How to write a competitive proposal

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1984 - 2013

1° 2° 3° 4° 5° 6° 7°

• Basic Research
• Universities/Research Centres
• Very few tangible results

• Applied Research
• Industry/End user
• Many more tangible results
Some Considerations

• Changes in Research
• Changes in the Framework programmes
• Improved proposal quality
• Past experiences
• Results acheived
• Involvement of industry and end user
• Project management
Evolution of the process
(The past)

• Scarse knowledge of the calls
• Lack of planning in research
• Tendency for easy success both at a national and European level

• Process:
  ❑ The call
  ❑ The Idea
  ❑ Last minute invitation to participate
  ❑ Presentation of the proposal
Evolution of the process (The present)

- Wide knowledge of the calls
- Better planning in research
- Continuous increase in number of applications and proposal quality but with a decreasing success rate

Process:
- The idea
- The call
- First proposal planning
- Presentation of the proposal
Evolution of the process (The future)

• Wide knowledge of the calls
• Good quality research planning
• High level of competition for limited research funds

• Process:
  ❑ The idea
  ❑ The formulation of the idea
  ❑ Identification of valid partners (including industry)
  ❑ The project
Deliberate and emergent strategies

Intended strategy → Deliberate strategy → Realised strategy

Intended strategy → Unrealised strategy

Realised strategy → Emergent strategy
From the idea to the project

IDEA

Design

First document

Partner Search

Complete document

Analyse Calls

Prepare proposal

Summary

Plan (Gantt)

Technical description

Aim

Problem

Solution

How

Establish roles

Allocate resources

1

2

NO

OK

1. Establish roles
2. Allocate resources

Sapienza Innovazione

Turning research into innovation
Approaches to idea development

• Clarify the criteria/theme
• Brainstorm the idea
• Mapping of the idea against the criteria/theme
• Define the base elements
  – Aim
  – Problem
  – Solution
  – How
• Describe the WBS
• Construct the Gantt
PROJECT

INPUTS
- Background
- Knowledge
- Background Property
- Resources
- Funds

OUTPUTS
- Results
- Experience
- Social Impact
- Improvement in state of the art
CONTROLLED PROJECT

INPUTS

- Background
- Knowledge
- Background Property
- Resources
- Funds

OUTPUTS

- Results
- Experience
- Social Impact
- Improvement in state of the art

Measurable objectives
Verifiable progress

CONTROL
AIM

• Define clearly and concisely
  ➢ What is the objective of the project
• Consider
  ➢ European relevance
  ➢ The impact
  ➢ The scientific method
  ➢ Secondary benefits
• Formula
  ➢ We will do this……
  ➢ … by doing that……
  ➢ …… in this way …..
Problem

- Define clearly and concisely
  - What is the problem to be solved

- Consider
  - The problem at a European level
  - The urgency for finding a solution
  - The impact of the problem
  - Progress already obtained
  - Progress that is needed

- Formula
  - This is the problem
  - … this has been done……
  - …… this is still needed ….
Solution

• Define clearly and concisely
  ➢ How the project will change the problem

• Consider
  ➢ The quantification of the progress
  ➢ The practical impact (how the project will change somebody’s life)
  ➢ The scientific progress
  ➢ Secondary benefits/effects

• Formula
  ➢ The project will solve the problem by ..
  ➢ … with these changes……
  ➢ …… and will achieve…..
How

• Define clearly and concisely
  ➢ How the work will be done

• Consider
  ➢ The partners capacities
  ➢ The consortium’s resources
  ➢ The principle project phases
  ➢ Scientific steps
  ➢ How the principle results will be achieved

• Formula
  ➢ Make the sure the evaluator know you can do this !!