

Getting on board

Becoming a strategic partner and project leader

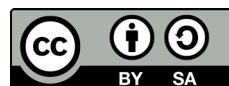


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Agenda

- **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**



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.



Thank You!

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