



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

DIRECTORATE-GENERAL FOR AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Directorate H. Sustainability and Quality of Agriculture and Rural Development
H.5. Research and Innovation

GUIDELINES ON PROGRAMMING FOR INNOVATION AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EIP FOR AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY AND SUSTAINABILITY

Programming period 2014-2020
16 March 2016

Annex to the EIP guidelines of December 2014, as updated for the Rural Development Committee of 16 March 2016, including info on synergies and complementarities developed between the Horizon 2020 EU research policy and the rural development policy under the CAP

Annex: EIP-AGRI Common format for interactive innovation projects

The interactive innovation approach under the European Innovation Partnership Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability (EIP-AGRI)¹ fosters the development of demand-driven innovation through projects, turning creative new ideas into practical applications thanks to interactions between partners, the sharing of knowledge and effective intermediation and dissemination.

The EIP **common format** consists of a set of basic elements characterising the project and **includes one or more "practice abstract(s)"**. The format was developed with two main objectives:

- (1) to enable contacting partners and incentivise efficient knowledge exchange, and
- (2) to disseminate the results of the project in a concise and easy understandable way to practitioners.

The common format allows providing information all along the life-cycle of the project. The **content in the common format can be updated at any moment** when useful, for instance in an intermediate phase of the project. Project information should at least be available **at the beginning** (describing the situation at the start of the project, including project title and objectives) and **at the end of the project** (describing the results/recommendations resulting from the project, including a final project report and the practice abstracts).

The **common format** consists in obligatory, recommended and optional elements. Its fields are listed in the bullets below.

¹The European Innovation Partnership for Agricultural productivity and Sustainability (EIP-AGRI) was launched by the European Commission in 2012. It aims to foster a competitive and sustainable agriculture and forestry sector that "achieves more from less":

<http://ec.europa.eu/eip/agriculture/en/content/eip-agri-part-eu%E2%80%99s-growth-strategy-decade>

1) Obligatory elements

- **Title** of the project in native language: short and easily understandable (one key sentence on the project; max 150 characters, word count – no spaces)
- **Title** of the project in English: short and easily understandable (one key sentence on the project; max 150 characters, word count – no spaces)
- **Editor** of the text: person/organisation responsible for delivering the text
- **Project coordinator** (lead-partner) according to the cooperation/consortium agreement: name, address, e-mail, telephone
- **Project partners**: name, address, e-mail, telephone, type of partner (farm holder, advisor, research institute, SME, NGO, or other)
- **Keyword-category** (to be chosen from a pre-defined list of categories)
- **Project period** (starting date, end date)
- **Project status**: ongoing (after selection of the project) or completed (after final payment)
- **Main funding source** (Rural development programme, H2020, or other EU, national/regional or private funds)
- **Total budget** of the project
- **Geographical location** where the main project activities take place: NUTS 3 level, to enable contacting within/between a climatic/regional entities
- **Final report** (in the form of an annex), including a substantial description of the results - obligatory once the project is completed – to be drafted according to the requirements specific for the funding source

Practice "abstract":

- **Objective** of the project in native language: what problems/opportunities does the project address that are relevant for the practitioner/end-user, and how will they be solved? - (300-600 characters, word count – no spaces)
- **Objective** of the project in English: what problems/opportunities does the project address that are relevant for the practitioner/end-user, and how will they be solved? - (300-600 characters, word count – no spaces)
- **Short summary for practitioners** in native language on the (final or expected) outcomes (1000-1500 characters, word count – no spaces).

This summary should at least contain the following information:

- **Main results/outcomes** of the activity (expected or final)
- The **main practical recommendation(s)**: what would be the main added value/benefit/opportunities to the end-user if the generated knowledge is implemented? How can the practitioner make use of the results?

This summary should be as interesting as possible for farmers/end-users, using a direct and easy understandable language and pointing out entrepreneurial elements which are particularly relevant for practitioners (e.g. related to cost, productivity etc). Research oriented aspects which do not help the understanding of the practice itself should be avoided.

Several practice abstracts may be needed for one project, depending on the size of the project and the number of outcomes/recommendations which are ready for practice.

2) Recommended elements

- **Description of project activities in native language**: (max 600 characters, word count – no spaces): short summary highlighting main project activities.
- **Description of project activities in English**: (max 600 characters, word count – no spaces): short summary highlighting main project activities.
- **Short summary for practitioners in English**: short summary according to guidance (see box above under "practice abstract"; 1000-1500 characters, word count - no spaces)
- **Audiovisual material** which is useful and attractive for practitioners (e.g. YouTube link, videos, other dissemination material)
- **Website** of the project (URL)
- **Links to other website(s)** hosting information on the project (results) that are available after the project has ended, by preference using the existing local/regional/national communication channels that practitioners most often use.

3) Optional elements

- [additional fields are available for additional practice abstracts]: **Practice "abstract" in native language**: short summary according to the guidance in the text box above (max. 1500 characters, word count – no spaces)]
- [additional fields are available for additional practice abstracts]: **Practice "abstract" in English**: short summary according to the guidance in the text box above (max. 1500 characters, word count – no spaces)]
- **Description of the context of the project** (e.g. drivers in legislation/ markets or other causes that were at the origin of the project, etc.)
- **Additional information** on the project as required by the specific guidance at national / regional level (e.g. for detailed monitoring purposes)
- **Additional comments**: free text field which can be used by the editor e.g. for listing facilitating elements or obstacles for the implementation of the produced results, for suggestions for future actions/research, for messages to consumers, etc.

Context:

Rural Development Policy 2014-2020 and the European Union Research and Innovation Policy "Horizon 2020" (H2020) both aim at demand-driven innovation and complement each other in providing opportunities for EIP interactive innovation projects. Rural development programmes are applied within a specific programme region, whilst H2020 policy goes beyond this scale by funding innovative actions at transnational level.

Under the EIP-AGRI, synergies and complementarities have been developed between the Horizon 2020 EU research policy and the rural development policy under the CAP. Firstly, they all contribute to the common EIP-AGRI web database. Rural development Operational Groups and interactive and practice-oriented projects under Horizon 2020, such as multi-actor projects and thematic networks, will feed the EIP-AGRI web database for practitioners using the common EIP format.

Moreover, all Horizon 2020 multi-actor projects are strongly recommended to involve relevant interactive innovation groups operating in the EIP-AGRI context, such as rural development Operational Groups. Developing a common database will ease contact between groups working on similar issues and incentivise knowledge flows. Multi-actor projects may provide potential innovative material to rural development Operational Groups for further development and vice versa. The EIP-AGRI network is there to link them and incentivise exchange between them.

Last but not least, using the common format for practice oriented projects will give visibility to actors involved. It will enable measuring impact of projects and rewarding researchers' work for practice, in an analogue approach to research abstracts in scientific journals. Together they will build a unique EU repository of practical information.

Why an EIP-AGRI common format?

Communicating about projects, activities and results - both during and after the project's lifetime – at the EU level is much easier through the use of a common format for practice-oriented projects. Such common format **facilitates the knowledge flow and enables contacting** of farmers, researchers and all other actors involved in innovation projects. The content of the common format was developed and agreed at EU level thanks to the work of the Standing Committee for Agricultural Research (SCAR)².

How will the information in the EIP common format be shared?

The **EIP-AGRI website**³ will host and share the information at the EU level. The EIP-AGRI common format is recommended to all projects that wish to provide information on their concrete outcomes for practitioners. These include interactive and practice-oriented innovation projects funded by sources other than rural development programmes and Horizon 2020, for instance national/ regional funding, Interreg, etc.

Which projects will use the common format?

² The SCAR Strategic Working Group on Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems (SWG AKIS) developed the common format on the basis of experience in Member States

³ <http://ec.europa.eu/eip/agriculture/>

All Horizon 2020 multi-actor projects and H2020 thematic networks, as well as all EIP Operational Groups will use the EIP common format to provide info to practitioners. The common element between the 3 types of projects listed below in more detail is that they all envisage implementing the EIP-AGRI interactive innovation approach, and will all deliver outputs that are expected to be useful for practitioners.

1. Multi-actor projects

The H2020 **multi-actor approach**⁴ aims at demand-driven innovation because research projects' objectives and planning are targeted to needs/problems and opportunities of end-users. They should result in practical knowledge which is easy understandable and accessible. The approach requires that end-users and multipliers of research results, such as farmers, farmers' groups or advisors are closely involved throughout the whole project period. This should lead to innovative solutions that are more likely to be applied in the field, because those who need the solutions will be involved right from the start and will bring in complementary practical knowledge: from defining the questions, to planning, to implementing research work, to experiment and right up until possible demonstration and dissemination.

2. Thematic networks

Thematic networks⁵ are a particular format of multi-actor projects that aims to compile knowledge ready for practice in a specific field. This knowledge should be easily understandable for practitioners, stay available beyond the project period, and also be shared through the EIP-AGRI network. Thematic networks will summarise and present best practices and research results with a focus on themes and issues that are "near to be put into practice", but not sufficiently known yet by practitioners.

3. EIP Operational Groups

Operational Groups⁶ are multi-actor projects funded under the rural development policy. They are requested to make the plans and results of their work available for others in the EIP network to use. The use of the EIP-AGRI common format for reporting on operational group projects through the EIP-AGRI network will definitely play an important role in this regard, as it will help connecting Operational Groups funded under rural development with Horizon 2020 research consortia on specific topics and themes.

What are common elements for the "interactive" innovation projects developed under the EIP-AGRI?

In the **interactive innovation model**, building blocks for innovation are expected to come from science, but also from practice and intermediaries, such as farmers, advisors, businesses, NGOs, etc. Key for interactive innovation is to include existing (sometimes

⁴ http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/wp/2016_2017/main/h2020-wp1617-food_en.pdf p.10 definition of multi-actor approach

⁵ http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/wp/2016_2017/main/h2020-wp1617-food_en.pdf p.139 Thematic Networks compiling knowledge ready for practice

⁶ See section 4.1 of the rural development EIP guidelines http://ec.europa.eu/eip/agriculture/sites/agri-eip/files/pb_guidelines_eip_implementation_2014_en.pdf

tacit) knowledge into building innovative solutions, which is crucial for tackling complex challenges in a holistic approach. In interactive innovation projects, end-users and practitioners are involved, not as a study-object, but in view of using their entrepreneurial skills and practical knowledge for developing the solution or opportunity and creating co-ownership. Innovation generated with an interactive approach tends to deliver solutions that are well adapted to real circumstances and easier to implement since the wider participation speeds up the acceptance and dissemination of new ideas. In short, the focus of interactive innovation is: "an idea put into practice with success". A new idea turns into a genuine innovation only if it is widely adopted and proves its usefulness in practice.

EIP-AGRI: “Ideas, put into practice, with success”

Having potential innovative knowledge is one thing, turning it into reality is another.