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# 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 as information source**

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

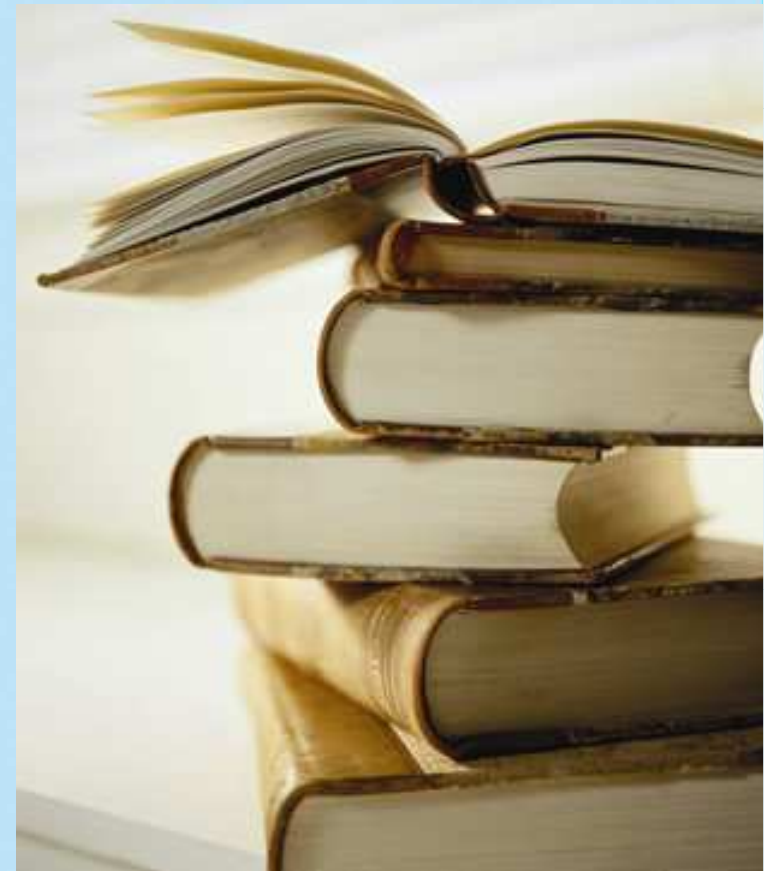


- > **Proposal:** Your application
  - > Part A -- on-line forms with administrative data + proposal abstract
  - > Part B -- your (technical) work programme
  - > Part C -- your budget in summary and by partner
  - > Annexes -- financial & legal documents + letters of support
- > **EPSS:** On-line proposal submission tool – obligatory for IEE proposals
- > **Consortium:** A team of organisations submitting the IEE proposal – with one defined Coordinator.

# 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 – not identical to Call 2011 !**



# The IEE Call triggers your inspiration...



**...first check carefully the 2012 Call priorities and the market need – about 20% of proposals fail because of their low match to the call priorities (criterion 1)**

- > Reflect on your motivation and criteria to decide to go for a project proposal**

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



## ~~> 10.1.2 SAVE – Consumer behaviour~~

### ~~> Explanatory note~~

~~> Nearly all Europeans think that protecting the environment is important, but less than half of them know how much electricity they consume or trust producers' claims about the environmental performance of their own products. Although general awareness has improved considerably in the last years, there is still a long way to go to change investment and habitual energy behaviour of citizens. [...]~~



## Priorities for action in 2012:

> Market surveillance for energy-related products [...]



> Effective energy behaviour change programmes [...]



# Before you start – what will IEE evaluate?



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- > **Look at the 5 Award Criteria & 3 sub-criteria each**
- 1. **Relevance**
- 2. **Quality of implementation methodology**
- 3. **Ambition and credibility of the 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 IEE project database**
- > **Invest in 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 up an early 2-3 paper on



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

- > Reality check inbound: Use it as first base to discuss with potential partners
- > Reality check outbound: 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 picky – make an appealing choice!**
- > **Stay consistent – keep 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**

> **PInE Project:**

- > PInE project to promote industrial energy efficiency in SMEs via set-up of local audit schemes
- > In 7 Member States always two organisations are twinned up: **one with technical expertise** and **one responsible for set-up and institutionalisation** (chambers of commerce, industry associations, etc.)



# 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

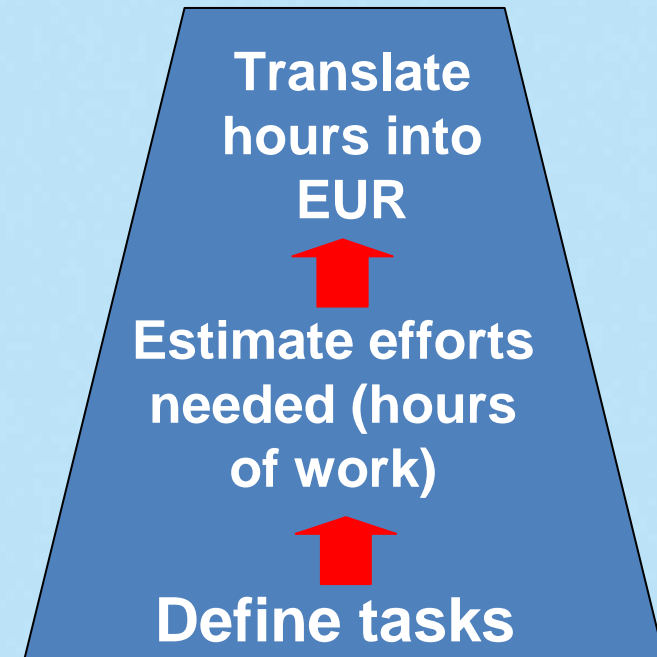


- > Work out Work Packages. Do not write extensive text. 3-5 pages per WP will be fully enough in most cases
  - **But: explain your activities sufficiently**
- > Invest time in planning your outputs and deliverables – what are useful, meaningful, attractive products for your target group?
- > Involve your partners – in particular Work Package Leaders
  - **BUT: a Coordinator must understand the various starting points and all work packages**
- > Think smart to increase your chances: You can add a scheme, a time line, a table 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”**
- > **Do that once the tasks are sufficiently specified and agreed**
- > **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



Make sure the Coordinator has 2 weeks before the deadline:

- > **EPSS Online Forms A 2 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



- > Involve an “informed outsider” for critical reading
- > Check consistency of data (including budget)
- > Check consistency of terminology (names of organisation, key documents, deliverables, work packages etc)
- > If you have the chance, then have a native speaker check the English
- > But remember : no perfect English is necessary, it is the clarity which counts and increases your chances

# Submit on time with EPSS



- > **Preparing a proposal in EPSS is straightforward – but needs time**
  - > **No mystery: Only limited data need are encoded in on-line forms. Main proposal parts B & C & Annexes will be ‘uploaded’ as pdf or excel files.**
- 
- > **Fill out the on-line forms well before the deadline – perform “validation checks”**
  - > **Upload administrative, legal and financial annexes early – they will not change unless you change partners**
  - > **Use the advantage of EPSS – ‘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:  
Proposal often miss a clear starting point

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

- ✓ Develop a clear red line : Describe the problem - user needs or market barriers
- ✓ Do this not only for the part of the Coordinator... your partner's input 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, misunderstandings, mis-readings



## Objectives and Impacts

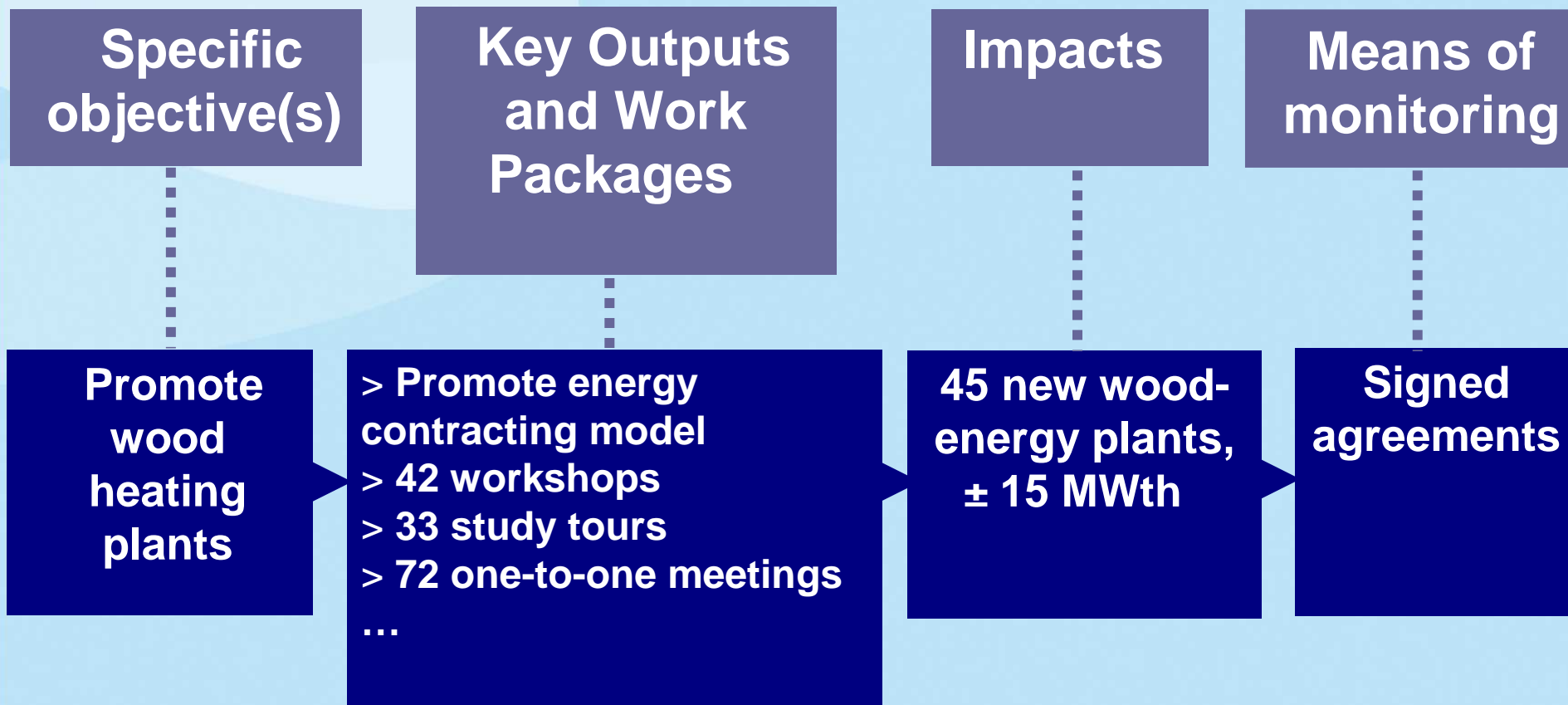
- > Evaluation results: Proposals often suffer from lack of focus, do not convince on assumptions - miss the potential impact

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

- ✓ Be courageous – take choices: Limit your objectives, not more than 3!
- ✓ Be clear on outputs and outcomes, seriously reflect on assumptions - quantify where appropriate
- ✓ 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 design for engagement

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

- ✓ Have an effective project, choose your way
- ✓ 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 fit-for-purpose engagement plan
- ✓ Avoid stakeholder consultations too late, or too burdensome

# Frequent mishaps, misunderstandings, mis-readings



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

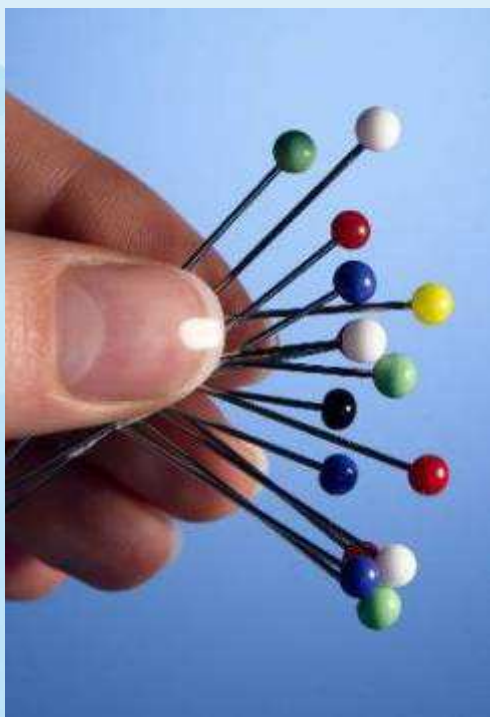
**! Invest time in a solid methodology – together with your team, this is THE CORE of your proposal !**

- ✓ 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-tunes 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 listing loosely a series of tools will not be sufficient**
- ✓ **Choose and design your tools fit for purpose = Targeted & audience driven**
- ✓ **Communicate for your target group, not for Commission, nor 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: no real concern on specific cost items but 4 main issues to highlight**

- ✓ **Hourly rates – understand the concept of real cost**
- ✓ **Balance – Volume of hours against activities**
- ✓ **Balance – Sharing of skills and EU sharing between partners**
- ✓ **Co-financing: avoid identical arguments – make a short, but honest case of the motivation of the partners**

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 2012 priorities / **Stop: 30 March**
- > **Application Forms:** assist in understanding the forms and instructions

## What can we not do:

- > **No pre-judgement** of your proposal idea
- > **No recommendation** on consortium partner



# Who can help finding partners ?



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

> [www.managenergy.net](http://www.managenergy.net)

The screenshot displays the ManagEnergy website interface. A yellow sticky note with the word "UPDATE" is pinned to the top left. The website header includes the European Commission Energy logo and the ManagEnergy logo. The main content area is titled "Search for Partners" and contains a search bar, a "Search" button, and a "Selecteur une langue" dropdown menu. The page also features a sidebar with navigation links and a "search in:" section with a list of search categories.

# IEE website as source of information



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





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

**<http://ec.europa.eu/intelligentenergy>**

**we look forward to your  
proposal!**