How to Develop a Project Proposal

EU Programmes for non-EU countries

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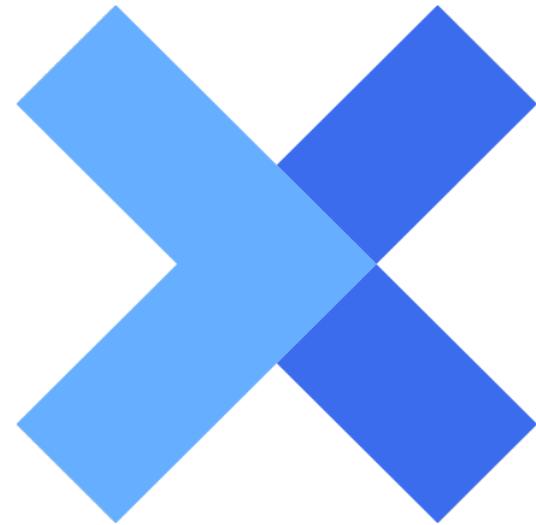
Overall Course Structure

Section 1: Overview of EU programmes for non-EU countries

Section 2: Project design

    The main steps in proposal preparation

Section 3: Transversal Issues: project management, dissemination, sustainability

Section 4: Budget

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Transversal issues

In the third module, participants will be provided with an overview of how to design the project management procedures for an international project, how to design a dissemination strategy, and how to ensure the sustainability of the future project, three key transversal issues for a successful proposal.

Summary

- Introduction to Project Management
- Dissemination, Exploitation and Communication

Introduction to Project Management

- PM must be considered at 2 different stages:
    - Proposal preparation: we describe the way we will manage the project, if approved
    - Project execution: we must put in practice what we have described
    - In this module we recall some concepts of the design phase and focus on the execution stage

Introduction to Project Management

- Why is PM so important for the Commission at evaluation stage?
  - A complex, multi-country project must be managed thoroughly in order to produce results
  - Partners are in different countries, speak different languages, have different priorities and (usually) different expectations vis-à-vis the project

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Introduction to Project Management

- Hence we have to convince the Commission that we know how to deal with PM, at least on the following aspects:
  - Monitoring and control of activities
  - Recovery actions (if sthg goes wrong)
  - Control of decision process
  - Financial and Administrative management
  - Intellectual Property Rights
  - Conflicts resolution

- Final statement:
  - NO MANAGEMENT = NO RESULTS!

The management structures: committees, roles

- Terminology:
  - Deliverable
  - Milestone
  - Review
  - Reporting Period

PM Structure

Design Phase:

The PM structure is more or less the same for all projects but it should be tailored to the individual project.

In the design phase (drafting of the proposal) we must convince the evaluators that we know how to manage an international project
We start from the hierarchical structure (see next slide)

PM Structure

Design Phase: Management Chart (example)

PM Structure

- General Assembly
  - Partners representatives
  - Strategic Management, high level decision making
  - Delegates Operational Management
- Executive Board
- Project Manager (PM: Coordinator)
  - Responsible for project execution
  - Operational Management
  - Coordination Administrative Management
  - Interface Consortium/Commission

PM Structure

- General Assembly
  - Composed by Partners' representatives
  - Strategic Management, high level decision making
  - Delegates Operational Management
  - Meets once or twice per year
  - Voting rules!

- Executive Board
  - Elected by G.A.
  - Usually the WP leaders
  - Operational management, high level
  - Meets 3-4 times a year
  - Clear mandate by G.A.

PM Structure

- Project Manager Team (Coordinator)
  - Responsible for project execution
  - At least, 1 project manager and an Administrative PM
  - Operational Management, day-by day
  - Coordination Administrative Management
  - Project Manager: Interface Consortium/Commission

PM Structure

Possibility of setting up other Committees (depending on Project type)

- Technical/scientific Committee:
    - Manages Technical/Scientific issues
    - Includes Technical WP leaders
    - Chaired by Project Manager or Technical Manager
- Exploitation Committee:
    - Manages Exploitation issues
    - Includes Industrial Representatives
    - Chaired by Exploitation Manager
- Ethical Committee:
    - Manages Ethical issues (experimentation on Humans or animals, data protection etc…)
    - Constituted by Ethical issues experts
    - Chaired by Ethical Manager
- All these Committees report to the Executive Board

PM Structure

- Management structure and procedures
    - WP Leaders:
    - Responsible for individual WPs.
    - Report to PM
    - Can be members of the Executive Board

- G.A.: rules of representation and vote:
    - G.A. is a committee including all the partners=> need for voting rules
    - Possible rules
        - A) one man one vote
        - B) n. of votes corresponding to partners' investment
        - C) Other (agreement between partners)

PM Structure

- All rules to be defined and agreed during first meeting of G.A, included in Consortium Agreement

- Possible difficulty if consensus is not reached but voting rules are not decided yet

- Solution: PM's mediation capabilities

Project Management Levels

- 3 levels of Management :
  - Strategic
  - Operational
  - Administrative

Strategic Management (G.A.)

- Typical function of G.A.
- Adherence with contract
- Management of modifications/exceptions
- Consortium Agreement

Strategic Management (G.A.)

- Examples
  - Redefining the objectives of the project
  - Changing partnership
  - Modify budget allocation
  - Realignment workplan / time
  - Definition of IPR and exploitation

Operational Management (Exec. Board.)

- Executive Board:
    - Operational Management
    - Takes decisions on operational matters
    - Prepares decisions of G.A.
    - Management of conflicts (see below)

Operational Management (PMT)

- Project manager: in charge for project execution, main tasks:
  - Chairing the Executive Board
  - Preparing a detailed Project Management Workbook (DX.1) illustrating the management and reporting procedures to be followed by all partners;
  - On the basis of this Workbook, monitoring the progress of the project against the Workplan and taking corrective actions where necessary.
  - Calls for meeting of Exec Board where necessary

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Operational Management (PMT)

- Project manager: in charge for project execution, main tasks:
    - Activating the project tasks at the foreseen times, in order to make sure that all partners are following the Workplan;
    - Being the interface between the Commission and the Consortium, as it is required by the Commission itself: this might require mediation and negotiation skills;
- Project manager: in charge for project execution, main tasks:
    - Ensuring that the Project deliverables are delivered at the proper timing and with the appropriate quality level;
    - Last but not least initiating conflict resolution procedures as set out in the Project Management Handbook where necessary.

Administrative Management (PMT)

- Control of costs and reimbursements

- Financial Plan

- Management and control

- Advance payments

- Payments

- Amount Due

- Cost statements

Project Workbook (WB)

Task n.	Task title	Start date	End date	Status
1.2	Methodological definition of the information gathering			On going
	General description	Participants (task leader first)		
	Elaboration of the methodology for the information gathering to analyse the Status of the art and the users' requirements.	Partner2 Partner4 Partner5		
	Subtask n.	Description	Participant	Status
	1.2.1	Detailed description of 1.2.1	P2, P4	
	Subtask n.	Description	Participant	Status
	1.2.2	Detailed description of 1.2.2	P2, P5	

Task 1.2 Input (previous task results that flow in the task)

Project plan; list of the major stakeholders.

Task 1.2 Output (task results that flow into the following task)

Methodology for Information gathering to analyse the Status of the art.

Methodology for Information gathering to analyse the users' requirements.

Quality Plan

- The Quality Plan:
  - It is normally part of the Project Management WP deliverables
  - It mainly focuses on project deliverables (more than on procedures)
  - Defines the format of the documents, the nomenclature and quality control procedures on the same
- Example of Table of Contents of a Quality plan (see annex)
- 3 Quality procedures
  - 3.1 Formal quality control
    - 3.1.1 Document numbering
    - 3.1.2 Document Format
    - 3.1.3 Quality control procedures and responsibilities
  - 3.2 Contents oriented quality control
    - 3.2.1 Content quality control procedures
    - 3.2.2 Timing
    - 3.2.3 Evaluation grid

Quality Plan

- Example of Rules: Document Identification Code (DIC)

Field n.	1	2	3	4
Content	PROJECT_NAME	Work package number or GE (GEneral document	If deliverable: the number of the deliverable (e.g. D2.1). If not deliverable: WD (working Document) and the progressive number within the WP	The version number (assigned by the author, e.g. V 0.2). replaced by an F (=Final) after end of evaluation process
Example	EL-GATE	WP2	D21	F

Management of conflicts

- Procedures for conflict resolution: describe how any conflicts within the Consortium will be addressed and resolved.

- Usually implies the following steps:
  - PM tries to obtain an informal consensus
  - PM tries to obtain consensus in formal way (eg. Meeting only with involved partners)
  - PM convenes meeting of the G.A.
  - If necessary, G.A. voting
  - If no consensus is found, involvement of Commission

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Dissemination, Exploitation and Communication

- A key element in each and every EU project proposal
- EU uses taxpayers money to fund projects, hence it needs to ensure that the results are used and made available to a wide audience
- However, there is often some confusion between these three terms
- To avoid confusion among these three components, we provide clear definitions of each one of them

Dissemination, Exploitation and Communication

- Definitions
- Dissemination: "Transfer knowledge & results with the aim to enable others to use and take up results, thus maximising the impact of EU-funded research".
  - Focus is on the transfer of results and on their reuse by other actors.
  - The extent to which this is possible is obviously linked to the commercial value of the same results and to the IPR provisions established by the consortium.

Dissemination, Exploitation and Communication

- Definitions
- Exploitation. "Effectively use project results through scientific, economic, political or societal exploitation routes aiming to turn R&I actions into concrete value and impact for society".
  - Use of the project's results by consortium partners, possibly on a commercial basis.
  - Will take place after the end of the project, but must be described in a credible way in the proposal.

Dissemination, Exploitation and Communication

- Definitions

- Communication. "A strategically planned process that starts at the outset of the action and continues throughout its entire lifetime, aimed at promoting the action and its results."

  - A one way process aimed at making the project visible and known to the external world, not only in terms of results but also of project's activities (public events, trainings, intermediate reports and documents of interest to a wider community….).

Dissemination, Exploitation and Communication

a) Dissemination and exploitation of results

- A Draft 'plan for the dissemination and exploitation of the project's results', must be included in the proposal, articulated in the following phases (this example refers to and R&D project proposal).

- **Phase 1**: Elaboration of the IPR and Commercial rules.

- The commercial exploitation rules and more specifically the distribution of revenues among the partners must be defined.

- All these issues have to be agreed upon and described in the Consortium Agreement which will be signed by all the partners at the very beginning of the project.

Dissemination, Exploitation and Communication

a) Dissemination and exploitation of results

- **Phase 2**: Identification of stakeholders.

- This is the first step needed to create a sound basis for all the three components (dissemination, exploitation and communication).

- Definition of "stakeholders":

- ALL THOSE ACTORS WHICH CAN INFLUENCE OR BE INFLUECED BY THE PROJECT/PROCESS AT STAKE

- In order to properly disseminate the project's results, stakeholders must be identified.

- First activity: mapping the actors in Europe which operate in the same field, e.g. as individual companies, trade associations, research organisations, NGO's, Public Authorities and so on.

- Stakeholders are those interested in a direct transfer of the project's results in terms of procedures, equipment and other tangible results:

- The transfer shall be regulated by technical and commercial agreements on the basis of a set of provisions which will be defined in the consortium agreement (see IPR section).

Dissemination, Exploitation and Communication

a) Dissemination and exploitation of results

- **Phase 3**: Project's dissemination of results.

- The goal is to transfer the project's knowledge and results to the identified stakeholders' categories. Hence on the basis of the mapping performed in Phase 1, the following activities should be performed:

- As soon as the first tangible results will become available, their direct involvement in the dissemination activities of the project will be started, in the following way:
  - Create small groups of max 10 stakeholders, orgnanise focus groups meetings to illustrate project's results and prepare transfer;
  - The next steps for those interested will include:
    - Definition of the commercial aspects of the transfer, which will be on a preferential basis but not necessarily for free,
    - Definition of operational aspects such as the training of the operators,
    - Implementation of the results at the users' sites and so on

Dissemination, Exploitation and Communication

a) Dissemination and exploitation of results - RECAP

- A good dissemination plan (not communication, which is dealt with in a separate section) should incude:

- Phase 1: Elaboration of the IPR and Commercial rules.

- Phase 2: Identification of stakeholders.

- Phase 3: Dissemination of Project's results, including:
  - Setup of focus groups
  - Identificaiton of pilot users
  - Definition of the commercial aspects of the transfer
  - Operational arrangements (Training of operators, implementation of results at users sites, monitoring…)

Dissemination, Exploitation and Communication

b) The exploitation plan

- The exploitation plan is requested whenever the EU and the project partners make an investment to reach some concrete results, so that there is a need for a subsequent recovery of the investments

- This can only be obtained by exploiting the project's results, normally in a commercial perspective

- The Commission needs to show that the project's results are beneficial to the partners and the society at large also after the end of the project funding phase (sustainability).

Dissemination, Exploitation and Communication

- The structure of the exploitation plan

- A proper exploitation plan should be structure as follows:
  - 1.   INTRODUCTION
  - 2.   PROJECT'S OBJECTIVES
  - 3.   EXPOLITATION STRATEGY (incl. IPR issues)
  - 4.   UNDERSTANDING THE CUSTOMER BASE
  - 5.   EXPLOITATION TOOLS
  - 6.   EXLPOITATION PLANNING
  - 7.   SUMMARY TIMETABLE
  - 8.   MONITORING
  - 9.   ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Dissemination, Exploitation and Communication

- The exploitation strategy

- The main goal of the exploitation strategy is that after the end of the project there will be a customer base ready to purchase the products and/or services which incorporate the project's results.

- Therefore we need to:
  - Perform a preliminary market analysis to understand the real potential for commercial exploitation of our results
  - Identify the main classes of potential users/buyers
  - Start to create awareness about the product/service with the users, through e.g.:
    - Dissemination actions
    - Focused working groups (focus groups) where feedbacks from potential users are collected and provided to the design team
    - Keep potential users updated on project's progress
    - Identify early adopters (pilot users)
  - Formulate hypotheses of return of investment
  - Monitor effectiveness of the exploitation campaign

Dissemination, Exploitation and Communication

- How to implement the strategy

- In order to implement the above, the most delicate issue is the involvement of the potential users/customers who are not part of the project

- In order to facilitate this action it is highly recommended to include in the project consortium one or more of the foreseen users

- Another channel is to contact trade associations which represent a large number of potential users/customers

Dissemination, Exploitation and Communication

- How to write a good exploitation plan

- In order to write a good exploitation plan some issues must be taken care of:

    - Be as specific as possible in the indication of the potential users/customers which will be contacted
    - Be as realistic as possible in the formulation of the ROI hypotheses
    - Define as precisely as possible the product/service which will be put on the market
    - Define as precisely as possible the ownership of results (IPR)
    - At least two versions of the plan should be foreseen: an initial draft and a final version as an update of the previous one when the results are closer to completion.

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Dissemination, Exploitation and Communication

- Deliverables
- Typical deliverables of an Exploitation Workplan
  - DX.1: Exploitation plan draft
  - DX.2: Market analysis
  - DX.3: Exploitation plan final version
  - DX.4: Report on exploitation activities

Communication in EU projects

- Why is it so important?
  - Contractual obligation
  - Eu needs consensus by member states, therefore must show how it uses the funds
  - Public money, wide range of beneficiaries (more than consortium members)
- What do we communicate?
- When do we communicate?
- To whom do we communicate?
- How do we communicate?
  - Formal, contractual rules
  - Practical Hints (effective presentation)

What do we communicate?

- We have to communicate:
  - The existence of the project
  - The fact that it is supported by EU funds
  - The results of the project
    - Confidentiality issues!
      - At University/Research level
      - At Industrial level
      - To be addresses in the Consortium agreement

When do we communicate?

- Communication about project's existence can start early in the project's lifetime (eg 6 months from start)

- It will continue throughout the life of the project and after the end

- The contents evolve with the project's evolution ("we will....", "we have done....")

To whom do we communicate?

- Communication is closely related to the projects' dissemination strategy

- Different target groups (depending on project's content, messages have to be adapted):
  - Wide public (eg civil society)
  - Specialist public (eg researchers)
  - Political level (mainstreaming)
  - Stakeholders at large
  - Possible "replicators"

- Language Problem!!!!!!!!

- Hence we have to define a Communication methodology and tools solving all these issues:
  - Adapting the message and wording to the different target groups
  - Be as clear and complete as possible (do not assume that the readers have the background)
  - Foresee translation costs

The communication strategies

- The paper strategy
  - Promotional materials, such as Brochures, Posters, Poscards
  - Newsletters
  - Scientific papers (if appropriate), Publications on general purpose and specialised press

- Multimedia Strategy
  - Project website, newsletters, social networks
- Event strategy: public events, conferences, events organised by the project

Sustainability

Sustainable development definition (Brundtland, 1987)

- ***Sustainable development*** is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It contains within it two key concepts:

- The concept of 'needs', in particular the essential needs of the world's poor, to which overriding priority should be given; and

- The idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organization on the environment's ability to meet present and future needs.

Sustainability in EU projects

Need to ensure that the project's results will continue to provide benefits after the end of the project's lifetime.

HOW?

- Setting up permanent structures (internal and/or external)

- Allocation of permanent staff

- Commitment by top level management

- Durable cooperation with other stakeholders

Thank you!