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Research Project Application Document, Project Description Section

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*The questions in this document serve to gain a better understanding of your idea and project or to obtain information relevant to the evaluation criteria that will be used to assess your application. It is therefore important that you answer* ***each question separately.*** *It is best to carefully read through the* [*evaluation criteria*](https://www.vlaio.be/nl/media/235) *(Appendix 1 of the* [*'Explanatory Document on Research & Development projects and Feasibility Studies'*](https://www.vlaio.be/nl/media/1827)*) before writing your application.*

*A properly prepared application document is essential for a smooth and fast evaluation process. Each question should be answered* ***separately, briefly and concisely.***

*You can assume that your application will be read by someone with basic knowledge of your industry. If necessary, the information you provide can be relayed to third-party experts. If you wish to submit detailed information that should not be relayed to third-party experts, please upload a separate file along with your digital submission.*

*The application documents for research projects is split into 2 documents*

* *Project description section: company description + workplan + expertise*
* *Impact section: strategic importance + added value + path towards market + importance support*

#### Preparation and composition of the project application:

* *This template should be seen as a tool to format the project application. This document, as well as the other attachments, should then be uploaded to the appropriate section of the online portal.*
* *When filling in the project application it is explicitly recommended to read the* *‘*[*Explanatory Document on Research & Development projects and Feasibility Studies'*](https://www.vlaio.be/nl/media/1827) *for explanation of the requested information!*
* ***All template information and additional information****-* ***should be deleted or replaced with your own text.***

#### Resubmitting a previously submitted application:

* *If this project application is a resubmission and/or a partially reworked submission of a previously evaluated proposal, then motivate in ½ page the changes made within this project proposal, based on the remarks and questions within the decision of the Fund for Innovation and Entrepreneurship.*

#### Layman’s summary (max. 0.5 page)

This is where you provide a brief summary of your project, which can also be used for publication. Approval will always be requested before effectively publishing anything.

***Guidelines:***

* Answer these 2 questions:
  1. What is the project about?
  2. What is the added value of this project? What can it be used for in the future?
* Focus on the overall goal and expected impact rather than on the process itself.
* Replace difficult technical words with an easier synonym.
* Avoid (too) long sentences and complicated sentence structures, for example make two sentences out of one long sentence.
* Keep it concise, leave out what is less important for the target group.

# Company and project details

## Business activities and project details (1 page)

Briefly describe the activities of each business partner. What do you currently offer your customers and in what market, or what do you have in the pipeline? Emphasize specific activities, business units and markets that are related to this project.

Describe the specific reasons for the research project (problem, opportunity) and how the idea for the project came about. Explain how the proposal for the research project relates to your company’s current activities: is the research project in line with your current business activities or will it allow you to set up new activities?

## Executive summary (1 page)

Provide a brief summary of the research project. Emphasize the objective(s) of the project and relate them to the intended effects of the VLAIO support program: knowledge acquisition and sufficiently high-risk research. The objectives you define here will be copied verbatim to the support agreement and will be used after the research project to assess whether you were able to achieve your objectives. Please note that the funding agreement provides for best efforts, not results.

The executive summary should be structured as follows:

### General objective

In a few sentences, describe the goal of the research project. What knowledge are you aiming to acquire through this research project? Describe the essence of the innovative product, process and/or service in question.

### Concrete objectives and criteria

How far along the innovation development process do you aim to be after this research project? Specify which concrete, verifiable results you wish to achieve (SMART). If possible, include quantitative targets, requirements, criteria and standards that you can use at the end of the research project to test the extent to which you managed to achieve the expected results. If your project is expected to have a social impact as well, please formulate a specific social objective too.

### Impact

Assuming that you manage to achieve the intended results, describe briefly what your company will do with these results (e.g. improve a new product, launch a new product, improve a process, ...). Describe the impact on your business (or the Flemish branch of your company): new activity, expansion/continuation of a main activity, sub-activity, ... Describe how the results will have an economic valorization and impact (jobs & investments) on Flanders. The total quantitative added value that the project will have for Flanders over the course of the valorization period has to create a leverage 10x compared to the requested funding (which is by default calculated on a valorization period of 5 years after the end of the project). If your project also creates societal added value, then describe it here shortly.

If several business partners are involved, describe the impact for each partner.

## Samenvatting (1 blz.)

If the research project application document is submitted in English, the executive summary must be provided in both Dutch and English.

### Algemeen doel

### Concrete doelen en criteria

### Impact

# Project contents

In this section, you are asked to describe your innovation and explain how the research project and your chosen approach will help you achieve the set objectives.

This section should be developed to a maximum of 40 pages, including figures and tables. In exceptional cases - for very large and complex projects - the limit may be exceeded for adding tables and figures. The proportion of text should be limited to max. 40 pages. This section will be forwarded to third-party experts in full.

## 2.1 State of the art and relevance

Briefly describe the international state of the art in the domain of the research project, including sources if available (publications, patents, freedom-to-operate, existing products or processes). The state-of-the-art should be presented on the level of knowledge, insight and skills, and not only on the level of the intended application.

Explain how the research project relates to competing, complementary and previous research projects (both own projects and other R&D activities in the Flemish knowledge ecosystem), patents and standards. This should clearly highlight how the research project will expand or improve on the state of the art and the knowledge already available to the partners involved in the project. Specifically, identify challenges and problems for which no solution is currently available. Describe in this paragraph the most important knowledge gaps related to the project compared to the current state-of-the-art. The project implementation section (see below) allows you to go into more detail for each specific work package.

## 2.2 Project implementation

Your project plan will serve as the foundation for your project budget, which will be used to determine the grant amount. Use the separate [Excel-template](https://www.vlaio.be/nl/media/2847) to prepare your project budget. This file will not be shared with third-party experts.

### Approach

Describe and substantiate your proposed approach, and how it contributes to a deeper, scientifically based understanding of the underlying phenomena. Outline the general structure of the various work packages and describe how they relate to one another. Clearly specify how interim decisions will be made and how they will affect the process. Add a Gantt chart to illustrate the project schedule.

### Work Program

Divide the work program into work packages, providing the information below for each work package:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Work package number:** |  | **Starting month:** | |  | | **Duration:**  **(months)** |  | | **Total man-months:** | |  |
| **Title:** |  | | | | | | | | | | |
| Partner: | C1 | | C2 | | … | | | S1 | | S2 | |
| Man-months: |  | |  | |  | | |  | |  | |
| Subcontractor(s):  List the key subcontractors involved. For foreign companies or research institutes, please state the country in which they are based. | | | | | | | | | | | |

**Work package objective:** briefly describe the objective of this work package

**Tasks:**

* Break down the work into tasks. What possible solutions will you explore and what actions are needed to do so? Indicate the extent to which you will be using existing methods/tools/technologies/software and/or whether you will have to develop new ones.
* Indicate the staffing budget (e.g. number of planned iterations).
* Describe the division of labor between partners and key subcontractors.
* If a particular work package requires more than 10 man-months of work, specify the amount of work required for each task.

**Expected results/deliverables and milestones (if any):**

* List the expected results and milestones (if any) of this work package.

**Knowledge Step:**

* Describe the specific additional knowledge related to the state-of-the-art you will acquire while carrying out this work package.

**Challenges and risks:**

* Describe the specific challenges that apply to this work package. Describe which risks you may encounter in the context of this work package, as well as outlining a back-up plan (if necessary) or formulating go/no-go criteria.
* Challenges and risks that are not taken into account are those of a commercial nature, management risks and uncertainties about manpower, timing and budget.

### Staffing overview

Outline the number of man-months required per work package per year.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **WP** | **Partner** | **Start date**  **+ 12 months**  **Year 1** | **Start date**  **+ 24 months**  **Year 2** | **Start date**  **+ 36 months**  **Year 3** | **TOTAL** |
| 1 | Partner 1 |  |  |  |  |
| Partner 2 |  |  |  |  |
| … |  |  |  |  |
| … | Partner 1 |  |  |  |  |
| Partner 2 |  |  |  |  |
| … |  |  |  |  |
| **TOTAL** | **Partner 1** |  |  |  |  |
| **Partner 2** |  |  |  |  |
| **…** |  |  |  |  |

### Research details

Indicate which work packages or project parts fall into the realm of research and development, respectively[[1]](#footnote-2).

Explain your breakdown based on the challenges and risks listed for the work packages and the extent to which you will be acquiring new knowledge, insight and skills and engaging in R&D work to obtain a deeper, scientifically based understanding of the underlying phenomena. For development, explain the distinction between engineering activities, routine improvements and implementation.

## 2.3 Expertise and Resources

Briefly describe the relevant expertise and resources (staff & infrastructure) of each party involved in the tasks listed above (e.g. your company, a knowledge institute, and/or a subcontractor). If there are still certain gaps, please indicate how you plan to fill these gaps.

Outline the expected synergy or synergies between the parties and subcontractors involved and explain why you decided to work with your chosen partners.

# Additional Information

Your application will be assessed according to the criteria listed in Appendix 1 of the [explanatory document for innovation support](https://www.vlaio.be/nl/media/1827). In making this assessment, VLAIO will rely primarily on the submitted application document. VLAIO will always seek the opinion of third-party experts on your application. Please make sure to complete this document clearly and accurately. VLAIO may also request extra information and/or documentation to aid the evaluation process (e.g. figures to support the valorization estimates), especially for particularly large or complex projects.

As part of the application process, you will meet with a VLAIO Advisor. During this meeting, you will discuss the information provided, such as the figures to substantiate your valorization estimates or your approach.

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1. The distinction between research and development is explained in the [*Explanatory Document on Research & Development projects and Feasibility Studies'*](https://www.vlaio.be/nl/media/1827). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)