

Almost all IEE promotion and dissemination projects require collaboration with a minimum of 3 independent partners from different countries¹. Only organisations established in one of the 27 EU Member States, Croatia, Norway, Iceland, FYR of Macedonia and Liechtenstein are currently eligible. If an organisation is not established in any of these countries it cannot sign a grant agreement with the EACI even if it does not request any EU financial support. Under certain conditions, organisations in other countries can contribute to the project as a sub-contractor.

The specific requirements for collaboration, such as number and nature of partners, will be set out in the relevant Call for Proposals and it is essential that you comply with these requirements, if you do not your proposal will be deemed to be ineligible.

Beyond the minimum requirement set out in the Call for Proposals, the size of consortia varies significantly depending on the nature of the project, so it is not possible to indicate a typical number of partners. Each project requires a different set of partners with specific knowledge, capacities, roles and geographical location to be able to deliver its objectives. In most cases, successful proposals involve more than the required minimum number of 3 partners from 3 different countries. The average is between 7 and 8 partners. Still, nothing prevents a 3-partner proposal from being successful if you can demonstrate that this is enough to deliver your objectives and have a European-wide impact. However, bear in mind that if one partner drops out the proposal will be ineligible. Large consortia would need to show that the benefit from having so many partners (e.g. more countries covered, more know-how) justifies the major effort to co-ordinate and manage so many organisations.

In your proposal explain why you have included each partner in order for the evaluators to assess how the partners complement one another and the quality of the consortium as a whole. It is essential that all partners have a genuine role in contributing towards the achievement of the project's objectives. Additional partners should not be included simply to boost the consortium size.

We suggest that using your sector knowledge and your existing networks of contacts will be the most successful route to finding appropriate partners. The IEE programme needs to use and build on knowledge and expertise that is state of the art at a European level, making real progress in key markets. This means involving key market actors either as partners or as organisations associated with the project. If you are working at the appropriate level you are likely to be aware of other organisations that are also working at this level and could be potential partners. You are also likely to be aware of the relevant European trade associations that may be a source of partners.

We make this suggestion of forming partnerships with organisations that you are already aware of, or who are recommended to you, because it is important to remember that if successful you will need to work with your partners for several years, sharing the funding and being jointly responsible for project delivery.

Nonetheless we recognise that in some instances it may be necessary to search for European partners outside your networks. This factsheet provides some generic suggestions on how to do this.

1. Summaries of projects that the IEE Programme has funded to date

The EACI maintains a database about projects funded to date. Information on over 400 projects funded under the Intelligent Energy Programme, including partner details, can be found on http://ec.europa.eu/energy/intelligent/projects/index_en.htm We recommend you contact organisations that have been successful in previously funded projects as a route to finding partners but also to find out more about their work.

¹ Mobilising Local Energy Investments and the Building Workforce Training Initiative are exceptions in 2012

2. European partner search databases

The Commission websites Managenergy and Cordis include partner search databases where you can search the capability of organisations that have posted their credentials and/or post information about your organisation's capability.

The main partner search facility recommended for IEE is the Managenergy partner search facility <http://www.managenergy.net/partners.html> According to the EACI, 80% of those who submitted projects in the 2009 IEE call found partners using this. Managenergy also provides a link to the Cordis partner search facility. However, you need to bear in mind that not all countries listed can take part in the IEE programme, as participation is more limited than in FP7.

3. Enterprise Europe Network

The Enterprise Europe Network (EEN), managed by the Commission's Executive Agency for Competitiveness and Innovation, offers advanced partner search through its 400 Networks operating across the EU-27 and associated countries. You can contact the networks operating at a regional level in the UK to discuss the partner search support that they can provide at

http://www.enterprise-europe-network.ec.europa.eu/countries/theunitedkingdom_en.htm

4. UK Knowledge Transfer Networks

The UK's Knowledge Transfer Networks (KTNs) can be a source of information on potential European partners. KTNs working in the energy themes are as follows:

- Energy Generation and Supply KTN <http://ktn.innovateuk.org/web/energyktn>
- Environmental Sustainability KTN <https://ktn.innovateuk.org/web/sustainabilityktn>
- Biosciences KTN <https://ktn.innovateuk.org/web/biosciencesktn>
- Modern Built Environment KTN <https://ktn.innovateuk.org/web/modernbuiltktn>

5. Intermediary organisations

If you know the type of organisation that you are looking for you could try to find the address of its European association and ask them whether they could put you in contact with suitable members. You can also look at networks of suitable organisations in the UK to see if they can put you in contact with similar organisations in other eligible countries.

6. National Contact Point network

The EU Energy Focus team can send proposal summaries to the National Contact Point (NCPs) network to flag up your idea to interested partners in other countries. However it is essential that summaries are tailored to a priority area within the 2012 IEE Call and make reference to the capabilities you are seeking to add to the consortium in order for our counterparts in other countries to focus their partner search activity on relevant organisations.

The EU Energy Focus team is a free, Government-funded service that aims to ensure that UK companies, research institutions and other organisations are well informed and have every chance of success in applying for and securing European funding for energy-related projects. Please contact us with your queries.

EU Energy Focus UK

Tel 0161 874 3636

Email energie@enviros.com