

# Success Story:

## How to be excellent enough to get the funding?

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MorphoPOS





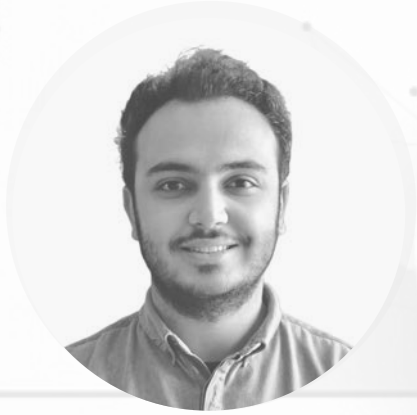
How to be ~~excellent enough~~ to get the funding?

*objective-driven*  
*methodology-sound*  
*competence-matching*

**WHAT & WHY?**

**HOW?**

**WHO?**



Dr Onur Tümtürk

Assist Prof of Urban Design and Morphology  
Bilkent University

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2015

BSc | Urban Planning



MSc | Urban Design  
2018



2024

PhD | Urban Design,  
Planning &  
Morphology



Department of Urban Design &  
Landscape Architecture (LAUD)  
Sep'24....

FULBRIGHT



Sep'25  
Postdoctoral  
Research

Jul'26



MorphoPOS



Jul'28

# Morpho-POS ●

Understanding the morphology of public open space accessibility:

*Towards an integrative framework for objective measures and user perceptions*

- to investigate the influence of urban form on Public-Open-Space (POS) accessibility in rapidly developing urban contexts, using Ankara as a case study, and
- to explore the alignment between objectively measured and perceived POS accessibility

**Horizon 2024 | Marie Skłodowska-Curie Individual Fellowships**

European Fellowships (MSCA\_IF\_EF 2024)

Duration: 24 Months (July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2028)

Host: Bilkent University

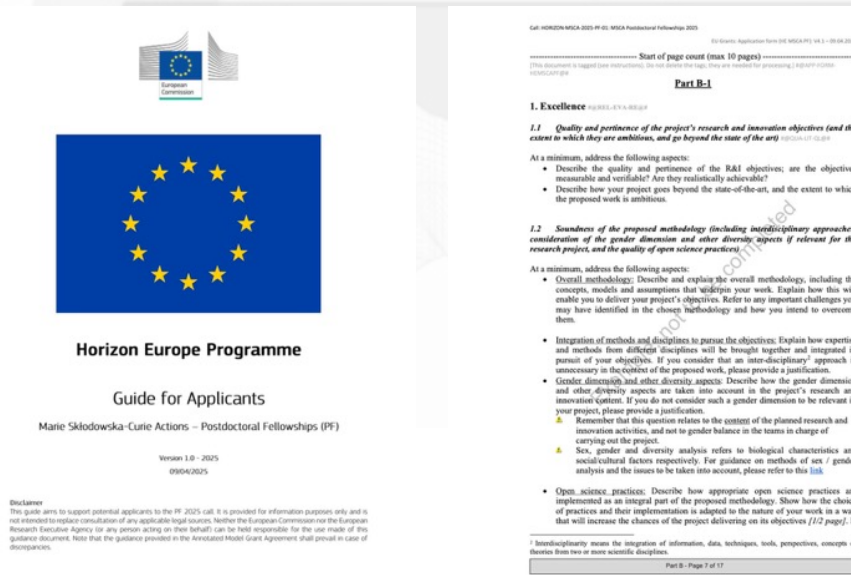


# Preparation for MSCA application

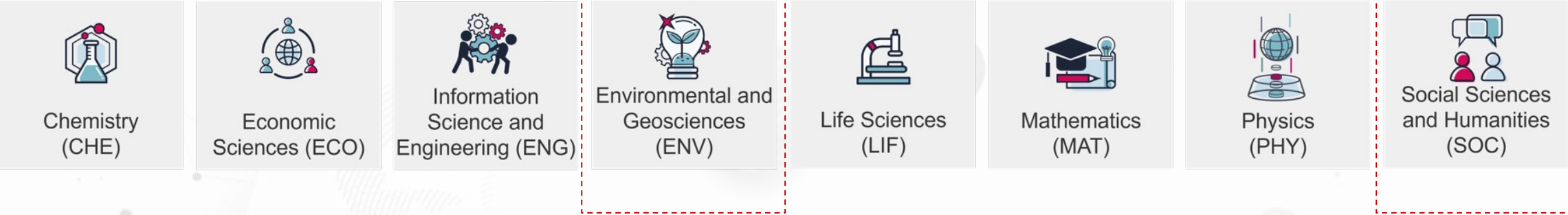
**idea** that challenges status quo and pushes beyond state-of-the-art  
ambitious yet achievable that address a significant knowledge gap

**host** supervisor and institution with relevant expertise and resources  
who is committed to your professional development

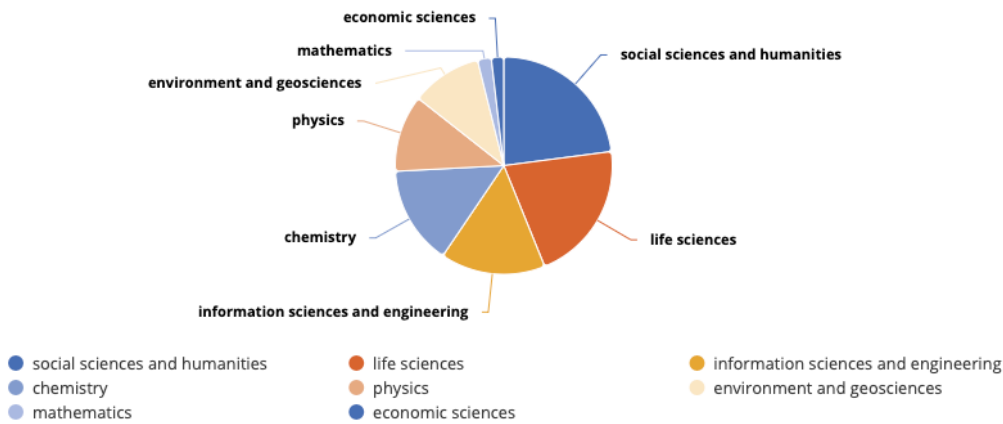
**time** to develop and write up your proposal through multiple drafts,  
careful alignment with MSCA evaluation criteria, and adherence  
to strict formatting requirements.



# Panels



Projects by scientific disciplines



MSCA-PF-2024: Cumulative percentage of proposals above threshold, with a given score or higher (funding range marked in green)																
Number of eligible proposals	1428 proposals	162 proposals	1560 proposals	966 proposals	1966 proposals	196 proposals	1032 proposals	1912 proposals	60 proposals	15 proposals	109 proposals	107 proposals	143 proposals	10 proposals	110 proposals	436 proposals
Cut off score for funding*	93.6	92.0	94.8	95.2	94.2	91.4	92.0	94.2	95.0	92.0	96.4	95.2	96.0	92.8	95.0	96.0
Score equal to or above	EF-CHE	EF-ECO	EF-ENG	EF-ENV	EF-LIF	EF-MAT	EF-PHY	EF-SOC	GF-CHE	GF-ECO	GF-ENG	GF-ENV	GF-LIF	GF-MAT	GF-PHY	GF-SOC
100	1.05%	0.62%	2.05%	1.76%	1.53%	1.02%	0.29%	1.73%	1.67%	0.00%	3.67%	1.87%	0.70%	0.00%	2.73%	2.75%
99	1.89%	1.23%	2.76%	3.73%	2.95%	1.02%	0.68%	3.19%	1.67%	0.00%	7.34%	5.61%	1.40%	0.00%	3.64%	4.36%
98	4.69%	3.09%	6.03%	7.87%	6.10%	3.06%	2.33%	6.69%	6.67%	0.00%	11.01%	8.41%	4.90%	0.00%	7.27%	10.09%
97	6.30%	3.70%	9.29%	9.94%	8.34%	4.59%	4.17%	9.26%	6.67%	0.00%	13.76%	12.15%	9.09%	0.00%	10.91%	13.53%
96	8.61%	6.17%	12.05%	13.87%	11.70%	6.63%	6.20%	11.98%	8.33%	0.00%	16.51%	14.95%	16.08%	0.00%	14.55%	17.43%
95	12.11%	8.64%	15.51%	17.49%	15.06%	10.71%	9.30%	14.64%	16.67%	0.00%	20.18%	19.63%	24.48%	10.00%	17.27%	21.10%
94	15.83%	10.49%	18.14%	20.81%	18.01%	12.76%	11.72%	17.73%	25.00%	0.00%	24.77%	23.36%	26.57%	10.00%	21.82%	23.39%
93	18.56%	13.58%	20.06%	24.74%	21.57%	14.29%	14.24%	20.08%	35.00%	6.67%	28.44%	26.17%	30.77%	10.00%	25.45%	25.69%
92	21.29%	17.28%	22.63%	28.36%	25.69%	16.33%	17.64%	23.17%	38.33%	20.00%	33.94%	32.71%	35.66%	20.00%	28.18%	27.52%
91	24.37%	21.60%	25.83%	30.95%	28.38%	19.90%	19.67%	25.78%	40.00%	20.00%	35.78%	34.58%	39.86%	30.00%	32.73%	31.19%
90	28.08%	25.31%	29.04%	34.89%	31.84%	23.47%	23.16%	27.51%	48.33%	26.67%	40.37%	40.19%	41.96%	40.00%	40.00%	34.17%

Source: <https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/topic-details/horizon-msca-2024-pf-01-01>

# Anatomy of the project proposal

B-1

**excellence**

50%

**impact**

30%

**implementation**

20%

*10 pages to impress:  
Every word counts, every pixel matters!*

B-2

**CV of the researcher  
Capacity of the host**

*Where humility takes a back seat (for once)!*

# Evaluation summary report (ESR)



Horizon Europe

Evaluation Form (HE MSCA)

Version 2.0  
28 February 2025

## IMPORTANT NOTICE

### Scoring:

Scoring must be in the range from 0-5. Half-marks may be given.

- 0 — The proposal fails to address the criterion or cannot be assessed due to incomplete information.
- 1 — Poor. The criterion is inadequately addressed, or there are weaknesses.
- 2 — Fair. The proposal broadly addresses the criterion, but it has weaknesses.
- 3 — Good. The proposal addresses the criterion well, but a number of shortcomings are present.
- 4 — Very Good. The proposal addresses the criterion very well, but a number of shortcomings are present.
- 5 — Excellent. The proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects. Any shortcomings are minor.

### Thresholds & weighting:

The threshold for the individual criteria is 3. The overall threshold, applying individual scores, is 10 points.

Weighting is only for the ranking (not to determine if the proposal passed the threshold).

⚠ Specific calls or topics may have different rules regarding thresholds and weighting.

### Specific cases:

#### Two-stage calls

For stage 1 proposals, only the criteria Excellence and Impact will be evaluated. Only the aspects indicated in bold in General Annex of the Main threshold for each of the two individual criteria is 4.

After the evaluation, the call coordinator will then fix an overall threshold, to be invited to stage 2. (This overall threshold will be set at a level which requested budget of proposals admitted to stage 2 is as close as possible to the budget, and in any case, not less than 2.5 the available budget. The actual level on the volume of proposals received. The threshold is expected to normally be

## 1. EVALUATION

⚠ Applications **must** be evaluated as they were submitted, NOT on their potential if certain changes were made. Therefore, do NOT recommend any modifications (e.g. consortia composition, resources or budget, or inclusion of additional work packages). Shortcomings should be reflected in lower score.

⚠ If an application is partly out of scope, this should be reflected in the scoring and explained in the comments.

### 1. Excellence

The following aspects will be taken into account, to the extent that the proposed work corresponds to the description in the work programme:

- **[OPTION for MSCA Doctoral networks, Postdoctoral fellowships and Staff exchanges:** Quality and pertinence of the project's research and innovation objectives (and the extent to which they are ambitious, and go beyond the state of the art).
- Soundness of the proposed methodology (including interdisciplinary approaches, consideration of the gender dimension and other diversity aspects if relevant for the research project, and the quality and appropriateness of open science practices).
- **[OPTION for MSCA Doctoral networks:** Quality and credibility of the training programme (including transferable skills, intermultidisciplinary, inter-sectoral and gender as well as other diversity aspects).
- Quality of the supervision (including mandatory joint supervision for industrial and joint doctorate projects).
- **[OPTION for MSCA Postdoctoral fellowships:** Quality of the supervision, training and of the two-way transfer of knowledge between the researcher and the host.
- Quality and appropriateness of the researcher's professional experience, competences and skills.
- **[OPTION for MSCA Staff exchanges:** Quality of the proposed interaction between the participating organisations in light of the research and innovation objectives.
- **[OPTION for MSCA COFUND:** Quality and novelty of the selection / recruitment process for the researchers (transparency, composition and organisation of selection committees, evaluation criteria, equal opportunities, the gender dimension and other diversity aspects) and quality and attractiveness of the appointment conditions, including competitiveness of the salary for the standards of the hosting countries.
- Quality and novelty of the research options offered by the programme in terms of science, interdisciplinarity, inter-sectorality and level of international mobility. Quality of open science practices.
- Quality, novelty and pertinence of the research training programme (including transferable skills, intermultidisciplinary, inter-sectoral and gender as well as other diversity aspects).
- Quality, novelty and pertinence of the supervision, career guidance and career development arrangements.

## Proposal Evaluation Form



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Horizon Europe Framework Programme (HORIZON)

Evaluation Summary  
Report - Postdoctoral  
Fellowships

Call:	HORIZON-MSCA-2024-PF-01
Type of action:	HORIZON-TMA-MSCA-PF-EF
Proposal number:	101209487
Proposal acronym:	Morpho-POS
Duration (months):	24
Proposal title:	Understanding the morphology of public open space accessibility: Towards an integrative framework for objective measures and user perceptions
Activity:	EF-ENV

## Evaluation Summary Report

### Evaluation Result

Total score: 92.60 % (Threshold: 70 /100.00)

Make yourself familiar with the **Evaluation Form** provided to the reviewers!



## KEY TO SUCCESS

- *Be ambitious yet realistic*: convince them your research objectives are achievable
- *Method matters the most!*
- *Interdisciplinary* by design, not by accident

### Criterion 1 - Excellence

Score: **4.50** (Threshold: 0 / 5.00 , Weight: 50.00% )

- Quality and pertinence of the project's research and innovation objectives (and the extent to which they are ambitious, and go beyond the state of the art).
- Soundness of the proposed methodology (including interdisciplinary approaches, consideration of the gender dimension and other diversity aspects if relevant for the research project, and the quality and appropriateness of open science practices).
- Quality of the supervision, training and of the two-way transfer of knowledge between the researcher and the host.
- Quality and appropriateness of the researcher's professional experience, competences and skills.

#### Strengths

- The research and innovation objectives on public open spaces, urban forms and capacity in the city of Ankara are extremely relevant and could lead way to an approach of inner-city neighbourhoods and social-ecological urbanism.
- The research and innovation objectives are realistically achievable, measurable and verifiable.
- The proposed work is ambitious and goes beyond the current state-of-the-art in the field of public open space with insights from a concrete case study and a new methodology linked with social-ecological urbanism.
- The proposed methodology is well described and credibly integrates quantitative spatial analysis and advanced machine learning clustering with qualitative research to address the methodological challenges.
- The proposed use of AI is appropriate.
- The research topic is interdisciplinary in nature and the proposal adequately considers the integration of the necessary disciplines.
- The gender dimension is relevant to the research content of the proposal and is well addressed.
- Open science practices are sufficiently detailed and in line with open science principles.
- The proposal presents a credible set of skills, experiences across subject areas that the researcher will bring to the host institutions. Methods for transferring information from researcher to host are adequately described.
- The researcher has an excellent CV with a solid academic background. The excellence of the researcher's scientific activities is reflected in a significant number of grants and awards obtained in a short academic career.
- The researcher has most of the necessary qualifications, knowledge and skills to carry out the proposed project effectively.

#### Weaknesses

- The proposal does not adequately describe a training plan that identifies the training objectives of the researcher. The methods that will be used to meet the researchers training needs at the host institution are not described in sufficient detail to judge their appropriateness.
- Limited metrics is provided on the experience of the supervisor in terms of publication record, citations, international projects and postdoctoral supervision.

## KEY TO SUCCESS

- *Be ambitious yet realistic*: convince them your research objectives are achievable
- *Method matters the most!*
- *Interdisciplinary* by design, not by accident
- Gender and *inclusivity* dimension: not just a tick box
- *Prove that you're the right person* for this project

## WHERE I FAILED

- *Training plan*: Remember, it's about YOUR development at the host institute
- *Showcase your supervisor*: Their excellence reflects on your project too!

### Criterion 1 - Excellence

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## KEY TO SUCCESS

- *Connect your past to your future:* Show research trajectory
- Career vision: *Paint a credible path* to tenure-track position/a dream job...
- *Dissemination plan:* Target specific audiences with appropriate channels
- Beyond academia: Demonstrate relevance to real-world policies and *real-world impact!*

## IMPACT

### Criterion 2 - Impact

Score: **4.80** (Threshold: 0 / 5.00 , Weight: 30.00% )

- Credibility of the measures to enhance the career perspectives and employability of researchers and contribution to their skills development.
- Suitability and quality of the measures to maximise expected outcomes and impacts, as set out in the dissemination and exploitation plan, including communication activities.
- The magnitude and importance of the project's contribution to the expected scientific, societal and economic impacts.

#### Strengths

- The proposal adequately describes how the study will build on the researcher's prior research experience. The capacity of the study to add knowledge and experience of direct relevance to their areas of research interest, including a desire to enhance the value of their work through the greater integration of user perspectives, is clearly presented
- The proposal makes a strong case that the proposed study and its associated outputs will enhance the researchers career perspectives both within and outside academia. A route from the proposed study to the researchers stated objectives of securing a tenure-track position within 3-5 years is credible and enhanced by the breadth of interdisciplinary exposure and network growth that is proposed.
- The study has an appropriate strategy for the dissemination of its academic findings including a sufficiently considered publication strategy and conference attendance.
- The proposed work is of high relevance to applied decision making and the study sufficiently outlines the tangible actions that will be undertaken to exploit this relevance. Engagement with decision making bodies is undertaken to a satisfactory degree given the value of the study for informing evidence based urban policies.
- Communication and public engagement strategies are sufficiently described within the proposal. The measures that are outlined use appropriate tools and channels.
- The study sufficiently defines the magnitude of its impacts. The proposal makes a credible case that the studies novelty and inherent applied value on a subject of widespread interest and value will lead to inherent significance.

#### Weaknesses

- The exploitation measure and intellectual property rights are not adequately addressed.

## KEY TO SUCCESS

- *Connect your past to your future:* Show research trajectory
- Career vision: *Paint a credible path* to tenure-track position/a dream job...
- *Dissemination plan:* Target specific audiences with appropriate channels
- Beyond academia: Demonstrate relevance to real-world policies and *real-world impact!*

## WHERE I FAILED

- No clear plan for protecting research outputs  
**Missed opportunity:** *Failed to describe how knowledge would be commercially exploited*

## IMPACT

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## KEY TO SUCCESS

- **Work plan structure:** Clear, logical progression of activities (WPs)
- Resource allocation: **Appropriate timing and effort** for each task
- **Visual roadmap:** Gantt chart with concrete deliverables and milestones

## IMPLEMENTATION

### Criterion 3 - Implementation

Score: **4.70** (Threshold: 0 / 5.00 , Weight: 20.00% )

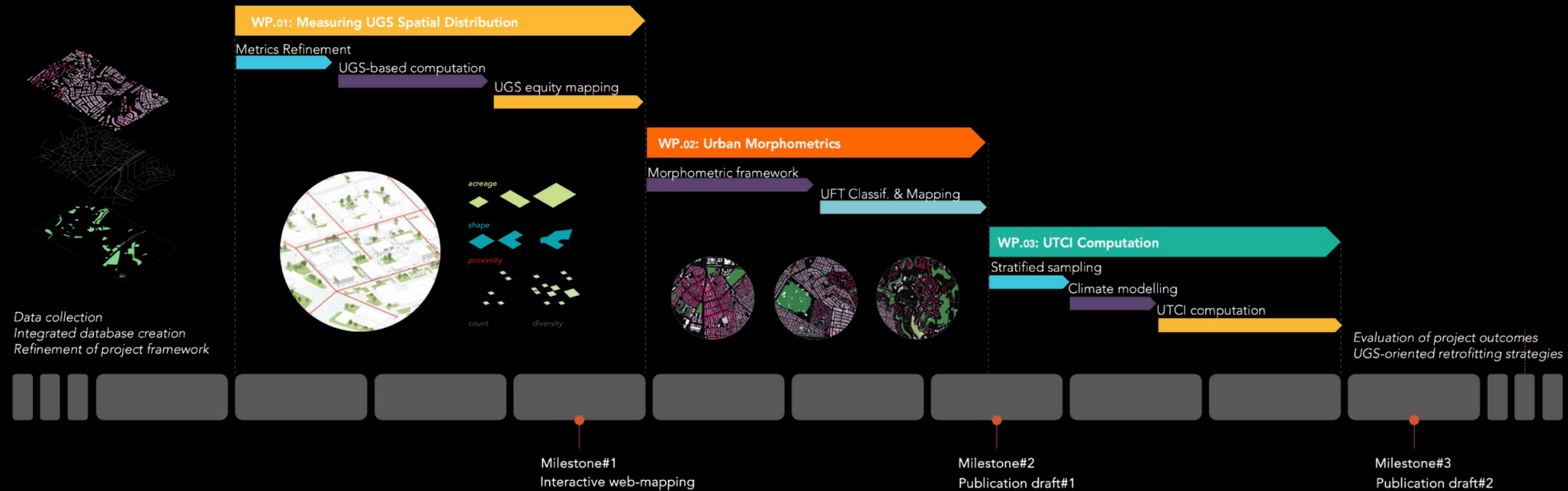
- Quality and effectiveness of the work plan, assessment of risks and appropriateness of the effort assigned to work packages.
- Quality and capacity of the host institutions and participating organisations, including hosting arrangements.

#### Strengths

- The proposal contains well defined work packages and the work plan is convincing.
- The effort, timing and duration of the work packages are credible.
- The Gantt Chart is adequately structured and is consistent with the projects' work plan, where deliverables and milestones are included.
- The proposal adequately identifies risks. The likelihood of occurrences is considered.
- The provision of institutional services and hosting arrangements are of very good quality.
- The logistics, infrastructure and facilities of the host institution are excellent, well presented and appropriate for carrying out the proposed activities.

#### Weaknesses

- Mitigation strategies that limit risk likelihood are briefly outlined.



visualize your roadmap via tasks, deliverables and key milestones

## KEY TO SUCCESS

- **Work plan structure:** Clear, logical progression of activities (WPs)
- Resource allocation: *Appropriate timing and effort* for each task
- **Visual roadmap:** Gantt chart with concrete deliverables and milestones
- **Risk awareness:** Identify potential obstacles
- **Host capabilities:** Showcase institution's facilities and support services

## WHERE I FAILED

- **Risk mitigation weakness:** Lacked detailed alternative strategies if primary approaches failed

## IMPLEMENTATION

### Criterion 3 - Implementation

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# IDEAL

actual

## Start early and plan with your supervisor

*Two-week sprint from "You should apply!" to submission*

## Expect multiple drafts before submission

*Only managed one or two drafts despite thinking about it for over a year*

## Seek support: Consult your host's TTO or Project Office

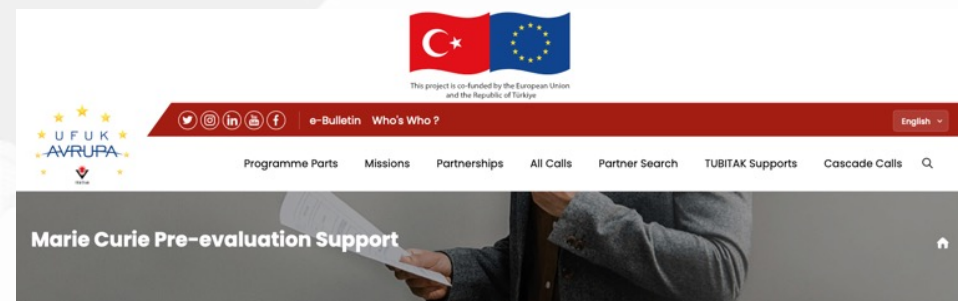
*Grateful for Bilkent TTO's heroic support and guidance!*

## Consider TUBITAK pre-evaluation or writing support

*A missed opportunity you should not pass up!*



**BİLKENT UNIVERSITY**  
**TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER OFFICE**







How to be ~~excellent enough~~ to get the funding?

*objective-driven*  
*methodology-sound*  
*competence-matching*

**WHAT & WHY?**

**HOW?**

**WHO?**

# Thank you & good luck!

Dr Onur Tümtürk  
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**MorphoPOS**

