

# FCH2 JU under Horizon2020 rules Proposal Submission and evaluation





Mirela Atanasiu
Project Manager Energy Applications & Call Coordinator



- H2020-JTI-FCH-2015-1 call conditions
- Proposal submission and evaluation

# H2020-JTI-FCH-2015-1 call conditions

Call identifier: H2020-JTI-FCH-2015-1

Total budget : EUR 123 million

Publication date: 05 May 2015

Deadline: 27 August 2015

#### General Annexes to the Work-Plan 2015 (based on H2020 RfP\*\*)

- Eligibility and admissibility conditions (Annexes B and C)
- Types of action and funding rates (Annex D)
- Technology readiness level (TRL) (Annex E)
- Evaluation criteria, scoring and threshold (Annex F)

	No. of topics	Type of action*	Indicative budget (mill EUR)
TRANSPORT PILLAR	5	RIA	25
	6	RIA	20
ENERGY PILLAR	3	IA	34
OVERARCHING PROJECTS	2	IA	39.5
	1	RIA	5
CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES	3	CSA	2.5
		Total call	123

Additional condition for participation in some topics:

at least one constituent entity of the Industry Grouping or Research Grouping should be among the participants

Proposals are required to provide a

draft plan for exploitation and dissemination of results!

\*RIA= Research and Innovation Action; IA= Innovation Action; CSA= Coordination and Support Action

\*\* RfP= Rules for Participation

# **Proposal submission**

### **Overview of process**



### NEW more ergonomic and user-friendly Participant Portal

#### http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/ desktop/en/home.html



# **Funding Opportunities** page gives a short overview of the information and some **priority highlights** of H2020

 left hand menu: go directly to the calls of specific parts of H2020 or click on "Search topics" and search funding opportunities just with free keywords, without having to know the structure of the programme



Another important priority of the Commission is to ensure dender is embedded in the design of Horizon 2020 grolect This page lists additional research activities, initiatives executed by several Member States or joint programmes, co-funded calls, thematic opportunities, and

### Participant Portal Calls

#### Calls are presented as

clickable "cards" that lead to the call details.

When landing on the page the user will see <u>all the open calls in the order of their publishing dates</u> (possibility to see forthcoming and open calls when filtering accordingly). The user can also filter calls by programmes and themes.

#### Newcomers:

searching for call topics by **free keywords without having to know the structure of the programme** 

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	Industrial Leadership Horizon Prize - Breaking the optical transmission barriers H2020-OpticalPrize-2015	Industrial Leadership Horizon Prize - Collaborative Shar of Spectrum H2020-SpectrumPrize-2015	Societal Challenges FCH2 JU call for proposals 2015 H2020-JTI-FCH-2015-1
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	Science with and for Society Call for making science education and careers attractive for young people H2020-SEAC-2015-1	Science with and for Society Call for integrating Society in Scie and Innovation H2020-ISSI-2015-1	Science with and for Society Call for promoting Gender Equality in Research and Innovation H2020-GERI-2015-1
	Deadlines: 16/09/2015 Opening Date: 22/04/2015	Deadlines: 16/09/2015 Opening Date: 22/04/2015	Deadlines: 16/09/2015 Opening Date: 22/04/2015
	Science with and for Society Call for developing governance for the advancement of Responsible H2020-GARRI-2015-1	Societal Challenges Clean Sky 2 Call for Core Partners Wave 2 H2020-CS2-CPW02-2015-01	Excellent Science COFUND - Co-funding of Regional, National and International Programmes H2020-MSCA-COFUND-2015
	Deadlines: 16/09/2015 Opening Date: 22/04/2015	Deadlines: 30/07/2015 Opening Date: 16/04/2015	Deadlines: 01/10/2015 Opening Date: 14/04/2015

- A call is a list of distinct, separate topics
- <u>A proposal is submitted to one and only one topic</u>
- A topic is linked to one and only one call (the same topic applicable in two years will be considered as two distinct topics)
- A topic can have only one action type ("funding schemes"; e.g. R&I actions, CSA)
- A topic can have only one deadline

#### First access to the system from each Topic's page

**Draft and submitted** proposals to be accessed <u>later</u> from the "My Proposals" page

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		Topic: FCH-01.3-2015: Development of Industrialization-ready PEMFC systems and system components	n l						
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		Topic: FCH-01.4-2015: Adaptation of existing fuel cell components and systems from road to non-road applications							
		Topict ECH-01.5-2015: Develop technologies for achieving competitive solutions for APU transport applications based on existing technology							
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		Topic: FCH-02.3-2015: Development of co-electrolysis using CO2 and water							
		Topic: FCH-02.4-2015: Proof-of-concept of HT electrolysers at a scale > 70 kW							
		Topic: FCH-02.5-2015: Development of technology to separate hydrogen from low-concentration hydrogen streams							
		Topic: FCH-02.6-2015: Development of cost effective manufacturing technologies for key components or fuel cell systems	1						



7. Additional provisions:

Enhanced access rights, enabling the read-only rights to proposals

<u>Full access (= coordinator contact or participant contact) or read-only rights (= team member) for any contact person</u> of the proposal.

Rights to be managed in the Submission tool until call closure, after that in the Participant Portal

All contact persons receive access rights and are listed in Part A: Main contact persons with full details; other contacts with minimum data;

Authorized representative data is not required in the proposals !



## **Structure of proposal**

### Part A

General information

Abstract, panel and fixed keyword (if relevant),

- **New:** declarations, checklist questions
- Participants and contact persons: data is read-only from the Organisation Registry (URF/PDM)
- Budget table specific per action types
- New: Ethics Issues Table: structured, reference to Part B
- <u>Call specific questions: limited set of specific questions related to the call (IG/RG membership!)</u>
- The system offers validation checks & any problems are listed at the end of the administrative part.

### Part B and Annexes

- Templates per calls/topics <u>downloadable from the system</u>!
- Page limit will apply per attachments (45+5 pages) The check is based on <u>pages</u> of the pdf document.
- Watermark to be applied to mark the pages above the limit
- General constraints: 10 MB, PDF
- The complete proposal package receives an e-receipt upon submission.

• New: Separate template for the <u>'Plan for exploitation and dissemination of results'!</u> (if applicable, possibility to include <u>additional activities and/or investments</u> along the project to increase impact of results, as part of beneficiaries' business plans)

### Guidance

- Call and Topic-related official documents are available from the call/topic page of the Participant Portal
- Additional H2020 reference documents !
- Online help: H2020 Funding Guide on the Participant Portal
- Embedded guidance text in the forms: ghost text or fixed guidance behind the question marks; hyperlinks

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Grants				
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# **Proposal evaluation**

# New 'types' of calls and proposals

- Calls are **challenged-based**, and therefore more open to innovative proposals
  - Calls are <u>less prescriptive</u> they do not outline the expected solutions to the problem, nor the approach to be taken to solve it
  - Calls/topics descriptions allow plenty of scope for applicants to propose innovative solutions of their own choice
- There is a greater emphasis on impact, in particular through each call/topic impact statements
  - Applicants are asked to explain how their work will contribute to bringing about the described impacts (separate plan for exploitation of results!)
  - During the evaluation, the experts are asked to assess this potential contribution.
  - Bigger weighting of the criteria in the Innovation Actions !

## More emphasis on innovation\*

- <u>Substantial support to activities</u> such as prototyping and testing, demonstrating and piloting, first market replication - establishing technical and economic viability in (near) operational environments
- <u>Piloting new forms and sources of innovation</u> extending beyond technological and research-based innovation
- Leveraging and boosting engagement of industry
- When the experts evaluate a proposal, they need to take into account <u>innovation</u> <u>activities</u> in the targeted innovation actions as well as in research and innovation actions
- <u>**Cross-cutting issues**</u> are fully integrated in the work plan (WP):
  - <u>Gender dimension</u> in the content of R&I a standard question on relevance of sex/gender analysis is included in proposal templates
  - The <u>new strategic approach to international cooperation</u> consists of a general opening of the WP and targeted activities across all relevant Horizon 2020 parts (the approach to providing 'automatic funding' to third country participants is restricted & the experts should check requests for 'exceptional funding')
  - <u>Other cross-cutting issues</u> such as science education, open access to scientific publications, ethics, standardisation ... may also be included in the WP

## Impact of grant preparation on evaluation

### No grant negotiation phase!

- The time from submission of a proposal, evaluation and signature of the grant has been reduced to a maximum of 8 months
   (max. 5 months for evaluation + max. 3 months for grant signature)
- What does this mean for the evaluation of proposal?
  - The experts evaluate each proposal as submitted not on its potential if certain changes were to be made
  - The experts do not recommend substantial modifications
     such as change of partners, additional work packages, significant budget or resources cut, additional scientific activities to strengthen the concept, trans-disciplinary aspects not appropriately covered...
  - If the experts identify significant shortcomings, they must reflect those in a lower score for the relevant criterion

Proposals requiring substantial modifications are not expected to pass the relevant thresholds

- Is there a <u>margin for making some recommendations?</u>
  - Minor and specific corrections to be implemented without negotiation, e.g. timing of work package...
  - Obvious clerical errors

# **Overview of the Evaluation Process** & Role of independent experts



- They are responsible for carrying out the evaluation of the proposals themselves The experts are not allowed to delegate the work to another person!
- Significant funding decisions will be made on the basis of their advice !

## **Guiding principles**

#### Independence

- The experts evaluate in a personal capacity
- The experts represent neither their employer, nor their country!

### • Impartiality

 The experts must treat equally all proposals and evaluate them impartially on their merits, irrespective of their origin or the identity of the applicants

### Objectivity

 The experts evaluate each proposal as submitted; meaning on its own merit, not its potential if certain changes were to be made

#### Accuracy

 The experts make their judgment against the official evaluation criteria and the [call/topic] the proposal addresses, and nothing else

#### Consistency

- The experts apply the same standard of judgment to all proposals

## Admissibility and eligibility checks

### • Admissibility is checked by the FCH JU:

- Readable, accessible and printable
- Completeness of proposal presence of all requested forms
- Plan for exploitation and dissemination of results

Page limits: Clearly set out in electronic system; excess page marked with a watermark

- Eligibility should already have been checked by the FCH JU:
  - Minimum number of partners as set out in the call conditions
  - "Out of scope" a proposal will only be deemed ineligible in clear-cut cases
  - Other criteria may apply on a call-by-call basis (IG/RG membership!)
- However, if the experts spot an issue relating to eligibility when evaluating a proposal, they should inform the FCH JU

### **Evaluation criteria**

### There are <u>three evaluation criteria</u>:

- Excellence (relevant to the topic of the call)
- Impact
- Quality and efficiency of the implementation
  - Applicants are only required to provide <u>summary of staff effort</u> in each WPs and <u>breakdown of 'Other direct cost' items</u> (travel, equipment, other goods and services, large research infrastructures) in case their total <u>exceeds 15% of the personnel costs !</u>
  - <u>Methodology to declare 'large research infrastructure' costs should be previously</u> <u>assessed (and accepted) by the Commission services</u>
- The criteria are <u>adapted to each type of action</u>, as specified in the WP

### **Evaluation criteria**

### Research and Innovation/Innovation Actions (RIA/IA)



Appropriateness of the management structures and procedures, including risk and innovation management

# **Evaluation criteria**

**Coordination & Support Actions (CSA)** 



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

Complementarity of the participants within the consortium (when relevant)

Appropriateness of the management structures and procedures, including risk and innovation management

## Elements to be reflected in the evaluation

### If a proposal

- is only marginally relevant in terms of its scientific, technological or innovation content relating to the [call/topic] addressed, the experts must reflect this in a lower score for the Excellence criterion
  - <u>No matter how excellent the science!</u>
- does not significantly contribute to the expected impacts as specified in the WP for that [call/topic], the experts must reflect this in a lower score for the Impact criterion
- would require substantial modifications in terms of implementation (i.e. change of partners, additional work packages, significant budget or resources cut...), the experts must reflect this in a lower score for the "Quality and efficiency of the implementation" criterion
- If cross-cutting issues are explicitly mentioned in the scope of the [call/topic], and not properly addressed (or their non-relevance justified), the experts must reflect this in a lower score for the relevant criterion
  - Proposals addressing cross-cutting issues which are not explicitly mentioned in the scope of the [call/topic] can also be evaluated positively

### The experts disregard excess pages which are marked with a watermark !

### **Proposal scoring**

### • The experts give a score of between 0 and 5 to each criterion based on their comments

- Half-marks can be used
- The whole range of scores should be used
- Scores must pass thresholds if a proposal is to be considered for funding
- Thresholds apply to individual criteria...
   The default threshold is 3 (unless specified otherwise in the WP)
  - ...and to the total score The default overall threshold is 10 (unless specified otherwise in the WP)



•

For Innovation Actions (IA), the criterion Impact is given a weight of 1.5 to determine the ranking

• If an applicant lacks <u>basic operational capacity</u>, the experts make comments and score the proposal without taking into account this partner and its associated activity(ies)



The proposal fails to address the criterion or cannot be judged due to missing or incomplete information

**Poor.** The criterion is inadequately addressed, or there are serious inherent weaknesses.

**Fair.** While the proposal broadly addresses the criterion, there are significant weaknesses.



2

**Good.** The proposal addresses the criterion well, although a number of shortcomings are present.



**Very Good.** The proposal addresses the criterion very well, although a small number of shortcomings are present.



**Excellent.** The proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion. Any shortcomings are minor.

## **Proposals with identical total scores**

- For each group of proposals with identical total scores, the panel considers <u>first</u> proposals that address topics that are not already covered by more highly-ranked proposals
- The panel then orders them according to:
  - <u>first</u>, their score for Excellence,
  - and <u>second</u>, their score for Impact
  - [for Innovation actions, first their score for Impact and second for Excellence]
- If there are ties, the panel takes into account the following factors:
  - First, the size of the budget allocated to SMEs
  - Second, <u>the gender balance</u> of personnel carrying out the research and/or innovation activities
- If there are still ties, the panel agrees <u>further factors</u> to consider:
  - e.g. synergies between projects or contribution to the objectives of the call or of Horizon 2020
- The same method is then applied to proposals that address topics that are already covered by more highly-ranked proposals

- Only proposals that comply with the ethical principles and legislation may receive funding
- For proposals above threshold and considered for funding, an <u>ethics screening</u> and, if necessary, an <u>ethics assessment</u> is carried out by independent ethics experts in parallel with the scientific evaluation or soon after
- For those proposals in which one or more ethical issues have been identified, the experts will assess whether the ethics issues are adequately addressed
- The ethics experts will produce an <u>ethics report</u> and give an opinion on the proposal, including:
  - granting ethics clearance (or not)
  - recommending the inclusion of 'ethics requirements' in the grant agreement, or
  - recommending a further Ethics Assessment and/or an Ethics Check or Audit

- Maximum 5 months from the call deadline ! (includes necessary time for Board decision)
- <u>Complaints (request for evaluation review)</u>: within **30 days** of receiving the proposal rejection letter (through Participant Portal)
- <u>Flash Info on Participant Portal (eventually on FCH JU website too)</u>:
  - Publishing number of proposals submitted per budget/list of topics, after the call deadline;
  - Publishing <u>basic statistics on the outcome of the call (e.g. total proposals, ineligible, above/below-thresholds)</u> at the same time with the feedback/evaluation results to all applicants

#### **Budget flexibility**

Budgetary figures given in the work plan are indicative. Unless otherwise stated, final budgets may vary by up to 20%, following the evaluation of proposals for:

- Total expenditure for call for proposals;
- Any repartition of the call budget within a call, up to 20% of the total expenditure of the call

# **CLOSING RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Do's and Don'ts**

### (best practise from the previous calls)

#### What exactly is the INNOVATION of the proposal?

**Do:** Include a clear <u>State of the Art</u>, SoA (not only EU, but international) which illustrates the novelty **Do:** Provide <u>details of any "preliminary" activities</u> already performed by some members of the consortium to show that they don't start from 'scratch' and that the risk is limited (or address the risk!)

#### What are you planning to do and how?

Do: Critically review the number of deliverables (too many OR too few are bad indicators + confidentiality!)
 Do: Provide clear milestones which allow to evaluate the progress of the project

(including Go/NoGo decision points)

**Do:** <u>Structure the Work Plan</u> in a clear and consistent way showing the relationship among the different Work Packages (WP) and/or tasks

**Do:** Try to have a <u>balanced (sectorial and geographical) and complementary consortium;</u> avoid adding "cosmetic" partners

Don't: mix deliverables and milestones

**Don't:** Avoid using sub-contractors and third parties - a strong consortium should be able to perform the major tasks with their own resources

### The proposal should provide <u>clear and short answers</u> to these questions

### • How is your budget/resources planned over the activities and duration of the project ?

Do: explain as clear as possible the <u>allocated resources (e.g. man-months</u>) per partner and activities - avoid to over-estimate the effort needed
 Do: try to declare as accurately as possible the <u>estimated costs</u>, especially for major costs

**Don't:** include <u>partners with 0 total costs</u> - <u>the requested funds could be zero</u>, but the total should be definitely higher, reflecting their contribution to the project

### What can be expected as a result of the project?

**Do:** Describe precisely the <u>main outcome of the project</u> - avoid using too many ambiguous terms (e.g. illustrate, evaluate, assess, recommend, etc)

#### • What would be the impact on energy technology?

**Do:** Describe the <u>potential impact of the "project outcome"</u> not of the "technology" being addressed **Do:** Provide <u>"quantitative" estimates of critical parameters (e.g. performance, size, weight, cost, etc) which allow to compare the resulting outcome with the SoA</u>



# Thank you for your attention !

further info <u>fch-projects@fch.europa.eu</u>







European Industry Grouping (NEW-IG): <u>http://www.new-ig.eu/</u>

FCH JU official website:

www.fch.europa.eu



European Research Grouping (N.ERGHY): <u>http://www.nerghy.eu/</u>