

# Getting on board

Becoming a strategic partner and project leader



**ICER - Pro**



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# Agenda

- **Role: Partner or Coordinator?**
- **Being a project partner**
  - What can you offer?
  - Finding a coordinator – Identifying potential partners
  - Stay up-to-date
- **Becoming a project coordinator**
  - Pros and Cons
  - Consortium building tips
- **Conclusions**
- **Questions?**



# Partner or Coordinator?

- If you **have not participated as a partner before (new comer)**: Try to **get invited** to a proposal.

It may not be easy to get invited ..... but it is worth the effort.

**Seek support** from people who have prepared and coordinated European projects in your entity or your network.



- If you **have already participated as a partner**: The logical **next step is to coordinate**.

While it's easier to join as an invited partner, relying too much on that role can weaken your long-term strategy.



**Either way, deciding to participate is a good way to **start moving, learning, creating visibility and meeting partner entities****



# Being a key project partner



# Key aspects to become a partner

## Basic recipe:

### *IDENTIFY THE TOPIC(S)*

- To know clearly **HOW TO** and **WHAT** we can contribute.

You need to **analyze the topic** (previously done under Session 4).

### *IDENTIFY KEY ACTORS*

- Identify potential proposal coordinators (**CORDIS** and **DASHBOARD**)

### *CONTACTS AND EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST*

- Participate actively in relevant **forums / brokerage events**.
- Present your **profiles/proposals** at events.



**BE PROACTIVE! PLAN AHEAD!**



# Being a key project partner What can you offer?



# Key aspects to become a partner

## The topic – Prepublication of 2025 Work programmes

The 'main' Horizon Europe work programme 2025 and the amended Horizon Europe 'main' work programme 2023-2025 have been pre-published.

### Pre-published work programme 2025 parts:

- General introduction
- Research infrastructures
- Clusters 1 to 6
- European innovation ecosystems
- Widening and ERA
- EU Missions
- New European Bauhaus Facility



# What can you offer?

## Start by elaborating your Entity/Group's Profile

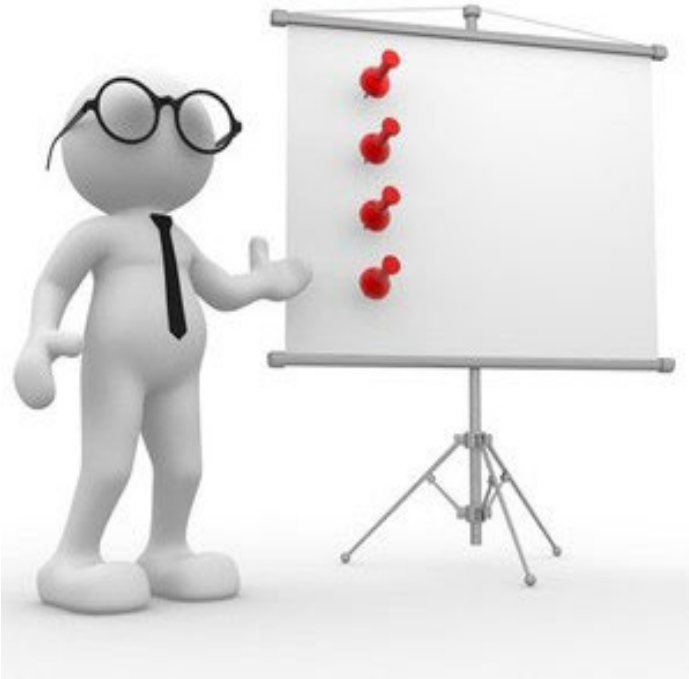
### What makes us different from other EU research groups? Why?

- Key infrastructure and equipment
- Relations with key partners/ stakeholders
- Results and experience in projects.

## Prepare a Technological Offer (key for brokerage events):

- What role can we adopt? What aspects of the topic do we cover?
- Presentation of a **specific technology / capability made available**
- Highlight your added value to the proposal!

**Essential to have high quality presentation material and adapted to the Topic**





# Being a key project partner

## Finding a Coordinator



# How to identify potential coordinators?

## Previous projects:

- **Horizon Dashboard** and **CORDIS** are the official search engines

## In **which areas** has my technology been applied?

- Often some **applications** are not so obvious from literature.

## **Which research centers/companies** are leading these activities?

- These are likely to continue to participate
- **Who we know/ have contact with?** Often consortia start with a core group of partners that know each other from previous collaborations.



**Do not hesitate to directly contact potential coordinators, especially if you already know what you can provide to the proposal!**



# How to identify potential coordinators?

Search for related [European partnerships](#), platforms and associations.



# How to identify potential coordinators?

Search for related **European partnerships, platforms and associations.**

In many cases, the topic already refers to **Partnerships.**

- **Ask if your entity is involved** in the ones of your interest  
Involvement not only provides **contacts**, but also a lot of **information**.
- **Identify members** of these networks.  
Do you have contacts with any of them?



# How to identify potential coordinators?

## Where do they meet?

- **Annual events of each partnership**
- **Other events** organized by the EC, National Agencies or Partnerships.
  - Provide **information** about calls for proposals
  - Allow **contact** with other entities with common interests
- Sometimes these event allow to :
  - **Present capacities or project ideas**
  - **Arrange bilateral interviews**



29 April 2025

## **Textile ETP's brokerage system starts today!**

The Horizon Europe Work Programmes 2025, including the ones of the 'Textiles of the Future' European partnership, have been pre-published! This mean that at



# Networking – Presentations at events

## Presentation of project ideas and group capabilities

- At events where you can present your ideas/capabilities, you usually have **1-5 slides, and only few minutes**, to make yourself known.

Prepare a **clear, concise and graphic presentation**, following the guidelines provided by the organisers.

- **Clearly identify the topic/s of interest.**
- Identify the **key skills and experience** that you bring to the coordinator (review the topic).
- Define the role you can take in the proposal and what additional elements or stakeholders you provide.

**Distinguish yourself from the competition!**



# Networking - B2B

- A **B2B** is an event where participants have **bilateral meetings** where they discuss possibilities for collaboration on proposals.
- The **meetings are selected by the participants themselves** on the basis of profiles and/or offers/demands published on an on-line platform.
- **A 15 minutes meeting** should be enough time to determine whether there is a potential for cooperation.

## How to make the most of it?

- Publish a complete **profile** tailored to the event.
- Upload one or more well-detailed technology offers with supporting material.
- **Review participants/offers in advance**, select and invite.

**It is ESSENTIAL to prepare the brokerage well in advance. The most interesting participants have their meetings blocked before the event.**



# Being a key project partner

## Stay up-to-date





Key events: infodays and brokerage events

Organized by:

- the EC
- National Contact Points
- National delegations



# Keep moving

- A website in English provides **visibility and confidence** to the coordinators when selecting our offer.
- **Maintaining contacts of interest** that have been made at events, interviews or brokerage over time:
  - Sending additional documentation
  - Contacting again when more calls for applications come out.
- **Expand** the initial network of contacts
  - Attending new events
  - Periodically review new profiles posted



A **medium/long-term strategy** is more effective than seeking one-off participation. Integrating as partner into a proposal is a **process** that requires: **Planning, Dedication; Investment and Skills.**



# And now, what?

Based on the gathered information, you need an **action plan**:

- Which **topics** and areas are we interested in?
- What can we **offer**?
- What makes us **unique** from the competition?



## Concerning potential partners:

- Where can we meet them?
- In which Platforms and/or Partnerships is it convenient to integrate?



Use all this information to try to integrate into a 'winning' consortia



# Becoming a Coordinator



# Pros and Cons of being a Coordinator

## Advantages at European level

- It allows you to **control your R&D strategy**. If you are only invited ...
  - You don't control the topics in which you have projects.
  - You don't control the partners with whom you will collaborate with.
- Leading is a **more robust strategy** in a changing **R&D ecosystem** (partners, topics...).
- Being coordinator **improves your position** in Europe. It makes you more interesting to potential experienced partners.

## Disadvantages

- It requires effort and a lot of **work**.
- **Risk** of getting a bad evaluation.



# To consider

The process of preparing a proposal **starts long before you start writing.**

Before you decide to start preparing a proposal, you need to be sure that it is worthwhile:

- The **resources** we have are adequate.
- The **idea is sufficiently competitive in relation to** the topic, in a broad sense.
- The **political and competitive aspects** are known and controlled.

It is necessary to devote **time and attention** to these aspects before:

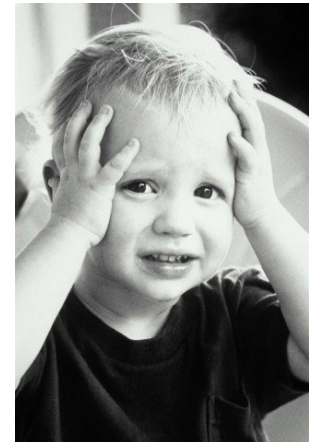
- Setting up the **consortium** and **contacting others.**
- **Writing** the proposal.



# Potential problems...

We may **discover too late**:

- We do not have the necessary **resources**.
- The project **does not fit** a key aspect of the topic.
- We have not managed to put together a sufficiently **competitive and differentiated idea**.
- We are **missing a key aspect** (and therefore a partner) that could have increased the potential of the idea.
- That we have developed the idea with a **partner** who provides something **that is not relevant or even does not fit** into the theme.
- That we are submitting a proposal to a theme where the **chances are practically none**.



# Be sure you have the required resources

**Key roles** (different persons or one person assuming several roles):

- **Principal researcher.** This is the technical scientific leader.
- **Writer.** The person who will devote the most time in practice to the project.
- **Financial/Administrative Support.** Relieves others of work and must have a good control of the financial and administrative aspects of the entity and the Call.
- **(Core) Partners.** Their collaboration is essential, make this clear from the beginning.

**Time – estimated (start 4-5 months in advance):**

- 300 hours of the writer
- 150 hours of the lead researcher(s) involved
- 30 hours for administrative and financial support
- 50 hours from each core partner





# Consortium Building



# Consortium: HE and topic requirements

**Horizon Europe calls have different requirements** for the composition of consortia, specifying a minimum number of 3 partners, from at least 3 different countries.

- Check additional **topic requirements**: the involvement of companies, stakeholders, Multi-Actor Approach (MAA) etc.

**The consortium is carefully built to:**

- Ensure the **technical part**.
- Cover the **identified needs**;
- Ensure achieving **expected outcomes and exploitation**:
  - **Include companies**, these are the ones who know what the market needs, and what they would be willing to pay for.
- With the **best partners** at European level and **including key players**.



# Consortium

**Before starting to write**, design and guarantee a **minimum consortium structure** for the project.

**Layered construction:** A **core group** of must-haves, covering the identified needs with the best possible partners.

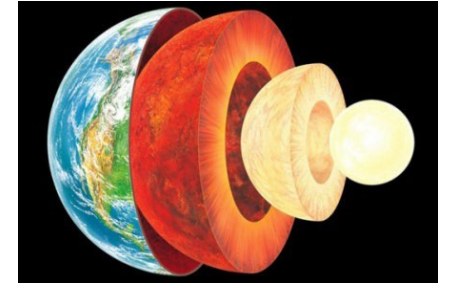
Complete with other **partners** who are more **interchangeable** (e.g. end-users)

Important that **partners are committed**, this will depend on:

- **Enthusiasm** for the idea
- **Context** (e.g. if they are involved in another project)
- Profile and **previous relationships**

**Try not to approach 'friends' too early**, first you'll need to make sure:

- that the idea fits the topic
- that the partner fits the idea (and is the best).



# Consortium

## How to contact?

- Previous contacts
- Other contacts
  - Through other consortium members
  - Value chain of companies
- Contacts made at events
- Key project partners found in:
  - Project databases, partner search platforms and networks/partnerships



**A STRONG AND COMMITTED CONSORTIUM IS OFTEN THE KEY TO APPROVAL**



# Events – European and National

If you are going to Coordinate, it is necessary to **participate in related European events** during the year before submitting the proposal.

- This will allow you to **validate the project idea, its novelty, alignment ...**
- It will also allow you to get to know who are the **key players**

**At national events**, there is usually the possibility to **present the idea to your National Contact point – NCP.**

- They can help you to **check if the idea fits in the topic.**
- They can tell you **who is behind the topic** (strategic interests)



# CONCLUSIONS

It is important to **dedicate time** on **analyzing key aspects (topic/consortium/proposal idea)** before even making a firm decision to prepare the proposal.

It is difficult to get the proposal approved the first time you submit it, but **everything you do will be useful for subsequent actions** or to encourage others to include you as a partner.

**Long-term vision:** The decision to be a coordinator should not simply be linked to a specific topic but **should be part of a broader strategy**.

The impossible just takes  
a little longer.



# Any Questions?



# Thank You!

**CPI EUROPE**

**Universitat Politècnica de València**

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## **Session 5. Getting on board: Becoming a strategic partner and project leader**

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