Support kit for researchers to assist them in building their collaborative research proposals *

ENLIGHT RISE- RESEARCH AND INNOVATION AGENDA WITH AND FOR SOCIETY: LEVERAGING DIGITAL INNOVATION FOR A GREENER AND HEALTHIER EUROPE

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Introduction

ENLIGHT is a European University Alliance that brings together nine comprehensive research-intensive universities from nine European countries with the aim of promoting equitable quality of life, sustainability and global engagement through Higher Education Transformation. ENLIGHT has obtained funding from the European Commission to fund the ENLIGHT RISE project, which seeks to strengthen the research and innovation dimension of the ENLIGHT Alliance. More information about ENLIGHT RISE.

This toolkit is composed by 4 sections: the first one introduces the *Research Support Bodies* the ENLIGHT RISE offers to their researchers; the second section presents all the research mechanisms and tools that ENLIGHT RISE makes available for their researchers to foster collaboration among them; the final section aims at providing an overview of the existing documents (guides, toolkits…etc) that will help researchers to prepare a good research and innovation proposal.

1. *Research Support Bodies* within ENLIGHT RISE

1.1 Research and Innovation Support Group- R&I SG

The R&I SG is a virtual working group of research support officers from the nine ENLIGHT partners who support the ENLIGHT community on European and international research and innovation proposals/projects. Each partner allocates staff to participate in the R&I SG. The R&I SG is composed of research support staff who have different profiles: funding officers, research funding advisers, grant consultants etc. It is coordinated by support staff members of the Universities of Tartu, Groningen and Bordeaux.

The R&I SG's main goal is to support the ENLIGHT community in developing joint competitive European and international research and innovation project proposals. Its specific objectives are the following:

- Providing the ENLIGHT community with an easier and broader access to European /international funding opportunities
- Identifying synergies that can be achieved in different sources of international & EC funding
- Facilitating and incentivizing research collaborations between ENLIGHT partners
- Identifying suitable funding support in response to the research ideas
- Supporting the preparation of joint research and innovation proposals

Among its activities, the R&I SG members act as facilitators to help researchers find partners in other ENLIGHT universities in order to initiate collaboration and build joint R&I proposals. The R&I SG members regularly exchange information on partner requests they are aware of and on the expertise available at ENLIGHT partners and facilitate the establishment of contacts with potential partners.

For further information, please contact a member of the ENLIGHT R&I SG at your University's Research Support Office:

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1.2 The five ENLIGHT RISE Focus groups

The overall objective of these Focus Groups is to coordinate the emergence and expansion of mission-oriented R&I projects, building on the ENLIGHT alliance R&I capacities and leading to successful grant applications around the flagship challenges.

More specifically this includes:

- Community building: getting to know each other, the different expertise available in relation to the flagship domain at each institution, and the interest for establishing collaborations

- Identification of the right expertise at each university and facilitate the connection between them
- Establishment of an action plan for prioritizing pilot projects and funding applications, and
- Activation of pilot R&I projects on flagship domains.

The ENLIGHT alliance focuses its action around five big challenges that are key determinants of societal well-being and sustainability (ENLIGHT flagships):

- ***Health and Well-being:***
Urban Health with a special focus on (i) the impact of aging populations, especially on brain and mental health, (ii) the impact of environmental exposures and inequalities in healthcare access, and (iii) opportunities for future cities through precision medicine and digital public health.

- ***Digital Revolution and Impact of digitization:***
AI for Good in our cities and communities, with a special focus on digital simulation to support decision-making, AI and health, AI and sustainable society.

- ***Climate change:***
Climate change and urban development with a special focus on: (i) impact of climate change on land use, socio-ecosystems, relation between cities and surrounding rural areas, (ii) mitigation through improved environmental impact assessment, intersectoral initiatives for climate neutrality.

- ***Energy and Circular Economy:***

Energy conversion and transition with a special focus on multidisciplinary approaches to (i) energy transition, (ii) circularity, and (iii) raw material value chain.

- ***Equity:***

Addressing polarization in our cities and communities, with a special focus on (i) urban development and marginalization, (ii) access and equity in future cities for long-term sustainability, (iii) sustainable heritage and polarization.

The ENLIGHT RISE Focus Groups correspond to this thematic division: there are five Focus Groups, one for each of the ENLIGHT Flagships.

For more information, please contact your local R&I SG officer as stated in 1.1

2. ENLIGHT RISE research support mechanisms and tools

2.1 Seed money of each institution to enable ENLIGHT research collaborations

In order to support joint activities in the area of research & innovation within the alliance, some calls (funded by national/regional organisations or ENLIGHT institutions) are launched by ENLIGHT partners aiming at encouraging the emergence or consolidation of cooperation between partners.

More information: https://enlight-eu.org/university-about-us/funding

2.2 R&I ECR Mobility Award & R&I Prizes

The ENLIGHT consortium supports new and ongoing joint R&I project (proposals) conducted by early career researchers from different (minimum two) ENLIGHT consortium partners.

Thereto it finances 20 mobility/travel awards – of up to maximum € 1,000 - each – to help deepen the envisioned plans for these joint collaborations.

The aim of this seed money is to stimulate and support (new) ENLIGHT RISE R&I collaborations and projects on ENLIGHT flagship challenges between early career researchers from various/different consortium partners.

Awarded projects making promising progress towards a consolidated joint R&I collaboration or project proposal after having received the mobility award will automatically be selected as candidates for the ENLIGHT R&I Prize.

More information: https://www.enlight-eu.org/university-about-us/funding/680-the-enlight-r-i-ecr-mobility-award-call

2.3 ENLIGHT R&I Observatory

The ENLIGHT Research & Innovation Observatory is a comprehensive platform of information presenting the research and innovation capacities of, and synergies between the nine ENLIGHT universities. It presents the ENLIGHT scientific and technological profile as well as an overview of the R&I expertise of the ENLIGHT research community. Furthermore, the Observatory also collates a variety of outputs from the Alliance development related to R&I

bringing together the results, surveys, tools, and evidence-based policy recommendations generated in the framework of our alliance.

The ENLIGHT R&I Observatory aims to facilitate the creation of a common R&I agenda for the ENLIGHT Alliance by facilitating the identification of expertise and potential synergies amongst the ENLIGHT universities and its external stakeholders (i) and fostering exchange, mutual learning and collaboration amongst the broader ENLIGHT community (ii).

It will help monitor and visualise the evolution of the ENLIGHT research and innovation related activities.

More information on: https://observatory.enlight-eu.org/

2.4 Digital matching tool

The scene of different funding opportunities is becoming increasingly harder to navigate. ENLIGHT RISE will develop a digital matching tool that will match researchers of the nine ENLIGHT universities with relevant funding opportunities, while also providing information about potential cooperation partners within the ENLIGHT network. The matching tool will help researchers identify other ENLIGHT researchers working in the same field or under a similar flagship, providing them with valuable information about potential partners to work with to seek funding and conduct impactful research.

2.5 Other initiatives

We present different funding schemes (national, regional and from our own institutions) that can potentially be used by researchers to develop ENLIGHT research proposals.

1. University of Bordeaux

MRSEI

The French National Research Agency (ANR) proposes the MRSEI call.

The MRSEI aims at funding French research units to set up European or International Scientific Networks to answer to European/International calls for proposals. It proposed a call with a continuous submission format throughout the year with four scheduled selection sessions.

Through MRSEI calls, researchers working in French laboratories should have easier ability to apply to European programmes (Horizon Europe) and other international calls and thus have the opportunity to lead ambitious transnational networks. Funding will only be provided for research networks, in all the disciplines, that have specifically been set up to prepare and submit a collaborative project in response to a large-scale European or international call for proposals with major scientific, technological or societal impacts. Selected projects will receive €35,000 in funding over a 24-month period. The ANR grant is purely intended to fund the setting up of the scientific network; the call is not designed to offer funding for the research itself.

Dispositif Europe

A particularity of the University of Bordeaux is the possibility for researchers to apply for funds under the mechanism *Dispositif Europe*. *Dispositif Europe* provides traveling funding, hiring external consultancy services, and releasing teaching hours... The Principle Investigators (PI's) must apply through their EU grant officer by filling out a 1-page application form. After an internal check, the committee evaluates the proposal and decides what projects get support. If the project is granted by the European Commission (depending on the funding scheme), researchers have to return the funding previously obtained through dispositive Europe, via the overhead…etc. This additional service is only eligible for ERC and collaborative projects applications, to the condition that the project coordination is carried out by a researcher from one of the partner institutions of the Bordeaux Campus of Excellence initiative (that includes UBx but also local partners such as CNRS/INSERM).

2. University of Galway

As a national **initiative** in Ireland, applicants to the Horizon Europe calls can avail of the Enterprise Ireland Coordinator Support Fund. This is a €12,500 available only to prospective coordinators to help them with the preparation of their proposal (eligible costs include teaching buy out, staff costs, travel within Europe and consultancy costs).

At the **Institutional** level there is an internal scheme called the **Strategic Research Fund** aimed to support the construction of teams and partnerships developing significant research collaborations aligned to the Research and Innovation Strategy of our University. There are also some College specific seed funding schemes that are available but vary from year to year and are managed by the Vice Deans for Research in the Colleges.

3. Ghent University

Weave enables bilateral as well as trilateral scientific cooperation within Europe between Austria (FWF), the French-speaking Community of Belgium (F.R.S.-FNRS), The Flemish-speaking Community of Belgium (FWO), Germany (DFG), Luxembourg (FNR), Poland (NCN), Slovenia (ARRS) and/or Switzerland (SNSF).

Mobility fund from the Flemish speaking Community of Belgium: Foreign researchers, affiliated to a non-Belgian institution, can apply for a grant for a scientific stay in Flanders. It is aimed at researchers in Flanders who want to start or further develop a collaboration with a colleague abroad, and who want to bring this colleague – with a certain excellent and necessary expertise – for a short period of time to their own research facilities.

Scientific Research Network: This grant supports researchers with the coordination of Scientific Research Networks. These are international networks of researchers that encourage national and international cooperation.

These virtual research groups are set up through efficient coordination and intensive collaboration at (inter)national level. They prevent dual usage and provide researchers with more development opportunities. A scientific research network places the research of individual and complementary research departments in a wider framework.

O&O&I Subsidies for international cooperation related to innovation and R&D from Flanders Innovation & Entrepreneurship agency for Flemish companies and/ or knowledge institutions for their international collaboration related to innovation and R&D through specific calls. Overview of open calls (in Dutch) through this link.

Faculty Mobility and Sabbatical Fund - All faculties of Ghent University have a specific Mobility and Sabbatical Fund to support incoming and outgoing mobility.

4. University of Gottingen

The Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG, German Research Foundation) supports international cooperation in all its funding programmes e.g.:

- International Research Training Groups
- International cooperation at Collaborative Research Centres

The Federal Government's research funding programmes are generally open for international cooperation - in some cases, international cooperation is explicitly expressed as an element in this programme.

The VW Foundation concentrates its support on defined funding initiatives e.g.: Collaborative projects. In some funding initiatives, the VW Foundation provides funds for projects that are conducted by international research teams. To be eligible to apply for funding from abroad under these initiatives, it is necessary to partner up with someone based at a German university or research institute, who then must act as the main applicant and must play a major role in this research cooperation.

In addition, there are national, regional and institutional start-up funding programmes for EU project proposals that could be used to develop collaborative ENLIGHT proposals.

5. Uppsala University

Circus is a program for finding new pathways for fostering research rather than a specific research program. Initiatives supported are all distinctly multi-, inter-, or trans-disciplinary

with a focus on developing collaborations within the Disciplinary Domain of Humanities and Social Sciences. One of the calls entails support to networks with an aim to facilitate the development of research networks that transgress disciplinary, university, departmental and faculty boundaries.

3. Repository of documents that can help to prepare a good collaborative proposal

This section provides an overview of the existing documents and sources (guides, toolkits…) that will help researchers to prepare a good European research and innovation proposal, mainly related to the Horizon Europe programme.

The main documents to use as reference are the different Work Programmes and guides for applicants published by the European Commission.

Below is a list with some links to general tools and guides.

3.1 General

Presentation of the EU Research & Innovation Programme (2021-2027)
- ✓ https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe_en
- ✓ https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2022-06/ec_rtd_he-investing-to-shape-our-future_0.pdf

Webinar: How to prepare a successful proposal for Horizon Europe (march 2021)
- ✓ https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/docs/h2020-funding-guide/other/event210324.htm

Webinar: How to prepare a successful proposal for Horizon Europe: Scientific technical excellence is key, but don't forget the other aspects (April 2021)
- ✓ https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/docs/h2020-funding-guide/other/event210421.htm

National Contact Point (NCP) corner repository
It provides officially nominated NCPs resources and services to perform their work better
- ✓ https://horizoneuropencpportal.eu/ncp-corner#repository

National Contact Point (NCP) Flanders
The infosheets section contains edited content on aspects related to the Horizon Europe programme
https://ncpflanders.be/information/horizon-europe

"Do not significantly harm" principle
- ✓ https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/other/events/20210421/do-no-significant-harm_en.pptx

Gender dimension
- ✓ https://rea.ec.europa.eu/news/tackling-gender-equality-research-and-innovation-2022-03-07_en
- ✓ Gender Impact check list : https://wereset.eu/deliverables/gia-checklist-and-protocol-in-all-project-languages/

Impact
- ✓ The repository of international good practices on research impact assessment and measurement: https://impact.enlight-eu.org

3.2 Horizon Europe – Pillar 1 – Excellence Science

European Research Council (ERC)
- ✓ https://erc.europa.eu/homepage

Short videos that provide advice and questions to think on before starting the writing of an ERC Proposal.

- How to get started with your ERC proposal
- ✓ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O7mOFL2tIQ8&list=PLtv6FnsXqnXAYRk6HCErwMxwML0ZKoMcy&index=2
- How to write part 1 of your ERC proposal
- ✓ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HsmQRM88yyM
- How to write part 2 of your ERC proposal
- ✓ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4fpHkhitwA0
- How do we evaluate your ERC proposal?
- ✓ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FFhZX00AUV4&list=PLtv6FnsXqnXAYRk6HCErwMxwML0ZKoMcy&index=5

Marie Curie Sklodowska Actions (MSCA)
- ✓ https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe/marie-sklodowska-curie-actions_en

For MSCA Actions, you can also refer to the website of the National Contact Point networks that developed several sources.
- ✓ https://msca-net.eu/

- MSCA COFUND Handbook
- ✓ https://msca-net.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/MSCA_COFUND_Handbook_2022.pdf

- MSCA Doctoral Networks Handbook
- ✓ https://msca-net.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/MSCANET_DN2022.pdf

- MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships Handbook
- ✓ https://msca-net.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/MSCA_PF_handbook_final.pdf

- MSCA Staff Exchange Handbook
- ✓ https://msca-net.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/MSCA_SE_Handbook_2022_final.pdf

MSCA Green charter
- ✓ https://marie-sklodowska-curie-actions.ec.europa.eu/about-msca/msca-green-charter

MSCA Green Charter Guidance materials
- ✓ https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/2bfbb0d9-9b3c-11eb-b85c-01aa75ed71a1

3.3 Horizon Europe – Pillar 2 – Global challenges & European Industrial Competitiveness

a. Horizon Europe – Pillar 3 – Innovative Europe

European Innovation Council (EIC)
- ✓ https://eic.ec.europa.eu/eic-funding-opportunities_en

European Institute of Technology (EIT)
- ✓ https://eit.europa.eu/our-communities

b. Other

Some ENLIGHT partners developed tools for researchers.

Uppsala University Handbook for researchers:
- ✓ https://mp.uu.se/en/web/info/forska/forskarhandboken