

Annex 3 to the OPERRA-COMET Guide for Applicants: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

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1. Who can participate in a proposal?

- All legal entities around the world may participate in the OPERRA/COMET call, regardless of the country of origin. The same approach is in the general Euratom Rules of participation: Chapter II, Section 1, Minimum conditions, Article 5, General principles: *“Any undertaking, university or research centre or other legal entity, whether established in a Member State, an associated country, or a third country, may participate in an indirect action –”*).
- The above applies to current beneficiaries of the OPERRA/COMET projects as well as to any other legal entity (for details regarding the composition of the consortium, please see Question 2).
- The term “participant” refers to a legal entity (not individual scientist – unless a natural person is forming a legal entity on its own).
- Read also carefully the Question 2 below.

2. How should the composition of the consortium be?

PLEASE READ THIS SECTION CAREFULLY, AS SOME CLARIFICATIONS IN REFERENCE TO THE COMPOSITION OF THE CONSORTIA HAVE BEEN ADDED TO THE CALL ANNOUNCEMENTS AND GUIDE FOR APPLICANTS SINCE THE OPENING OF THE CALL.

- **General principles:**
 - There is no maximum limit for number of proposal participants.
 - There are no minimum conditions in reference to the country of origin of the participants.
 - The suitability of the composition of the consortium is one of the elements taken into account in the evaluation (proposal, section 2.2 Consortium as a whole).

- **OPERRA Minimum conditions:**
 - There should be at least three legal entities external to current OPERRA consortium participating in a proposal (no single-partner proposals nor proposals with just two participants are eligible). **Note: In the initial version of the OPERRA call announcement, there were some inconsistencies in the necessary number of participants. This has now been clarified.**
 - There are no conditions for participation regarding the country of origin.
 - Bulk of the budget (meaning more than 50% of the requested EC contribution of the proposal) should be dedicated to the participants external to current OPERRA consortium.

- **Examples of eligible OPERRA consortia:**
 - A consortium with three or more external participants.
 - A consortium with three or more external participants, and one or more member participants, provided that more than 50% of the requested EC contribution is allocated to external participants.

- **Examples of non-eligible OPERRA consortia:**
 - A consortium with just one or two participants.
 - A consortium with one or more member participant and one or two external participants.
 - A consortium with two or more member participants and one or two external participants.
 - A consortium with three or more external participants, and one or more member participants, but less than 50% of the requested EC contribution is allocated to external participants.

- **COMET Minimum conditions:**
 - There should be at least two legal entities external to current COMET consortium participating in a proposal (single-partner proposals are not eligible).
 - There are no conditions for participation regarding the country of origin.
 - At least 80% of the requested EC contribution of the proposal should be dedicated to the participants external to current COMET consortium.

Provided that the above minimum conditions are fulfilled, additional participants may participate in the proposal. Such additional participants can be current COMET beneficiaries or external organizations.

- **Examples of eligible COMET consortia:**
 - A consortium with two or more external participants.
 - A consortium with two or more external participants, and one or more member participants, provided that at least 80% of the requested EC contribution is allocated to external participants.

- **Examples of non-eligible COMET consortia:**
 - A consortium with just one participant.
 - A consortium with one member participant and one external participants.
 - A consortium with two member participants and one external participants.
 - A consortium with two or more external participants, and one or more member participants, but less than 80% of the requested EC contribution is allocated to external participants.

- **Main differences in minimum conditions for OPERRA and COMET calls:**
 - In OPERRA call, there should be **at least three** participants external to OPERRA consortium, and external participants should get **more than 50%** of the EC funding.
 - In COMET call, there should be **at least two** participants external to COMET consortium, and external participants should get **at least 80%** of the EC funding.

- **Third country participants:**

- As all legal entities around the world may participate, there might be participants from third countries (=non-EU member or Switzerland), considering their contribution essential, justifying this in the proposal, and therefore requesting EC funding. In case such participant is included, it is taken into account for fulfilling minimum conditions as: a) such participant is external to current OPERRA/COMET consortium, and b) by requesting EC funding, it has to be taken into account when calculating the EC contribution percentages dedicated to external participants.
- In case there are participants from third countries, not requesting EC funding, they are taken into account for fulfilling the minimum condition requiring participants external to OPERRA/COMET consortium. However, they are not taken into account when calculating EC contribution percentages dedicated to external participants, as they are not requesting EC funding.

3. Who are eligible for EC funding?

- Legal entities from EU member states and Switzerland (=country associated to Euratom FP7) as well as any international European interest organization are eligible for EC funding.
- Legal entities established in third countries and international interest organizations are eligible for EC funding only under special circumstances: there is need to explain in terms of the project's objectives why such funding would be essential or can be otherwise justified. In case such organizations are requesting funding, justifications are needed in proposal, section 2.3 Resources to be committed.

4. Is my organization entitled to 75 % EC contribution?

- Provided that your organization is eligible for EC funding (see Question 3), non-profit public bodies, secondary and higher education establishments, research organisations and SMEs may request up to 75 % of the total costs. For others, the upper limit is 50 %.
- If you are successful in the evaluation, your final costs and funding estimates agreed with the project will also be subject to legal and financial verification by the Commission services.

5. Is it possible to subcontract part of the work?

- Subcontracting is possible, but there are several conditions to be met in order to be able to include subcontracting in the contract with the EC. For more information, please see [EC FP7 Financial Guidelines](#), page 28 onwards.

6. I have an idea X and would like to know if it is relevant for the call?

- The call administrators can't and shouldn't comment anything on proposals worth submitted, as that would interfere the call process and they have to remain objective.
- In general, everybody who believe that their proposal is of any interest, are encouraged to submit proposals. In the proposal itself, the relevance to the call topics and OPERRA/COMET objectives may be described. It is then the duty of the independent evaluators to evaluate the proposals on the basis of the call announcement and the support material, against the criteria of the evaluation form (Guide for applicants, annex 2).

7. How to interpret the proposal template instructions?

- What is the PIC-code? I don't know if my organization has such a code or not. Can I submit a proposal without a PIC?
 - For more information, see http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/pp-pic_en.html. The proposal may be submitted also without a PIC-code, in case your organisation does not have the code yet.
- Are the page limits very strict?
 - Yes, the evaluators will be requested to disregard excessive pages. Even where no page limits are given, or where limits are only recommended, it is in your interest to keep your text concise since over-long proposals are rarely viewed in a positive light by experts.
- Should the reference lists also be included within the page limits?
 - Yes (see above).
- Is it possible to include letters of support or other additional materials?
 - No additional document should be attached to the proposal. This applies also to any possible additional annexes, lists of references, etc. Any additional documents and any pages exceeding the limitations will be discarded.
- What is the maximum file size of a proposal?
 - The maximum file size of a proposal is 2 Mo, including pictures. The proposal must be submitted as a single file in PDF format.
- Is it allowed to prepare only one task description table, with max. 2 pages? Or can there be more copies of the table, provided that the max. 10 pages for section 1 is not exceeded?
 - The task description table (sub-section 1.3.2) should include all tasks foreseen within the submitted proposal and the maximum allowed for this sub-section is 2 pages, even though the max. 10 pages for section 1 is not exceeded.
- In the section 2.1 Individual participants, should there be one page description of each individual scientist, or each organization involved in the proposal?
 - The term "participant" refers to a legal entity (not individual scientist – unless a natural person is forming a legal entity on its own). So, there should be one page description of each legal entity involved in the proposal as participant. The one-page description should also include a short profile of the staff members who will be undertaking the work.