PROJECT CYCLE MANAGEMENT FOR DIGITAL, ECOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL INNOVATIONS
Euro-planning techniques

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Trieste, 22/09-19/12/2025

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Recap of the last lesson

Project writing and analysis of selection criteria

Relevance

Feasibility

Sustainability

The checklist for a call for proposals

End of course exercise

Final tips for drafting the project

➢ Be concise and clear, but describe everything, respecting the text length limits;

➢ Good English;

➢ Get yourself a good proofreader;

➢ Read the evaluation report with humility; it is a great opportunity for professional growth. Do not give up.
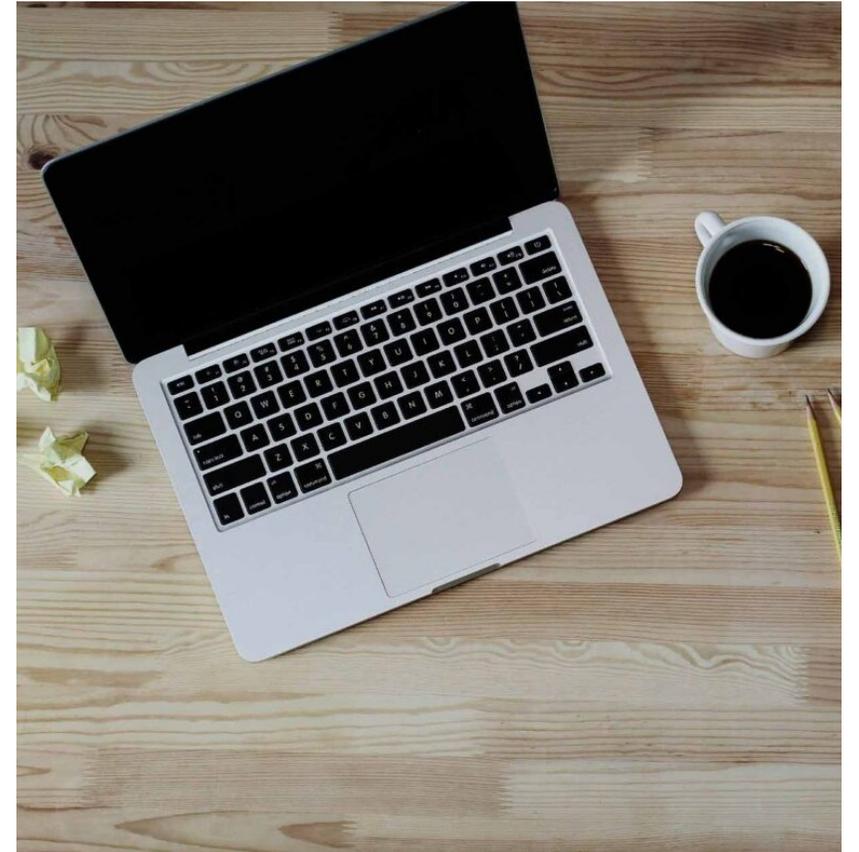
Final tips for drafting the project

➢ Study the call, work program and guidelines thoroughly;

➢ Build a strong partnership;

➢ Act in good time;

➢ Comply with the PCM;

➢ Write the project with the evaluation criteria in mind;

➢ Be ambitious but remember that you will also have to implement the project..
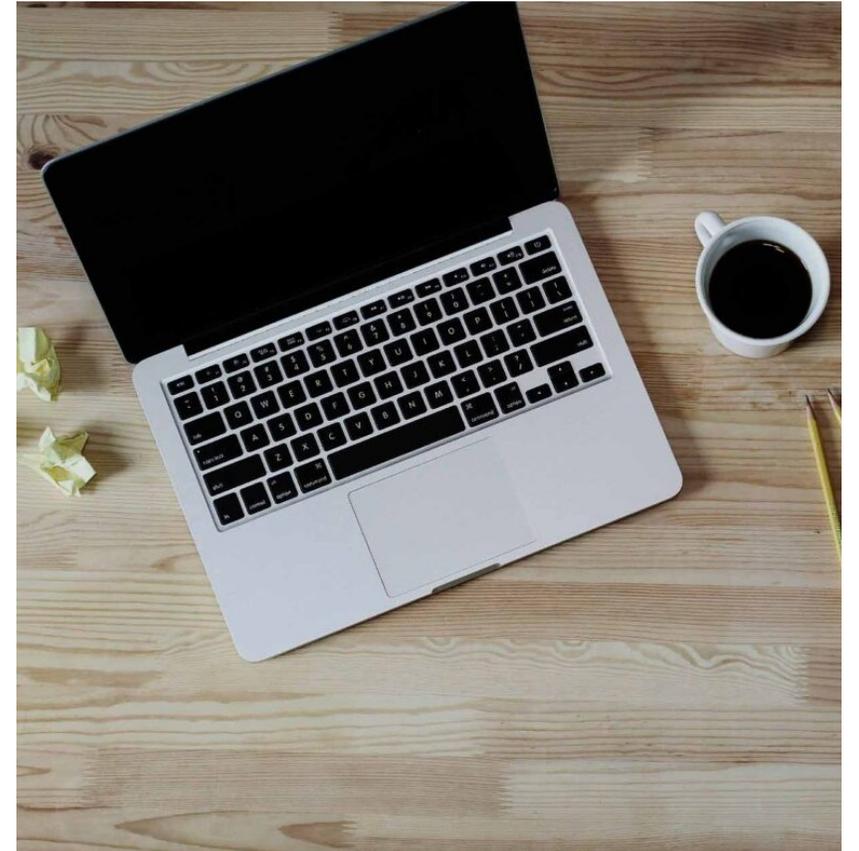
# The project contracts

Contracts in European projects include:

➢ **A contract between the funding body and the coordinator** (who represents the partnership). This contract, called funding contract or **Grant Agreement**, contains all the essential information such as the start and end dates of the project, the amount of funding granted and how it will be disbursed, the project budget, eligible expenses, reporting procedures, the obligations of the Lead Partner or Coordinator, the obligations of the managing authority or funding body, etc.

The project contracts

Contracts in European projects include:

➤ **A contract between the coordinator and the partnership**. This contract, called partnership contract or **Consortium Agreement**, contains all the fundamental information for the functioning of the partnership, such as the obligations of the Lead Partner or Coordinator, the obligations of the project partners, the management of financial flows, changes to the project (amendments), measures relating to information and communication activities and dissemination of results, management of intellectual property, the competent court for disputes, etc..
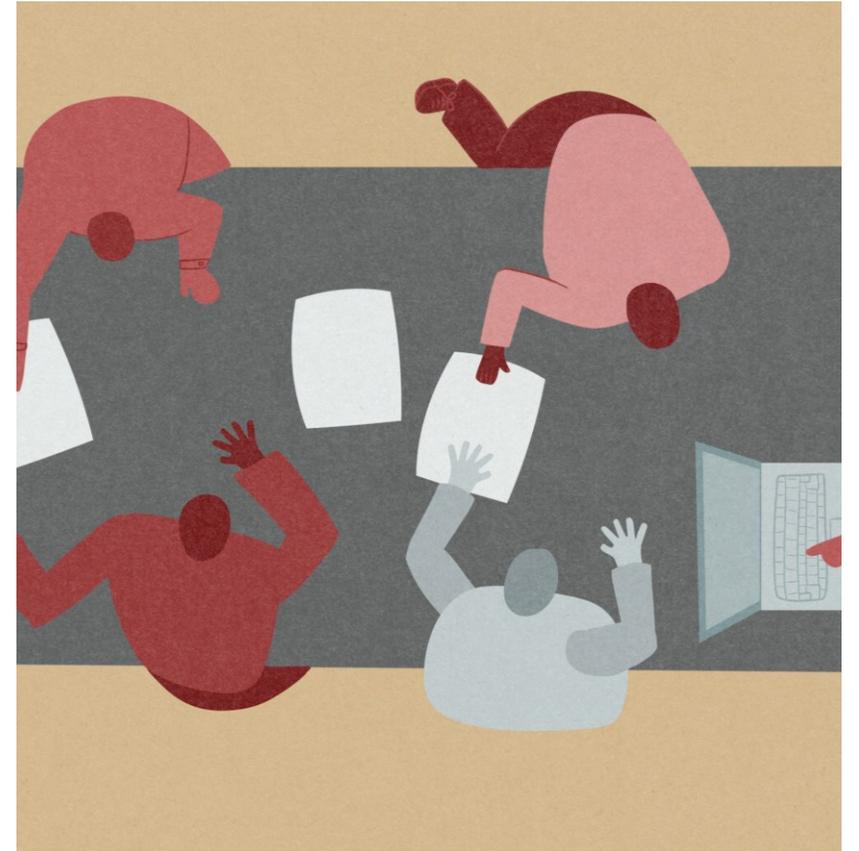
Template of the Grant Agreement

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Template of the Grant Agreement

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- Article 13 Ownership and use of project results
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- Article 18 Disputes
- Article 19 Final provisions

Template of the Partnership Agreement

Template of the Partnership Agreement

Template of the Partnership Agreement

Article 13 Measures relating to visibility, transparency, communication and dissemination of results

Article 14 Ownership and use of project results

Article 15 Liability and force majeure

Article 16 Registration

Article 17 Languages

Article 18 Jurisdiction

Article 19 Final provisions

Project implementation
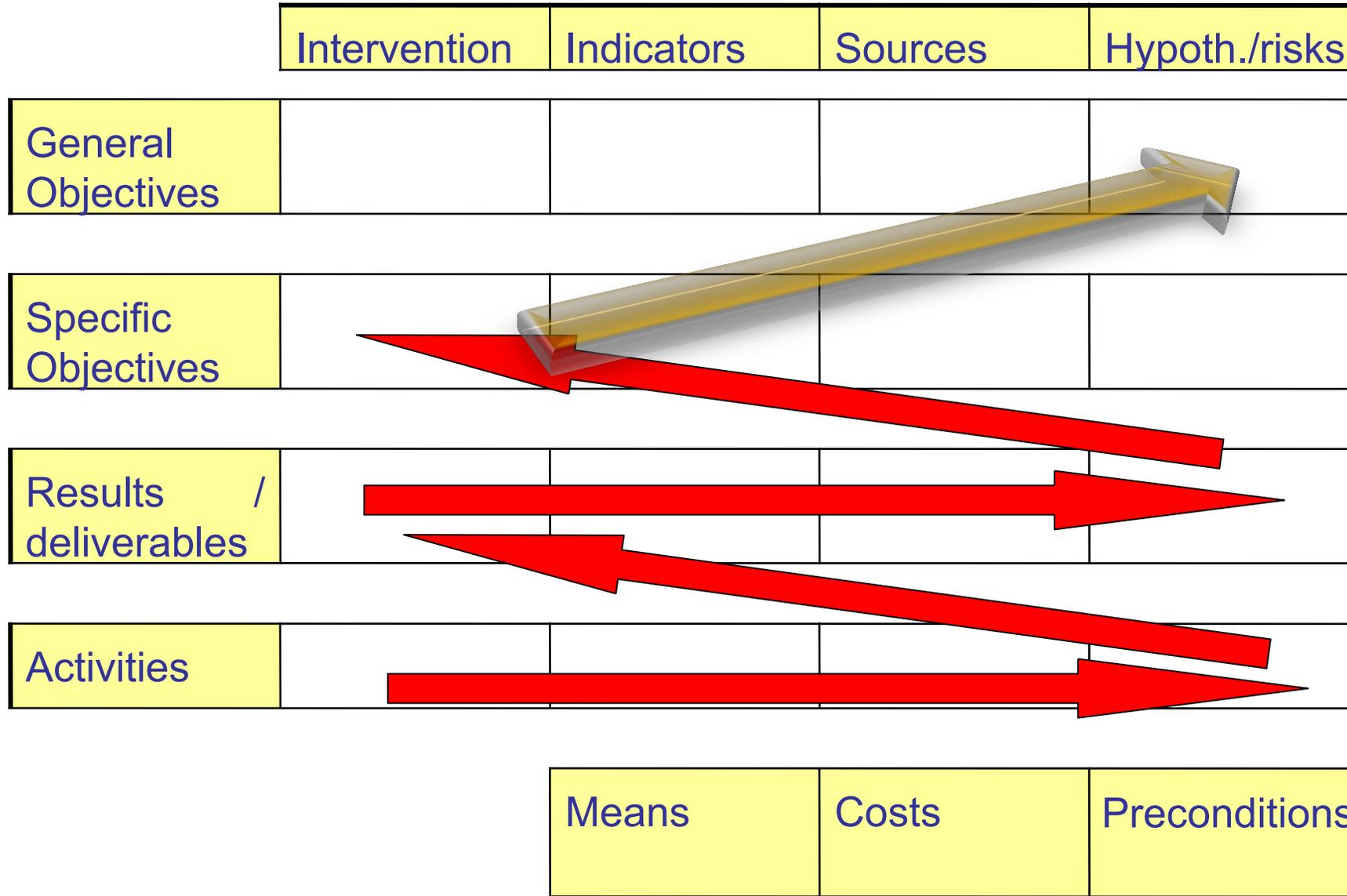
The project implementation

➢ The logical framework matrix is an excellent guide;

➢ The logical framework matrix must be constantly updated.

Some practical advice for coordinators

➢ Monitor partners closely;

➢ Deadlines will always tend to be extended;

➢ Take care over meetings; they should not be a mere formality. Select the topics to be discussed carefully and consider dividing participants into groups;

➢ Maintain good relations with the project officer and understand their priorities.

Communication and dissemination of project results

https://rea.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2021-11/Communication%2C%20Dissemination%20and%20%20Exploitation-2021.pdf

Communication and dissemination

"Dissemination" and "communication" are two similar concepts, but they have two different meanings in European projects.

Communication is aimed at a very broad and general target audience (citizens, the media, society in general, but also stakeholders). It includes information and promotion activities to increase the visibility of the project.

How?

➢ By using a communication strategy

➢ By conveying clear messages

➢ By choosing the right media channels

Communication and dissemination

When?

From the beginning to the end of the project.

Why?

➢ Commitment to stakeholders.

➢ Attract the best experts to the project team.

➢ Stimulate demand in the market.

➢ Raise awareness of how public money is spent.

➢ Showcase the success of European collaboration.

It is a requirement of the grant agreement!

Communication and dissemination

Dissemination, on the other hand, communicates the results of the project and their transfer to promote their exploitation (including economic exploitation) with a view to practical use. In this case, the target audience will consist of individuals specializing in a particular sector, such as the scientific community or legislators.

Target audience:

➢ Authorities

➢ Industry

➢ Policymakers

➢ Sectors of interest

➢ Civil society

Communication and dissemination

How?

➤ In scientific projects, by publishing the results.

➤ By presenting the results to a specialist audience, for example by attending conferences and trade fairs in the sector.

When?

At any time, as soon as the project produces transferable results.

Why?

To maximize the impact of the results.

It is a requirement of the grant agreement!

Exploitation of project results

Finally, **exploitation** (which is expressly required in research projects) involves the practical use of the project results at a commercial and political level and for the benefit of society as a whole.

How?

➢ By creating development plans, prototypes and software.

➢ By sharing knowledge, skills and data obtained.

When?

Towards the end of the project or even after the project has ended, as soon as the project produces exploitable results.

Exploitation of project results

Why?

➢ To lead to new laws or regulations in the sector

➢ For the benefit of innovation, the economy and society

➢ To help address problems and respond to emerging questions in society

It is a requirement of the grant agreement (especially in research projects)!

Communication and dissemination

Example of WP project communication (source: Andrej Bertok)

WP2 title: Project communication

2.1. Project events

2.2. Advertising campaign

2.3. Brochures and leaflets

2.4. Publications

2.5. Website

2.6. Social media accounts

2.7. Newsletters or direct mailings

2.8. Press conferences

2.9. Other media relations

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring takes place <u>throughout the project implementation phase</u> and aims to continuously and systematically collect information on project progress.

Evaluation is typically conducted <u>midway through the implementation period (*in itinere* evaluation)</u> to assess whether the project is achieving its objectives and, if necessary, to reorient it. It is also conducted <u>toward the end</u> of the same period (*ex post evaluation*), when a more comprehensive assessment of the project's achievements can be made.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring tasks

Aim to track the progress of the action undertaken in terms of costs, resources employed, activities completed, and outcomes. The results provide the information base for the subsequent and complementary evaluation activity.

As such, monitoring is an **ongoing activity**, carried out by the project management team and is essential for monitoring progress. It allows the project to be monitored during the implementation phase and, if necessary, redesigned its activities.

Monitoring and Evaluation

In project management, **monitoring and control processes** are essential and allow for the overall assessment of key project variables (time, costs, quality) using the most objective measures possible, with the ultimate goal of ensuring the established objectives are progressively achieved.

In this phase, the project team and project manager will be responsible for monitoring the progress of activities, time, and costs against the project baselines.

The purpose of monitoring and control is, therefore, **to identify deviations from the work plan and identify possible corrective actions before they become irreparable**.

Monitoring activities

■ **Continuous project review**: through monitoring, information is gathered to reflect on what is being achieved and to consider changes and adjustments to project activities;

■ **Replanning**: The implementation phase of a project always involves deviations from what was initially planned. It is therefore essential to replan the project as it progresses, adapting it to the current situation;

■ **Reporting**: This is a crucial function for providing various key stakeholders (especially the project funding body) with updated reports on the project's physical and financial progress.

Monitoring and Reporting

Purpose:

■ **Inform the various key stakeholders about the project's progress** compared to the initial plan, highlighting any difficulties encountered and the actions to be taken to overcome them;

■ Provide **formal documentation of what has been accomplished** while the project is still underway, to facilitate future monitoring and evaluation;

■ **Document all changes** that occurred during the project's implementation period and any resulting adjustments to the initial budget;

■ **Ensure project transparency** by making all information about its progress accessible to an external party.

Monitoring and Reporting

Monitoring Insights

■ **The relevance and feasibility of the project**, i.e., its ability to continue to meet the needs of beneficiaries and deliver the expected benefits to target groups;

■ **The progress being made in achieving the expected objectives** and the ability to utilize available financial resources;

■ **The quality of project management**, especially in relation to the ability to manage risk factors and unexpected events;

■ **The future sustainabi**lity of the benefits the project is delivering;

■ **The actions** to be taken.

Monitoring

Control paves the way for the replanning process and, in some cases, the redesign of the project's constituent elements (Work Breakdown Structure - WBS, requirements, technological solutions, schedules, resources, etc.).

Physical Progress in the Project Control Process:

Monitoring is the process of gathering the data needed to evaluate and monitor the project's physical progress; it precedes the control process, which, as the next phase, aims to verify project progress through the use of monitoring data.

Monitoring

Monitoring involves:

● **collecting project progress data** in terms of time, costs, and output;

● **updating the project work plan**;

● **identifying deviations** from the overall schedule;

● **refining estimates** based on extrapolations and simulations;

● **developing** partial and overall **performance indicators**.

Monitoring

By analyzing monitoring data, it is possible to:

● **identify the actions and resources still needed** to achieve the project's objectives;

● **propose corrective actions** to meet the project's timeline targets.

Evaluation

Evaluating physical progress is essential to verifying project progress: in fact, the hours and costs reported in the final report do not necessarily indicate that the work is actually progressing. Only after the work is completed and the individual project components have been completed is it possible to verify whether the costs incurred to complete the activities are adequate or excessive

For this reason, it is necessary to establish **the most objective possible criteria for measuring the progress** of each activity and, therefore, of the entire project. This means clearly defining **what to measure, who will do it, and when**.

Evaluation

The most commonly used **measurement criteria** for assessing progress are diverse. They typically include a series of standard indicators and can be supplemented with other indicators defined specifically based on the specific nature of the project.

Some examples of indicators:

➢ Measurement against predefined milestones;

➢ Percentage of completion;

➢ Level of effort

Evaluation

Evaluation Tasks

■ **Verify** whether a project **is achieving its established objectives**;

■ **Support decision-making processes** regarding actions to be undertaken in the subsequent project period.

It is therefore a one-time activity that generally occurs midway or toward the end of the project and is typically entrusted to **experts external to the project implementing body**. Evaluation in this case is called "formative" because it allows learning from the project's implementation, drawing useful information to overcome any difficulties encountered and continuously improve project quality.

Evaluation

Evaluation Principles

■ **Impartiality and independence of the evaluation function** from the organizations/institutions responsible for policy development or project implementation;

■ **Credibility**, ensured both by the use of professionals and by the transparency of the evaluation process and the dissemination of results;

■ **Participation of key stakeholders** to ensure that ideas and opinions from different perspectives are taken into account;

■ **Usefulness** in terms of the ability to provide evaluation results and recommendations in a timely manner.

Financial Reporting Principles

Eligible costs

➢ **Eligible costs must be foreseen in the estimate overall budget of the project** (costs necessary but NOT foreseen need the prior approval of the Agency before incurring)

➢ **Eligible costs must be borne during the project** (initial and end date indicated in the Grant Agreement), with the exception of preparation costs (if any)

➢ **The expense related to the last activities of the project must be paid in 3 months** from the end of the project, must be related to project activities implemented before the end of the project and must be reported in the final report;

Staff costs

Financial report procedure for staff reported with the REAL COSTS method:

❑ Definition of project team through a formal provision, indicating the persons involved, professional status, salary + social charges, hours monthly worked (as in the employment contract if any), number of productive hours worked on the project, hourly cost

❑ Description of roles and responsabilities in the project

❑ Periodic report with description of tasks and activities performed and results obtained in the specific reporting period; periodic reports must be signed by the person involved in the project and by the supervisor

Staff costs

➢ To be reported on a real basis, keep also **timesheets** in order to document the number of working days!

➢ Timesheet has to indicate the days really worked (pay attention to illness or holiday!), have to be signed by the persons involved in the project, to be counter-signed by the responsible of the project, dated and recorded in order to avoid any future modifications.

➢ Timesheet have to be filled in real time (NOT going back in time!!!)

Staff costs

➢ Timesheet have to be calculated, generally, on a basis of 1720 productive hours/year, as in Horizon Europe program

➢ Generally, NO timesheets requested for staff **working 100%** on the project

Staff costs

Necessary supporting documents

➤ You have to produce your **employment contract**;

➤ For Italian beneficiaries: produce also the **annual summary pay packet** (cedolino riepilogativo annuale), to calculate the hourly cost

➤ **Definition of project team** through a formal provision, indicating the persons involved, professional status, salary + social charges, hours monthly worked (as in the employment contract if any), number of productive hours worked on the project and descritpion of the activities performed, hourly cost. This provision has to be dated and confirmed both by the person involved and by the responsible of the project; if the person is involved also in other EU or national projects, specify also the title of the projects and the hours worked on other projects;

➤ **Timesheets** signed and dated

Staff costs

Necessary supporting documents
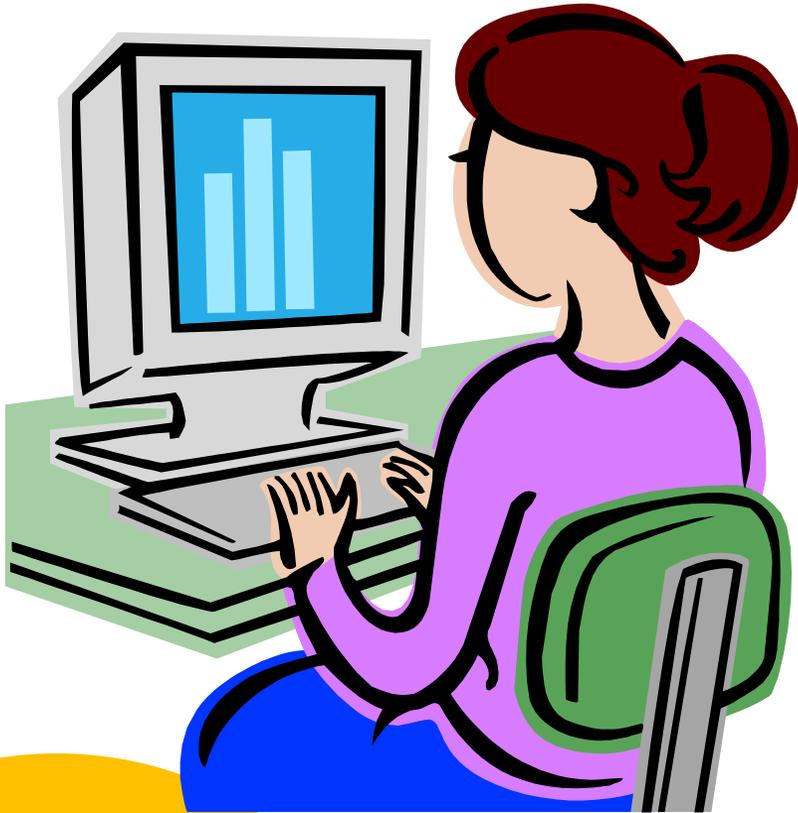
➢ You have also to produce your **pay packet** for all the months for which you have filled in the time sheets, that have to be stamped with the project stamp, and under the stamp has to be specified the cost of the days worked for each month (if you don't report the whole cost of the month!)

➢ Finally, you have to produce the proof of the payment of your salary + social charges and taxes of the months for which you have filled in the time sheets (named order of payment with receipt, copy of the bank transfer) → in case of group payment, declaration by the salary payment office

Staff costs

Necessary supporting documents
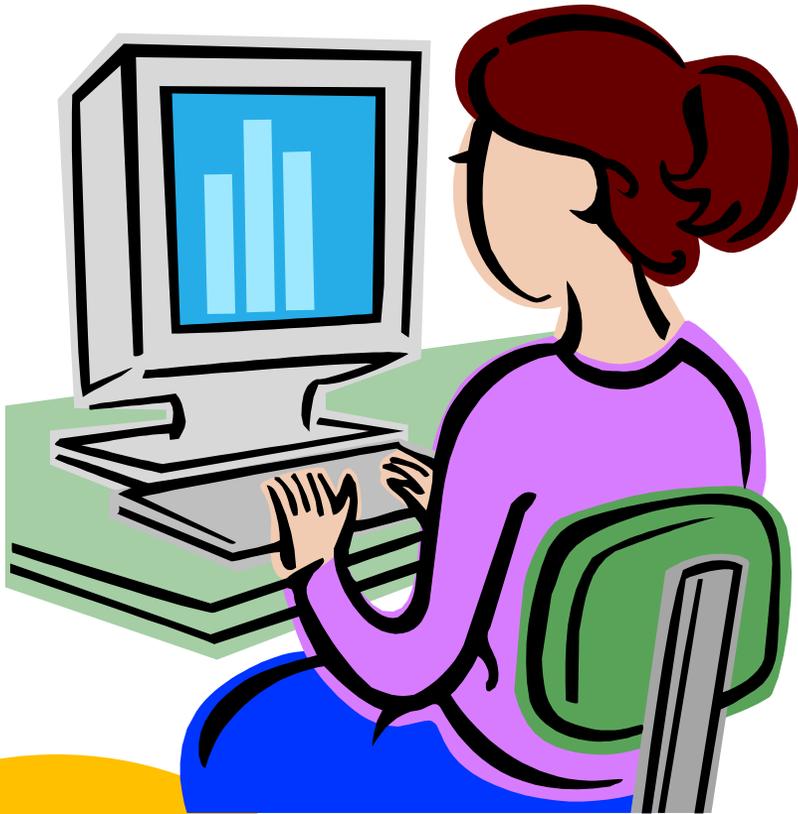
- ➢ **Description of activities performed for the project**, specifying the time dedicated

- ➢ **the hiring procedure must guarantee conditions of transparency and equal treatment**. In the employment contract (as well as in the selection procedure) the project should be mentioned;

- ➢ In case of audit, you have to produce the employment contract, as well as documents relating to the procurement procedure (invitation to submit a candidature, candidatures received, minutes of evaluation/selection of the best candidate)

Staff costs

Necessary supporting documents

All original documents must be kept by the coordinator or co-beneficiaries **during 5 years from the date of the final payment**!

Travel & Subsistence

➤ Keep invoices and/or receipt signed by the staff receiving the reimbursement (tickets, boarding pass, travel agency invoices; if bought through internet, email confirmation is accepted if no invoice is available);

➤ Remember to keep always the boarding pass!

➤ Buy air ticket with insurance covering the impossibility of travelling or change of date

➤ Business class ticket are not eligible!

➤ Remember to keep minutes of the meetings (= reason for travel) and the proof of you participation (attendance sheet)
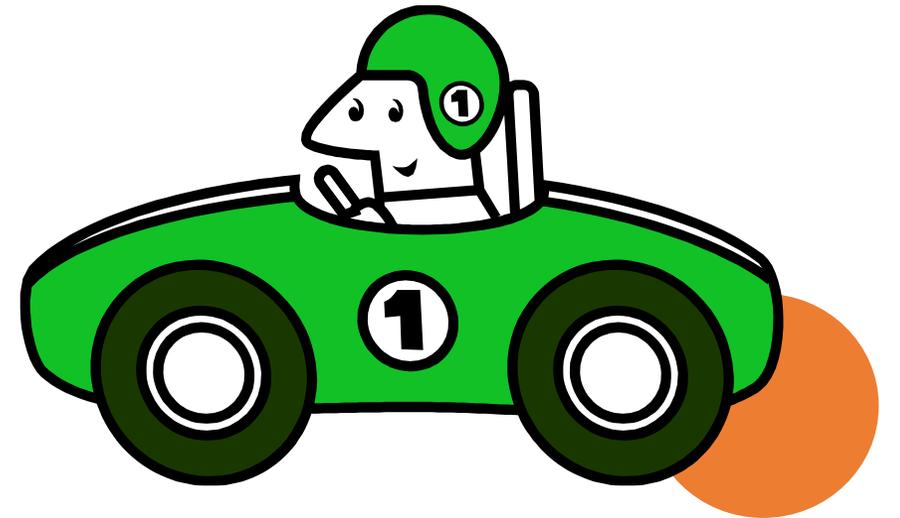
Travel & Subsistence

Examples of necessary supporting documents

➢ Employer authorization for the travel

➢ Expense account of the person who travelled and proof of reimbursement by the employer

➢ tickets (plane, train, bus, etc.) and invoices (hotels, restaurants, travel agency);

➢ boarding cards;

➢ Report with clear identification of the activity/purpose of the trip, place and date, list of participants, names and functions of the participants in the project (e.g. partner, expert, volunteer, subcontractor), detailed related costs, splitted in travel, hotel and restaurant costs;

Subsistence

Examples of necessary supporting documents

➢ Reimbursement must be based **on the basis of the real costs** and following the existing internal rules of the partner organizations, (reimbursement of receipts)

➢ Expenses reimbursement claim form (e.g. mission expenses reimbursement claim), indicating place, date and time, signed and dated by the participant – employee – and the person authorizing the expenditure – employer -);

➢ Proof of accommodation - (hotel invoice);

➢ Attendance list signed by the participants;

➢ Proof of payment

Equipment

Remember that rules for procurement apply, that is:

➢ principle of **best value for money**: award the contract to the tender offering best price-quality ratio

➢ procedure involving at least 3 tenderers

➢ For equipment necessary for project implementation, essential for reaching project objectives, if equipment is used ONLY for the project the depreciation cost is eligible (in some cases also purchase cost could be eligible), provided that ownership and use are kept for 5 years after the final payment).

➢ If equipment is foreseen, is better to buy it in the very beginning of the project, otherwise you risk not to cover the cost (as depreciation is always eligible, only the portion of the equipment's depreciation corresponding to the duration of the project and the rate of actual use for the purposes of the project may be taken into account.)

Equipment

➢ ICT Costs, such as computer equipment, if used also for other projects, <u>should be spread proportionally to all projects and main activities implemented by the Contractor and Project Partners</u>. The pro rata charged to the project, should reflect the percentage of use of the ICT equipment and connection time in that project. The apportionment should be on a reasonable, justified and coherent basis, which should be readily available.

➢ All equipment related to the administration of the project (e.g. PCs, portables, etc.) and all equipment purchased before the start of a project <u>is covered by indirect costs of the project</u>.
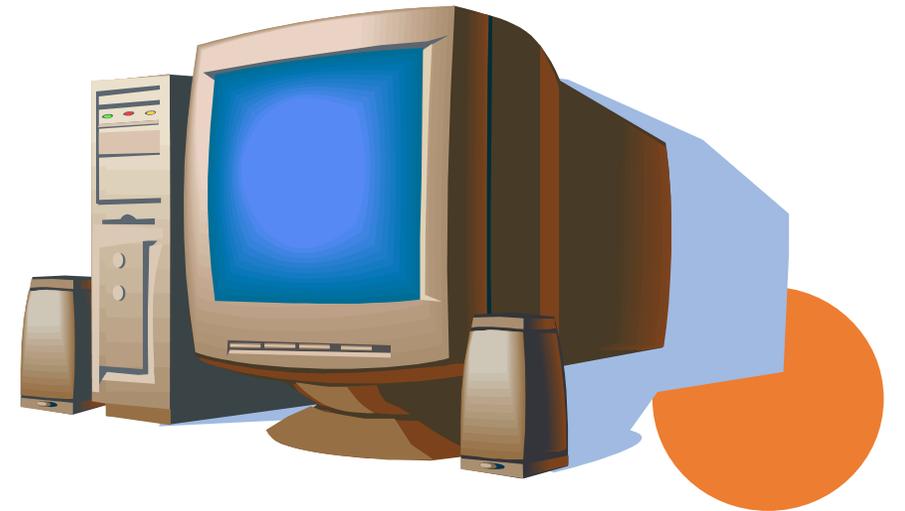
Equipment

Examples of necessary supporting documents

➢ contracts and invoices;

➢ proof that the payments have been made by the partner and are recorded in his accounts;

➢ the equipment purchased must be itemized in the organization in which it is installed and bear an inventory number (and must be identified with a project label)

Investment and infrastructure

Eligible expenses:

➢ Purchase of lands;

➢ Restructuring/restoring of buildings;

➢ Building

Condition:

➢ Direct link between purchase/restructuring/bulding and project objectives;

➢ Ownerhips and use of buildings must be kept for 5 years after the end of the project;

➢ Beneficiary must have all the necessary legal authorization;

Investment and infrastructure

Examples of necessary supporting documents

➤ Terms of reference/specifications of the tendering:

➤ request for quotation with reference to the project, activity and deadline for answering;

➤ quotations received dated and signed;

➤ evaluation committee's report;

➤ award decision;

➤ contracts and invoices;

➤ proof that the payments have been made by the partner and are recorded in the accountancy;

➤ Intermediate and final work progress and test certificate.

Project closure

The **project closure process** is the last of the main project management processes.

When defining a project, a key characteristic that distinguishes it is its defined time horizon, meaning a certain start and end. The closure phase, therefore, deals with all aspects related to the project's completion and includes the subprocesses necessary to formally conclude all project activities.

Project closure

Closing a project essentially means:

1. **Making the product/service generated by the project available for use**;

2. **Verifying that all activities** outlined in the Work Breakdown Structure (WBS) **have been completed**;

3. **Verifying the delivery and acceptance by the funding body of all deliverables**, including delivery documentation and the dispute resolution process;

4. **Obtaining feedback** from the funding body client/stakeholder;

5. **Closing the contract** binding the project developer to the contractor and verifying that contracts with third parties have been closed.

Project closure

6. Ensure the closure of financial and administrative transactions;

7. **Reallocate resources** used during the project;

8. **Archive project documentation** according to the organization's procedures;

9. **Produce a final project report**.

Project closure

Finally, it's very important to highlight **lessons learned**, or significant experiences gained during the project.

It's helpful to collect them in a document to be archived, after presenting and sharing them with stakeholders. The purpose of lessons learned is to highlight the successes, but also the failures, to understand "**what worked and what created problems during the project**."

Some final thoughts

"He who does not design has already chosen to be designed"

Giulio Carlo Argan

(art historian)

Some final thoughts

"Designing—a building, a magazine, or more generally, one's life—without being passively swept along by events is the foundation of a conscious and noble life."

Sergio Olivotti
(Graphic Design Professor)

Thank you for your attention!

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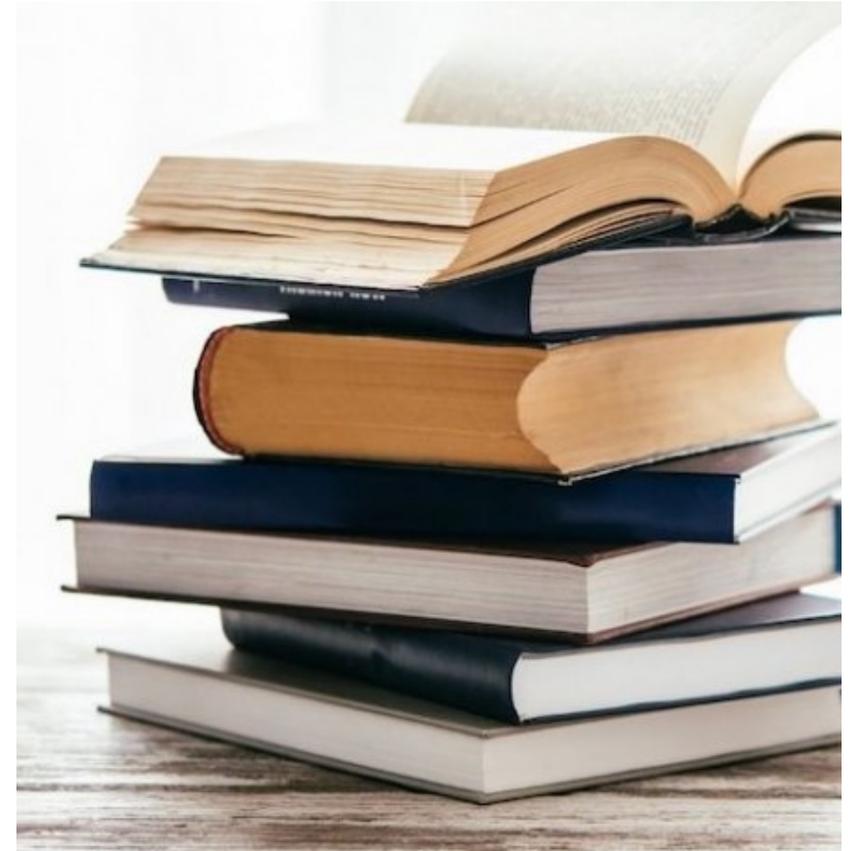
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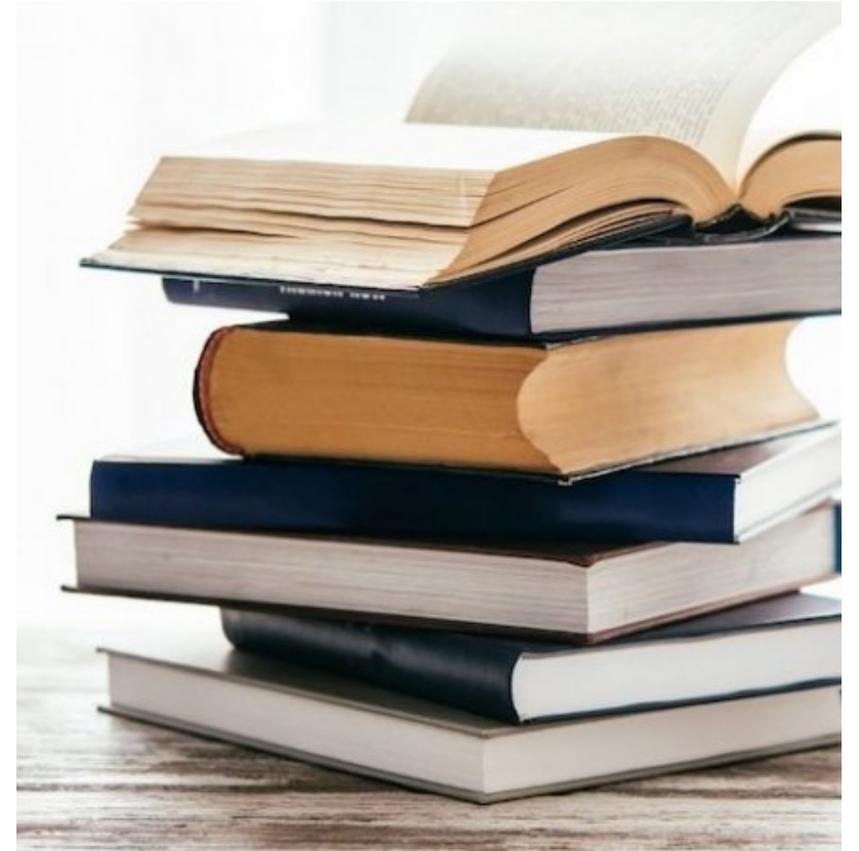http://focus.formez.it/content/testi-corso-project-cycle-management-e-project-management

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Dr. Andrej Bertok