Zürcher Hochschule
für Angewandte Wissenschaften

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President's Office

Research and Development Unit

ZHAW-Checklist EU Projects (H2020)

1.   Purpose of this document

This document should help ZHAW researchers to find their way through all phases of the lifecycle of a European research project under the 8. Framework Programme Horizon 2020 (H2020). The sections are designed to be self-contained.

The Euresearch Office Zurich UAS promotes the participation of the Zurich University of Applied Sciences (ZFH) in European research programmes. The focus of the office is on ensuring a timely and adequate assistance for clients at the ZFH who are interested in EU funding schemes and in particular, the new Framework Programme on Research and Innovation 'Horizon 2020'. The Euresearch Regional Office Zurich UAS is part of the Euresearch network and works in close cooperation with the Head Office in Bern.

Please note: This document is only partially covering the tasks of *coordinators*. The main focus are researchers joining research consortia as participants in consortia.

2.   Ideation, Visibility, Credibility

This chapter covers strategies to sharpen the researchers profile, as well as to find project partners and project ideas.

2.1 Conferences

To be accepted as a potentially capable partner in a H2020 project it is necessary to be present and active in international research conferences. If you are not yet regularly invited to international conferences, organizing your own conference at ZHAW is a recommended option.

Informal meetings during conferences often lead to great proposal ideas. Social events during conferences are great contact possibilities, too.

2.2 Publications

Publish in journals, newspapers, be present on TV, serve as an expert in your research area. Getting funding is about selling your research, so the appearance in less scientific media is at least as important as the presence in scientific journals.

Please make sure your presence can also be seen and found. Example databases to check

- ZHAW Forschungsdatenbank
- Goggle Scholar
- ResearchGate

2.3 Sign-up at Euresearch

Subscribe to the Euresearch Newsletter and profile yourself to get tailored updates on your research topics and news concerning the Swiss status in European research.

Euresearch also forwards invitations to formal networking events. Moreover, Infodays on specific Calls and Work programmes are being regularly announced on the EC Webpage under Events.

2.4 Sign-up on Participant Portal

Signing up at the "Participant Portal" is necessary once you are preparing a proposal. It is a good idea to sign up right now to get to know the portal. The sign-up is straightforward and takes only a few minutes. (see 3.3)

Note: Do not attempt to register ZHAW or your Institute. ZHAW is preregistered under the **PIC 998291506**. As long as you are not part of a proposal the tab "My Organisation(s) will remain empty.

2.5 Become an expert

There is an Expert Area within the Participant Portal. Signing up as an expert is recommended to all researchers. If you're chosen as an expert, you will be involved in evaluating the proposals in a call of your area. This will require a lot of reading and an invitation to spend a week in Brussels. The result for yourself is a great insight in the processes how European Research is organized and will directly improve your own proposals. Additionally, you're representing and fostering ZHAW's reputation as a viable, expertised project partner.

2.6 Complementary Partners

Finding partners within your research area is achieved by networking. Finding partners complementing your area is trickier. There are a couple of search engines that could help:

- Partnering platforms offered by the EU with specific thematic areas (ICT, Nanotech, Health etc.).
- On the CORDIS Platform you can find information about previous projects in your field of interest and about successful consortia.

Mind also to collaborate with other ZHAW research entities. Once convinced of your project ideas benefits, they will most likely get you in touch with researchers of their own network.

2.7 ZHAW / ZFH Euresearch Contact Point

The Euresearch Office can help you in finding the right call for your project.

Our website provides information on services of the Euresearch Network for researchers in Switzerland. For more information or advices on H2020 please contact Dr. Patrik Ettinger directly.

2.8 Alternatives / complementary funding

Consider alternative and complementary funding from sources such as foundations, Innosuisse, SNF, D-A-CH or the "Ressortforschung des Bundes".

It is always advisable to fund your research from as many sources as possible.

It is recommended to list successful funding by other funding sources. This demonstrates your network and the excellence of your research rather than giving a funding source the impression of being already financed sufficiently.

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3. Proposal

The EU offers a comprehensive [manual](#) for H2020, which describes the steps involved in preparing a research proposal.

An accessible step-by-step [instruction in German](#) is available on the Website of the «Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung».

There might be a possibility to provide insight into an approved H2020 grant, given the grant recipient agrees on this procedure.

3.1 The consortium

The most important step in the lifecycle of a research project is the definition of the consortium.

Points to consider:

− Are the participants balanced (Research Institutes/Schools/Public Sector/SMEs/Companies)

− Is it the right consortium to tackle precisely the challenge defined in the call

− For applied research projects (technology readiness levels TLR>3): can the consortium credibly demonstrate its commitment to commercializing the project results

− Is the coordinator capable and experienced in organizing

3.2 To coordinate or not to coordinate

If no experienced coordinator can be found, coordinating a European project at ZHAW is possible. However, please consider that coordinating a project will include a considerable number of administrative tasks. Coordination is easier if you have had previous experience in European projects as a project participant.

3.3 EU Portal Registration

[ECAS](#) is the European Commission's user authentication service. It allows authorised users to access a wide range of Commission information systems, using a single username and password.

In any of the following project phases, ECAS is the central tool to interact with the EU; your registration is thus a mandatory requirement.
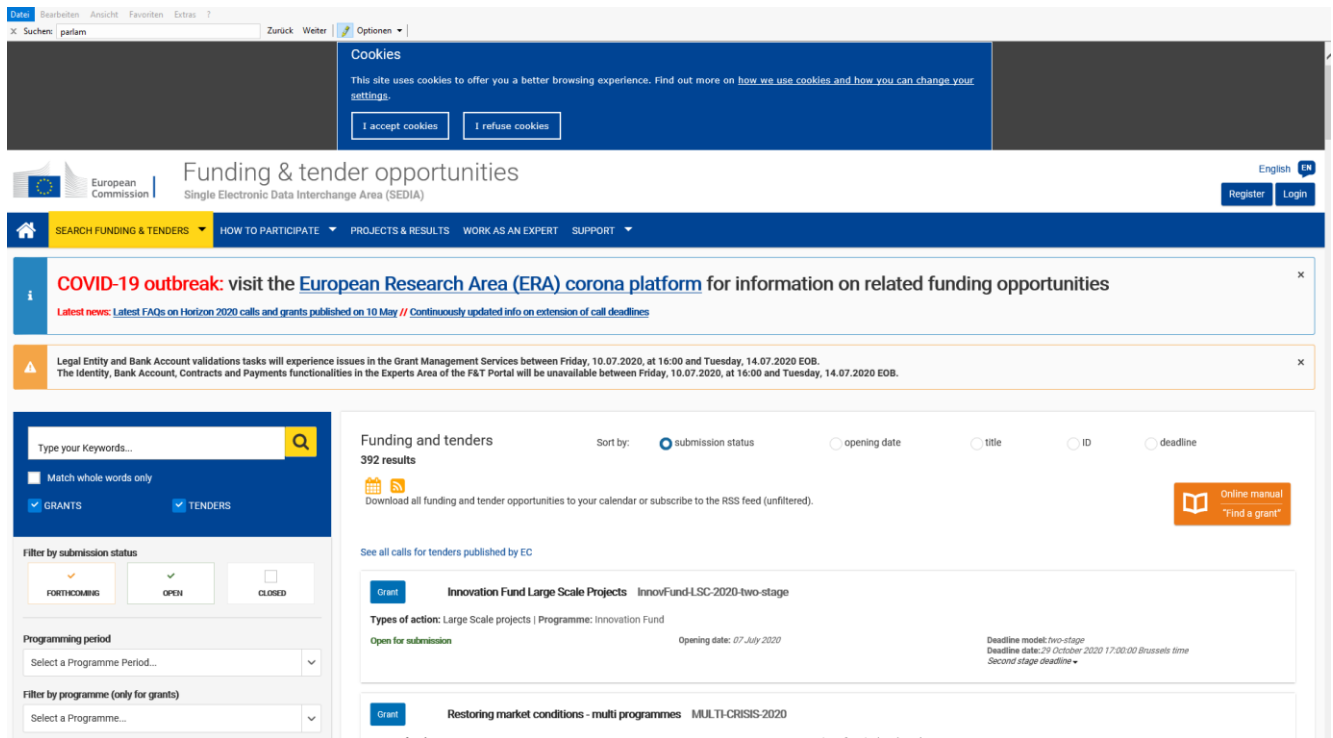
Recommendation/Hint:

− Use your ZHAW-shortname-email when you register your profile, i.e. etti@zhaw.ch.

− Can't with your existing account? Use the [password reset procedure](#) to receive a new/temporary password to your email

3.4 Find a "call for proposals"

All [EU funding opportunities](#) are listed on the Participant Portal.

To identify interesting calls, restrict the variety of shown calls using the filter criteria. Alternatively, if you have a project idea, but can't find it using the filters, try the fulltext search under the [Search Topics page](#). It is also recommended to contact the [Euresearch Office Zurich UAS](#) who will help you in identifying an adequate call.

The EU also works hard on improving the readability of their H2020 documentations – we can recommend to read at least screenshots and the straightforward explanation in the Proposal Submission Service User Manual, page 8-13. Please also read page 48 to get familiar with the different roles available.

Once you found a matching call, read carefully the call documentation and the work programme to verify that your idea matches the scope of the call.

3.5 Submission of proposals

Now that you've decided on your role, found your project partners (and coordinator), continue:

-As participant: Your project coordinator should appoint you with tasks/subtasks in the proposal writing process. You might be invited in person or online to help with structuring the WBS. You might be asked to write essential chapters of the proposal or co-edit or proofread other parts. In any case, you'll have to contribute the "EFFORTS" and "COSTS" you expect for your project contributions.

<!>In this phase: Be as pro-active, demanding, eager, precise and concise as you can, both in contact with the coordinator and all your project partners: You'll gain valuable reputation as "active" contributor, and you'll likely be asked to partner again in the next project, even if *this* proposal fails. You'll also gain the same insight from future partners – or the "avoid = passive" ones.

A positive track record and some past successes in EU-research are very helpful in acquiring a new project.

You can address Dr. Patrik Ettinger (etti@zhaw.ch; Tel 4049) and forschungssupport.t@zhaw.ch (if your are a member of Departement T) if you have any

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question concerning your proposal. You may also send the proposal draft to the National Contact Point (NCP) in your field for proofreading. (List of Swiss NCPs for Zurich UAS).

3.6 Tool for effective collaboration in the proposal phase

Physical presence meetings are recommended to draft the overall goal of the proposal as well as the work distribution within the proposal. (Minor contribution partners may be involved via videoconference.) The content of the different workpackages and rough estimates of the corresponding workloads should be also defined at an early stage.

Effective writing can be achieved in

− either a collaborative manner (e.g. "Google Docs"), or via https://collab.zhaw.ch/
− or in a distributed way (i.e. the Coordinator distributes tasks and chapters, preferably in predefined templates and compiles the parts in a centralized document).

However, experience shows that collaborative proposals tend to be messy as the participants don't use the same wording etc. and the proposal usually needs to be edited by the Coordinator in the end.

Note: EMDESK proved to be an effective tool especially for the planning and calculation of budget / workpackage / task distribution even if only used by the coordinator.

3.7 Data Management Plan

All project proposals submitted to "Research and Innovation actions" as well as "Innovation actions" include a mandatory section on research data management which is evaluated under the criterion "Impact" (Guidelines on FAIR Data Management in Horizon 2020).

In Horizon 2020 the Open Research Data Pilot aims to improve and maximise access to and re-use of research data generated by projects. The legal requirements for projects participating in this pilot are contained in the optional article 29.3 of the Model Grant Agreement.

A ZHAW guide on ORD can be found here (available in German language only).

3.8 Gender aspects

There is a collection of gender specific inputs at Yellow Window.

Gender aspects must be addressed in a proposal even if it might seem difficult in your area. At ZHAW, you can contact the Diversity Unit for specific questions.

3.9 Risk Analysis

A detailed risk analysis including planned reaction (e.g. consortium partner fails to deliver) is part of a proposal. This is included in the implementation plan and has to be mainly discussed and assessed with the coordinator of a proposal.

3.10 Budget

Personnel hours for the workpackages need to be planned and calculated; for this, please refer to the Checkliste interne Kostensätze ZHAW for the budget phase. These cost rates are averaged rates for each ZHAW personnel category. The actually paid amount will be your actual personnel cost rate. If you are unsure, please ask Dr. Patrik Ettinger (etti@zhaw.ch), the financial controller of your department or forschungssupport.t@zhaw.ch.

At ZHAW, a **Person Month** has **172 hours**.

Audit costs should be budgeted as „other direct costs" with ~ EUR 1'350 (kantonale Finanz-kontrolle: CHF 1450/day) per reporting period. Audits are mandatory if the share of ZHAW is ≥ EUR 325K actual direct costs; however, audits are also performed randomly on smaller project and can happen anytime.

4.   Negotiation

In contrast to FP7, your project will be implemented as submitted (no additional negotiation and proposal improvement. The exceptions to this rule are when corrections are needed:

−   as a result of an ethical review or security scrutiny

−   to ensure the project conforms to the applicable rules, e.g. legal and financial rules

−   to remove clerical errors or clear inconsistencies

−   when, under exceptional circumstances, a participant is removed from a consortium dur-ing grant preparation

4.1   Consortium Agreement

The Consortium Agreement defines how the project results are shared by the consortium partners and is hence a crucial document clarifying the collaboration modalities. Consortium Agreements for EU projects are often based on the template called "DESCA model".

NOTE: at ZHAW, the Consortium Agreement has to be **verified by the legal service** before it is signed; please contact **Maurus Meier** (memu@zhaw.ch; Tel 7219) for such verifications. The legal service has a very good knowledge of the DESCA model consortium agreement and can also advise on its adaptation.
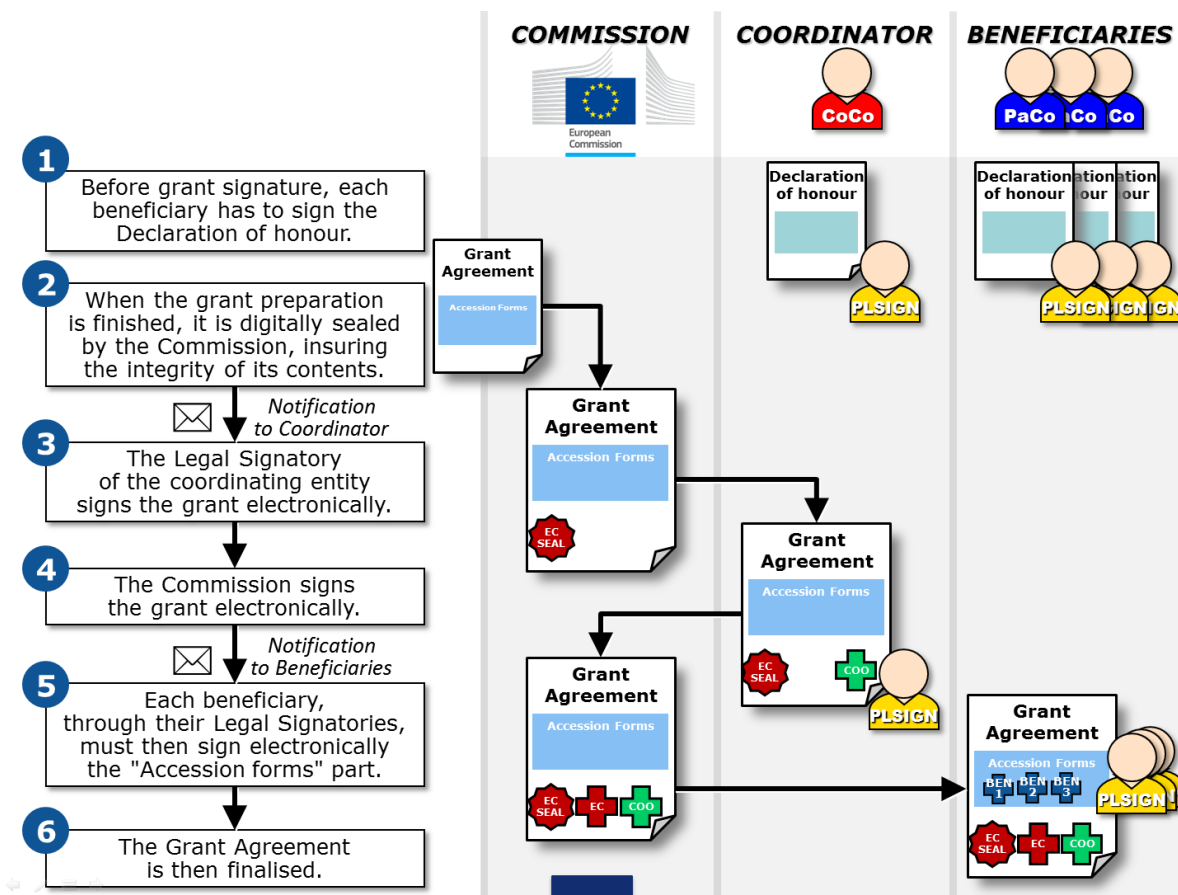
4.2   Grant Agreement

Signing the Grant Agreement is the last step of the grant preparation phase. It shows that both the project consortium and the European Commission formally approve the agreement and its annexes. The Grant Agreement is signed by the coordinator, while all consortium partners sign the "Accession Form to the Grant Agreement".

Under H2020, Grant Agreements are generally signed electronically.

NOTE: The ZHAW has implemented an eSignature-Process.

The following schematic from the Horizon 2020 Online Manual illustrates the signature process of the Grant Agreement:

Please refer also to the annotated Model Grant Agreement.

5.   Execution

5.1   Project administration

Key points for EU project administration:

For support on the financial aspects of your project, please contact your department's financial controller (see controller contact information on page 10). If you are from SoE please contact Forschungssupport T.

EU research projects must be registered in the ZHAW SAP system as PSP element "Project". To permit EU-mandatory reporting on workpackage (WP) level each of the projects WP must be registered as a PSP-element "subproject".

It is highly recommended to do **project status check-up monthly**.

Note: Changes and corrections of SAP bookings after the end of any month (ProTime Sperrdatum) should be avoided.

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5.2 Processes and tools for financial reporting

5.2.1 Administrative tasks during the project year

Responsible: ProjektleiterIn, ProjektmitarbeiterIn, supported by institute secretaries

− Recording efforts in ProTime **(monthly)**
  EU research project regulations require efforts/hours to be recorded "at least **monthly**, or more frequent". Within **ZHAW, hours need to be recorded <u>before</u> <u>ProTime deadline</u>**. The project lead must ensure that the project team knows which workpackage(s) they're expected to work on (which WP to book their efforts onto) in advance.

− Recording of expenses in ProTime **(monthly):**
  Please ensure to **record all expenses** concerning your project in **ProTime directly**.

  Every single expense must have a receipt.

  Your expenses will be eligible only, if recorded in ProTime and linked to a previously pho-tographed or scanned and assigned receipt**.** This receipt is stored in your personal receipt archive ("Belegarchiv" button). **Please note** that you are now required to submit a receipt and complete a text entry field. The expenses will be paid with your salary.

  A **guide** on "how to record efforts and expenses in ProTime" can be found here.

5.2.2 Administrative tasks due at the end of full reporting period

Responsible: ProjektleiterIn, HR, F&E Support (SoE), Controlling

After the end of a full reporting period, the project coordinator requests the project participants to submit:

− Periodic **technical** report:
  detailed research progress reports and deliverables (responsible: Projektleiter)

− Periodic **financial** report*
  responsible: ProjektleiterIn / coordination: F&E support (SoE) / Cost info: HR / Financial Controlling: conformity & compliance check prior to report submission

The above reports must be **submitted** by the coordinator **within 60 days** following the end of each reporting period, unless other deadlines are communicated by the coordinator (Report templates).

*Declaration of actual direct costs[1] and indirect costs[2] eligible for the period:
After ProTime / SAP deadline has passed F&E support (SoE) or ProjektleiterIn requests the **actual direct personnel costs** (calculation of periods eligible personnel costs based on regis-tered hours) from HR and **expenses** (other direct costs) from ProjektleiterIn or institutes secre-tary.

The "Project FSIGN" (department controller) appointed to the project will then cross-check whether it can be sent to the coordinator/EU for processing.

Note: The **final financial report** must be accompanied by a certificate on the financial state-ments – **CFS** (one certificate per beneficiary) if a **financial contribution of €325,000 or more for direct costs is claimed**. The certificate must be issued by an external auditor (For ZHAW: Kanton Zürich Bildungsdirektion – Generalsekretariat Finanzen und Bauten).

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[1] direct personnel costs & expenses
[2] indirect administration & service costs to support the project

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5.3 Preparation for an EU Project Audit

If you're requested by the project coordinator to conduct a project audit, please contact ZHAW Financial Controlling and F&E Support SoE (Dr. Patrik Ettinger etti@zhaw.ch or forschungssupport.t@zhaw.ch) right away. They will support you.

5.4 Closing of a Project

At the end of a project, a final full reporting, final project review meeting with the consortium and perhaps a final financial audit will be performed.

Archiving: Any key project documentation such as contracts, invoices and receipts must be kept for 10 years as required by the "Aufbewahrungspflicht Obligationsrecht Schweiz".

The EU may request project documentation audits until 5 years after the project end.

6. ZHAW Reference Data and Contacts

6.1 Reference Data[3]

ZHAW PIC	**998291506**
Organisation legal name	Zürcher Hochschule für Angewandte Wissenschaften[4] (Zurich University of Applied Sciences)
Organisation short name	ZHAW
Status	validated
Organisation legal adress	Gertrudstrasse 15, Postfach 805, CH-8401 Winterthur, Switzerland, www.zhaw.ch
Registration data	VAT **CHE-116.041.896**
LEAR (Legal Entity Appointed Representative)	Dr. Martin Jaekel, Phone1: +41 58 934 78 17, Phone2: +41 58 71 71, Fax: +41 58 935 78 17, E-mail: jaek@zhaw.ch
Number of employees (FTE)	3308 (2019)
Annual turnover (millions)	507.6 CHF (2019)
Autonomous legal entity	Yes
Individual participants (Text, der die Institution beschreibt)	The ZHAW is one of the leading universities of applied sciences in Switzerland. It offers teaching, research, continuing education and other services that are both practice-oriented and science-based. Research & development at the ZHAW focuses on key societal challenges, with a particular emphasis on energy and societal integration. With its expertise in sustainable development and digital transformation, the ZHAW imparts forward-looking knowledge and takes an active part in shaping the digital and ecological transformation. With locations in Winterthur, Zurich and Wädenswil, the ZHAW is firmly anchored in its region whilst collaborating with international partners.

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[3] Most of this data is already safed on the EC Servers.
[4] "legal name" is the German version (English can be added in brackets) (Info Rechtsdienst 10.10.2007)

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	The eight schools of the ZHAW cover a broad range of subjects: Architecture, Design and Civil Engineering, Health Professions, Applied Linguistics, Life Sciences and Facility Management, Applied Psychology, Social Work, Engineering, and Management and Law. About 13'485 students are enrolled in 29 Bachelor's and 18 Master's degree programmes.
Authorised representatives to sign the Grant agreement	LEAR (jaek@zhaw.ch) following the eSignature procedure
Authorised representatives to sign the Consortium agreement	Please refer to Finanzreglement

6.2 ZHAW contact points

(We can also get you in contact with other researchers experienced in EU projects)

Name	Kürzel	Tel	Dept.	Support area
Patrik Ettinger	etti	4049	R	Euresearch Regional Office UAS Zurich
Andreas Binkert	bink	4964	T	Coordination Dept. T
Jelena Cubrilo Ilic	cubr	7983	T	Coordination Dept. T
Cathy Kroll	krol	5498	N	Coordination Dept. N
Martin Jaekel	jaek	7817	R	Ressort F&E, LEAR
Beatrix Weber	wbbr	7144	T	Coordination Controlling Departemente

6.3 Links to original documents

- European Commission, Funding & tender opportunities, reference documents
- Supplier Quality Assurance Questionnaire

6.4 Further links

- Antragstellung in Horizon2020, Leitfaden des Deutschen BMBF (in German)
- Euresearch Regional Office UAS Zurich
- Euresearch Homepage
- IPR Helpdesk (helpful Factsheets)

7. Erlassinformationen

Betreff	Inhalt
ErlassverantwortlicheR	LeiterIn Euresearch Office
Beschlussinstanz	LeiterIn Stab Ressort F&E/DL
Themenzuordnung	3.00.00
Publikationsart	Public