



E U R O P E A N A L L I A N C E

The story of the impossible ? Writing a successful HE proposal

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Journey to the proposal writing

Horizon EU : a treasure map !

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A topic ?
What is this ?

3

Where does it
come from ?

4

Understand
what is expected
in the topic

5

6

Alone we go faster,
together we go further

Fitting ideas
with the topic

7

Start of
preliminaries

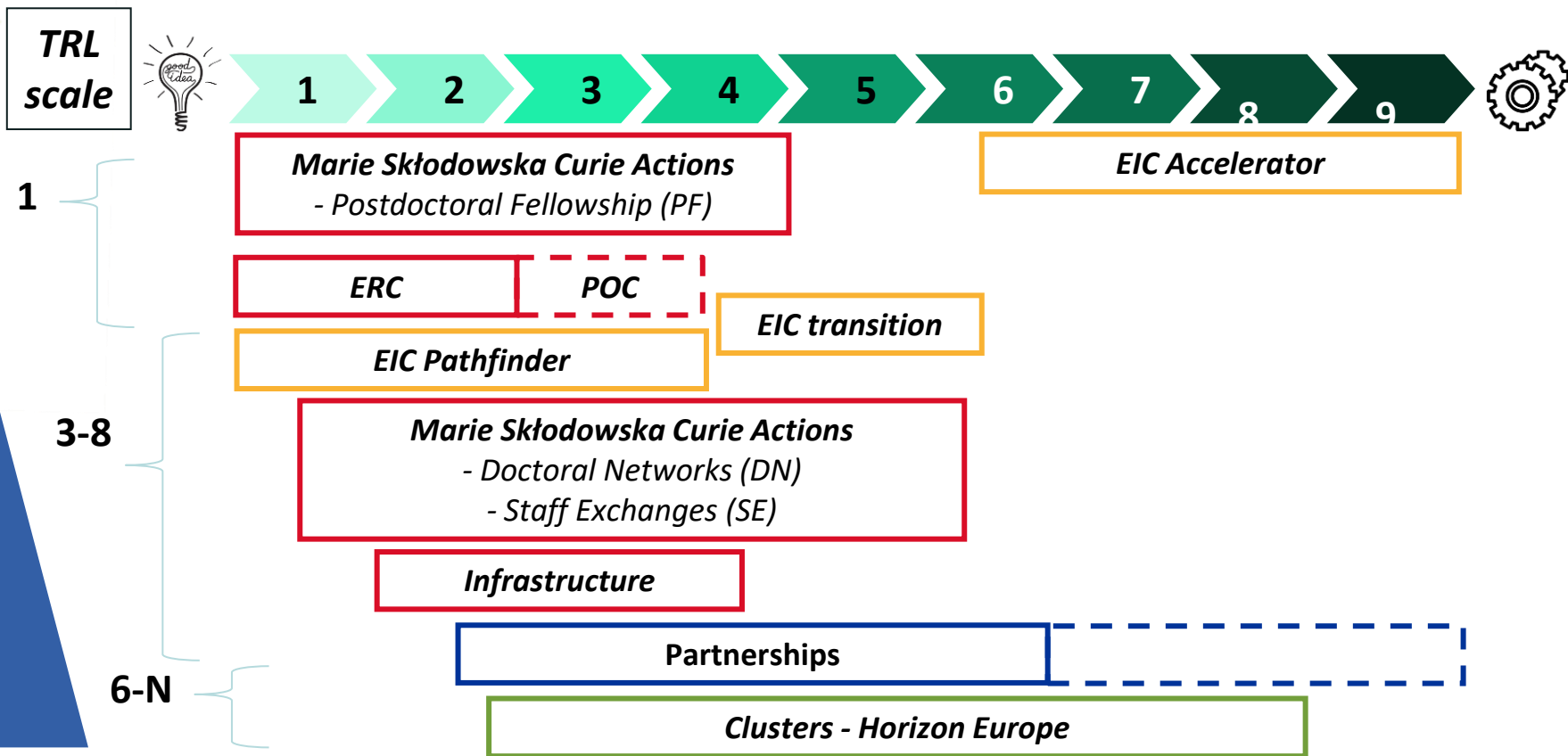
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How my proposal will
be evaluated ?

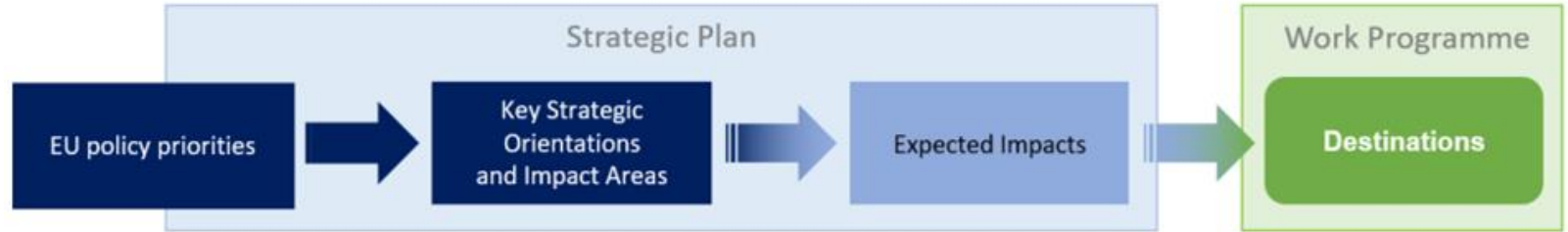
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Ready to write my
proposal !

1. Horizon EU : find your path in the jungle



2. What is a topic ?



- A topic is a top-down call for proposals
- It is an order from the European commission, the funding institution.
- It's a short text (1 or 2 A4 pages)
- You have to read it carefully, every words are important !

3. How the R&I domains are selected ?

Where could be my influence ?

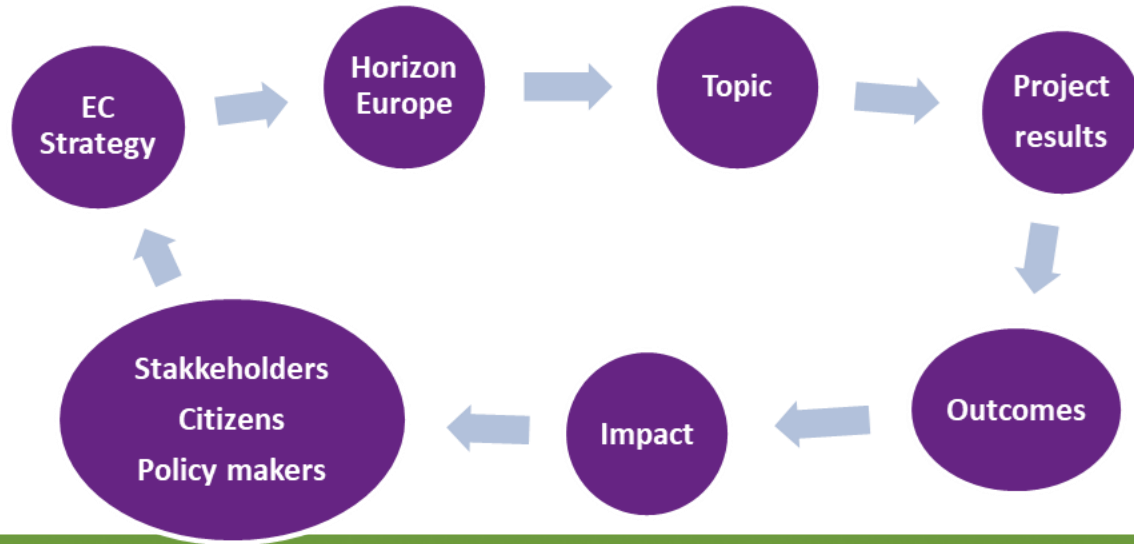
Sources of content to write a work programme :

- Strategic programme analysis
- The Programme Committee meeting -> National lobbying (France : GTN)
- Project coordinators
- Stakeholders/public consultations
- Advisory/expert groups
- European Partnerships
- European or international Workshops/conferences (R&I days)
- Lobbies

...But also UN SDGs, european policies ("Green Deal")

4. A topic : few words, many meanings

- 3 parts : - **Specific conditions** : Budget, type of action, eligibility conditions, TRL
- **Expected outcomes** : context of the call, on which strategic agenda/document/policy this topic is based, what are the expected impacts



4. A topic : few words, many meanings

- 3 parts :
- **Specific conditions** : Budget, type of action, eligibility conditions, TRL
 - **Expected outcomes** : context of the call, on which strategic agenda/document/policy this topic is based, what the EC wants
 - **Scope** : the content of your proposal/project, the questions you have to answer, all the specific recommendations (SSH participation, synergies with other topics or funded projects, international cooperation, etc.)

-> An advice of the EC ("proposal may/should/must, etc.") is always an obligation

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developed. Legume crops have a significant role to play in this regard. However, for a variety of reasons, European legume production is not sufficiently developed. Amongst others, a lack of breeding efforts and insufficient use of genetic resources are responsible for the low percentage of arable land currently used for legumes in Europe, despite their agronomic and environmental benefits. Closing gaps in breeding (traditional and new varieties) including facilitating the sharing of knowledge and best practices in legume breeding, can be a key driver for improving the competitiveness of European-grown legume crops.

Proposals should build on the results of relevant EU-funded research projects. Proposals must implement the 'multi-actor approach' and ensure adequate involvement of farmers, the breeding sector and other relevant actors of the value chain. This topic is open for the breeding needs of the legume sector in conventional, agroecological and organic farming, and addresses all climate/biogeographical regions in Europe. In order to achieve the expected outcomes, international cooperation is advised. Proposals should include a clear plan to collaborate with other projects selected under this topic. In this topic the integration of the gender dimension (sex and gender analysis) in research and innovation content is not a mandatory requirement.

Projects should develop a catalogue of legume species and varieties and desired characteristics driven by demands in the EU and Associated Countries food and feed chains. Projects should develop a range of measures to improve legume varieties for different attributes, such as higher and more stable yields, enhanced tolerance to abiotic and biotic stresses, resource efficiency, increased nitrogen-fixing capacity (e.g. enhanced use of plant root-microbiome interactions within rhizosphere layer), and enhanced nutritional quality, food and feed processing, etc., through pre-breeding and breeding activities and tapping into local and traditional varieties where relevant. Projects should improve screening techniques for a better understanding of genetic relationships, origin and susceptibility to specific attributes. Proposals should build an open repository of breeding methods and breeding research outcomes for different attributes. Projects should analyse the cost-effectiveness of legume breeding methods and identify the best varieties suited for given uses (e.g. crop rotation, extensive agricultural livestock systems, etc.). Case studies of innovative engagement of value chain partners in legume breeding initiatives in different contexts should be analysed and key factors of success should be identified. Governance and financial models should be developed to support legume breeding initiatives that are inclusive for all actors in the value chain and that build linkages among those actors, with a view to strengthening legume demand. Projects should design training packages tailored to the specific needs of different actors in the legume breeding and seed business to strengthen their capacities to achieve breeding gains. Building on existing tools or mechanisms, where relevant, projects should set up a transdisciplinary Europe-wide platform to facilitate trans-national and trans-regional sharing of knowledge and best practices in legume breeding, including facilitating cross-regional testing of varieties. Projects should foster demonstration and testing of legume breeding in different regions, with emphasis in regions where the legume breeding sector is less developed.

5. Understand what is expected in the topic

Split the topic text into ideas in a table :

- Align your consortium skills/domain of expertises with the scope
- Identify what is missing/ gap analysis : ideas ? Expertise/partners ?
- Link with the impact (with all the concerned stakeholders)

Where are you located in the big picture ?

6. Build or join a consortium

- **Know who you are to know what you can contribute**

Define what skills/expertises you will bring to a consortium regarding the identified topic

- **Find partners in your own network** (regional, national or European levels)

Who are you used to working with? Who would be interested in the subject?

Tell as many people as you can

Your partners' partners are your partners

- **Find partners in an extended network**

Find new relations that can lead to new partners (NCPs, Representative in Bruxelles or new networks)

Brokerage event/ Networking event / EC tools

7. Start of preliminaries

- **Anticipate**
- Communicate
- surround yourself, seek help, activate your networks
- **Anticipate**
- Don't answer to every calls for proposals (don't recycle the same project)
- Don't just look for funding
- **Anticipate**
- Prepare each phase well
- Know the state of the art, funded projects and current initiatives.
- **Anticipate**

8. The evaluation :

a well know process from wich you can take advantage

Three award criteria: **‘Excellence’**, **‘Impact’** and **‘Quality and efficiency of the implementation’**. Excellence only for ERC.

- The number of **‘aspects to be taken into account’** have been **reduced**, ensuring that the same aspect is not assessed twice
- **Open Science** practices assessed as part of the scientific methodology in the excellence criterion
- **New approach to impact**: Key Impacts Pathways (KIPs)
- The assessment of the **quality of applicants** is assessed under ‘implementation’, rather than as a separate binary assessment of operational capacity
- Assessment of **management structures** has been removed.

8. The evaluation :

a well know process from wich you can take advantage

Individual
evaluation

Experts assess proposals **individually**. Minimum of three experts per proposal (but often more than three).

Consensus
group

All individual experts discuss together to agree on a **common position**, including comments and scores for each proposal.

Panel
review

The panel of experts reach an **agreement** on the scores and comments for all proposals within a call, checking **consistency across the evaluations**.

if necessary, resolve cases where evaluators were unable to agree.

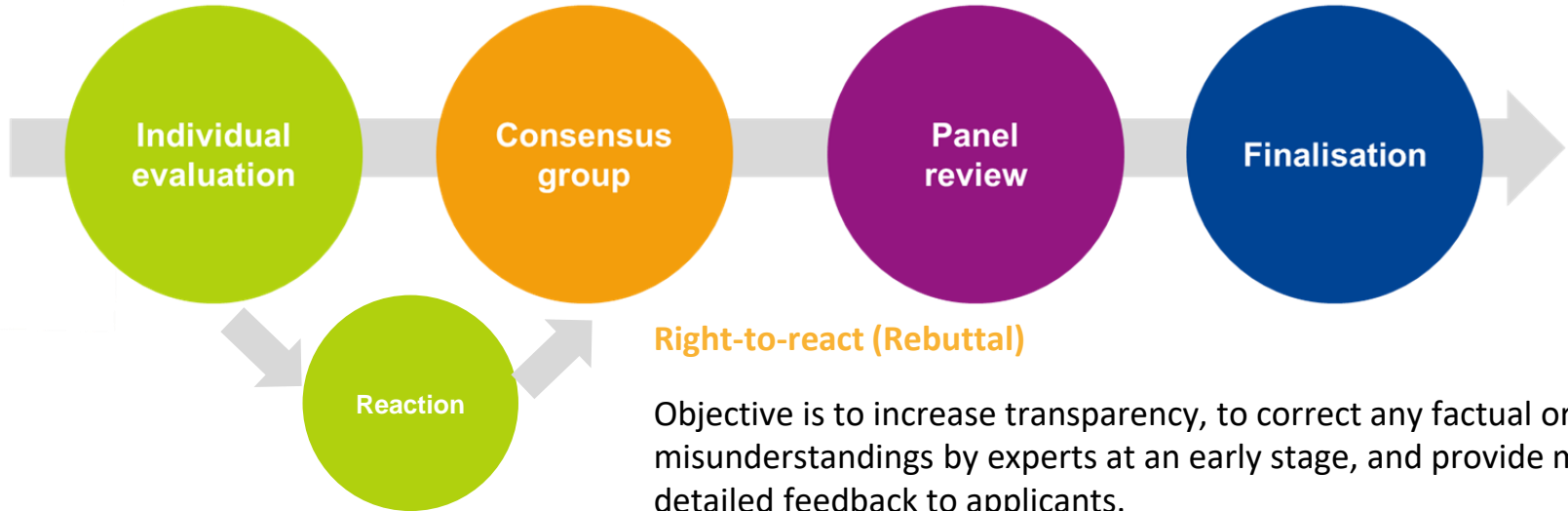
Rank the proposals with the same score

Finalisation

The Commission/Agency reviews the results of the experts' evaluation and puts together the **final ranking list**.

8. The evaluation :

a well know process from wich you can take advantage



Right-to-act (Rebuttal)

Objective is to increase transparency, to correct any factual or major misunderstandings by experts at an early stage, and provide more detailed feedback to applicants.

Applicants will send their reactions to draft experts comments

Experts will take applicants' reaction into account before finalising their final assessment.

8. The evaluation : the hurdle jump or the recipe of success

Blind evaluation (in 1st stage)

There is no evidence that the current proposal evaluation system is systematically biased.

There are understandable concerns that evaluation experts may be swayed – perhaps unconsciously – in favour of proposals from well-known organisations in countries with better performing R&I systems.

‘Blind’ evaluation is a way to remove any real or perceived effect of such reputational bias.

Experts evaluate without knowing the identity of participants.

The work programme will include an additional admissibility criterion: applicants can not be disclosed in the narrative part of the proposal.

-> **Becoming an HE expert evaluator**

9. Ready to write the proposal...really ?

- Start early!
- Discuss your idea with your colleagues
- Involve your administration
- To have an idea of the needs...will define your budget !

Write the one-page proposal



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