line will be developed";
- **Use verb forms instead of abstract nouns:** say 'creating the assay leads to...' rather than 'the creation of the assay leads to...'

**If writing is not your forte, get help**

# Tips to prepare a good proposal

**It is not easy to prepare/write a good proposal:**

It takes **time** and **efforts**; it can take several months ...

**Keep in mind what evaluators are looking for in proposals:**

- **relevance**
- **scientific and technical excellence**
- **quality of project management**
- technical credibility of the proposal
- **impact:** added value of carrying out the research at a European level
- strategy for exploitation and dissemination of results
- costs and budget breakdown
- competence and effectiveness of the consortium

# 5

## Contract Negotiation & Signature

- **Prepare** the negotiation phase
- **Involve** administrative persons from your institution
- **Read** the (Standard Model) **G**rant **A**greement
- **Read** carefully the **C**onsortium **A**greement
- **Visit** the **IPR-Helpdesk** web site

# 6

## Management of the Proposal

### Roles and responsibilities

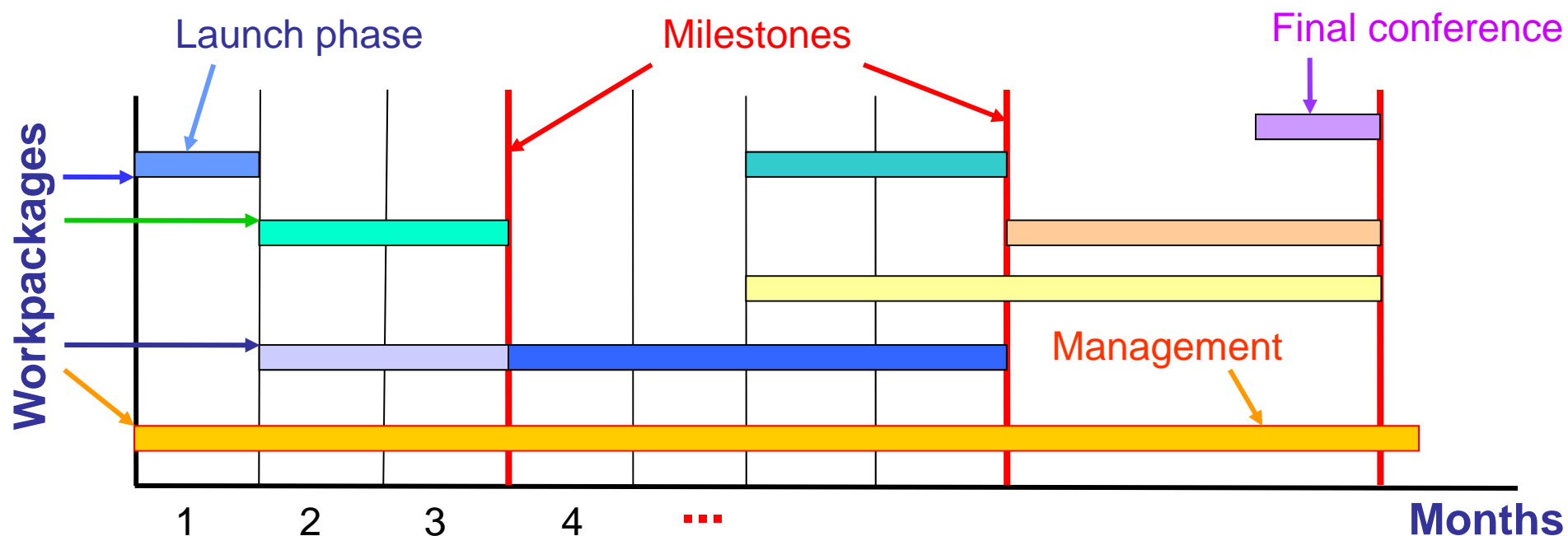
- **Coordinator (Project manager):** project direction, costs control, EC contact (reporting)
- **WP Leaders**: deliver work package results, reporting
- **Participants** (Contractors): deliver participants contribution
- **Administratives**: deliver cost statements

# Tips for a successful project management

- **Define clear objectives** and be sure these objectives are understood and endorsed by all participants (submission; kick off meeting)
- Manage the **project scope**
- **Identify the risks** and take appropriate actions
- Decide before/during the **kick off meeting** **how problems will be solved** (Consortium agreement, rules for a good management)
- **Plan, plan** then **plan** some more
- **Communicate** towards all participants and keep the team happy!

# The Gantt Chart

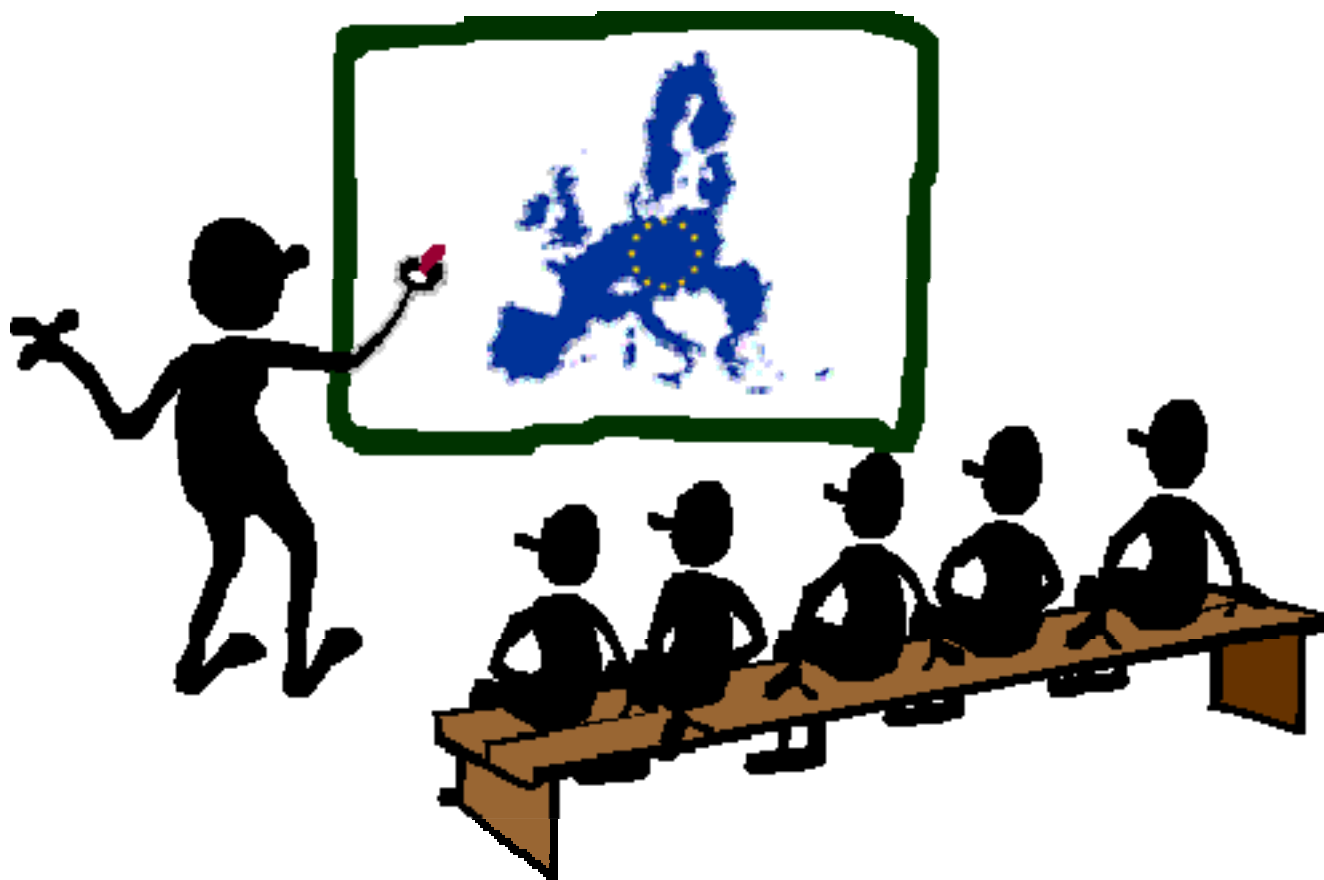
A **Gantt Chart** helps organize a **plan** to implement a (research) project. It documents **what** is to be accomplished, **who** will be involved and **when** workpackages and tasks will take place and how they will interrelate. It shows at a quick glance **the course of the project**. Additionally it provides guidance for managing the project. A simple example looks like:





# So, be a pro-active participant

- Be **well informed**, so be **well prepared** before contacting potential partners (*esp.* Coordinators)
- **Work closely with the coordinator** and other partners of the consortium to **create win-win situations**
- Try to be **Task leader** or better try to be **WorkPackage leader**
- **Make sure your institution is supportive** and able to follow EC rules *esp.* about EC-funding
- Pay attention to **IPR**
- **Be professionnall and responsive.**



**Thanks & Good Luck**