Miscellaneous TIPS for writing Marie Skłodowska-Curie Proposals

These notes are an incomplete set of tips, based on past experience and repetitive comments from the evaluators, and should not be taken as a checklist or handbook. The basic documents are the Guide for Applicants and, to a lesser extent, the Work Programme. The CRITERIA and Part B (usually in Annex 4 of the Guide) tell you what to write.

General tips

Writing a proposal is a PROJECT – plan accordingly! Go for early deadlines. Define a schedule for proposal preparation such that a good and complete draft is available at least 2 weeks before submission deadline. In this way, you could get valuable feedback from the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Steering Group.

All previous proposals and the ESRs (Evaluation Summary Reports) are on EDMS.

Tables, graphs and lists are a good, compact way to present information.

Use bold font to highlight key concepts (without abusing it).

Make sure you have an abstract.

Re-submissions – use the current template/Guide since there are always changes in emphasis and order.

The evaluators want to see “added-value” i.e. something new.

The trend is towards a higher participation of industry, some risk analysis, ethics is also an important part and more outreach.

In all proposals involving partners, make an early start with the role etc. of the partners and the Letters of Commitment.

Questionnaire templates to the Partners and WP Leaders are a good way of rapidly getting clear information.

ITN Proposals

Write a TRAINING & RESEARCH proposal!

It can take a long time to get formal agreement from industrial partners. Put that in your planning.

Associated Partners – they must have a genuine involvement in the training programme.

S&T Quality Section:

- Be as specific as possible in the “research methodology” sub-section.
- Well-presented research objectives
- Well-explained arrangements for continuous joint supervision
- Address general research challenges

Training Section:

- Distinguish clearly between “hands-on” and formal (i.e. courses) training.
• Aim for a good balance among partners.
• List the courses available but, whenever possible, say which courses the ESRs will take.
• Present a list of obligatory complementary training courses. Could be included in “milestones and deliverables”.
• Say how CERN ESRs can obtain PhDs.
• Emphasize how the network training capacity is exploited.
• Clarify, and emphasize, the role of Associated Partners.
• For workshops, conferences and schools, give the time schedule, organizers and attendees.
• Clarify ESR roles and their training.
• Clarify roles of Visiting Researchers, if any.
• Justify the training and supervision capacity.
• List the secondments. Secondments to industry are appreciated. (Nota Bene: Secondments should last more than two weeks in a row. Shorter stays are assimilated to visits)
• Define training events.
• Include research training

**Implementation Section:**

• Emphasize how the network capacity is exploited.
• Present clear, detailed Work Packages.
• Present a clear schedule of training events.
• Give details of workshops, conferences and training courses.
• Present recruitment schedule.
• Present clear management rules. Don’t forget to have an unnumbered sub-section on “Financial Management”
• Present detailed procedures for quality management
• Address risk management and contingency plans in detail.
• Present clear plans for dissemination and outreach.
• Present plans/schedules for secondments.
• A clear plan for industrial dissemination is a real plus.

**Impact Section:**

• Be specific. Give specific illustrative examples. Past examples can provide good justification as well. However, don’t spend a lot of valuable space on the history and the justification for the scientific programme
• Partners give added value.
• Emphasize training in the private sector.
• Emphasize benefits to industry.
• Demonstrate potential for long-lasting collaborations/networks.
• Emphasize outreach and give details.
• A detailed communication plan
• Address impact beyond high-energy physics.
• Give a detailed description of the exploitation plan and IPR strategy

• Clear description of the plans for a stable structure for the training network after the end of the project

Consult KT and CERN Training service to get advice on the respective sections of the proposal

Annex 1: List of Recent Proposals (CERN as coordinator)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposals</th>
<th>Main Author</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ICE-DIP</td>
<td>Bob Jones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PACMAN</td>
<td>Hélène Mainaud-Durand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEDICIS-PROMED</td>
<td>Thierry Stora</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STREAM</td>
<td>Heinz Pernegger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RADSAGA</td>
<td>Markus Brugger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EASiTrain</td>
<td>Johannes Gutleber</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>