Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in the Seventh Framework Programme

Recorder briefing
ICT Calls Jan- March 2012
Welcome!

Your task is to help us record the evaluations of the proposals submitted in this call.
Your responsibilities

On the various evaluation forms for which you are responsible, you will record as accurately and completely as possible the conclusions reached by the evaluators.

You will not express or impose your own view of any proposal.

You will treat all proposal information, and any opinions which you hear, as confidential both now and in the future.
We will never ask you to act as Recorder for any proposal involving your own organisation.

If you find you are requested to act as Recorder for some other proposal in which your impartiality could be criticised, please let us know at once and we will re-assign the proposal.

Proposals are only discussed in the meeting rooms, not in the corridors!
How a proposal is evaluated

Stage 1. Individual readings

• Each proposal is read independently by three or more experts and evaluated under three specific criteria
  - S&T excellence
  - Implementation
  - Impact

• The experts each prepare an Individual Evaluation Report IER on the proposal on-site in Brussels using the Pinocchio tool or at home using the Rivet remote evaluation tool (data then transferred to Pinocchio)
Stage 2. Consensus Group

- The experts who read the proposal meet together in Brussels to come to a consensus view
- The group prepares a Consensus Report CR

The group is supported by a Commission Moderator and you as Proposal Recorder

This stage, and all subsequent stages, is completed using our normal Pinocchio evaluation software
How a proposal is evaluated

Stage 3. Panel meeting

- All the experts within the area meet together as a panel to review the Consensus report of the proposal
- The panel prepares an Evaluation Summary Report ESR to be sent to the proposer

The panel is supported by a Commission Panel Coordinator and a Panel Recorder
Each evaluation criterion is given a score out of five, with explanatory comments.
A threshold of 3/5 must be achieved on each criterion.
An overall score is calculated for each proposal by simple addition.
A threshold of 10/15 must be achieved on the overall score.

Out of scope proposals are given low scores on Criterion 1 “Scientific and technical excellence.”

FET objectives have different thresholds and a weighting scheme; See the FET Proactive evaluation forms in the “Guidance notes for evaluators.”
The scoring scale

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

1 - Poor. The criterion is addressed in an inadequate manner, or there are serious inherent weaknesses

2 - Fair. While the proposal broadly addresses the criterion, there are significant weaknesses

3 - Good. The proposal addresses the criterion well, although improvements would be necessary

4 - Very good. The proposal addresses the criterion very well, although certain improvements are still possible

5 - Excellent. The proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion in question. Any shortcomings are minor

Use the full scale. Half marks are possible
ICT evaluation

The reporting forms
Consensus Report

As soon as all the evaluators of one of the proposals for which you are responsible have submitted their IER forms in Rivet, their comments (but not scores) on the proposal will become visible to you.

If their views are sufficiently close together, you may make a first rough draft of the Consensus form in Rivet.

When you get to Brussels you paste over your draft from Rivet into Pinocchio.
The Consensus group discusses the proposal until a decision is reached on scores and comments to which all agree.

The Commission Moderator chairs the group, ensures that all voices are heard and all issues discussed.

You record the outcome on the Consensus Report CR form in Pinocchio.

You and the Commission Moderator both sign a hard copy of the form.
The Consensus Report gives only the final agreed view of the proposal.

If scores 3 or 4 are used (improvements are necessary/possible) make sure that required improvements are described!

In the final “Remarks” box:

- For below threshold proposals, only write “This proposal scores below the evaluation threshold on the criterion…” (No repetition of criterion comments! No additional discussion or gratuitous remarks!)
- For high scoring proposals – give the recommendations for negotiations.
If the IERs show a strong convergence of negative views, the Moderator may ask you to complete the CR without a formal meeting.

Then you, the Moderator and all the experts sign the form.
After the Consensus meeting you with the help of the Commission Moderator complete the first part of a Proposal Minute form (PM) in Pinocchio recording the background to the consensus decision.

You and the Commission Moderator sign a hard copy of the PM form.

Exceptionally, a meeting may close without a consensus between the experts. In this case the Consensus report will record the majority view, but will note that there is a minority view. This minority view is detailed on the PM form.
The Proposal Minute form (PM) is there to defend the result of the evaluation.

Here you should focus on the process not the outcome.

Record important discussion points and crucial decision points.

Especially explain the reasons for major deviations/changes from the IER results.
If the experts detects that the proposal touches upon ethical issue, and they judge the proposal to be above all thresholds, you complete an Ethical Issues Report (EIR).

This is a paper form (listing) to identify the issues and free text in the CR in Pinocchio.

You and the Commision Moderator sign a hard copy of the Ethical Issues Report.

The proposal may be examined on these issues later by specialist reviewers.
Consensus group

Working in the Consensus group
The Commission Moderator actively seeks a consensus among the experts. You can help by summarising, prompting, suggesting good phrases, without of course imposing your own view.

Insist on factual comments, not unsupported opinion.

Bring out the differences so they can be clarified and resolved.

Indicate missed bullet points (listed under each evaluation criterion) if necessary.

Help the Commission Moderator to maintain consistency in assessment across all the meetings.
Make sure your comments are really understood by everybody (especially those with weaker English)

Be aware of the danger of “dominating negatives” – don’t forget to mention the good points too!

Make sure each argument is put under the right criterion

Familiarise yourself with the scoring scale; make sure the scores match the comments!

Don’t appear to punish a proposal twice for the same crime. A basic underlying fault in a proposal could impact more than one criterion, but make clear these are different and distinct problems
You are knowledgeable in information and communication technologies yourself....

• ...and you are aware of some information which the experts do not seem to be taking into account

Say nothing; if you start by contributing information to the Consensus group you will end up by contributing an opinion! Discuss it afterwards with the Commission Moderator. If he agrees, the new information can be introduced by the Commission chairman at the Panel stage

• ...you are aware that the experts are making a **factual error**

Speak up! The meeting can be briefly paused while the facts are checked
Always finish by verifying that the experts agree with your CR and are okay with the outcome! Specifically ask:

- are you in agreement with this CR?
- is there anything else to add?

If a proposal is high-scoring, verify that the comments are useful for the negotiation, i.e. either to improve the work plan or to change the resources

but pay attention, if many changes are needed was the result correct?

Full explanations for the experts’ recommendations for negotiations must be given on the Proposal Minute form.
The Panel meeting

Working in the Panel meeting
The Panel meeting

The Panel first approves the rejection of the below-threshold proposals

Then each above-threshold proposal is briefly introduced by the Recorder concerned

The Panel suggests any necessary modification to the proposal’s CR, to convert it to an Evaluation Summary Report (ESR), which you implement

If any modifications to the Consensus scores or comments, the Commission Moderator or Proposal Recorder completes the second part of the Proposal Minute form PM recording the background to the decision (or he writes “No change”)
The Panel report

You may also be asked to assist in drafting the Panel report

• Stick to the standard template! Omit nothing, invent nothing

• The report describes only the final result for each proposal. Specifically, it never discusses changes made in the Panel meeting or in the Hearing Panel

• Below-threshold proposals are never discussed, only listed in a table

• The Panel report is signed by the Commission Panel coordinator and any three experts from the panel (normally including the Panel Recorder)

• (NEW) You may also be asked to assist in preparing an informal panel minute
ICT evaluation

Writing a good Consensus Report / ESR
Consensus group

• Comments are confined only to the criterion concerned
• Comments are clear: Comments are substantial: Comments are of adequate length
• Comments are facts not opinions – “This proposal is . . .” not “We think that . . .”
• There is no advice concerning the improvement of the proposal for re-submission
• There is no identification of any evaluator
Poor comments merely echo the score – Good comments explain it

- This proposal does not adequately advance the state of the art
- This proposal fails to advance the state of the art in X or Y, it does not take Z into account

- Planned resources are inadequate
- Resources in the main research workpackages 2 and 3 are underestimated by some 25%

- Good potential impact can be foreseen
- The implementation plan addresses the two key potential market segments A and B
Poor comments are shallow

- The objectives are not specified in terms of their clinical and S & T intent. No evident progress beyond state-of-the-art is given

Good comments are deep and cover all the bullet points

- The proposal lacks a clear identification of the state-of-the-art, key technologies and design approaches. It does not sufficiently consider research in language learning and formal theories of knowledge. The S&T approach is unlikely to enable the project to achieve its objectives. The required foundational research is not well addressed. There are numerous statements which are not grounded on relevant research results. The proposal does not consider the use of standards nor does it contribute to their development
Poor comments are ambiguous – Good comments are clear

- The resources for the project are unrealistic
  (*Does this mean too high, or too low?*)
- The overall resources are overestimated by 30%

- The composition of the consortium is not appropriate
  (*Does this mean too many partners, or not enough partners?*)
- The Consortium does not show in this proposal adequate expertise and resources in the area of X
Poor comments are vague, or invite criticism -
Good comments are precise and final

- We think the consortium management plan is probably inadequate given the duration of the project and the number of partners
- The consortium management plan does not include an overall responsibility for demonstration activities; it omits a problem-solving mechanism in the event of disputes between partners
- The relevance of Workpackage 4 to the goal of the project is not clear to us
- Workpackage 4 is not relevant to the goals of the project because it fails to address issue A but instead dedicates the majority of its effort to B
Poor comments provide an opening for a complaint

- There is no discussion of dissemination activities
- Dissemination activities are not adequately discussed
- There are too many Italian partners in the consortium
  The project's effort and impact is over-concentrated in one country or region
- There is only one end user organisation in the consortium
- The consortium lacks a sufficient participation of end users
- The coordinator is not adequately experienced
- The coordinator does not demonstrate in this proposal an adequate level of experience of work in this field
Poor comments include words like:
- Perhaps
- Think
- Seems
- Assume
- Probably

Good comments include words like:
- Because
- Percent
- Specifically
- For example
Start from the given vocabulary (“...poor, fair, good, very good, excellent...”) and expand from there

Why say “Poor” when you can say:

- Insufficient, minimal, fails to describe, unacceptable, inadequate, very generic, not evident, unfocussed, very weak, bad, does not meet criteria, no information, inappropriate, limited, unclear, not sound enough, not specified, no significant impact, not been followed, unjustified, overestimated, does not fit profile.....

Why say “Excellent” when you can say:

- Extremely relevant, credible, very clear, precisely specified, realistic, very innovative, extremely well suited, very good, timely, convincing, comprehensive, high quality, justified, very well identified, strong, highly effective, thoughtful, very promising, evidence, well-formulated, carefully-prepared, very professionally prepared, fully in line, looks great, very profound, sound, very convincingly integrated, clearly articulated, coherent, well balanced, very plausible, ambitious, clear advances, well above average.....
CR/ESR Writing

Check your work

• Have you fully explained this proposal’s strengths and weaknesses on this evaluation criterion

• Do comments match scores (high scores = positive comments, low scores = negative comments)

• Have you checked any matters-of-fact which you have quoted

• Have you written at adequate length

• Spelling (new- Spellchecker), Grammar?
If you were the proposer receiving this ESR, would you find it fair, accurate, clear, complete?