Evaluation of the proposals: criteria and procedures (based on experience from previous projects)

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Time span of the project evaluation in R&D sphere

- Ex-ante evaluation (stage of selection)
- Evaluation during the execution of the project
- Ex-post evaluation
- Follow-up evaluation
- 'Retrospective' evaluation

Formation of evaluation criteria

1. It is really impossible to develop universal **quantitative** criteria for different types of research projects (There are two key quantitative indicators, which could be used for evaluation: a) those, related to publication activities and b) those, related to patenting activities).

2. Possible economic effects are not applicable fully for evaluation of results in different disciplines and, especially, for basic research because of a number of reasons.

Key methods, procedures and actors

- No 'pure' quantitative approach is used but quantitative indicators are playing an important role as a source of information for decision-making
- Peer review as a key element of selection procedure
- Procedures and 'supportive' indicators are different for different types of projects
- Different constraints for different projects (research network establishment, programmes with specific research goals, projects, oriented on SMEs, or with their substantial participation and so on)

Principles of expert's work

- Avoidance of conflict of interests
- Confidentiality of expertise
- Independence of experts and fixed term of their involvement in the project evaluation
- Participation of several experts in evaluation of each project
- Utilization of complementary competences of experts in selection procedures
- 'Punishment' for 'unfair' expertise
- Possibility of revision of results till some stage of expertise

General criteria of evaluation

- _Relevance_ – of the content of proposal to the objectives of the call and requirements of the funding agency.

- _Quality_ – level of arguments, justification of the main instruments, which are used in the project, knowledge of the subject of research and so on.

- _Performance_ – effective implementation of results (publications, level of citation, patents, new contracts and so on).

Functional classification of R&D indicators, which are used in evaluation process

- Input Indicators (cadres, finances)
- Process Indicators (number of projects)
- Output Indicators (publications, citations, patents)
- Indicators that describe the connections with other subsystems of the society (results of the opinion polls, media reaction and so on)

Sources of Information for quantitative indicators

- Traditional statistical forms and so-called administrative data (very often- not in line with new realities)
- Data from sociological surveys (often – fragmented)
- Information from special databases (not in adequate format)
- **PEER REVIEWs**

Problems with 'objective' indicators, which are used for evaluation

- Problems with calculations of the number of publications (international statistics versus internal statistics)
- General problems with statistics of publications (language of publication, complementary citations, negative citations and so on)
- Propositions on changes in statistical forms
- Patent statistics (national patens, European patens, US patents, 'tryadic family' patents)
- Other output indicators

Example: Indicators of patent activities

- Post-Soviet countries have very few American or EU patents, if compare with other countries of the CEE, even with countries of smaller size.

- Partially, it could be explained by relatively high costs of patenting in these countries but the state has no special program of support patenting abroad, despite discussion about such program is still continuing in the post-Soviet states.

Example of assessment form (Fulbright Programme, - USA) –Part A: Professional Qualifications

	Excellent (5)	Very Good (4)	Average (3)	Poor (2)
Knowledge of the field				
Appropriateness of training to the proposal				

Example of assessment form (Fulbright Programme, - USA) –Part B: Assessment of Research Objectives

	Excellent (5)	Very Good (4)	Average (3)	Poor (2)
Argument for conducting research in the U.S.				
Clarity of the research objectives				
Significance of research to the field				
Significance of research to Ukraine				
Thoroughness of research objectives				
Dissemination plan and feasibility				

Example of assessment form (Fulbright Programme, - USA) –Part C: Recommenadations

- Comments:
- Recommend for interview
- Not recommend to interview
- PLUS: Recommend with reservations

EU projects evaluation: main stages

- Formal checking of the proposal (has it missing documents or positions or not?)

- Expert evaluation (at least 2-3 experts per project)

- Evaluation of administrative specialists

- Panel evaluation and final decision by the Commission specialists

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Academic Expert:	Project type: Project N°: Partner Country/ies:

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CATEGORY	Tick here in turns for the final update of grades before printing.
Rationale of the Project	GRADE
Rationale of the project in the partner country(ies) context	0/10
Needs assessment in the Partner Country institutions involved	0/10
Level of expertise and relevance of Consortium partners	0/10

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Description of the Project	
Clarity and relevance of project objectives	0/10
Appropriateness of working methods	0/10

Design and Planning Tools	
Demonstrated logic and sound planning capacity (Logical Framework Matrix & Workplan)	0/10

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Outcomes and Activities (tables and strategies)	
Appropriateness of Project Outcomes and related activities	0/10
Quality of arrangements for Dissemination	0/10
Potential for Sustainability	0/10
Foreseen Quality Control, Monitoring and Management of the project	0/10
Overall Grade	**0/ 100**

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OVERALL COMMENTS & RECOMMENDATIONS (in two 'boxes')

- In the first box, you are asked to formulate at **least 3 phrases** focusing on strong and weak points which reflect the overall grading given to the proposal. In those cases where you gave a grade of 50 and below, please focus in particular on explanations of the weak(er) points and make recommendations for improving the proposal.

- Please provide recommendations for improvement in the second box. For those proposals, which are likely to be funded, please concentrate on issues that should be improved during the project life; whereas for weaker proposal recommendations should be provided on how the application could be improved. Your phrases should be clear, constructive and friendly, as these will be forwarded to the applicants.

Important notes

- **Should you feel that there are any particular/exceptional aspects which should be taken into consideration for the overall grading of this proposal (which have not been covered in any of the grading categories), please indicate below:**

- _In **all** cases of discrepancies (where the Overall Grade differs by more than 20 points), please indicate below what changes to grades were undertaken and provide a brief reasoning for the re-grading):_

General remarks, related to Horizon2020

- Time to grant shortened to **8 months** (approx. 5 months from call deadline to evaluation outcome) ⇨ Less time for negociation

- Generalisation of **2-stages** procedure
  - Pre-proposal (evaluated against a limited set of criteria)
  - Full proposal (evaluated against a full set of criteria)

- Evaluation guided by
  - excellence
  - transparency
  - fairness and impartiality
  - efficiency and speed
  - ethics and security

- Evaluations are performed by distance and/or on site

Grants Manual – Section on:
Proposal submission and evaluation

http://ec.europa.eu/research/particip
ants/docs/h2020-funding-
guide/index_en.htm

Evaluators

- External and independent experts *ad personam*
- 3 evaluators per proposal, selected by the EC in a database (http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/experts/index.html) ensuring a balance between
    - skills, experience and knowledge
    - geographical diversity
    - Gender
    - private and public sectors
- Briefed by EC before evaluation procedure (methodology, topics content, terms of their contract, etc)
    - ⓘ Evaluators are strictly required to **ignore** excess pages
    - ⓘ Also encouraged to evaluate the proposals are they are and to **not** provide   any recommendations for improvements

Evaluation criteria (1)

Excellence
- Clarity of objectives
- Soudness of concept
- Credibility of approach
- Ambition and progress

Impact
- Expected impact as in WP
- Enhancing innovation
- Strengthening competitiveness
- Exploitation of results

Quality of implementation
- Coherence and effectiveness of work plan
- Complementarity of consortium
- Appropriateness of consortium

Evaluation criteria (2)

↳ Scores from 0 to 5 (half marks possible); maximum overall score: 15

No weighting (except IA and SME Instrument)

ⓘ Standard evaluation forms used by evaluators are available among the reference documents on the Participant Portal : use them to perform a **mock evaluation** and assess the strength and weaknesses of your proposal (http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/funding/reference_docs.html#h2020-call_ptef-ef)

Evaluation process (1)

- <u>Admissibility and eligibility check</u>
  - Proposal must be complete, submitted in ESS before the deadline, readable, accessible and printable
  - It must meet the standard eligibility criteria as well as the specific conditions of the call
- <u>Phase 1: Individual evaluation</u>
  - Each expert carries out an evaluation and prepares an individual evaluation report (IER) with comments and scores for each criterion
- <u>Phase 2: Consensus group</u>
  - Experts form a « consensus group » to come to a common view and agree on comments and scores, under the control of a moderator

Evaluation process (2)

- <u>Phase 3: Panel review</u>
  - All proposals within a call are reviewed by a panel to ensure the consistency of the evaluations and propose a new set of marks or comments if necessary
  - As part of panel review, the EC may organize hearings with applicants to improve the understanding of the proposal
  - A panel report, including an evaluation summary report (ESR) for each proposal, is produced with explanations and a list of proposals passing all thresholds
- <u>Outcome of evaluation</u>
  - Proposals are ranked according to the results of evaluation (including reserve list and list of proposals that cannot be funded due to insufficient budget)
  - Successful applicants (main list) are invited to the grant preparation stage (letter sent within 5 months of the call deadline)

Conclusion: key moments

- Form and procedures could vary, depending on the goals and content of the project
- There is a need to present the best qualities and to show competences and to have an ability to fulfil the project by the team of applicants
- The knowledge of formal procedures, realistic working plan and reliable partners are key for success