

# Horizon Europe: Insights and Reflections from a Research Management Perspective



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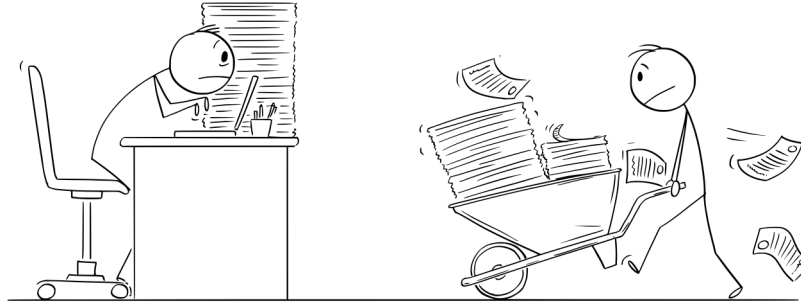


# The Most Common Challenges





Multiple Partners (12 +)



Bureaucracy (Lots!)

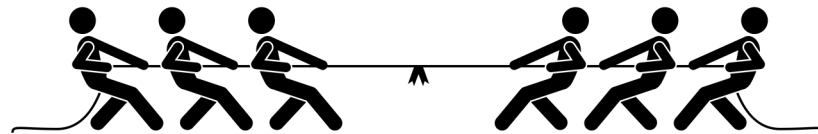


Short Timescales

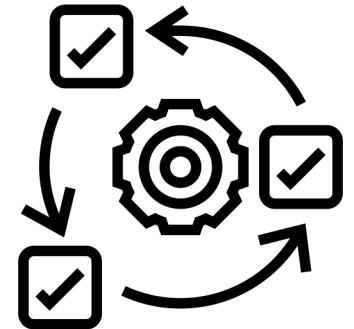


International Consortia

## The Perfect Storm?



Conflicting Opinions/Interests?



Rigid Process & Templates

# The Most Common Issues

- Complex Programme Structure & Terminology
- Overthinking/Overcomplicating the Process
- Large Projects Becoming Unfocussed
- Visibility, Profile & Presence amongst the EU Research Community

# The BEST Horizon Europe proposals...

...Are simple and consistent

...Can be easily understood by a wider audience than subject experts

...Have logical structure & flow

...Have a well-balanced consortium

...Look smart

...Give themselves time

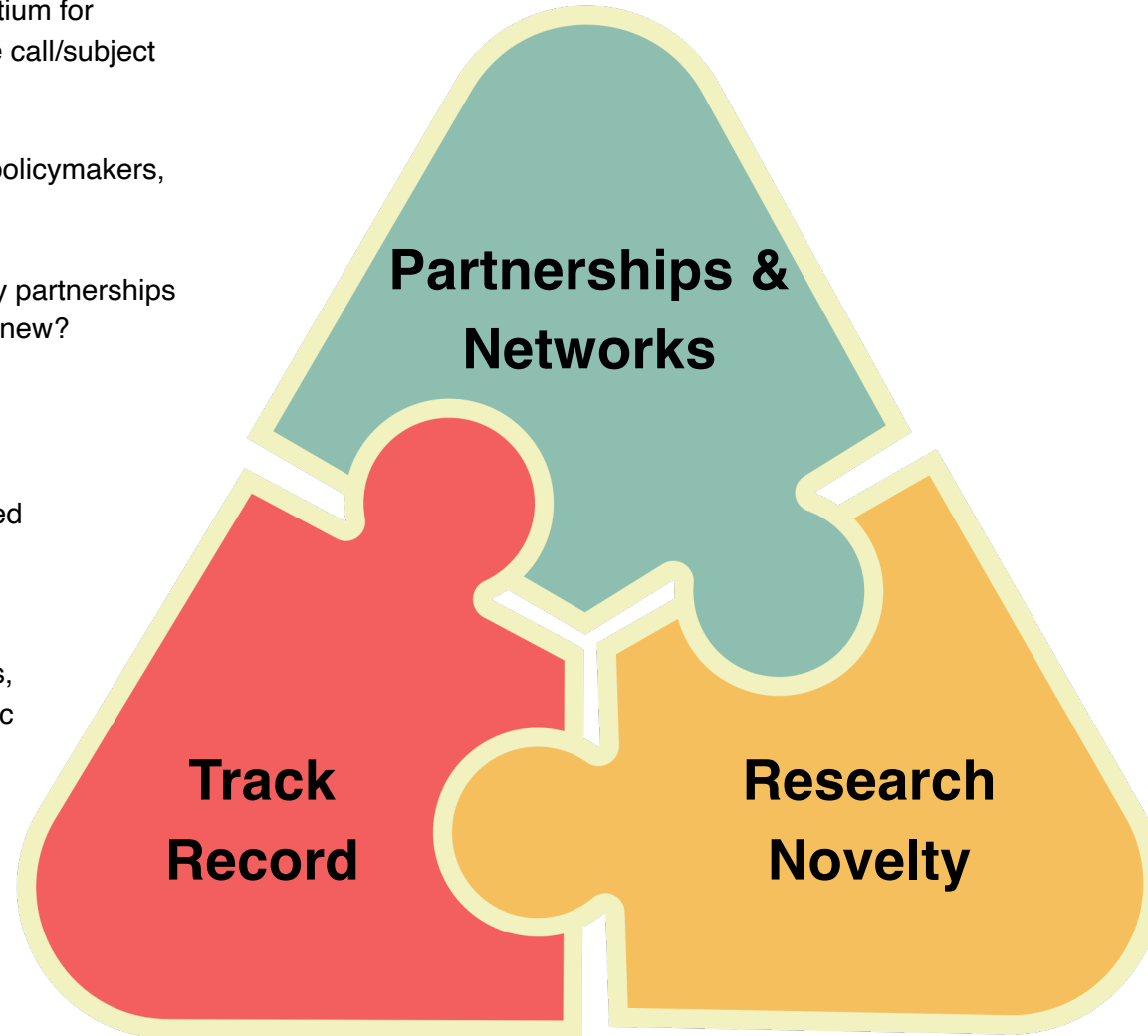
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Make it CRYSTAL CLEAR how they meet the expectations of the funding call!

# **How Can Research Managers Support the Process?**

# Which Researchers are 'Horizon Europe Ready'?

- Internal and external (international) partnerships to create a robust and diverse consortium for comprehensive expertise relevant to the call/subject area?
- Consider industry partnerships, links to policymakers, end-user communities, etc.
- Consider complementary/transdisciplinary partnerships within the University. Ongoing or new?
- Consider Publications in Major Peer-Reviewed Journals, presentations in well-established international conferences, organisation of international conferences, granted patents, leading research expeditions, awards, prizes, academy memberships or any other scientific achievements the researcher might deem relevant concerning their research field and project.



If a researcher doesn't hold 1 of these, they are not necessarily unsuitable. However, consider who they might partner with/what they might need to access to 'fill the gaps.'

- Unique knowledge, novel facilities, equipment, or intellectual property that will assist the consortium in addressing crucial impact areas or achieving key project outputs?
- How might this strengthen our overall value proposition to European/International partners?



# To Lead...Or Not to Lead?

Consider the nature of the specific funding call.

Read the Full Call Text. Target Outcomes? Previous Initiatives? Expected Impacts?  
= Is it strategically appropriate for your institution to lead?

The coordinator, often the project initiator, enjoys prestige and leadership advantages but also faces mandatory responsibilities throughout the project's lifecycle, including tasks beyond scientific contributions:

- Serve as the intermediary between beneficiaries and the EC
- Monitor and control project work plan implementation
- Organize consortium meetings and manage reporting
- Implement quality procedures and oversee scientific/technical content in reports
- Manage project finances, including budget, payments, and financial checks
- Facilitate communication within the consortium on administrative matters



# Supporting Researchers to Navigate Horizon Europe

- **Understand Guidelines & Requirements**

Be informed of the latest guidelines and requirements. Be able to relay these to research teams. Give the programme a more 'easy access' image.

- **Provide Training & Workshops with Research Teams**

Develop/Procure training sessions and workshops on critical aspects of the proposal development process and project lifecycle.

- **Facilitate Collaboration Between Partners**

Support to identify potential research partners (project leads?). Build relationships with institutions, coordinate meetings/facilitate communication between their research communities.

- **Proposal Development Support**

Ensure you have the capability within the team to evaluate/review proposals against the specific funder criteria. Be familiar with the Horizon Europe proposal templates, structure and mandatory requirements. 'Train the Trainer' Sessions.

- **Create Tools & Templates**

Prepare templates that can be used across project teams to ensure consistency/alignment with funder expectations and internal processes.

# 'Lessons Learned' So Far...

- **European Partners are Keen to Collaborate with Us**

New Zealand can bring novel expertise and experience in multiple areas. However, we do need to promote our strengths. Health, Energy, Space, Environment, Climate, Biotechnology. Indigenous Research Community.

- **Success is Achievable in Horizon Europe - Not Only as a Minor Partner**

NZ has had a promising start to life in Horizon Europe. Successfully funded projects across multiple institutions covering a broad spectrum of research areas from Dance & Arts to Biotechnology, Energy & Materials Science. Partners are taking significant roles in projects - Work Package Leads, Technical Leads, etc.

- **Horizon Europe Does Bring Some New Challenges**

E.g. Novel Reporting Structure & Requirements. Not immediately compatible with internal processes and systems (e.g. Timesheets). EU/NZ Time Difference!

- **We Must be Willing to Explore New Partnerships - as well as Develop Existing Relationships**

Research Managers play a pivotal role in this. They are supporting researchers to identify new partners and initiate those early-stage discussions. Becoming well-networked with European counterparts is very beneficial.

- **The More Informed Researchers Are, the More Interested they Become**

Regular, 'Little and Often' training sessions have enabled us to avoid information overload. Tailored workshops with specific research teams allow for more in-depth discussion. Identify those researchers with a keen interest towards Horizon Europe - accept it is not for everyone. Who within your portfolio is well-suited?

# Horizon Europe – University of Auckland Progress to Date



## Key Activities & Initiatives

Internal Training Programmes & Workshops:

- Researchers
- Research Support, Contracts & Legal
- Finance & Operations
- ✓ Integration of Post-Award Processes/Audit Compliance
- ✓ Engagement with Horizon Europe National Contact Points
- ✓ Transitioning from the Awareness Phase to Practical Guidance for Researchers
- ✓ Industry Partnerships
- ✓ Global Research Engagement Fund

- **13 Funding Proposals Submitted**
  - 6 Awaiting Results
  - 1 Invited to Second Round Submission
  - 2 Proposals with UoA as Project Lead
- **3 Successfully Funded Projects**
  - Faculty of Engineering
  - Faculty of Creative Arts & Industries
  - Auckland Bioengineering Institute

# Thank You for Listening

## Q&A?

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