



Marie Skłodowska - Curie Individual Fellowships

Writing the scientific proposal

Tuesday - 7/5/2019

Sala Verde (Ca' Vignal - Borgo Roma)

Thursday - 9/5/2019

Aula 1,4 (Polo Zanotto - Veronetta)



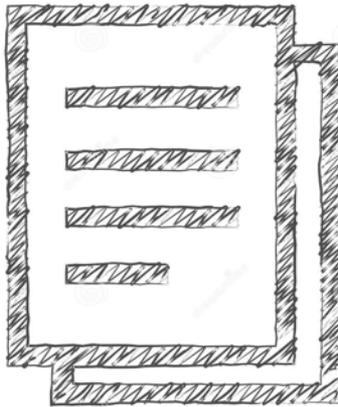
Who is writing the proposal?

The proposal is a collaborative action between the Experienced Researcher and the Supervisor at the beneficiary institution

GF: the Supervisor at the Host Institution needs to be involved too!



The blank page panic!



**EC Template for the
scientific proposal**



**Annotated Template
by UNIVR Grant Office!**

DON'T PANIC



Why using the template?

- Win the blank page panic!
- Clear structure for your proposal
- What to stress and how to write it

The document will be used by the evaluators!

➔ Use the template and address all points and suggestions! They correspond to **award criteria** for evaluators!

The template has **formatting rules** and **page limits**: respect them!

- ✓ Remove instructions from template
- ✓ No cover page and summary
- ✓ Only current template (2019) is admissible!
- ✓ Do not insert links to webpages: evaluators are instructed not to open them!



Template Part B1 (max 10 pages)

1. Excellence
2. Impact
3. Quality and efficiency of the implementation



Section 1

Excellence

1.1 - Quality and credibility of the **research/innovation** project; level of novelty, appropriate consideration of inter/multidisciplinary and gender aspects

1.2 - Quality and appropriateness of the **training and of the two way transfer of knowledge** between the researcher and the host

1.3 - Quality of the **supervision** and of the **integration** in the team/institution

1.4 - Potential of the researcher to reach or re-enforce a position of **professional maturity/independence** during the fellowship

Try to summarise the main features of your proposal in few lines

The Why – Motivation

- Why is this proposal important for the research area?
- Why is this proposal important for the ER career?
- Why is this proposal important for the HO/S?

The What – Main scientific result(s) of your project

- The topic(s) of the project
- The research goal(s)
- The main research results

You can use these tips also to write an abstract of the project!

- The Who – Key actors involved
- The Experiences Researcher (ER)
- The Host Organisation(s) (HO)
- The Supervisor(s) (S)

Review this summary once the proposal is finished!



How to find objectives?

DEFINE THE PROBLEM/S AND SUBSTANTIATE THE NEED FOR STUDY

Objectives must be few!

You should be in a position to answer the following questions:

- What is/are the problem/s you intend to explore?
- Can the proposed research improve what now 'is'?

Objectives must be SMART!

- ✓ **S = Specific:** *‘What specifically needs to be done to reach the global objective?’*
- ✓ **M = Measurable:** *‘How will you know when the objective has been successfully met?’ (use qualitative or quantitative indicators)*
- ✓ **A = Achievable:** *‘Can the objective be accomplished within the established timeframe and planned human and physical resources?’*
- ✓ **R = Relevant:** *‘Is it instrumental to the scope and impact set out in the call, and to the fixed GOs?’*
- ✓ **T = Time-bound:** *‘Will it be accomplished within the target date?’*

- ✓ Formulate the main question of your research project
- ✓ Expose the available positions (with their strong and weak points)
- ✓ Stress the stalemate situation or the difficulties in choosing one of the main available positions expressed by the scientific community

References to bibliography



Research methodology and approach

- ✓ Methodological steps (sequential phases, thematic areas)
- ✓ Research methods and how they are connected
- ✓ Different approaches and traditions (for humanities)
- ✓ Key concepts
- ✓ Protocols, experimental plans, pilots, activities of testing and demonstration
- ✓ Make use of graphs and tables



- ✓ Why is your research project original or innovative?
- ✓ How could it bring the investigation beyond the actual state of the art?

Refer to the state of the art



© Can Stock Photo

Originality, novelty and innovation might refer to:

- ✓ Basic / fundamental concepts and ideas
- ✓ Methodologies/approaches
- ✓ Final expected results

You do not have to mention them if NOT relevant to your research activity!

Gender dimension in the research content

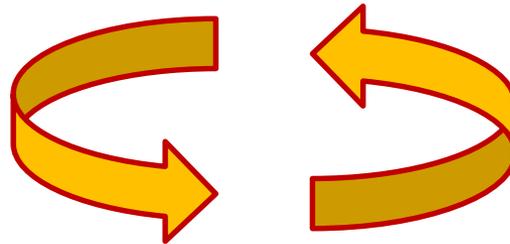
- ✓ Not referred to gender-balance in the staff and policies for gender equality
- ✓ Referred to the sex and gender factors that might influence the research outputs
- ✓ In research activities **where human beings are involved** (e.g. as subjects or end-users), gender dimension is always relevant

Gendered Innovation website
http://ec.europa.eu/research/swafs/gendered-innovations/index_en.cfm?pg=home

Interdisciplinary aspects of the action

Aspects of **different scientific disciplines** that you will face during the project (e.g. mathematics, computer science, engineering, social sciences, etc.)

- ✓ Explain what **new knowledge** the experienced researcher will gain during the fellowship at the hosting organisation(s) and how it will be acquired



- ✓ Outline the **previously acquired knowledge and skills** that the researcher will transfer to the host organisation(s)

- ✓ *Training-through-research* → **individual personalised project**
- ✓ Training for **developing scientific skills**: new techniques, instruments, research integrity, 'big data'/'open science'
- ✓ Training for **developing transferrable skills**: entrepreneurship, grant preparation, patents applications, management of IPR, project management, task coordination, etc
- ✓ Inter-sectoral or interdisciplinary **transfer of knowledge** (e.g. through secondments)
- ✓ Taking part in the **research and financial management**
- ✓ Organisation of **scientific/training/dissemination events**
- ✓ Communication/outreach activities
- ✓ Training dedicated to **gender issues**



A **Career Development Plan** should not be included in the proposal, but will be part of the action's implementation in line with the European Charter for Researchers. The Plan should be established jointly by the supervisor(s) and the researcher. In addition to research or innovation objectives, this plan comprises the researcher's training and career needs, including training on transferable skills, teaching, planning for publications and participation in conferences.



It is part of implementing the project!



It will be the first thing to do during your project



Qualifications and experience of the supervisor(s)



The **level of experience** on the research topic proposed: publications, participation in projects, patents, international collaborations (in the topic!)

Experience in supervision/training:

- role in doctorate programmes, number and quality of supervised PhD students and Post-docs, excellence of researchers who used to work in the centre/lab of the supervisor
- education for PhD students, classes, courses at advanced levels
- referee for PhD thesis

In GF you need to distinguish between hosting organisations



Hosting arrangements

Integration in the research group

- ✓ participation to lab/centre meetings
- ✓ introduction to researchers working in the host organisation
- ✓ integration in the research interests of the host organisation
- ✓ ...

→ Present the networks and relations at European and worldwide level of your supervisor

Here it is necessary to **distinguish among the host organisation** (beneficiary), the host organisation in the third country (only for GF), the host organisation of the secondment (if any).

Professional maturity/independence

In this section you have to demonstrate that this project is a **“good investment”** for the European Commission in terms of enhancing the career of the funded ER **during the fellowship**

- ✓ Demonstrate your experience and talents
- ✓ Show the new skills and competences you will acquire during the fellowship
- ✓ Demonstrate that the fellowship will enhance your maturity and independence





Section 2

Impact

2.1 - Enhancing the **future career prospects** of the researcher after the fellowship

2.2 - Quality of the proposed measures to **exploit and disseminate** the project results

2.3 - Quality of the proposed measures to **communicate** the project activities to different target audiences



Future career prospects of the ER

- Career perspectives **after the end of the fellowship**
 - Explicitly outline your **career goals**
 - Short-medium term = 2-3 years after the fellowship
 - Long-term = 5 years after the fellowship
1. Increased scientific production
 2. Improved scientific production (higher impact factors, better journals...)
 3. Improved Funding ID
 4. Better professional position (academy / industry)

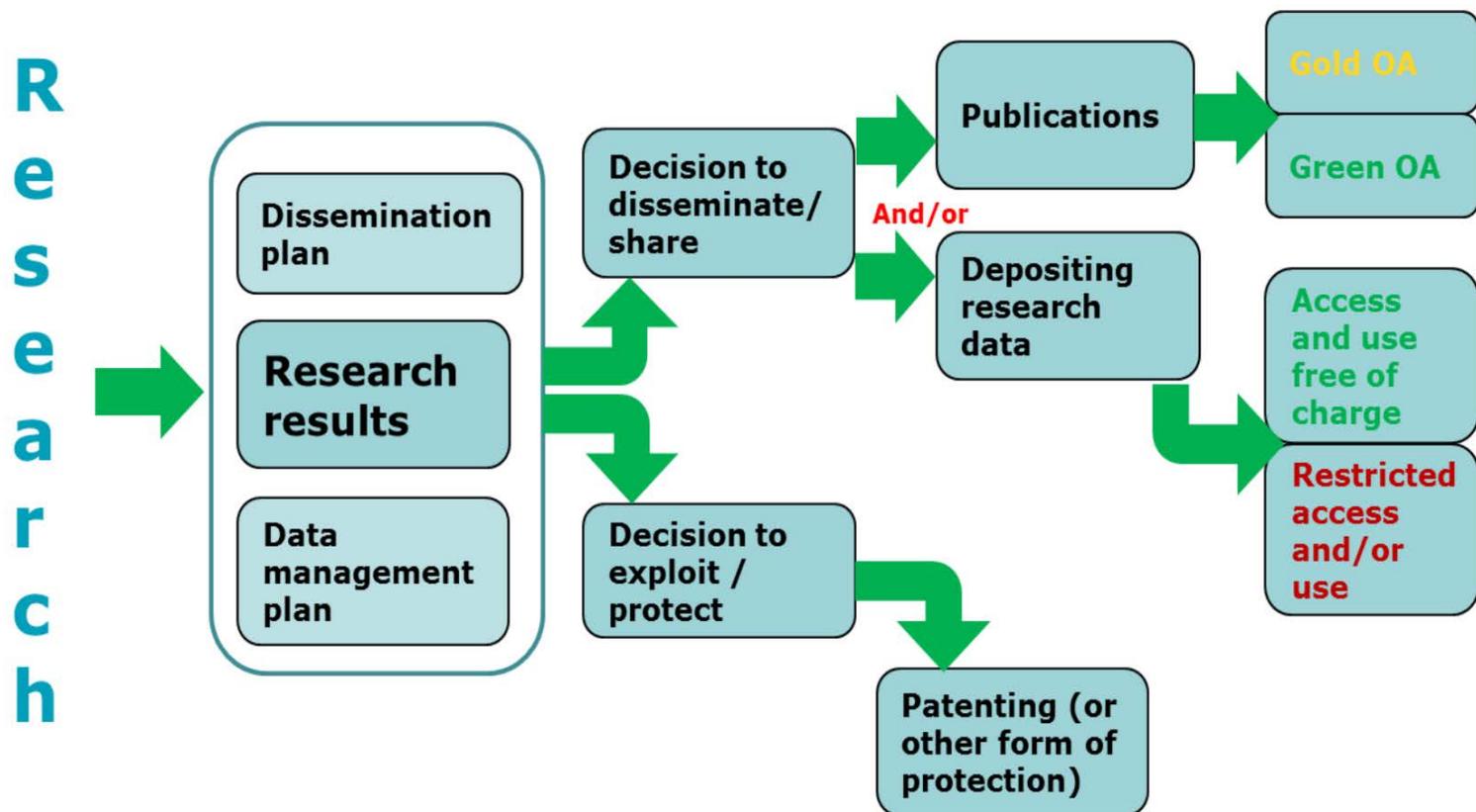
Marie Curie researchers and their long-term career development: A comparative study. Final Report (2014)

https://ec.europa.eu/research/fp7/pdf/mca/marie_curie_researchers_and_their_long-term_career_development.pdf

Exploitation and dissemination

Guidelines to the Rules on Open Access to Scientific Publications and Open Access to Research Data in Horizon 2020

http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/grants_manual/hi/oa_pilot/h2020-hi-oa-pilot-guide_en.pdf





Exploitation and dissemination

Results: *any tangible or intangible output of the action, such as data, knowledge or information, that is generated in the action, whatever its form or nature, whether or not it can be protected, as well as any rights attached to it, including intellectual property rights*

Dissemination: *disclosure of the results by any appropriate means (other than resulting from protecting or exploiting the results), including by scientific publications in any medium*

Exploitation: *use of results in further research activities other than those covered by the action concerned, or in developing, creating and marketing a product or process, or in creating and providing a service, or in standardisation activities*

“Communicating EU Research & Innovation. A guide for project participants”
<http://bookshop.europa.eu/it/communicating-eu-research-innovation-pbKI3212366/>

What are the results you plan to transfer

... And to whom!

Dissemination activities - examples

- Publication of research findings on journals, monographs, ...
- Presentation in scientific conferences (papers and posters)
- Presentation on other media (e.g. project website)
- Presentation to specific target groups (e.g. end-users, policy makers, ...) through participation in fairs/exhibitions and other public events, production of policy briefs, ...
- Distribution of the project data (if relevant)

Presentations at conferences, journal papers and other events can be both dissemination and communication activities! **Try to avoid repetitions**

Open Access Policy

Provide policies for Open Access to Publications and Research Data (mandatory!)

Open access refers to the practice of providing online access to scientific information that is free of charge to the end-user and reusable

Open Access to Publication and to Research Rata

http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/docs/h2020-funding-guide/cross-cutting-issues/open-access-dissemination_en.htm

Open Access to Publications

Open access publishing
Gold road

Article is published in an Open Access journal

(= everybody can read it for free)

Self-archiving
Green road

After the article is published you store a copy in an institutional repository (if necessary after an embargo period)

(= everybody can read it for free, eventually after the embargo)

IRIS at UNIVR <https://iris.univr.it/>

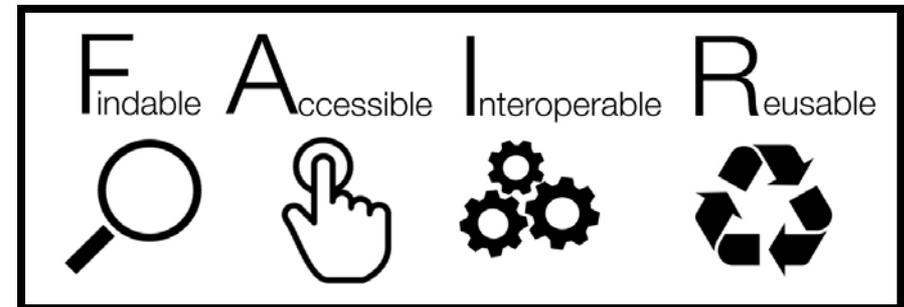
Open Access to Research Data

Refers to the right to access and reuse **digital research data**

- Statistics, results of experiments, measurements, observations resulting from fieldwork, survey results, interview recordings and images

Mandatory, unless

- ✓ It endangers privacy or security
- ✓ It is against your commercialisation plans and IPRs
- ✓ It jeopardises the project



Exploitation of the project results

If some results **are further exploitable during or after the project**, you should mention them or mention this possibility

Examples

- Further research, product or service development, licensing, joint venture, spin-off, standardisation activities

Commercial exploitation ➔ sketch a short business plan / business analysis

If you are going to exploit a project result, you do not have to publish it and therefore no Open Access obligation arises

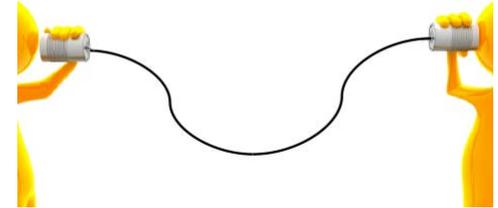
BUT, IPR issues might arise
➔ take them into account!

European IPR Helpdesk - “Fact Sheet - IP management in Horizon 2020 Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions”

https://www.iprhelpdesk.eu/sites/default/files/newsdocuments/FS_IP_management_in_MSCA-H2020_v1.0.pdf

Project **communication objectives** are:

- Presenting your project to a general public
- Promoting research itself
- Enhancing a **positive attitude** of EU citizens
- Giving evidence of the **EU support**



Communication contributes to support dissemination and exploitation

Communication plan

- **Who**: what are your target groups?
- **How**: shortly describe your activity
- **What**: what is the key message?
- **When**: when do you schedule this activity?



Section 3

Quality and Efficiency of the Implementation

3.1 - Coherence and effectiveness of the **work plan**, including appropriateness of the **allocation of tasks and resources**

3.2 - Appropriateness of the **management structure and procedures**, including risk management

3.3 - Appropriateness of the institutional environment (**infrastructure**)

Work package: a major sub-division of the proposed project

- Coherent sets of activities contributing to expected results that will lead to the achievement of the specific objectives of the project

Deliverable: a distinct output of the project, meaningful in terms of the project's overall objectives

- Report, document, technical diagram, software, video, etc.

Milestone: a critical moment in time, like a go/not go moment

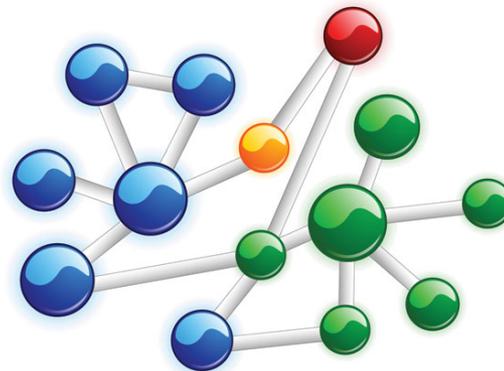
→ **not every delivery date is a milestone!**

- Completion of a key deliverable, allowing next phase of the work to begin
- Intermediary point so that, if problems have arisen, corrective measures can be taken

The work plan shall include **interconnected WPs** with defined **deliverables and milestones**, which have to be consistent with project's objectives



Research, knowledge transfer, training, communication and dissemination and management activities





Secondment(s)

Organisation unknown

- ✓ Where and when are you moving for the secondment?
- ✓ What kind of organisation?
- ✓ In what sector?
- ✓ How and when do you plan to find the organisation?
- ✓ How will the beneficiary help you in this task?

Organisation already know

- ✓ Mention the organisation, the lab/dept/unit, the supervisor

In both cases

- ✓ Describe the research AND training activities during the secondment

If you are splitting the secondment in several periods provide an explanation for this choice



- How and why the host institution(s) will provide you with all infrastructures needed to carry out your research project
- How and why the host institution(s) will support you with the required skills and competences

Demonstrate that the **project duration is adequate** (i.e. **neither too short nor too long**)



Example: Gantt Chart

Work Package	Title	Year 1												Year 2												Year 3											
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36
WP1	Management						D1.1																	M1.1												M2, D1.2	
WP2	Data collection						M2.1									D2.1																					
WP3	Field work						M3.1													M3.2	D3.1																
WP4	Research part x																	M4.1, D4.1															M4.2, D4.2				
WP5	Research part y																							M5.1, D5.1													
WP6	Dissemination and communication					D6.1					D6.2			D6.3						D6.4																	
WP7	Secondments																												M7.1								
...	...																																				

Legend

Milestone	M
Deliverable	D

Scientific and training monitoring is the main task of the supervisor together with the researcher

- ✓ Periodic meeting / web-conference with the supervisor
- ✓ Written activity report sent to the supervisor
- ✓ Daily contact face-to-face
- ✓ For GF or secondments: stay in touch with your main supervisor!



The lab / research team could be involved in the scientific monitoring

➔ **regular lab meetings**

Financial management is performed by the Secretariat of the Department and by the Research Area at UNIVR

Periodic meetings with the researcher are encouraged!

Risk Management

List **ALL** risks related to research, training and general management activities

RISK: Any event not governed by you that might happen with a negative impact on your project

For each risk:

- Provide a **short description** (refer to the concerned WPs)
- Indicate its **likelihood** (low – medium- high)
- Indicate its **impact** on the project (low – medium- high)
- Explain the **plan B (contingency plan)**



Commitment and tasks

Stress the **different contributions** of each hosting organisation (beneficiary, partner organisation in the Third Country, host organisation for the secondment)

Stress the common scientific interests between the host institution, the partner organizations (if any) and the ER



Template Part B2

4. CV of the ER
5. Capacities of the participating organisations
6. Ethical aspects
7. Letter of Commitment (GF only)



Horizon 2020: Lo European Research Council (ERC)

15 May 2019, 9:30-16:30 – Aula Vecchioni, Lente Didattica

The class will be held by Serena Borgna di APRE – Agenzia per la Promozione della Ricerca Europea **[IN ITALIAN]**

Subscribe at <http://bit.ly/corsoErc19>

Research Project Writing “Absolute Beginners” – Sala Verde, Ca' Vignal

11 June, 9:00-10:00 – Scientific Proposal - Excellence

13 June, 9:00-10:00 – Impact

18 June, 14:00-15:00 – Implementation

25 June, 14:00-15:00 – Project Management

The course will be held by the Science and Engineering Hub – Grant Office and open to all researchers at UNIVR

More info ... Coming soon!



Ufficio Progetti di Ricerca

<https://www.univr.it/it/organizzazione/area-ricerca/progettazione-e-rendicontazione-progetti-di-ricerca>

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