

Grant Agreement vs Consortium Agreement

Once your proposal gets accepted by the European Commission, and before the beginning of the project, as a coordinator you will have to prepare and sign two often mixed up but completely different documents:

THE GRANT AGREEMENT AND THE CONSORTIUM AGREEMENT

GRANT AGREEMENT

This binding agreement between the EC, the coordinator and the other partners of your consortium has three main purposes:

1. When signed, it authorizes the European Commission or the Agency **to pay the grant** to the beneficiaries ;
2. The **objectives of the action** and the stages of its completion are presented in Annex 1;
3. The maximum amount of the grant and the **applicable rules for participants** (Coordinator, beneficiaries and other third parties) are defined.

Your agreement will be based on the standard **model for grant agreement (MGA)**. An annotated version with explanation on all section has been made available on [Participant Portal](#).

WHEN?

The preparation starts when you receive formal acknowledgement your proposal has been accepted (at the latest 5 month after deadline). The Grant Agreement must be signed at the latest 3 months after starting the grant preparation.

Declaration of honour signature	First submission of the Grant Agreement	Grant Agreement Signature
6 weeks after receiving the invitation to prepare the GA	3 weeks after receiving the invitation to prepare the GA	3 months after receiving the invitation to prepare the GA

WHAT?

During this time frame, your Project Officer (PO) will ask you to:

1. **gather legal, administrative and financial information**
2. make sure the **Description of the Action** (DoA, Annex 1 to the grant agreement) and the **Estimated budget for the action** (Annex 2) **match the proposal**,
3. **establish the key points of the grant agreement** (when the project starts, reporting periods, amount of pre-financing, need for consortium agreement, and, if applicable, ethical issues, third parties linked to the beneficiaries, in-kind contributions provided by third parties, subcontracting)
4. **verify your financial capacity** (principally, this concerns certain types of coordinators only, other participants will be check in exceptional cases)

WHERE?

A single entry point: the Participant Portal's [MyProjects](#) page. Signature will be made electronically as well. Signing the grant agreement is the last step of the grant preparation phase. It shows that both you and the EC formally approve the agreement and its annexes.

GA AMENDMENTS

If there are any changes to GA terms & conditions or its annexes, the Grant Agreement must and can be amended. Five steps are necessary:

1. Amend the relevant data in the grant agreement
2. Give reasons for (justify) the amendment
3. Upload supporting documents
4. Make sure the necessary validations are complete (e.g. validation of a new legal entity or bank account)
5. Submit your request

TIP

Take the opportunity of the Grant Preparation phase to remove clerical errors or clear inconsistencies. You may also correct shortcomings identified by the experts in the 'Evaluation Summary Report'. Doing so at this moment could help the good implementation of your project. Make sure in advance roles and right are properly filled within the Participant Portal.

HELPDESK

[Introduction to the participant portal Service](#)
[Identity and access management](#)
[Participant Portal Online Manual](#)

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

[Rules for participation \(Regulation No 1290/2013\)](#)
[H2020 General Model for Grant Agreement](#)
[Participant Portal Terms & Conditions](#)

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CONSORTIUM AGREEMENT

In all the research and innovation projects funded under Horizon 2020 involving at least three partners (multi-beneficiary projects), the **consortium agreement is a compulsory document. The European Commission is not a contracting party** to this agreement.

The consortium agreement should set the framework for a successful project implementation (i.e. settle all issues that might hamper the smooth and seamless cooperation of the different actors for the different parts of the project). It allows you, as consortium members, to agree on any specific details not covered by the grant agreement, such as the organisation of work, intellectual property management, liability, and future exploitation and dissemination of results.

It should **complement the grant agreement and must NOT contain any provision contrary to it.**

WHEN?

The members of the consortium are obliged to sign a consortium agreement between each other no later than the day of the grant agreement signature.

WHAT?

The basic principle to follow when drafting a CA is to provide flexible and efficient mechanisms to support the co-operation between the parties, to encourage protection and maximum use of foreground as well as to ensure swift dissemination thereof. It shall specify the conditions for:

- Internal organisation — Managing the consortium;
- Project budget — Contributions — Receipts;
- Intellectual property rights — Exploitation and dissemination of results ;
- Liability, warranties & penalties — Financial responsibility for rejection of costs, reduction of the grant, recoveries and damages ;
- Confidentiality obligations.

WHERE?

Model consortium agreements are available from different sources but usually for Transport Research Project, the DESCA 2020 is the most used model.

TIP

Start talking about your Consortium Agreement during the proposal preparation phase, especially IP related matters.

HELPDESK

The *European IPR Helpdesk* is the official IP service initiative of the European Commission providing free-of-charge, first-line advice and information on Intellectual Property (IP) and Intellectual Property Rights (IPR).

Factsheet on “How to deal with IP related clauses within Consortium Agreements”

Find your Legal and Financial *National Contact Point*

