

Background to my motivations

In my active phase as a scientist I have cared for EU projects, was project coordinator and evaluator for the European Commission. Especially in the last 15 years I served as "EU Liaison Officer", advised colleagues and held lectures on how to successfully solicit funding from national and international research sponsors.

We are experiencing a paradigm shift almost everywhere: on the way to a united Europe the importance of central funding from the European Commission grows immensely for national companies and institutions. This also applies to the field of research in universities, research institutes and SMEs (small and medium-sized enterprises). In the 7th EU Research Framework Program (FP7) the EU spent between 2007-2013 more than 54 billion € - primarily for cross-border research and development, but also to motivate research organizations and companies to innovate and intensify cooperations.

The 8th Framework Program, better known as HORIZON 2020, started in 2014 - and the final budget has been increased to close to 80.000 million Euro, 10 billion € per year...

But experience shows that oversubscription leads to an average success rate for applications of between 10-15 %. Fortunately this is not really valid for the Max Planck Society (MPG), where in recent years between 25 - 40 % of the applications were successful. A significant contribution to this achievement is due to the Brussels Office of the MPG and the roughly a dozen "EU advisers" covering most of the Institutes. I was one of them - and I continue to pass on my experience in form of (motivational) lectures and direct advice.