

# How to exploit successfully the the MSCA Staff Exchange call as a Turkish Beneficiary

By

Nikolaos Floratos

TH2020II Training Coordinator



# Next Steps as Coordinator



# Next Steps as Coordinator

---

- Step 1(C): Check the [Strategic Plan 2025-2027 Analysis](#) for new research needs
- Step 2(C): Study the targeted call in detail
- Step 3(C): Prepare a proposal concept/summary
- Step 4(C): Get feedback
- Step 5(C): Finalise the core consortium
- Step 6(C): Coordinate the grant application writing
- Step 7(C): Have the full proposal externally evaluated
- Step 8(C): Submit



# Step 1(C): Identify the most appropriate call to focus

---

Identify this one call based on your

- Expertise
  - Are the keywords of the call fully aligned with your specialisation?
  - Based on your scientific specialisation can you elaborate convincingly on the SoA limitations?
  - Have you been involved in previous research initiatives that lead to results (Knowledge, solutions, infrastructure, etc) which can be used as starting point in this call?
  - Do you have the expertise to lead the development of a grant application?
- Resources
  - Do you have the time ahead (~3-5 months) to lead a proposal?
  - Do you have the people to support you in proposal writing?
- Network
  - Do you have access to a wide network of all the key actors from various EU member states/regions?
  - Can your network involve as many as possible associate partners?



# NEW RESEARCH NEEDS AND POTENTIALS ARISING FROM THE GLOBAL CHALLENGES

## Key points



- 3. POSSIBLE NEW RESEARCH NEEDS AND POTENTIALS ARISING FROM THE GLOBAL CHALLENGES ..... 69**
- 3.1. Transformative research and innovation policies: how research and innovation can boost systemic change .....70**
- 3.2. Research and innovation needs for delivering on the European Green Deal.....71**
  - 3.2.1. Achieve climate neutrality ..... 75**
  - 3.2.2. Protect and restore our ecosystems. .... 77**
  - 3.2.3. Deliver a circular economy and a zero pollution ambition for a toxic-free environment ..... 79**
  - 3.2.4. Design a fair, healthy and environmentally friendly agrifood system with vibrant rural areas and protected forests..... 81**
  - 3.2.5. Bioeconomy governance and sustainable bio-based innovation systems..... 82**
  - 3.2.6. Climate-neutral, energy-intensive industries ..... 83**
  - 3.2.7. Sustainable mobility ..... 84**
  - 3.2.8. Modernise our buildings..... 84**
  - 3.2.9. Environment, climate change, sustainability and health..... 85**
  - 3.2.10. Leave no one behind ..... 86**

# Step 2(C): Study the targeted call in detail

---

- Do you understand what are the key challenges that have to be addressed with your proposed project?
- Do you understand which results and objectives are expected from your proposed project?
- Do you understand what are the benefits that are expected from each of your project results by the end of the project?
- Do you understand what are the benefits that are expected from each of your project results some years after the end of the project?
- Do you understand the size and profile of your potential consortium in order to deliver a winning project under this call?
- Have you noticed any other specificities that will make the difference and should be addressed by the winning projects?
- Identify previously funded projects (e.g. from [COST](#), [TWINNING](#), etc) in your research area that their achievements could be considered as a starting point in your project.



## Step 3(C): Prepare a proposal concept/summary

---

Further to Step 2 (C), prepare a 3-4 pages document as your proposal concept/summary which will contain

1. The key challenge and key purpose of your project
2. The Scientific, Social and Economical Challenges
3. Outline your objectives as solutions to address each of the identified challenges
4. Elaborate more on the State of Art limitations and why no-one has managed to overcome them
5. Outline how the planned research programme and the staff's activities will contribute to strengthening Europe's human capacity for research and innovation
6. Outline how participating in the project will help staff (research plus admin) to enhance their potential and improve their career prospects.
7. Explain the methodology/approach, expertise and resources needed in order to overcome each of the identified limitations and contribute to the expected benefits
8. Match the needed expertise and resources with type of organisations and from which regions if possible





# Step 4(C): Get feedback

---

Get feedback on the **value and alignment** of your proposal concept/summary with the targeted call from

- Your NCP
- TH2020II experts
- EC Officers
- Other Experts
- Key actors from previously funded projects
- ...



# Step 5(C): Finalise the core consortium

- Use your own network
- Exploit [MSCA matchmaking platform](#)
- Exploit the related [F&T Portal Search](#) partner facility (Login required)
- Identify Key actors from related MSCA SE [previously funded projects](#) (search with research keywords in CORDIS)
- Use [Euraxess Portal](#)
- Social Media and especially LinkedIn Groups such as
  - [MARIE CURIE Actions \(MSCA\), Horizon Europe, Fellowship, Research Grants, PhD Careers, and R&D Jobs](#)
  - And post proposal summary and an expression of interest form for potential partners to apply – Tip: State that priority will be given to highly experienced organisations that can involve you in other similar initiatives
  - Explore contacts from related COST project actions and TWINNING ones (see previous slide)



# Step 6(C): Coordinate the grant application writing

- **A. Assign clear roles in the grant application writing**

- Who writes what,
- who assures quality,
- who evaluates,
- who supports in administration,
- who communicates with externals

- **B. Use online word processing to contribute jointly to the application writing**

- **D. Ensure the following in grant application**

- **Excellence**

- Key challenge and key purpose
- State of the Art/scientific limitations and Project Objectives
- Measurable project objectives
- Methodology focus on overcoming those limitations and advancing TRL
- Why you are the best consortium for the suggested methodology
- Open Science, cross-cutting issues,
- Strong collaboration between academic and non-academic sector for mobilities and knowledge sharing

- **Impact**

- Measurable expected outcomes and impacts (target groups, scale and significance)
- Plans to achieve TRL 9 after the project
- Barriers to achieve those impacts
- Pathways/strategy to overcome those barriers

- **Implementation**

- Alignment between workplan and objectives
- Risks mitigation/preventive measures per task
- 80/20 rule on allocation of resources

## Step 7(C): Have the full proposal externally evaluated

- Ensure the final draft is ready 2 weeks before the deadline
- Engage an expert (either a paid one and/or for free from TH2020II programme) to evaluate your proposal
- Detailed feedback on each subsection of the full grant application should be received –Focus on Weaknesses
- Address each of the received evaluation comments



# Step 8(C): Submit

**S. Submit** the final proposal

- Send a thank you message to all partners

- Tidy-up your office and e-folders

- Last but not least – with your team that supported you!

# Next Steps as Potential Partner



WHAT'S  
NEXT



# Next Steps as Potential Partner

---

- Step 1(P): Check the [Strategic Plan 2025-2027 Analysis](#) for new research needs that fit your research interests
- Step 2(P): Outline your assets as partner in potential proposals
- Step 3(P): Identify previously funded projects related to your targeted calls
- Step 4(P): Engage intelligently with the key partners from those funded projects
- Step 5(P): Explore with those partners potential collaboration possibilities in your targeted calls
- Step 6(P): Provide high value contributions to any proposals you are involved
- Step 7(P): Stay in touch with all the ones contacted



# Step 1(P): Identify those research needs you can bring value

---

Check the [Strategic Plan 2025-2027 Analysis](#) and identify research needs that you can bring value due to your

1. Experience on the scientific and research area of the call
2. Access to essential infrastructures
3. Involvement in previous related funded projects or access to key partners from those (e.. MSCA, Twinning, COST, etc)
4. Access to key actors needed (e.g. end-users and policy makers, academic and non-academic actors) in the call
5. Understanding of the specificities of the MSCA call
6. Competency to provide high value contributions during the proposal writing
7. Capability to engage for free a high-calibre consultant/EC Expert to evaluate the final draft from the TH2020II programme





# Step 2(P): Outline your assets as partner in potential proposals

---

- Any of the ones applicable for you from Step 1(P)
- Be specific, for example
  - prove your experience on the scientific and research area of the call with a detailed State of Art Analysis of the targeted research area and focus on the limitations that winning projects should overcome
  - Identify specific names of key actors that you can bring on board as associate partners or as stakeholders



# Step 3(P): Identify previously related funded projects

## Check

- 1.related MSCA SE previously funded projects  
(search with research keywords in CORDIS)
- 2.As well as COST, TWINNING, ) in your research area
- 3....



**GIVE**  
*& you shall*  
**receive**

## Step 4(P): Engage intelligently with the key partners from those funded projects

---

Send an email as follows

- Start with an honest compliment (e.g. congratulate about their project and explain why)
- Elaborate on your high interest and expertise in their key research area
- Express your offer to get more involved in their project (if still running), e.g. as peer-reviewer, AB/stakeholders member, speaker in their event (NB. Give and shall receive)
- Ensure you get a response. e.g. Follow-up over the phone (You never send an email to anyone if you are not determined to follow-up and should persist to get a response)

# Step 5(P): Explore with those partners potential collaboration possibilities in MSCA SE

---

- Use any applicable assets from Step (2(P) For example, highlight any current discussions with policy makers(EC, national authorities) and other key actors (e.g. initiators of similar projects, end-users) related to your research area (see values 1-9)
- Conclude with your desire to virtually meet and have a discussion on any ideas for the forthcoming identified HEU call in **MSCA SE**
- See example next



# Email Example/template

Subject: **Collaboration Opportunity under Horizon Call topic: ...**

Dear .....,

I am ..... and I decided to contact you based on your [expertise/or active involvement] in .... because we are working in the same area with some [unique knowledge/ideas/solutions/ products, select whatever applicable] and we believe this is an excellent mix for a successful project under [MSCA SE call](#)

In case you are active in submitting a grant application under the above call, we would like to discuss in a quick zoom meeting how we can add high value and jointly submit a successful proposal in this call. Please note the following points that we believe are essential for success in this competitive call.

[ Apply tips for values/assets 1 to 9]

[Example on assets/values 1,2,7, 8]. We have investigated heavily the expectations from this call with the help also from a team of EC experts and you can find our brief analysis attached

[Example on asset/value 3]. Furthermore, we are already in communication with other related projects that their results can form an excellent starting point for a winning proposal under this call. Such projects are ...

[Example on asset/value 4, 5 ]In addition to our organisation we could also bring a very strong end user from the XXX domain as well as a policy maker (i.e. the ministry of ...) as direct or associate partner. With our participation proposal value chain as well as its geographical coverage could be significantly enhanced.

[Example on 8, 9] Our team (www.xxx.com) could provide top-notch support in the proposal preparation and also engage an experienced EC expert as external evaluator of the proposal final draft with no cost from your side.

[Example on 1] You can see a short elaboration on the related SoA analysis applicable to the targeted research area and I'll be happy to elaborate further.

I hope we will have the chance to work together and prepare a successful proposal. Looking forward to your feedback. You can reply directly to my email: xxxx @ xxx. xx or mobile phone: +xx xxxxxxxxx

Best regards

[First Name]. [Position]

[Full Name]



# Step 6(P): Provide high value contributions to any proposals you are involved

- **A. Assign clear roles in the grant application writing**
  - Who writes what,
  - who assures quality,
  - who evaluates,
  - who supports in administration,
  - who communicates with externals
- **B. Use online word processing to contribute jointly to the application writing**
- **D. Ensure the following in grant application**
  - **Excellence**
    - Key challenge and key purpose
    - State of the Art/scientific limitations and Project Objectives
    - Measurable project objectives
    - Methodology focus on overcoming those limitations and advancing TRL
    - Why you are the best consortium for the suggested methodology
    - Open Science, cross-cutting issues,
    - Strong collaboration between academic and non-academic sector for mobilities and knowledge sharing
  - **Impact**
    - Measurable expected outcomes and impacts (target groups, scale and significance)
    - Plans to achieve TRL 9 after the project
    - Barriers to achieve those impacts
    - Pathways/strategy to overcome those barriers
  - **Implementation**
    - Alignment between workplan and objectives
    - Risks mitigation/preventive measures per task
    - 80/20 rule on allocation of resources

# Step 7(P): Stay in touch with all the ones contacted

---

- Engagement is like muscles: The more we work, the stronger they become
- Find interesting topics to share such as
  - Related publications
  - Events to join
  - Calls to collaborate
  - Offer to join advisory groups
  - Explore Twinning and Teaming actions and other MSCA calls
  - etc



# Applied Knowledge is power

**Knowledge is not power, applied knowledge is**

Practice NOW with the proper support and apply what you learned in class

Indicative Tasks to work:

## **Morning Tasks – Hands on Practice**

Based on the [MSCA SE call](#) specificities and the training day 1

1. **Task 1:** Introduce the research problem to address and explain why this problem is important and needs to be solved.
2. **Task 2:** Outline the key specific Research Objectives that should be SMART and Innovative
3. **Task 3:** Explain why no-one else has managed to achieve them
4. **Task 4:** Outline for each RO, the interdisciplinary expertise needed
5. **Task 5:** Identify related types or names of organisations for sharing knowledge via secondments and state what each participating organisation will contribute towards achieving the research and knowledge transfer objectives

Presentations/Reflections on tasks done and receive feedback by the whole class

## **Afternoon Tasks – Hands on Practice**

1. **Task 6:** Outline the expected benefits by the project end and within 5 years after project end from the achievement of each of the project Research Objectives
2. **Task 7:** Outline the expected benefits by the project end and within 5 years after project end for the staff members and participating organisations that are involved to the Staff Exchanges

Presentations/Reflections on tasks done and receive feedback by the whole class

