

SiS 2011 Work Programme - Questions and Answers on topics An overview

SiS.2011.1.0-1 Mobilisation and Mutual Learning (MML) Action Plans on societal challenges

- Can the MMLAP activities take place at only one specific stage of the research cycle (e.g. exploiting results) or should they cover more than one stage?

The text of the topic says under "objectives" the MMLAP develops forms of dialogue and cooperation at different **stages** (plural) of the research process. This is repeated under "Content"

- What kind of deliverables are expected? In particular for challenge 3 (inland activities and marine resources)

The outputs should be multiple and respond to the objectives set by the different types of partners in the project.

Examples from previous years:

- joint reports on case studies
- training material adapted to CSOs
- policy recommendations
- mapping of previous research in the chosen fields,
- assessment of previous research / needs & interests of the societal actors which are partners in the project
- new research themes / agenda
- changes in the governance of research (integrating participatory initiatives in the course of research)
- Videos, TV programmes.

NEW

*- Is the project expected to focus on renewable energy **sources** (wind, solar, biofuels, fuel cells, nuclear, etc) or on related **consumption** technologies (electric cars, low-energy appliances, etc) or both?*

The topic focuses in the first place on the generation side including also fossil fuels (CCS). However, "low carbon energy technologies" is a broader concept that also encompasses demand-side technologies, like smart meters. Even if demand-side technologies could also be addressed by the project, the topic focuses on "sources".

NEW

*- Should the project focus on citizens concerns with **existing** renewable energy sources and ways to deal with these concerns, or should it focus on developing **research agendas** (jointly citizens, research organisations) to research and develop new technologies which do not cause such public concern, or both?*

It is at the core of the MML topic to consider citizens concerns and to involve consequently civil society organisations as partners in the project (cf. "Participants") This can be done at different stages of the

	<p>research cycle : "defining research agendas, in the course of research or exploiting research results"- (cf. "Content of the MML Action Plan")</p> <p>NEW <i>- How many such platforms should be created – around six thematic platforms for different renewable technologies?</i></p> <p>The text of the topic does not indicate any constraint about the number of renewable technologies to address in the project. This is for the partners to discuss when they draft the proposal.</p> <p>NEW <i>- Forging partnerships between research organisations and different societal actors – should these be active throughout the duration of the project? How many participants in each platform? How often should they meet?</i></p> <p>This is for the partners to discuss when they draft the proposal. The evaluators will assess the relevance and quality of the involvement of the different partners as well as the relevance and quality of the planned activities in relation with the selected issues.</p> <p>NEW <i>- Can the project involve focused initiatives such as action plans for transition to electric cars in a particular city, transition to energy generation from organic waste in another city, etc.</i></p> <p>As said under "Content" the MML activities are implemented at local and /or regional and /or national level" but bear in mind that they also "should include transnational networking and exchange of best practice."</p>
<p>SiS.2011.1.1.1-1 Involvement of civil society organisations in research</p>	<p>NEW <i>- Is it possible to put the focus in the research project on one specific field only, e.g. environment?</i></p> <p>The text of the topic does not give any specific indication about the fields to be covered. However it should be born in mind that a sub-criterion was added concerning an "appropriate comparative perspective in relation to the proposed research". This can be considered in different ways (geographical, historical, across fields, etc). The applicants are therefore expected to justify the perspective(s) they choose in relation with their proposed research.</p>
<p>SiS.2011.1.1.1-4 - Societal impacts of emerging scientific and technological developments</p>	<p>NEW <i>- Could a proposal be funded if it focuses in analysis of the societal impact of one specific emerging scientific and technological developments (gerontology technologies)?</i></p> <p>The topic states that "Researchers supported under this topic should investigate ways of integrating all these Knowledge Assessment methods into an anticipatory</p>

	<p>approach to science, technology, innovation and Knowledge Societies progress". Nothing prevents researchers to chose particular emerging S&T developments (such as the one quoted), analyse the existing knowledge assessments and propose a way to integrate them.</p> <p>Proposers are invited to "note that the scientific and/or technological excellence evaluation criterion will include the following sub-criterion: "appropriate comparative perspective in relation to the proposed research".</p> <p>NEW</p> <p><i>- The concept of measure or measuring is not mentioned in the formulation of the Expected Impact.</i></p> <p><i>Some of the methods mentioned in the call (Ethical Review, Forecasting and others) are typically qualitative methods that do not produce measurements in the quantitative sense.</i></p> <p><i>Question: With respect to this call, does the Commission anticipate and welcome interpretations of the concept of "measuring" that go beyond quantification?</i></p> <p>With respect to the present call, and in particular under the topic SiS.2011.1.1.1-4 Integrated assessment methods for measuring societal impacts of emerging scientific and technological developments, the concept of "measuring" may go beyond quantification.</p>
<p>SiS.2011.1.1.1-5 A Forward Look at new ways of doing and organising research in our knowledge societies</p>	<p><i>- This topic is very ambitious; it demands "a complete stock-taking of recent and ongoing Forward looking exercises on new ways of carrying out Research, Technology development and innovation in universities, research organisations, companies and civil society, in the EU and its Member States including their methodological background and usefulness for policymaking". Is there any definition of what is a "forward looking exercise on new ways of carrying out Research"; are there certain criteria that make it possible to identify such exercises, new ways of doing research?</i></p> <p>Definition: 'Forward looking exercise' (Foresight) is an extensively documented governance tool used in particular in the area of science, technology and innovation (Borup, 2003, Saritas, 2007). Several Member States have established governmental foresight institutions. It is also a tool for corporate management. This is nothing new but there is nowadays renewed interest in a context of accelerating innovation.</p> <p>Criteria for new ways of doing research: 'new' here is to be understood as opposed to 'classical', i.e. research performed by researchers and for researchers. This 'classical' way of doing and organising research has been opened-up by and to other stakeholders such as industry, policy makers and civil society organisations. This is made more explicit in the call through the examples of trends and drivers ("gender equality, participation of society in defining research directions, open access to and communication of scientific results, interdisciplinarity of research in motion (e.g. social sciences and ethics embedded in natural sciences research projects),</p>

	<p>extended peer review, partnerships between civil society organisations and research teams, new (societal) impact assessment processes, etc").</p> <p>NEW</p> <p><i>- Is it possible to put the focus in the research project on one specific discipline only or does it need to cover various academic disciplines?</i></p> <p>This topic of the 2011 Work Programme focuses specifically on "Forward looking exercises". It states: "Action under this topic should make a complete stock-taking of recent and ongoing Forward looking exercises on new ways of carrying out Research, Technology Development and Innovation in universities, research organisations, companies and civil society, in the EU and its Member States including their methodological background and usefulness for policymaking. In addition a comparison with international Forward looking exercises should be made..." The project must therefore consider existing ("recent or on-going") "Forward looking exercises" on carrying out RTDI. As long as these on "Forward looking exercises" bear on "new ways of doing research" they are relevant to the topic, be they mono or multidisciplinary, and should enter in the analysis.</p>
<p>SiS.2011.1.3.4.1 Clusters of Cities of scientific culture for innovation</p>	<p><i>- The topic shall complement the 2009 SiS topic "Platforms of networks grouping science museums, organisers of science events and cities" which becomes implemented by the project "PLACES" (Platform of Local Authorities and Cities engaged in science). There is hardly any information about this project in the web: The SiS page only briefly mentions it, there is no homepage and it's not in the project data base on CORDIS. Could you please provide us with more information about the project (activities, events, partners etc.)?</i></p> <p>There is no need to have knowledge of the specific project "Places". When we say complementary we refer to the topic objectives which are different but proposals could involve similar actors. We do not want to create the impression that this year's topic supersedes or is better than the topic under which Places is being funded.</p> <p><i>- Do you want the consortium for this topic to work together with the PLACES project in any way or can they be totally independent from each other?</i></p> <p>There is no presumption that consortium should work with Places. It can be totally independent (involving a completely different set of participants). On the other hand, if there are formal links then the proposal must make it clear what it is going to do that is not already covered by Places (this should not be difficult as the objects of the two topics concerned are different).</p> <p><i>- The action plan is to be defined at the proposal stage already, how detailed do you expect it to be?</i></p> <p>The proposal will be evaluated on the basis of the action plans presented. The funding mechanism is CSA (supporting) and so even though networking is important</p>

specific actions should be presented and described.

- Could you explain in more detail the following request (especially against the backdrop that the action plan will be implemented on two levels and needs to be distinct between local and European level): "Although the Plan should identify or define the local activities that are being or will be implemented, the costs incurred for local activities will be eligible for support under this topic only if they are new activities to be implemented jointly through cooperation at the European level under the proposed Plan".

The grant support offered should not be considered as a subsidy simply for supporting ongoing local activities or launching new ones that are executed independently of the proposed consortium.

- On the interpretation of the following text from the description of the topic (SiS.2011.1.3.4-1): The types of activities to be included in the Action Plan could include (non-exhaustive list): Speculative design-led projects involving collaboration between artists, designers, scientists and or technologists; It is not clear what "design-led" refers to here: is the emphasis on the design of the project or design as project content?

Examples of activities are given in the text of the topic. In the case of "speculative design-led" we refer to examples in which particular tasks are set (e.g. a new concept for a "coffee maker") requiring collaboration (between artists, designers, scientists and or technologists). In this particular example, it is for the proposers to identify the task(s) and the nature of the collaboration in the proposal and for to implement it (them) during the course of the action.

- In this same list of possible activities to be included in the Action Plan, are the three examples given really only meant as examples or would it be advisable to base the project on one of the three examples given?

This is for the applicants to decide. The examples are indicative only.

- What size of consortium the EC is looking for, as no minimum number is given?

No specific upper limits have been placed on the number of partners but the call fiche specifies that the maximum requested EU contribution **shall** (i.e. **must**) **not** exceed EUR 2 Million. The topic text indicates that we expect to fund two (2) proposals.

**SiS 2011.2.1.1-1
Implementing structural change in
research organisations/
universities**

- The activities to be funded under this topic shall continue in the longer run without EU support. Does the implementation roadmap which is asked for as part of the proposal, need to include this long term dimension already?

Yes, the proposal should describe within the implementation roadmap for the self-tailored action plans how and when the proposed activities to bring about the changes will be implemented.

- The proposal should include sufficient evidence that 1. the plans will be implemented in the medium to long term, and that, to this end, 2. the proposed activities have the full support of the management structures at the highest levels of these institutions. This will be considered during the evaluation process, too. Can you give us examples of what can be acceptable/insufficient evidence?

The roadmaps should include realistic and measurable implementation targets for each of the organizations. The activities proposed should come accompanied by the active involvement and commitment of the decision making bodies of the institution/ organization where the change (s) is to be implemented. For example, if a proposal claims to be supported by the relevant authority in the institution, a formal letter of commitment will be requested at the negotiation phase, provided the proposal is retained.

NEW

- Does the self-tailored action plan of a university need to cover all university departments or is it ok if the action plan deals with two specific departments only, e.g. information and communication technology and physics?

Not all departments from the University and from the beginning need to be necessarily involved. The project can act as a pilot phase in which only some departments participate, e.g. those where the participation of women to the top is weaker. However, at a later stage, the proposed solutions should be extended to all university departments.

NEW

- Must the proposal cover ALL the elements listed in the topic in order to be eligible? For instance:

- must the action plans address ALL the elements mentioned in the non-exhaustive list or is it envisageable that a proposal does not deal at all with e.g. dual career couples and course content development?

- must the proposal include procedural guidelines for other institutions

Action plans do not need to address all the elements mentioned. It also could address others that are not mentioned (not exhaustive list). The procedural guidelines for other institutions are very important - to bring a European added value.

	<p>NEW</p> <p><i>- Could you provide me with clarifying what is meant with the "impartial assessing of the actions implemented"? Does impartial indicate that it must be performed by person(s) external to the organisations of the consortium partners? Could the assessment be done by persons from the partner organisations who are not directly involved in the project content? Could you possibly give me some examples how such an "impartial assessment throughout the duration of the project" could be done"?</i></p> <p>Impartial in this case mean external to the consortium, it could very well be part of the same organization. One example is to carry out the impartial assessment as soon as a milestone deliverable (S) is produced.</p>
<p>SiS 2011.2.2.1.1 Supporting and coordinating actions on innovative methods in science education: teacher training on inquiry based teaching methods on a large scale in Europe</p>	<p><i>- The work programmes mentioned a clause 40, to be included in the grant agreement of each project selected. What should be brought as arguments and evidence to prove that there no conflict? What is expected as guarantee?</i></p> <p>This question is not clear: the special clause 40 is invoked simply to make sure that material that is being produced and disseminated by individual project can also be disseminated by the SCIENTIX which is an internet platform that is funded by the SiS programme to do just that. However, this does not exempt project proposals from including its own dissemination measures (for instance, a project website) nor from foreseeing translation and adaptation, at least, to the EU languages of the project.</p> <p>NEW</p> <p><i>- Is it possible for a consortium to only focus on life sciences in the proposal, not including any further fields of science and technology?</i></p> <p>The focus of the topic is not on subject matter, but on IBSE techniques which can be used in a number of settings. It is important that the utility of this technique is brought out in the proposal (so that teachers could use it in other settings, for example) rather than an activity which is simply aimed at raising awareness of a particular discipline focusing on learning output rather than learning processes.</p>
<p>SiS.2011.3.0.6-1 Science-Society interaction in the digital technologies era</p>	<p>NEW</p> <p><i>- The call is very broad in scope for a small/medium project. Does the proposal have to cover everything in the call, or could it focus on a couple of significant areas?</i></p> <p>This is a research topic and so the proposal could cover certain aspects in greater detail than others within the framework described in the text</p>

NEW

- What does the call mean when it refers to "traditional media"? Is this TV, radio, email bulletins, print? Standard web pages could be viewed as traditional media when compared to blogs, facebook, twitter etc.

In the context of this topic, "traditional media" refers to "Newspaper, TV, Radio" while modern mass media refers to "Internet, Mobile Devices (Mobile Phone - iMode - iPod), Interactive Kiosks, Interactive TV".

NEW

- The call indicates we need at least one media organisation/public body/non-academic partner in the consortium as an actual member (rather than just associated with the proposal/appearing on a steering group). Please confirm that this is the case.

The topic states: 'The proposed consortium should comprise expertise from the scientific community, science communicators and media'. This kind of composition is not an eligibility criteria: their involvement could be as consortium members but it may take other forms.

General questions

<p>Implementation roadmap</p>	<p><i>- What is the difference between "action plan" and "implementation roadmap" and how are they both connected with the work-packages?</i></p> <p>There should be a self-tailored action plan per partner describing the activities (proposed structural changes) that will be addressed. These plans should consider the specific needs, challenges and problems of each institution. Within this plan, there should be a timetable (= roadmap) for implementation which would indicate when and how these activities are going to take place (timing).</p> <p>The description of the plan and the roadmap in terms of deliverables, milestones within the work-packages is up to the proposer. The proposal should leave very clear the activities to be carried out and their implementation timing</p>
<p>Evaluation procedure</p>	<p><i>- The evaluation for all collaborative projects includes additionally the sub-criterion "appropriate comparative perspective in relation to the proposed research". Could you please give us further information about this criterion?</i></p> <p>As SiS research activities must be sufficiently meaningful in a European context, what is sought after here is that the research subject will be developed in such a way that a real comparative approach is deployed, at European level. This would allow research outcomes to be meaningful at the level of the EU because they will be ideally comparing a large number of European case-studies, allowing to draw relevant conclusions. It has to be noted however that unless specified in the Work programme and the Call Fiches, a simply large consortium in geographical terms (i.e. a lot of participating countries) provides no guarantee that this criterion is fulfilled. It would be rather on the side of research methodology, design and outcomes that this criterion would be judged.</p>
<p>CSO - definition</p>	<p>NEW</p> <p><i>- CSO is defined in the SiS WP as "a legal entity which is non governmental, non profit, not representing commercial interest and pursuing a common purpose in the public interest". What is then the difference between CSOs and NGOs?</i></p> <p>In the WP it was decided to provide a definition of what is meant by CSO in order to avoid various understanding with the NGO current use.</p> <p>According to the work-programme, CSO is a legal entity which is non governmental, non profit, not representing commercial interests and pursuing a common purpose in the public interest.</p> <p>A so-called NGO which fulfils the definition of a CSO given in the programme can therefore be considered as a CSO within the call.</p>

Lump sum

- Who is eligible for the lump sum payment – is this just the target groups, or anyone in the consortium that wants to use it?

Firstly an issue of definition:

Beneficiary to a grant agreement is an organisation that signs the contract and is bound by its conditions including those relating to the submission of audited claims for reimbursement of eligible costs. In the SiS 2011 Work Programme, an organisation in receipt of a lump sum is not defined as a beneficiary to the grant agreement. On the one hand this facilitates the financial aspects (see below) on the other hand the lump sum is limited to a maximum of 25 000 EURO.

The possibility to use lump sum payments is offered only to stakeholder organisations who wish to involve some of their members/affiliates in some parts of the project and in such circumstances the lump sum per member/affiliate is limited to a maximum of 25 000 EURO. The stakeholder organisation must be a signatory to the grant agreement as a beneficiary and will disburse the lump sums.

- How is the budget worked out? It's a maximum of 25 000 as per the current FR max, but this does not stipulate whether the beneficiary costs up their role in the project on real cost basis then asks for the lump sum which is reimbursed at usual reimbursement rate, or whether they say what they want and the Commission decides. It is implied it is the first of these, but I think we need clarification. If the Commission decides the amounts, how is this worked out? Is it the same as ICPC countries? I.e. function of time on the project.

Commission will not decide the lump sum amount. It's up to the particular stakeholder organization to determine in the part B of the proposal the estimated eligible cost foreseen in the project that might be incurred by its members/affiliates. Those estimated eligible costs should be linked to project deliveries and activities described in part B. The maximum EU contribution will not exceed 25 000 EURO. However, the lump sum facility is an option. Members/affiliates of stakeholder organizations who wish to receive more than 25 000 EURO cannot use the lump sum option and must instead follow the normal procedures for an identified beneficiary (with the subsequent obligations as regards submission of audited claims for reimbursement on the basis of incurred eligible costs). Furthermore, it is possible for identified beneficiaries in the grant agreement to receive 25 000 EURO or less but of course there will be obligations as regards submission of audited claims for reimbursement on the basis of incurred eligible costs

- Obvious problem that it would disadvantage 'wealthier' countries since there is an upper limit

See above comments.

- Do the same rules for the GA apply? i.e. the lump sum might make the beneficiaries in these other organisations think that they aren't part of the consortium and might have a surprise when they are asked to sign up to the GA anyway.

The members/affiliate of stakeholder organizations wishing to receive lump sum payments must be identified at the proposal stage along with their planned activities in the project and the related budget foreseen. They will not have to sign the grant agreement. Nevertheless, they will be considered as third party under special clause 10, meaning they will have to be identified in the grant agreement and provide form C.

- What will be required for audit purposes in practice?

Under special clause 10, third parties are linked by the provisions on audits (article II.22 and II.23) and shall keep track of all necessary supporting evidence documents.

- What about moving money between partners if one of these partners drops out?

Budget transfers are allowed under the usual conditions of the GA. Consequences of the removal of members/affiliates shall be discussed among the consortium and with the project officer.

NEW

- A consortium is planning to include third parties under the new lump sum option - does the PIC number of these third parties need to be obtained and provided already at the proposal stage?

Although strongly recommended, getting a PIC at the stage of preparing and submitting a proposal is not compulsory - please see the "EPSS preparation and submission guide" page 4 (<http://cordis.europa.eu/documents/documentlibrary/91055671EN6.pdf>):

"Important: Applicants are able to prepare and submit their proposal (use EPSS) without the possession or without the introduction of PIC."

Please also note (SiS 2011 Work Programme - page 6): *"Members of participating stakeholder organisations seeking to avail themselves of this option must be identified in part B of the submitted proposal. During the negotiation, such members will be specified in the grant agreement and its description of work, as well as in the tables of estimated budget breakdowns of the project".*