

Preparing, Submitting and Coordinating Competitive Research Projects

A researchers perspective

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Outline

- Where do I start
- Answer the call
- Project conception
 - Stakeholders
 - Solve a need
- EU calls
- Partners
- Putting it together
- Writing
- Pre-contract meeting
- Running the project
- Dos and don'ts
- Advantages
- Disadvantages
- Spin-offs
- Future

Where do I start !!!

Teagasc mandate is :

To generate and apply new knowledge for the sustainable development of agriculture and the food processing industry to enable it to respond profitably to consumer demands and requirements and contribute to a vibrant rural economy and society. (Teagasc Statement of Strategy 2005-2007)

Major policy documents/reports:

Report of the Agri -Vision 2015 Committee. Department of Agriculture and Food, Dublin, 2004.

Building Ireland's Knowledge Economy: The Irish Action Plan for Promoting Investment in R&D to 2010. Report to the Inter Departmental Committee on Science, Technology, and Innovation. Forfás, Dublin, 2004.

Department of Agriculture and Food Statement of Strategy 2005-2007. Department of Agriculture and Food, Dublin, 2005.

Ireland: National Development Plan 2000 – 2006. The Stationery Office, Dublin, 2001.

Sustaining Progress: Social Partnership Agreement 2003 – 2005. The Stationery Office, Dublin, 2003.

An Agreed Programme for Government between Fianna Fáil and the Progressive Democrats. Department of An Taoiseach, Dublin, 2002.

Ahead of the Curve: Ireland's Place in the Global Economy. Report of the Enterprise Strategy Group. Forfás, Dublin, 2004.

European Research

(Courtesy of
Hyperion Web site)

Links to websites on: www.hyperion.ie/fp7websites.htm

Cordis Website on FP7 www.cordis.lu/fp7/

EURAB (European Research Advisory Board)
http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/eurab/index_en.html

External Advisory Groups www.cordis.lu/fp6/eags.htm

5-Year Assessment Panel www.cordis.lu/fp6/instruments_review

Annual Monitoring Reports www.cordis.lu/expert-monitoring/home.html

COST Actions <http://cost.cordis.lu>

White Papers http://europa.eu.int/comm/off/white/index_en.htm

Answer the Call

Read the call text very carefully

Know the Research Program inside out

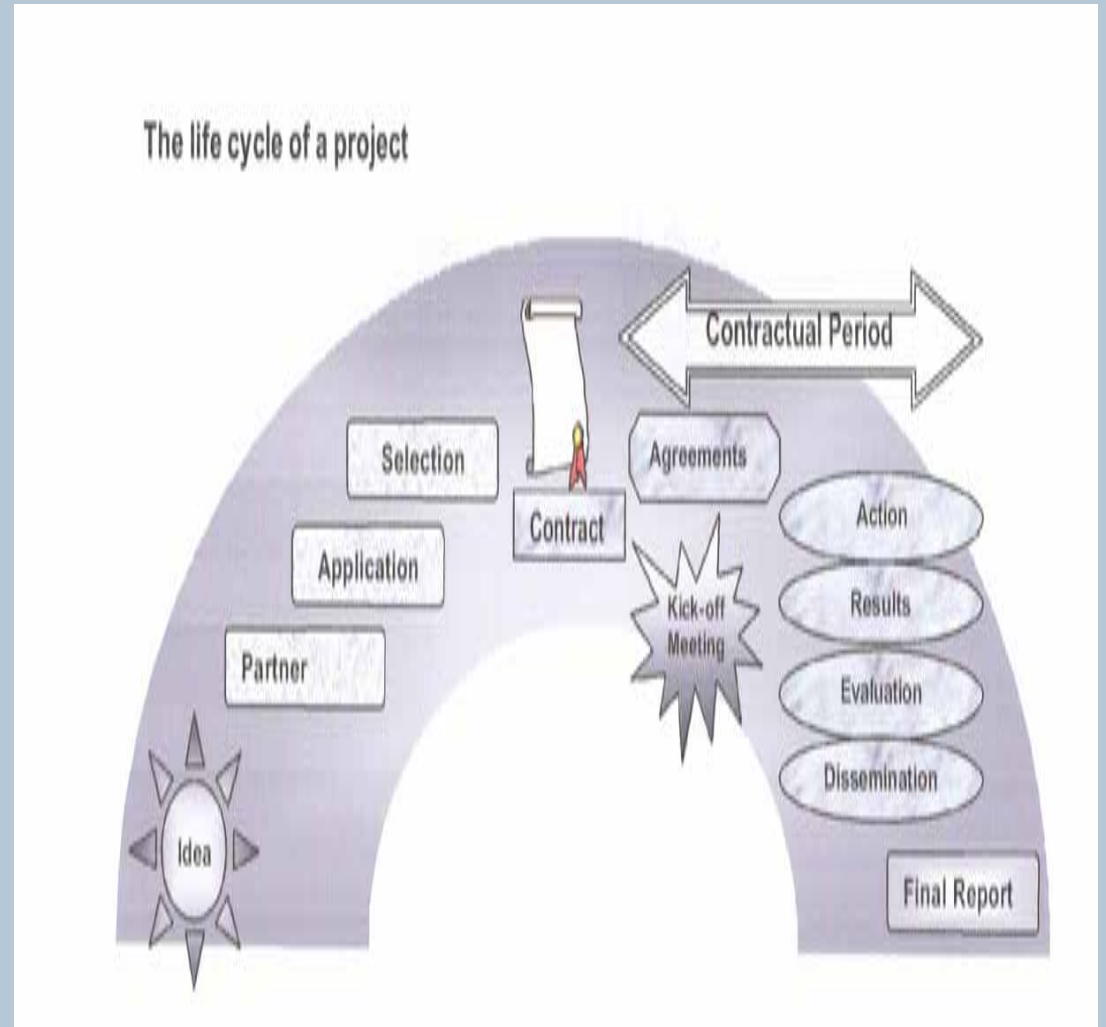
- (a) Rationale
- (b) Overview
- (c) Detailed program
- (d) Instructions for submitting
- (e) Evaluation criteria

Answer the Call

- Get behind the funders lines and into their minds
- Think of the big issues of National / International importance (eg obesity)
- Be aware of the bigger picture (eg Lisbon Declaration, Forfas Policy Documents)
- State of art and previously funded areas

Project Conception

- Knowledge gap
- Focused (must solve a real problem)
- Clear objectives
- Think outside circle
- Consult all stakeholders (not just scientists)



Consult

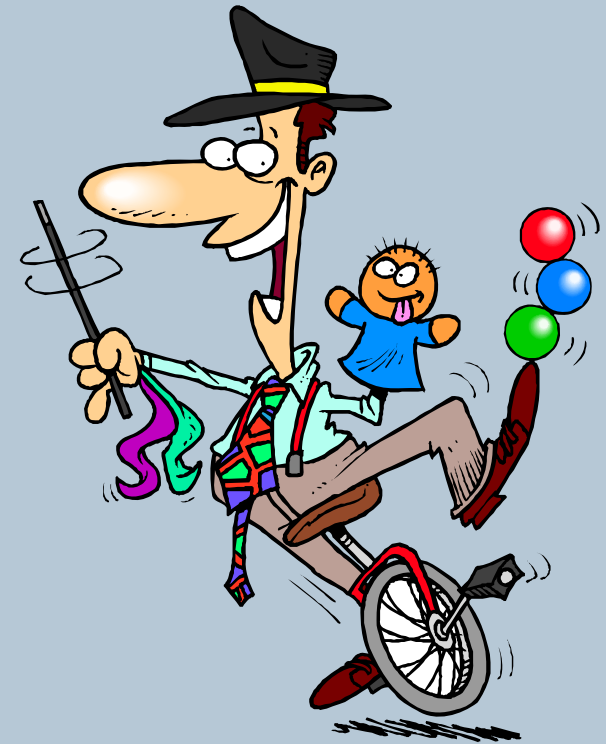
- Bord Bia
- Enterprise Ireland
- Forfas
- DAF
- Industry

Project Conception

- Why
- What
- How
- When
- With what
- How much
- Description
- End users/ Innovation Management

Disciplines

- Personal and interpersonal skills
- Project management skills
 - Financial
 - People
 - Planning
 - Writing
 - Research
 - Dissemination

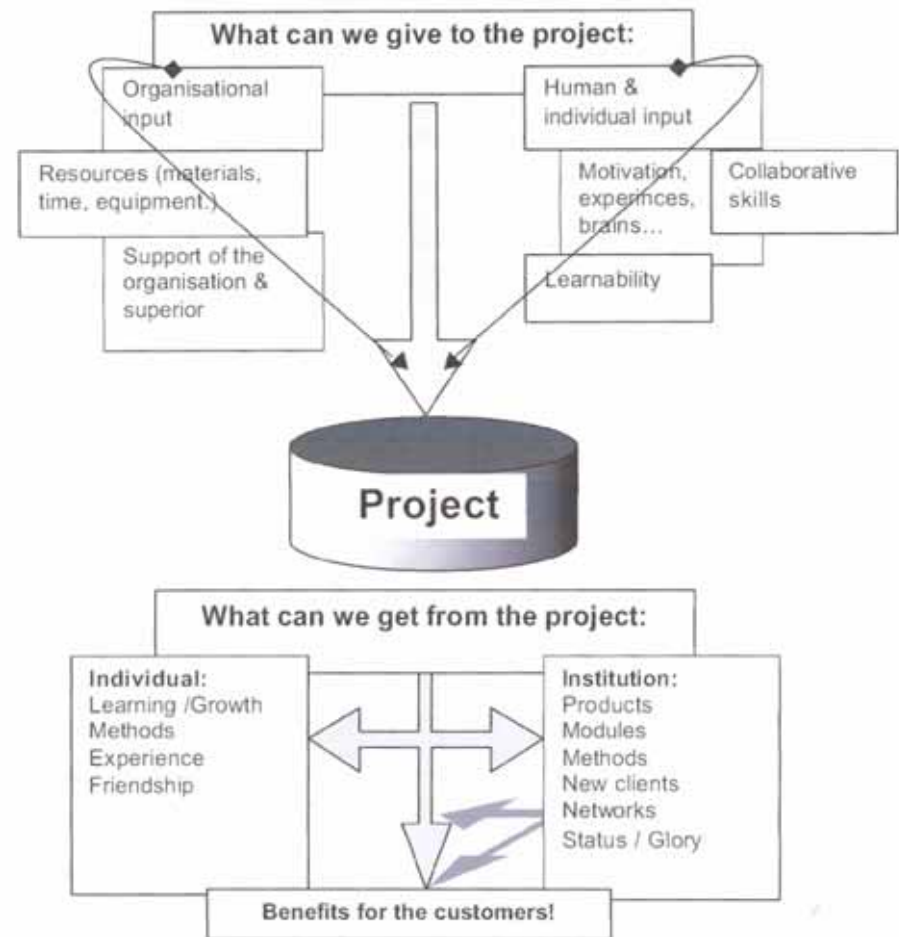


Proposal Preparation- General

- Takes longer than expected
- Initiate all aspects simultaneously
- Write with the funders core mission in mind, place the researchable issue in this context
- Emphasis the need, the benefits and how its success they will be measured
- Relate the project to the state of art

Partners

- Visits, conferences, active
- Choose carefully (not friends)
- What novel approach and strengths can they contribute?
- Keep group small initially
- Multidisciplinary (include industry, consumer groups)
- Expertise, capacity, track record
- Pick and choose judiciously



Quality Counts

- Appropriate and valid researchable issue
- Good research design
- Appropriate methodology
- Experienced team
- Clear relevant outcomes

Putting It Together

- Organize specific proposal generating meetings
- Formulate roadmap
- Listen and develop proposal
- Identify clear distinct areas and responsibilities
- Delegate
- Emphasis trust and confidentiality

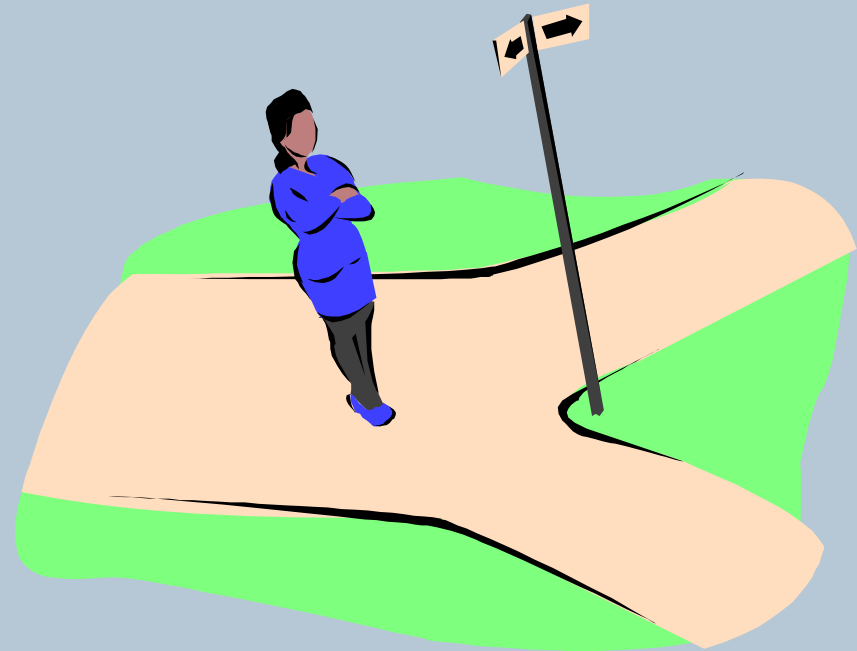


Writing

- Good abstract hitting the right notes
- Easy to read (with evaluators in mind)
- Answer questions asked
- Don't overdo the technical jargon
- Show integration between tasks and partners
- Use simple diagrams
- Back up claims with References and/or Statistics

Decision to Coordinate

- Sound knowledge base
- Get advice from those who have coordinated!!!!
- Know what it involves
- At what level (IP, STREP, SSA)
- Multidisciplinary
- Time available



Submission

- Read as evaluators are asked to read it
- Make it easy to read , not hard in-depth science
- Emphasis potential applications and benefits
- Don't lose overall objectives
- Don't under-estimate finishing touches



Pre-Contract Meeting

- Set the goal posts
- Prepare the Technical Annex (carefully)
- Develop consortium agreement



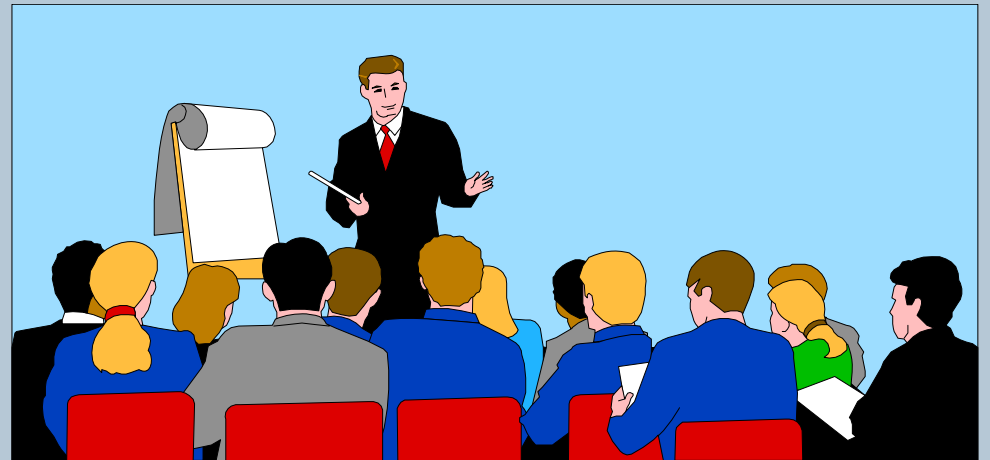
Running the Project

- Delegate
- Constantly refer to the Technical Annex
- Meetings with all partners every six months
- Watch for signs of slack and act
- Monitor, review and take action



Running the Project

- Create friendly atmosphere
- Rotate location of meetings
- Meet all team members
- Demand appropriate documents (financial, scientific, industrial, popular)



Running the project

- Innovation management plan
- Produce deliverables
- Think of the wider picture
- Organise workshops, conferences
- Disseminate
- Go out with a bang!!!

Dos and don'ts

- Remember things take longer than expected
- Don't get bogged down in finance discussions
- Keep stakeholders informed
- Communicate clearly
- Delegate

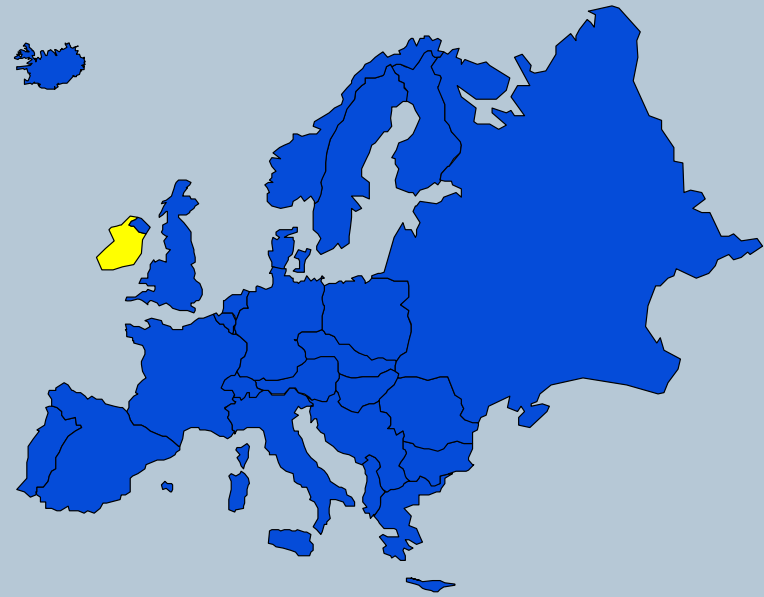


National vs Framework

- Converging
- Common objectives
- Peer reviewed
- Scale varies

Advantages of coordinating (individual)

- European wide recognition among peers and general stakeholders
- Confidence increases
- New skills and knowledge
- Participate in networks and scientific exchanges
- Strategic vision
- Management skills improve
- Research outputs increase



Research outputs

- Number of refereed publications
- Invited papers at international conferences
- Post graduate students (Marie-Curie training site)
- Popular press and TV articles
- Become 'sought after'

Advantages of coordinating (institutional)

- Prestige and recognition
 - Benchmark institute
 - Attract further follow-up funds
 - Forges transnational collaborative links
 - Input into policy
 - Producer, processor, retailer and consumer interest
 - State agencies seek advice
- BAFF, Kulmbach, Germany
 - Cemagref, Rennes, France
 - CSIC, Valencia, Spain
 - DMRI, Denmark
 - FBN, Dummerstorf, Germany.
 - ID-DLO, Netherlands
 - IGER, Aberystwyth, U.K.
 - IRTA, Monells, Spain
 - INRA, Clermont-Ferrand, France.
 - INRA, Rennes, France
 - INRA, Theix, France
 - Institute of Agricultural Science, Denmark
 - Instituto del Frio, Spain
 - Matforsk, Norway
 - Norway Meats, Norway
 - St. Savas Hospital, Athens, Greece
 - Swedish Meats R+D, Sweden
 - Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Uppsala, Sweden
 - University of Bretagne Sud, France
 - University of Bristol, U.K.
 - University of Ghent, Belgium
 - University of Kaposvar, Hungary
 - University of Parma, Italy
 - University of Tübingen, Germany

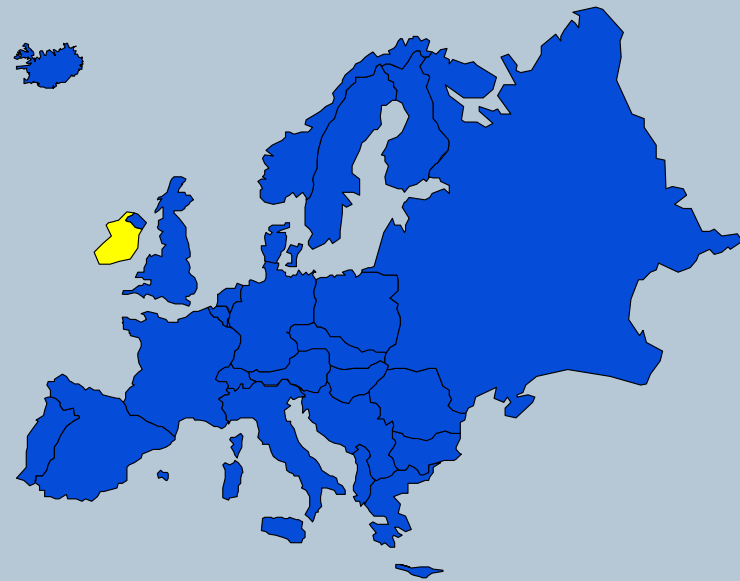
Advantages of coordinating (institutional)

- Centres of excellence
- Share and transfer knowledge and skills
- Attract highly skilled workers
- International conferences
- Funds



Advantages of coordinating (national)

- Attract skilled researchers
- Highly trained scientists
- Sharpen and add value to national research programmes
- National policy



Examples

- 2 Marie-Curie training sites in meat biochemistry
- International Conference of Meat Science and Technology in Ireland 2006
- World leader in meat safety and quality



Current

- **Beef and Dairy Integrated projects under the 6th Framework**



Concerns

- Time and resources?
- Administration overload?
- No time for own research?
- Experienced enough?
- All on my own?
- Responsibility?



Coordinating

- **Serious decision**
- **Take advice**
- **Choose partners carefully**
- **Delegate**
- **Hugely rewarding**



Issues

- **IP National Code of Practice**
- **Science based innovations**
- **Food and health**
- **Teagasc investments**
- **Industry more sophisticated**
- **Cross disciplines**
- **Emphasis on impact (not solely publications)**
- **National Support for 7thFramework**

Thank You