

## Learning from Horizon 2020 evaluators



### FACILITATING THE WORK OF EVALUATORS ALWAYS IS A GOOD STRATEGY!

- ✓ You need to get into the head of the evaluator.
- ✓ Fill in all fields and all sections to be evaluated, using exactly the default template structure and headings, as this greatly facilitates the work of the evaluators.
- ✓ **PROOFREAD** your proposal before submitting! It is important to pay attention to the language and evaluation criteria when writing. A clear presentation of the project benefits the applicant.

### WHAT DOES A WINNING PROPOSAL LOOK LIKE?

1. Be **excellent** (that is “clear and logical”) in all 3 parts: excellence, impact and implementation. They all count for your evaluation score.
2. Ensure the scientific **soundness** of the proposal. Always respond to the specifics of the call (concept needs to be consistent and focused throughout the proposal).
3. Prove the **uniqueness** of your project (not just adding knowledge), couple it with realistic objectives (how is the project implemented).
4. Bear in mind that the **structure** of the proposal is as important as its content (e.g. your explanation of how you will solve the problems addressed). This means a good layout and design, including images (graphics, photographs, drawings..), but do not overdo it.
5. Address **impact at all levels** (individual, institutional, societal), not just the economic ones—impact can be understood differently (e.g. social, environmental, educational or political impact). Identify different target groups audiences to solve the problem/s of a large community.

[If something is still unclear, contact your NCP!](#)

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# Recommendations to Societal Challenge 6 applicants

## EXCELLENCE

DOs	DON'Ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Define objectives clearly. Have in mind what you want to achieve.</li> <li>• The project objectives must coherently respond to the size of the project.</li> <li>• Try to be original, creative and innovative. How does the project differ from other projects?</li> <li>• Be ambitious in relation to the “what”, but realistic on the “how”.</li> <li>• Balance the consortium: choose a reliable coordinator. Try a balance between partners with different backgrounds (academic disciplines, possibly different regions, non-academic partners...).</li> <li>• Provide a detailed description of your methodology, technical solutions, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Don't include partners for purely “decorative” purposes or mention only a single expert in a relevant scientific area. This actually weakens the proposal.</li> <li>• Don't generate doubts about the expertise of the partners by only naming one or two publications or projects. This could give the evaluator a bad impression of the expertise of the consortium.</li> <li>• If you are working with case studies, don't create a specific task to select them during the project. Case studies should be chosen beforehand, as a lack of a prior selection latter may generate doubts and risks.</li> </ul>

## IMPACT

DOs	DON'Ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When planning, be concrete and precise.</li> <li>• Show links between different disciplines.</li> <li>• Quantify the impact of the proposed dissemination, communication and exploitation measures.</li> <li>• Show sustainability: Explain what happens to project results after the project.</li> <li>• Talk about impact at all levels, (individual, institutional, societal), not only at an economic level.</li> <li>• Take into account the policy context and all the expected impacts specifically described in the topic.</li> <li>• Demonstrate how you will enhance innovation capacity and integration of new knowledge.</li> <li>• A good Data Management Plan is essential.</li> <li>• Guarantee a good gender balance within the consortium.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Don't use general descriptions which lack a specific focus.</li> <li>• Don't forget that the impact should be related to the particular concept, not only to the call.</li> <li>• Avoid undefined impacts and results in the text, or those which are not measureable (or worst, don't even try to measure).</li> <li>• Don't quote literally the required impact from the call; instead take it as a basis and develop your own impact.</li> <li>• Don't confuse the dissemination with communication or exploitation concepts. They may look alike, but are not the same.</li> <li>• Don't copy and paste from other proposals (i.e. same communication plan for every proposal).</li> <li>• Don't write the Impact section at the last minute, or independently from the rest of the proposal. Impact should be integrated throughout the entire proposal.</li> </ul>

## IMPLEMENTATION

DOs	DON'Ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide details and quantification. Use tables. Ensure appropriateness of the management structures and procedures, including a risk table.</li> <li>• Include well-timed tasks and activities together with a well-balanced allocation to partners, justified resources and budget.</li> <li>• Create a consortium with partners who complement tasks and whose expertise is well balanced.</li> <li>• Clearly mention the intended target group for each dissemination action that is addressed (e.g. end users?).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Don't plan vague deliverables and milestones, or lack a “Plan B” and contingency measures.</li> <li>• Don't include unnecessary risks. Risks must be credible, and presented in combination with possible solutions.</li> <li>• Don't try to re-invent the wheel in 4 months with only 1 PM. The tasks must be possible with the number of PM requested.</li> <li>• Don't only ask friends (to be part of your project); rather, care about involving those with the right (best) expertise.</li> </ul>

### FURTHER INFO:

[Gather experience and apply to be an evaluator yourself: European Commission Experts database registration](#)  
[Evaluation criteria / Prioritization of proposals with the same score](#)  
[Success stories in SSH integration](#)  
[Net4Society Factsheet: “Increasing Impact”](#)  
[Increasing the impact of societal research](#)  
[Keys to successful integration of social sciences and humanities in H2020](#)  
[FAQ on the evaluation of social sciences and humanities in H2020 calls](#)

