

IRISTIPS: WHAT TO WRITE IN A BUSINESS PLAN IN GRANT PROPOSALS

It is increasingly important to focus on a Business Plan in your grant proposal to maximize the evaluation of the project's impact.

Including a Business Plan in the section of dissemination and exploitation of results will show that you think above and beyond the project with a clear outline strategy that is, nonetheless, flexible enough to respond to the challenges of the project that may appear along the execution.

To help you introducing a Business Plan in your Proposal, we have prepared a set of questions that you should try to reply, based on European guidelines.

When writing your Business Plan, always take into consideration the level of development of your idea/concept/technology/product and also if you have a partner in your consortium already willing to commercialize the assets derived from the project's results. It is increasingly essential to build measurable expected results during your project implementation to demonstrate the expected impact both on the market and in society. Besides the technical results you should take in consideration the previous ones.

1. KEY QUESTIONS TO ADDRESS

- ✓ What kind of **needs** does the project respond to?
- ✓ What kind of **problem** the proposed solution will solve and why this solution will be **better** than existing ones and in which areas?
- ✓ What **new knowledge** (results) the project will generate (assessment of the state of the art)?
- ✓ Who will **use** these results?
- ✓ What **benefits** will be delivered and **how much** benefit?
- ✓ How will end users be **informed** about the generated results?

**IN CASE OF DOUBTS, OR IF YOU JUST WANT HELP TO CLARIFY IDEAS AND OPTIONS, COUNT WITH
IRIS TO HELP YOU DESIGN THIS SECTION OF YOUR PROPOSAL!**

2. CHECKLIST AND TIPS

2.1. KEY EXPLOITABLE RESULTS

- ✓ What are the assets that your project will provide? List them.

Think in all areas that the projects results may be used: research activities, commercial exploitation activities, standardization, skills and educational training, and policy making.

2.2. KEY AREAS OF APPLICATION

- ✓ For each asset that you identified, state the areas of application

Healthcare example: fundamental research, clinical research, drug discovery and development, diagnostics, treatment

2.3. DEVELOPMENT STATUS

- ✓ For each asset that you identified, what is its state of development? Use TRL scale (Technology Readiness Level) when appropriate.

2.4. IMPACT

- ✓ Respond to call/topic challenge – how does your project fit into the problem addressed in the call/topic?
- ✓ What is the pain/problem that your asset will tackle? What is the problem it solves?
- ✓ How big is that problem? Include numbers of disease incidence for example, costs associated

- ✓ Why should your asset be used instead of others? Compare your solution to current solutions (standard techniques; state-of-the art). Emphasize the problems of such solutions and how your solution will be better. More efficient? Less side-effects? More sensitive? Less costly? Environmentally friendly? More cost-effective?
- ✓ What benefits/features your asset provides? What is the innovative feature?
- ✓ Is there any social or environmental benefit?

2.5. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS (IPR)

- ✓ Are there any IPR (patents, trademarks, software, copyrights) that partners will bring to the project (**Background**)?
 - State that Assess Rights of Background after the project will be contractualized in the consortium agreement.
- ✓ What kind of IPR will your project generate (**Foreground**)?
 - a) Knowledge or information whatever its form or nature.

Business information or valuable know-how can be protected via contractual mechanisms, like **non-disclosure agreements or as trade secret**. If relevant state this.
 - b) Patents, trademarks, design rights, copyright.
 - State that ownership and assess rights between partners will be contractualized in the consortium agreement.
- ✓ Will you generate knowledge that cannot be protected? State that you will publish Open Assess.
- ✓ More information about IPR must be stated in the **Consortium Agreement** that is recommended to be negotiated and signed during the proposal preparation. It is therefore important that, at the proposal stage, you demonstrate that you are aware of IPR issues.

2.6. TEAM

- ✓ Why are the consortium members good to develop the assets?
- ✓ If your assets are in low TRL, still far for the market, which players could you contact to strengthen the team in the future?
- ✓ Include TTO's of each Institution, state how can they help
- ✓ How will you manage the collected data? Will you have a database? Will you have reports?

2.7. MARKET

- ✓ Depending on the applications that you identified for each asset, what markets can be addressed?
- ✓ How big are those markets? Search for market size and market value?
- ✓ Is the solution you are providing global, European? Which geographical areas will be more affected with your solution?
- ✓ In what markets does the industry operate mainly, for each market?
- ✓ Who will buy the technology? Who will be the end-users?
- ✓ Who will use the technology? Who are the final customers/patients?

2.8. BUSINESS MODEL

- ✓ Have you an industrial partner in your consortium? If yes, leave this part to them. They may wish not to disclose it, and that's OK!
- ✓ The most probable business model will be collaborative research development, licensing or assignment. State this, show that you know that TTO's of Universities must be involved in contractualizing this.
- ✓ How will the marketing of your assets be performed?
 - a) How will your reach end-users? Who will be contacted?

Ex:

- Website with news of main deliverables - who will perform this?

- Prepare Tech Briefs with your TTO
- Send Tech Briefs to specific contacts? Who?
- Contract Tech Transfer companies? Use University TTO services?
- Advertise your technology in Technology Transfer platforms (EEN, BTN, etc?)

b) How will you reach customers/Patients?

2.9. FINANCIAL PROJECTIONS//COMMERCIALIZATION ROADMAP

These items were placed together, because in early-stage technologies is very difficult to make financial projections. If you have them include them. If not, substitute with a commercialization roadmap.

- ✓ What are the steps necessary to cover so that your solution reaches the market?
Ex: prof-of-concept, prototyping, demonstration of technological performance, validation in operational environment, benchmarking with current standard solution
- ✓ What funding will be necessary to make that commercialization roadmap?
Search for cumulative funding to solve specific or future need of the project.
- ✓ How much time to get to each milestone? In the best-case scenario, how long until market?

2.10. RISK ASSESSMENT

- ✓ Are there any regulatory requirements? Address them early and include them in your proposal tasks!
- ✓ What risks and barriers does your project faces? What can you do to overcome them?

2.11. DISSEMINATION

- ✓ Will you publish? Use Open Assess, in line with the European policy

- ✓ Will you present results in Conferences? Make workshops? Round-tables?
- ✓ Will you have a website, will you use your Institution Divulcation department, will you have a blog or a LinkedIn Group?
- ✓ Will you have a public engagement strategy? The communication strategy it is of paramount importance in both EU research projects and national projects.
 - Define your message - the first step in any communications exercise is to define the message or messages to be transmitted. Focus on positive achievements and the benefits they bring.
 - Target your audience
 - Select your tools - Peer-reviewed publications, specialist websites and scientific congresses typically form the principal information channels of the research community.

The Communication Strategy is leading in the development of a detailed Communication Plan. In the Communication Plan an estimate of the costs of communication should be made and an adequate budget should be allocated in your project.

Important Note: Make sure you include these Milestones and Deliverables in your Gantt Chart!!