Information Society Technologies In the 6th Framework Programme

Evaluator briefing

Evaluation IST Call 1

24 April 2003

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Evaluator briefing

- Roles and definitions

- The evaluation process

- Evaluator responsibilities

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Roles and definitions -Instruments

- **Instruments** - The different types of project funded in the Framework programme

The IST Priority funds five sorts of project :

- Integrated project (IP)

- Network of excellence (NOE)

- Specific targeted research project (STREP)

- Coordination action (CA)

- Specific support action (SSA)

Roles and definitions -Instruments characteristics

Instrument	Purpose	Primary deliverable	Scale
IP	objective-driven research	knowledge	med-high
NoE	tackle fragmentation	structuring	med-high
169	joint MS programmes	knowledge and/or structuring	high
STRP	research	knowledge	low-med
CA	coordination	coordination	low-med
SSA	support	support	low-med

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Roles and definitions -Strategic Objective

- **Strategic objective (S.O)** - One of the research areas mentioned in the IST call *

- **Strategic objective coordinator** - The Commission official in overall charge of the evaluation of proposals in an S.O.

*The call also includes a group of three FET (Future and Emerging Technologies) "Proactive initiatives"

Roles and definitions - Panels

It is likely that each S.O. will receive more proposals than can be handled by a single group of evaluators, therefore:

- **Panel** - A group of evaluators responsible for the evaluation of a subset of proposals within a Strategic objective

- **Panel coordinator** - The Commission official in overall charge of the evaluation of proposals in a panel

The proposals sent to a Panel for evaluation may be defined:

- by a technical sub-category within the Strategic objective

- as a particular instrument or instruments within the S.O.

- by a combination of the two

Roles and definitions - Proposal parts

IST proposals are submitted in writing, in two parts:

Part A (Forms):

- A1 - Proposal summary (one form per proposal)

- A2 - Details of participants (one form per participant)

- A3 - Financial breakdown (one form per proposal)

Part B

- A text document (with supporting tables), written to a pre-determined structure, describing the proposed project

- The structure of Part B varies per type of instrument

Roles and definitions - Evaluation criteria

Each proposal is evaluated on a number of pre-determined criteria, which differ according to instrument type

- Each criterion is scored 0-5

- Each criterion has a "threshold" - a score which a proposal must reach to be considered for funding

- A total score is also calculated for each proposal, by simple addition of its five/six criterion scores (no weighting scheme)

- A threshold also applies to the total score

- These criteria, and their threshold scores, are detailed on the forms used

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Roles and definitions - Evaluation Criteria

Evaluation criteria	IP	NOE	STREP	CA	SSA
Relevance	X	X	X	X	X
Potential impact	X	X	X	X	X
Scientific & tech excellence	X		X		
Degree of integration & the JPA		X			
Quality of the coordination				X	
Quality of the support action					X
Quality of the consortium	X		X	X	
Excellence of participants		X			
Quality of management	X		X	X	X
Organisation and management		X			
Mobilisation of resources	X		X	X	X

Roles and definitions - Scores

Criteria are scored 0-5. Half marks may be given

5 = Excellent

4 = Very good

3 = Good

2 = Fair

1 = Poor

0 = The proposal fails to address the issue under examination or cannot be judged against the criterion due to missing or incomplete information

Roles and definitions - Horizontal Issues 1

Evaluators should also bear in mind "horizontal issues"

- Are there gender issues related to the subject of the proposal?

- Are ethical and safety aspects identified and dealt with?

- Does it plan to spread awareness and knowledge, does it explore the societal implications of the work?

- Are there synergies with education at all levels?

- Is any third country participation justified, is it well integrated?

Roles and definitions - Horizontal Issues 2

These horizontal issues are not scored, but may be taken into consideration in the score of relevant evaluation criteria. For example:

- A proposal which ignored relevant gender issues, ethical or safety issues could get a lower score on criterion **Scientific and technical excellence** (or its equivalent)

- A proposal which failed to spread awareness and knowledge, or ignored needed links to education, could get a lower score on criterion **Impact**

- A proposal which failed to properly justify and integrate third country participation could get a lower score on criterion **Quality of the consortium** (or its equivalent)

Roles and definitions - Observers

Independent external observers may monitor evaluations

- Report to the Director General and the Programme Committee

- Have full access to information and meetings

- Are bound by the same confidentiality rules as evaluators

- Do not influence evaluation result for any proposal !

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Evaluation Process - Proposal assignment

On arrival at the Commission

- Proposal data (the content of the Part A forms) is entered in the database, and all the pages (Part A and Part B) are scanned

- The assignment of the proposal to a Strategic objective is confirmed

- If necessary, a cross-objective evaluation is planned

Evaluation Process - Eligibility-check

The Strategic objective coordinator checks that each proposal

- is complete with a Part A and a Part B

- arrived before the deadline

- is in scope for the call

- is composed of an eligible consortium

Evaluation Process - Eligibility-check 2

Completeness pre-check

- If <u>all</u> of Part A or <u>all</u> of Part B are missing, the proposal will not go to evaluation

- If only <u>some</u> information is missing, the proposal will go to evaluation. If the evaluators find they cannot score a particular criterion because of missing or incomplete information, they should score 0 on that criterion

Evaluation Process - Eligibility-check 3

Arrival before deadline

- Proposals arrived after the deadline (17.00 local Brussels time 24 April, 2003) will not go to evaluation

- In cases of uncertainty, the proposal will go to evaluation. If it is subsequently found to have arrived late, its evaluation result will be declared null and void

Proposal in scope of call

- A proposal clearly out of scope of the call will not go to evaluation

- In cases of uncertainty, the proposal will go to evaluation. If the evaluators find the centre of gravity of a proposal is in fact not within the call, they should score 1 on the criterion "Relevance"

Consortium composition

- Proposals not meeting eligible consortium requirements* do not go to evaluation

* IP, NOE, STREP, CA - Three independent legal entities established in three different Member States or Associated States, of which at least two shall be established in a Member State or associated candidate country

SSA - no specific requirement

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Evaluation Process - Individual reading 1

Evaluators are assigned to each proposal

- The Panel coordinator decides which evaluators will read each proposal, based on the evaluator's skills and experience

- Three evaluators are planned for each STREP, CA or SSA proposal, five evaluators for each IP or NOE proposal

- Once their confidentiality declaration has been signed, each evaluator is given the proposals which he/she has been assigned to read

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Evaluation Process - Individual reading 2

The evaluators first carry out the "individual" readings

- He/she evaluates proposals individually, without discussion with other evaluators who are also reading them
- For each, he/she completes an Individual Assessment Report (IAR form) giving scores and comments on all criteria
- The evaluator complete it on paper
- The evaluator signs one the IAR form and hands it over to the Panel Co-ordinator

Individual Assessment Report (IAR form)

- Form differs according to instrument type
- Form lists each of the five/six criteria applicable to the instrument
- For each criterion it also gives supporting "sub-criteria", which interpret the criterion but which are not themselves marked
- Contains a box for overall remarks and total score (calculated by the arithmetic sum of all the criteria scores)

Evaluation Process - Individual reading 4

Individual Assessment Report (IAR form)

- (For IPs and NOEs) Includes a box for questions to be asked at a possible proposal hearing
- Includes a box for comment on the "horizontal issues" if relevant (gender, ethics, links to education….)
- Contains a flag box for "Ethical issues"

Evaluation Process - Consensus group 1

After all the individual readings are complete for a particular proposal, the evaluators who read that proposal meet in a "Consensus group", to agree scores and comments on all criteria for the proposal

- The group consists of the five evaluators (IPs and NOEs) or three evaluators (STREPs, CAs or SSAs), with a Commission moderator

- They continue in discussion until a consensus is reached, i.e. a decision to which all agree

- In case of deadlock the moderator may bring in extra evaluators, or may finally accept a majority view

Evaluation Process - Consensus group 2

One of the evaluators in the Consensus group is nominated as "Proposal rapporteur". Or a specialist Proposal rapporteur may be used

- The Proposal rapporteur is responsible for completing the various forms used for that proposal from now on

- If a "non-evaluating" specialist rapporteur is used, he/she records the decisions but does not contribute to them *

- The Proposal rapporteur completes the Consensus Report (CR) and Consensus Meeting Minute (CMM) forms

* in exceptional cases, if suitably qualified, the specialist rapporteur may be asked by the moderator to contribute an opinion

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Evaluation Process - Consensus group 3

Consensus Report (CR form)

- Form differs according to instrument type

- Form lists each of the five/six criteria applicable to the instrument, without "sub-criteria", plus space for overall remarks and total score

- (For IPs and NOEs) Includes a box for questions to be asked at a proposal hearing - To be completed if the proposal is above all thresholds

- Contains a flag box for "Ethical issues"

- Can contain comment on horizontal issues under appropriate criteria

- The Proposal rapporteur may complete the form directly on line using the PESS, or may complete it on paper and have the data entered by support staff

- A hard copy of the form is signed by all the members of the consensus group and the Commission moderator

Evaluation Process - Consensus group 4

Consensus Meeting Minute (CMM form)

- Standard form for all instrument types
- "Free text" to show how the conclusions developed, and on what considerations they were finally based
- A hard copy of the form is signed by the Proposal rapporteur and the Commission moderator

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Evaluation Process - Consensus group 5

If the "Ethical issues" box is flagged by even a single expert in the Consensus group, the Proposal rapporteur also completes an Ethical Issues Report (EIR form)

Ethical Issues Report (EIR form)

- Standard form for all instrument types
- Evaluators identify the ethical issues and record any relevant comment
- If the proposal passes all evaluation thresholds it will be sent for a separate ethical review
- A hard copy of the form is signed by the Proposal rapporteur and the Commission moderator

Evaluation Process - Consensus group 6

If the Individual Assessment Reports already show a strong convergence of views, the Proposal rapporteur may be asked to complete the forms and have them approved (and signed in hard copy by all members of the group) without a formal Consensus meeting

Evaluation Process - Panel meeting 1

When the Consensus group discussions are completed for all the proposals in a panel, the evaluators assemble in a panel meeting with two objectives: finalise the evaluation of the proposals (ESR) and write the panel report

- The panel meeting is chaired by the Panel coordinator, and a Panel rapporteur is appointed*

- The panel reviews all the Consensus reports, so that the knowledge and experience of all is applied to each proposal

- The panel may have a new opinion on the scores and comments for any proposal

- The original CR forms are not changed, the new opinion is reflected in the Evaluation Summary Report of the proposal

* either a member of the panel or a specialist rapporteur

Evaluation Process - Panel meeting 2

Evaluation Summary Report (ESR)

- Form differs according to instrument type
- Form lists each of the five/six criteria applicable to the instrument, without "sub-criteria"
- Contains a flag box for "Ethical issues"
- Resolves any minority views. Focuses on the official evaluation criteria *
- The Proposal rapporteur complete it on paper
- The Evaluation Summary Reports are signed off as part of the panel report

*Horizontal issues are dealt with in detail in the Consensus Report CR

Evaluation Process - Panel meeting 3

For STREP, CA and SSA proposals the scores and comments agreed by the panel on the ESR are now final

If the panel is handling only proposals of these types, it may directly begin preparing its Panel report

Evaluation Process - Panel meeting 4

For IP and NOE proposals, the scores agreed by the panel now determine the next step

- If one or more of the scores is below threshold, the scores and comments agreed by the panel on the ESR are now final

- If <u>all</u> of the scores are above threshold, the proposal coordinator will be invited to a hearing on the proposal (Evaluators involved in these hearings will be briefed in more detail on the hearing procedure at that time)

After all the hearings have taken place, the panel meets to prepare its Panel report

Evaluation Process - Panel report

To write its Panel report , the panel must first "prioritise" all its above-threshold proposals…..

The Commission prepares lists* of all the above-threshold proposals, ordered by overall score

- The panel considers any proposals with tied scores, and imposes a priority between them

…….then it writes a detailed report

- Under the supervision of the Panel rapporteur, the panel writes its final Panel report in a predetermined format
- This Panel report contains their prioritised lists

*different instruments are listed separately

Evaluation Process - Strategic objective report

When all the reports from all the panels within a Strategic objective are completed, representatives of each panel may meet to prepare an Strategic objective overview report
This is because the Strategic objective overview may in some cases require the production of consolidated priority lists

- The Commission consolidates the existing lists from the Panel reports
- The representatives of the panels participating in the Strategic objective overview consider any proposals with tied scores, and impose a priority
- They make other recommendations concerning overlapping proposal etc.

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Evaluation Process - Sending of ESR

The ESR sent to the proposal coordinator will follow certain content guidelines

- If the proposal was ineligible, the ESR shows no scores, only an overall comment identifying the reason for ineligibility

- If the proposal failed one or more thresholds, the ESR shows scores and comments on all criteria, and a total score. The overall comment only identifies the failed threshold(s)

- If the proposal passed all thresholds, the ESR shows scores and comments on all criteria, and a total score. The overall comment must include any recommendations for negotiation

Evaluator responsibilities 1

You give a fair and clear opinion on each proposal, and a ranking among them. You are:

- **Independent** (you represent yourself, not your employer, not your country…..)
- **Honest** (declare any conflict of interest you may encounter)
- **Accurate** (use the official evaluation criteria only)
- **Consistent** (apply the same standard of judgement to all proposals)
- **Discrete** (individual names and opinions are confidential*)*
- **Incommunicado** (external contacts on evaluation are not permitted during <u>or after</u> the evaluation*)*

Evaluator responsibilities 2

Respect the rules regarding conflicts of interest

- Declare your known conflicts of interest before the start of the evaluation
- If you spot a new conflict of interest during the evaluation (for example during the reading of a proposal), alert your Panel coordinator immediately. He/she will take appropriate action
- An evaluator with conflicts of interests will not participate in the evaluation of that or competing proposals

Evaluator responsibilities 3

Respect the rules regarding confidentiality

- You act independently, as experts

- Your opinions are anonymous

- Those of your fellow evaluators are equally anonymous

Individual roles or opinions are NEVER revealed

- Not by you, not by the Commission

- Not now, not later!

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