

Hints and tips for Welsh Horizon 2020 applicants



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

There is a significant amount of skills, experience and expertise on Horizon 2020 in Wales. The community of practice of Welsh Horizon 2020 experts and evaluators is one example of how this expertise is being used to impart practical advice and informal guidance to the wider Horizon 2020 community in Wales.

Here is the community of practice's top 5 practical tips for potential Horizon 2020 applicants:

1. Know what you are looking for and start looking...

Horizon 2020 work programmes offer a range of funding opportunities through a variety of topics and calls for proposals. Take time to acquaint yourself with the Horizon 2020 Participant Portal, scan for upcoming opportunities of interest and start to immerse yourself in the EU funding system. The [National Contacts Points](#) can assist you with this and the [Horizon 2020 Unit](#) may be able to put you in touch with others in Wales who are working in your topic area.

2. Study the call carefully and plan ahead...

Once you have identified a relevant call it's crucial that you start your preparation as early as possible. Before committing pen to paper thoroughly study the content of the published call as well as the introduction pages of the Work Programmes to see how your project fits with the wider context. Read all accompanying documentation, understanding the milestones and necessary timescales, and start planning now!

3. Develop a strong consortium...

Funding for research and innovation actions requires consortia of partners from different countries, industry and academia. Invest time to develop diverse partnerships with the necessary blend of international representation and know-how; achieving a gender balance within research teams is also beneficial. Available sources of support include:

- The centres of excellence supported by the European Regional Development Fund may offer opportunities for collaboration and support (ask the Horizon 2020 Unit for details);
- The [SCoRE Cymru scheme](#) which supports the costs of travel in the UK, Europe and beyond to meet potential partners and strengthen existing relationships;
- The [Enterprise Europe Network \(EEN\)](#) can help find and connect you with potential business partners across Europe;

- The [Knowledge Transfer Network \(KTN\)](#) works with companies to help find funding opportunities, form partnerships and support proposals with sector specific advice and guidance on market opportunities.
- The Horizon 2020 Participant Portal offers a [partner search tool](#).

4. Think about language, structure and submitting your proposal early...

Having an excellent project idea is essential but there's an art to translating this into a successful proposal. Keep in mind that evaluators are required to consider several proposals in a limited time period. Taking simple steps to aid an evaluator's assessment of your proposal can be very effective:

- English may not be the evaluator's first language. Study the call and mirror key words and phrases as this will help evaluators recognise your proposal's fit with the call criteria;
- Come up with a memorable title and a synopsis that is clear and concise. If your project is very technical this will be particularly helpful for an evaluator in understanding your project from the outset;
- Evaluators will expect content relevant and tailored to your proposal. Avoid the temptation to use off-the-shelf / standard information;
- Experience of writing proposals cuts across individual sectors. Talk to evaluators or experienced Horizon 2020 applicants inside and outside your organisation, including learning from past successful proposals. This can help you navigate other common pitfalls.
- The participant portal can run slowly near the deadline; upload your proposal on to the portal early and then update it as many times as needed until the deadline (remember the time difference).

5. Become a Horizon 2020 evaluator...

Registering as an evaluator is one of the best ways of gaining invaluable knowledge of the Horizon 2020 evaluation process. It will offer first-hand experience of what a successful proposal looks like, where points are lost and gained, as well as offering opportunity to meet useful contacts and potential future partners. For more information or to register as an expert see our 'Benefits of being an evaluator' summary and/or go to the [Expert area](#) in the Participant Portal.

Further information

Mail to: Horizon2020@wales.gsi.gov.uk
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