



THE 2013 PEOPLE PROGRAMME

GUIDE FOR APPLICANTS

Marie Curie Actions (General Part)

This document contains information common to the Marie Curie Actions.

It is to be read in conjunction with the Guides for Applicants, Ethics and Call-Specific Parts

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Please note

The 2013 Marie Curie Actions are:

FP7-PEOPLE-2013-CIG
FP7-PEOPLE-2013-COFUND
FP7-PEOPLE-2013-IAPP
FP7-PEOPLE-2013-IEF
FP7-PEOPLE-2013-IIF
FP7-PEOPLE-2013-IOF
FP7-PEOPLE-2013-IRSES
FP7-PEOPLE-2013-ITN

Guides for Applicants for any other action in the PEOPLE programme, or indeed in any FP7 programme, can be found by following the links at

<http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal>

The Marie Curie website can be found at

http://ec.europa.eu/research/mariecurieactions/about-mca/contacts/index_en.htm

This Guide is based on the rules and conditions contained in the legal documents relating to FP7 (in particular the Seventh Framework Programme, Specific Programmes, Rules for Participation, and the Work Programmes), all of which can be consulted via the Participant Portal.

This Guide does not in itself have any legal value, and thus does not

1. Introduction

Funding decisions in the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7) are made on the basis of **calls** published by the Commission or its agencies, which solicit **proposals**. The proposals must be submitted using a special web-based service before a strictly enforced **deadline**. The Research Executive Agency (REA) evaluates all eligible proposals in order to identify those whose quality is sufficiently high for possible funding. The basis for this **evaluation** is a peer review carried out by independent experts.

The REA then **negotiates** with some or all of those whose proposals have successfully passed the evaluation stage, depending on the budget available. If negotiations are successfully concluded, **grant agreements** providing for an EU financial contribution are established with the beneficiaries.

This **Guide for Applicants** contains the essential information to guide applicants through the mechanics of preparing and submitting a proposal. It contains information that is common to all of the Marie Curie Actions, and must be read in conjunction with the Call-Specific Guides and the Ethics Guide.

Applicants must also refer to the [People Work Programme 2013](#). This includes a detailed description of the Marie Curie Actions, their objectives and scope, the eligibility criteria, the European Union contribution and the evaluation criteria. Work Programmes are revised each year, so it is important to refer to the latest version before preparing a proposal.

This Guide and the Work Programme are essential reading. In addition, applicants may wish to consult other reference and background documents, in particular those relating to negotiation and the grant agreements, which are available on the Participant Portal:

<http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal>

2. How to apply

Turning your idea into an effective proposal

The coordinator

The REA refers to the participant who is taking the lead in the preparation of the proposal as the "proposal coordinator". The coordinator acts as the single point of contact between the participants and the REA. For Intra-European Fellowships (IEF), International Outgoing Fellowships (IOF), International Incoming Fellowships (IIF) and Career Integration Grants (CIG) the experienced researcher can act as the proposal coordinator before the call deadline, in particular in order to submit the proposal. However after the call deadline the scientist in charge at the host organization will be the single contact point. The experienced researcher and the scientist in charge **cannot be the same person**. Please note that the Acknowledgement of Receipt of the proposal, which is sent after the call deadline, will be sent to the coordinator. Further, the evaluation results will be sent to the coordinator.

Focusing your planned work

Refer to the description of the Marie Curie Action in the Call-Specific Guide and the Work Programme to check the **eligibility criteria** and any other special conditions that apply. Refer also to the **evaluation criteria** against which your proposal will be assessed. These are given in the Work Programme and the Call-Specific Guide. The independent experts are instructed that proposals submitted must be evaluated exclusively against the published criteria.

National Contact Points

A network of National Contact Points (NCPs) has been established to provide advice and support to organisations which are preparing proposals. You are highly recommended to get in touch with your NCP at an early stage. (Contact details are given on CORDIS http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/get-support_en.html.)

Please note that, after the applicants have been informed, the Commission will also give the NCPs statistics and information on the outcome of the call and of the evaluation for each proposal. This information is supplied to support the NCPs in their service role, and is given under strict conditions of confidentiality.

Other sources of help

The Call-Specific Guides give references to further sources of help for this call. In particular:

- The Commission's general **enquiry service** on any aspect of FP7. Questions can be sent to a single email address and will be directed to the most appropriate department for reply. Please see <http://ec.europa.eu/research/enquiries>
- A dedicated help desk has been set up to deal with technical questions related to the Electronic Submission Services of the Commission DIGIT-EFP7-SEP-SUPPORT@ec.europa.eu
- The **European Charter for Researchers** and the **Code of Conduct** for their recruitment can be downloaded from <http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess/rights>
- A help desk providing assistance on intellectual property matters (see under http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/fp7_documentation)
- Any other guidance documents or background information related specifically to this call
- The date and contact address for any '**information day**' that the REA may be organising for this call.

Other services, including partner search facilities, provided via the CORDIS web site (see http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/partners_en.html).

Ethics principles

Please remember that research activities in FP7 should respect fundamental ethics principles, including those reflected in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union¹. These principles include the need to ensure the freedom of research and the need to protect the physical and moral integrity of individuals and the welfare of animals. For this reason, the REA and the European Commission carry out an ethics review on research proposals when appropriate.

The following fields of research will not be financed under this Framework Programme:

- ***research activity aiming at human cloning for reproductive purposes***
- ***research activity intended to modify the genetic heritage of human beings which could make such changes heritable²***
- ***research activities intended to create human embryos solely for the purpose of research or for the purpose of stem cell procurement, including by means of somatic cell nuclear transfer.***

¹ Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, 2000/C 364/01. See also http://www.europarl.europa.eu/charter/default_en.htm

² Research relating to cancer treatment of the gonads can be financed.

For human embryonic stem cell research, European Union financial support for research activities involving destroying human embryos is excluded, including for the procurement of stem cells. The exclusion of funding of this step of research will not prevent the European Union funding of subsequent steps involving human embryonic stem cells.

More comprehensive details can be found in the Guide for Applicants (Ethics). This guide must be read by all applicants, even if they believe that no ethics concerns arise in their proposal; failure to complete the Ethics section of the proposal can lead to the proposal being declared ineligible.

Presenting your proposal

A proposal has two parts:

Part A consists of several administrative forms which contain information about the proposal and the applicant. The information requested includes a summary of the proposed project, contact details of the *host organisation* and the *researcher (if appropriate)*, and information related to the funding requested (please see the Call-Specific Guide). This information will be encoded in a structured database for further processing to produce, for example, statistics, and evaluation reports. This information will also be used by the experts and the REA staff during the evaluation process.

The information in **Part A** is entered through a set of online forms.

Part B is a "template", or list of headings, rather than an administrative form (please see the Call-Specific Guide). Applicants should follow this structure strictly when presenting the scientific and technical content of their proposal. The template is designed to highlight those aspects that will be assessed against the **evaluation criteria**. It covers, among other things, the nature of the proposed work, the participants and their roles in the project proposed, and the impacts that might be expected to arise from the proposed work.

The information given will be the basis on which the experts will evaluate the proposal, so ensure that it is precise and complete. References to web pages will not be taken into account as part of the proposal during evaluation, unless specified in the Call-Specific Guide.

Part B of the proposal is uploaded by the applicant in the Electronic Submission Services of the Commission.

A maximum length may be specified for the different sections of Part B, or for Part B as a whole (see the Call-Specific Guide). Applicants must keep their proposal within these limits. Experts will be instructed to disregard any excess pages.

Proposal language

The working language of the expert evaluators is English and it is recommended that proposals are prepared in English. However, proposals may be prepared in any official language of the European Union. If your proposal is not in English, a translation of the full proposal, appended to part B, would be of assistance to the experts.

3. Proposal submission

About the Electronic Submission Services of the Commission

Proposals must be submitted electronically using the Electronic Submission Services of the Commission. Proposals arriving by any other means are regarded as 'not submitted', and will not

be evaluated³. All the data that you upload is securely stored on a server to which only you and the other participants in the proposal have access until the deadline. This data is encrypted until the close of the call.

The proposal coordinator can access the Electronic Submission Services of the Commission from the call page on the Participant Portal. Other participants must be invited by the coordinator in order to access the service.

Full instructions are found in the "[10 Minutes guide to the Electronic Submission](#)", available from the submission service website (follow the link above or click on "Starter Manual" to download the user guide).

Requirements of the service are listed below.

What is needed?

As this is a web application, an Internet connection is mandatory. An Internet browser and version 9 (or above) of the Adobe reader are needed. To check the requirements, click on <https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/submission/manage/diagnostics>.

Proposal coordinator actions:

First step: getting a user ID with the Commission

Getting a personal user ID with the **European Commission Authentication Service (ECAS)** is mandatory in order to complete the information requested from partners or in order for the proposal coordinator to submit the proposal. The system will request it for every partner and the steps to get one are easy. The same user ID will be used for all later interactions with the European Commission in the field of Research.

Second step: choosing a funding scheme

For each call, a list of funding schemes will be presented by the site. The proposal coordinator must choose the appropriate one for the proposal. Refer to the call fiche and work programme for the various conditions applicable to each funding scheme.

Prior to step 3: obtaining a mandatory Participant Identification Code or PIC:

The Participant Identification Code is a unique 9 digit number that helps the European Commission identify a participant. It is used in all grant-related interactions between the participant and the Commission.

If your organisation has already participated in a 7th Framework Programme proposal, it is likely that the organisation has already received a PIC number. You can check it on the Participant Portal: <http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/myorganisations>

If your organisation already has a PIC, it is likely that it has also appointed a Legal Entity Appointed Representative (LEAR) (see section 3.1.). The names of LEARs are not available online; you have to enquire with the administration of your organisation.

All participants already possessing a PIC should use it to identify themselves in the proposal submission system. After entering the PIC, sections of the A forms will be filled in automatically.

³ In exceptional cases, when a proposal coordinator has absolutely no means of accessing the Participant Portal Submission Service, and when it is impossible to arrange for another person, an applicant may request permission from the REA to submit on paper. A request should be sent via the FP7 enquiry service (see the Call-Specific Guide), indicating in the subject line "Paper submission request". (You can call the enquiry service if the web access is not possible: +800 6 7 8 9 10 11 from inside Europe; or +32 2 299 96 96 from the rest of the world. A postal or email address will then be given to you). Such a request, which must clearly explain the circumstances of the case, must be received by the REA no later than one month before the call deadline. The REA will reply within five working days of receipt. If derogation is granted, a proposal on paper may be submitted by mail, courier or hand delivery. The delivery address will be given in the derogation letter.

If a PIC is not yet available for an organisation, it can be obtained by registering the organisation in the Unique Registration Facility. A PIC will then be given, which can then be used in the Electronic Submission Services of the Commission. The use of PICs will lead to more efficient processing of your proposal. Registration in the Unique Registration Facility for receiving a PIC is quick and simple: <http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/myorganisations>

Whenever the data shown in the submission system appears to be incorrect once the PIC has been entered, it is advisable to contact the LEAR of the organisation to change the data through the Unique Registration Facility (URF). This parallel process has no influence on the preparation and submission of the proposal. The proposal can be submitted even without the correction of such errors.

However, it is possible to change organisation data initially prefilled from the PIC in the Electronic Submission Services of the Commission. This change however remains local (in the Electronic Submission Services of the Commission) and it is not associated to the PIC for further use.

Third step: create a draft proposal

Once the prime organisation (proposal coordinator) is known and identified, the service will request the essential details of the proposal. These details will be used by the Commission services in order to plan the evaluation. In general, the following is requested:

- The proposal acronym. This is the name of the proposal and it will be used throughout the lifetime of the project, if funded. No more than 20 characters are allowed (standard alphabet and numbers only; no symbols or special characters, except underscore, space, hyphen and dot).
- The proposal abstract, which describes briefly the purpose of the proposal with a maximum of 2.000 characters.
- Activity code (i.e. identification of the objective addressed by the proposal).

Fourth step: adding other participants to the proposal

At this step the proposal coordinator will set up the consortium. The proposal coordinator can:

- **Add other participants** to the proposal. A search function is offered, in order to insert the PIC in the administrative forms and copy the most up to date information for you. This information will be completed with contact details – multiple contacts can be added. Other participants will be invited to access to the proposal (the contact person will receive an email with a link to access the system and update the participating organisation information).
- **Delete a participant.**
- **Reorder the participants.** The order of the participants in the administrative forms can be adjusted.

The proposal coordinator however cannot be deleted, and is always the first participant.

Fifth step: forms, files and submit

This step is the core of the site, as, from this step, the proposal coordinator can:

- Fill administrative forms, part A of the proposal (see the call-specific guide)
- Forms are completed using a PDF reader (e.g. Adobe Reader, see above "What is needed" for minimum requirements). The **proposal coordinator** can complete all the forms, including the budget table and its own administrative details. **Proposal partners** can only complete their own administrative details (form A2).
- Download the template of the part B of the proposal and other information files (see Annex 4 of this Guide)
- Upload the file that will be the part B of the proposal.
- Submit the proposal package.

Only the coordinator can upload the part B of the proposal and submit the proposal. Therefore, only the coordinator should be logged into the Electronic Submission Services of the Commission when the submission attempt is made.

For the proposal Part B you must use exclusively PDF ("portable document format", compatible with Adobe version 3 or higher, with embedded fonts). Other file formats will not be accepted by the system. Irrespective of any page limits specified in the call-specific guide, there is an overall limit of 10 Mbytes to the size of proposal file Part B. It is advised to limit the size of the proposal to 2 Mbytes.

There are also restrictions to the name given to the Part B file: use alphanumeric characters; special characters and spaces must be avoided.

You are advised to clean your document before converting it to PDF (e.g. accept all tracked changes, delete notes).

Check that your conversion software has successfully converted all the pages of your original document (e.g. there is no problem with page limits).

Check that your conversion software has not cut down landscape pages to fit them into portrait format. Check that captions and labels have not been lost from your diagrams

Please note that the Commission prints out proposals in black and white on plain A4 paper. The printable zone on the print engine is bounded by 1.5 cm right, left, top bottom. No scaling is applied to make the page "fit" the window. Printing is done at 300 dots per inch.

Completing the Part A forms in the Electronic Submission Services of the Commission and uploading a Part B does not yet mean that the proposal is submitted. Once there is a consolidated version of the proposal, **the "SUBMIT" button must be pressed.**

The service performs a limited automatic validation of the proposal. A list of any problems such as missing data, wrong file format or excessive file size will then appear on the screen. **Submission is blocked until these problems are corrected.** When corrected, the coordinator must then repeat the above steps to achieve submission.

If the submission sequence described above is not followed,
the REA considers that no proposal has been submitted.

When the proposal is successfully submitted, the service will proceed to Step 6 where the coordinator sees a message that indicates that the proposal has been received. This automatic message is not the official acknowledgement of receipt (see Section 5).

Sixth step: proposal status page

Reaching this step means that the proposal is submitted (i.e., sent to the European Commission services for evaluation). It does not mean that the proposal is valid, complete, and eligible in all aspects or that it will be funded. In Step 6 you can:

- **Download the proposal.** It is advised to download the proposal once submitted to check that it has been correctly sent. The downloaded proposal will be digitally signed and time stamped.
- **Re-edit the proposal,** going back to step 5. The coordinator may continue to modify the proposal and submit revised versions overwriting the previous one right up until the deadline. The sequence described above must be repeated each time
- **Withdraw the proposal.** If the proposal is withdrawn, it will not be considered for evaluation. However, the proposal draft will be kept by the service and the withdraw action may be reversed by resubmitting the proposal before the deadline. A reason for the withdrawal will be requested by the service.

About the deadline

Proposals must be submitted on or before the deadline specified in the Call fiche.

The Electronic Submission Services of the Commission will be closed for the call at the call deadline. After this moment, access to the Electronic Submission Services of the Commission for the call in question will be impossible. Do not wait until the last moment before submitting your proposal.

Call deadlines are absolutely final and are strictly enforced

Leaving your first submission attempt to the last few minutes of the call will give you no time to overcome even the smallest technical difficulties, proposal verification problems or communications delays which may arise. Such events are never accepted as extenuating circumstances; your proposal will be regarded as not having been submitted.

Submission is deemed to occur at the moment when the proposal coordinator completes the submission sequence described above. It is not the point at which you start the upload. If you wait until too near to the close of the call to start uploading your proposal, there is a serious risk that you will not be able to submit in time.

If you have registered and submitted your proposal in error to another call which closes after this call, the REA will not be aware of it until it is discovered among the downloaded proposals for the later call. It will therefore be classified as ineligible because of late arrival.

*The submission of a proposal requires some knowledge of the Electronic Submission Services of the Commission, a detailed knowledge of the contents of the proposal and the authority to make last-minute decisions if problems arise. **Applicants are advised not to delegate the job of submitting their proposal.***

In the unlikely event of a failure of the Electronic Submission Services of the Commission due to breakdown of the server during the last 24 hours of a call, the deadline will be extended by a further 24 hours. This will be notified by email to all proposal coordinators who had registered for this call by the time of the original deadline, and also by a notice on the Call page on the Participant Portal (see http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/fp7_calls)

Such a failure is an exceptional event, therefore do not assume that there will be an extension to the Call. If you have difficulty in submitting your proposal, you should not assume that it is

because of a problem with the server, since this is rarely the case. Contact the Electronic Submission Services of the Commission if in doubt.

Please note that the REA will not extend deadlines for system failures that are not its own responsibility. In all circumstances, applicants should aim to submit their proposal well before the deadline to have time to solve any problems.

Correcting or revising your proposal

Errors discovered by the applicant in proposals can be rectified by simply submitting a corrected version. As long as the Call has not yet closed, the new submission will overwrite the old one.

Once the deadline has passed, however, the REA can accept no further additions, corrections or resubmissions. The last version of your proposal received before the deadline is the one which will be evaluated, and no later material can be submitted.

Ancillary material

Only a single PDF file comprising the complete **Part B** can be uploaded. Unless specified in the call, any hyperlinks to other documents, embedded material, and any other documents (company brochures, supporting documentation, reports, audio, video, multimedia etc.) sent electronically or by post, will be disregarded.

Withdrawing a proposal

Before the deadline, applicants may withdraw a proposal by submitting a revised version with an empty **Part B** section, with the following words entered in the abstract field of **Part A**:

"The applicants wish to withdraw this proposal. It should not be evaluated by the REA".

You may also withdraw a proposal in Step 6 of the submission as described above and after the deadline by accessing My Proposals tab when you login in the participant portal. With the action 'view submitted' the coordinator will move to the Step 6 where proposal can be withdrawn.

Multiple Submissions

*Applicants are reminded that only **one** proposal may be submitted **at any one time** for any of the following actions:*

- Marie Curie Intra-European Fellowships for Career Development (IEF),
- Marie Curie International Outgoing Fellowships for Career Development (IOF),
- Marie Curie International Incoming Fellowships (IIF).

Please note that the Research Executive Agency will not conclude more than one grant agreement for the same project.

In case of multiple submissions by a research or research funding organisation, the applicant entity may be asked to demonstrate the capacity to participate in more than one of those projects simultaneously, in terms of research staff, infrastructure and management.

4. Countries that can participate in, or be funded by the PEOPLE programme

Please be aware that the information in this section cannot be regarded as definitive, and participants should refer to the Participant Portal website before making an application http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/fp7_documentation

In general all EU member states and countries associated to the 7th Framework Programme can participate in all calls, although in some calls other countries must be included in order to form an eligible consortium.

The European Union Member States are:

Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom.

The Associated countries are⁴:

Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the Faroe Islands, FYR Macedonia, Iceland, Israel, Liechtenstein, Moldova, Montenegro, Norway, Serbia, Switzerland, Turkey.

Other countries may become associated during the course of FP7. The latest news will be posted on the web site:

http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/fp7_documentation.

⁴ Please consult list at http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/fp7_documentation

Preparing your proposal

- **Are you applying for the correct action?** Check that your proposed work falls within the scope of this call, and that you have applied for the correct action (see the "PEOPLE" *Work Programme*).
- **Is your proposal eligible?** The eligibility criteria are given in the *Work Programme*. For detailed information, please refer to the Call-Specific Guide. Any proposal not meeting the eligibility requirements will be considered ineligible and will not be evaluated.
- **Is your proposal complete?** Proposals must comprise a **Part A**, containing the *administrative information*; and a **Part B** containing the *description* of your proposal as described in the Call-Specific Guide. A proposal that does not contain both parts will be considered ineligible and will not be evaluated.
- **If the call allows referees' assessments and you intend to use them** to support your application, have you defined the referees well in advance so that they can submit their recommendation letter before the deadline?
- **Does your proposed work raise ethics issues?** Clearly indicate any potential ethics, safety or regulatory aspects of the proposed research and the way they will be dealt with in your proposed project. An ethics check will take place during the evaluation and an ethics review will take place for proposals dealing with sensitive issues. Proposals may be rejected on ethics grounds if such issues are not dealt with satisfactorily.
- **Does your proposal follow the required structure?** Proposals should be precise and concise, and must follow the proposal structure described in the Call-Specific Guide, which is designed to correspond to the evaluation criteria which will be applied. This structure varies for different calls. Omitting requested information will almost certainly lead to lower scores and possible rejection.
- **Have you maximised your chances?** Please be aware that there will be strong competition. Therefore, edit your proposal carefully, strengthen or eliminate weak points. Put yourself in the place of an expert evaluator; please refer to the evaluation criteria given in the Call-Specific Guide. Arrange for your draft to be evaluated by experienced colleagues, use their advice to improve it before submission.
- **Do you need further advice and support?** You are strongly advised to take part in different events organized by your National Contact Point, such as Info Days, training sessions and meetings. You can also ask them for advice and help during the proposal preparation stage as well as later during project implementation. Remember the Enquiry Service listed in the Call-Specific Guide.

Final checks before submission

- If you are submitting for a Marie Curie Intra European, International Outgoing or International Incoming Fellowship or for a Marie Curie Career Integration Grant, please be certain that this is agreed upon by the respective host organisation
- **Check once more the eligibility criteria described in the call.** Remember – the information given in part A is considered definitive and eligibility decisions will be based on it. Please ensure that the information in part A does not contradict that in part B.
- **Is your Part B in portable document format (PDF)**, including no material in other formats?
- **Is the filename made up of the letters A to Z, and numbers 0 to 9?** You should avoid special characters and spaces.
- **Have you printed out your Part B PDF file**, to check that it really is the file you intend to submit, and that it is complete, printable and readable? Proposals that cannot be printed will not be evaluated. After the call deadline it will not be possible to replace your Part B file.
- **Double check that you respect the minimum font size and the page limitations for the different sections (if any) given in the Call-Specific Guide.**
- **Is your Part B (PDF file) within the size limit of 10 MB?**

- **Have you virus-checked your computer?** The Electronic Submission Services of the Commission will automatically block the submission of any file containing a virus.

The deadline: very important!

- **Have you taken the responsibility to submit your proposal?**
- **Have you made yourself familiar with the Electronic Submission Services of the Commission in good time?**
- **Have you allowed time to submit a first version of your proposal well in advance of the deadline** (at least several days before), and then to continue to improve it with regular resubmissions?
- **Have you completed the submission process for your latest version?**

Following submission

- Information submitted through the Electronic Submission Services of the Commission can still be reviewed by the applicant.
- **It is strongly recommended that you check that all your material has been successfully uploaded and submitted, that you have submitted the correct Part B file and that it is readable and printable, by downloading and printing it;**
- You can revise and resubmit your proposal up to the call deadline.