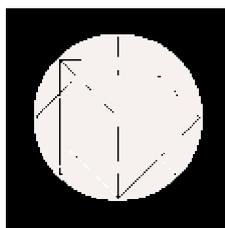




THE FIFTH FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME

The Fifth Framework Programme focuses on Community activities in the field of research, technological development and demonstration (RTD) for the period 1998 to 2002.

MANUAL OF PROPOSAL EVALUATION PROCEDURES



MANUAL OF PROPOSAL EVALUATION PROCEDURES

Introduction

The new approach followed in preparing and implementing the fifth framework programme requires an evolution in the earlier practices for evaluating research proposals. The purpose of this evolution is threefold:

- a broader integration of scientific and technological evaluation criteria with socio-economic issues, matching these to resources and management capabilities;
- a faster processing of calls for proposals and a more effective assistance and information to potential proposers;
- a more harmonised set of general procedures in order to facilitate coordination and interaction between specific programmes or key actions.

The processes for evaluating proposals submitted for funding to research, technological development and demonstration (RTD) programmes of the European Communities will continue to rest on a number of well established principles:

- i. **Quality.** Projects selected for funding must demonstrate a high scientific, technical and managerial quality in the context of the objectives of the RTD programme in question and must help in making a contribution to Community policies in general.
- ii. **Transparency.** In order to provide a clear framework for researchers preparing proposals for funding, the process of reaching those funding decisions, both the principles and the practice, must be clearly described and available to any interested party. In addition, adequate feedback must be provided to proposers on the outcome of the evaluation of their proposals.
- iii. **Equality of treatment.** A fundamental principle of Community RTD support is that all proposals should be treated alike, irrespective of where they originate or the identity of the proposers.
- iv. **Impartiality.** All eligible proposals are treated impartially on their merits, following an independent peer review.
- v. **Efficiency and speed.** The procedures have been designed to be as rapid as possible, commensurate with maintaining the quality of the evaluation and respecting the legal framework within which the RTD programme is managed.

The purpose of this manual is to provide in one document the “ground rules” or guidelines for the evaluation of proposals for European Community funded projects,

taking the principles set out above into consideration. It describes the basic procedures that will be followed by all the programmes under the fifth framework programme of the European Community and the European Atomic Energy Community, indicating any particular procedures that will be used in specific cases or under particular circumstances.

The harmonisation of the basic procedures between the specific programmes of the fifth framework programme which is implied by the preparation of this manual is intended to make it easier for consortia and researchers to prepare their proposals in the full knowledge of the rules that will apply. In addition, the aim is to ensure that, whenever possible, proposals are not excluded from consideration for administrative reasons when they span areas covered by more than one programme and to ensure that projects can easily be transferred between the programmes when appropriate. This manual recognises, though, that individual programmes and/or action lines will have special needs in some circumstances and provides flexibility within a harmonised framework for programmes to adapt procedures to their own particular needs when this is appropriate. Due to the nature of the research training measures and specific measures for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) a number of specific rules will apply to such measures funded under the horizontal or thematic programmes. Any exceptions from the general rules are mentioned in the text of this manual.

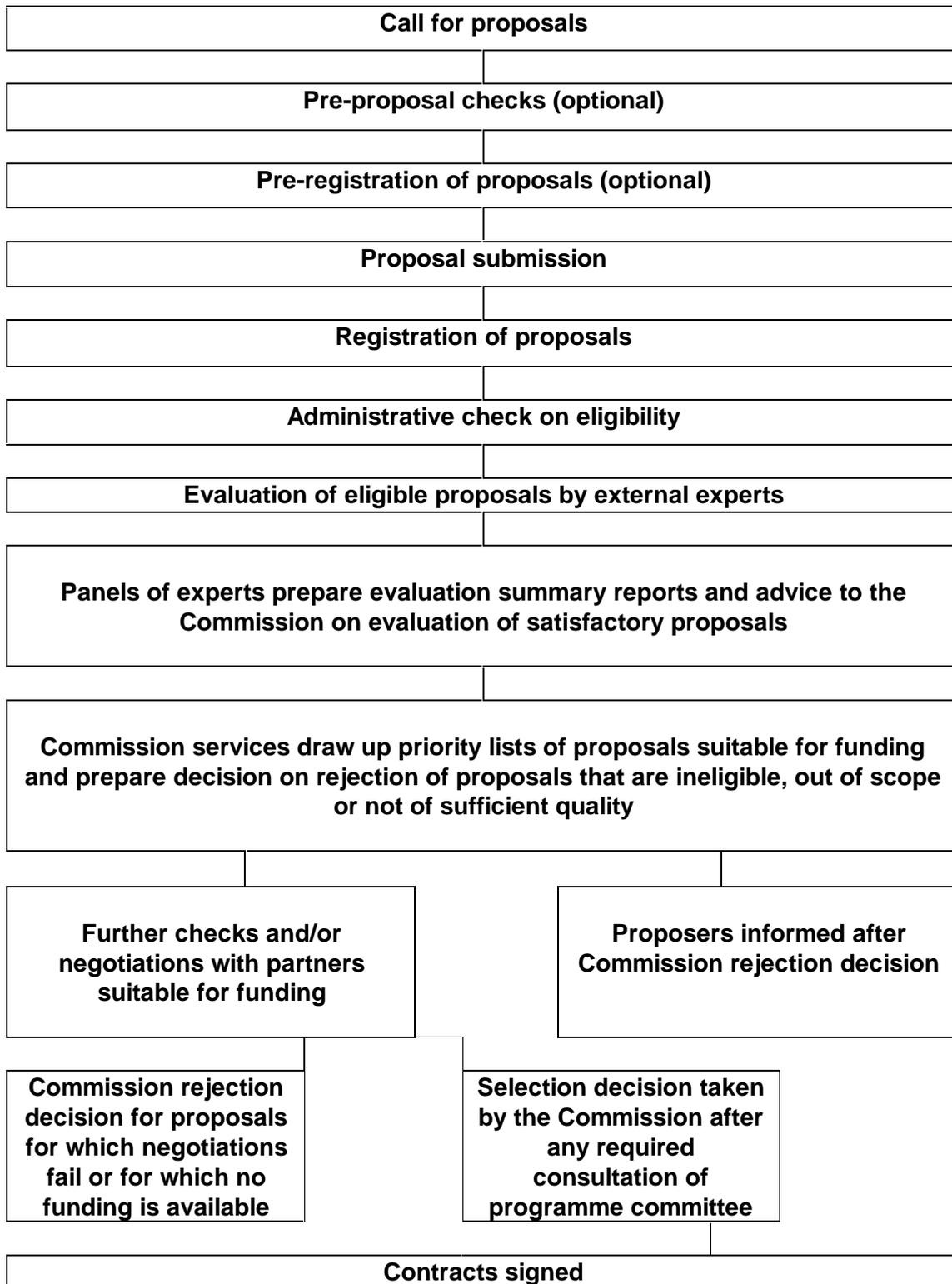
For each specific programme, a short annex is appended to this document setting out how it is intended to apply the guidelines contained within this manual, in particular the choices made (where choices exist) and details of each programme's priorities through a description of the marking and weighting system to be used and any programme-specific interpretations of the general evaluation criteria or criteria specific to the particular programme. Whilst the programme-specific annexes adapt these guidelines and provide further detail, they may not go against the provisions of this manual; if the text of annex is unclear in this respect, the main text of this manual will apply.

Throughout this manual, the term "proposal" generally signifies an application for funding of a shared-cost RTD project through either a European Community or Euratom specific programme. The rules set out in this manual for the evaluation of such proposals also apply to all other proposals for funding initiated through calls for proposals (e.g. concerted actions, fellowships and training actions and other measures such as SME-specific measures and certain accompanying measures), unless otherwise stated. Procedures for dealing with measures submitted through normal public procurement procedures or for ad-hoc subsidies are covered by the Commission's general rules for such measures. Special provisions for any particular measures are either mentioned in the main text or dealt with in an annex.

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Summary of the steps involved in the proposal evaluation and project selection process



N.B. In some instances, it may be decided to operate proposal submission in two stages. Details are set out on p.15.

Pre-proposal checks

Pre-proposal checks are an informal advisory service which may be offered by the Commission services to the research community. Their purpose is to advise potential proposers on whether their proposals would fulfil formal eligibility criteria and on whether they appear to be within the scope of the calls for proposals. When used by a programme, they are carried out through the proposal coordinator sending to the Commission services concerned a short description of the proposal he/she intends to submit. The short proposal description must also contain details of the proposed project consortium, to allow an examination of the eligibility of the partners.

The Commission services will send back a standardised check list reply to the proposal coordinator by fax or electronic mail in general within 5 working days of receipt or, in the event of pre-proposals being explicitly invited, of any deadline specified in the call for proposals. There will be no element of evaluating the quality of the scientific content of the proposal by the Commission services and the advice provided is not binding on either the Commission or the proposers. Pre-proposals will not be checked against any full proposals received later, nor will their content form part of the evaluation of full proposals or be divulged to expert evaluators. The feedback form to be used by RTD programmes is attached at Annex A.

The submission of a pre-proposal is not obligatory and the feedback provided by the Commission services does not commit the Commission nor oblige the proposer either to submit or not to submit a full proposal. No pre-proposals will be accepted later than one month before the deadline of a call for proposals (in the case of calls with fixed deadlines) or the date of evaluation sessions (in the case of continuously open calls with fixed dates for evaluation sessions). The Commission services will only reply to one pre-proposal per proposal. Further contact between the proposal coordinator and the Commission services or the sending in of “refined” pre-proposals will not be allowed.

Pre-registration

For the purposes of planning evaluation sessions and inviting the appropriate external experts, programmes may request proposers intending to submit a proposal to pre-register their proposal with the Commission services. To do this, they will have to send in by fax, letter or electronic mail the names and addresses of the participants in the proposal as well as a title and short summary of the proposal content (including an indication of the language in which the proposal is to be submitted) no later than three weeks before the call deadline. In return, they will receive, normally within a few working days, but not earlier than 4 weeks before the call deadline, a proposal number from the Commission services to be quoted in the full proposal submitted. The pre-registration of a proposal would not commit the proposers to submitting a full proposal or an identical proposal.

Receipt of proposals

Proposers are encouraged to prepare proposals with a software tool (the Proposal Preparation Tool) which will be made available by the Commission via Internet, by electronic mail or distributed on CD-ROM. It will help them prepare the administrative and technical information required.

Proposals may be sent in one of two ways:

- Made by the Proposal Preparation Tool and sent electronically, by use of a sealing mechanism, including encryption and server uploading or electronic mail.

The coordinator must request a digital certificate from the Commission's certification authority for electronic signature of the proposal file. When the proposal has been finalised, it is then "sealed" and a short validation file ("fingerprint") is created.

The validation file, which identifies the proposal file uniquely, must be sent (electronically or by fax) before the deadline. The unmodified proposal file must be received electronically within 48 hours after the deadline.

- Made by the Proposal Preparation Tool and printed out by the coordinator, or prepared on the paper forms distributed with information packages.

To be receivable, proposals submitted on paper must be sent by post or handed in to the Commission at an address specified in the call on or before the deadline published in the call for proposals. Proposals arriving up to 10 working days after this deadline will be accepted if both sent by post and clearly postmarked on or before the deadline. Proposals sent by express courier service or delivered by hand must arrive by the deadline.

Packages containing proposals may be opened by the Commission staff (or any contractor retained by the Commission for the purpose of providing administrative services for evaluation sessions) as they arrive for the purposes of registering the administrative details in Commission databases and for returning acknowledgement of receipt forms. In the case of proposals submitted electronically, files will be unsealed and their contents entered into the databases as they arrive. No evaluation or analysis of the proposal contents will take place before the call deadline has passed, nor will any contact with proposers be permitted. 10 working days after the deadline in the call, a record will be drawn up of all the proposals received.

Electronic proposals will be archived electronically under secure conditions at all times, both in sealed format as received, and in unsealed, decrypted format. Where a proposal is received correctly in both electronic and paper formats, the electronic copy only will be treated as valid and used for making further copies for the purpose of evaluation.

Paper proposals and any paper copies of proposals will be kept under secure conditions at all times. When no longer needed, all paper copies will be destroyed except for any copies required for archiving and/or auditing purposes. Unless otherwise stated in the programme-specific details relating to the particular call, no

proposal or copy of any proposal will leave any premises or parts of premises controlled by the Commission (such as the site for the evaluation sessions). No correspondence will be entered into with the proposers concerning the proposal submitted until after the completion of the evaluation¹.

An acknowledgement of receipt will be sent to the proposal coordinator not more than 3 weeks after receipt of the proposal.

For proposals not submitted electronically, details of the proposals (title, project partners, funding requested, proposal summary, etc.) will be entered into a Commission database using optical character recognition (OCR), where possible. Standard EU rules regarding the confidentiality of data contained in such databases will apply.

In the case of “open” calls for proposals for measures for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) with fixed dates for evaluation sessions, special arrangements for the receipt of proposals are set out in Annex B².

¹ However, by analogy with the procedures followed for public procurement, the Commission services may request additional information of a purely technical nature from proposers.

² In the case of open calls without fixed dates for evaluation sessions, proposals will be batched and the batches evaluated at intervals that depend on the number of proposals received, but which will not exceed 3 months.

Administrative check on eligibility

Commission staff will verify that proposals meet the eligibility criteria referred to in the call for proposals. These criteria will be rigorously applied and any proposal found to be ineligible will be excluded from evaluation.

An eligibility check list will be filled out for each proposal on the basis of the information contained in the proposal form. If it becomes clear during or after the evaluation phase that one or more of the eligibility criteria have not been fulfilled by a proposal, it will be declared ineligible and withdrawn from any further examination.

The following criteria will be checked for all proposals. Only proposals that fulfil all of these criteria will be retained for evaluation³:

- date of dispatch of electronic validation file or proposal before deadline for dispatching
- date of reception of proposal before deadline for reception
- for proposals submitted electronically, agreement between the unique identifier code sent with the validation file and that calculated from the proposal file
- original signature of the coordinating legal entity (or appropriate electronic “signature”)
- original signatures of the partners who would contribute to the funding of a project (i.e. potential contractors, assistant contractors and members) **or** a signed declaration of the proposal coordinator that he/she is authorised to send the proposal and that the proposal is agreed to by the partners
- minimum number of eligible, independent partners, as referred to in the call for proposals⁴
- completeness of the proposal, i.e. the presence of all relevant administrative forms and the proposal description (N.B. the completeness of the information contained in the proposal description will be for the expert evaluators to judge; the eligibility checks only apply to the presence of the appropriate parts of the proposal).

The decision to exclude a proposal for failing eligibility criteria will be taken by the Commission, normally at the same time as the decision to reject proposals which are out of scope with the call (see p.12) or which do not meet the quality criteria (see

³ These criteria may be complemented by additional eligibility criteria provided for in the specific programme decision and/or the work programme.

⁴ For certain countries, the formal process leading to association with the 5th framework programme is under way. Checks on the eligibility of proposals (including those for fellowships) that include participants from these countries may be completed after the evaluation sessions but before the Commission decision on selection.

p.13.*ff*). Coordinators of ineligible proposals will be informed immediately after the Commission decision.

Special arrangements for eligibility checking in the case of continuously open calls for proposals for SME-specific measures are set out in Annex B.

Evaluation experts

All proposals that fulfil the eligibility criteria will be evaluated to determine their quality (see below for evaluation criteria). To advise the Commission in evaluating proposals, programmes will use independent external experts. As a general rule, a minimum of three⁵ independent experts will examine each eligible proposal submitted to the Commission⁶.

The independent experts used for examining the proposals are sought through a call for applications published in the Official Journal of the European Communities and open for the duration of the framework programme. The call details the criteria to be used for selecting the experts. In general, experts will be expected to have **appropriate competence in the areas of activities in the fifth framework programmes. They must also have a high level of professional experience in the public or private sector in one or more of the following areas or activities: research in the relevant scientific and technological fields; administration, management or evaluation of RTD projects; use of the results of research and technological development projects, technology transfer and innovation; international cooperation in science and technology; development of human capital. The Commission will also take account of applicants' abilities to appreciate the challenges and industrial and/or socio-economic effects of research, in particular with regard to Community policies and their capacity for judging the relevance of proposals for these policies.** Experts must also have appropriate language skills. Each application for selection to serve as an expert comprises a form incorporating a CV and appropriate keywords, on the basis of which the selection will be made.

The lists of individuals from which panels of experts can be chosen will be drawn up by the Commission staff using the selection criteria set out above. The database of experts will be maintained centrally and an adequate rotation of experts will be ensured.

In general, in any period of 6 years, experts will not serve for more than 3 years (or 3 calls, whichever takes longer) per programme. Programme managers will ensure a renewal of at least one third of the experts used by a programme per year or per call if these are more than one year apart.

To evaluate the proposals submitted in response to calls, Commission staff will draw up a list of appropriate experts (including a reserve list, if required) from the database of eligible experts. Care will be taken to ensure that each panel of experts chosen has an appropriate range and balance of competences, geographical backgrounds and linguistic capabilities. As far as possible, attention will also be given to achieving an

⁵ For example, due to the nature of Marie Curie Fellowship proposals (large numbers of relatively small projects), a minimum of two experts will evaluate these proposals.

⁶ For measures submitted through normal public procurement procedures or for ad-hoc subsidies, the Commission's normal rules for evaluating such measures will apply. Specific criteria relating to subsidies are set out in Article 10(2) of the rules for participation. In the case of accompanying measures, particularly those of small size, it may be decided to carry out the evaluation without the assistance of outside experts.

appropriate gender balance⁷. Care will be taken to avoid inviting experts who could be potentially biased for or against any particular proposal they are asked to examine, for whatever reason. The list of experts to be used for any particular evaluation session will be decided by the relevant Director(s) General, as will any replacements or additional experts needed in the course of the session.

Experts participating in the evaluation will be required to sign a contract with the Commission, binding them to confidentiality and impartiality regarding the proposals that they examine. Terms of reference and a code of conduct for experts to be annexed to this contract is given in Annex C. A declaration regarding impartiality, to be signed by experts is attached at Annex D.

For most programmes and calls, experts will be invited to a central location to carry out the evaluation. However, where time permits and where issues of commercial sensitivity are not a limiting factor, proposals may be sent to experts, either as electronic or paper copies, for them to carry out an initial evaluation at their place of work. If this latter alternative is to be used, it will be made clear in any public supporting documentation for the particular call.

In this case, the results of the initial evaluation will be communicated to the Commission by post or electronically and, where necessary, discussed further in panels to arrive at the final advice to the Commission. In certain cases the Commission may invite all experts for discussion of the advice to the Commission.

⁷ The European Communities pursue an equal opportunities policy. In this context, women are particularly encouraged either to submit proposals or to be involved in their submission. In its communication on "Women and Science", the Commission has set itself a target of having evaluation panels comprising, if possible, 40% women.

Evaluation criteria

A number of evaluation criteria are common to all the programmes of the fifth framework programme⁸ and are set out in Article 10 of the Council Decision on the rules for participation of undertakings, research centres and universities and for the dissemination of research results⁹ (the “rules for participation”) under the section dealing with selection criteria for indirect actions. Each eligible proposal will be examined against these criteria by the independent experts. The specific programme decisions provide further details of these criteria and may also provide for additional evaluation criteria which apply only to the particular programme(s) concerned. Any particular interpretations of the criteria to be used for evaluation and any weights and thresholds to be applied to the criteria are set out in the programme-specific annexes to this document and referred to in calls and all relevant supporting documentation.

For the detailed examination of proposals against the criteria set out in the rules for participation, the experts will generally provide marks and comments. In addition, the experts will be asked to examine certain evaluation criteria by answering a set of questions relevant to the specifications referred to in the call. The following questions will be addressed at an appropriate moment in the evaluation:

- Does the proposal address the parts of the work programme, including policy issues, open for the particular call? If the proposal is only partially in line with the call, does it have sufficient merit to be considered in its entirety or partially?
- Have relevant ethical issues been adequately taken into account in the preparation of the proposal; is the proposed research compliant with fundamental ethical principles, if relevant? Is the research proposed in line with Community policies, if relevant; have appropriate safeguards/impact assessment regarding Community policies (e.g. environment) been taken into account, where necessary?
- Does the proposal follow the requirements for presentation (notably requirements for anonymity)?

In the case of negative answers to these questions, the experts will be required to provide comments to justify their answers. On the basis of the experts’ remarks, the Commission reserves the right not to continue with the evaluation of any proposal which is found not to fulfil one or more of the above requirements. In clear-cut cases (for example, a proposal which addresses a research task which is not open in the

⁸ For research training actions (Marie Curie fellowships, Human Potential Research Training Networks, Enhancing Access to Research Infrastructures and High Level Scientific Conferences), specific criteria taking into account the training aspects of these activities will apply; these criteria are outlined in Annex N. In the case of the specific programme “Promotion of innovation and encouragement of SME participation”, Annex III-2 of the Council Decision adopting the programme notes that implementing arrangements concerning pilot activities may depart from the procedures generally applicable to indirect RTD actions, on condition that they provide for evaluation and selection procedures respecting the principles of equity and transparency.

⁹ O.J. N° L26 of 1.2.99, p.46

particular call), a proposal may be ruled out of scope or contrary to clearly stated policy requirements at the moment that the eligibility checks are carried out.

Proposals which are only partially in line with the call for proposals and/or which span areas of more than one programme will be examined on a case-by-case basis. Options may include evaluating the proposal in its entirety, evaluating only those parts of the proposal which conform to the call, transferring the proposal to another programme (where the latter has an appropriate call open), or abandoning the evaluation of the proposal if the part which conforms to the call is so minor as to have no real interest when separated from the rest of the proposal.

All eligible proposals which conform to the requirements of the call will be examined for their quality and relevance by the Commission assisted by external experts. Unless otherwise indicated in the programme-specific annex to this manual, experts will examine proposals and provide marks for the criteria set out below (which are drawn from the “Article 130j” decision and grouped into five main blocks). In addition, they will also provide an overall mark for each block of criteria (unless a proposal fails any thresholds – see below). Experts will be required to provide comments to accompany each of their marks in a form suitable for providing feedback to the proposers. These comments must be consistent with any marks awarded.

The blocks of criteria to be applied by all programmes are as follows:

Scientific/Technological quality and innovation

- The **quality** of the research proposed and its contribution to addressing the key scientific and technological issues for achieving the objectives of the **programme and/or key action**;
- The originality, **degree of innovation** and progress beyond the state of the art, taking into account the level of risk associated with the project;
- The **adequacy** of the chosen approach, methodology and work plan for achieving the scientific and technological objectives.

Community added value and contribution to EU policies

- The **European dimension of the problem**. The extent to which the project would contribute to solving problems at the European level and that the expected impact of carrying out the work at European level would be greater than the sum of the impacts of national projects;
- The **European added value of the consortium** - the need to establish a critical mass in human and financial terms and the combination of complementary expertise and resources available Europe-wide in different organisations;
- The project’s contribution to the implementation or the evolution of one or more **EU policies** (including “horizontal” policies, such as towards SMEs, etc.) or addressing problems connected with standardisation and regulation.

Contribution to Community social objectives

- The contribution of the project to improving the **quality of life and health and safety** (including working conditions);
- The contribution of the project to improving **employment** prospects and the use and development of skills in Europe;
- The contribution of the project to **preserving and/or enhancing the environment** and the minimum use/conservation of natural resources.

Economic development and S&T prospects

- The possible contribution to growth, in particular the **usefulness and range of applications** and quality of the **exploitation plans**, including the credibility of the partners to carry out the exploitation activities for the RTD results arising from the proposed project and/or the wider economic impact of the project;
- The **strategic impact** of the proposed project and its potential to improve competitiveness and the development of applications markets for the partners and the users of the RTD results;
- The contribution to European technological progress and in particular the **dissemination strategies** for the expected results, choice of target groups, etc.

Resources, Partnership and Management

- The **quality of the management and project approach** proposed, in particular the appropriateness, clarity, consistency, efficiency and completeness of the proposed tasks, the scheduling arrangements (with milestones) and the management structure. In addition, the tools to be used for monitoring project progress, including the quality of specified indicators of impact and performance, and ensuring good communication within the project consortium;
- The **quality of the partnership** and involvement of users and/or other actors in the field when appropriate; in particular, the scientific/technical competence and expertise and the roles and functions within the consortium and the complementarity of the partners;
- The **appropriateness of the resources** - the manpower effort for each partner and task, the quality and/or level and/or type of manpower allocated, durables, consumables, travel and any other resources to be used. In addition, the resources not reflected in the budget (e.g. facilities to carry out the research and the expertise of key personnel). For this criterion, comments may be given rather than marks.

In addition to the criteria outlined above, if the proposal includes participants from third countries not associated to the framework programme, the experts will examine whether their participation is in conformity with the interests of the Community and **brings substantial added value for implementing all or part of the specific programme in accordance with the objectives of the programme. If such participants request Community funding, the experts will examine whether such funding is essential for achieving the objectives of the action in question.**

When examining proposals, experts will only apply the criteria set out in this manual, supplemented by any programme-specific criteria contained in the programme decision. These criteria as they apply to the particular programme may be described in greater detail in the programme-specific annex. Experts will not be allowed to apply criteria which deviate from those set out in this manual and the programme-specific annex.

Where appropriate (for example when a high level of oversubscription is expected or a new complex research theme is introduced), a call for proposals may be carried out in two steps, involving two submissions. Following the first submission, which will be of a simplified form, the evaluation will concentrate on the quality of the research proposed and its degree of innovation. A Commission decision to reject those “outline” proposals not reaching the required level of quality will be taken following the first evaluation step. Coordinators of proposals that are not rejected at this step will be invited to submit full proposals within a certain time frame for the second step of the evaluation. In this case, the essence of the evaluation rules described in this manual will apply to the full process. The breakdown and weighting of the criteria in each of the steps will be clearly set out in the programme-specific annex and referred to in the call for proposals and supporting documentation.

The evaluation sessions will be supervised overall by Commission staff. Their role is set out in Annex E.

Proposal marking¹⁰

Experts will examine the proposals assigned to them individually, filling in an individual evaluation sheet with their comments and marks. Marks will be attributed according to the schemes set out in the programme-specific evaluation annex. According to the specific nature of the programme and/or the particular call, it may be decided to weight the blocks of criteria differently for the programme. The weightings to be applied to each block of criteria are set out in the programme-specific evaluation annex and referred to in the call for proposals and relevant supporting documentation.

When putting together their proposals, proposers will be asked to prepare the scientific/technical parts with no references to the identity of the proposers, in order to allow the evaluation of the first block of evaluation criteria (scientific/technological quality and innovation) to be carried out anonymously. In general, experts will mark the anonymous parts of a proposal separately, fill in and sign an evaluation form on the anonymous part before being given the remaining parts in which the proposers' identities are revealed. Where the nature of the projects requires a knowledge of the proposers during the whole evaluation process, it may be decided, for duly justified reasons, to reveal the identity of the proposers to the experts from the outset. When this is the case, it is mentioned in the programme-specific evaluation annex.

Each evaluation criterion will in general be marked by the experts on a six point scale from 0 to 5.

In this scheme, the scores indicate the following with respect to the criterion under examination :

- 0 - the proposal fails to address the issue under examination or can not be judged against the criterion due to missing or incomplete information
- 1 - poor
- 2 - fair
- 3 - good
- 4 - very good
- 5 - excellent

In addition, taking into account their marks for each of the individual evaluation criteria, experts will give a mark from 0 to 5 to each of the blocks of criteria. Only these marks for each block of criteria will be taken into account (after applying any weightings) for the final overall mark for the proposal¹¹.

¹⁰ The proposal marking procedures applying to research training actions (Marie Curie fellowships, Human Potential Research Training Networks, Enhancing Access to Research Infrastructures and High Level Scientific Conferences) are outlined in Annex N.

¹¹ The purpose of the procedure as described is to allow the evaluators to reflect on the individual criteria and, by giving them each a mark, to provide a base line for subsequent tracking of quality indicators throughout the life of projects. By only taking the marks for the blocks of criteria into consideration in the final evaluation of the proposals, evaluators are encouraged to "look at the larger picture" and score the proposal against the 5 important categories of criteria as a whole, rather than applying a "mechanical" process of adding the marks for individual criteria. Choosing a short scale of

Once all the experts to which proposals have been assigned have completed their individual assessments for a given phase, a panel will be brought together to discuss the marks awarded with a Commission official acting as moderator for the group. During this consensus meeting, the experts will attempt to agree on a final mark for each of the groups of criteria and on an overall mark for the proposal. They will justify their marks with comments suitable for providing as feedback to the proposal coordinator and agree on an overall evaluation summary report, which will be signed.

If during the consensus meeting it is found to be impossible to bring all the experts to a common point of view on any particular aspect of the proposal, the Commission services in charge of the evaluation may ask additional experts to examine the proposal. The evaluation summary report prepared will set out the majority view of the experts but will also record any dissenting views from any particular expert(s). The final decision concerning any particular advice or view from the experts will be the Commission's.

It may be decided to divide the evaluation into several stages with the possibility of different experts examining different aspects. In addition, thresholds will normally be set for some or all of the blocks of evaluation criteria, such that any proposal failing to achieve the threshold marks for any set of criteria will not be proposed for selection. Where the evaluation is carried out in several successive stages, any proposal failing a threshold mark will not progress to the next stage. Such proposals will immediately be categorised as rejected.

Independent observers

To tie in with the annual programme monitoring exercise and not less than once per year for each specific programme, independent observers will be invited to monitor evaluation sessions. Their task will be to verify that the procedures set out in this manual and supplemented by information published by the specific programmes are adhered to and to report to the programme management on ways in which the process could be improved. In the case of a two-step proposal submission, the observers will report on the application of the procedures for the full process of both steps. Observers will be chosen from among those having replied to calls for monitoring and evaluation experts and calls for expert advisors concerning the RTD programmes. Terms of reference for the independent observers are set out in Annex F.

marks from 0 to 5 applied to a small number of main criteria is intended to give confidence that differences in overall scores for different proposals reflect real differences in quality, rather than possible statistical errors or inconsistencies between evaluators.

Final examination, proposal ranking and rejection decision

Following the examination of the individual proposals by the experts and the preparation of evaluation summary reports by the panels, it will be the task of the experts to examine and compare the reports of those proposals which pass the various thresholds, if any, in order to check on the consistency of the marks applied by the individual panels and, where necessary, have these corrected. In addition, those proposals receiving the same marks following the initial examination will be re-examined with a view to placing them in priority order, if possible and relevant.

If necessary, the Commission may decide to refer a proposal to additional experts to have further opinions and, as a result, the overall mark and/or comments contained in the evaluation summary report may change. In this instance, a new version of the evaluation summary report will be prepared by the final panel rapporteur and will be signed by the members of the panel and/or the panel chairman.

Depending on the nature of the call and the number of proposals submitted in response to it, it may be possible to arrange that all the experts for a particular area see all the proposals submitted for this area and carry out this final examination at the same time as they examine the individual proposals. Alternatively, it may be necessary to constitute an additional “extended” panel for this task. The practical arrangements to arrive at the experts’ final recommendations will be determined in the light of the call circumstances.

A further task of the panel(s) of experts carrying out the final examination may be to review those proposals considered to be worthy of funding and, where relevant, to make recommendations as to any possible regrouping or combination of proposals into larger projects or into project clusters.

On the basis of the recommendations of the experts, the Commission research services will draw up the final ranked list in priority order of all the proposals evaluated and which pass the required thresholds. Normally, this ranking will follow the marks received and any advice concerning the priority order for proposals receiving the same marks. In drawing up the final ranked list, the Commission services will also take into account the programme priorities (for example, coverage of the programme objectives, compatibility with stated Community policy objectives and ethical considerations, if appropriate). For these reasons, it may be decided not to follow the experts’ priority order. In this instance, the reasons for overriding the advice of the experts will be fully set out in writing by the services concerned at the moment of preparing the final ranked list.

The Commission services will draw up a list of proposals to be rejected. This list will comprise all proposals found to be ineligible, out of scope, failing any of the individual thresholds for evaluation criteria or the overall threshold required to be passed by a proposal to be taken into consideration and those which, because they fall below a certain ranking, cannot be funded for budgetary reasons. The list of proposals to be rejected will take into account the budget available (which will have been set out in the call for proposals) plus, if necessary, a percentage of the call budget to allow for

withdrawal of proposals and/or savings to be made during contract finalisation. No proposals failing any evaluation threshold will be retained for possible selection.

Following an appropriate consultation of other Commission services on the final ranking and the rejection list, the decision on proposal rejection will be taken by the Commission. Immediately after this decision, coordinators of rejected proposals will be informed in writing of the Commission's decision. The letter informing them will also include an explanation of the reasons for rejection. For those proposals rejected after failing an evaluation threshold, the evaluation summary report may only be complete up to the particular block of criteria for which the threshold was failed. A model evaluation summary report is given in Annex G.

Contract preparation and finalisation

Immediately following the preparation of the priority list by the Commission services, the coordinators of all proposals of the main priority list (i.e. those not rejected and for which funding is available) will be contacted in writing. They will receive a summary report of the evaluation of their proposal and, where required, a request for further administrative information necessary for the preparation of a project contract. A deadline for replying to any request for further information will be given, beyond which, if the information is not received, the Commission may terminate discussions on contract preparation and reject the particular proposal. This extra information will include that necessary for establishing the financial viability of the contract partners and the potential availability of all the necessary resources to carry out the project. The coordinators of any proposals held in reserve (in case of the failure of negotiations on projects in the main priority list, withdrawal of proposals or savings being made in contract negotiation) will receive a summary report on the evaluation of their proposal and an indication that negotiations with a view to preparing a contract may be offered, but only if further funding becomes available.

Among the items to be dealt with in the contract preparation and finalisation phase will be an examination of the costs proposed in relation to the resources requested and the detailed technical work to be carried out. In particular, the cost-effectiveness of the use of resources will be examined – the scale and level of manpower, economy in the use of durables, consumables, travel expenditure and other resources and the effective mix between manpower and other resources so as to deliver the planned outputs for the least input. In discussing these items with proposers, the Commission staff will take account of the comments of the experts. In addition, any arrangements for possible clustering/coordination and/or fusion of projects (with the agreement of proposers) will be dealt with in this phase.

Once the contractual details have been finalised with the proposers and all the necessary financial and legal checks carried out, a draft selection decision will be prepared by the Commission services. This will be adopted by the Commission following normal internal procedures and the procedure adopted in the specific programme decision. Once the selection decision has been taken, the contracts will be sent for signature. If it proves impossible to reach agreement with any proposers on modifications to their proposal in line with the outcome and recommendations from the proposal evaluation, and within a reasonable time (to be indicated by the Commission), negotiations on contract preparation will be terminated and the proposal rejected by Commission decision.

When the budget for the particular call has been used up, any proposals remaining from the “reserve” which it has not been possible to fund will be rejected by a decision of the Commission as set out above and the coordinators informed.

Reporting

Following each evaluation session, a summary report will be prepared and made publicly available. The report will give general statistical details on the proposals received (number, priority themes covered, background of proposers, budget requested, etc.) and those selected, on the evaluation procedure and on the experts - number, disciplines represented, nationality, gender, etc.

The names of the experts assigned to individual proposals will not be made public, however the Commission will make available lists of all the experts used at regular intervals.

Feedback form for pre-proposal check

Programme name and year of call : PRE-PROPOSAL CHECK

Name and address of co-ordinator

Proposal title:

Dear Sir/Madam,

Following your recent request, I attach comments on your summary of this proposal.

Appears to fulfil partnership and transnationality requirements:

YES NO

Comment:

[Comment obligatory if No]

Appears to conform with scope and objectives of call:

YES Partly NO

Comment:

[Comment obligatory if Partly or No]

Please note that these comments are provided on the basis of an appreciation of the summary information supplied and do not commit the Commission. They may not be taken as indicating either acceptance or rejection of any subsequent full proposal submitted for evaluation.

Official responsible:
DG/Unit:

SME-specific measures

Calls for proposals for specific measures designed for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) will be continuously open (usually for the duration of a specific programme) to allow proposal submission at any time but will have fixed dates for evaluation sessions. In this case, the calls will specify the cut-off dates for receipt of proposals to be considered in any particular evaluation session.

For such calls, project officers will carry out checks on certain formal requirements (signature of the proposal, appropriate partnership, presence of all parts of the proposal) as the proposals are received for all proposals arriving at least three weeks before each cut-off date. Where a proposal is found not to meet these requirements or where a doubt exists over whether the proposal fulfils these requirements, the proposal coordinator will be contacted by the staff of the special SME “single entry point” in order to request further information to verify any requirements which can not be judged or to indicate that the proposal as submitted may be deemed ineligible. In such instances, the proposal coordinator will be allowed to withdraw the proposal without waiting to receive the results of the next evaluation session or may provide additional information before the cut-off date to allow the checks to be completed. If such additional information is not received or the proposal is not withdrawn before the cut-off date, the proposal will be evaluated as it stands. A written record of all such contacts will be attached to the proposal file.

Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct for Expert Evaluators

1. The task of the expert is to participate in a confidential, fair and equitable evaluation of each proposal according to the procedures described in this manual and in any programme-specific evaluation document. He/she will use his/her best endeavours to achieve this, follow any instructions given by Commission staff to this end and deliver a constant and high quality of work.
2. The expert works as an independent person under contract to the Commission. He/she is deemed to work in a personal capacity and, in performing the work, does not represent any organisation, even if the contract for remuneration is concluded with the organisation employing the expert.
3. The expert will sign a declaration of confidentiality before starting the work. In doing so the expert commits him/herself to strict confidentiality and impartiality concerning his/her tasks. Invited experts who do not sign the declaration will not be allowed to work as an evaluator. If an expert has a direct or indirect link with a proposal, or any other vested interest, is in some way connected with a proposal, or has any other allegiance which impairs or threatens to impair his/her impartiality with respect to a proposal, he/she must declare such facts to the responsible Commission staff as soon as he/she becomes aware of this. The Commission staff will ensure that, where the strength of the link is such that it could threaten the impartiality of the expert, the expert will not participate in the evaluation of that proposal, and, if necessary, competing proposals.

An expert is deemed to have a direct link with a proposal if

- he/she is currently or has recently been employed by one of the proposing organisations; or
- he/she has been involved in the preparation of the proposal; or
- he/she is related to an applicant or a member of the proposing team; or
- he/she may be knowingly involved in the publication or exploitation of the results.

An expert is deemed to have an indirect link with a proposal if he/she is employed by an organisation which has contractual links with one of the proposing organisations in the field covered by the proposal or if he/she has any direct link with or works for an organisation submitting a competing proposal.

4. Experts should not discuss any proposal with others, including other experts or Commission staff not directly involved in the evaluation of the proposal, except

during the formal discussion at the meetings moderated by or with the knowledge and agreement of the responsible Commission staff.

5. Experts may not communicate with proposers, nor should any proposal be amended during the evaluation session. Experts' advice to the Commission on any proposal may not be communicated by them to the proposers or to any other person.
6. Experts are not allowed to disclose the names of other experts participating in the evaluation with them. The Commission services will make public lists of names of experts at regular intervals without indicating which proposals they have evaluated.
7. Where it has been decided that proposals are to be posted or sent electronically to experts, who then work from their own or other suitable premises, the expert will be held responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of any documents or electronic files sent and erasing or destroying all confidential documents or files upon completing the evaluation. In such instances, experts may seek further advice or information in order to allow them to complete their examination of the proposals, provided that any discussions or contacts with others respect the overall rules for confidentiality and impartiality.
8. Where the evaluation takes place in an office or building controlled by the Commission, experts are not allowed to take outside the evaluation building any parts of proposals, copies or notes, either on paper or in electronic form, relating to the evaluation of proposals. All information concerning the proposals will be securely stored during the experts' absence from the evaluation building.
9. In the evaluation premises, experts must always wear visibly the badge provided to them at the beginning of the evaluation. Without badges, entrance to premises will not be allowed without special permission from the Commission staff. Badges should be returned to the evaluation organiser by the expert, when leaving on the last day of his/her contract.
10. Experts are required at all times to comply strictly with any rules defined by the Commission services for ensuring the confidentiality of the evaluation process (for instance, regarding communication with persons outside the evaluation sessions). Failure to comply with these rules may result in exclusion from the immediate and future evaluation processes.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATION

(Please tick whichever is applicable)

I, the undersigned, confirm that I have read and understood the terms of reference and code of conduct for expert evaluators.

I declare that I have not submitted, nor am I, to my knowledge, directly or indirectly involved, in any proposal submitted for evaluation under the Call for Proposals.

I declare that my participation in the evaluation of the following proposal(s) could create either a direct or an indirect conflict of interest:

<u>Acronym</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Area</u>
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

I undertake to inform the Commission staff immediately if I discover any conflict of interest, direct or indirect, with any proposal that I am asked to evaluate or which is the subject of discussion in any evaluation meeting at which I am present.

Signed

Name.....

Date

Role of Commission staff in Evaluations

1. Commission staff will organise a confidential, fair and equitable evaluation of each proposal according to the criteria described in the programme-specific evaluation annex and guide to proposers in full respect of the relevant procedures, rules and regulations set out for this task.
2. Commission staff will assign proposals to experts for evaluation. In doing so, they will take care to avoid assigning proposals (or competing proposals) to experts who might have a direct or indirect link with the proposal (see Annex C for definitions of such links).
3. In selecting experts for the evaluation of proposals, Commission staff will further ensure:
 - the appropriate range of competences required
 - an appropriate balance between academic and industrial expertise and users
 - a reasonable gender balance¹²
 - a reasonable distribution of geographical origins of experts
 - regular rotation of experts between evaluations.
4. Commission staff will, where needed, take action to ensure the correct implementation of the process. This includes briefing experts on the procedures to be followed, reminding experts of the rules and reporting any irregularities to the responsible officer, who will exclude a person from the process if he/she deems them to be in breach of the confidentiality obligations. Any exclusion of persons will be reported to the Head of Unit and Programme Director.
5. When coordinating meetings of expert panels for establishing advice to the Commission services, Commission staff will act as moderators, seeking consensus between the external experts, without any prejudice for or against particular proposals or the organisations involved. Commission staff present at the meetings of evaluation panels will provide any additional explanation or information needed to allow a proper evaluation of proposals.
6. Commission staff are responsible for overseeing the performance of the work by experts. They must check that the above mentioned points are taken into account.

¹² See footnote 7.

7. Commission staff will be responsible for maintaining an “audit trail” (i.e. a full file on each proposal containing, for example, experts’ marking sheets and comments). They will record the marks from the individual experts’ marking sheets and identify any criteria on which discussion is needed to arrive at a consensus, according to the rules set out in any programme-specific evaluation document.
8. Commission staff will not discuss aspects of the evaluation or selection process with proposers or any persons not involved directly in the process unless this has been explicitly authorised (on a case-by-case basis) by their Director. This will only be done in exceptional cases, taking full account of the need to maintain the confidentiality of the process.
9. Commission staff will treat in the strictest confidence the assignment of experts to proposals. The list of all experts who have taken part in evaluations will be made public at regular intervals without indicating their specific assignments.
10. Commission staff will take all the necessary measures to ensure appropriate confidential treatment of proposals and any other documents related to the evaluation. In particular:
 - proposals and related documents will not be shown to any persons other than those Commission officials who need it for the proper performance of their work, and to the experts and proposers themselves, unless the proposers have explicitly agreed otherwise.
 - evaluation reports and advice to the Commission from experts will be restricted to Commission officials who need it for the proper performance of their work and to persons who are assigned to observe or audit the evaluation process.
11. Commission officials will restrict the copying of evaluation documents to a minimum and ensure that copies are destroyed when they are no longer needed.

Terms of Reference for independent observers of the evaluation process

The role of the observers is to give independent advice to the Commission on the conduct of the evaluation sessions, ways in which the procedures could be improved, the appropriateness of the evaluation criteria used in the sessions and the way in which these criteria are applied by the experts.

Observers will be chosen by the Director General concerned, in some cases from among the high level experts taking part in the annual monitoring exercises for each programme and also from among those having replied to calls for monitoring and evaluation experts and expert advisors. Such a choice is aimed at obtaining continuity between the various exercises and ensuring, in particular, that the monitoring panels are able to comment on the evaluation process from first hand experience. The observers will be required to examine the evaluation process from the point of view of its working and not the outcome. In particular, they will not express views on the proposals under examination or the experts' opinions on the proposals.

The observers will be invited to be present at the beginning of the evaluation sessions when the experts are briefed by the Commission staff and to visit the evaluation panels to observe the discussions and the process of reaching a consensus viewpoint on the evaluation criteria set by the Commission.

The observers will report on their findings to the Director(s) concerned, with a copy of the report being sent to the appropriate Director(s) General. A summary of their report will be made publicly available. As well as producing a report, the observers are also encouraged to enter into informal discussions with the Commission staff during the evaluation sessions and to make observations on any possible improvements that could be put into practice immediately to the programme Director, programme manager or official in charge of the evaluation.

Observers are required to respect the same confidentiality obligations as experts (see Annex C) and to sign a confidentiality agreement. They are not permitted to divulge details of the proposals, the experts assigned to examining the proposals, nor the discussions in the evaluation panels.

Model of Evaluation Summary Report¹³

Programme:

Date:

Proposal No.:

Proposal title:

Proposal acronym (if used):

 Marks achieved for evaluation criteria:
1. Scientific/technological quality and innovation*Comments:***2. Community added value and contribution to EU policies***Comments:***3. Contribution to Community social objectives***Comments:***4. Economic development and S&T prospects***Comments:***5. Resources, partnership and management***Comments:***Overall**

General/overall comments [including proposals for modifications and possibilities for clustering/fusion with other proposals]:

¹³ As the expression of the evaluation criteria for research training actions is somewhat different from other RTD actions, the feedback forms used will reflect these differences (see Annex N for main categories of criteria)

Proposal Evaluation Procedures for the Programme “Quality of Life and Management of Living Resources”

1. The Evaluation process.

1.1 Pre-Registration Pre-registration of proposals will not be offered.

1.2 Pre-proposal check. Initial pre-checking will not be offered.

1.3 Remote or postal evaluation. All evaluations will normally be performed within the premises controlled by the Commission, with possible exceptions for proposals for Infrastructures and for accompanying measures submitted in response to a call for proposals.

1.4 Anonymity. The evaluation of the scientific and technological excellence aspects of shared-cost RTD project proposals will be carried out according to the rules preserving strict anonymity of the applicants. For further steps of the evaluation and other types of action where these rules will not be applied, the evaluation will be conducted in a spirit of anonymity, without regard to identity or gender of the applicants except insofar as the characteristics of the proposer are relevant to the criteria.

1.5. The Evaluation Procedure

It is expected that under a majority of action lines the number of proposals received will be too large to be processed by a single panel¹⁴. In those cases and others where it is considered appropriate, a two-stage procedure is foreseen.

In Stage One, the members of the panels will individually evaluate each proposal initially against the first “threshold” block of evaluation criteria for *scientific and technological excellence* (for which the rules for preserving anonymity apply), and then against the second threshold block of criteria for *resources, partnership and management*. When all projects have been so evaluated, a consensus mark will be attributed following discussion by the panel for these two blocks of criteria. Proposals which fail to reach one or both of the threshold marks will not progress to the next evaluation stage. The consensus evaluation summary report (ESR) for such excluded proposals will normally only be completed under the headings corresponding to the said criteria. It will make clear that the proposal failed to reach the required level and was therefore eliminated.

For all retained proposals, an ESR is similarly completed for the threshold blocks of criteria. If the relevant expertise is present, the same panel might then attribute an initial marking for each of the other three blocks of criteria and prepare a complete draft ESR for each retained proposal for the Stage Two panel to use. Stage One finishes here.

In Stage Two, all proposals successfully passing through the thresholds of Stage One under a given action line are gathered for further evaluation against the three non-threshold criteria (if needed) and ranking by a synthesis panel¹⁵. This panel will normally include at least one member from each Stage One panel (acting as its “rapporteur”), as well as relevant complementary expertise if necessary (for instance with regard to socio-economic objectives). The basis for this ranking is the score of the proposal, that is the weighted average of the marks concerning the two threshold blocks of criteria (which the Stage Two panel cannot alter) and of the three remaining blocks of criteria. This weighting is performed according to

¹⁴ In this annex, the term “panel” refers to a group of at least 4 experts.

¹⁵ Each of these panels will gather an appropriate mix of expertise. If the number of proposals received under a given action line can be processed by a single panel with all the relevant expertise, Stage Two will be processed by the same panel.

the table under point 3. The outcome of *Stage Two* will be a ranked list of proposals that the panel recommends for funding¹⁶ and a final ESR for each proposal.

In a final step, a specific ethical review by a panel composed of scientists, lawyers, philosophers and ethicists will be performed to check if the ethical and legal questions raised by those selected projects dealing with sensitive issues¹⁷ are adequately answered.

1.6 Specific procedure for research infrastructure proposals (excluding accompanying measures). The evaluation procedure will normally involve a single panel, which will meet in two sessions. In the first session, each proposal will be screened for eligibility and those eligible will then be assigned to three members of the panel, who subsequently will each carry out an individual evaluation of the proposal at their normal place of work, consulting other experts as they consider necessary. Also in the first session, a rapporteur will be appointed for the proposals of each sub-class of infrastructure. Before the second session, the individual evaluators of a proposal will send their evaluations to the relevant rapporteur, who will draft a collective evaluation and summary report to act as a basis for the discussion at the second session of the panel. Both sessions will be chaired by a member of the panel, in the presence of a member of the Programme staff acting as moderator.

1.7 Specific procedure for accompanying measures Accompanying measures will generally be evaluated by experts in one stage, possibly via postal evaluation. In this case, the feedback given to the applicant will be limited to the marks that were attributed. In the case of small size accompanying measures, the evaluation may be carried out without the assistance of outside experts.

1.8 Specific procedure for the Specific Measures for SMEs and for the fellowships. The evaluation procedure, criteria and weightings concerning the above will be defined in the specific annex to, respectively, the IPS and Improving Human Potential programmes. They will nevertheless ensure that specific features to the Quality of Life & Management of Living resources Programme, such as ethical aspects will be properly addressed.

¹⁶ Each Stage Two panel will produce one ranked list, covering in general one action line

¹⁷ Such as projects involving the use of human embryos or foetal tissues, or experimentation on non-human primates, as well as any project where the evaluators will express concern with regard to ethical aspects of the research (its objectives, methodology or potential implications)

2. Specific interpretation of evaluation criteria

Several of the fifteen selection criteria presented in the Manual of Proposal Evaluation Procedures require further explanation in relation to the specificities of the life sciences and technologies.

Ethical aspects: Proposals must respect fundamental ethical principles including human rights and animal welfare requirements. They should provide the minimum amount of information for reviewers to form their independent opinion on the level of awareness, and the existence of adequate provisions where necessary, as shown by project participants. In particular, research should comply with all relevant national and international laws, conventions and codes of conduct and, where appropriate, have the explicit approval of local or national research ethics or animal welfare committees.

Impact evaluation: Proposers are required to provide, where applicable, all information necessary for the detailed evaluation of the social, economic and ecological impact of their studies and for the assessment of technological risk, and once a project proposal is selected, to seek where necessary, approval from the responsible authorities. In the case of a possible ecological impact, the accuracy of the description of potential risks and of provisions made to deal with them will be an important element in the assessment of the proposal. When research is likely to involve social considerations and affect the public perception of science, the proposal should describe any possible effect on current moral and philosophical issues, and/or conceivable consequences upon such areas as, for example, employment, working conditions, health and safety, public health, environment.

Representation of potential users: Particular attention will be given to the participation of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and where applicable the effective participation, commitment, and support of industry, service providers and end-users in the projects.

Relevance to Community policies and actions: Proposals should be factual in outlining anticipated research results, from which a linkage could be made between reinforced scientific and technological bases, specific competitive advantages for European trade and industry, consumer satisfaction, the citizen's quality of life and the contribution to sustainable development. New data and methodologies would have to be promoted in a variety of fields such as health and safety, risk assessment, measurement and testing, bioresource management, informed consumer choice, ecosystem preservation, equal opportunities vis-à-vis health care provisions or new food habits, etc. Additional value will be attributed to projects addressing the priorities of EU policies or anticipating their evolution in a global societal context, those providing scientific facts and validation tools in support of EU legislation and its further development.

Where appropriate, documents describing in what respect proposals in relevant Key Actions should be coherent with the implementation of current and development of future specific Community policies and orientations and how this can be evaluated will be included in the information package and made available to the evaluators when their opinion is requested. The Commission services will also be available during the second stage evaluation process to provide further explanations on EU policy issues should they be required.

	Scientific and Technological Excellence	Resources , Partnership and Management	Community Added value/ Comm. Policies ¹⁸	Contribution to Community Social Objectives	Economic Development and S&T prospect
Specific interpretation for Key Action 2			For projects in the field of animal health, please refer to footnote 19		
Specific interpretation for Key Action 5			For projects in sub-areas 5.1, 5.3 first bullet, 5.4 and 5.5, see footnote ¹⁹ .	For projects in sub-areas 5.1, 5.3 first bullet, 5.4 and 5.5, the criterion interpretation will differ according to the action line that the proposal addresses. For example, for a proposal in the field of rural development, the employment prospects may be the most important aspect while for a proposal in the field of forestry or agricultural systems it may be the contribution of the project to improving the quality of life and health and safety and/or the preservation /enhancement of the environment.	For projects in sub-areas 5.1, 5.3 first bullet, 5.4 and 5.5: Likely usefulness and/or applicability of the awaited results as shortly as possible after the end of the project.
Specific interpretation for Infrastructures		Involvement of a critical mass of infrastructure operators	Impact on the overall provision of infrastructure services in the field		
Specific interpretation for Demonstration Projects	Novelty of the technology to be demonstrated (new technology or new application of an existing technology). Sufficient level of knowledge to implement the demonstration. Justification of how a demonstration phase is made possible and necessary by the stage of development reached Adequate (realistic) scale of validation. Acceptable and properly assessed risks of failure.	Quality of the management and project approach: Taking into consideration and clarification of all legal and ethical problems (especially intellectual property, regulations, safety) Quality of the partnership: involvement of both technology producers and technology users.			Clear commitment and strategy to exploit the technology or to ensure its exploitation through the project (identification of all hurdles to- and appropriate targets and strategies for- dissemination & exploitation). Presence of substantial elements of a contingency plan (i.e., appropriate risk study (technical, commercial, managerial, financial). Dissemination strategies: mobilisation of the most appropriate <i>Extended Audience</i> ²⁰ and appropriate resources and strategy within the partnership to interact with it.

¹⁸ The project's contribution to the implementation or the evolution of one or more EU policies relevant to the proposal will be taken into account.

¹⁹ Specifically concerning the implementation of the Common Agricultural Policy, the significance of this criterion means on one side the European dimension of the problem to be solved by the proposed project and on the other side, the contribution of the subject of the RTD proposal to the implementation or the evolution of the Common agricultural and related policies. A support document which clarifies and provides additional guidance to assess research proposals relevant to agriculture, forestry and rural development with regard to their contribution to the Common Agricultural and related policies will be added in the information package of the programme and made available to the evaluators.

²⁰ The *Extended Audience* being the ensemble of all potential users, interest groups and other relevant bodies that might have an influence on the adoption of the technology under demonstration

3. Weighting of the evaluation criteria (scale of 1 to 10) and thresholds (scale of 0 to 5)

TYPE OF ACTION	TYPE OF PROJECT	SELECTION CRITERIA						
		Threshold Criteria				Non-Threshold Criteria		
		Scientific and technological excellence		Resources, partnership and management		Community Added value etc.	Contribution to Community Social objectives	Economic Development and S&T prospect
		Weight	Threshold	Weight	Threshold	Weight	Weight	Weight
All Key actions	R&D project K.A 1	3	4	2	4	1.5	1.5	2
	R&D project K.A 2, 4, 6	3	4	2	4	2	2	1
	R&D project K.A 3	3	4	2	4	1	1.5	2.5
	R&D project K.A 5	2 (3 for areas 5.2, 5.3, 2 nd bullet- and for fisheries & aquaculture)	4	2	4	3 (2, for areas 5.2 & 5.3 2 nd bullet)	1.5 (1 for fisheries & aquaculture)	1.5 (1 for fisheries & aquaculture)
	Demonstration project or Combined RTD / Demonstration project	2	4	2	4	1.5	1.5	3
	Generic actions	R&D project in areas Chronic and degen. Diseases, Neurosciences, Genomes	5	4	2	4	1.5	1
	R&D project in areas Public Health, Disabled, Socio-Economics, Ethics	4	4	2	4	2	1.5	0.5
	Demonstration project or combined R&D / Demonstration project	3	4	2	4	1	1.5	2.5
Support for research Infra-structures	R&D project or Demonstration project	4	4	2	4	2.5	1	0.5
All actions	Acc. Measures ²¹	4	4	2	4	2	1	1
	Thematic network or Concerted action	2.5	4	2.5	4	2.5	1.5	1

²¹ The weightings presented in this table are indicative for accompanying measures: some slight modulation of no more than +/- 10% on any of the weightings might be applied depending on the type of action supported (studies, workshops, publications, etc.)

**EVALUATION PROCEDURES FOR THE PROGRAMME
“USER-FRIENDLY INFORMATION SOCIETY”
(IST PROGRAMME)**

1. The Evaluation Process

1.1 Anonymity: The key scientific and technological issues for achieving the objectives of the Key Actions, Research Networking and Cross Programme Activities of the IST Programme, are closely inter-linked with industrial relevance and credibility of the consortium.

Whenever evaluation of RTD projects is done in Commission premises, the IST programme will ask evaluators to initially assess the Scientific and Technological objectives and workplan (part B) of proposals with respect to criterion *Scientific/Technological excellence and innovation* WITHOUT having knowledge of the participants. The other criteria, incl. industrial relevance and credibility of the consortium to undertake the work is evaluated subsequently WITH knowledge of the participants.

For actions OTHER than RTD projects, the criterion on Scientific/Technological Quality will be assessed with the knowledge of the partners involved in the proposal.

1.2 Two-step submission: a two-step submission procedure will be applied in FET-Open and for those RTD projects for which it is duly specified in the Call.

1.3 Evaluation through mailing: The evaluation of FET Pro-active proposals, the second submission of FET-Open, and actions OTHER than RTD projects can be conducted through mailing to evaluators for obtaining individual assessments (non-anonymous, see 1.1). These written assessments form the basis of final recommendations established by an expert panel invited to the evaluation offices. In other cases that evaluation will be performed through mailings, this will be indicated in the Call.

2. Application of Evaluation criteria

The IST Programme applies the five blocks of evaluation criteria as provided in the FP5 Evaluation manual. Evaluators will, after individual assessment, jointly seek consensus on a final mark for each of the five groups of criteria and propose an overall mark. Panels of evaluators shall agree on a comparative ranking of groups of proposals as well as the overall marks of the proposals compared.

The following questions will be addressed at an appropriate moment in the evaluation.

- (1) Does the proposal address work as specified in Action Lines of the IST Workprogramme open for the particular call.
- (2) Are ethical principles and safeguards respected
- (3) In compliance with Art. 3.2 of the IST Specific Programme Decision: is participation of industrial entities in industrially-oriented shared cost actions appropriate to the nature and purpose of the activity (detailed conditions with respect to these questions can also be given below for specific action types).

In case of negative answers to one or more of these questions, the Commission may decide not to continue with the evaluation of any such proposal.

The application of the criterion with respect to the Contribution to Community Social Objective, e.g. employment prospects, will take into account direct as well as indirect effects, as appropriate.

3. Detailed provisions

- **First-step submission in RTD projects (if specified in the Call).**

In the first-step submission (short proposals) no details are required on: workplan, exploitation or dissemination plans, partner budgets.

- **Demonstration projects or Combined projects**

The Consortium must contain technology developers and technology users.

- **FET Open (shared cost RTD)**

The assessment of Scientific/Technological quality and innovation will focus on innovation, bold ideas involving high risk, or high quality long-term research.

In the first-step submission (short proposals) no details are required on: exploitation or dissemination plans, partner budgets.

In the first-step submission in which an assessment phase is requested, appropriate criteria for measuring success must be defined.

- **Pro-active initiatives in FET shared cost RTD**

Evaluation of Scientific/Technological quality and innovation focuses on innovation and the specific objectives given in the Work programme.

The management plan must define appropriate criteria for measuring the success of the action.

- **Research Networking R.N1**

Concerted actions with funding organisations and communities of users will be launched to help specify the required services. These services will be procured following public procurement by competitive calls for tenders.

- **IST Take-up actions²²**

These actions are coordinated/clustered in larger initiatives to ensure critical mass. The support and coordination/clustering needed for each initiative to cover individual actions across Europe will be put in place either through calls for tenders or through calls for proposals. The programme allows for the following take-up actions: Trials, Best Practice Actions, First User Actions, Assessments and Access Actions.

In Trials, user-supplier cooperation is necessary. The consortium must contain one or more users of innovative, leading-edge technology. This technology must not yet been established or

²² A support document giving additional guidance to constitute a proposal will be provided as part of the call specific IST information.

commercially available and would need, within the trial, adaptation to users' need, leading to progress beyond the state of the art.

For Trials, additional and/or specific elements relevant under the standard criteria are:

- 'Scientific/Technological quality and innovation': The originality, degree of innovative use and progress beyond state of the art.
- 'Community added value': The credibility of the plan for how to transfer experience to other organisations across Europe, and the related commitment to contribute to European dissemination activities.
- 'Contribution to Community social objectives': The contribution of the project to improving employment prospects and the use and development of skills in Europe.
- 'Economic development and S&T prospects': The strategic and potential commercial impact for the user and supplier organisations and the credibility of the partners to carry out the exploitation activities.
- 'Resources, Partnership and Management': Strong involvement of users and user-supplier cooperation.

In Best Practice Actions, one or more user organisations participate. They must demonstrate a sound analysis of current practice, identify a clear business need for improvement, identify clearly the technical and business objectives of the improvement, and plan for adoption of new practices to achieve this.

In First User Actions, one or more user organisations participate. They must demonstrate a sound analysis of current practice, identify a clear business need for improvement, identify clearly the technical and business objectives of the improvement, and demonstrate how this can be fulfilled by first time use of technology.

For both Best Practice Actions and First User Actions additional and/or specific elements relevant under the standard criteria are:

- 'Scientific/Technological quality and innovation': Clearly identified degree of improvement, leading to progress beyond the state of current practices, and the adequacy of the approach, technologies and methodologies to achieve it, and appropriateness of the chosen business case.
- 'Community added value': A clear identification of the wider European community of interest sharing the problem which is addressed in the action.
- 'Contribution to Community social objectives': The contribution of the project to improving employment prospects and the use and development of skills in Europe.
- 'Economic development and S&T prospects': The business relevance and commercial impact for the participants, and for the wider community, the measurability and transferability of results, and their replication potential. The proposal must include a clear statement that the proposers are aware of the obligation to disseminate results and are committed to allow access to the results achieved
- 'Resources, Partnership and Management': The appropriateness of the proposing organisations and any third party involvements (professional support from technology, know-how, training or consultancy providers).

In Assessments user-supplier cooperation is necessary. The consortium must contain one or more industrial users (depending on the maturity of the technologies to be assessed - from proof of concept to close to production conditions).

In Access actions the consortium must demonstrate proven capability to provide access to required technologies and services, and the ability to stimulate relevant use of advanced,

emerging technologies and services. It must have the potential to be self-supporting at long term.

- **Concerted Actions and Thematic Networks**

The criterion on Scientific/Technological quality and innovation will not address the research quality, but will focus on how programme objectives are supported and the approach to awareness and relations to relevant scientific and technological work.

Community added value addresses interdependencies between national and international R&D when relevant.

Economic development and S&T perspectives particularly addresses the potential for creating added value for industry, the economy or general technical progress. Dissemination plans must be detailed.

The consortium/network must be open to new partners, provide clear procedures for coordination and consensus building; show appropriate critical mass of skills and top level expertise, as well as an appropriate balance between academic and industrial participation.

- **Technology stimulation for SME participation.**

The specific evaluation procedures are defined in the specific annex for the programme "Promotion of Innovation and Encouragement of Participation of SME's".

- **Training Fellowships**

The specific evaluation procedures are defined in the specific annex for the programme "Improving human research potential and the socio-economic knowledge base".

TABLE OF WEIGHTS (WITH TOTAL 10) AND THRESHOLDS

TYPE OF ACTION	SELECTION CRITERIA									
	Scientific / technological excellence, Innovation		Community Added value and contribution to EU policies		Contribution to Community Social objectives		Economic Development and S&T prospects		Resources, Partnership and Management	
	Weight	Thres-hold* Min. Score	Weight	Thres-hold* Min. Score	Weight	Thres-hold* Min. Score	Weight	Thres-hold* Min. Score	Weight	Thres-hold* Min. Score
RTD step 1 (if applicable)	4	3	1	2	1		3	3	1	-
RTD one-step or step 2	4	3	1	2	1		2	3	2	2
Demonstration projects [†]	3	3	2	2	1		2	3	2	2
Combined projects [†]	4	3	1	2	1		2	3	2	2
<i>FET Open</i>										
Step 1	5	3	1	-	1		2	-	1	-
Step 2	4	3	1	3	1		2	-	2	2
FET Pro-active	4	3	1	1	1		2	-	2	2
<i>Take-up</i>										
Trials	3	-	1	2	1		3	3	2	3
Assessments and Access actions	4	-	1	2	1		2	3	2	4
Best practice actions and First user actions	2	3	1	2	2		3	3	2	3
Concerted Actions	2	-	3	-	1		2	-	2	2
Accompanying Measures**	2	3	3	4	2		2	-	1	2

* Note that the threshold refers to the mark (0-5) given to the block of criteria (see Manual page 16).

[†] As provided for in Annex IV of the Council Decision on the fifth Framework Programme.

^{**} As provided for in Annex IV of the Council Decision on the fifth Framework Programme and specified in the IST work programme.

Annex J

“COMPETITIVE AND SUSTAINABLE GROWTH”

1. The Evaluation process

- **Pre-Registration:** Not envisaged for paper submission, but pre-notification is obligatory in the case of electronic submission.
- **Pre-proposal check:** Pre-screening will be offered.
- **Remote or postal evaluation:** All evaluations will normally be performed within the premises controlled by the Commission.
- **Anonymity:** The programme will conduct the evaluation of the scientific, technological excellence and innovation aspects as described in part B of the RTD proposal respecting strict anonymity. The scientific and technical part of the RTD proposal should therefore be written in an anonymous manner. Identity of partners might be revealed in the other part of the proposal. Anonymity is however not requested for co-ordination activities, support to research infrastructure or accompanying measures, although the whole evaluation will be conducted without regard to identity of the applicants except insofar as the characteristics of the proposer(s) are relevant to the criteria.
- **The Evaluation Procedure:** The evaluation process will consider two main parts:
 - the evaluation of the scientific, technical and managerial part
 - the evaluation of the socio-economic aspects.

The recommendation of experts will be based on marks allocated, comments given and programme priorities. If there is more than one group of experts, these should agree independently on the recommendation of the proposals. In a subsequent step, extended groups will revise the consolidated evaluation results, examine possible doubtful cases, and discuss the ranking.

- **Marking:** To be recommended, a proposal should receive more than 18.0 points out of a total of 25. Marks will normally be averaged between evaluators to the first decimal point.
- **Ranking:** Proposals recommended will usually be ranked according to the marks, per key action or generic activity. Final recommendation will however not be based only on marks but also on justified comments. The relative importance of some proposals in expressing the priorities as defined in the call may also be used as input for the setting up of the final list.
- **Procedure for the Specific Measures for SMEs:** The evaluation procedure, criteria and weightings concerning the above will be defined in the specific annex to the “Innovation and Participation of SMEs” programme.

2. Specific interpretation of evaluation criteria: RTD actions and related activities have to be selected according to criteria reflecting the overall objectives of the programme. These criteria are grouped in five categories described in pages 13, 14 and 15 of the general part of this manual (scientific / technological quality and innovation, Community added value and contribution to EU policies, contribution to Community social objectives, economic development and S&T prospects, management and resources).

For most activities within this programme, and referring to the five evaluation criteria, particular attention would be given to projects which facilitate cross-sectoral exchanges and consider multi-disciplinarity as well as participation of all relevant stakeholders in consortia, including industrial and related service enterprises, effective participation of SMEs wherever possible, and/or links and access by SMEs to RTD results.

3. Weighting of the evaluation criteria and thresholds: For this programme equal weighting will be given to the five selection criteria.

The thresholds proposed for **shared-cost RTD activities** are as follows:

<i>Minimum mark (scale 0 - 5)</i>	KA1	KA2	KA3	KA4	Mat	M&T
S&T excellence	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	4.0	3.0
Community added value ⁽¹⁾	3.0	4.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0
Societal needs	3.0	4.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0
Economic prospects	4.0	3.0	4.0	4.0	3.0	3.0
Partnership & management⁽²⁾	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0

(1) 4.0 in the case of dedicated calls

(2) 4.0 in the case of large scale proposals (e.g. technology platforms) with more than €10 million total cost and/or very large number of participants

{KA1= “innovative products, processes and organisation”; KA2=”sustainable mobility and intermodality”; KA3=”land transport and marine technologies”; KA4=”new perspectives for aeronautics”; Mat=”materials and their technologies for production and transformation” including steel research; M&T= “measurements and testing”}

For the other activities the thresholds are as follows:

<i>Minimum mark (scale 0 - 5)</i>	Co-ordination activities	Support to Research Infrastructure	Accompanying measures
S&T excellence	3.0	3.0	3.0
Community added value	4.0	4.0	3.0 ⁽³⁾
Societal needs	3.0	3.0	3.0 ⁽³⁾
Economic prospects	3.0	3.0	3.0
Partnership & management	4.0	4.0	3.0

(3) For policy driven research studies in KA2 the thresholds are increased to 4.0

**EVALUATION PROCEDURES FOR THE PROGRAMME
“ENERGY, ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT”**

ENVIRONMENT SUBPROGRAMME

1. The Evaluation Process.

1.1 Pre-registration. Pre-registration of proposals will be offered.

1.2 Pre-proposal check. Initial pre-checking will be offered.

1.3 Remote or postal evaluation. All evaluations will normally be performed within the premises controlled by the Commission, with possible exceptions for proposals for Infrastructures and for Accompanying Measures submitted in response to a call for proposals.

1.4 Anonymity. The evaluation of the scientific and technological excellence aspects of RTD project proposals will be carried out according to the rules preserving strict anonymity of the applicants. For further steps of the evaluation and other types of action these rules will not be applied.

1.5 The Evaluation Procedure. The evaluation will be carried out in two stages. Stage 1 will be the evaluations by the various panels, while stage 2 will be done by the extended panel.

Stage 1:

Stage 1 will be divided into 3 steps.

The step 1 evaluation will consist of evaluating scientific and technological value, including innovation (block 1). The identity of the participants will not be disclosed to the evaluators. At the end of this step, the evaluators will make a “go/no go” recommendation, depending if the threshold for step 1 has been reached or not.

At step 2, the evaluators will assess “Community added value and contribution to EU policies” (block 2), “Contribution to Community social objectives” (block 3) and “Economic development and S&T prospects” (block 4). The identity of the participants will be known. At the end of this second step, a “go/no go” recommendation will be made depending if the minimum threshold for step 2 has been reached.

At step 3, the evaluators will assess “Management and resources” (block 5). At the end of this step, a “go/no go” recommendation will be made depending if the minimum threshold for step 3 has been reached.

Only the proposals which have reached the minimum thresholds for steps 1, 2 and 3, i.e. those which received a go recommendation after all three steps, will proceed to stage 2.

The overall mark will be the sum of the points of the blocks for the first 3 steps, taking into account the weighting factors so that the highest possible total will be 100%.

Normally, experts will be rotated from proposal to proposal so as to harmonise the ratings throughout the process and to make best use of the available expertise.

If the evaluators cannot agree on a common view, then the moderator **will ask another panel for a new evaluation of the proposal**. If the second panel reaches consensus, the views of the first panel will be discarded. If there is still no consensus, the moderator will ask the two panels collectively to record the majority and the minority views.

Stage 2

Stage 2 by the extended panel will be done as described in the general manual.

1.6 Specific procedure for the Specific Measures for SMEs. The evaluation procedure, criteria and weightings concerning the above will be defined in the specific annex to the IPS programme.

2. Specific interpretation of evaluation criteria

The evaluation criteria and their interpretation are the same as described in the general manual

3. Weighting of the evaluation criteria and thresholds

Weighting of evaluation criteria

For shared-cost actions, the weighting of the various blocks will be as follows (on a scale of 1 to 10) for all 4 key actions for the scientific and technical evaluation (Block 1), for the socio-economic evaluation (Blocks 2-4) and for the evaluation of the proposed management and resources (Block 5).

BLOCK/activity	Key actions	Generic activities	Research infrastructure
Scientific/technical	4.5	5	5
Socio-economic	3.5	3	2
management	2	2	3

Thresholds

The thresholds for the 3 steps of stage 1 will be as follows:

	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
Maximum number of points per step	5	15	5
Minimum number of points for go	3	9	3

Accompanying measures, networks and concerted actions will be evaluated with the same weightings and thresholds as those for the infrastructure projects (5/2/3).

ENERGY (INCLUDING EURATOM) SUBPROGRAMME.

1. The Evaluation process.

1.1 Pre-Registration. Pre-registration of proposals will not be offered.

1.2 Pre-proposal check. Initial pre-checking will be offered.

1.3 Remote or postal evaluation. All evaluations will normally be performed within the premises controlled by the Commission.

1.4 Anonymity. Due to the nature of research into energy matters, the evaluation process will need to integrate socio-economic and scientific/technical issues fully at all stages. To this end, the evaluation will be carried out by joint teams of experts gathering the necessary scientific and socio-economic expertise, hence the identity of the proposers will be revealed to the experts from the outset of the evaluation.

1.5. The Evaluation Procedure. Proposals submitted to the Energy sub-programme will be examined by a number of panels of experts covering different areas of energy RTD (for proposals dealing with nuclear energy, different areas of RTDT in nuclear energy and radiation protection), composed of teams of '*technical experts*' and '*socio-economists*'.

By '*technical experts*', it is meant experts with confirmed and up-to-date scientific and technological knowledge concerning the topics of the programmes open for the related call for proposals, and a good sense of resources assessment and project management issues. These experts should also have experience in international cooperation.

By '*socio-economists*', it is meant experts with up-to-date broad knowledge of public or industrial sectors and of the larger economic, social and environment aspects of the proposals. They usually have professional experience in prioritising energy R&D funding. These experts have a good knowledge of strategy, policy issues and future prospects and experience related to exploitation and dissemination of results.

At **Stage 1**, proposals will in principle be attributed to teams composed simultaneously of 'technical experts' and 'socio-economists' for assessment along the evaluation criteria of the specific programmes (see below). As a first part of the evaluation, experts will be asked to assess the pertinence of the proposal with regard to the problems identified in the calls. Only proposals deemed pertinent will be further assessed.

For a given proposal, at the end of the individual assessment by the experts (taking into account the specific interpretation, thresholds and weighting given in the following tables), the moderator will convene both the 'scientists' and the 'socio-economists' to a meeting to discuss the proposal. During this meeting, the experts will attempt to agree on a final mark for the proposal, justified by written comments, and a recommendation to the Commission '**worth funding / not worth funding**'. The final mark attributed to a proposal must be coherent to the recommendation to the Commission.

If no consensus on the final mark and on the recommendation is achieved, the Commission will consider the average mark as the final mark, quoting the majority view as well as any dissenting views. The final recommendation is taken according to the majority rule.

Stage 2: when Stage 1 has terminated, in order to check on the consistency of the marks given within different panels and in order to prioritise proposals which have received the same marks at Stage 1, an '**extended panel**' composed of representative(s) of individual panels will be constituted. As a result, the overall mark and/or comments can be changed and constitute the final recommendation of experts to the Commission services.

1.6 Specific procedure for the Specific Measures for SMEs

The evaluation procedure, criteria and weightings concerning the above are defined in the specific annex to the IPS programme.

2. Specific interpretation of evaluation criteria

The only specific interpretation relates to the **Scientific and Technological Excellence**. In the subcriteria on quality particular attention will be paid to the extent to which the proposal contributes to the targets and objectives set in the workprogramme.

3. Weighting of the evaluation criteria (scale of 1 to 10) and thresholds (scale of 0 to 5)

SELECTION CRITERIA FOR NON-NUCLEAR ENERGY					
Weighting (Threshold)					
TYPE OF ACTION	Scientific and technological excellence	Community Added value etc.	Contribution to Community Social Objectives	Economic Development and S&T prospects	Management Resources
RTD in Key Actions and Generic Actions	4 (3) ²³	1	1	2	2 (3) ²³
Conc. Actions Thematic Networks Accompanying Measures	3	3	1	1	2

SELECTION CRITERIA FOR NUCLEAR ENERGY					
Weighting (Threshold)					
TYPE OF ACTION	Scientific and technological excellence	Community Added value etc.	Contribution to Community Social Objectives	Economic Development and S&T prospects	Management Resources
Key actions and Generic Actions	4 (3.5) ²³	4			2
Support for research Infra-Structures	4	4			2
Concerted Action Thematic Networks Accompanying Measures	3	3	1	1	2

²³ Minimum average mark required for this criterion for a proposal to be considered for funding.

**EVALUATION PROCEDURES FOR THE PROGRAMME
« CONFIRMING THE INTERNATIONAL ROLE OF COMMUNITY RESEARCH »**

A.1. States in the Phase of Pre-Accession to the European Union : Support for Centres of Excellence

and

A.2 NIS and CEECs not in the pre-accession phase : COPERNICUS-2

1. The Evaluation process. Evaluation will follow standard procedures as described in the *Manual of Proposal Evaluation Procedures*.

1.1 **Pre-Registration** Option not exercised.

1.2 **Pre-proposal check.** Option not exercised.

1.3 **Remote or postal evaluation.** All evaluations will normally be performed within premises controlled by the Commission; there may be possible exceptions for visits to centres of excellence which have submitted proposals for support.

1.4 **Evaluation criteria.** The generic evaluation criteria will be applied within the context of the specific programme; interpretation of the criteria will consider the extended geographical cover of the countries addressed in the programme, the support of efforts to develop a pluralistic scientific and technological system, and the preservation and development of their research excellence by building on existing expertise in order to help them solve some of their major economic and societal problems.

1.5 **Evaluation procedure.** Evaluation will follow standard procedures as described in the *Manual of Proposal Evaluation Procedures*. Non-anonymous evaluation is foreseen for the Centres of Excellence.

Threshold criteria will be used in the following way:

Where the raw score for any threshold criterion is not met, the evaluator will stop evaluation of the proposal and report to the evaluation panel. If the consensus mark attributed by the panel is less than the threshold, this will be marked on the Evaluation Summary Report and no further evaluation of other criteria will be made.

1.6 **Specific procedure for evaluation of accompanying measures:** For support to centres of excellence, on-site evaluation by experts may follow the assessment of the submitted written documentation in selected cases. For other accompanying measures, which will involve low amounts (average less than € 12000), the scientific, administrative and financial evaluation will be performed by staff of the International Co-operation programme with the aid of thematic programme staff where appropriate..

2. Specific interpretation of evaluation criteria

The specific nature of the measures requires an adaptation of the general evaluation criteria in the following way:

	Scientific and Technological Excellence	Resources , Partnership and Management	Community Added value/ Comm. Policies	Contribution to Community Social Objectives	Economic Development and S&T prospect
Specific interpretation for A.1 States in the Phase of Pre-Accession to the European Union: Accompanying Measures I: Support for Centres of Excellence	<p>Scientific/technological excellence of the centre: scientific/technological reputation of permanent staff, quality and volume of scientific and technological output and activities, attractiveness to visitors, experience with networking activities</p> <p>Scientific/technological potential and impact of the proposed package of accompanying measures: coherence with general FP5 themes, clear definition of target, contribution to linkages with other European centres, contribution to supra-regional relevance and international attractiveness</p>	<p>Quality of centre and package concerning: Combination of theoretical and applied research, Quality of management and supervisory board Distribution of staff in qualification and age, Appropriateness of the infrastructure and working environment (incl. safety regulations and equal opportunities). Diversity of funding: The contribution of the Community should correspond to no more than one third of the normal activity of the centre</p>		Contribution of the proposed package to the local economic and social relevance of the centre	Links with local economic and social environment
Specific interpretation for A.2 NIS and CEECs not in the pre-accession phase: COPERNICUS-2	The adequacy of the chosen approach, methodology and work plan for achieving the scientific and technological objectives. Including consideration that the proposed project must have sufficient size to have an appreciable impact	The appropriateness of the resources . This criterion will include a significant and balanced participation between the partners	<p>European dimension: extended to particularly address the problems of the countries that this programme aims to support.</p> <p>European added value: need to establish a critical mass in human and financial terms and the combination of complementary expertise and resources available within the countries that this programme aims to support; contribution to the consolidation of the scientific and technological potential in fields where these countries have a recognised excellence. Contribution to EU policies: will include International role of Community research as well as links to other relevant EU and wider policies (notably Phare, Tacis, WHO, Agenda 21)</p>	These criteria will be applied not only in the context of the Community, but also in terms of their positive impact upon the quality of life, health, safety, employment, and the environment within the countries that this programme aims to support.	The possible contribution to growth, in particular the usefulness and range of applications and quality of the exploitation plans . Consideration will be given to the usage of local resources and involvement of local target groups
Specific interpretation for Accompanying Measures II: (for A.1 and A.2) Support for scientists from CEEC, NIS and Mongolia, to take part in seminars, conferences, colloquiums and workshops taking place in the EU, and to organise such events in their country.	<p>Scientific/technological quality of the initiative, non-recurring nature of the event, novelty of the programme and role to be performed by the CEEC/NIS scientists (papers, interventions, chairmanship of workshops etc.)</p> <p>Scientific relevance in relation to themes of interest to these countries: environment, health, sustainable use of natural resources</p>	<p>Appropriateness of the overall initiative, credibility of the organisers</p> <p>Technical and administrative organisation of the initiative, foreseen financial coverage.</p> <p>Diversity of the funding: the contribution of the Commission should not cover more than one third of the global costs.</p>	Contribution to Community pre-accession strategy, and to the EU scientific, financial and technical co-operation programmes for these countries		
Specific interpretation for Accompanying Measures III (for A.1 and A2): Support for information dissemination, awareness and training actions concerning FP5, aimed at CEEC, NIS and Mongolia	<p>For dissemination and awareness events: relevance of subjects, selection of audience</p> <p>For training actions: expertise level of trainers, relevance of subjects, appropriateness of audience</p>	<p>Appropriateness of the overall initiative, credibility of the organisers</p> <p>Technical and administrative organisation of the initiative, foreseen financial coverage</p>	<p>Contribution to supporting existing dissemination networks in their interaction with the Community</p> <p>Contribution to integration into these networks of all public and private bodies capable of representing and/or reaching the science and technology community</p>		

3. Weighting of the evaluation criteria (scale to 10) and thresholds (scale to 5)

TYPE OF ACTION	TYPE OF PROJECT	SELECTION CRITERIA					
		Threshold Criterion		Non-Threshold Criteria			
		Scientific and technological excellence		Community Added value etc.	Contribution to Community Social objectives	Economic Development and S&T prospect	Resources, partnership and management
		Weight	Threshold	Weight	Weight	Weight	Weight
A.1.Support for Centres of Excellence	Accompanying Measures	5	4	0	1	2	2
A.2 NIS and CEECs not in the pre-accession phase: Copernicus-2	Shared cost actions, concerted actions/thematic networks	3	3	2	1.5	2	1.5
(for A.1 and A.2) Support for scientists from CEEC, NIS and Mongolia, to take part in seminars, conferences, colloquiums and workshops taking place in the EU, and to organise such events in their country.	Accompanying Measures	5	3	2	0	0	3
(for A.1 and A2) Support for information dissemination, awareness and training actions concerning FP5, aimed at CEEC, NIS and Mongolia	Accompanying Measures	5	3	2	0	0	3

A.3 Mediterranean Partner Countries

and

A.4 Research for Development

1. The evaluation process

Proposals (Shared-cost actions, concerted actions and thematic networks) will first be evaluated on scientific and technical grounds by subject-matter specialists (first step). Highly-rated proposals with a potential for support will then be submitted to regional evaluation panels consisting of experts from Mediterranean Partner/Developing Countries who will examine the relevance and usefulness of proposals to and possible impact of results in the regions concerned (second step).

Evaluation of accompanying measures will be undertaken under the responsibility of Commission staff using appropriate procedures.

2. Specific interpretation of evaluation criteria

Type of action	Scientific and Technological Excellence	Resources , Partnership and Management	Community Added value/ Comm. Policies	Contribution to Community Social Objectives	Economic Development and S&T prospect
A.3 and A.4 shared-cost actions, concerted actions and thematic networks	Applied as in Manual (anonymous)	Applied as in Manual and especially considering significant and balanced partnership between European and Mediterranean Partner/Developing Country teams. This criterion will be applied both in the first step which will focus on the division of the tasks and the scientific capacity of the teams to execute them and in the second step, where the Mediterranean Partner/Developing Country experts will particularly consider the quality of local resources and manpower, and the balance in the partnership and the work load.	Applied as in Manual, except that the problems to be addressed will not be specifically European in nature but will be of relevance to Mediterranean Partner/ Developing Countries as set out in the Work Programme. Community added value will apply to the European element of consortia. Euro-Mediterranean Partnership policy and EU Development policy will be of particular importance.	Since the targets are Mediterranean Partner Countries and Research for Development, this block of criteria will not be applied. Nevertheless, it should be noted that the individual criteria mentioned in the Manual are all related to the objectives of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership and are components of sustainable development which is the major objective of Research for Development.	Applied during regional evaluation as in Manual and including foreseeable impact on sustainable development as criterion and application to global or regional-scale problems (Research for Development) or socio-economic modernization in the Mediterranean Region.
A.3 and A.4 accompanying measures	Emphasizing quality of the action proposed and its contribution to addressing the key scientific and technological issues for achieving the objectives of the programme, and adequacy of the chosen approach, methodology and work plan for achieving the scientific and technological objectives. (proposers identity revealed)	Applied as in Manual	Contribution to Community scientific, financial and technical co-operation programmes for the countries concerned.	as above	The strategic impact of the proposed project and its potential to support the objectives of the programme.

3. Weighting of evaluation criteria (scale to 10) and thresholds (scale to 5)

TYPE OF PROJECT	STEP	EVALUATION CRITERIA							
		Scientific and technological excellence		Community Added value etc.		Resources, partnership and management		Economic Development and S&T prospect	
		Weight	Threshold	Weight	Threshold	Weight	Threshold	Weight	Threshold
A.3 and A.4 Shared- cost, concerted actions and thematic networks	Step 1	3	4	1	Not applied	1.5	Not applied	-	-
	Step 2	-	-	-	-	1.5	4	3	4
A.3 and A.4 Accompanying measures	-	2	Not applied	2	Not applied	2	Not applied	4	Not applied

A.5 EMERGING ECONOMIES AND INDUSTRIALISED COUNTRIES

1. Evaluation criteria

Scientific/Technological quality

- Quality of the proposal and its contribution to achieving the objectives of the call for proposals
- Adequacy of the chosen approach, methodology, and work plan for achieving the objectives of the call of proposals.

Community added value and contribution to EU policies

- The international cooperation dimension
- The European added value for the Consortium
- The proposal's contribution to the implementation or the evolution of EU external policies.

Contribution to Community social objectives

- Not applied

Economic development and S+T prospects

- Not applied

Management and resources

- Quality of the management and proposal approached proposed
- Quality of partnership
- Appropriateness of the resources

2. Weighting (scale to 10) of evaluation criteria and thresholds

ACCOMPANYING MEASURES TO DEFINE, EXPLOIT AND ASSESS S&T COOPERATION				
EVALUATION CRITERIA	Weight of criterion	Primary marks	Maximum marks	Threshold
Scientific & technological quality	5	5	25	18
Community added value and contribution to EU policies	2	5	10	None
Contribution to Community social objectives	-	0	0	None
Economic development and S&T prospects	-	0	0	None
Management and resources	3	5	15	10
TOTAL	10		50	28

3. Thresholds

Proposals must receive 18 or more marks for **Scientific/Technological quality and innovation** and 10 or more marks for **Management and resources** in order to be considered for funding.

B. TRAINING OF RESEARCHERS

B.1. BURSARIES FOR YOUNG RESEARCHERS FROM DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Consortia preparing a joint research proposal²⁴ or a concerted action proposal for any of the specific programmes may include an application for an International Co-operation Training Bursary. If successful, the bursary will be funded from the budget of the specific programme "Confirming the International Role of Community Research". The following procedures apply to the evaluation of such bursaries under all specific programmes of the EC fifth framework programme.

1. Evaluation Experts

Bursary applications must be submitted together with a project proposal (concerted action or joint research project) for any programme. The bursary application will then be evaluated simultaneously with the project proposal, by the same experts.

2. Eligibility criteria

In order for a bursary application to be eligible, it must satisfy the following requirements :

The Candidate

- Must be a national of, and established in one of the eligible regions.
- He/she should not be more than 40 years of age (at the time of application).
- He/she must have a good knowledge of a working language of the host institute.

The Host Institute

- Must be established in an EU Member State or in a State associated to the 5th Framework

²⁴ RTD projects, Demonstration projects and Combined projects (see point 1.3.2a of the Guide to Proposers)

Programme.

-Must be a member of the consortium proposing the joint research project or concerted action.

3. Evaluation Criteria

Eligible bursary applications will be evaluated according to the following criteria :

	Criteria	Score range
1.	Excellence of the scientific and/or training objectives of the application	0-50
2.	Potential value of the bursary to the applicant and to his/her own home institute	0-20
3.	Relevance of the proposed bursary to the project as a whole	0-15
4.	Experience and professional training of the candidate	0-15

4. Proposal marking

The score range is 0 to 100 as detailed above. In order for a bursary to be granted, a bursary application must reach a score of at least 60, of which at least 30 should be excellence of scientific and/or training objectives. A score of at least 5 must be reached for each of the other criteria. The evaluated applications will be ranked by each Programme according to their score.

Note : Only if the whole project is selected for funding and the bursary application is highly rated will the bursary be granted.

B.2 Fellowships for Community Researchers

The horizontal nature and common requirements of the system of Japan Fellowships mean that a number of the provisions detailed elsewhere in this manual do not apply to their evaluation. The major differences, grouped under the headings evaluation experts, evaluation criteria and proposal marking, are detailed below.

1. Evaluation experts

Each Japan Fellowship proposal will be evaluated by two independent experts, selected according to the procedures described earlier. Because of the scientific diversity of the Japan evaluation panel, the chairperson will be nominated by the Commission. The chairperson's role will be to coordinate the work of the panel and will not involve the evaluation of individual proposals.

2. Evaluation criteria

The evaluation criteria to be applied to the Japan Fellowships, together with an indication of their relative importance, are detailed below according to the scheme available:

Japan Fellowships	Score Range
1. Project Proposal Scientific/technological quality; methodological approach; scientific relevance of project to Europe	0 - 30

2. Japanese Host Institution Research quality of host group; research infrastructure to support project; quality of scientific contacts between the Japanese Host Institute and Europe	0 - 30
3. Applicant Research experience/academic records/publications; aptitude of candidate; impact and benefit to fellow; knowledge of Host Country and language	0 - 40

3. Proposal marking

Because of the detailed and specific nature of the applications forms for Japan fellowships, the structure of proposals are in general relatively homogeneous. This allows a standardised assessment to be made by each expert, which is scored in a range from 0 to 100.

The total score attributed to each proposal is interpreted as follows :

- Marks of 90 or more should be reserved for proposals of exceptionally high quality;
- Marks of 80 or more indicate proposals of very high quality;
- Marks from 70-79 indicate proposals of high quality;
- Marks from 60-69 indicate proposals of medium quality;
- Marks lower than 60 indicate proposals with notable weaknesses.

Once all the experts have completed their individual assessments, the marks will be checked to ensure there are no significant discrepancies between them. Where there are such discrepancies, the experts can discuss the marks with each other, and may revise their marks if there is clear agreement between them. If there is a continuing discrepancy, a supplementary expert may be asked to mark the proposal.

The detailed scoring system used in fellowships will result in a ranked list of proposals to be funded. In the limited number of instances where two or more proposals have the same score, the plenary panel session described below will discuss and rank these proposals separately.

When the individual evaluations have been completed, a plenary panel session will take place in order to discuss and agree on issues relating to eligibility, specific evaluation criteria, marking discrepancies, or proposals which experts believe require further discussion. In case a supplementary expert has been used for a specific proposal, one of the experts may withdraw his/her mark. If this is not the case, one of the following courses of action will be agreed under the guidance of the Chairperson : the Panel may decide to keep the average mark; the Panel may decide to withdraw an obvious outlier mark; exceptionally, the Panel may decide to appoint a further supplementary expert.

**EVALUATION PROCEDURES FOR THE PROGRAMME
“PROMOTION OF INNOVATION AND ENCOURAGEMENT OF THE
PARTICIPATION OF SMEs”**

INNOVATION PROJECTS

Innovation projects promote the transfer of technologies not stemming from the thematic programmes

- Type of actions:**
- a) Projects
 - b) Three types of accompanying measures
 - “Cluster support measures” (AM clusters)
 - “Common Promotional Structure” (AM promo)
 - “Common Policy Interface (AM policy)
- **Pre-proposal checks** : no
 - **Pre-registration** : no
 - **Receipt of proposals** : the electronic submission will be registered in Brussels and transferred to Luxembourg. The paper copies will be registered in Brussels, copied into the electronic database and transferred to Luxembourg. It will not be an “open” call
 - **Evaluation criteria** : in addition to the criteria outlined in the general manual, the following criteria will also be taken into consideration:
 - Does the proposal cover the adoption of technologies not stemming from the thematic programmes ?
 - Does the proposal provide funding opportunities for transnational technology transfer ?

The work programme provides the details of the criteria. The indication of weightings to be used for each block of criteria is given in the table hereunder. Thresholds are not applicable for this call.

Additional information on the criteria (including examples) will be given in the Call specific Brochure.

This call for proposals will not allow for a two step-approach, only one single submission will be accepted. Remote evaluation is not applicable for this call.

- **Proposal marking** : the identity of the proposers will be revealed to the evaluators from the outset. The relevance of research in clarifying “non-technical” aspects of innovation, its degree of innovation and the proposed methodology is closely linked to the involvement of appropriate partners (competence, expertise, complementarity). Moreover the two criteria “Economic Development” and “Management and Resources” which account for the majority of the weighting, depend substantially on the identity of the proposers. Therefore the “anonymous” part should not be taken into consideration in this call. This will be mentioned in the Call specific Brochure.

- **Contract preparation and finalisation** : among the items to be dealt with in the contract preparation and finalisation phase will be, additional to the details set out in this manual, the contractual obligation of including a GO/NO GO decision, 6 months after starting the contract for the project. Additional information will be given in the Call specific Brochure.

Selection criteria (specific interpretations, weightings on a scale of 1 to 10):

CRITERIA	Relative weightings of blocks of criteria			
	Projects	AM clusters	AM promo	AM policy
<p>1. Scientific/Technological quality and innovation.</p> <p>a) The <u>relevance</u> of the research in clarifying “non-technical” aspects of innovation and its contribution to achieve the objectives of the Programme.</p> <p>b) The <u>degree of innovation</u> of the methods applied to solve “non-technical” innovation problems.</p> <p>c) The <u>appropriateness</u> of the chosen approach, methodology and workplan (tasks, responsibilities, timing, milestones, deliverables) in addressing the technology transfer described in the proposal.</p>	1	2	3	1
<p>2. Community Added Value</p> <p>a) The potential of the technology transfer described in the proposal to contribute to <u>solving technical problems at European level</u>.</p> <p>b) The transnational <u>combination of complementary expertise</u> put forward by the proposal.</p> <p>c) The potential of the proposal to contribute to the implementation of <u>EU policies</u>, in particular EU innovation policy.</p>	2	2	1	4
<p>3. Community social objectives.</p> <p>a) The potential of the proposal to contribute to improving the <u>quality of life and health/safety</u>.</p> <p>b) The potential of the proposal to contribute to improving the <u>employment prospects and the development of skills</u>.</p> <p>c) The potential of the proposal to contribute to <u>preserve</u> and enhance the <u>environment</u> and to the conservation of natural resources.</p>	1	1	1	2
<p>4. Economic development and S&T prospects.</p> <p>a) The potential of the proposal to contribute to economic growth, in particular through the <u>wealth of applications</u> and the <u>quality of the exploitation plans</u>.</p> <p>b) The fit of the “non-technical” aspects of the proposal with the <u>strategic interest</u> of the consortium and its potential to improve <u>competitiveness</u>.</p> <p>c) The expected efficiency of the <u>dissemination strategies</u> proposed.</p>	3	1	3	2
<p>5. Resources, partnership and management.</p> <p>a) The <u>quality of the management and proposal execution</u> proposed, in particular means to assist multi-cultural and multi-disciplinary partnership, ensuring good communication within the proposal consortium and with the respective target groups.</p> <p>b) The <u>quality of the partnership</u> and involvement of appropriate partners to assure the competence, expertise and complementarity required for performing technology transfer and assessing methodologies on non-technical issues.</p> <p>c) The <u>appropriateness of the resources</u> in view of own contribution to the proposed proposal, the availability of the manpower effort, allocation of budget and expertise to perform the technology transfer related non-technical issues.</p>	3	4	2	1

INNOVATION RELAY CENTRES (IRCs)

- **Pre-proposal check.** No
- **Pre-Registration** No
- **Receipt of proposals:** Proposals submitted on paper or electronically must be sent in line with the instructions given in the general and Call-specific documentation. However, proposers should note that due to the nature of the project, proposals may include substantial specific annexes, not always suitable for electronic proposals.
- **Anonymity.** Anonymity of the applicants will not be preserved during any stage of the evaluation. The nature of the action is such that a knowledge of the proposers is required during the whole evaluation process. In particular, applicants will need to demonstrate their ability to provide IRC services across a proposed geographical area. As such, proposers will be making reference in their proposals to a range of essential local circumstances and issues which are directly linked to the identity of the proposer. Anonymity will therefore not be applicable and this will be mentioned in the Call specific brochure.
- **Evaluation criteria:** The work-programme provides the details of the criteria. The indications of weightings to be used for each block of criteria is given in the table herein. Thresholds are not applicable for this call. Additional information on the criteria will be given in the Call-specific documentation.
- **Evaluation procedure.** The objective of the evaluation procedure is to obtain ranked priority lists of those proposals evaluated with a recommendation of usually only one proposal for each “region” although “reserve” proposals may be permitted. Due to the nature of the relay centre project, a second stage of evaluation will be required, based on the results of the experts’ evaluation. This will assess each individual proposal within the context of their national set-up. It will incorporate in the overall evaluation process the opinions (duly noted) of representatives nominated by the member states. This second stage will be used to assist in the determination of the most appropriate regional coverage for the preferred proposals i.e. removal of unnecessary overlapping between bordering regions and to assist in the final recommendation of a proposal in the case of two or more suitable proposals being identified for essentially the same region.
- **Specific interpretation of Evaluation criteria:** All five blocks of evaluation criteria as provided in the FP 5 evaluation manual will be employed although some individual criteria therein are considered as not applicable as indicated in the work programme. Due to the nature of the project, the criteria will have to be interpreted within the context that each proposer will be an organisation/consortium proposing to deliver specific services across a specific geographical area but also working within a trans-national network of other relay centres. Thus, the following considerations will be made when evaluating these proposals:
 - Demonstrating clear focus on trans-national technology transfer (TTT) and other foreseen IRC services as indicated in IPS work programme (applies to criteria nos. 1,2,3,4,5 see over);
 - Demonstrating a project which will deliver key services and efficient relay centre structure and management for providing these services (applies to criteria nos.1,2,5);
 - Experience and track record of proposer in these fields, demonstrating experience of dealing with relevant client organisations within the proposed geographical area (applies to criteria nos.1,2,4,5);
 - Demonstrating availability of high quality facilities supporting TTT, access to external services, strong links with local RTD and service provider organisations (applies to criteria nos. 1,5);

Value for money (as defined in IPS work programme) (applies to criteria no.5);

Demonstrating ability to achieve results in the field of TTT and to measure and monitor them (applies to criteria nos. 4,5).

Evaluation criteria and weighting (scale of 1 to 10)

	CRITERIA	Weighting
1.	Scientific/Technological quality and innovation.	2
2.	Community Added Value	2
3.	Community social objectives.	0.5
4.	Economic development and S&T prospects.	1.5
5.	Resources, Partnership and Management.	4

PILOT ACTION: SCHEMES TO FACILITATE THE SETTING-UP AND DEVELOPMENT OF INNOVATIVE FIRMS

This action supports and promotes schemes from economic areas facilitating the setting-up and development of innovative firms to constitute a showcase of successful initiatives in Europe.

Types of actions:

- a) Thematic network to stimulate the exchange of information, good practices and competencies.
 - b) "Transnational cooperation projects" aimed at identifying, analyzing, validating and diffusing or enlarging the application of "best practice" liable to contribute to the creation of innovative firms.
 - c) Accompanying measures:
 - A European wide directory of competencies and a database of European start-up and high tech companies. (AM1)
 - Promotional measures to ensure dissemination and visibility of the action.(AM2)
 - A policy interface to extract policy lessons and feed back policy priorities.(AM3)
- **Pre-proposal checks** : no
 - **Pre-registration** : no
 - **Receipt of proposals** : the electronic submission will be registered in Brussels and transferred to Luxembourg. The paper copies will be registered in Brussels, copied into the electronic database and transferred to Luxembourg. It will not be an "open" call

- **Administrative check on eligibility** : Additional criterion to be fulfilled for the action “*Thematic network to stimulate the exchange of information, good practices and competencies*”:
 - The proposal must demonstrate have the support of the regional/local authorities.
- **Evaluation criteria** : in addition to the criteria outlined in the general manual, the following criteria will also be taken into consideration :
 - Objective elements supporting the reliability of the proposal as regards the scientific, technical and economic potential of concerned regions/areas.
 - Demonstrated capability of concerned regions/areas to facilitate the setting-up and development of innovative firms.

The work programme provides the details of the criteria. The indication of weightings to be used for each block of criteria is given in the table hereunder. Thresholds are not applicable for this calls. Remote evaluation is not applicable for the calls.

Additional information on the criteria (including examples) will be given in specific brochures of the calls.

- **Proposal marking** : the identity of the proposers will be revealed to the evaluators from the outset. The relevance of proposals is closely linked to the involvement and reliability of appropriate partners (potential competence, expertise, complementarity). Moreover the two criteria “Economic Development” and “Resources, Partnership and Management” which have large relative weightings, depend substantially on the identity of the proposers. Therefore the “anonymous” part should not be taken into consideration in this calls. This will be mentioned in the specific brochures of the calls.
- **Contract preparation and finalisation** (only valid for the “*Projects*” action): among the items to be dealt with in the contract preparation and finalisation phase will be, additional to the details set out in this manual, the contractual obligation of including a GO/NO GO decision, 6 months after starting the contract for the project. Additional information will be given in the Call specific Brochure.
- **Specific implementing arrangements**: The nature of the pilot activities described in the specific programme could require specific implementing arrangements departing from the procedures generally applicable to indirect RTD actions.

The interpretation of the selection criteria will be as in the general part of this manual.

Weighting of selection criteria (scale of 1 to 10) :

CRITERIA	Type of actions and weightings				
	Network	Projects	AM 1	AM 2	AM 3
1. Scientific/Technological quality and innovation.	1	1	2	2	1
2. Community Added Value	3	1	2	2	3

3. Community social objectives	1	2	2	2	2
4. Economic development and S&T prospects.	3	3	2	3	3
5. Resources, partnership and management.	2	3	2	1	1

PILOT ACTION TO SUPPORT ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN BY THE NATIONAL PATENT OFFICES TO “PROMOTE INNOVATION”

Types of action : a) Projects

b) Accompanying measure « To stimulate networking » (AM)

- **Pre-proposal checks** : yes
- **Pre-registration** : no
- **Receipt of proposals** : the electronic submission will be registered in Brussels and transferred to Luxembourg. The paper copies will be registered in Brussels, copied into the electronic database and transferred to Luxembourg.
- **Administrative check on eligibility** : Additional criteria to be fulfilled for the action : on account of the nature of this pilot activity, all proposed projects must be in collaboration with National Patent Offices.
- **Evaluation criteria** : Under additional evaluation criteria, the following shall be also applicable :
 - a) The innovative approach or the synergy with respect to existing European or National schemes of promotion and dissemination of intellectual property.
 - b) The partnership includes established and recognised organisations in the field of intellectual property with a track record in granting and administration of patents, awareness raising and promotion of patents and /or patent information.

Criterion a) above shall be applicable to projects and accompanying measures and criterion b) above shall be applicable only to projects.

All five blocks of evaluation criteria as provided in the FP V evaluation manual will be employed. Some individual criteria therein are considered as not applicable as indicated in the specific work programme. The indication of weightings to be used for each block of criteria is given in the table below. Thresholds are not applicable for these calls. Remote evaluation is not applicable for the calls.

Additional information on the criteria will be given in the call-specific documentation.

- **Proposal marking** : the identity of the proposers will be revealed to evaluators from the outset. The relevance of proposals is closely linked to the involvement and reliability of appropriate partners (competence, expertise, complementarity). Moreover the criterion “Management and Resources” which account notably in the weighting, depend substantially on the identity of the proposers. Anonymity will therefore not be applicable and this will be mentioned in the call-specific documentation.

Specific implementing arrangements : The nature of the pilot activities described in the specific programme could require specific implementing arrangements departing from the procedures generally applicable to indirect RTD actions.

The interpretation of the selection criteria will be as in the general part of this manual.

Weighting of evaluation criteria (scale of 1 to 10):

CRITERIA	WEIGHTINGS	
	Projects	AM
1. Scientific/Technological quality and innovation	1.5	1
2. Community Added Value (*)	3.5	2.5
3. Community social objectives	0.5	0.5
4. Economic development and S&T prospects	1	2
5. Resources, partnership and management (**)	3.5	4

(*) : including additional criterion a) above.

(**) : including additional criterion b) above, for projects only.

SME-SPECIFIC MEASURES

1. Exploratory Awards And Craft Projects

These measures are to be implemented by each thematic programme. The following provisions will, thus apply across all the thematic programmes.

Criteria. The set of common FP5 evaluation criteria will be used. They will all have the same weight.

For Exploratory Awards, two additional criteria will be used to evaluate the Exploratory Phase

:

- Extent to which EC financial support is needed and justified to prepare a complete Step 2 proposal
- Quality of the work foreseen in the Exploratory Phase (Feasibility check, Market analysis, Novelty verification, Search for additional participants)

Thresholds. Each of the 5 main criteria will be marked from 0 (not addressing the point) to 5 (excellent). Proposals for which each of the 5 main criteria reach an average of 3 or higher when combining all experts marks may be retained for funding. Proposals for which at least 2 main criteria fail to reach an average of 3 will be rejected. Proposals for which only 1 of the main criteria does not pass the threshold will be subject to a discussion between experts to reach a consensus on retention or rejection. Proposals for which the total of the 5 criteria does not reach 6 for a given expert will also be discussed to reach a consensus on retention or rejection.

Weighting of evaluation criteria (scale of 1 to 10) for Craft projects and exploratory awards:

CRITERIA	Weight
1. Scientific/Technological quality and innovation. a) The quality of the research proposed and its contribution to the general objectives of the relevant thematic programme b) The originality, degree of innovation and progress beyond the state of the art, taking into account the level of risk associated with the project; c) The adequacy of the chosen approach, methodology and work plan for achieving the scientific and technological objectives	2

<p>2. Community added value and contribution to EU policies</p> <p>a) The European dimension of the problem. The extent to which the project would contribute to solving problems at the European level and that the expected impact of carrying out the work at European level would be greater than the sum of the impacts of national projects</p> <p>b) The European added value for the consortium – the need to establish a critical mass in human and financial terms and the combination of complementary expertise and resources available Europe-wide in different organisations</p> <p>c) The project’s contribution to the implementation or the evolution of one or more EU policies (including “horizontal policies” such as SMEs etc.) or addressing problems connected with standardisation and regulation.</p>	2
<p>3. Contribution to Community Social Objectives</p> <p>a) The contribution of the project to improving the quality of life, health and safety (including working conditions), taking into account ethical issues where relevant</p> <p>b) The contribution of the project to improving employment prospects and the level of skills in Europe</p> <p>c) The contribution of the project to preserving and/or enhancing the environment and natural resources</p>	2
<p>4. Economic development and S&T prospects</p> <p>a) The possible contribution to growth, in particular the usefulness and range of applications and quality of the exploitation plans, including the credibility of the partners to carry out the exploitation activities for the RTD results arising from the proposed project and/or the wider economic impact of the project</p> <p>b) The strategic impact of the proposed project and its potential to improve competitiveness and the development of applications markets for the partners and the users of the RTD results</p> <p>c) The contribution to European technological progress and in particular the dissemination strategies for the expected results, choice of target groups</p>	2
<p>5. Resources, partnership and management</p> <p>a) The quality of the management and project approach proposed, in particular the appropriateness, clarity, consistency, efficiency and completeness of the proposed tasks, the scheduling arrangements (with milestones) and the management structure. In addition, the tools to be used for monitoring project progress, including the quality of specified indicators of impact and performance, and ensuring good communication within the project consortium</p> <p>b) The quality of the partnership and involvement of users when appropriate, in particular, the scientific/technical competence and expertise and the roles and functions within the consortium and the complementarity of the partners</p> <p>c) The appropriateness of the resources - the manpower effort for each partner and task, the quality and/or level and/or type of manpower allocated, durables, consumables, travel and any other resources to be used. In addition, the resources not reflected in the budget (e.g. facilities to carry out the research and the expertise of key personnel).</p>	2

2. Economic And Technological Intelligence Actions/SME Support Documents

The set of common FP5 selection criteria will be used. They will all have the same weight.

Each of the 5 main criteria will be marked from 0 (not addressing the point) to 5 (excellent). Proposals for which all 5 main criteria reach an average of 3 or higher when combining all experts’ marks may be retained for funding. Proposals for which at least 2 main criteria fail to reach an average of 3 will be rejected. Proposals for which only 1 of the main criteria does not pass the threshold will be subject to a discussion between experts to reach a consensus on retention or rejection. Proposals for which the total of the 5 criteria does not reach 6 for a given expert will also be discussed to reach a consensus on retention or rejection.

Evaluation criteria for Economic and Technological Intelligence actions/SME Support Documents:

CRITERIA	Weight
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<p>1. Scientific/Technological quality and innovation.</p> <p>a) The quality of the research proposed and its contribution to the general objectives of the relevant call for proposal</p> <p>b) The originality and degree of innovation of the methods applied</p> <p>c) The adequacy of the chosen approach, methodology and work plan for achieving the foreseen objectives</p>	2
<p>2. Community added value and contribution to EU policies</p> <p>a) The European dimension of the problem. The extent to which the project would contribute to solving problems at the European level and that the expected impact of carrying out the work at European level would be greater than the sum of the impacts of national projects</p> <p>b) The European added value for the consortium – the need to establish a critical mass in human and financial terms and the combination of complementary expertise and resources available Europe-wide in different organisations</p> <p>c) The project's contribution to the implementation or the evolution of one or more EU policies (including horizontal policies such as SMEs etc.) or addressing problems connected with standardisation and regulation.</p>	2
<p>3. Contribution to Community Social Objectives.</p> <p>a) The contribution of the project to improving the quality of life, health and safety (including working conditions), taking into account ethical issues where relevant</p> <p>b) The contribution of the project to improving employment prospects and the level of skills in Europe</p> <p>c) The contribution of the project to preserving and/or enhancing the environment and natural resources</p>	2
<p>4. Economic development and S&T prospects.</p> <p>a) The possible contribution to the competitiveness of the relevant sector(s) or regions arising from the proposed project and/or the wider economic impact of the project</p> <p>b) The strategic impact of the proposed project and its potential to improve competitiveness and the development of applications markets for the SMEs and the users of the RTD results</p> <p>c) The contribution to European technological progress and in particular the dissemination strategies for the expected results, choice of target groups.</p>	2
<p>5. Resources, partnership and management.</p> <p>a) The quality of the management and project approach proposed, in particular the appropriateness, clarity, consistency, efficiency and completeness of the proposed tasks, the scheduling arrangements (with milestones) and the management structure. In addition, the tools to be used for monitoring project progress, including the quality of specified indicators of impact and performance, and ensuring good communication within the project consortium</p> <p>b) The quality of the partnership and involvement of users when appropriate, in particular, the competence and expertise and the roles and functions within the consortium and the complementarity of the partners</p> <p>c) The appropriateness of the resources - the manpower effort for each partner and task, the quality and/or level and/or type of manpower allocated, durables, consumables, travel and any other resources to be used. In addition, the resources not reflected in the budget (e.g. networking tools and the expertise of key personnel).</p>	2

EVALUATION PROCEDURES FOR THE PROGRAMME « IMPROVING HUMAN RESEARCH POTENTIAL AND THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC KNOWLEDGE BASE »**Contents:**

1. Research Training Networks
2. Marie Curie Fellowships
3. Enhancing Access to Research Infrastructures
4. High-Level Scientific Conferences
5. Raising Public Awareness of Science and Technology
6. Key Action “Improving the Socio-economic Knowledge Base”
7. Support for the Development of Scientific and Technology Policies in Europe: Strategic Analysis of Specific Political Issues

1. RESEARCH TRAINING NETWORKS

The horizontal nature of the Human Potential Programme, the requirements for evaluating the training offered by each network and the large number of proposals expected for each call means that a number of the provisions detailed elsewhere in this manual do not apply to their evaluation.

1.1 The evaluation process

Pre-proposal checks are not foreseen for this action, nor is pre-registration of proposals. The eligibility of the proposals is verified by the Programme management.

The evaluation process will be carried out by 7 disciplinary panels in order to be able to cope with the wide range of research topics and the expected large number of proposals. Each proposal is allocated to the disciplinary panel specified in the proposal. Multidisciplinary proposals may be reviewed by experts of different disciplinary panels but they will be discussed in the panel meeting of the panel specified by the proposer.

Proposals will be sent out to experts to carry out the primary assessments of the proposals at their normal place of work.

The identity of the proposers will be known to the experts throughout the evaluation process; the main objective of the activity being the training of the young researchers, the identity of the proposers is required for evaluation.

The results of the primary evaluations will be discussed in the meetings of the 7 disciplinary evaluation panels.

Because of the size and the complexity of the Research Training Networks evaluation panels, chairpersons will be nominated by the Commission for each evaluation panel. The chairperson's role will be to coordinate the work of the panel and to chair the meeting where the proposals individual evaluations are discussed. A Commission representative will act as moderator.

1.2 Evaluation criteria, weighting and thresholds

The criteria relating to

- Community added value and contribution to EU policies

- Contribution to Community social objectives
- Economic development and S&T prospects

are inherent in the Research Training Networks or are not relevant due to the bottom-up approach of this action. They will therefore be given a zero weighting and shall not be considered explicitly in the evaluation of the Research Training Networks proposals.

The blocks of evaluation criteria to be applied to Research Training Networks are defined in accordance with the Council Decision on the programme. They are detailed below with their relative weighting and the individual evaluation criteria.

Evaluation criteria	Weight	Score range
1. Scientific merit of the collaborative research project (a) Research topic and project objectives (b) Scientific originality (c) Research method (d) Work plan	4	0-40
2. Quality of the network partnership, organisation and management (a) Collective expertise (b) Quality of the collaboration (c) Organisation and management	3	0-30
3. Quality and content of the network's training programme (a) Training need (b) Training programme (c) Justification of the appointment of young researchers	3	0-30
TOTAL		0-100

In addition, in accordance with the Council Decision on the programme, each proposal will also be measured against two secondary criteria marked from 0 to 10 and used to decide between proposals of otherwise equal merit:

- (a) Training in a context promoting interactions between different disciplines or/and in complementary research teams
- (b) Training in an industrially relevant context

Proposal marking

Three evaluation criteria blocks are defined. They are composed of individual evaluation criteria referred as (a), (b), (c), (d). Each expert will mark the individual criteria from 0 to 10. In addition to marking each evaluation criterion individually, experts will give a mark to each block in the score range defined in the table above.

An expert from the evaluation panel may request an external expert to evaluate a proposal assigned to him but the panel member will take responsibility for the evaluation and be prepared to discuss the proposal at the plenary session of the panel.

During the panel meetings, the disciplinary panels will examine their proposals on the basis of the primary evaluations giving particular attention to marking discrepancies. If necessary, a supplementary expert may be appointed to mark the proposal during the panel meeting. The

panel will award a score for each of the three blocks based on the individual assessments. Only these overall marks for each block of criteria will be taken into account for the final mark of the proposal.

Thresholds

The minimum score required for block 3 (quality and content of the network's training programme) is **20/30** for a proposal to be considered for funding.

2. MARIE CURIE FELLOWSHIPS

2.1 The evaluation process

The horizontal nature and common requirements of the system of Marie Curie Fellowships mean that a number of the provisions detailed elsewhere in this manual do not apply to their evaluation. In addition to pre-proposal checks and pre-registration which cannot be offered for practical reasons, the major differences with the general provisions of the manual are detailed below.

Evaluation experts

Each Marie Curie Fellowship proposal will be evaluated by at least two independent experts, selected according to the procedures described earlier. Because of the size and complexity of Marie Curie Fellowship evaluation panels, chairpersons will be nominated by the Commission for each evaluation panel. The chairperson's role will be to co-ordinate the work of the panel and will not involve the evaluation of individual proposals.

Final examination and proposal ranking

Once all the experts have completed their individual assessments, the scores will be checked to ensure that there are no significant discrepancies between experts. Where there are such discrepancies, experts can discuss the scores with each other, and may revise their scores if there is clear agreement between them. If there is a continuing discrepancy, a supplementary expert may be appointed by the chairperson, in consultation with the Commission representative, to evaluate the proposal. The appointed expert will neither be informed of the scores of the first experts nor will he or she consult with these experts. Upon completion of all individual evaluations, a ranked list of proposals by fellowship type will be produced. This list of proposals will then be discussed in a panel plenary session.

The panel plenary session will allow the experts to discuss and agree on issues relating to eligibility, specific evaluation criteria, marking discrepancies, or proposals which experts believe require further discussion. For example, in the limited number of instances where two or more proposals have the same score these proposals will be discussed and ranked separately. In addition, if a supplementary expert has been used for a specific proposal, during the plenary session one of the experts may withdraw his or her mark. However, if this is not the case, under the guidance of the Chairperson, the panel may decide either to keep the average score; or to withdraw an obvious outlier score; or exceptionally, to appoint a further supplementary expert. The discussion in the plenary session will result in a final ranked list of proposals recommended for funding based on the budget available.

2.2 Evaluation criteria, weighting and thresholds

The evaluation criteria to be applied to Marie Curie Fellowships, together with their weighting factors, are detailed below according to each of the six schemes available. Because the criteria relating to Community added value and the contribution to social objectives are inherent in the transnational mobility and research training aspects of Marie Curie Fellowships, these are not applied in the evaluation of individual proposals.

(1) Marie Curie Individual Fellowships	<i>Score Range</i>
1. Project Scientific/technological quality; originality; methodological approach; feasibility; relevance and potential scientific impact of project.	0 – 30
2. Host Institution Research quality of host group; expertise in project field; research infrastructure to support project; ability to meet research training needs.	0 – 30
3. Applicant Research experience/publications; aptitude of applicant; impact and benefit to fellow.	0 – 40
(2) Marie Curie Return Fellowships	<i>Score Range</i>
1. Project Scientific/technological quality; originality; methodological approach; feasibility; expected impact and benefit for host.	0 – 25
2. Host institution Research quality of host group; research infrastructure to support project.	0 – 25
3. Applicant Research experience/publications; preliminary scientific results from initial fellowship.	0 – 50
(3) Marie Curie Experienced Researchers Fellowships	<i>Score Range</i>
1. Project Scientific/technological quality; originality; methodological approach; feasibility.	0 – 20
2. Expertise transfer Relevance and feasibility of the transfer of knowledge and technology; expected impact and benefit of collaboration for parties involved.	0 – 20
3. Host institution Research quality/potential of host group; research infrastructure to support project.	0 – 20
4. Applicant Research experience; expertise in project field.	0 – 40
(4) Marie Curie Industry Host Fellowships	<i>Score Range</i>
1. Proposed research area Scientific and technological significance of research area.	0 – 20
2. Host research quality Research quality of host group/institution; collaborative arrangements with other research organisations; research experience of staff; appropriate equipment and resources.	0 – 40
3. Ability to provide training Skills and technical ability of research group; appropriate size; arrangements for training and supervision; potential benefit for fellows.	0 – 40
(5) Marie Curie Development Host Fellowships	<i>Score Range</i>
1. Proposed transfer of knowledge/technology Scientific and technological relevance; need and justification; feasibility.	0 – 40
2. Host research quality Research quality of host group/institution; research group facilities including appropriate size and equipment; research experience of staff including research collaboration and international research activity.	0 – 30
3. Potential impact and benefit of transfer of knowledge/technology Compatibility of competence sought with existing competence; ability to absorb new competence; potential scientific impact.	0 – 30
(6) Marie Curie Training Sites	<i>Score Range</i>
1. Proposed research training area Scientific/technological significance of the research training area.	0 – 20
2. Research quality of the site Research experience; research collaboration; appropriate equipment and resources.	0 – 40
3. Ability to provide doctoral research training Quality of proposed training; specific benefits to fellows; evidence of past successful training of post-graduate students from abroad; appropriate size; supervision arrangements and adequate working conditions for the fellows.	0 – 40

Proposal marking

The extremely large number of submissions associated with each evaluation round of Marie Curie fellowship proposals may lead to significant time constraints during the evaluation procedure. To overcome these time constraints, it is necessary for the panels to have a quick and efficient marking system, where general discussions on individual proposals are limited to proposals that are ranked around the funding cut-off areas or where significant scoring discrepancies occur. Because of the detailed and specific nature of the application forms for fellowships, the structure of proposals is in general relatively homogeneous. This allows a standardised assessment to be made by each expert, which is scored in a range from 0 to 100, as outlined in the table above. Due to the detailed nature of the information required to properly evaluate the candidate/host institution, it is essential that the personal details of the parties involved (e.g. applicants, scientific supervisors) are known to the expert. It is therefore impractical to carry out the evaluation anonymously. The total score attributed to each proposal is interpreted as follows:

- Marks of 90 or more are reserved for proposals of exceptionally high quality;
- Marks of 80 or more indicate proposals of very high quality;
- Marks 70-79 indicate proposals of high quality;
- Marks 60-69 indicate proposals of medium quality;
- Marks lower than 60 indicate proposals with notable weaknesses.

Threshold for funding: all proposals where the average mark of all evaluations is less than 60 will not be funded, even if funds remain available.

3. ENHANCING ACCESS TO RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURES

3.1 The Evaluation Process

The evaluation process will proceed as follows:

- Pre-proposal checks are not foreseen for this action, nor is the pre-registration of proposals. The eligibility of proposals is verified by the Programme management.
- Eligible proposals will be evaluated through a peer review system carried out by a single multidisciplinary panel of independent external experts (the Evaluation Panel), normally meeting in two plenary sessions. The meetings of the Evaluation Panel are normally chaired by one of the experts (the Chairman) with a Commission official acting as Moderator.
- At the first meeting, proposals will be screened in order to reject those that do not conform to the call for proposals, notably those transnational access proposals where the proposed infrastructure does not satisfy the Programme definition of a “major research infrastructure” or those proposals for cooperation networks or RTD projects that concern areas that are eligible for support under the Thematic Programmes. Proposals are also rejected at this preliminary screening stage, if they are incomplete or clearly of poor quality.
- Each proposal that passes the preliminary screening is then assigned for primary assessment to at least two Panel members. In doing so, care is taken to ensure that, where practicable, the primary assessment of each group of proposals is spread widely throughout the Panel. Furthermore, rapporteurs are appointed for each of the groups (so that each proposal is evaluated by at least three Panel members). The role of the rapporteur, who is normally chosen from outside those Panel members who have direct knowledge of the infrastructures in the group, is to propose to the Evaluation Panel at its second meeting a collective assessment for each proposal in the group taking into account all the individual primary assessments. As rapporteurs carry out primary assessments of proposals in other groups, an element of comparative analysis among proposals from different groups of infrastructures is introduced by this means.
- Before the second meeting, Panel members will carry out the primary assessments of proposals at their normal place of work, consulting external experts as they wish. Given the nature of the action, evaluators need to have knowledge of the infrastructures involved in the proposals. Therefore, the full proposals will be given to the evaluators at the outset.
- At its second meeting, the panel will collectively classify the proposals on the basis of the primary assessments. The assessment of proposals will also take account of recommendations by earlier Study Panels and of the experience gained in the implementation of earlier related Community Programmes concerning research infrastructures (notably through the Mid-Term Review of the Access to Large-Scale Facilities Activity of the TMR Programme). In addition, the benefit to the Community in terms of improving the scientific and technical potential of its less-favoured regions will also be taken into account. While respecting the overriding importance of scientific/technical merit and cost-effectiveness in the selection process, proposals from infrastructures in the less-favoured regions of the Community will be favoured at the margin, during the final ranking, over other proposals of equivalent merit and cost-effectiveness. The Panel will also rank all proposals that are judged to be worthy of funding. Concerning proposals for transnational access that it considers worthy of

funding, the Panel will advise the Commission both on the level of financial support and on the quantity of access to be obtained for that support.

3.2 Evaluation criteria, weighting and thresholds

The selection of proposals to be financed and the level of support to be awarded will be established on the basis of the following criteria:

1. Transnational Access to Major Research Infrastructures

- (1) the quality of the infrastructure, in particular whether the infrastructure is world-class and whether it is offering state-of-the-art equipment to the action;
- (2) the quality of the research that external users are able to carry out at the infrastructure;
- (3) the quality of the scientific, technical and logistic support provided for these external users, including the quality of the research environment;
- (4) the scale of interest being demonstrated in using the infrastructure by new transnational users coming from countries where no similar infrastructure exists;
- (5) the cost-effectiveness of Community support.

2. Infrastructure Cooperation Networks, Round-Tables and Exploratory Workshops

- (1) the potential of the proposed network to enhance the access to and the service provided by research infrastructures that have a Community-wide interest;
- (2) the ability of the participants to provide an effective coordination of the network's activities.

3. Research Infrastructure RTD Projects

- (1) the scientific originality of the project,
- (2) the potential of the project to improve infrastructure provision in Europe,
- (3) the degree of interest shown generally by infrastructure operators in the field and by the user community,
- (4) the quality of its research method and work plan,
- (5) the quality of the project management and competence of the partners.

Weighting of evaluation criteria and thresholds

For each type of proposal, all the criteria set out above will be applied with identical weightings.

On the other hand, some of the general criteria set out in the evaluation manual - i.e. (i) S/T quality and innovation, (ii) Community added value and contribution to EU policies, and (v) management and resources - are already included in the programme-specific criteria set out above. Some others - i.e. (iii) contribution to Community social objectives, and (iv) economic development and S&T prospects - play an insignificant role in view of the nature of this action.

Criteria (iii) and (iv) will therefore be given a zero weighting and shall not be considered explicitly.

For each type of proposal and for each of the specific criteria set out above, proposals which fail completely to address the issue under examination or can not be judged against that criterion due to missing or incomplete information will be rejected.

3.3 Selection of projects for funding

The Commission may require changes to a proposed infrastructure cooperation network on the basis of the evaluation. In particular, in those cases where different successful network proposals deal with related areas of infrastructure support, the Commission may negotiate the clustering of such proposals into a single network.

4. HIGH-LEVEL SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCES

4.1 The evaluation process

Pre-proposal checks are not foreseen for this activity, nor is pre-registration of proposals. The eligibility of the proposals is verified by the Commission staff.

The evaluation process will be carried out by a single Multidisciplinary Panel of experts coping with a very wide range of research topics and a large number of proposals covering all seven types of Conferences.

During the meeting of the Panel, the proposals will be evaluated in two phases: (1) In the primary review phase, each proposal is assessed against the evaluation criteria by at least two experts; (2) At the subsequent plenary session of the Panel, the proposals are analysed and ranked on the basis of the primary reviews.

The identity of the proposer (coordinator), scientific organisers and lecturers/keynote speakers will be known to the experts throughout the evaluation process. This knowledge is essential to evaluate the quality of the training of young researchers, which is a principal objective of the activity, as well as to evaluate the quality of the conference programme.

Because of the size and the complexity of the Panel, a Chairperson and a Vice-chairperson will be nominated by the Commission. The chairperson's role will be to coordinate the work of the panel and to chair the plenary session. The Commission staff will be responsible for the correct implementation of the evaluation procedure.

4.2 Evaluation criteria, weighting and thresholds

The criteria relating to

- Contribution to EU policies
- Contribution to Community social objectives
- Economic development and S&T prospects

are inherent in the High-Level Scientific Conferences or are not relevant due to the bottom-up approach of this action. They will therefore be given zero weighting and shall not be considered explicitly in the evaluation of the High-Level Scientific Conference proposals.

Blocks 1 to 3 of evaluation criteria to be applied to High-Level Scientific Conferences are defined in accordance with the Council Decision on the programme. Block 4 relates to the standard criteria block on "Community added value". They are detailed below together with their relative weighting and the individual evaluation criteria.

Evaluation criteria	Weight	Score range
1. Quality of the topic (a) Project topic (b) Scientific originality	2	0-20
2. Quality of the programme (c) Programme content (d) Lecturers and keynote speakers (e) Organisation and management (f) Location and infrastructure	4	0-40
3. Quality of the training (g) Training need (h) Training impact	2	0-20
4. European added value (i) Topic (j) Participants	2	0-20
TOTAL		0-100

Proposal marking

Four evaluation criteria blocks are defined. They are composed of individual evaluation criteria referred as (a) to (j). In the primary review phase each expert will mark the individual criteria from 0 to 10. In addition to marking each evaluation criterion individually, each expert will give a mark to each block in the score range defined in the table above.

In the plenary session all panel experts together analyse each proposal on the basis of the primary reviews, giving particular attention to marking discrepancies. If necessary, a supplementary expert may be appointed to mark the proposal during the plenary session. The Panel will award a score for each of the four blocks based on the individual assessments. Only these overall marks for each block of criteria will be taken into account for the final mark of a proposal, which in turn determines its rank on the list of proposals recommended for funding.

5. RAISING PUBLIC AWARENESS OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

5.1 The evaluation process

Pre-proposal checks

This service is **not** offered to applicants for funding in the area of Raising Public Awareness of Science and Technology. For Co-operation networks, the Call for proposals is open to all fields of scientific endeavour; and proposals for the European Science and Technology Week will focus on naturally occurring events and phenomena that have an impact on our daily lives (for example the Sun, the weather, the seas etc) and will demonstrate the role that science has played in their understanding.

Pre-registration

Whether, by fax, post, or electronically (using the electronic submission tool) is encouraged but not mandatory. Pre-registration or its absence will not affect in any way the eligibility of a proposal or the way in which it is evaluated.

Anonymity of the scientific part of the proposal

For proposals for funding under Raising Public Awareness of Science and Technology there is **no** requirement that part of the proposals be submitted anonymously. Please see the information package.

5.2 Evaluation criteria, weighting and thresholds

Block 1 Scientific/technological quality and innovation

In this block proposals will be evaluated in accordance with the criteria set out in this evaluation manual. It should be noted that raising public awareness is both a S&T and social issue and these aspects should be assessed under this block .

Block 2 Community added value and contribution to EU policies

In this block proposals will be evaluated in accordance with the criteria set out in this evaluation manual.

Block 3 Contribution to Community social objectives

In this block proposals will be evaluated in accordance with the criteria set out in this evaluation manual. It is recognised that these criteria refer to broader social issues than those reasonably included and assessed under block 1. This will be reflected in the weighting and threshold associated to this block (see below).

Block 4 Economic development and S&T prospects

Due to the nature of the activities envisaged proposals for funding under Raising Public Awareness of Science will **not** be assessed against the criteria set out in this block.

Block 5 Management and resources

In this block proposals will be evaluated in accordance with the criteria set out in this evaluation manual.

Block 1 will contribute a maximum of 30% to the final rating

Block 2 will contribute a maximum of 30% to the final rating

Block 3 will contribute a maximum of 10% to the final rating

Block 4 will not be used for the assessment

Block 5 will contribute a maximum of 30% to the final rating

Thresholds

The threshold for Block 1 is 2 marks (corresponding to “fair”)

The threshold for Block 2 is 2 marks (corresponding to “fair”)

There will be no minimum threshold for Block 3

The threshold for Block 5 is 2 marks (corresponding to “fair”)

6. KEY ACTION “IMPROVING THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC KNOWLEDGE BASE”

6.1 The evaluation process

Pre-proposal checks are not foreseen for this activity. Pre-registration is not an option for this evaluation (see page 5 of the general manual).

The evaluation process to be applied for RTD projects submitted to the Key Action “Improving the socio-economic knowledge base” is essentially based on an anonymous evaluation by independent evaluators of the first block of criteria on scientific quality and innovation followed by a non-anonymous evaluation of the other blocks of criteria (see pages 13-15 of the general manual). For thematic networks and accompanying measures the evaluation process may not necessarily be anonymous, due to the specific nature of these activities.

6.2 Evaluation criteria, weighting and thresholds

Due to the special nature of the Key Action “Improving the socio-economic knowledge base” the *Block 3 evaluation criterion “Contribution to Community social objectives”* (see page 14 of the general manual) will not be explicitly addressed as separate criteria. The reason for this is that societal issues and social objectives are major inherent components of the research proposals in this Key Action. Therefore, whenever relevant, they are assessed primarily in Block 2, third criterion: “Contribution to one or more EU policies” and also in Block 1, first criterion: “Quality of research and contribution to the objectives of the programme”.

The Block 4 criterion: “Economic development and S&T prospects” (see page 14 of the general manual) is intended to evaluate the soundness of the exploitation and/or dissemination strategies for the expected results and the strategic impact and policy relevance of the proposed project as well as the involvement of the potential users of the research results. Therefore within this Key Action evaluation will be focused on the following issues: user involvement; range of applications and exploitation not only technological but also socio-economic; effectiveness of dissemination strategies for the related policies.

The evaluation criteria to be applied to the Key Action, together with an indication of their relative importance expressed through the relative weightings and particular interpretations to be given to the criteria are specified below:

<i>Block of evaluation criteria</i>	<i>Weighting²⁵</i>	
	<i>RTD projects</i>	<i>Thematic Networks</i>
Block 1: Scientific quality and innovation (<i>see description of standard block of criteria 1 in the general manual</i>)	4	3
Block 2: Community added value and contribution to EU policies (<i>see description of standard block of criteria 2 in the general manual</i>)	2.5	3
Block 3: Contribution to Community social objectives (<i>will not be addressed explicitly by the evaluators</i>)	-	-
<p>Block 4: Economic development and S&T prospects</p> <p><i>Due to the specific nature and objectives of the Key Action this standard block of criteria in the general manual should be read and interpreted as follows:</i></p> <p>Soundness of the <i>exploitation strategies</i>: The expected deliverables suitable for exploitation should be specified and the possibilities for their application e.g. to relevant policies.</p> <p>The <i>strategic impact</i> of the proposed project for the partners, policy makers and the involvement of the potential users should be assessed, specially in relation to the key challenges for the E.U.</p> <p>Soundness of the <i>dissemination strategies</i>: the extent to which the dissemination of results and deliverables is planned and integrated in the project should be specified. The proposed dissemination plan should include work during and after the lifetime of the project.</p>	1	1
Block 5: Management and resources (<i>see description of standard block of criteria 5 in the general manual</i>)	2.5	3

Thresholds

In order to be considered for possible funding, proposals should pass the following thresholds (see page 17 of the general manual):

- A minimum total mark of 70 % or more in total; and
- A minimum mark of 70 % or more on block 1 criterion; and
- A minimum mark of 60 % or more on each of the evaluation blocks 2, 4 and 5

²⁵ Weights on a scale of 1 to 10. N.B. only the marks for the blocks of criteria will be used to determine the final mark for the proposal, not the marks for the individual criteria

7. SUPPORT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGY POLICIES IN EUROPE: STRATEGIC ANALYSIS OF SPECIFIC POLITICAL ISSUES

7.1 Evaluation Process

The Evaluation Manual and the specific work programmes will set out the criteria from the framework programme. Evaluators will examine the proposals and provide marks for each of the applicable criteria set out below (which are drawn from the Framework Programme and the “Rules for participation” decision).

Selection criteria will be weighted to favour proposals focusing on new or emerging issues and policy trends, bringing together a critical mass of diverse professional, and disciplinary inputs and/or actors (research, industry, policy etc.) on a European scale, within a coherent S&T policy-oriented approach.

Proposals will be required to demonstrate the relevance and added value of the activity proposed to the future development of science and technology policies in Europe. As such, they will implicitly address the social and economic objectives of the Community and will therefore not be evaluated separately against these criteria. More specific selection and award criteria may be defined for accompanying measures in accordance with the nature of the measure.

7.2 Evaluation Criteria, weighting, thresholds

Scientific/Technological quality and innovation

This is a key criterion. The subject matter of proposals should be of significant importance to the key policy issues being addressed by the programme; and the aspirations for implementation. They should bring together all the relevant actors.

- The **quality** of the activity proposed and its contribution to solving the key scientific/technological policy issues;
- The **originality** and progress beyond the state of the art;
- The **appropriateness** of the chosen approach, methodology and work plan.

Community added value and contribution to EU policies

This is a key criterion for action at Community level. Proposals should demonstrate the importance of addressing the issue at European level, the added value for the Community by doing so and the benefits for European wide policy as well as Community policy making.

- The **European dimension of the problem**. The extent to which the project would contribute to problem solving at the European level
- The **European added value of the consortium** - the need to establish a critical mass and the combination of complementary expertise and resources available in different organisations;
- The project’s contribution to the **development of European policies** & future issues.

Contribution to Community social objectives

Proposals rated highly on the second set of criteria will implicitly support the social policy objectives of the Community. Therefore there are no additional explicit criteria in this category, and there will be no explicit evaluation on this criterion.

Economic development and S&T prospects

Proposals rated highly on the second set of criteria will implicitly support the economic policy objectives of the Community. This set of criteria allows the impact of a proposal to be considered, in that Science and Technology policies can help guide downstream policies and economic orientations; as well as the proposers' own plans to engage a relevant and wider audience in the outcome of the work;

- In particular, the **usefulness and range of applications and exploitation**;
- The **strategic impact** of the proposal and its contribution to European policymaking;
- The relevant **dissemination plans**.

Management and resources

This set of criteria apply to the project management and is subsidiary to the content/quality assessment. Proposals should demonstrate that the organisation and methodology employed is capable of delivering relevant and useful policy conclusions. A key issue here is the early emergence of policy orientations imposed by the ever-shortening science and technology policy-planning horizon.

- The **quality of the management**: good communications between the actors, clarity, consistency, efficiency and scheduling arrangements with emphasis on the definition of early milestones
- The **quality of the partnership** proposed, in particular, the competence, balance and complementarity of representations and interdisciplinary expertise;
- The **appropriateness of the resources** requested, in order to achieve early outcomes.

There are then Four sets of criteria for evaluation. Although their weightings vary, every proposal must reach an acceptable standard – the threshold being an average mark of not less than 3.0 (i.e. not less than « good ») - in each of the applicable sections.

For Strategic Analysis of Specific Political Issues the weightings per block (on a scale of 1 to 10) will be as follows:

<u>Block of Criteria</u>	<u>Weight</u>
<i>Scientific/Technological quality and innovation</i>	3
<i>Community added value and contribution to EU policies</i>	3
<i>(Contribution to Community social objectives)</i>	<i>not explicitly applicable</i>
<i>Economic development and S&T prospects</i>	2
<i>Management and resources</i>	2

Proposal ranking and rejection decision

The Commission reserves the right to implement suitable proposals, or parts thereof, via accompanying measures if this contributes to the overall efficiency of programme implementation.

The Commission further reserves the right, for those proposals which have been thought to have reached sufficient technical merit and remain unfunded for purely budgetary reasons, to draw the anonymous parts of those proposals to the attention of other European bodies which may have complementary interests. It will only disclose mutual contact details after prior agreement with the proposers.

Contract preparation and finalisation

A proposal which is undergoing contract finalisation negotiations and tries to **significantly amend the content or resource** allocation which are outside the scope of the evaluation recommendations **may lead to termination of negotiations.**