

# Ingredients for successful Photonics proposals

**Markus Korn**  
**Photonics Unit**  
**European Commission**



15/09/2010



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# Outline

- Understanding the process and the criteria
- Common mistakes
- Typical negative feedback comments
- Final advice



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# Basic ingredients for success

Explain:

- What is the real problem being solved and why is this an important problem.
- What are the concrete outcomes in business and scientific terms.
- Where/what is the innovation?
- Who is participating?
- Who are your competitors?



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# How does it work



- Written application in standard format
- Clearly defined evaluation criteria
- Individual assessment
- Group assessment



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# Understanding the evaluation criteria

The evaluation criteria are

- Used by evaluators to judge your proposal
- Essential for you to understand how to convince the evaluators
- Public Information



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# Understanding the evaluation criteria

## 1. S&T Excellence

weight 1, threshold 3/5

- Objectives/Relevance
- State-of-the-Art
- Approach/Work plan/Risk assessment

## 2. Implementation

weight 1, threshold 3/5

- Management
- Individual participants
- Consortium as a whole
- Resources

## 3. Impact

weight 1, threshold 3/5

- Impact
- Exploitation and dissemination, IPR handling



# Most common mistakes

- Spending the majority of the effort describing the scientific objectives and approach - criterion 1
- Spending the minimum of time on the other aspects, management, impact, exploitation – criteria 2 and 3. Easier to earn points.
- Idea does not fit into the call or only partially addresses the focus of the call
- Science for the sake of science
- Things are so obvious to the proposers that they forget to explain them
- Neglecting to address:

What can it be used for? Why is this method better? How will the results be used? What is the path to commercialization?



# Typical (negative) evaluators comments

## 1. Scientific and/or technological excellence –

### a) Soundness of concept, and quality of objectives

- The proposal does not fit or only partially fits with the call text
- The objectives are not clear / measurable/ not quantified.
- The objectives are not ambitious enough or too ambitious/unrealistic.
- They have mentioned targets X and Y, but why did they not specify other essential targets for their approach?
- Why do detailed technical objectives only come after month 6 into the project and not in the proposal?



# Typical (negative) evaluators comments

## 1. Scientific and/or technological excellence –

### b) Progress beyond the state-of-the-art

- They do not explain the state-of-the-art (SoA) world wide (only their own SoA).
- They refer to an outdated SoA.
- They do not explain what the advantages of their solution are compared to other existing approaches.
- Company X already has a similar device on the market, why is the proposed one better?
- There is no clear comparison between the proposal objectives and the (potentially well identified) SoA.



# Typical (negative) evaluators comments

## 1. Scientific and/or technological excellence –

### c) Quality and effectiveness of the S/T methodology and associated work plan

- The interaction between the tasks and work packages is not described.
- It is not clear who is doing what.
- The description of methodology is very generic. How can I have confidence that they know what they are doing?
- They do not explain why they do it this way. There are better ways of doing the same.
- They have not explained how they will solve problem X. Do they even know that it will be a problem?
- There is no risk analysis and contingency plans are inappropriate.



# Typical (negative) evaluators comments

## 2. Quality and efficiency of the implementation and the management

- They have not described how they will take decisions or resolve conflicts (voting procedures)?
- The management only meets once a year!
- What experience has the coordinator with project management?
- The consortium is missing an essential partner (e.g. end-user, system integrator)
- There seems to be overlap in expertise and tasks of beneficiaries a and b
- Has this partner experience with solving similar problems?
- They seem to be missing a required expertise/equipment.



# Typical (negative) evaluators comments

## 2. Quality and efficiency of the implementation and the management (continued)

- They have not explained why they have a (high) budget for equipment or consumables?
- Why do they have such a high travel budget?
- It is not clear from the description why they need so many person months for task X.



# Typical (negative) evaluators comments

## 3. Potential impact through the development, dissemination and use of project results

- They give no evidence that their solution has the potential to create the expected impact as described in the call text.
- They do not try to quantify the impact.
- They have not tried to give any targeted cost or market share figures.
- They do not compare to the competition.
- They do not give any figures for the market size.
- They only give statements that they will exploit but they give no details and no exploitation plan.



# Typical (negative) evaluators comments

## 3. Potential impact through the development, dissemination and use of project results – continued

- Standard company profiles or generic statements on exploitation philosophy rather than elaborated exploitation plans of industrial partners together with limited industrial participation casts doubt on real industrial commitment.
- There is no identification of exploitable project results for which meaningful exploitation plans could be developed.
- The dissemination plan is very generic.
- Intellectual property is not addressed at all (how to protect/manage/share IPR generated in the project, monitoring of the world wide evolution of IPR).
- This project is heavily based on the evolution of standards and this is not discussed.



# Final Advice

- **Read and understand the call text.**
- **Discuss the proposal with all partners.**
- **Do not submit last minute.**
- **Understand the evaluation criteria and make sure you cover the essential points.**
- **Explain your approach comprehensively from the very beginning (what do you want to achieve, how and what for).**
- **More text does not equal more points. Be concise, avoid redundancy and be clear!**
- **Get somebody who was not involved to read your proposal and ask his/her advice to improve.**

