

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)

Proposals	Main Author
STREAM	Heinz Pernegger
RADSAGA	Markus Brugger
EASiTrain	Johannes Gutleber
LISA	Bruce Marsh