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

Recorders' briefing
ICT Call 10
Brussels : February-March 2013
Evaluation

Welcome!

Your task is to help us record the evaluations of the proposal submitted in ICT Call 10
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.
Your responsibilities

We will not 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 and we will re-assign the proposal.

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

Stage 1. Individual readings (Remote)

- Each proposal is read independently by three experts (IPs – five experts) and evaluated under three specific criteria
  S&T excellence
  Implementation
  Impact

- The experts each prepare an Individual Evaluation Report IER on the proposal

This stage is completed “remotely”, by the experts working at home, using the new Rivet remote evaluation tool
How a proposal is evaluated

Stage 2. Consensus Group

- The three/five experts who read the proposal meet together in our evaluation building 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

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.
The scoring scale

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.

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

Scale is changed since our last call!

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

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.

You and the Commission Moderator both sign the form.
Consensus Report

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 the 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
Consensus Report

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.
Proposal Minute form

After the Consensus meeting the Commission Moderator or you (to be agreed between you) completes the first part of a Proposal Minute form (PM) recording the background to the consensus decision

You and the Commission Moderator sign the Proposal Minute 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 Proposal Minute 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.
Ethical Issues Report

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)

You and the Commission Moderator sign the Ethical Issues Report

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

Working in the Consensus group
Consensus group

The Commission Moderator actively seeks a consensus among the experts. You can help by summarizing, prompting, suggesting good phrases, without of course imposing your own view of the proposal

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
Consensus group

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

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, make clear these are different and distinct problems
Consensus group

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! It is not your job to contribute to the Consensus group. Discuss it afterwards with the Commission Moderator. If he agrees, the information can be introduced 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 about 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 is the result correct?
The Panel meeting

Working in the Panel meeting
The Panel meeting

The Panel approves the rejection of the below-threshold proposal

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) produced by the Recorder

The Commission Moderator or Proposal Recorder also completes the second part of the Proposal Minute form PM recording the background to this Panel decision
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, and never any intermediate or individual views (especially for those with hearings)
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)
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
CR/ESR Writing

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:

- 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.
CR/ESR Writing

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 to the objectives of the project
  (*Does this mean too many partners, not enough partners?*)
- The Consortium does not show in this proposal adequate expertise in the area of X
CR/ESR Writing

Poor comments are vague, or invite criticism - Good comments are precise and final:

- 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
- 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
CR/ESR Writing

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

- Partner X is not adequately experienced
- Partner X 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
CR/ESR Writing

Step 1: 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-formed, 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

**Step 2: If possible, try to give a structure to your comment:**

Overall assessment
Followed by two or three illustrations
(especially if the score is very low or very high)
Followed by comments which mitigate/reduce the overall appreciation

“This proposal is very good overall. Its strengths are A, B and C. Its main weakness is D” Score 4
Step 3: Then 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 this report fair, accurate, clear, complete?