European Research Projects (H2020) Guidelines UNIGE

Administrative and contractual/legal key points
IP, Third parties, Ethics, AI, Data, Dual-use, Conflict of Interest

The Guidelines apply to all H2020 projects, including ERC grants and Marie Skłodowska Curie actions.

The guidelines are not intended to be a legally binding document or regulation. In case of questions, please contact Research Services or DIFIN. Official reference documents: EC H2020 Annotated Model Grant Agreement; UNIGE directives and policies.

Please refer always to the latest version of the guidelines available on our web site.

1. Intellectual Property, Confidentiality agreement

Intellectual property rights must be addressed properly in the proposal. It is strongly advised that all relevant IP-related issues (including all background know-how to be excluded) are thoroughly checked before proposal submission.

In some cases IP and confidentiality issues are addressed in a specific agreement among partners before the submission of the proposal.

In any case, IP issues are formalised in the « Consortium agreement » if the project is retained for funding.

➔ IPR helpdesk
➔ H2020-CA-ProcedureUNIGE-Avril2015.pdf

2. Third parties, subcontracting

UNIGE researchers wishing to submit an H2020 project including contributions provided by another institution are requested to contact us in order to define the relevant third party set-up.

In particular, for projects with contributions provided by the University Hospital of Geneva (HUG) respectively projects implying personnel with double affiliations (UNIGE/HUG), PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS are requested to refer to the infosheet below and to contact us.

➔ UNIGE-HUG third party infosheet – project submissions
➔ UNIGE-HUG third party infosheet – project management
➔ UNIGE – Other Third parties infosheet – project submission
➔ UNIGE – Other Third parties infosheet – project management
3. Ethics

The ethical issues are becoming increasingly important in the management of research projects in all scientific disciplines. Main ethical concerns include research involving human embryos/foetuses, humans, human cells/tissues, personal data, animals, third countries, environment and health/safety, **trustworthy artificial intelligence**, dual use, exclusive focus on civil applications, misuse and other ethical issues. For the personal data protection, please see next point.

The PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR must announce the ethical issues concerning his research in the “Ethics self-assessment” form on the EC Portal and download all the relevant documents.

For further UNIGE-relevant information, please refer to our dedicated web page explaining which commission/authority to contact and which authorisation to get:

- UNIGE ethics in research projects home page
- UNIGE ethics and personal data protection infosheet

4. Personal data protection

With the new EU data protection regulations (GDPR) and the upcoming revision of the national data protection laws, the issue of collection/processing of personal data at/by the University of Geneva must retain special attention.

For projects involving the collection and processing of personal data at / by the University, it is the Cantonal Data Protection Law that applies. Consequently, its application to UNIGE.

In case some personal data would be transferred from Europe to Switzerland for processing this should be considered as an intra-European transfer following the Adequacy Decision for Switzerland. Following the GDPR, art. 45, al.9. this decision is still valid.

IF the EU data protection regulation (GDPR) would exceptionally apply to your project, please refer to the EU guidelines on this matter before any data processing.

- EU Data protection regulation (GDPR)
- Cantonal data protection Law
- UNIGE Data protection policy (LIPAD)
- EU Data transfer outside EU information (EC)
- EU Guidelines on data protection (EC)
- UNIGE ethics and personal data protection infosheet

5. Ethics guidelines for trustworthy Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Research projects including AI components should take into account the [Ethics Guidelines for Trustworthy AI](https://example.com) that provide an assessment list including the key requirements and guidances established by the [High-Level Expert Group on AI (AI HLEG)](https://example.com). We encourage UNIGE researchers involved in research projects related to AI to refer to these guidelines for the ethical evaluation of their project.

- Ethics Guidelines for Trustworthy AI
- Preliminary summary infosheet on ethics for research on AI (RS)
6. Data open access pilot and Data management plan

As of January 2017, all Horizon 2020 projects are by default part of the Open Research Data Pilot (ORDP). The ORDP aims to make the research data generated by selected H2020 projects accessible with as few restrictions as possible, while at the same time protecting sensitive data from inappropriate access. The PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR must confirm this default option in the corresponding form A5 (Call specific questions), or in case of opting out, clearly identify the reason in Part 5 of the Administrative form.

If the project is part of the pilot, a Data Management Plan (DMP) must be created and a data repository selected if the project is retained for funding.

- UNIGE data management plan in H2020 infosheet
- UNIGE Research Data Management (UNIGE library)
- Politique institutionnelle sur la gestion des données de recherche
- EC guidelines on Data Management in Horizon 2020
- Open access & Data management H2020 Online Manual

7. Dual use or military applications

According to the UNIGE Charter of Ethics and Deontology, responsibility towards society is a consequence of the University’s public mandate and academic freedom. Therefore, all researchers have a personal duty to take into account the possible consequences on society of their research, and to question potentially dangerous applications, throughout the full duration of the project.

Along this line, the Principal Investigator is required to review UNIGE ethics standards (see also point on “Ethics” above) including the following questions: 1) Is the military-industrial complex (including but not limited to government, armed forces and/or defence industry) involved in funding your research? 2) Do the results of your research have any confirmed or potential military applications or affect current standards in military ethics – e.g., global ban on weapons of mass destruction, issues of proportionality, discrimination of combatants and accountability in drone and autonomous robotics developments, incendiary or laser weapons? 3) Do any export control regulations apply to the results of your research?

If one of these questions is answered by YES/POSSIBLY, the Principal Investigator is required to notify Research Services in writing without delay for further advice. If a preliminary review does not confirm that UNIGE ethics standards are followed, the competent ethics body will conduct a full evaluation.

- UNIGE Charter of Ethics and Deontology
- Guidelines Dual-Use of University KU Leuven
- Export Controls and Sanctions (SECO)

For H2020:

- Guidance note for research involving dual-use (H2020)
- EU import/export rules
- Council Regulation (EC) No 428/2009 of 5 May 2009 setting up a Community regime for the control of exports, transfer, brokering and transit of dual-use items (Recast)
8. Clinical trials

If clinical studies/trials/investigations/cohorts are included in the work plan of the project, the corresponding annex « Essential information on clinical studies ... » template must be filled in and uploaded in the section for Part B and Annexes.

→ H2020 Clinical trials template

9. Financial conflict of interest

Pursuant to the UNIGE Financial Conflict of Interest Policy, all Principal Investigators employed by UNIGE are required to inform UNIGE of any financial interests that could give the impression of creating a financial conflict of interest.

A financial conflict of interest can be defined as the presence of monetary assets, income, or sponsored travel expenses which are allocated to Investigators, their spouses, and their dependent children, and which are related to the content, design, execution and publication of results of a project.

Financial interests that are created through a contractual relationship with UNIGE as well as any compensation for teaching duties and consulting services for public or non-profit organizations do not fall under the above definition.

If the Principal Investigator identifies a financial conflict of interest that affects him/her and/or another UNIGE researcher working on the project, the Principal Investigator is required under the UNIGE Financial Conflict of Interest Policy to notify his/her hierarchical supervisor without delay. Such notification shall be made in writing with copy to Research Services (euresearch [at] unige.ch). For professors, the hierarchical supervisor is in principle the Dean. For Deans, the hierarchical supervisor is in principle the Rector. The hierarchical supervisor will determine the appropriate measures to be taken to protect the interests of the University.

→ UNIGE Financial Conflict of Interest Policy
→ Obligations to avoid conflict of interest in implementing H2020 projects – AMGA art. 35 (EC)

Further information, contacts

H2020 Annotated Model Grant Agreement
Research Services - Euresearch