From the idea to a successful application

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Why proposals fail

• The problem has not been explained well
• The issue does not strike the reader
• No involvement of relevant stakeholders
• The outcomes do not fit with the call and/or funder’s interest
• Too ambitious, too expensive, too confused ...
What is the problem?

an existing negative situation  not the absence of a solution
Other definitions

• Goal/impact: high-level change to which the project will contribute (not guaranteed)

• Objective: the description of the outcome

• Outputs: results of individual activities, e.g. work packages

• Assumptions/risks: external influences that may hamper the project’s

Source: www.eldtraining.com
The Logical Framework Approach and the Logical Framework

- Analyse the existing situation
- Develop a strategy (hierarchy and relationship between activities and outputs)
- Risk management
- Monitoring and evaluation of outputs and outcomes
- Widely accepted

Source: www.eldtraining.com
Analysis of the situation

• Analyse the situation or the problem

• Analyse the stakeholders – identify their stakes in the problem and modify the problem analysis if needed

• Disentangle problems (causes/effects) and objectives (hierarchy)

• Analyse the strategy alternatives and select an approach or combination of approaches
Stakeholder analysis

• List all relevant stakeholders that may have a stake in your project

• What kind of interest do they have in the project outcome? Is it positive or negative? What motivates them?

• What support do you need from each of them and vice versa? What role will each of them play in the project?

• If individual stakeholders are going to oppose the project, how will you deal with their opposition?
Identify the core problem and the project’s objectives

- Brainstorming: list the various aspects of the problem (causes, effects, different perspectives ...) your project is going to address (cards)
- Identify the core problem and distinguish (potential) causes and effects
- Create a ‘problem tree’: hierarchy, relations and dependencies
- Restate the negatives as positives
The project’s objectives and measuring achievement

• State clearly what will be the direct (Outcome) and indirect (Goal) effects of what the project produces or provides

• Add to each Outcome how you will measure progress and achievement
The project’s objectives and risk management

• State clearly what will be the direct (Outcome) and indirect (Goal) effects of what the project produces or provides

• List potential external factors that may influence your project’s Outcomes
# Analysis of approaches

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<th>Project A</th>
<th>Project B</th>
<th>Project C</th>
<th>Project D</th>
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<td>Likelihood of achieving the project outcome</td>
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<td>Sustainability</td>
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<td>Cooperation from key stakeholders</td>
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<td>Cost – value for money?</td>
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<td>Risk – too many external assumptions?</td>
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Activities and tasks

• List the activities and tasks to be accomplished to work towards individual achievements or outputs

• Create clusters – work packages

• Define responsible partners

• Define timelines (estimate chunks of time per staff and task)
Mind-mapping your proposal

- People, roles
- Project management
- Organisation
- Budget
- Background – State of the Art
- Work packages...
- Consortium description
Gantt chart
PERT (Program Evaluation Review Technique) chart
Some hints on proposal writing

Planning
Drafting
Editing

Clear objective

Clear, brief & concise

Good organisation

Appropriate language, correct spelling...
Some hints on concise writing and editing

• Reduce unnecessary words
• Get rid of meaningless phrases
• Avoid nominalisations, use verbs
• Use the active voice
• Take care of the design and layout (text, graphs, tables)
Final reflections

• To whom is the proposal addressed? Who is evaluating the proposal?
• Whom could I ask to read the proposal from an outside perspective?
• What other resources could I use to improve my proposal?