



# Professional Development Webinar Series

How to Manage International Multidisciplinary  
Research Projects

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#RSAWebinar

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Speaker: Linda Hantrais (London School of Economics and Political Science, UK)



Look inside

*Hardback*

# How to Manage International Multidisciplinary Research Projects

[How To Guides](#)

Edited by Linda Hantrais, Professor Emerita of European Social Policy, Department of International Relations, Politics and History, Loughborough University and Visiting Professor, International Inequalities Institute, London School of Economics and Political Science, UK

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This insightful How to guide is expertly crafted to assist mid-career academic and non-academic researchers in preparing for new and innovative ways of working in international multidisciplinary environments.

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- 1. Why produce a How to... guide now?**
- 2. Who are the target readers?**
- 3. What are the main challenges facing project managers?**
- 4. How can these challenges be met?**
- 5. How can funders' requirements be satisfied?**
- 6. What are the key messages (hot tips) to take away?**

# 1. Why produce a How to... guide now?

The divide between natural, social and human sciences may occasionally be bridged when the reasons for taking account of the sociocultural impacts of phenomena become compelling, *as exemplified by research into global issues.... International Comparative Research, p. 16*

**2014 Horizon 2020 Global societal challenges**

**+ 2015 UN Sustainable Development Goals**

**2016 Brexit referendum + 2020–2022 Pandemic**

**2022 War in Ukraine + energy & cost of living crises**

**-----> value for money and impact (evidence-based policy)**

**2021–2027 Horizon Europe ‘green, healthy, digital and inclusive Europe’**

**+ industrial competitiveness**

**-----> (multi-)international collaborative research**

**-----> pathways to (inter-)multidisciplinarity**

## 2. Who are the target readers?

- mid-career academic and non-academic researchers from a mix of disciplines and cultures
- established researchers at key milestones in their careers
- ❖ Elgar case study team characteristics (Elgar Look inside)
  - countries and disciplines
  - coordinators
  - authors
  - postgraduate/postdoctoral assistants

## Table 2.3 Composition of international and multidisciplinary project teams

Project	Countries and (nationalities)	Disciplines
AMR	UK, India	biochemistry, bioengineering, environmental science, geochemistry, <b>social sciences</b>
BIAS	UK, Canada (Chinese)	computing, <b>management</b> , mathematics, <b>sociology</b> , statistics
B-SET	UK, Africa, Middle East, Asia	<b>economics</b> , technology, veterinary science
CLICCS	Germany	computing, earth systems, geophysics, meteorology, physics, <b>political science</b> , <b>sociology</b>
EPPIC	UK, Austria, Denmark, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Poland	<b>anthropology</b> , criminology, health policy, psychology, <b>sociology</b> , <b>social policy</b>
FFP	UK, Norway, Portugal	<b>anthropology</b> , <b>sociology</b> , statistics
LCEDN	UK, Africa, South America	anthropology, civil engineering, economics, electrical engineering, environmental science, <b>human/political geography</b> , <b>sociology</b> , <b>social policy</b>
POLKU	Finland, Denmark, Netherlands, Sweden, UK	<b>economics</b> , law, <b>public policy</b> , <b>social policy</b> , <b>sociology</b>
PRO-RES	UK, Belgium, Croatia, Estonia, France, Greece, Italy, N. Ireland	<b>business ethics</b> , computer science, <b>economics</b> , health sciences, marine biology, nanotechnology, international relations, life sciences, philosophy, physics, psychology, research ethics, <b>social science</b> , <b>sociology</b>
TROPICO	Norway, Belgium, Denmark, Estonia, France, Hungary, Netherlands, Spain, Wales	<b>public administration</b>

### 3. What are the main challenges facing project managers?

- Moving from multinational & multidisciplinary
  - > to integrated international & interdisciplinary collaboration
- Knowing how to collaborate intensively & effectively throughout the process
- Degrees of complexity
  - parallel studies
  - juxtaposition of cases
  - hybrid disciplines (LCEDN, TROPICO)
  - cognate disciplines (BIAS, EPPIC, FFP, POLKU)
  - natural + social sciences (AMR, CLICCS, LCEDN, PRO-RES)

# 4. How can these challenges be met?

- **Combining resources to deal with layers of complexity**
  - ... no single one best way, magic bullet or one-size-fits-all solution
- ❖ ***International Comparative Research*** (Companion & Interactive resources)
- ❖ **International Social Research Methods** (Restore archives from ESRC training programme)
- ❖ **ISRM Part 1 Framework** (checklist of headings and questions)
- ❖ **Elgar case study chapter structure** (Elgar Look inside & Elgaronline)
  - Project Descriptors** (The [project acronym] Case Study)
    - Aims and Objectives
    - Themes and Research Questions
  - The Research Process**
    - Meeting Funders' Requirements
    - Building the Project Team
    - Research Design and Methods
    - Engagement and Dissemination Lessons Learnt



# 5. How can funders' requirements be satisfied?

## ▪ Recurring questions about project funding

❖ *International Comparative Research* (Companion practical questions about funding)

❖ *International Social Research Methods* (Archives - Resources and governance)

➤ contractual arrangements

➤ requirements of funders

➤ constraints on scope of projects

➤ policy relevance and policy impact

➤ changes to the research design and methods

➤ support staff needs

➤ institutional support and requirements

❖ *Elgar guide* (Index terms funders' requirements Elgar Look inside)

# Table 2.2 Project funding and assessment

Project	Funding organisations	Duration	End	Amount
AMR	UK Research Council (Natural Environment Research Council, NERC) World Bank in kind	3 years	2023	£793 290
BIAS	UK/Canada Research Councils (Economic and Social Research Council, ESRC; Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, SSHRC)	3.5 years	2023	£508 000 (UK £386,030)
B-SET	Research England (UKRI), Connecting Capability Fund (CCF)	3.2years	2021	£4.96 million
CLICCS	German Research Council (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, DFG) Hamburg University host institution	6 years	2025	€46.56 million
EPPIC	European Commission Health Programme Consumers, Health, Agriculture and Food Executive Agency (CHAFEA)	3 years	2020	€599 511 (partners 40%)
FFP	European Commission (European Research Council, ERC) University College London host institution	5 years	2019	€1.371 million
LCEDN	UK governments departments (BEIS, DECC, DfID, FCOD) Research councils (EPSRC, ESRC, NERC)	2 x 5 years	2022	£100 000 to £40 million
POLKU	Finnish government Prime Minister's Office Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, Netherlands and UK partners in kind	1.5 years	2022	€149 919
PRO-RES	European Commission Horizon 2020 (FP8)	3.5 years	2021	€2.8 million
TROPICO	European Commission Horizon 2020 (FP8) DG Connect; partners in kind	4.5 years	2021	€4.9 million

## 6. Lessons learnt/hot tips

- ❖ **Elgar guide** (lessons learnt by project managers Elgar Look inside)
- ❖ **Elgar guide** (Companion Video clips by participants Elgar Online Resources)
- ❖ ***International Comparative Research*** (Companion Hot tips)
- **Consider engaging a professional administrator to support the project coordinator, and know how to delegate tasks (work packages)**
- **Avoid being overly ambitious, ensure feasibility while catering for contingencies throughout the process**
- **Manage the priorities, expectations and commitments of team members (personal & institutional) and stakeholders (funders & end users)**
- **Select team members with complementary cultural and disciplinary interests, personal skills and characteristics**
- **Discuss and reach a common understanding of cultural and disciplinary concepts, conventions, methods, dissemination and publication strategies**
- **Fully integrate less experienced researchers by providing dedicated training**

## 7. Final takeaway

**integrated multinational & inter/intra-disciplinary approach**

**+ economic, social, cultural policy impacts**

**-----> innovative forms of cooperation <-----**

**proven capacity to work cross-nationally**

**+ effective collaboration across disciplines**

**-----> methodological learning and knowledge exchange <-----**

❖ ***How to Manage International Multinational Research Projects***

<https://www.e-elgar.com/shop/gbp/how-to-manage-international-multidisciplinary-research-projects-9781802204711.html>

❖ **Elgar prelims, contents, contributors and index terms (Elgar Look inside)**

❖ **Elgar book chapters in pdf ([Elgaronline](#))**

❖ **Video clips (Elgar Online resources)**

❖ ***International Comparative Research Companion web site***

<https://www.bloomsburyonlineresources.com/international-comparative-research/home>

❖ **ICR Companion Interactive resources**

<https://www.bloomsburyonlineresources.com/international-comparative-research/interactive-resources>

❖ **ICR Companion Practical questions about funding**

<https://res.cloudinary.com/bloomsbury-online-resources/raw/upload/RGP/H/Hantrais/practical%20questions.pdf>

❖ **ICR Companion Hot tips**

❖ <https://res.cloudinary.com/bloomsbury-online-resources/raw/upload/RGP/H/Hantrais/hot%20tips.pdf>

❖ **International Social Research Methods (Restore archives)**

<https://www.restore.ac.uk/ISResMeth/>

<https://eprints.ncrm.ac.uk/cgi/search/archive/advanced?screen=Search&keywords=IRM>

❖ **International Social Research Methods**

❖ **Part 1 Framework checklist of headings and questions (Resources & governance) [drdjfc@gmail.com](mailto:drdjfc@gmail.com)**

<https://eprints.ncrm.ac.uk/id/eprint/4892/>

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