

EU Funding

Awareness, insights and practical tips

Moore Grants & Incentives (MGI)

Borderless Research
Flemish Council of Universities of Applied Sciences in collaboration with Dutch partners

9 December 2025



Workshop purpose

PURPOSE

- ▶ Raise awareness about EU funding opportunities and strategic considerations
- ▶ Share experiences and common challenges in applying for EU funding
- ▶ Provide practical tips for improving proposal development and collaboration
- ▶ Introduce key concepts such as strategy fit, policy alignment, and the MGI 3S5C methodology



Strategic considerations

WARM UP

Mentimeter

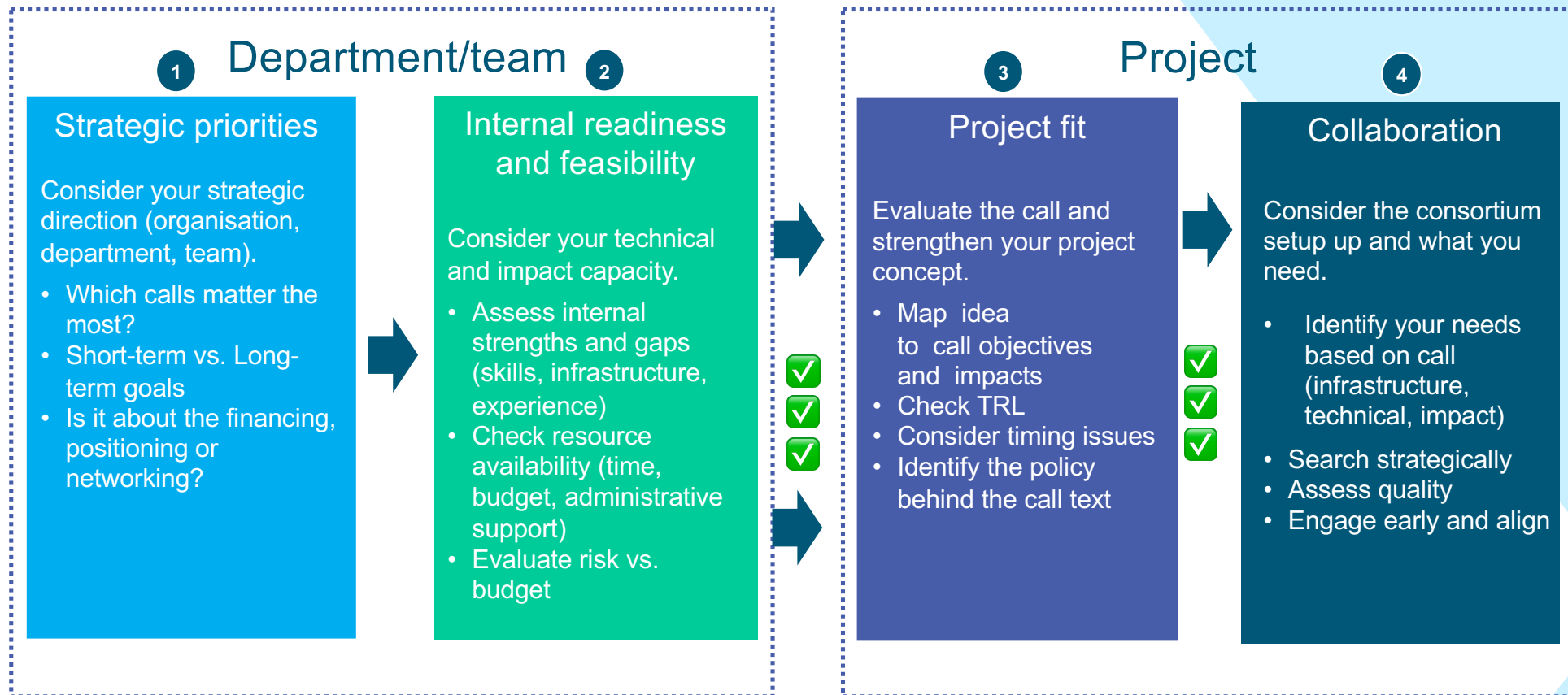
- ▶ What's the first word that comes to mind when you think of EU funding?
 - ▶ Word cloud

QUESTION

Mentimeter

- ▶ What is the biggest challenge you face when applying for EU funding?
 - ▶ Identifying the right EU calls
 - ▶ Partner search
 - ▶ Lack of time
 - ▶ Developing the proposal
 - ▶ Managing the partners
 - ▶ Showing clear project impact
 - ▶ Collaboration internally

STRATEGIC APPROACH



POLICIES LINKED TO PROGRAMMES

Policy priority	Key policy objective	Supporting programmes	Supporting activities	Date
<u>European Green Deal</u> Climate neutrality, clean energy, biodiversity	Make Europe climate neutral by 2050 and drive sustainable economic growth	Horizon Europe (green research), Innovation Fund, LIFE (innovation projects), InvestEU (green projects)	These programmes fund R&D and innovation projects supporting climate action, clean energy, circular economy, and biodiversity.	Dec 2019
<u>Clean Industrial Deal</u> Decarbonisation	Strengthen EU industry competitiveness while supporting digitalisation and green transition	Horizon Europe (industrial & clean tech research), STEP (AI, clean tech), Innovation Fund	They support industrial R&D, technological decarbonisation, and AI-enabled clean technologies.	Mar 2020
<u>Digital Transition / Europe's Digital Decade</u> AI, cybersecurity, digital skills	Achieve a fully digital and resilient Europe by 2030, with advanced digital skills and technologies	Digital Europe Programme, Horizon Europe (digital research), InvestEU (digital projects)	These programmes fund R&D and innovation in digital infrastructure, AI, cybersecurity, data spaces, and digital skills.	Jan 2022
<u>Open Strategic Autonomy</u> Reduce dependency on non-EU tech	Ensure EU self-reliance in strategic technologies and reduce external dependencies	Horizon Europe, Digital Europe Programme, European Defence Fund	They support EU-driven R&D and innovation in critical technologies, defence, and strategic industrial sectors.	Mar 2020

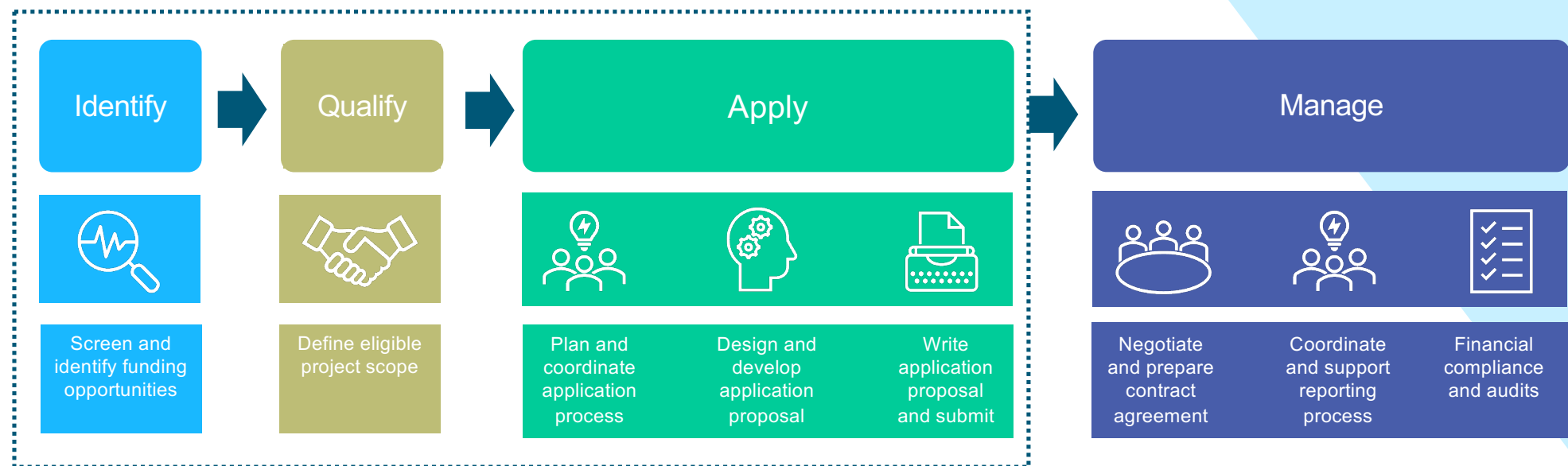


EU funding application process



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THE PROCESS



THE PROCESS

Identify



Screen and
identify funding
opportunities

Action Area	Constructive Approach
Define project objectives	Map concept to call text and related EU policy priorities
Build a strong consortium	Use partner search tools (CORDIS, EU networks), attend brokerage events,
Ensure balanced consortium	Include SMEs, end-users, and societal stakeholders
Establish trust on budgets/IP	Sign preliminary MoUs or NDAs; discuss expectations early
Secure early buy-in from partners	Organise alignment meetings; confirm written commitments if needed
Plan timing and preparation	Maintain a calendar of calls, start drafting well ahead
Agree on the project coordinator	Agree on proposal lead
Check compliance with requirements	Create a checklist for eligibilit, TRL and mandatory deliverables

THE PROCESS

Qualify



Define eligible
project scope

Action Area	Constructive Approach
Align partner expectations on project objectives (1)	Draw up clear concept note (one pager)
Perform initial gap analysis against call requirements	Use structured templates for gap analysis and involve subject experts
Accelerate IP and legal negotiations	Engage legal/IP teams early and use standard consortium agreement templates
Simplify initial budget preparation	Share budget guidelines
Involve finance/legal teams early	Include finance and legal departments in initial planning calls
Secure authorised budget sign-off	Ensure commitments are documented and signed by authorized decision-makers
Align partner expectations (2)	Discuss IP, budget, and timelines during consortium building meetings

THE PROCESS

Apply



Plan and
coordinate
application
process

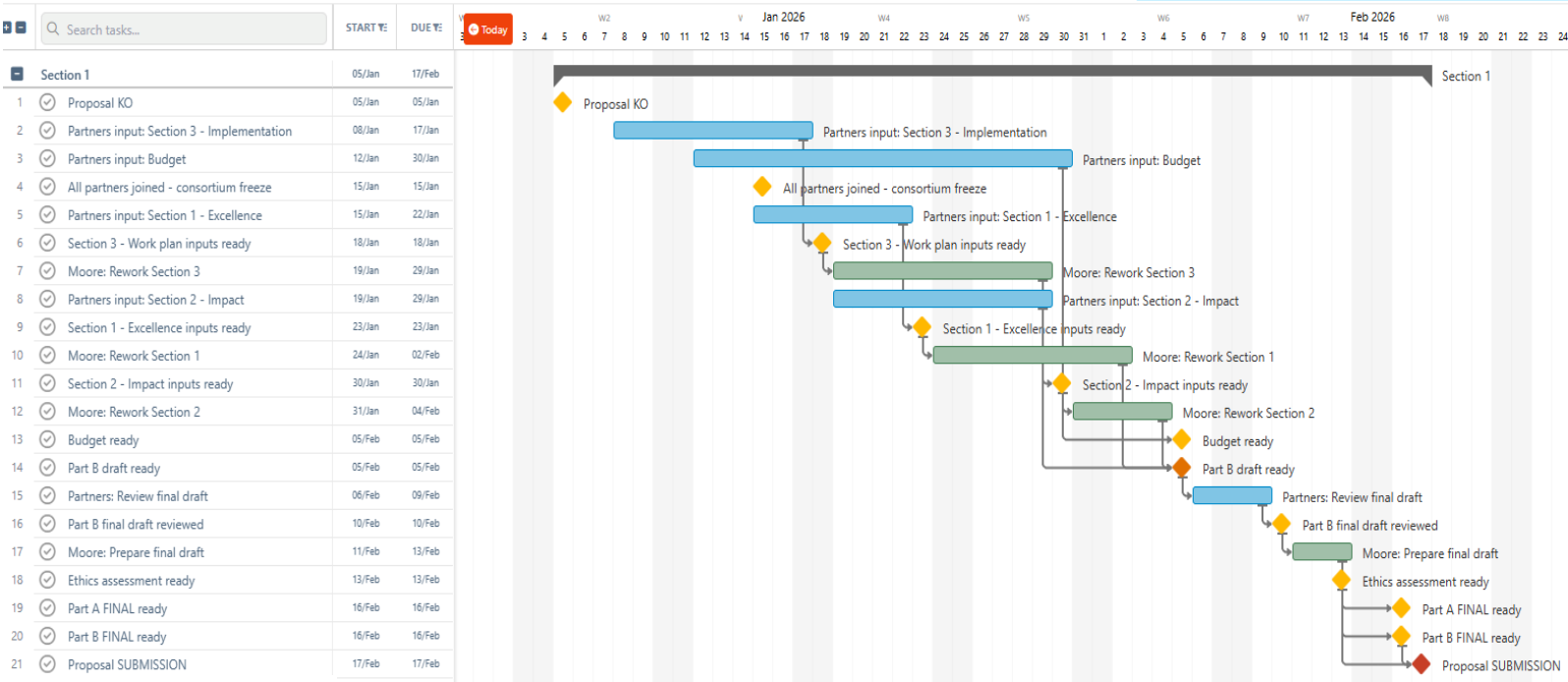
- ▶ Step-by step guidance
 - ▶ Compliance
 - ▶ Share consortium
 - ▶ Information exchange and parallel working
 - ▶ Align content
 - ▶ Roles: SPOCs, Core Team, WP leaders, task leaders
 - ▶ Partner deliverables
- ▶ Workflow and time management
 - ▶ Monitor progress, maintain momentum
 - ▶ Resolve issues promptly
 - ▶ Kick-off and follow-up meetings
 - ▶ Visual tools

THE PROCESS

Apply



Plan and coordinate application process



THE PROCESS

Apply



Design and
develop
application
proposal

- ▶ Gap analysis
 - ▶ Identify gaps and strengths vs. Call criteria
 - ▶ Recommend adjustments
- ▶ Design and develop proposal
 - ▶ Define objectives, work packages and interdependencies early
 - ▶ Challenge scientific approach and align with call priorities
 - ▶ Integrate IP strategy and preliminary budget
 - ▶ Agree on approach to address impact, scalability and exploitation of results

THE PROCESS

Apply



Write
application
proposal and
submit

- ▶ Write proposal (Part B)
 - ▶ Clear instruction needed on format, structure and programme compliance
 - ▶ Agree on way of working: writing/co-writing/review rounds, and who
 - ▶ Continuous partner interaction: (bi) weekly calls, roundtable discussions
- ▶ Prepare budget
 - ▶ Early top-down budget exercise – strategic direction for proposal writing
 - ▶ Followed by detailed bottom-up exercise to finalise figures
 - ▶ Secure full partner agreement: the right person!
- ▶ Administrative information (Part A) and annexes
 - ▶ Start admin early, continuous process
 - ▶ Collect LoI, declarations of honour, partner data

THE PROCESS

Apply



Write
application
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submit

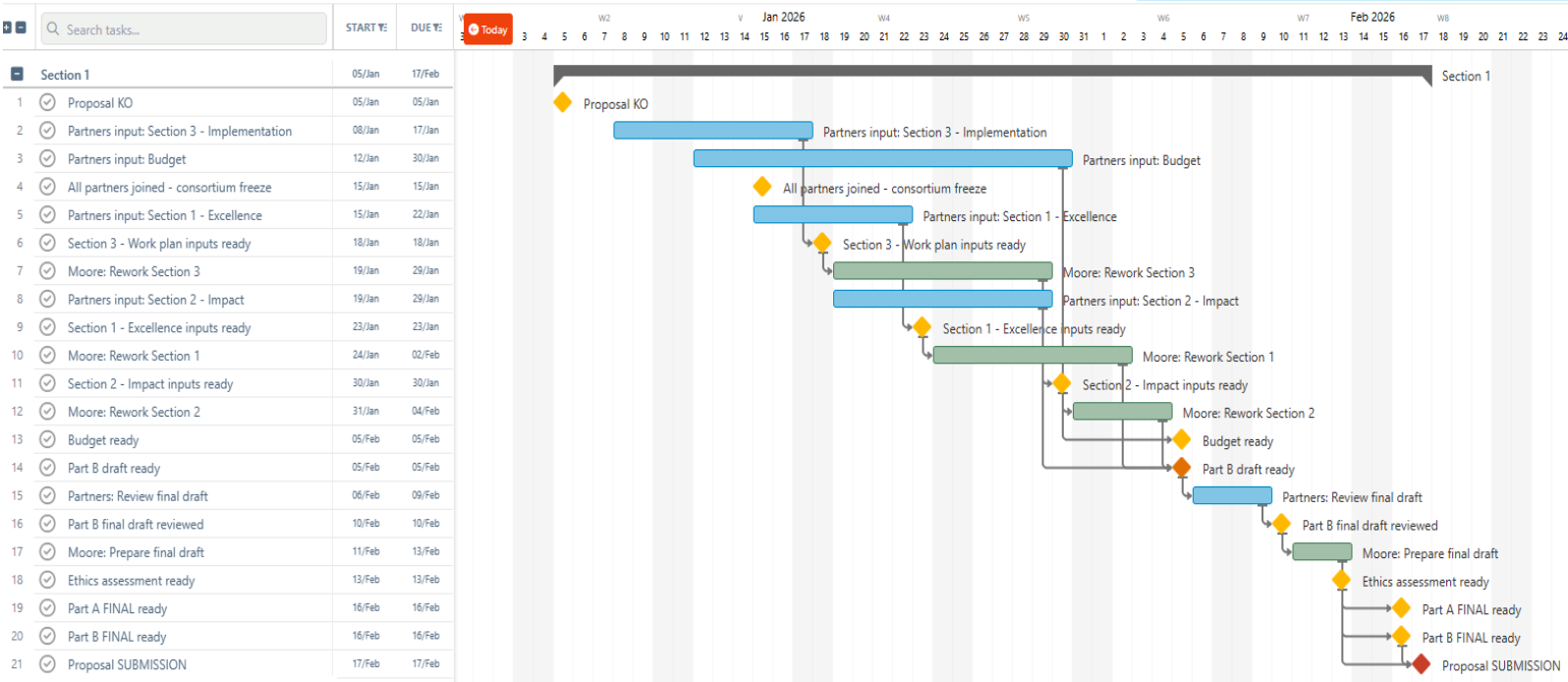
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THE PROCESS

Apply



Plan and coordinate application process



USE OF GENAI

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- ▶ Are you aware of your institution's policy on using Gen AI (e.g. Copilot) for proposal writing?
 - ▶ Yes, allowed
 - ▶ Yes, restricted
 - ▶ No, not sure

USE OF GENAI

Mentimeter

- ▶ If allowed, do you currently use GenAI (e.g. Copilot) in your proposal writing?
 - ▶ Yes, regularly
 - ▶ Occasionally
 - ▶ Rarely
 - ▶ Never
 - ▶ Planning to start

USE OF GENAI

Mentimeter

- ▶ What do you think are the most important considerations when using GenAI in proposal development and writing?
 - ▶ Data privacy and confidentiality
 - ▶ Accuracy and reliability of content
 - ▶ Ethical use and originality
 - ▶ Maintaining scientific quality
 - ▶ Uncertainty about how consortium partners will use it



MGI 3S5C methodology

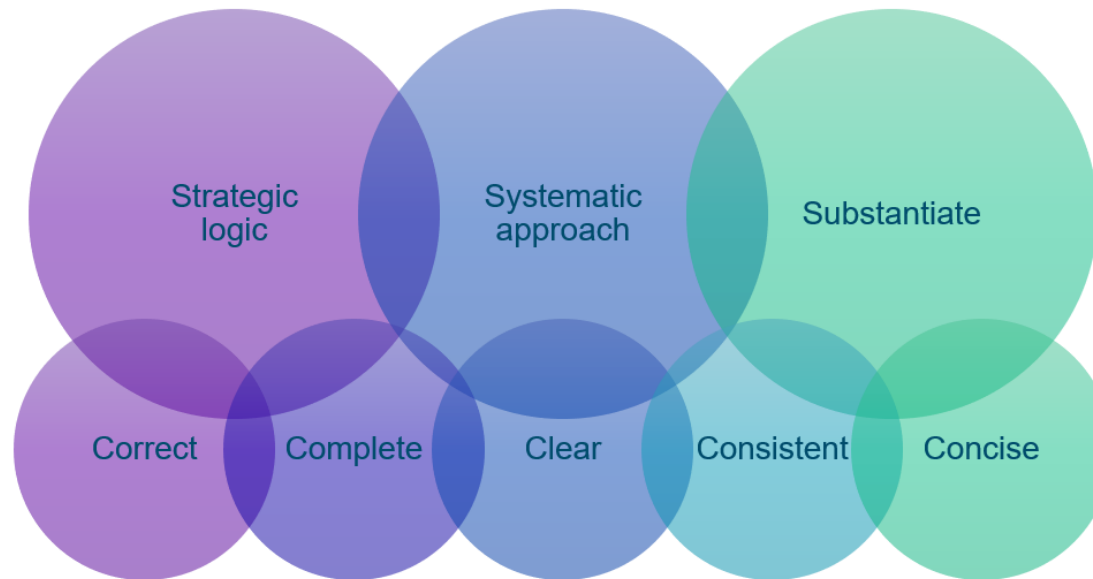
MGI 3S5C METHODOLOGY

How we think and communicate

Apply



Plan and
coordinate
application
process

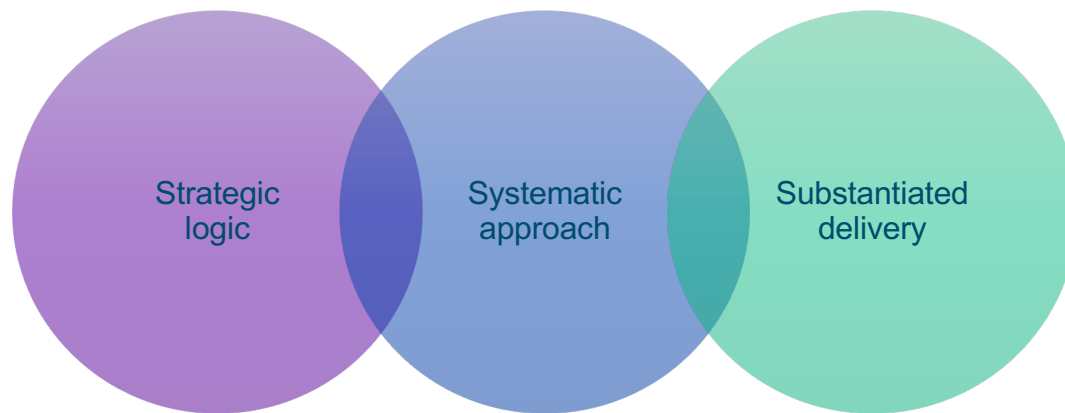


3S5C METHODOLOGY

Apply



Plan and coordinate application process



Clear rational aligning project goals with call objectives while addressing real-life challenges

Does it make sense?

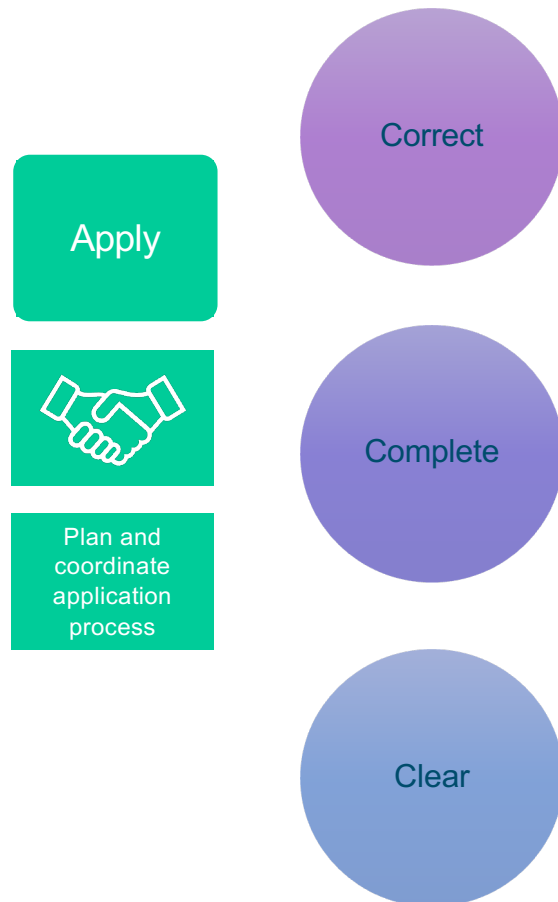
Methodical process with clear agreements, structure, and effective time management

Is the process clear?

Evidence-based arguments supported by credible sources to build trust and show feasibility

Can you prove it?

MGI 3S5C METHODOLOGY



Content thinking

- ▶ Base your concepts on validated facts, sound logic and reliable sources
- ▶ Ensure technical assumptions and calculations are correct

Language/writing

- ▶ Take over the language from the call text
- ▶ Use precise terminology and correct grammar so meaning isn't distorted

Content thinking

- ▶ Think holistically: include all elements for the full picture (objectives, risks etc)
- ▶ Anticipate what stakeholders need to make decisions (partners, customers)

Language/writing

- ▶ Ensure the relevant information is used not all the information (be discriminate)
- ▶ Ensure explanations are thorough (A + B + C and instead of A to C)

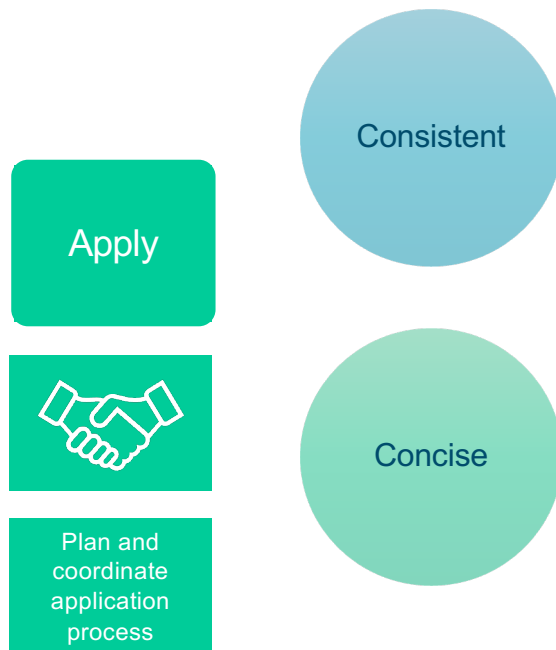
Content thinking

- ▶ Structure ideas logically: Why, what, how, who, when, impact
- ▶ Introduce project-specific technical terms, acronyms before applying them in detail

Language/writing

- ▶ Use direct wording, avoid jargon unless explained
- ▶ Maintain logical transitions in paragraphs/sections, use visualisations

MGI 3S5C METHODOLOGY



Content thinking

- ▶ Apply the same reasoning and assumptions throughout the project proposal
- ▶ Keep KPIs, metrics and terminology aligned across all sections

Language/writing

- ▶ Maintain uniform terminology and structure
- ▶ Use consistent units, data formats and references

Content thinking

- ▶ Focus on what matters the most, prioritise key insights
- ▶ Avoid duplicating information across sections, summarise where possible – use story telling text boxes

Language/writing

- ▶ Eliminate unnecessary information, redundant phrases
- ▶ Keep to the point



Practical tips for Excellence and Impact sections

TIPS FOR EXCELLENCE

► Objectives

- Measurable and verifiable (e.g. KPIs, targets)
- Overarching project objectives should incorporate the WP objectives for overall consistency and completeness
- Show why and how the objectives can be realistically achieved: link to planned tasks and resources.

► Ambition

- Provide clear baseline with numbers and describe how your approach advances knowledge
- Be ambitious but realistic.
- Ensure ambition aligns with the work plan and deliverables

► Methodology

- Start with problem formulation, structure approach logically and justify chosen methods
- Align with WPs

TIPS FOR IMPACT

- ▶ Clear pathways to impact
 - ▶ Clearly link the project results to the expected outcomes (be complete)
 - ▶ Use a cause-effect logic across objectives, activities and outputs
 - ▶ Identify who benefits (industry, academia, customers, use groups, policy makers).
- ▶ Quantify scale and significance
 - ▶ Include numbers (e.g. size of target group, additional healthy years, efficiency savings)
 - ▶ State benchmarks and reference studies
 - ▶ Focus on own project so impact is clear for evaluators
- ▶ Dissemination and communication
 - ▶ Know the difference between the two terms
 - ▶ Set realistic objectives

Round-up

SUCCESS FOR WINNING EU FUNDING

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- ▶ What do you think is critical for winning EU funding?
 - ▶ Strategic alignment with EU policy
 - ▶ Strong consortium
 - ▶ Clear impact demonstration
 - ▶ Evidence-based proposal
 - ▶ Clear scientific or innovative advancement

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- ▶ Proposal development is more than just writing
 - ▶ Its about strategic thinking, strong coordination, structuring and evidence-based arguments etc
- ▶ Strategic fit is essential
- ▶ Address all aspects of the call text and link to EU policy priorities
- ▶ Build a strong consortium
- ▶ Apply the MGI 3S5C methodology
- ▶ Ensure internal readiness and resouce availability
- ▶ Start on time



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@YOUR SERVICE

... for the little things that make all
the difference to you.