UNIVERSITY
OF INSUBRIA

RESEARCH AND TEACHING AREA
Research and Internationalization Office
Research and Innovation Office

GUIDELINES
FOR THE SUBMISSION AND MANAGEMENT OF FUNDED RESEARCH PROJECTS

Updated in November 2020

INTRODUCTION

The following **guidelines** provide operative and procedural indications for a correct management of each stage of a research project:

- Identifying funding opportunities
- Designing and submitting proposals
- Assessment
- Implementation of the project (beginning, management, monitoring, reporting)
- Results promotion
- Audit

This handbook is intended as a support tool for professors, researchers, research fellows, and technical-administrative personnel, who are involved in the management of "institutional" research projects, that is, those projects which have been funded on the basis of programs or calls sponsored by national and international institutions, in which the University is a partner or third party and not a mere provider of a service.

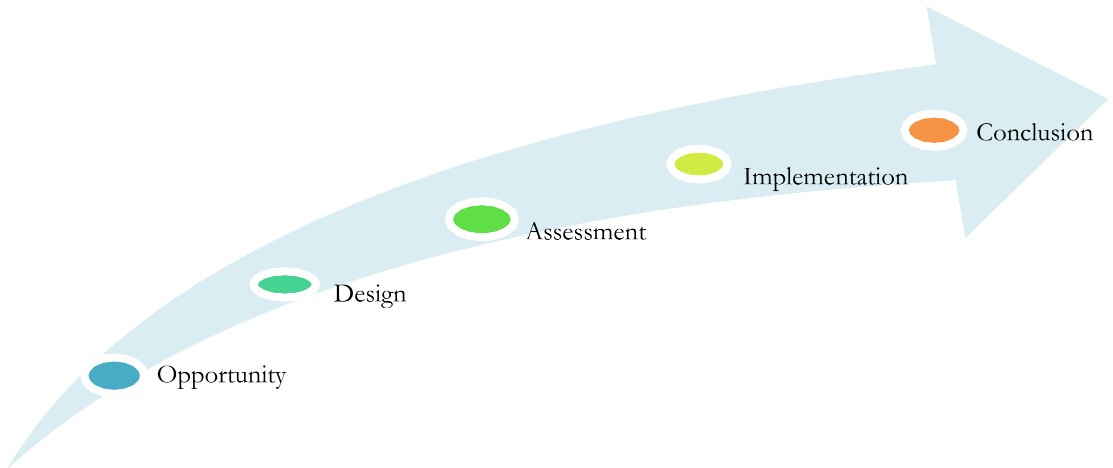
This handbook, therefore, does not concern activities on account of third parties.

For each phase of the project, the handbook specifies the administrative offices that should be involved and provides some general recommendations.

All templates mentioned in the handbook are available in a modifiable format in the intranet.

We recommend to refer to the documents provided by the funding institution (call, contract, report guidelines, work program, etc.) before starting to organize the proposal or the report for awarded projects.

The Research and Innovation Office is always available to offer advice in case of need at ricerca@uninsubria.it or by phone: 0332 217211-15/031 3686143.



1. IDENTIFYING FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

In order to identify the most suitable funding opportunities for the project idea, the researcher may use several tools:

- **Research Professional**: the University personnel has access to the Research Professional platform, which offers the following services:
  - **Search for funding programs**: this allows to search within a database of more than 15.000 calls, which is constantly updated by the specialized Research Professional staff. The searches may be personalized on the basis of different parameters (thematic keyword, discipline, funding institution, country, funding type, publication date), saved in your personal page and shared. It is also possible to add the deadlines to your calendar and set up email alerts to monitor new opportunities;
  - **News:** this sections allows to retrieve important information on the news regarding scientific research;
  - **Conferences:** this section offers the possibility to find invitations to submit papers to academic journals or conferences and to participate in events in order to create a contact network;
  - **Awards:** this section provides information on the recipients of various grants and their partnerships, which is useful to understand the state of the art of research, identify potential partners and better understand how to meet the requests of funding institutions.

  The portal is freely accessible by anyone who is on campus, as "guest". In order to use all services from devices which are not connected to the University's network, you need to access through a personal profile.
  Accounts for professors, researchers, research fellows and PhD students active as of 15 September 2020 are already available. Please check that you have received the activation email on your institutional email account. Newly hired personnel may create a personal profile by connecting to the Research Professional home page from a PC connected to the University's network, clicking on "register" in the top right-hand corner and entering the institutional email address as username (with the @uninsubria.it or @studenti.uninsubria.it domain).
  For information, please contact ricerca@uninsubria.it

  As an alternative, in order to identify the most suitable funding opportunities for your subject matter, you may refer to the list of main funding institutions on the page National and International Funding Opportunities

- **Newsletter:** the Research and Innovation Office regularly sends to all professors, researchers, research fellows and PhD students two notices:
  - The Research Newsletter, which gathers information on funding calls for research projects and internal deadlines for the submission of proposals, calls launch events, partner search requests and APRE's, Horizon's National Contact Point, weekly newsletter.

  - The Innovation Newsletter, which includes information on the main events for the promotion of innovative technologies and several opportunities for their enhancement.

- **Brokerage events and partner search platforms:**
  - **Participation in calls launch events**, brokerage events or useful initiatives for the creation of a contact network.
  - **Partner search platforms**: useful not only to find partners for already identified calls, but also to display the profile of your research group, thus putting it forward for possible collaborations on lines of research of your interest. A list of some partner search sites is available on the Researchers support page of the University's website.

- **European Commission Experts**
  The European Commission avails itself of external experts to assess projects and provide an opinion in specific cases and/or in the arrangement of policies or programs. Such opportunity is very useful to better understand the projects' assessment methodologies, therefore, it is strongly recommended. You may register as an expert by following this link.

Contacts
Research and Innovation Office ricerca@uninsubria.it

Documents and templates available in the intranet
Partner search format

Useful links
Research Professional
National and International Funding Opportunities
Research Newsletter (restricted access intranet)
Innovation Newsletter (restricted access intranet)
Researchers support
European Commission: Work as an Expert

2. DESIGNING AND SUBMITTING PROPOSALS

Professors who have identified a call to their interest, which they intend to participate in, must immediately notify ricerca@uninsubria.it and their Department.

At least **5 days** before the deadline of the call, the Project Coordinator must send to ricerca@uninsubria.it the following documents:

- Project draft;
- Budget;
- Specific documents required by the call;
- Memorandums of Understanding and/or agreements, for partnership projects;
- Letter of commitment to co-funding, if needed (cf. the special case of project co-funding);
- Letter of commitment for untenured personnel, (cf. the special case of untenured Research Coordinator).

This is necessary in order to allow the office to check that the documents reflect the funding institution's and the University's requests.
This check is not guaranteed if the documents are sent after the abovementioned deadline.
Should the call provide for submission through **an electronic platform**, if possible, give the Research and Innovation Office read-only access.
Should the call require the **signature** of an authorized representative of the University, the documents will have to signed by the Rector or, in their absence, by the Deputy Rector. The Directors of the Departments and the Research Coordinator are not authorized to sign as legal representatives the applications for institutional research projects. The Research and Innovation Office will submit the documents to be signed by the Rector in the format provided for by the funding institution, and will forward it via email or internal mail to the Research Coordinator for the project submission.
In case of **digital signature**, in order not to corrupt the file and jeopardize the validity of the document, please download the received file using **MS Outlook** (via webmail or PC), **without opening and renaming it**. The signature may be checked by using the Infocert Dike Go Sign software (which you should install on your PC).

Please, visit the "Research projects: submission indications" intranet section, where you may find regular updates on the information herein contained, pages dedicated to the main funding programs (e.g. H2020, PRIN, Cariplo Foundation Calls, etc.) and the slides on planning which were provided in previous training events.

2.1 SUGGESTIONS FOR WRITING THE PROPOSAL

Always read all documents provided for by the funding institution (call, reporting guidelines, contracts, FAQs, work programs, general policies, etc.).

Here follow some elements to which special attention should be paid.

Evaluation criteria

These provide information on important aspects of a project which should be given emphasis to, e.g. interdisciplinarity, internationalization, local nature, etc.

Number of fundable projects

The amount of the resources made available and the maximum permitted contribution provide information on the number of fundable projects and the probabilities of obtaining the contribution.

IPR

In partnership projects, it may be necessary to provide for, already in the planning phase, some agreements for the protection of intellectual property and existing know-how. The Research and Innovation Office is available to support researchers in the definition of such aspects. Templates and further information are available in the Results promotion specific page.

Project impact, communication, dissemination and sustainability

In the assessment of projects on the part of funding institutions, ever increasing importance is being given to the aspects of dissemination, communication, impact and sustainability.
Dissemination refers to the transfer of results to promote their exploitation (also from an economic point of view) in a practical perspective. In this case, the reference target will consist in subjects who specialize in a particular field, for example the scientific community and legislators.
Communication, instead, includes information and promotion activities to increase the visibility of the project and, therefore, addresses a more general target (public opinion and the media).
Impact refers to the influence that the activity and its results have on the people, practices, organizations and systems, also in order to reach the aims of the funding institutions' policies.
In order to maximize the **impact**, it might be useful to arrange for a communication and dissemination plan which takes advantage of available resources. Some funding institutions, in order to maximize the research impact, request publishing the results in Open Access.
Another important aspect to underline while writing the project is its **sustainability**, that is, the possibility to continue it and to use its results after the funding period has ended. Not all parts of the project or results may be sustainable and it is important to consider its dissemination and its promotion as a progression which goes further than the duration of the project, and towards the future.

TRL

The **Technology Readiness Level – TRL** is an index which allows to measure the level of maturity of technology.
It identifies the several phases which go from conceptualization of new technology to its introduction on the market.
The TRL identifies the phases of research and development, in-lab reproduction, testing, prototyping and piloting, up until monitoring of productive and operative experimental phases.
Its value ranges form 1 to 9.
In the context of the Horizon 2020 Program there are 9 Levels:

TRL 1 = basic principles observed
TRL 2 = technology concept formulated
TRL 3 = experimental proof of concept
TRL 4 = technology validated in lab
TRL 5 = technology validated in industrially relevant environment
TRL 6 = technology demonstrated in industrially relevant environment
TRL 7 = system prototype demonstration in operational environment
TRL 8 = system complete and qualified
TRL 9 = actual system proven in operational environment (competitive manufacturing in the case of key enabling technologies; or in space)

HRS4R

In 2019 the University received the HRS4R (Human Resources Strategy for Researchers) award, a quality mark awarded by the European Commission, which identifies the institutions which guarantee a favorable work environment for the professional development of researchers, with respect for the European Charter for Researchers and the European Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers. Such certification may be exploited in the project description to guarantee the respect for European policies on ethics, integrity and transparency. Further information is available on the HR excellence in research & Uninsubria webpage.

University description

Here follow some links with useful information for the University description to add to the proposals:

- Uninsubria Profile on the ECAS platform with a list of H2020 and FP7 funded projects
- List of funded projects in selection calls (national calls, private calls, etc.) (from 2017 onwards)
- Enhancement of the HRS4R award for the presentation of the recipient institution

Experimentation authorizations

Some calls may require, already in the submission phase, to forward the necessary experimentation authorizations on the part of some bodies (e.g. Ethics Committee, Body for the Protection of Animals (OPBA), Cultural heritage department, etc.), for the implementation of the activity.
In such cases, it might be useful to verify with the funding institution if the mere authorization request is sufficient.
Expenses for issuing authorizations may be admissible and must be added to the project budget.
To this end, the expenses provided for by the Ministry of Health for the authorization requests for animal experimentation, effective as of 2019, are available in the specific page.
In general, we recommend to add the expenses for the issuing of authorizations (tariff D), for retrospective evaluations (tariff H), for extensions and addition of new personnel (tariff F) and for scientific changes (tariff E) to the budget, for an approximate amount of 1500 euros.

Expenses admissibility criteria

The call (or contract, reporting guidelines, etc.) provides information on the expenses that the funding institution considers valid in order to assess the project cost.

Such expenses are sometimes grouped into predetermined categories, and some percentages to abide by or mandatory entries to be entered may be requested (e.g. audit).
Inadmissible expenses which are necessary to carry out the project may not be reimbursed, but will have to be covered by tenured personnel costs (cf. the entry for tenured personnel, point c), by general expenses (cf. specific entry) or by the professor's funds (cf. Special cases: co-funding)

Composition of the research group

Check how the call defines the research group.
Some funding institutions do not allow some categories of personnel, such as recipients of scholarships, PhD students, technical personnel, etc., to participate (e.g. PRIN).

Effort of the involved personnel

The time spent by the research group on the project must be adequate to the required activities and the aims to reach.
It is possible to ascribe to the project only the time that was actually spent on it.
Other activities/projects in which each member of the research group will be involved in should be taken into consideration in the planning phase.
To this end, please remember that:

- the teaching load of professors and researchers is of at least 350 hours per year (270 for fixed-time personnel).
- PhD students, in the context of their program, have to carry out some training activities, whose number of hours per year is decided by the Doctoral Program Committee. Should the Committee not have deliberated on this amount, it is possible to quantify it in 350 hours per year.

In light of these considerations, we recommend to provide for these figures a maximum effort of 6 month per year (or nonetheless no more than 9 months per year), provided that this is coherent with the scientific activity carried out in the context of the project.
It is the responsibility of the P.I. to gather information on the commitments already undertaken by the members of the research group and to explain the effort entailed in the project.

Recruitment of personnel

For the personnel who, at the submission and beginning of the project, does not have an active contract, it is necessary to proceed with recruitment, if this is permitted by the funding institution.
Therefore, indicating the names of the people involved or promoting their CV in the planning phase is not possible (with the exception of the provisions described in the section Special Cases: untenured PI).
Instead, the "to be recruited" indication and a description of the required professional profile must be added.
If the duration of the contract to be activated coincides with that of the project, it is possible that, due to recruitment times (at least 3 months for research fellows/recipients of scholarships, 6 months for fixed-time researchers), it will not be possible to report all months of activity in the implementation phase. Therefore, it would be useful to make sure that enough funds to cover these months and the costs of the teaching activity of any fixed-time researchers and PhD students which are not directly reportable on the project are available.
Such funds may derive from the project itself (through tenured personnel costs or overhead, if fixed)

or from the professor's resources (see Special cases: co-funding).
For the duration and amounts of the main contracts, please refer to the specific document.

Tenured personnel

In research projects, the cost of the time spent on the project by tenured professors and researchers may:

a. be considered by the funding institution as a form of co-funding on the part of the University, which, added to the contribution paid by the funding institution, constitutes the total cost of the project (e.g. PRIN);
b. be considered by the funding institution as an inadmissible expense. In such cases, the expense will not appear in the budget, but there will only be a general indication of the research group's effort in the description of the project (e.g. Cariplo Foundation Research Calls);
c. be recorded and reimbursed by the funding institution. In this case, the funding institution will recognize the hours dedicated by the researcher to the project in the context of the normal working activity and reimburse their cost to the University (personnel costs record and/or implicit personnel costs). Such reimbursement represents a resource for the project, which may be used to cover inadmissible expenses (e.g. amortization, teaching activity for fixed-time researchers to recruit, etc.) or unforeseen expenses (see Expenses admissibility criteria).

For an assessment of the personnel cost, see the specific entry

Tenured personnel: cost assessment in the submission phase

Assessment procedures are defined by the rules of the funding institution, which may allow for fixed expenses or require to assess the expenses sustained by the institution for the employed resource. Such expense is generally calculated by dividing the work cost by the productive time and multiplying the result for the time spent on the project.

a. Work cost: the call indicates any inadmissible entries (e.g. IRAP for H2020 calls). It is possible to check the cost with the Salary and Benefits Office or to refer to the salary tables (professors, technical-administrative personnel), by checking the financial position on the wage slip.
b. Productive time: it refers to the time that the resource may spend on the project in a year, generally 1.500 hours for national projects, 1.720 hours for projects funded by the Horizon 2020 Program.
c. Time spent on the project: see the indications for effort above.

Since the assessment method changes from one call to another, we recommend to check with the Research and Innovation Office the correctness of the calculated cost before compiling the budget.

Tools and instrumental goods

Check if the call allows for the purchase, rent or lease of tools.
In case of purchase, only the good's amortization expenses, in relation to the period and percentage of use on the project, is generally admissible.
To assess the amortization expenses, please use the specific file, after having checked its compatibility with the rules provided for by the funding institution.

Audit

Some funding institutions may require project expenses to be certified by an auditor. The amount to be entered equals indicatively 1.5-2% of the expenses to be audited, except for different indications in the call.

Entrusting this service follows the normal procedures provided for in the regulations and is generally considered as an admissible expense.

For further information on audit activities, please see the specific page.

Indirect costs/Overhead/General expenses

Some calls may provide for the reimbursement of expenses which are not directly ascribable to the project activities, such as phones, electricity, gas, and consumables which are not directly linked to the project, such as gloves, test tubes, etc.

These are regarded as indirect costs, also known as overhead or general expenses. Generally, there are 3 types:

- Fixed expenses: the funding institution reimburses a percentage of the direct expenses (or a certain amount, as established in the call or chosen by the participant) and, in the project reporting phase, does not require any expense receipts. This is the case of general expenses in PRIN projects, of current expenses in Cariplo Foundation Research Calls or of the overhead of H2020 projects;
- Actually sustained expenses: the funding institution reimburses the individual expenses actually sustained, prior to the submission of the expenses receipts in the reporting phase. The expenses entry may or may not have an upper limit percentage;
- Actually sustained expenses distributed according to predetermined assessment methods. The funding institution reimburses actually sustained expenses, provided that these are distributed following a *pro-rata* assessment method, which defines the share of the organization's general expenses which are ascribable to the project. As an example here follow some methods: Number of hours spent on the project/total number of workable hours; Personnel units working on the project/number of people who work in the whole organization or Department of the recipient; Number of square meters used by the personnel working on the project/surface of the entire organization or Department of the recipient, general expenses/personnel cost.

  The University's accounting system does not permit the use of the last type, so in the planning phase it is necessary to contact the Research and Innovation Office or enter 0 in the entry.

Check the type of indirect expenses attribution chosen by the funding institution. Should the first type, fixed overhead, be provided for, this may act as a resource to cover inadmissible or unforeseen expenses (cf. Expenses admissibility criteria and letter c of the Tenured personnel entry above)

Should the third type be provided for, it is necessary to contact the Research and Innovation Office.

Expenses for the administrative management of the project

Should the expense be admissible, we recommend to put the expenses for the administrative management of the project on the budget, in the form of part-time administrative personnel to recruit or service to entrust to a consulting company, especially for big-budget projects with several partners.

Such expense may also be covered by the fixed overhead of the project or by tenured personnel costs.

To enter this item, please contact the Office.

2.2 SPECIAL CASES

Untenured Project Coordinator

For each project it is necessary to identify a Project Coordinator from the University.
This role is generally undertaken by tenured personnel. However, in some special cases (for example MSCA IF; young researchers calls) it may be undertaken by researchers who do not have an active contract with the University, prior to the submission of a letter of commitment by the Director of the Department.

Project co-funding

Should the call require co-funding on the part of the University, this may be guaranteed through:

a. tenured, or recruited with University funds, personnel costs (recommended);
b. professor's funds: in this case it is necessary to submit a letter, signed by the professor and by the SAD, which attests the availability of the resources and binds their use to the project;
c. University funds: in this case it is necessary to submit a request to the Financial Resources Office, attaching all necessary support documents, and forward the contribution concession notification to the Research Office. The letters described in b and c above will be required also in case the project provides for expenses which are not entirely covered by the contribution of the funding institution (e.g. tools purchase, fixed-time researchers recruitment, etc.)

Maximum number of participants per University

Should a call provide for a maximum number of participants per University, the Research and Innovation Office will send an email to all professors to start an internal selection procedure, providing a deadline for the documents that should be submitted.
Should the call require some participation constraints at a departmental level, the choice will be made by the Department itself.
In case the call deadline does not allow for the activation of an internal selection procedure, the first professor who made a request to the Office, which, should more structures participate, will not be liable, will be authorized to submit the project.
For contributions requests to the Banca del Monte di Lombardia Foundation there are some specific guidelines, which are available in the intranet.

Direct call in specific high-qualification programs

Direct calls are a specific academic career access tool, reserved for subjects with specific requisites, pursuant to article no. 1, paragraph 9 of the Law no. 230 of 2005.
They are a direct recruitment form, through a special procedure which does not provide for calls on the part of the individual universities, but a nominative proposal which the University sends directly to the Ministry. There is a specific type of direct call which is reserved for scholars who qualified for specific high-qualification research programs, identified by the MIUR with a specific decree.

Currently identified programs and the positions for direct call for those who qualified are:
- MSCA International Outgoing Fellowship, IF Global Fellowship: type B fixed-time researcher.
- ERC Starting Grant, Consolidator Grant, Advanced Grant: type B fixed-time researcher, full, or associate professor.

The University's Research Committee, in order to promote young talents, supports the associate professor position for ERC Starting Grant or the full professor position for ERC Consolidator and Advanced.

Tenure Track

Tenure-track is a procedure adopted by some foreign universities through which academic researchers with a fixed-time contract may be confirmed full-time, if they prove that they possess the suitable academic requirements.
In the Italian academic structure, this position corresponds to type B fixed-time researcher, provided for in article no. 24, paragraph 5 of the Law no. 240/2010.
Therefore, should you want to participate in international calls which require a tenure track, it is necessary to provide for a type B fixed-time researcher position in the project, as a type A fixed-time position is not sufficient. Please also remember that the researcher selection will have to abide by normal selection procedures, except for the cases to which direct call requisites apply (see the specific paragraph).
When a call provides for a tenure track, the professor will have to contact the Research and Innovation Office, which, together with the Recruitment and Career Office, will provide all necessary information to participate.

Contacts
Research and Innovation Office ricerca@uninsubria.it

Forms available in the intranet
Pre-proposal for internal selections
Letter of commitment to co-funding with the funds of the professor/department
Letter of authorization for untenured PI

Templates available in the intranet
Letter of commitment (to be used only if the funding institution does not provide a *fac-simile*)
Tables to assess untenured personnel costs (research fellows, recipients of scholarships, PhD students)
Tables to assess amortization expenses

Useful documents available in the intranet (enter link)

Tables with salary expenses for professors and researchers

Tables with salary expenses for technical-administrative personnel

MIUR Regulations - Direct Calls in specific high-qualification programs

Useful links

List of the University's funded projects
Body for the Protection of Animals (OPBA): how to submit an opinion request to the Ministry of Health
Code of ethics, code of conduct and principles of research integrity of the University of Insubria: consolidated text
Open Access: useful resources
European Commission: Gender Dimension Quality
European Commission: Ethics Assessment
European IPR Helpdesk
Administration and Careers Office

Specific funding programs pages

Banca del Monte di Lombardia Foundation: how to submit a proposal
Cariplo Foundation: how to submit a proposal
Horizon 2020: how to submit a proposal
PRIN 2020: how to submit a proposal

3. ASSESSMENT

The assessment phase normally takes a few months. Some funding institutions provide some indications on the timing in the call or in the work program.
Should the funding institution require some integrations, the professor may contact the Research and Innovation Office to receive some support in the arrangement and submission of the same.
In case of negative outcome, it is possible to ask the funding institution for the assessment form.
The Office is available to support in the analysis of the same and in identifying possible areas of improvement for re-submission of the project.
In case of positive outcome, professors must promptly notify their Department and the Research and Innovation Office.

Contacts
Research and Innovation Office ricerca@uninsubria.it

4. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

The Project Coordinator will handle the relationships with the funding institution and the partners, guaranteeing the implementation of the project following the funding institution's times and procedures.

Professors are supported in this phase by the Administrative Office of their Department, to which they should promptly notify all changes to current activities and the administrative requests submitted by the partners and by the funding institution.

The Research and Innovation Office is available to offer advice to departmental structures on the required fulfillments in order to start, implement and report the activity on the part of the funding institutions, and the agreements which relate to intellectual property.

Such fulfillments vary significantly from one project to the next. We, therefore, recommend to read the documents provided by the funding institution carefully (guidelines, contract, policies, etc.).

Here follow some good practices which may be useful in the management of the activities and some templates, which may be modified according to the needs of the project, should the funding institution not have provided specific *fac-similes*.

For the main funding programs (e.g. H2020, PRIN, Cariplo Foundation Research Calls) we recommend to visit the specific intranet pages.

Project start: preliminary fulfillments

The **Department's Board** will approve:

- The participation in the project, with the identification of the Project Coordinator and of the budget (revised, if need be, should a different contribution with reference to what was provided for in the budget be granted);

- The stipulation of the agreement with the funding institution (if needed);
- The stipulation of the agreements with the partners, also linked to IPRs, for collaborative projects (if not already stipulated in the submission phase)

The **agreements** will be signed by the Rector, prior to the approval of the Board of Directors.

The Department's Administrative Office will agree with the General Affairs Office and Collegial Bodies upon the procedures for the approval of the agreements and their signature in due time with regard to the deadlines provided for by the funding institution.

Those agreements whose schemes have already been approved by the Board of Directors represent an exception, as they may be signed directly by the Director of the Department.

In particular, we recommend to pay special attention to those projects which entail some ethical **issues,** with specific reference to:

- research in which human beings are involved;
- research that entails the use, production and gathering of human tissues or cells;
- research that entails the collection of personal data;
- research on animals;
- research which may have a negative impact on the environment, health and safety of involved researchers;
- research in third countries;
- the possibility of double use of technology: research, technology, and information which may have military, terrorist, etc., aim, use or employment;
- technology and information which may be used for non ethical aims,

which may require authorization, specific documents or expenses (see Experimentation authorization and the Privacy and data processing intranet page)

Project management: good practices

In writing accounting and administrative documents (orders, invoices, recruitment calls, contracts, letters of assignment, missions authorizations, etc.), you should always specify the **project references**, such as ID code, title, Project Unique Code and the source of the funding.

Abide by the regulations on the use of the **logo** on the part of the funding institution.

Always add to publications an **acknowledgment** of the project and Funding Institution.

Expenses will have to be made in accordance with current laws and university regulations, following the funding institution's guidelines.

The **relevance of the expenses** to the funded project must always be evident in the documents. In expenses requests and/or missions **authorizations**, we recommend that you specify the reason and the relation with the funded project, by integrating, if need be, the normal forms with specific statements by the Project Coordinator.

Always abide by public evidence procedures for the **recruitment of personnel**, which, just like the contract, will have to display the references to the project and funding institution.

People who have been expressly employed for the project cannot work on other projects.

In order to attest the hours worked by the personnel, it is necessary to arrange for a timesheet which summarizes the activities carried out and must be signed by the resource and by the Project Coordinator.
In some cases, the timesheet must be integrated, that is, it must contain all activities carried out by the resource (e.g. teaching activities, other projects, etc.), and not only those which relate to the reported project.
If the resource was recruited *ad hoc* for the project, it may be possible, if permitted by the funding institution, to substitute the timesheet with an exclusive work statement for the project.

For already-recruited internal personnel, we recommend to arrange for a letter of assignment, which contains the number of hours to be spent on the project, together with the use of the integrated timesheet.

We recommend not to use all resources deriving from the fixed overhead or the tenured personnel costs at the beginning of the project, as their actual availability depends on the reporting trend. Please also remember that they may be used for expenses which do not relate to the project only after all audit deadlines on the part of the funding institution have expired (normally from 3 to 10 years after the conclusion of the project).

Monitoring

In order to facilitate monitoring activities, by avoiding delays and allowing for any necessary scientific or budgetary changes, we recommend to arrange for a project **schedule**, which contains:

- Administrative deadlines provided for by the funding institution
- Scientific deadlines provided for by the funding institution
- Purchases and recruitment activities plan
- Monitoring plan
- A list of the documents to be arranged for each deadline

For particularly conspicuous funds, it may be useful to adopt a monitoring system which allows to verify at established intervals not only the expenses sustained, but also the amount of the necessary resources to conclude the project.

Reporting

Scientific and administrative-accounting reporting rules always vary according to the funding institution and the call.
There are institutions which judge synthetic reporting based on self-certification sufficient, others who adopt complex rules and require very specific documentary evidence.
Even if the institutions do not require the submission of documentary evidence, these must be produced and kept on record (for a period which varies from 3 to 10 years), as these may be requested by the auditors sent by the funding institution for *ex-post* audits.
Indeed, should these not be available during the audit stage, the funding may undergo some reductions

which will be proportioned to the incorrectly documented expenses.

Therefore, we recommend to carefully read the indications provided by the funding institution.

In general, we recommend to pay particular attention to:
- the **personnel cost** assessment method (tabular cost vs real cost),
- the **inadmissibility** of some expenses entries, such as IRAP (for European projects), recoverable VAT, etc.
- correct charging of the **expenses entries** (e.g. stationery, gloves and test tubes for laboratories are considered by some funding institutions as general expenses and not as consumables)
- charging of amortization **expenses** for tools purchases

More specific indications for the main funding programs are provided in the specific intranet pages.

Contacts
Administrative Offices of the Project Coordinator's Department

Department's Administrative Offices Consulting
Research and Innovation Office ricerca@uninsubria.it

Templates available in the intranet
Consortium Agreement DESCA docx – commented pdf
Individual project timesheet
Integrated timesheet with 6 WP
Letter of assignment ITA

Documents in the intranet
How to define and manage the background in Horizon 2020

Useful Pages (enter link)
Open Access: useful information and list of publisher agreements already stipulated by the University
Privacy and data processing
University image handbook
Body for the Protection of Animals (OPBA): how to submit an opinion request to the Ministry of Health
Regulations for research scholarships
Regulations for the assignment of research grants

5. RESULTS PROMOTION

The University supports the promotion of the results of research mainly through patents and the establishment of spin-off companies.

5.1 PROTECTING THE RESULTS OF RESEARCH AND INDUSTRIAL EXPLOITATION

The **patent** is one of the most effective tools to promote the results of research.

A patent provides exclusive exploitation rights for your invention in a specific territory and for a predetermined time period. With it, you may prevent others from producing, selling or using the invention without authorization.
An invention, in order to be patentable, must entail a new and original solution to a technical problem. The object of the invention may be an innovative product, but also a method of goods production or service implementation.

There are three patentability requisites:
- **novelty**: an invention is considered new if it has not been made accessible to the public prior to the registration date of the patent application.
- **originality**: an invention is thus considered when, for an expert in the field, it is not evidently related to the state of the art.
- **industrial application**: the invention must have an industrial application, or be technically implementable, and must have practical effects.

The University equipped itself with the Regulations of the University of Insubria on industrial property, which regulate all results obtained during research.
The Regulations define, following the law, those who have the exploitation rights for the research results and state that researchers must communicate, through a brief written report, to ricerca@uninsubria.it, any patentable inventive result, using the following documents:

- Patent communication
- Patent description

The Regulations provide for the appointment of a Committee of experts who are called each time to express their opinion on the decisions which relate to a specific invention and on the patent application which may derive from it.
In order to protect patentable innovative results, it is fundamental to maintain the strictest confidentiality on the same. We therefore recommend to avoid any form of publication and to resort to specific **confidentiality agreements**. By clicking on this link you may download the templates in Italian and in English for this type of agreement.
For further clarifications, please write to ricerca@uninsubria.it

5.2 START UPS

Academic **Spin-offs** are limited companies founded by researchers (professors, students, technicians etc.) from the University, which aim to commercially exploit the results of the research activity and the scientific-technical abilities developed within the University. The activities carried out by the spin-offs must be clearly distinguishable and non-competitive with regard to institutional ones carried out within the University.
The University of Insubria equipped itself with the Regulations for the establishment and accreditation of innovative companies, which defines the criteria and the necessary procedures for the establishment and participation of its researchers in these companies.
The Regulations state that:
1. The "*University of Insubria Start Up*" company may be established as a limited liability company only.

2. The Company must have the connotation of "Innovative start up".
3. The Company's activity must be based on the results of the research and/or know-how obtained and developed at least in part within the University.
4. Among the members there must be at least one employee and/or collaborator of the University from the following categories: professors and researchers, technical-administrative personnel, research fellows, PhD students and students.

The birth of **innovative Start ups**, companies with specific characteristics, is thus favored, recognizing them among the most effective tools to promote the transfer of the technological innovations developed by its researchers on the market.
The University may decide whether or not to participate as a member in the enterprise.
In order to obtain the accreditation as **University of Insubria Start up**, you must submit a formal request to the Board of Directors, by filling out the following documents and sending them to ricerca@uninsubria.it:

- Accreditation Request
- Accreditation Proposal

The accreditation as **University of Insubria Start up** requires signing an agreement between the company and the University, which regulates, among other things, the use of the seal and of the University's facilities.

Contacts
Research and Innovation Office ricerca@uninsubria.it

Forms available in the intranet
Patent communication
Patent description
Start up accreditation request
Start up accreditation proposal
Start up accreditation agreement

Useful links
Regulations for the establishment and accreditation of innovative companies
Regulations of the University of Insubria on industrial property
University of Insubria Start Ups
University of Insubria patents
Innovation Newsletter
Open Access: useful information and list of publisher agreements already stipulated by the University

6. AUDIT

Audit is a verification and revision process of an activity or system, which aims to assess its compliance with current regulations and procedures and the achievement of the stated objectives.

Financial audits are increasingly used by supplying institutions and may be carried out directly by the funding institution, be entrusted to external audit companies or to monitoring groups within the institution, as is the case with ministerial projects.

6.1 PRIN - FIRB PROJECTS INTERNAL AUDIT

The MIUR, with Ministerial Decree no. 51 of 19 March 2010, provided for the implementation, for all PRIN and FIRB projects, of first level audits by an internal audit group and second level audits carried out directly by the Ministry on a sample which is not lower than 10% of all funded projects and for an amount of at least 10% of the ministerial funding, and ensuring a minimum number of audits for each University and for each scientific field.

The audit group performs a check of the reports submitted by the Administrative Office and Project Coordinator only.

Contacts
For funding institutions external audits: Department Secretary
For PRIN and FIRB internal audits: Research and Innovation Office ricerca@uninsubria.it

Useful links
H2020: audit guidelines
Cariplo Foundation: audit guidelines
PRIN: New administrative-accounting verification procedures
PRIN 2017: how to manage the project

DEFINITIONS

Competitive selection call research project

To be considered competitive, a project must have two requisites:

1) a public call, which entails the participation of more subjects (Universities, Public/Private Institutions and Foundations, Research Institutions, Departments, Research groups or units etc.)
2) the selection of winners with a referee system. Funding may derive from local, regional, national, European and international calls by public and private Organizations, Associations, Foundations, Agencies and Institutions[1].

   Referee system refers to the assessment on the basis of prearranged criteria carried out by the funding institution through its internal structures or using external reviewers.

In the absence of the second requisite, the research project is considered as non-competitive. In the absence of the first requisite, it should be considered as a contribution request.

Institutional research project

This refers to those projects which are funded on the basis of programs or calls promoted by national and international institutions, which aim at the attainment of interests for the University and do not fall under third-party activity.[2]

Fundamental, industrial and experimental development research[3]

<u>"fundamental research"</u>: experimental or theoretical works carried out specifically to acquire new knowledge on the bases of observable phenomena and facts, without direct application or commercial uses;

<u>"industrial research":</u> planned research or critical investigations which aim to acquire new knowledge and abilities to develop new products, processes or services, or to improve existing products, processes or services. It entails the creation of the components of complex systems and may include the development of prototypes in a lab environment or in an environment with simulation interfaces towards existing systems, and the implementation of pilot lines, if necessary for industrial research, in particular with the aim of validating general technologies;

<u>"experimental development":</u> the acquisition, combination, organization and use of existing scientific, technological, commercial or other knowledge and abilities with the aim of developing new or improved products, processes or services. Under this definition fall all other activities which are intended to conceptually define, plan and document new products, processes or services. Under experimental development fall the development of prototypes, the demonstration and implementation of pilot products, new and improved products, processes or services tests and validations carried out in an environment which reproduces real operative conditions, whose main objective is the introduction of further technical improvements for products, processes and services which are not fundamentally

---

[1] Guidelines for filling out the "scheda unica annuale SUA RD"
[2] Accounting Handbook, article no. 8.7.2
[3] in article no. 2 paragraphs 85 and 86 of the EU Regulations no. 651/14

definitive. Experimental development may, therefore, entail the development of a prototype or of a pilot product, which may be used for commercial purposes, which necessarily is the final commercial product and whose production cost is too high to be used for demonstration and validation only. However, experimental development does not include all routine or periodical changes made to products, production lines, building processes and existing services and other on-going operations, even if such changes represent improvements.

Memorandum of Understanding

It is a document which is used in the submission phase of contributions requests to funding institutions, in order to regulate the partners' main commitments.
Should they obtain the contribution, a real agreement stipulated by the parties generally follows from the Memorandum of Understanding.

Non Disclosure Agreement (NDA)
It is the contract which is used to guarantee that confidential information which must be shared remains restricted and is not used for purposes not agreed upon by the parties.
Restricted information refers to, for example, know-how, technologies, patentable ideas, etc. and, in general, all information which may have an economic value or which may damage the parties, if disclosed.
Such information must not be of public domain and must not already be possessed by the party who receives them.

Material Transfer Agreement
It is an agreement whose aim is the transfer of material substances (e.g. biological material, chemical components, etc.) and/or of information, in order to assess them for research purposes, in the context of which there is no cooperation among researchers and there is no intention to allocate intellectual property rights.
Such contractual tool is used for internal research only. Disclosing the material/information provided for assessment to third parties or using it for commercial purposes is explicitly forbidden. It refers to short-time contracts with the aim of assessing the material for research purposes and set the foundations for a possible future collaboration between the parties.