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FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE



# Preparing a proposal How does it work?

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# Topics



- 1. Before you (effectively) start...**
- 2. Designing your proposal**
- 3. Finish line and submission**
- 4. Frequent mishaps**
- 5. IEE information sources**

Start early ..... Start NOW !



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**...15 weeks until deadline**

**8th May 2012**

# Before we start: to lift the fog of the IEE terminology



- > **Proposal:** Your application
  - > Part A -- on-line forms with administrative data + proposal abstract
  - > Part B -- your (technical) work programme
  - > Part C -- your budget in summary and by partner
  - > Annexes -- financial & legal documents + letters of support
- > **Participants Portal:**  The home of the Commission's electronic submission tool – obligatory for IEE proposals
  - > You can link to the submission tool from the IEE website
- > **Consortium:** A team of organisations submitting the IEE proposal – with one defined Coordinator



# Before we start: to lift the fog of the IEE terminology

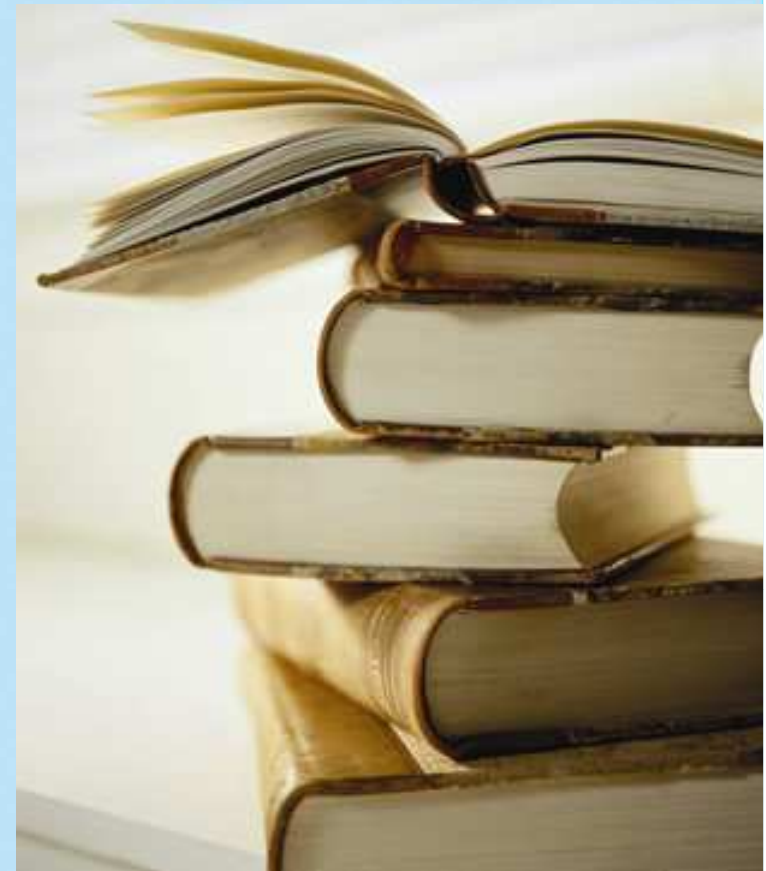


- > **ECAS Verification:**  Your own personal identity !
  - > European Commission Authentication Service (ECAS)
  - > To access the electronic proposal submission system you must have an ECAS account with the Commission
    - > Easy to obtain online
    - > Follow the link in the Guide for Proposers 2013
- > **Participant Identification Code:**  The unique identity of your organisation !
  - > Your organisation cannot prepare and submit a proposal nor can it participate as a partner without a Participant Identification Code (PIC)
    - > Easy to obtain online
    - > Follow the link in the Guide for proposers 2013

# Before you start... key documents



- > **‘Call for Proposals’**: eligibility & selection & award criteria, priorities and deadlines
- > **‘Work Programme’**: background, priorities and budgets
- > **Application forms & Guide for Proposers**: essential forms and guides to draw up and submit your proposal
- > **These are annual documents**: priority topics are not identical to Call 2012 !



# The IEE Call triggers your inspiration...



**...first check carefully the 2013 Call priorities and the market need – about 20% of proposals fail because of their low match to the call priorities (award criterion 1 => ‘relevance’)**

- > Think carefully about the reasons why you want to submit a project proposal**

# Example: What is a “priority” in the Work Programme & Call?



## ~~10.1.1 SAVE – Consumers and products~~

### ~~Explanatory note~~

~~As re-stated in the conclusions of the 4th meeting of the European Citizens' Energy Forum (October 2011), consumers should be at the centre of EU energy policy. Consumers have been targeted by some IEE projects in the past but the recent evaluation of the IEE II programme recommended intensifying efforts towards this group. [...]~~



## Priorities for action in 2013:



- > Actions guiding consumers to save energy at home by changing their behaviour [...]
- > Joint action supporting the market surveillance of Directive 2009/125/EC [...]
- > Strategic initiatives feeding in to the debate on the efficiency of energy-related products by 2020 and beyond [...]





# Before you start – what will IEE evaluate?



## > **Look at the 5 Award Criteria & 3 sub-criteria each**

- 1. Relevance**
- 2. Quality of implementation methodology**
- 3. Ambition and credibility of impacts**
- 4. EU added value**
- 5. Resources**

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# Define your specific objective & target group



- > **What concretely would you like to achieve?**
- > **Whom do you want to address? (not too many)?**
- > **Make sure you know the current (market) situation and your starting point**
- > **Make sure you check the IEE project database**
- > **Take a reality check before you invest your time: investigate the interest amongst target group and major stakeholders**

# Produce a first outline of your idea



## > Write a preliminary 2-3 pages about your:



- > objectives
- > target group
- > major steps (work packages)
- > intended consortium (countries, types of organisations)

- > **Internal reality check: Use it as first base to discuss with potential partners**
- > **External reality check: Consult with market actors – check their understanding and interest. Profit from their feedback to decide whether to take your idea forward**



# Design and invite your consortium



- > **Be selective – make an appealing choice!**
- > **Stay consistent – keep to your objective & target group**
- > **Do not cover the EU map artificially – make a fitting choice**
- > **Explore alternatives early, but be ready to change plan – change/renounce a country if you do not secure THE right partner**
- > **Keep your partners motivated - agree a working method for the proposal phase, make a plan for their contributions**

There is no single rule for how to design a consortium, but a lot of examples that work:



> **REScoop Project:**

- > Improve social acceptance of RES-e generation with its model of local cooperative citizen involvement.
- > In 7 Member States a match of **Renewable cooperatives** with **academic** and **financial** partners, European associations & networks and **facilitators for dissemination** – covering **all RES-e sectors**

> **PassREg Project:**

- > Helping municipal and regional authorities to create the local conditions for market transformation to a nearly zero-energy building stock
- > Participants from 10 Member States collaborate: in a **combination of municipalities, regional associations, technical institutes** and **academic** partners – active external engagement of 8 other municipalities



# Start writing the detailed proposal – Work Programme



- > **Fine-tune your aim and your target group**
- > **Take your time to decide the best methodology to be applied – can it deliver? Think impact!**
- > **Define your main working steps**
- > **Follow the guidance of the Guide for Proposers and make your partners read them too!**
- > **Follow the guide on number of pages – an average proposal must be able to convince with around 45 pages of main text (excluding description of organisations & CV's)**

# Finish with the fine-tuning - Work Programme



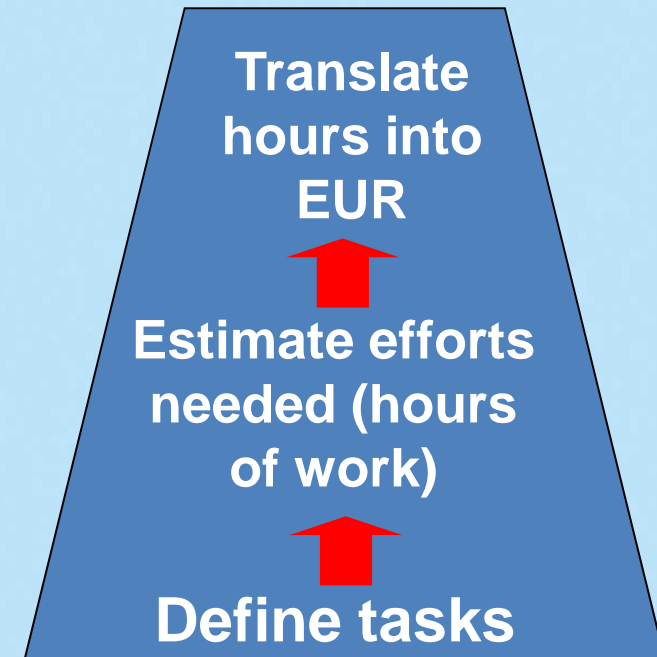
- > Complete your Work Packages with task descriptions. Do not write extensive text. In most cases 3-5 pages per Work Package is fully enough
  - **BUT: explain your activities sufficiently**
- > Invest time in planning your outputs and deliverables – what are useful, meaningful, attractive products for your target group?
- > Involve your partners – in particular Work Package Leaders
  - **BUT: a Coordinator has the full overview and must understand the various starting points and all work packages**
- > Think smart to increase your chances: You can add a diagram, a timeline, a table, etc. with extra information if that helps increase clarity.
  - **BUT: add no more than 1-2 pages in total.**



# Establish the budget



- > **Design your budget “bottom-up”**
- > **Wait until the tasks are sufficiently specified and agreed – then design the budget**
- > **Check consistency regularly while advancing on your Work Programme - share of resources, appropriate levels between partners, appropriate weight of hours between major work steps**



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# Get the administrative / financial documents right



At the latest 2 weeks before the deadline make sure the Coordinator has the following from the partners:

- > **All online A.2 Forms filled:** administrative data of each partner (can be filled by the Coordinator or the respective partners)
- > **Part B:** technical information of each partner
  - > Description of organisation
  - > Short CV of key personnel
  - > List of previous projects
- > **Annexes:**
  - > Legal, financial, administrative evidence
  - > Letters of support



# Last check: consistency / language



- > **Ask an “informed outsider” for critical reading and feedback**
- > **Check consistency of data (including budget)**
- > **Check consistency of terminology (names of organisations, key documents, deliverables, work packages etc)**
- > **If you have the chance, then have a native speaker check the English**
- > **But remember : perfect English is not necessary, it is the clarity + consistency which counts and increases your chances**



# Submit on time with the electronic proposal submission tool



- > **Preparing a proposal in the electronic proposal submission tool is straightforward – but needs time**
- > **Only limited data needs to be encoded in on-line forms. Main proposal parts B & C & Annexes will be ‘uploaded’ as pdf documents or zipped excel files.**

- > **Fill out the on-line forms well before the deadline – perform the “validation checks” available in the system**
- > **Upload administrative, legal and financial annexes early – they will not change unless you change partners**
- > **Use the advantage of the on-line tool – ‘overwrite’ your proposal any time - Submit a version of your proposal to be safe - at the latest one day before the submission deadline**

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# Your proposal – your selling points



- ❑ **Starting Point** - your unique selling point
- ❑ **Objectives and Impacts** - convincing ideas for 2020 targets
- ❑ **Target Groups & Key Actors** - Engagement is key
- ❑ **Work Programme** - together with your team **THE CORE**
- ❑ **Budget**



Frequent mishaps,  
misunderstandings, mis-readings



## Starting Point

> Evaluation results:  
Proposals often miss a clear  
starting point

### **! Your opportunity for a unique selling point**

- ✓ Develop a clear red line : Describe the problem you want to solve, the user needs or market barriers to overcome
- ✓ Do this not only from the perspective of the Coordinator... input from partners is key
- ✓ And: What is your motivation in this?
- ✓ Be precise, describe the market, show the market size
- ✓ Do not assume that evaluators know your specific context – you win by explaining!

Frequent mishaps,  
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## Objectives and Impacts

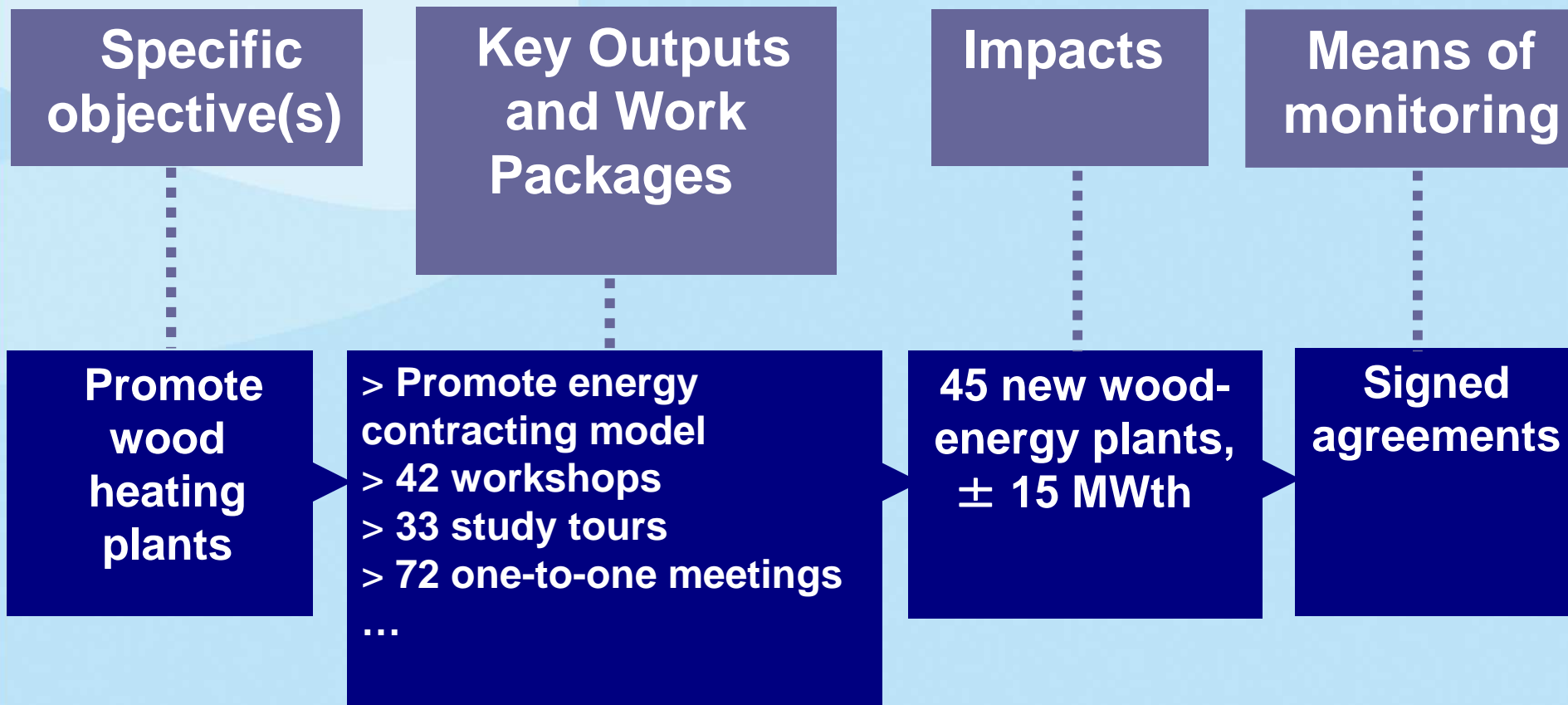
- > Evaluation results:  
Proposals often suffer from lack of focus, do not convince on assumptions - miss the potential impact

**! We look for convincing ideas for 2020 targets!**

- ✓ Be courageous – take choices: Limit your objectives, not more than 3!
- ✓ Be clear on outputs and impacts, seriously reflect on assumptions - quantify them
- ✓ Plan activities to monitor your performance
- ✓ Be aware: keep the link to actual activities in your work programme!



# IEE is set to contribute to 2020 targets – your project counts



Frequent mishaps,  
misunderstandings, mis-readings



## Target Groups & Key Actors

- > Evaluation results:  
Many proposals try to tackle too many target groups or do not find a good method for engagement

### **! Engagement is key !**

- ✓ Have an effective project => engage others in your activities !
- ✓ Invest time. Focus. Make choices. Communicate with your target group. What works?
- ✓ Avoid key actors which are not “mandated” to respond
- ✓ Ensure that you have a fit-for-purpose engagement plan
- ✓ Avoid late or burdensome stakeholder consultations

Frequent mishaps,  
misunderstandings, mis-readings



**Work Programme** > Evaluation results:  
Many proposals fail to convince  
on an ultimate delivery

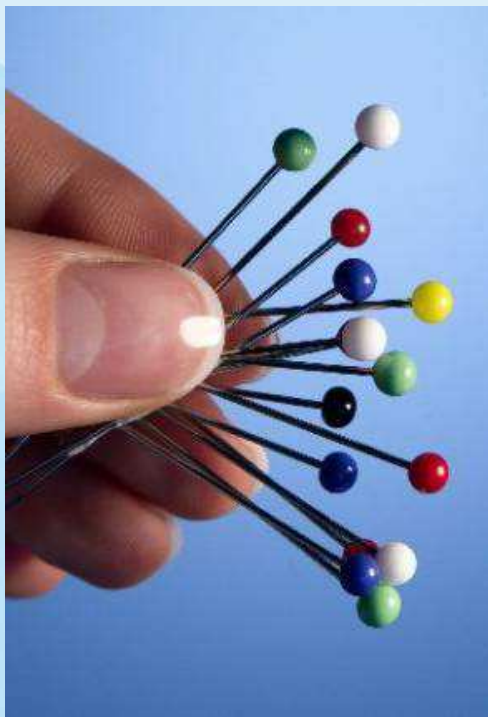
**! Invest time in a solid methodology – together with your team, this is THE CORE of your proposal !**

- ✓ Find your way: Good amount of text – clear terminology – clear activities
- ✓ Make your case: show in a simple way the scale of activities and ambition
- ✓ Think ‘value for money after you’ – transferability & sustainability
- ✓ Take time for planning & define your deliverables, but leave fine-tuning for (much) later

# >> Communicating – a pillar in your work programme



## Communication is key to IEE



- ✓ **Have a comprehensive plan. Not all details must be defined, but loosely listing a series of tools will not be sufficient**
- ✓ **Choose and design your tools fit for purpose = Target & audience driven**
- ✓ **Communicate for your target group, not for the EACI**
- ✓ **Plan to communicate right from the project start**
- ✓ **Hire specialists where they can add value, e.g. sub-contractors for websites, publications, media work**

# Frequent mishaps, misunderstandings, mis-readings



## **Budget**

> **Evaluation results: 4 main issues to highlight that are often overlooked by proposers**

- ✓ **Hourly rates – understand the concept of real cost**
- ✓ **Balance – match the number of hours against activities**
- ✓ **Balance – sharing of skills and actual cross border collaboration between partners**
- ✓ **Co-financing: avoid copy-paste of identical justifications – make a short, but honest case of the motivation of the partners to find third party financing or use own resources**



But let us highlight that perfect proposals do not exist...



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- > **We hope for inspired proposals**
- > **submitted by motivated and inspired project teams**
- > **aiming to deliver and make a “change”**

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# IEE Key documents & EACI assistance



## How can the EACI (further) guide you?



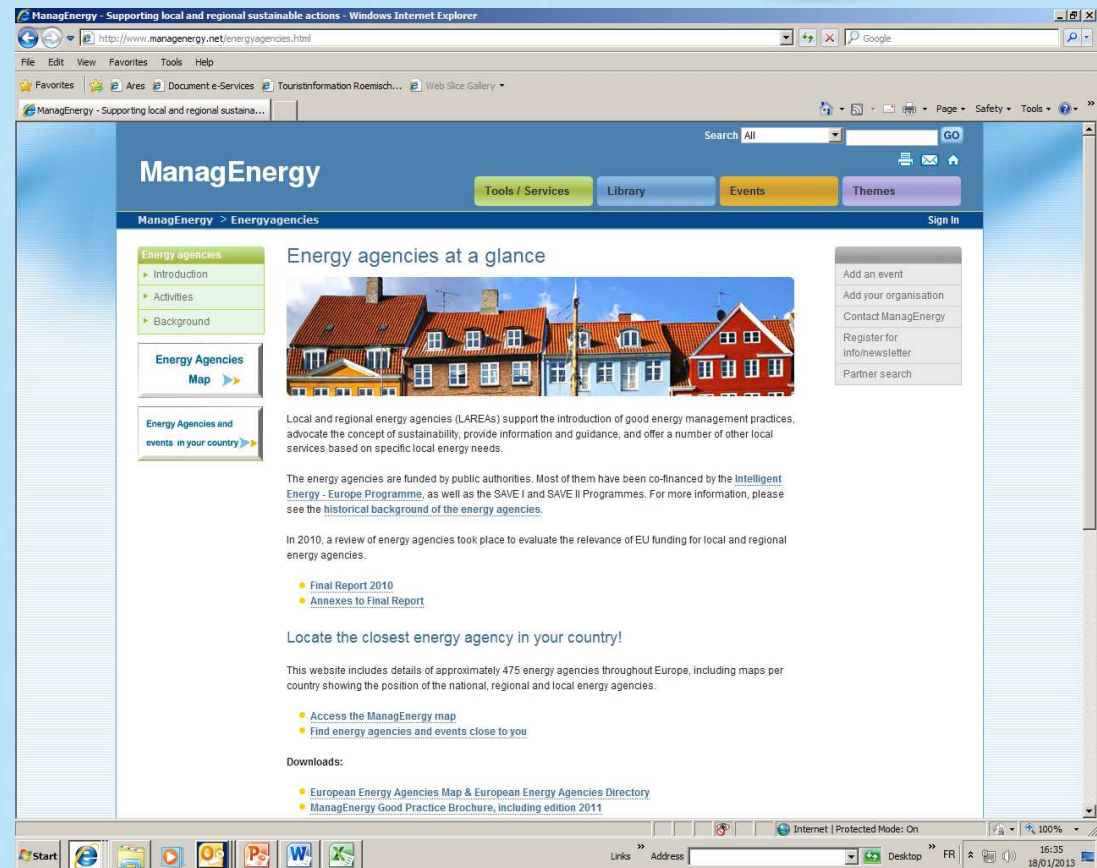
- > EACI IEE enquiry service: questions related to the call & rules & application form through the 'contact' area of the IEE website
- > Pre-proposal check: check your proposal idea with regard to 2013 priorities / **recommended to send before 15 March to maximise the benefit - requests received after 2 April will not be considered**
- > Application Forms: assist in understanding the forms and instructions
- > No pre-judgement of your proposal idea
- > No recommendation on consortium partner

## What can we not do?

# Who can help finding partners ?



- > Regional/national associations
- > Nationals Contact Point (NCP) (see IEE website)
- > Partner search facility of ManagEnergy
- > EACI cannot recommend partners



<http://www.managenergy.net>

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# IEE website as source of information



- IEE News
- Call information
- Project database
- Call for evaluators
- Information on how to implement a project
- Contacts & help

Firefox | Intelligent Energy Europe - European Co... | EN English (United Kingdom) | Help

wcmcom-ec-europa-eu-wip.wcm3vue.ccc.eu.int:8080/energy/copy\_intelligent/index\_en.htm

RSS | Privacy Statement | Legal notice | Contact | English (en)

European Commission

INTELLIGENT ENERGY EUROPE

European Commission > Energy > Intelligent Energy Europe

Offers a helping hand to organisations willing to improve energy sustainability

Search

**Don't miss**  
The call for proposals 2013 is now open  
In 2013, there will be € 65 million available for funding.  
The call closes on **8th May 2013** for all types of actions except the BUILD UP Skills initiative which has different deadlines.

**IEE in action**  
OFFSHORE GRID - plugging wind into the grid

**IEE in the media**  
> Photovoltaïque : PV Grid évalue les procédures françaises pour le raccordement au réseau | Actu-environnement / France / 18/01/13  
> La cooperazione è una risorsa per le rinnovabili (REScoop) | Tekneco / Italy / 18/01/13

**Discover**  
About the programme >  
Funding areas >

**Apply**  
How to apply >

**Manage**  
Managing a project >

**Contact**  
Send us your questions >  
Contact directly our IEE specialists >  
Contact your IEE national contact >  
Our address & location >

**News**  
16/01/2013 Check your project story with the EACI  
18/12/2012 A first schedule of National Info Days for 2013 has been published

**Upcoming events**  
24/03/2013 National Info Days 2013 - Information and advice in your country  
23/01/2013 European Info Day 2013

All news | All events



**Take a(nother) look at the  
IEE website :**

**<http://ec.europa.eu/energy/intelligent>**

**we look forward to your  
proposal!**