Excellence in European project development and proposal writing

Time:10.00 – 12.15

Balkan Security Network Lecture for the Business Academy

Authors: Prof. Dr. Steve Quarrie; Mr. Bosko Nektarijevic

Introduction

Boško Nektarijević

- **BBA** - Bachelor of Business Administration - Paris, France ‘99
- **MBA** - Master of Business Administration
- **Solvay Business School - University of Brussels** ‘02
- Executive education at **Harvard University, USA ‘05**
- Master programs at **Boston University** and various other trainings..
- Training reform leaders since 2002 in leadership, cross cultural negotiations, project development, project proposal writing, etc.
- Principal designer of many educational programmes for over 3000 managers from business, government, academic, and NGO sectors ..
- Founding member and executive manager of the **BSN**

Introduction

Dr. Steve Quarrie

- A 45 year career as a research scientist
- Former Director, **Consultative Bureau for International Projects,** Ministry of Science, Serbia
- Former **Visiting Professor at Newcastle University, UK**
- **Guest Professor, Faculty of Biology**, Belgrade University
- Training scientists in writing project proposals since 2003
- Major expertise in proposals for FP7
- Over 40% success rate for FP project proposals

Agenda for today

- **Intro & How EU Programmes work**
- Key factors for success in project development
- Context and Stakeholders Analysis
- Creating a Project Environment folder
- Creating a Background document
- Provide sufficient Evidence and Details
- Causality and consistency principles

- Why is the EU giving you money for projects?
- How do EU funding programmes work?
- Key steps and success factors for project development
- Effective context and stakeholder analysis
- How to create a Background document
- How to provide sufficient evidence and detail
- How to impress evaluators

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Why is the EU giving you money for projects?

Intro & How EU Programmes work

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➢ Challenges ahead for the EU?

Economics, Debts, Climate, Energy, Resources, Demographics, Global competition

➢ Challenges ahead for your country?

Crises, Power struggle, Control of access, info, knowledge, Corruption, Culture

➢ Challenges ahead for your organizations?

Lack of info, experience with EU procedures, networks, resources, business devils,

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Challenges ahead for your organizations?

Intro & How EU Programmes work

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Four major problems are evident in proposals I have reviewed for projects in Serbia:

- Irrespective of how intelligent they are, people are **unable to read and implement instructions**!
- Statements are made without any supporting **evidence** so evaluators are not convinced.
- **Insufficient details** are given of activities that will be carried out to convince evaluators of **impact**.
- The text of different parts of a proposal **is not consistent** so evaluators get confused.

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Challenges ahead for your organizations?

Intro & How EU Programmes work

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A ***successful*** proposal is one that gets the money!

A ***successful*** proposal for EU funding is ***not*** just describing your good idea for a project.

A ***successful*** EU proposal is ***not*** writing what your boss tells you to write, when he tells you to write it!

A ***successful*** proposal is ***not*** written in only a few days.

A ***successful*** proposal is ***not*** easy to put together.

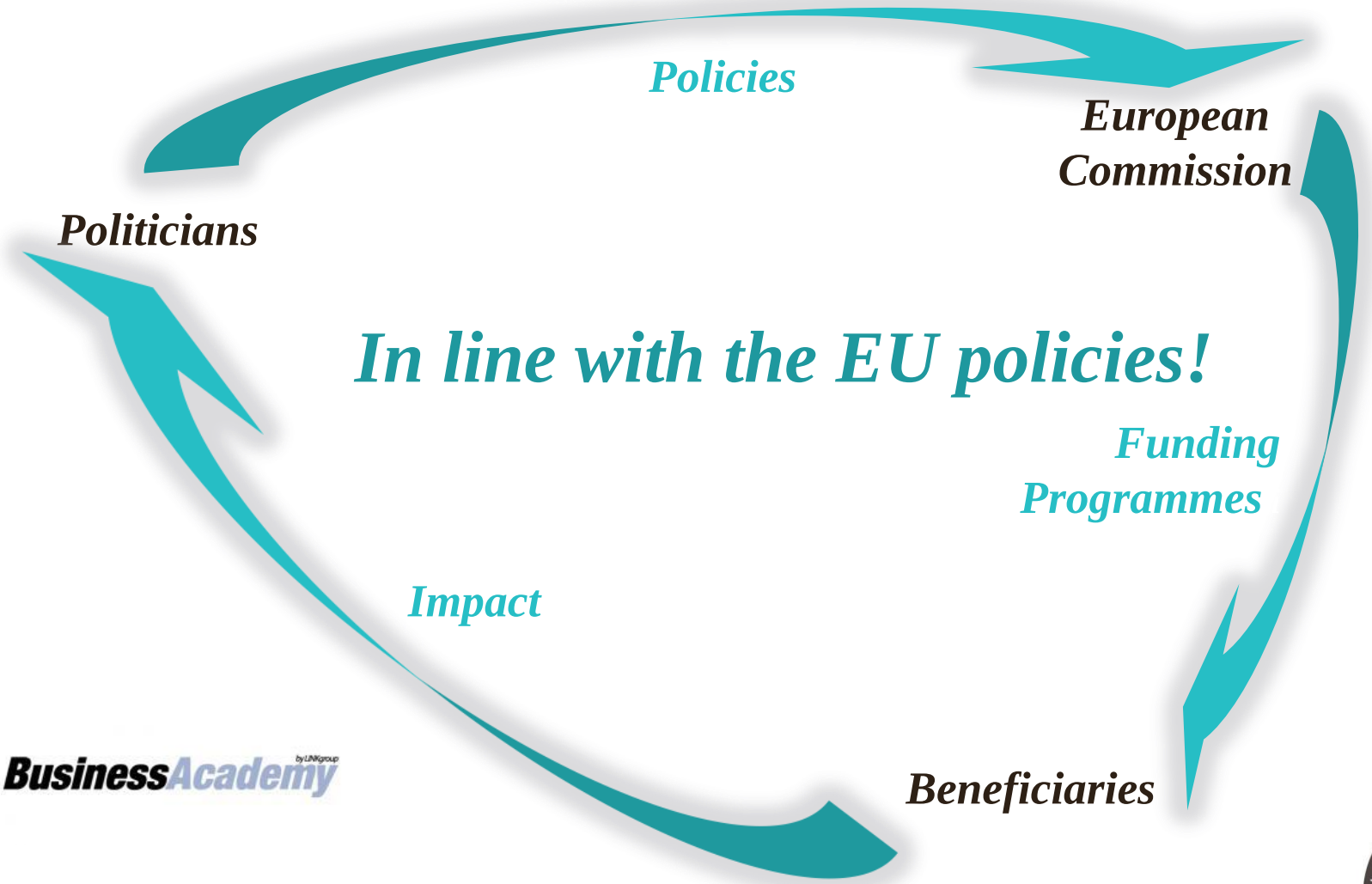
A ***successful*** proposal is ***many weeks of hard work!***

A ***successful*** proposal needs writing in ***good English!***

Furthermore, if your proposal involves research, a ***successful*** proposal needs ***world class research*** and,

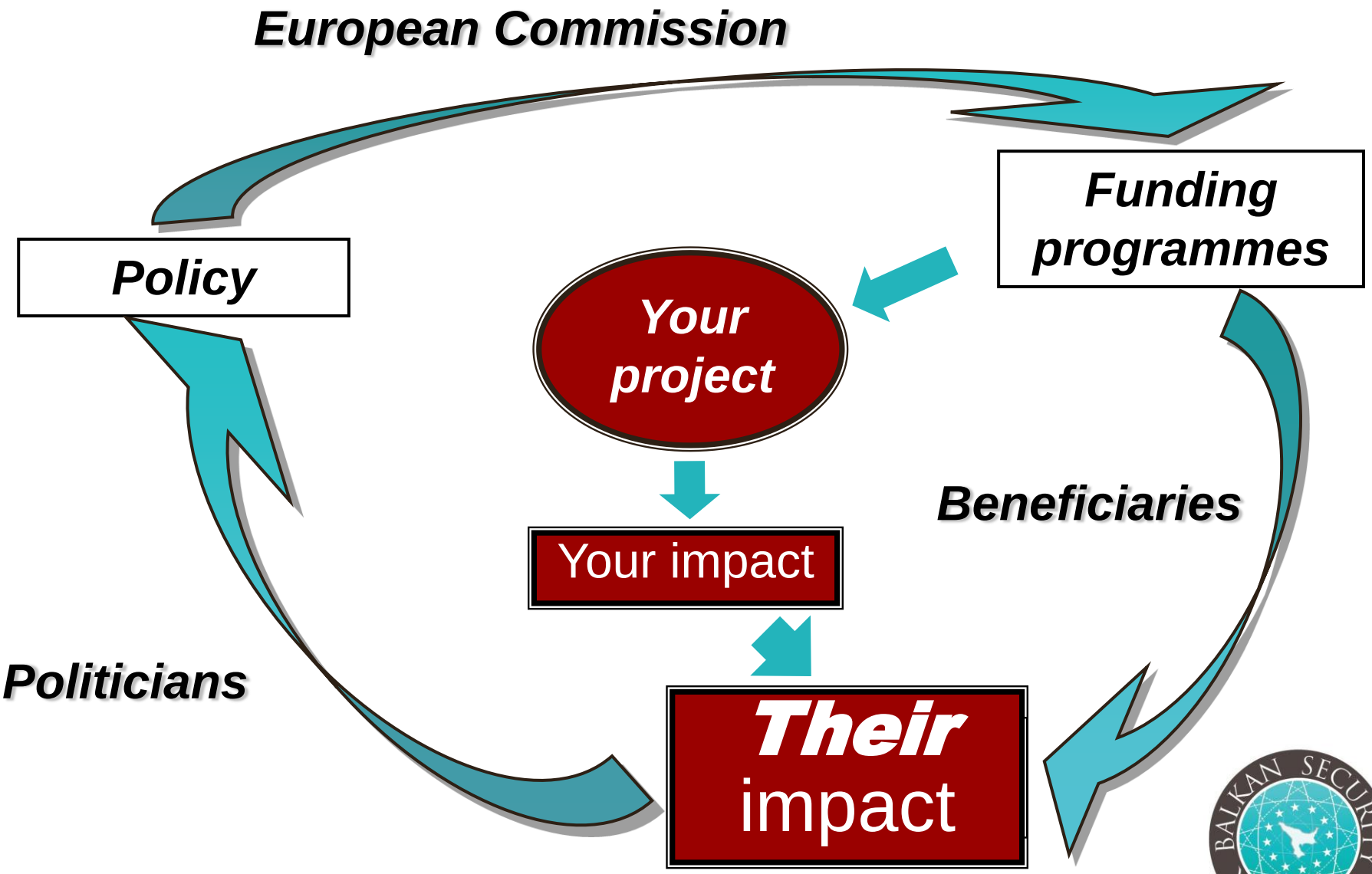
A ***successful*** proposal needs the right ***philosophy!***

How EU funding programmes work



You may check EU policy objectives here - http://europa.eu/pol/index_en.htm - Read the Brochures!

Philosophy you need for success



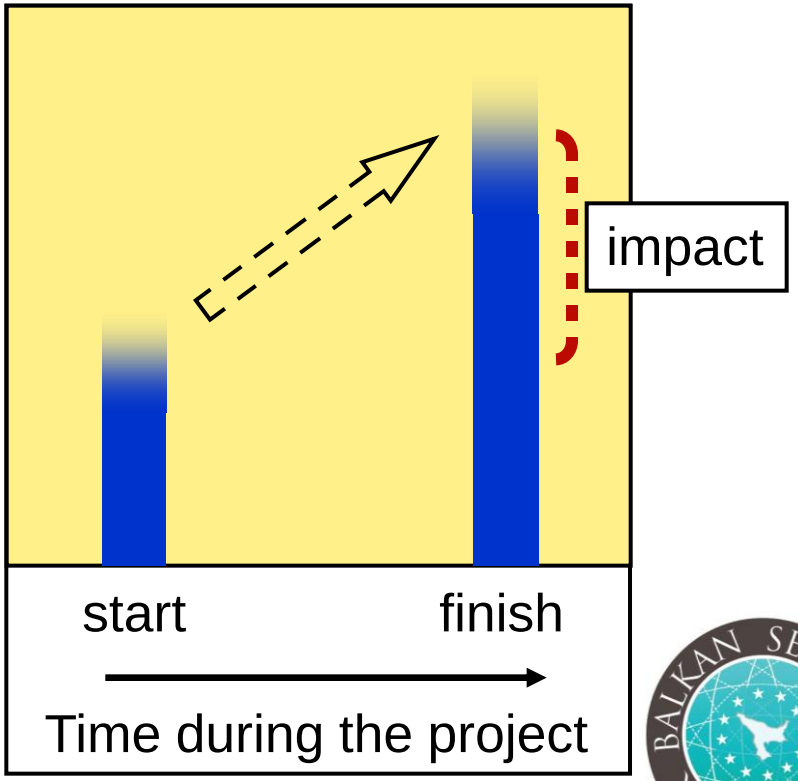
Philosophy you need for success

So, your project needs to have significant ***impact***.

So, you need to know how to convert ***this***:

The format for a proposal that is going to ***fail*** -

- Poor definition of starting point **(no needs analysis)**.
- Poor definition of finishing point **(poor impact analysis)**.
- Poor definition of how to get to the finishing point **(description of activities)**.



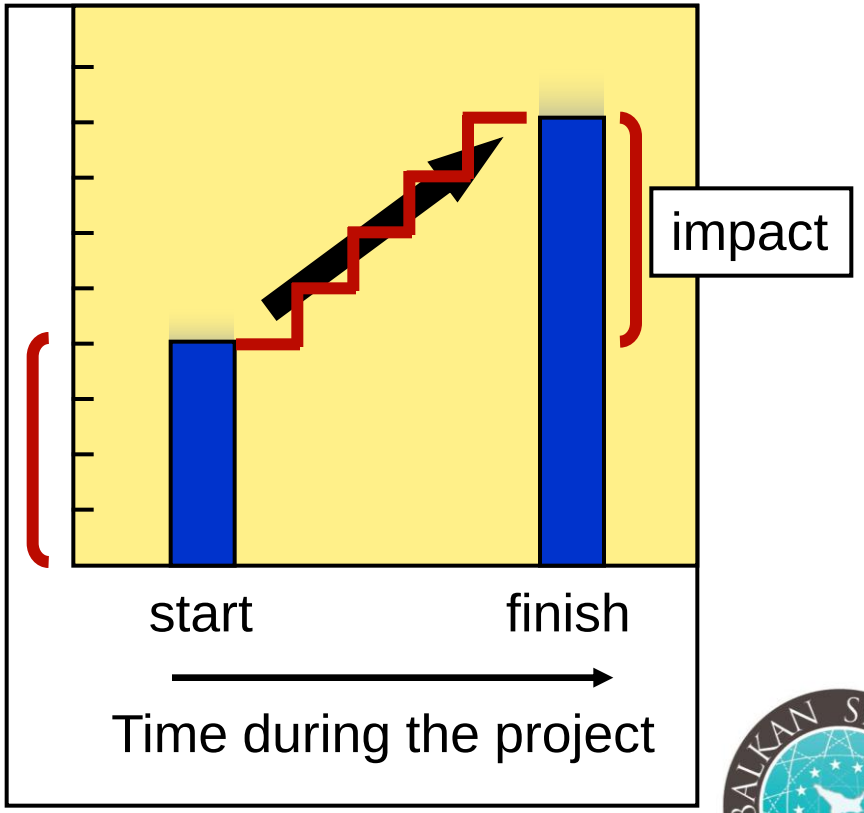
Philosophy you need for success

Into this:

The format for a proposal that is going to ***succeed*** -

Your proposal has got to be the one that gives the best definition of
- where you start from
- where you will get to
- how you will get there

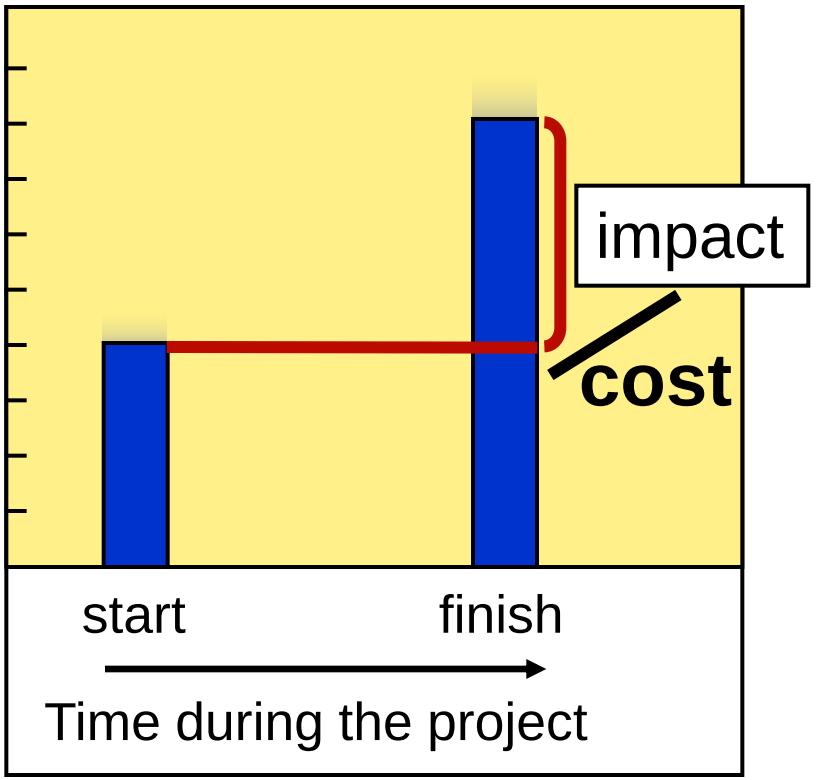
i.e. description of the activities (the steps up the ladder) and **evidence of progress**.



Philosophy you need for success

And one more criterion you need to satisfy:

It also has to give the *best value for money!*



An important concept for people in WBCs to understand!

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Main EU Funding Instruments

TREATIES :

- Treaty of Nice
- Treaty of Amsterdam
- Accession Treaties
- Lisbon Treaty etc..

POLICIES:

- Foreign Policy
- Agricultural Policy
- Health Policy
- Enterprise Policy
- Social Policy
- Environ. Policy
- Regional Policy
- Research policy..

INSTRUMENTS:

- EU LEGISLATION
- NAT. LEGISLATION
- FUNDING PROGRAMS

FUNDING PROGRAMS

- CIP
- Progress
- Framework 7
- EU Social Fund
- LIFE Program
- Structural Funds
- etc…

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Grants, funds and programmes by EU policy - http://ec.europa.eu/contracts_grants/index_en.htm

Main EU Funding Instruments

Structural and Cohesion Funds

internal funds operated by the National intermediaries

ERDF	ESF	Cohesion Fund
infrastructure, innovation, investments etc.	employment, social inclusion, institutional capacity	environment and transport infra-structure, renewable energy

Programmes for CSO
http://www.tacso.org/doc/doc_manual_3.pdf

Programmes for SMEs:
http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/newsroom/cf/_getdocument.cfm?doc_id=4619

Programmes for Research and Innovation:
ftp://ftp.cordis.europa.eu/pub/fp7/docs/practical-guide-rev3_en.pdf

Community Action Programs

operated by the European Commission in Brussels

- CIP - Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme
- Culture 2007 Programme
- Customs 2013
- Europe for Citizens
- Fiscalis 2013
- FP7 - Seventh Framework Programme
- Fundamental Rights and Justice
- Galileo
- Hercule II.
- LIFE+ - Financial Instrument for the Environment
- LLP - Lifelong Learning programme
- Marco Polo II.
- Media 2007
- Pericles Programme
- Progress
- Public Health Programme
- Safer Internet Programme
- Security and Safeguarding Liberties Framework programme
- TEN-E - Trans-European Energy Networks
- TEN-T - Trans-European Transport Networks
- Youth in Action etc…

External cooperation Programs

operated by the EC Delegations and coordinated by the EuropeAid

Trans: Stability - Macro financial assistance - Humanitarian Aid

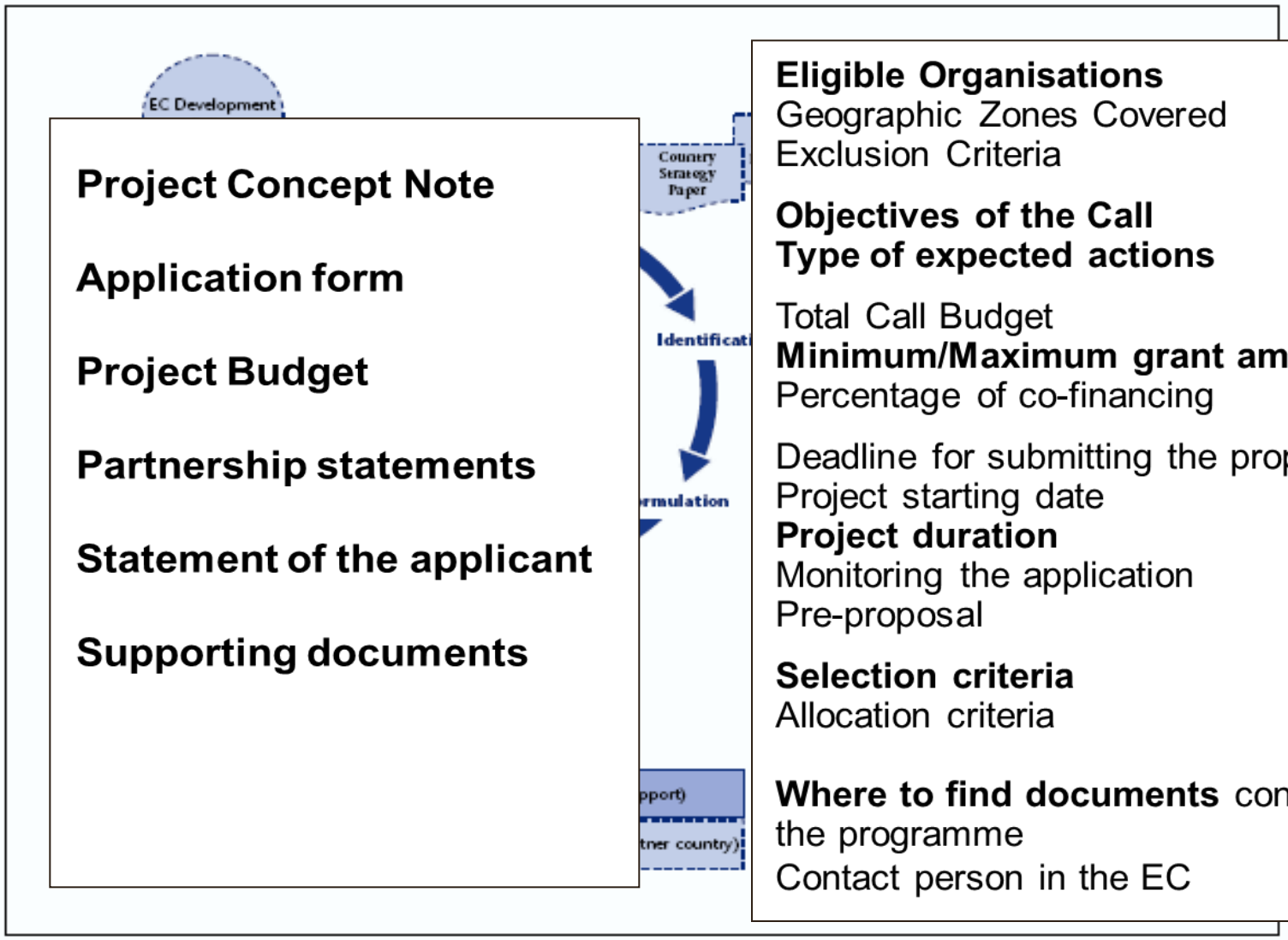
Pre-defined geographical zones:

- The European Development Fund (EDF)
- European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI)
- The financing instrument for development cooperation (DCI)
- Instrument for Pre Accession

Thematic : Asylum and Migration - Food Security – Environment and Energy

- Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights EIDHR
- Non-state actors and local authorities – investing in people etc

EC Project Cycle Management



Project Concept Note

Application form

Project Budget

Partnership statements

Statement of the applicant

Supporting documents

Eligible Organisations
Geographic Zones Covered
Exclusion Criteria

Objectives of the Call
Type of expected actions

Total Call Budget
Minimum/Maximum grant amount
Percentage of co-financing

Deadline for submitting the proposal
Project starting date
Project duration
Monitoring the application
Pre-proposal

Selection criteria
Allocation criteria

Where to find documents concerning the programme
Contact person in the EC

Key factors for success in project development

- Intro & How EU Programmes work
- **Key factors for success in project development**
- Context and Stakeholders Analysis
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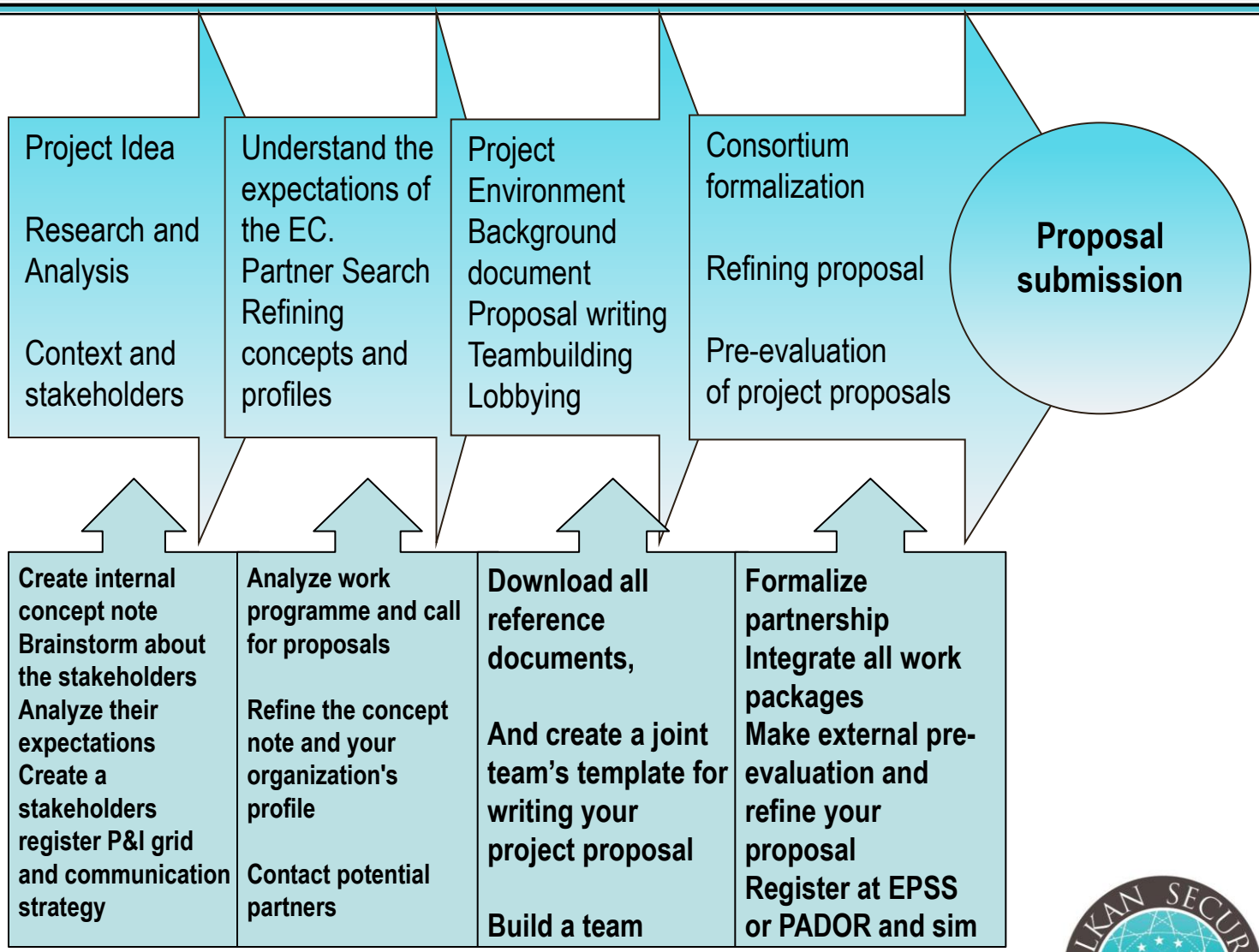
- Provide sufficient Evidence and Details
- Causality and consistency principles



Context and Stakeholder Analysis

Intro & How EU Programmes work

Key factors for success in project development

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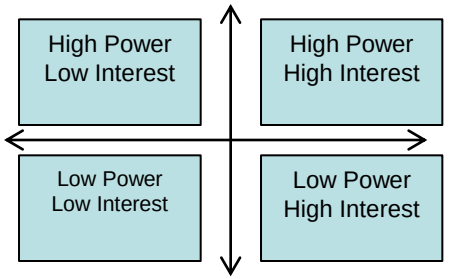

- Create a **Stakeholders Registry**
- Make Power & Interest analysis
- Create **Communication strategy**,

  Explain how will you manage stakeholders expectations
- Analyse **problems** in **both-way** communication

  Identify how are they inter-related and prioritised
- Brainstorm about solutions and define objectives
- Preselect ideal (possible) partners
- Understand the **expectations form the EC**

Project Environment Folder

Intro & How EU Programmes work

Key factors for success in project development

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PEF is an effective tool for Research and Analysis

to manage the **large amount of necessary information**!

Download into PEF all relevant documents (and share them):

Policy level: EU Policies, strategies, action plans..

EU Funding Programme level: work programmes, action plans, guidelines, FAQ ...

Project level: market/industry analysis,

research papers, publications, project models..

Regional National and Local level (if relevant) ..

and other relevant non-state initiatives

important for your project idea ..

Project Background Document

- Intro & How EU Programmes work
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- **Creating Background document**
- Provide sufficient Evidence and Details
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Adjust **project application form**

as a **template** for your proposal

and add **evaluation criteria**

where it's approapriate

Share PBD with your project team

Copy **all relevant paragraphs**

from the reference documents into PBD!

Application Form	Evaluation Criteria
2. Implementation 2.1 Management structure and procedures	Appropriateness of the management structure and procedures
2.2 Individual participants	Quality and relevant experience of the individual participants
2.3 Consortium as a whole	Quality of the consortium as a whole (including complementarity, balance)
2.4 Resources to be committed	Appropriateness of the allocation and justification of the resources to be committed

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How to read the Work programme

- **Objective ICT-2011.4.4 Intelligent Information Management**
- **Target outcomes**
- a) **Reactive algorithms, infrastructures and methodologies** (parallelisation, approximation, online processing, compression) for scaling data intensive techniques (including but not limited to machine learning, inference, statistical analysis) up to extremely large data volumes and real time performance. Implementations must be rigorously tested on extremely large and realistically complex data sets coming from diverse resources contributed by organisations with a clear stake in the solution and a clear path to deploying it if effective.

How to read the Work programme

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Project Background Document

- Intro & How EU Programmes work
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- **Provide sufficient Evidence and Details**
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Answer evaluators' questions using sentences from PEF;

Address **all relevant points** from the WP and GFA

Educate evaluators in simple and easy to understand language

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Answering evaluators equations

Intro & How EU Programmes work

Key factors for success in project development

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ICT policy objective:

"Bla bla .. we must all be able to ***obtain the skills needed*** *to live and work in the information age"*

Example of the adjustments you can make:

During the second year of the project 120 experts will be trained in bla bla and ***obtain the skills needed*** *to live and work in the information age.*

This will clearly contribute to achieve the first EU ***ICT policy objective****

Make sure that it's easy to understand!

Provide the evidence for your statements

Intro & How EU Programmes work

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Be intelligent in implementing the instructions. Every word of the policy document has a meaning.

Here's an example from an EU Work Programme:

"Bla, bla, bla, bla, bla … *close cooperation with at least 3 European* ***outstanding*** *… partnering organisations*". [Their *italics*, not mine!]

"**outstanding**" - so you **must** provide the ***evidence***!

So do not write "Our three European partners are outstanding" and expect evaluators to believe you!

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Give sufficient detail to define impact

- Intro & How EU Programmes work
- Key factors for success / develop
- Context and Stakeho
- Creating Environment folder
- Creating Backgro
- **Provide sufficient Evidence and Details**
- Causality and consistency principles

"One of our young R&D scientists will spend one month in project year 1 at Institute X in Paris to be trained in how to use an ABC machine."

Needs analysis

"Our institute currently has no ABC machine, though we plan to buy one in project Year 1, as it is essential to develop the diagnostic tests of Objective 4.

Activity description

Thus, 1 of our talented scientists will work in the institute of Dr X in Paris for 1 month immediately before commissioning the ABC machine. Dr X has used ABC since 1998 and she has two machines, one of which is regularly used to train visiting workers.

Impact analysis

Upon return to our institute, the young R&D scientist will help commission the new ABC machine and give training in its use to others to ensure dissemination and sustainability of the newly-acquired expertise."

So, make sure you **define the activities sufficiently** to give the **evidence** that **objectives will be achieved.**

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Give sufficient detail to define impact

Intro & How EU Programmes work

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Causality and consistency principles

Adjust the amount of detail you give to describe the work/tasks to be done according to the project scale and type.

A small-scale project for your first proposal (e.g. a staff training visit) would need more description of day-to-day activities than a large international collaborative project by experienced staff.

"We plan two stakeholder conferences to discuss the issues."

"We plan a 3-day international stakeholder conference in Belgrade in year 1 and another 3-day event in Niš in year 2 …"

"We plan to invite key Ministry representatives and EU experts."

"We plan to discuss key problems of inclusivity on day 1 and to present potential solutions implemented in EU states on day 2..."

You have to decide which level of detail is appropriate, but you must convince evaluators that objectives will be achieved.

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It is very important to format text to make it easy for the evaluators to read. Use subheadings, indents, and break up text with tables or pictures occasionally:

- drug-induced recombination between wheat and alien chromatin
- detailed gene-based marker mapping of a yield QTL on 7AL
- testing a candidate gene for the 7AL yield QTL effect
- association mapping of yield QTL effects on 7AL in common and durum wheats
- testing a candidate gene for *Lr19* in durum wheat
- transfer of *Lr19* alien resistance gene to other wheats using cisgenics
- allelic variation in *Yp* genes amongst alien species
- effectiveness of particle bombardment as a vehicle for alien gene transfer
- effects of *H. chilense* introgressions on durum wheat pigment contents

Other spin-out publications on techniques and integrative aspects of the science are expected.

Aspects of the science developing during the project will also be presented at scientific meetings and through existing EU dissemination platforms, such as the COST Action Tritigen.

We expect aspects of the SMARTWHEAT science to impact beyond the immediate confines of research on wheat. The alien gene transfer technologies using drug-mediated induction of homologous pairing and recombination and particle bombardment are likely to have application in other crop species, not just within the gramineae, where alien gene transfer has a potentially major role to play in improving the crop.

The research proposed for SMARTWHEAT is strongly aligned with several goals of the European Technology Platform 'Plants for the Future' strategic research agenda 2025:

- 1.2.1 Develop and produce sufficient … plant raw materials,
  - deliverable 1.1 – *Diverse and affordable raw material for food*
  - deliverable 1.2 – *Plant raw materials with improved characteristics for producing nutritionally enhanced and more attractive food*
- 3.2.1 Improve plant productivity and quality
  - deliverable 1.1 – *Identify key drivers of plant yield productivity and stability*
  - deliverable 1.3 – *Climatic changes and plant tolerance to non-biotic factors*
- 3.2.2 Reduce and optimise the environmental impact of agriculture
  - deliverable 2.2 – *Improve tolerance and resistance to pathogens and other biotic factors*

Assuming the same prices and disease incidence/control approaches against leaf rust each year in Spain, employing SMARTWHEAT advances would thus deliver potential annual savings of around €76 million. The same calculations could be done for other European countries where leaf rust is a problem, and for which *Lr19* would provide effective natural resistance. Therefore an effective source of resistance to leaf rust for European wheat varieties could potentially provide economic benefits of *hundreds of millions of euros* every year – a major, and guaranteed impact on Europe's economy.

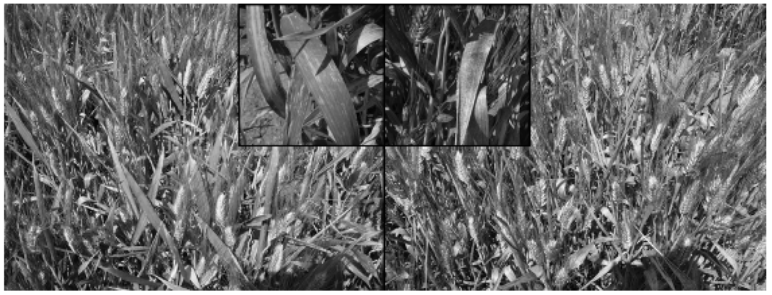


Fig. B3.1.1. Plots of a durum wheat line having a 7Ag terminal segment carrying *Lr19* (left), and the corresponding line without *Lr19* (right). Inset images show typical leaves from the two plots.

The effectiveness of *Lr19* in providing protection against leaf rust is illustrated in Fig. B3.1.1, for trials by P2 in 2007. The year 2007 was a bad year for leaf rust in several regions of Italy, associated with generally high summer temperatures which encourage pathogen development. In the absence of chemical fungicide protectants, micro trials conducted around Italy on advanced breeding lines carrying *Lr19* delivered yields, on average, 66% greater than

Note: I find information easier to assimilate (take in or understand fully) when written in Arial fonts and ***not*** in Times New Roman fonts.

Economic impact

With the dramatic doubling in grain prices during 2007 and subsequent fluctuations that have been a feature of the grain markets so far this season, it will be difficult to quantify the precise European economic benefit of the project. However, the economic consequence of increases in yield delivered through just one of the targeted traits for improvement, disease resistance, would be expected to be significant. A recent CIMMYT quotation [Plant Breeding News, 1 Oct 2006, 1.12] sums it up:

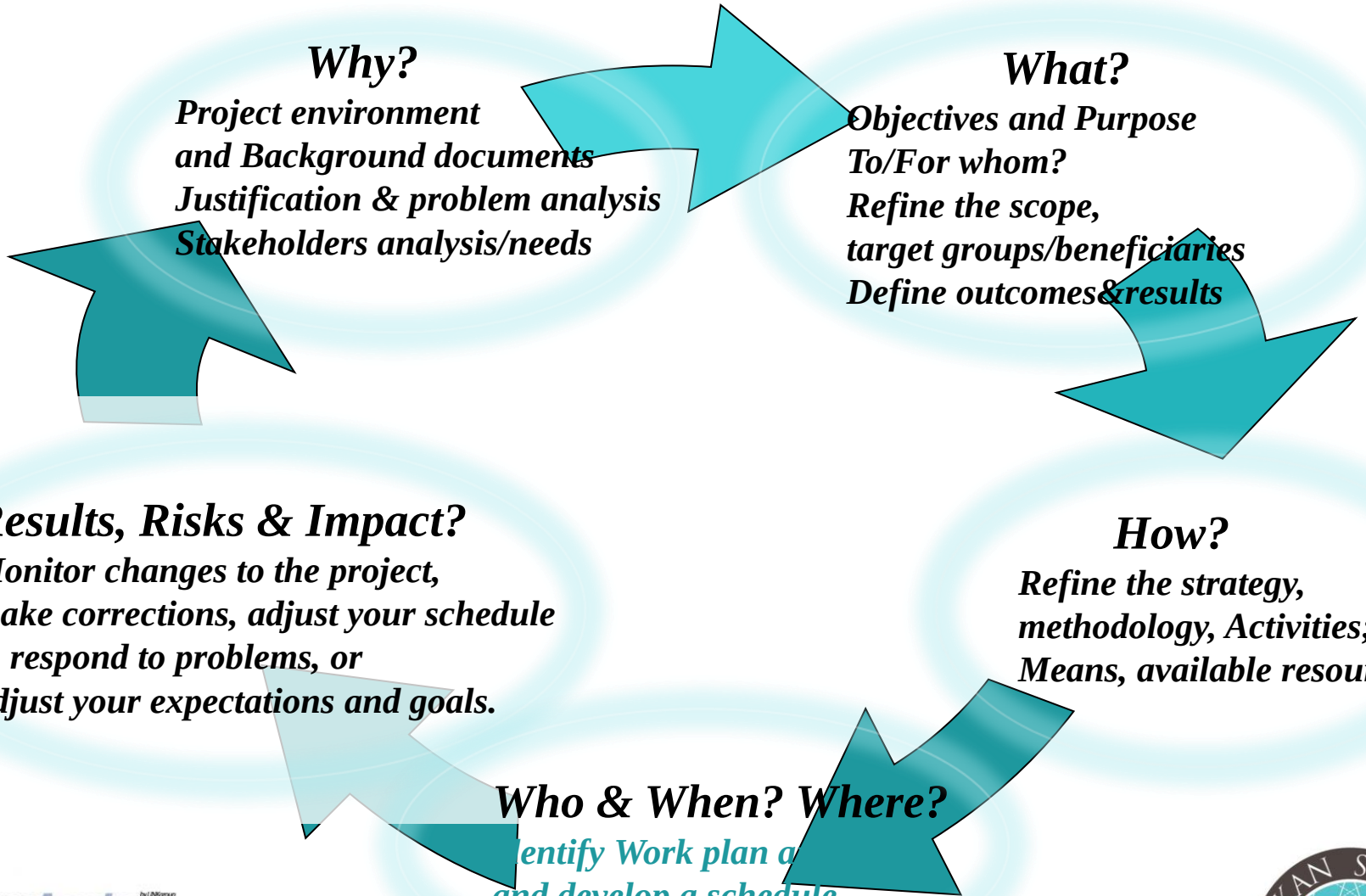
> "Every dollar spent on *all* wheat research at the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT) in Mexico, has generated $27 in benefits when measured *only* from the resistance it has produced for *one* disease (leaf rust) in *one type* of wheat (spring bread wheat). This is a benefit of $5.36 billion (in 1990 dollars)."

Table B3.1.1. Yield performance of *Lr19*-carrying durum wheat recombinant lines compared to adapted varieties used as controls (2-3 per locality; control means = 100).

	Localities		
	West-Coast	East-Coast	North
Lr19+ lines vs. controls	166**	101^{ns}	102^{ns}

Nevertheless, these economic impacts would be present only if resistance to the disease is not readily overcome by the pathogen. A major problem for breeders, which discourages many from turning to alien species for sources of disease resistance is the speed and frequency with which single gene resistance can be overcome by the pathogen. Although an average time for disease resistance genes to remain effective is difficult to give, breeders agree that around 5-20 years is a realistic range. However, a strategy to extend the useful

Make sure to respect causality and consistency principles



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Key factors to avoid for project proposal success

Intro & How EU Programmes work

Key factors for success in project development

Context and Stakeholders Analysis

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Provide sufficient Evidence and Details

Causality and consistency principles

- No respect for instructions. Be intelligent in implementing the instructions. Every word of the policy document has a meaning.
- The text of different parts of a proposal is not consistent so evaluators get confused
- Lack of understanding of Evaluation criteria (objective vs subjective)
- Poor needs analysis and description of the starting point (stakeholders, problems, target groups, state-of-the-art, markets, etc)
- Small relevance for the call objectives
- Insufficient detail given of planned activities as evidence to convince evaluators of impact
- Poor impact analysis

Key factors for success in project development

Intro & How EU Programmes work

Key factors for success in project development

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Provide sufficient Evidence and Details

Causality and consistency principles

- Educate evaluators in simple and easy to understand language using references from background documentation;
- Answer evaluators' questions and make sure you understand assessment criteria before you start writing;
- Provide 'just enough' details needs analysis, activity description and impact analysis;
- Provide measurable evidence of your claims from credible info sources;
- Present information in the best format for the readers to understand them.
- Make sure to respect Causality principle: and directly interconnect why – what – how – etc.. There should be nothing more and nothing less in your project proposal;
- Make sure to be Consistent in all parts of the project proposal;

Questions and answers

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Thank you for your attention!

Some Useful Links before we continue:

- **EU funds info** www.eufinds.info
- **Balkan Security Network** www.balkansecurity.net
- **ICIP** http://www.icip-serbia.org/
- **CORDIS Partner Search** http://cordis.europa.eu/partners/
- **EEN Technology transfer** http://www.enterprise-europe-network.ec.europa.eu/services/technology-transfer
- **EEN Serbian contact** http://www.een-srbija.rs/
- **The network of European NCP-SME** http://www.ncp-sme.net/
- **WBC-Inco Net** http://www.wbc-inco.net/object/news/list