



## Performing partner search



**A valuable service for NCP clients**

**An introduction in 6 steps**

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## Performing partner search

- Although NCPs globally have diverse profiles, different internal structures and service portfolio, Partner search (PS) is one of the main services requested by clients, especially those with limited experience and contacts in FP programs. On the other hand even experienced players often request partner search support, when special partners are requested from:
- Inflexible organisations such as public authorities, hospitals, security organisations, ministries, etc which are difficult to convince.
- Partners from ICPC countries which are difficult to find and check their validity.
- Large companies which are difficult to approach.
- SMEs with specific competences.



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### **Warning!**

- *It is always the best solution for your clients to consider first the organisations that they already know: distributors, customers, existing research partners, etc. It is also important to take into consideration a partner's availability, flexibility, culture, experience, age, any language or email problems, etc.*
- Seeking partners for international research is in principle, a simple task while efficient partner search is a difficult task requiring specialization and training. However, there are several simple steps and tools that could assist the process and offer good results in most of the following cases:



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### Step 1 – Validity check

- Check the validity of your client and check his commitment to submit a proposal. Don't waste your time and the time of your NCP colleagues.
- Note also that it's quite common in the FP community to submit a partner search, as a bait, just to approach other consortia preparing proposals.



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### ➤ **Step 2 – Forming the PS**

It is advisable to utilize a standard format for the PS text that has to be filled in by the client:

- [http://www.help-forward.gr/en/forms/rtdps\\_form.php](http://www.help-forward.gr/en/forms/rtdps_form.php) This is a more or less standard format for composing a partner search. Similar versions are utilized by most NCPs providing a clear picture of the proposal itself and the requested partners.
- It necessary for the NCP client to fill in the PS form, as a minimum requirement to demonstrate its validity and professionalism.
- The PS form is the main document reaching a broad research community. In order to be successful, it must be short, clear, and well-structured.



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### **Warning!**

- The profile itself of an organisation without a project idea is not a valid partner search. It is neither a good idea nor a professional attitude to disseminate profiles of organisations that wish to be included in proposals. In 99% of the cases no one is interested in such cases and usually the outcome is poor.
- As you know the needs and competencies of your clients better, it is best to keep the profile until you receive a suitable partner search.



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### Step 3 – Using the NCP network

The initial obvious step is disseminating the PS through the NCP network. In case you are looking for third country contacts remember to use both the Thematic and the INCO NCPs.

Draft a short mail with all the basic info:

- -PS title/abstract
- -Call info, deadline for responses
- -Partners requested
- -contact details for Expressions of Interest (EoIs)
- In most cases, a PS disseminated to the NCP network could result in obtaining on average 5-15 suitable contacts.



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### ***Warning!***

*As NCP organisations have diverse profiles, the level of PS dissemination varies in the different countries. So usually the EoIs received originate from the same specific countries.... In the case that partners are requested from specific countries or with specific profiles, we have to move to the next steps (step4, step5, etc).*



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### **Step 4 – Passive Partner Search / free & paid databases**

- An invaluable tool is to publish the partner search in several existing web based partner search databases, and although there are hundred of them only maybe a dozen are active and reliable. There are thematic databases, horizontal, EU financed, privately owned, project oriented, NCP administered, etc. that usually face the same problems:
  - -poor PS quality
  - -low number of PSs
  - -PSs not successfully checked and validated by the database administrator



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Some good examples in order of personal preference:

- European R&D Partner Search System: <http://www.rdppartners.net>
- Ideal-ist - the route to IST Partners: <http://www.ideal-ist.net/>
- SMEs go Health: <http://www.smesgohealth.org/>
- AeroSME: <http://www.aerosme.com/>



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### Step 5 – CORDIS tools

[http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/partners\\_en.html](http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/partners_en.html)

“CORDIS is the European Commission's information service offering a wide range of services on European research and innovation activities to:

- Review timely information on the daily News service
- Identify funding opportunities for free
- Find partners to co-operate in Research and Development activities and share expertise
- Promote and locate transferable technologies
- Follow-up latest European Research Area (ERA) developments, current research findings and innovation trends”



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### **Warning!**

*CORDIS is indeed a powerful tool offering many possibilities for PS, by containing a huge database of organisations all over the globe in all the thematic areas. However the main drawback of the system is that there is no quality check of the profiles submitted. In practice searching for profiles in CORDIS is a time consuming process with an uncertain outcome.*



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### Step 6 – Blind searching - the ultimate desperate effort

- If you haven't achieved satisfactory results after steps 3, 4 & 5;
- If you are looking for partners with specific competences or from specific countries;
- If your client is reliable and the proposal idea worthy enough to make an additional effort;
- Then the next step is to use special search techniques for identifying suitable partners:
- Some country-specific databases provide partners profiles from specific countries. E.g. <http://www.czechrtd.info/> - Czech Republic,  
<http://www.fp6nip.uzsci.net/eng/partners/index.php> - Uzbekistan  
<http://www.rtd.si/eng/> -Slovenia



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- The CORDIS projects database could provide info on organisations participated in previous EU funded projects. However, usually there are no personal contact details, so extra “Google search” will be needed.

[http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/projects\\_en.html](http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/projects_en.html)

<http://cordis.europa.eu/fp6/projects.htm>

- Google, Yahoo search. This is the last ultimate desperate option. You will probably receive dozens of contacts but serious work is needed for evaluating the results and identifying suitable partners.



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**Thank you**