How to write an FP7-ICT proposal?

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AGENDA

I. Information:
   ✓ General introduction to FP7

II. Your participation:
   ✓ Frequently asked questions

III. Training:
   ✓ Generating ideas
   ✓ Strategies for joining a consortium
   ✓ Overview of proposal preparation
I - General introduction to FP7
What is FP7?

- FP: Framework Programme is the main tool of the European Union to co-finance the Research and Technological Development in Europe.
- FP7 supports research in selected priority areas.
- FP7 is the 7th FP running from 2007 to 2013.
- FP7 represents a 41% increase from FP6.
Who can participate?

Participation on the Seventh Framework Programme is open to a wide range of organisations and individuals:

- Universities
- Research Centres
- Multinational corporations
- SMEs
- Public Organisations
- NGOs
- Individuals

*Different participation rules apply, depending on the research initiative in question.*
Components in FP7 and Budget

Cooperation ➔ Collaborative research  ➔ 32 365 million €
Ideas ➔ Frontier Research  ➔ 7 460 million €
People ➔ Marie Curie Actions  ➔ 4 728 million €
Capacities ➔ Research Capacity  ➔ 4 217 million €
Joint Research Center / Euratom  ➔ JRC (1 751) and Euratom (2 751)

Total budget: 50.5 billions €
(Vs 17.5 in FP6)
Where to find ICT?

- Health
- Food, Agriculture and Fisheries, Biotechnology
- **Information & Communication Technologies** (Budget = 9,110 M€ (18%))
  - Nanosciences, nanotechnologies, materials & new production technologies
  - Energy
  - Environment (including Climate Change)
  - Transport (including aeronautics)
  - Socio-economic Sciences and the Humanities
- Space
- Security

- Research infrastructures
- Research for the benefit of SMEs
- Regions of knowledge and support for regional research-driven clusters
- Research potential of Convergence Regions
- Science in society
- Support to the coherent development of research policies
- International cooperation
FP7 Instruments

Instrument = project type (different in size, format and purpose)

- Networks of Excellence (NoE)
- Co-operative Research Projects
  - Integrated Projects (IP)
  - Specific Targeted Research Projects (STREPS)
- Coordination and Support actions (CSA)
  - Coordination Actions (CA)
  - Specific Support Actions (SSA)
- Integrated Infrastructure Initiative (I3)
So ...

- FP7 is a multi-annual financing program from the European Commission
- FP7 has ICT as its #1 priority
- FP7 allows for Research and Development, people development and transversal actions financing
- FP7 uses several instruments related to collaborative research, support actions …
II – Your participation
What do you expect from FP7 participation?

Checklist before getting involved:

- We are leaders on a specific topic
- We want to enlarge our European cooperation and support the competitiveness of our companies
- We want to access new knowledge and best practices
- We are ready to spend days in writing a proposal that may be lost
Frequently asked question #1

I am doing very important R&D in ICT. How can I get funding from FP7?

- Make sure you are a leader in your field
- Identify a potential call for proposals in which your ideas could fit
  - Consider both directions: technology and application
  - Read between the lines
- Make a proposal following FP7 procedures
  - As a coordinator
  - Or a consortium partner
Frequently asked question #2

Should I better be the coordinator?

- Are you well known in Europe or do you have strong references?
- Do you have the capacity to handle the overhead created by the coordination of a European project and associated administrative tasks?
- Do you have strong references in project management (including IPR and dissemination)?
- Are you one of the main partners of the consortium?
- Do you want to lead the project developments?
- Are you from EU or associated countries?
Frequently asked question #3

How can I identify a consortium that will submit the proposal for FP7?

- Identify the consortia preparing a proposal
- Have a look at previous running projects. Many consortia are looking for continuation
- Check the existing database and publish your profile: [http://www.ideal-ist.net/](http://www.ideal-ist.net/)
- Prepare a description of your company/organisation and your main expertise related to the idea you may have or the project you are targeting
- Get in touch with the contact points…
Frequently asked question #4

How to convince a consortium to bring me on-board?

- Put in light in a nicely presented document
  - Your core competencies
  - Your added value for the project
  - Your references (projects and peer reviewed international literature)
  - The key persons to be involved
- Be pro-active: propose ideas
- Be extremely reactive to requests
Frequently asked question #5

How to maximise my chances?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Requirement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Competition</td>
<td>being very good is insufficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovation</td>
<td>demonstrate new knowledge created</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevance</td>
<td>perfect fit with EC requirements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partners</td>
<td>relevant and no passengers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>demonstrate capabilities and tools</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

16
So ... why getting involved?

- Prestige and visibility?
- International nature of research: benchmark?
- Funding opportunities?
- Sharing expertise/facilities?
- Networking?
- Meeting staff/student expectations?:
  - New IP and curriculum development
  - Staff training and development – broaden skill and competence base
  - Career development
III - Training
The general process

- Identify the call deadline
- Get the call documents
- Initial idea: draft summary

- Initiate contacts. Check idea
- Agree core partners & leaders
- Refine project plan and objectives

- Get last version of templates
- Allocate parts to be written between partners
- Construct budget

- Finalise proposal
- Check evaluator guideline
- Make sure to submit well before deadline
Generating ideas

**Set-up**
- Identify the call deadline
- Get the call documents
- Initial idea: draft summary

**Consortium**
- Initiate contacts. Check idea
- Agree core partners & leaders
- Refine project plan and objectives

**Drafting**
- Get last version of templates
- Allocate parts to be written between partners
- Construct budget

**Submission**
- Finalise proposal
- Check evaluator guideline
- Make sure to submit well before deadline

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**BALCON**

The Gateway to the ICT Monitoring & Control Research in the Western Balkans

Supported by the European Commission under the 7th Framework Programme for Research in “Information and Communication Technologies” (FP7-ICT)
Getting involved: information to be collected

- Publication of the Call;
- The Work Programme for the exact thematic priority;
- Basic information for the programme;
- Guidelines for proposals;
- Application forms and framework of the Contracts;
- Evaluation criteria;
- Financial rules.

http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/fp7_calls
In order to receive a complete Information Package for this call, you will need to select the following elements:

1. The call fiche (only available in .pdf format)
2. The work programme (.pdf format)
3. FP7 factsheets in your preferred language – an overview of the basic features of this programme (.pdf format)
4. The Guide for Applicants relevant to the funding schemes used in this call (.pdf format)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Click to download file</th>
<th>Select language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Call fiche</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guide for applicants (Collaborative projects: Large-scale integrating projects - IP)</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guide for applicants (Collaborative projects - Small and Medium-scale focused Research Projects - STREP)</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guide for applicants (Coordination and Support Action: Coordinating - CCA/CA)</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guide for applicants (Coordination and Support Action: Supporting - CSASA)</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guide for applicants (Combination of Collaborative project and Coordination and support action - CP-CPA)</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guide for applicants FET Proactive only (Collaborative projects: large scale integrating projects - IP)</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guide for applicants FET Proactive only (Collaborative projects: small and medium scale focused research projects - STREP)</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guide for applicants FET proactive only (Coordination actions - CA)</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guide for applicants FET Proactive only (Support actions - SA)</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperation Work Programme 2013 – General Introduction</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Programme 2013 - Information and Communication Technologies</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperation Work Programme 2013 - General Annexes</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FP7 Factsheets</td>
<td>English</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Examine the FP7 ICT work Programme

- Work Programme is usually available as a 100+ page .pdf document
  - Don’t try reading it cover-to-cover!

- Use “Edit->Find” menu in Adobe Acrobat to search the document for key research terms of interest to you
  - Help you to find the relevant research topics/priorities/challenges

- Assuming you find a research topic relevant to your interest, then:
  - Read carefully the following sections: technical content/scope, funding scheme, expected impact, call identifier, deadline, etc
  - Which Scenario is for you?
    - Scenario A – I have a proposal idea for the research topic
    - Scenario B – I just wish to participate in specific project activities
FP7 project proposal: meet in the middle

TOP DOWN APPROACH

BOTTOM UP APPROACH

Adjustment of the project

Project to submit

Target call analysis

Set-up
Consortium
Drafting
Submission

BALCON
The Gateway to the ICT Monitoring & Control Research in the Western Balkans
Supported by the European Commission under the 7th Framework Programme for Research in “Information and Communication Technologies” (FP7-ICT)
Strategies for joining a consortium

- **Set-up**
  - Identify the call deadline
  - Get the call documents
  - Initial idea: draft summary

- **Consortium**
  - Initiate contacts. Check idea
  - Agree core partners & leaders
  - Refine project plan and objectives

- **Drafting**
  - Get last version of templates
  - Allocate parts to be written between partners
  - Construct budget

- **Submission**
  - Finalise proposal
  - Check evaluator guideline
  - Make sure to submit well before deadline
Motivations

Identify your motivations for participation in an FP7 project …

Probably
- To do research on a research idea initiated by yourself

OR
- To do specific activities on a research idea initiated by someone else

But, also
- To increase your research/technology knowledge in general
  - To become even better for your “own” research/technology platform
  - To be recognised and well known in your specific research
  - To network with EU countries
  - To receive some funding (but this should not be your main reason)
Getting involved

Ways to get involved in a consortium preparing an FP7 project

1. Get support from your FP7 National Contact Point (NCP)
2. Identify “successful” European ICT partners
3. Contact “successful” European ICT partners
4. Alternative ways to identify partners
Need a realistic approach

- Average success rate for FP7 ICT proposals is about 15-20%.
- Preparing a competitive FP7 ICT proposal is a challenging task even for experienced European organisations.
- Identify “successful” European organisations interested to lead an FP7 ICT consortium and write the FP7 ICT proposal.
- “Successful” European organisations = Track record of successful EU funded project implementation.
- Persuade the “successful” European organisation(s) to let you join their consortium because:
  - you offer a unique and competitive proposal idea and/or
  - you have specific research capabilities that they need.
Identify the European state of the art

Investigate past and current FP7 ICT projects concerning monitoring and control:

Search FP7 projects on the Cordis database:

Identify “successful” European ICT partners

“Successful” European organisations = European organisations who have successfully implemented FP7 ICT projects

Search FP7 projects on the Cordis database
Alternative ways to find European partners

- Participate in FP7 ICT information-days organised by the European Commission in Brussels (and elsewhere in Europe)
  - Presentations concerning call objectives
  - Networking and brokerage


- Ideal-ist Partner Search ([www.ideal-ist.net](http://www.ideal-ist.net))
  - Ideal-ist network of representatives (covers 65+ countries)


- LinkedIn target groups (e.g. FP7, FP7 projects etc): [http://www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com)
Overview of proposal preparation

Set-up
- Identify the call deadline
- Get the call documents
- Initial idea: draft summary

Consortium
- Initiate contacts. Check idea
- Agree core partners & leaders
- Refine project plan and objectives

Drafting
- Get last version of templates
- Allocate parts to be written between partners
- Construct budget

Submission
- Finalise proposal
- Check evaluator guideline
- Make sure to submit well before deadline
From an Idea to a Proposal to a Project: An Overview

1. Proposal Idea
2. Consortium Building
3. Proposal Writing
4. Submission
5. Evaluation
6. Contract Negotiations
7. Project Start

Steps 1, 2 and 3 are often iterative.
1. Proposal idea

- Develop an idea for a research project that is …
- Relevant to the objectives/priorities in the FP7 work programme (so read the work programme carefully)
- Innovative (not done before)
- Realistic (objectives, skills, budget, duration)
- Requires a consortium with European partners

   Realistically - due to their greater experience with FP5/6/7 - an EU partner is more likely to initiate a competitive proposal idea and be a strong project coordinator

- Prepare an A4 page proposal summary for potential partners
  - Objectives – Work to be done – Expertise needed – Work plan
Types of EC collaborative projects

- **SM (Small or medium-scale focused research projects):** Medium-sized research projects which aims at generating new knowledge, including new technology, or common resources for research in order to improve European competitiveness, or to address major societal needs.
  (Activities: RTD, Demo, Other and Mgt);

- **LA (Large scale integrating projects):** Large-research projects with the same objectives as a STREP project.
  (Activities: RTD, Demo, Other and Mgt);

- **CSA (Coordination and Support Action):** aims at coordinating or supporting research activities and policies - networking, exchanges, trans-national access to research infrastructures, studies, conferences, etc.
  (Activities: Demo, Other and Mgt – But not RTD!).

Introducing some EC terminology
# Introducing some EC terminology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funded Activities</th>
<th>EC’s upper funding limit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research and Technological Development activities (RTD)</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Exception:</strong> Public bodies, secondary and higher educational establishments, research organizations and SMEs</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstration activities (Demo)</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support and coordination activities, training, career development of researchers (Other)</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management (Mgt)</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Consortium Building

- Work Programme and Call requirements:
  - Right number of partners
  - Type of organisations and countries
  - Functions

- Project needs:
  - Experienced Coordinator
  - Competent Partners
  - Complementarities of Partners
  - Needed expertise is covered
  - Role in Project - Fitting tasks to the organisations

- Balanced Consortium:
  - Balance of research performers (e.g. universities and public research organisations) and end-users (e.g. companies)
  - Balance of countries / good geographical spread
2. Consortium Building (Cont.)

Statistics on consortium size, budgets, duration and activities funded

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funding Schemes</th>
<th>Statistics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Project duration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small or medium-scale focused research project (SM)</td>
<td>2-3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large scale integrating project (LA)</td>
<td>3-5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support actions (CSA)</td>
<td>2-3 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Proposal writing

Preparation

- Download the latest FP7 ICT Work Programme
- Download the Guide for Applicants (usually a different guide for STREP, IP and CSA)
- Read carefully the Guide for Applicants

Link to the participant portal on Cordis:
http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/fp7_calls
3. Proposal writing (Cont.)

Two parts to a proposal – Part A and Part B

Part A
Part A contains the administrative information about the proposal and the participants
• A1: A brief description of the project
• A2: Details and characteristics of the participants
• A3: Project cost details

Part A completed via a set of on-line standard forms placed in Electronic Proposal Submission System (EPSS)
• Project coordinator registers on EPSS and completes A1 and A3 forms
• Consortium partners complete A2 forms (including PIC number)
Some important explanations about FP7 project financials (relevant for A3 form and Part B)
Financials

Direct Costs
- Personnel
- Durable equipment
- Subcontracting
- Travel and subsistence
- Consumables

Indirect Costs or Overhead
- Non-productive labour (e.g. administrative staff)
- Rent, general equipment depreciation
- Energy (e.g. heating, cooling and electricity)
- Communications (e.g. phone and website)
Financials – indirect costs

- Actual Indirect Costs
  - Organisations who have an analytical accounting system that can identify and group indirect costs must report their indirect costs or choose a 20% flat rate option (20% of direct costs excluding subcontracting)

- Flat rates
  - Flat rate 20%: large companies that do not declare actual indirect costs
  - Transitional rate 60%: SMEs, research organisations, universities, non-profit public bodies

- Coordination and Support Actions
  - Flat rate 7% for all organisations
## Financials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Research and Technological Development</th>
<th>Demonstration Activities</th>
<th>Management of Consortium Activities</th>
<th>Other Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collaborative project</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Network of Excellence</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordination and Support Action</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Financials – An Example STREP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant number in this project</th>
<th>Participant short name</th>
<th>Estimated eligible costs (whole duration of the project)</th>
<th>Total receipts</th>
<th>Requested EC contribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>RTD / Innovation (A)</td>
<td>Demonstration (B)</td>
<td>Management (C)</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>184,000.00</td>
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<td>80,000.00</td>
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<td>MPG</td>
<td>160,000.00</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>ICFJ</td>
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<td>0.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>CP</td>
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<td>0.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>USTAN</td>
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<td>10</td>
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<td>180,864.00</td>
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<td>0.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td>2,005,328.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>88,000.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **SME**
Appendices
Outline of the ICT Work programme

1. Objective
2. ICT research drivers
3. Strategy
4. Links to related activities
5. Funding schemes
6. Content of Calls for proposals
7. Implementation
8. Indicative priorities for future calls
Organisation of Content of Calls

Level 1: Challenges
- 8 main thematic areas
- Other actions (Field and Emerging Technologies, international cooperation, Horizontal actions)

Level 2: Objectives
- Main topics tackled within the challenge

Level 3: Call details
- Description
- Expected impact
- Funding scheme
- Indicative budget distribution
- Calls
The challenges

- Challenge 1: Pervasive and trusted network and service infrastructures
- Challenge 2: Cognitive systems and robotics
- Challenge 3: Alternative Paths to Components and Systems
- Challenge 4: Technologies for Digital Content and Languages
- Challenge 5: ICT for Health, Ageing Well, Inclusion and Governance
- Challenge 6: ICT for a low carbon economy
- Challenge 7: ICT for the Enterprise and Manufacturing
- Challenge 8: ICT for Creativity and Learning
We wish you a successful proposal preparation!