HORIZON 2020 PROPOSAL EVALUATION

THE EVALUATION PROCEDURE IN PRACTICE
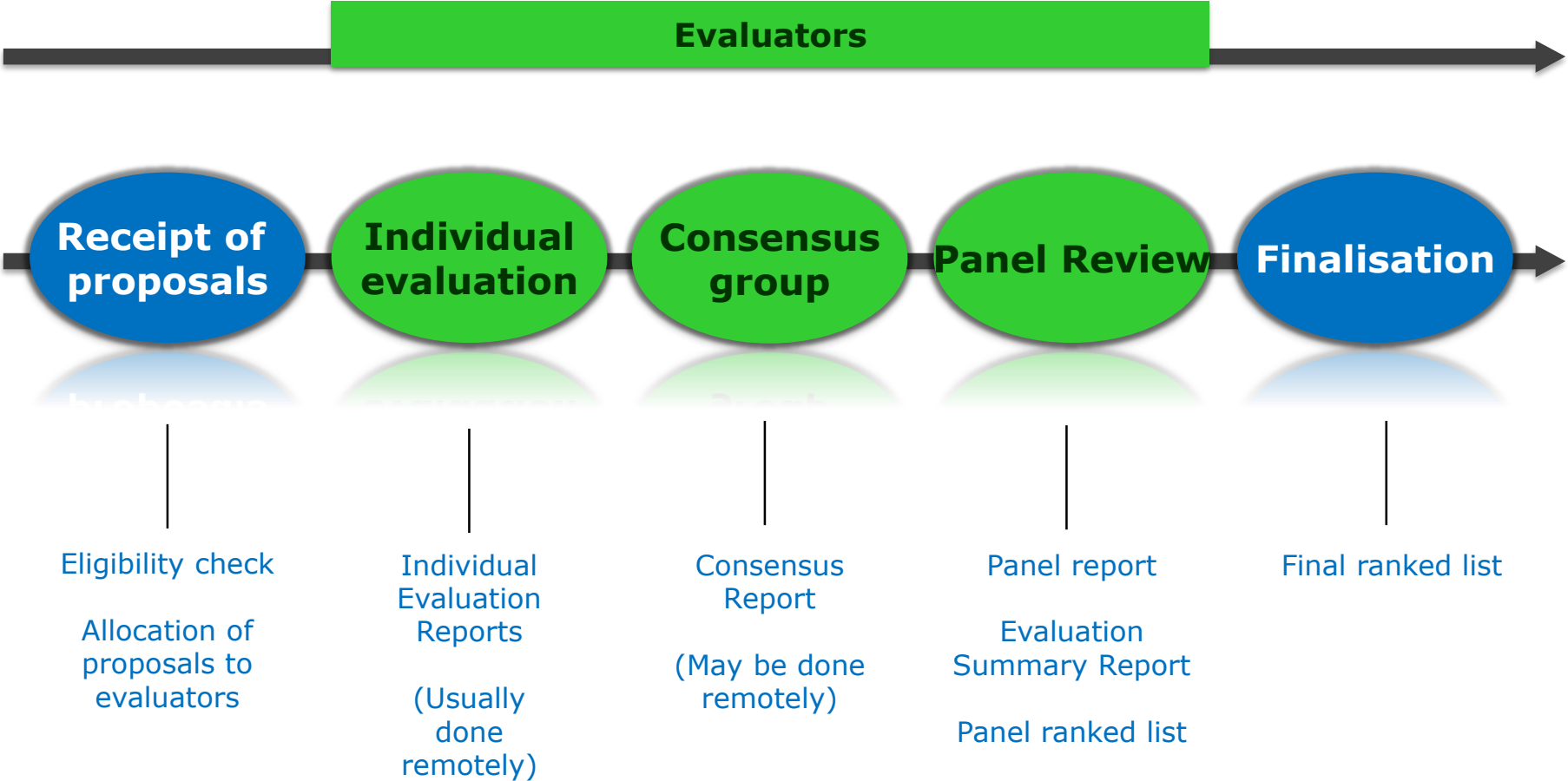
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Overview of the Evaluation Process

Evaluators

Receipt of proposals	Individual evaluation	Consensus group	Panel Review	Finalisation
Eligibility check	Individual Evaluation Reports	Consensus Report	Panel report	Final ranked list
Allocation of proposals to evaluators	(Usually done remotely)	(May be done remotely)	Evaluation Summary Report	
			Panel ranked list	

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Admissibility and eligibility checks

- **Admissibility is checked by the Commission/Agency:**

  – Readable, accessible and printable

  – Completeness of proposal
  presence of all requested forms

  – Inclusion of a plan for exploitation and dissemination
  of results (unless otherwise specified in the WP)

> **Page limits:** Clearly set out in electronic system; excess page(s) marked with a watermark

- **Eligibility checked by the Commission/Agency - however, if experts spot an issue relating to eligibility, they inform the Commission/Agency**

  – Minimum number of partners as set out in the call conditions

  – Other criteria may apply on a call-by-call basis as set out in the call conditions

- **"Out of scope" – if the content of a proposal corresponds, wholly or in part, to the description of the call or topic**

  – A proposal will only be deemed ineligible in clear-cut cases

> **Instructions:** For first stage of two-stage procedures, delete the third sub-bullet point on the inclusion of a plan for exploitation and dissemination as it is not required.

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Evaluation criteria

- **There are three evaluation criteria:**

  – Excellence (relevant to the description of the call or topic)

  – Impact

   ❑ **Communication activities** `new`

   ❑ **Research data management where relevant** `new`

  – Quality and efficiency of the implementation

   ❑ **Requests for 'exceptional funding'**
     from third country participants
     not included in the list are checked

   ❑ **This criterion is not evaluated in the**
     first stage of a two-stage procedure

- **The criteria are adapted to each type of actions, as specified in the WP**

Innovation Management: is a process which requires an understanding of both market and technical problems, with a goal of successfully implementing appropriate creative ideas.
Typical Output: new or improved product, service or process.
For consortium: it allows to respond to an external or internal opportunity. `new`

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Evaluation criteria
Research and Innovation Actions/Innovation Actions/ SME instrument

✓ For the first stage of a two-stage procedure, only the aspects of the criteria in yellow are evaluated

Excellence

Clarity and pertinence of the objectives

Soundness of the concept, including trans-disciplinary considerations, where relevant

Extent that proposed work is ambitious, has innovation potential, and is beyond the state of the art (e.g. ground-breaking objectives, novel concepts and approaches)

Credibility of the proposed approach

Impact

The expected impacts listed in the work programme under the relevant topic
Enhancing innovation capacity and integration of new knowledge
Strengthening the competitiveness and growth of companies by developing innovations meeting the needs of European and global markets; and, where relevant, by delivering such innovations to the markets
Any other environmental and socially important impacts (not already covered above)
Effectiveness of the proposed measures to exploit and disseminate the project results (including management of IPR), to communicate the project, and to manage research data where relevant

Implementation

Coherence and effectiveness of the work plan, including appropriateness of the allocation of tasks and resources

Complementarity of the participants within the consortium (when relevant)

Appropriateness of the management structures and procedures, including risk and innovation management

Evaluation criteria
Coordination & Support Actions

✓ For the first stage of a two-stage procedure, only the aspects of the criteria in yellow are evaluated

Excellence

Clarity and pertinence of the objectives

Soundness of the concept

Quality of the proposed coordination and/or support measures

Credibility of the proposed approach

Impact

The expected impacts listed in the work programme under the relevant topic

Effectiveness of the proposed measures to exploit and disseminate the project results (including management of IPR), to communicate the project, and to manage research data where relevant

Implementation

Coherence and effectiveness of the work plan, including appropriateness of the allocation of tasks and resources

Complementarity of the participants within the consortium (when relevant)

Appropriateness of the management structures and procedures, including risk and innovation management

Operational capacity

- **As part of the Individual Evaluation, it is seen whether each applicant has the necessary <u>basic</u> operational capacity to carry out their proposed activity(ies)** based on the information provided

    - Curriculum Vitae or description of the profile of the applicant

    - Relevant publications or achievements

    - Relevant previous projects or activities

    - Description of any significant infrastructure or any major items of technical equipment

- **At the consensus group, if an applicant lacks basic operational capacity, it is discussed**

- **Experts are invited to comment and score the proposal without taking into account this applicant and its associated activity(ies)**

- **Not for stage 1 of two-stage procedures**

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Proposal scoring

- **Experts give a score of between 0 and 5 to each criterion based on comments**

    – Half-marks can be used
    – The whole range of scores should be used
    – Scores must pass *thresholds* if a proposal is to be considered for funding

- **Thresholds apply to individual criteria...**
  The default threshold is 3 (unless specified otherwise in the WP)

- **...and to the total score**
  The default overall threshold is 10 (unless specified otherwise in the WP)

- **For Innovation actions and the SME instrument, the criterion Impact is given a weight of 1.5 to determine the ranking**

- **For first stage of a two-stage procedure, only the criteria *Excellence* and (part of) *Impact* are evaluated**

    – In that case, only the aspects of the criteria in bold are considered
    – Default threshold for individual criteria is 4 (unless specified otherwise in the WP)
    – Default overall threshold is 8 (unless specified otherwise in the WP)

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Interpretation of the scores

0   The proposal **fails to address the criterion** or cannot be assessed due to missing or incomplete information.

1   **Poor.** The criterion is inadequately addressed, or there are serious inherent weaknesses.

2   **Fair.** The proposal broadly addresses the criterion, but there are significant weaknesses.

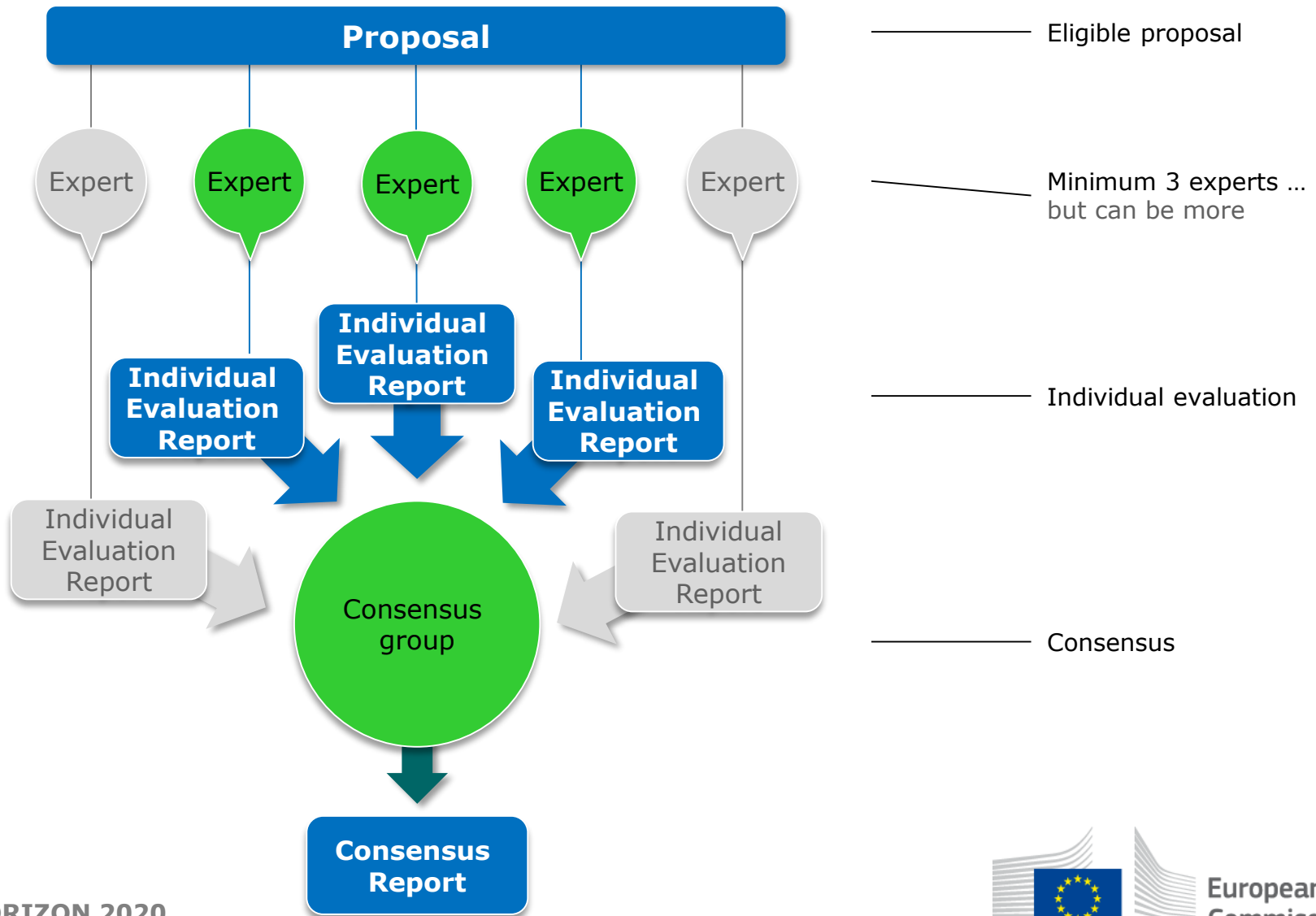**3**   **Good.** The proposal addresses the criterion well, but a number of shortcomings are present.

4   **Very Good.** The proposal addresses the criterion very well, but a small number of shortcomings are present.

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

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Evaluation Process

Individual evaluation

- **The proposal is read and and evaluated it against the evaluation criteria**

  – Without discussing it with anybody else

  – As submitted - not on its potential if certain changes were to be made

  – Applicants that did not provide detailed breakdown of costs are not penalised (they are not required)

- **Excess pages marked with a watermark are disregarded**

- **It is checked to what degree the proposal is relevant to the call or topic**

- **An Individual Evaluation Report (IER) is completed by each expert**

  – Experts give their view on operational capacity

  – Experts give comments and scores for all evaluation criteria (scores must match comments)

  – Experts explain shortcomings, but do not make recommendations

- **The form in the electronic system is then signed and submitted**

> **Look at the substance:**
> **Some proposals might be handicapped by language difficulties, others deceptively well written**

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Consensus

- **It usually involves a discussion on the basis of the individual evaluations**
  - It is not just a simple averaging exercise
- **The aim is to find agreement on comments and scores**
  - Comments are agreed upon before scores!
  - If an applicant lacks basic operational capacity, comments are made and the proposal is scored without taking into account this applicant and its associated activity(ies)
- **"Outlying" opinions are explored**
  - They might be as valid as others –an open-minded approach is encouraged
  - It is normal for individual views to change
- **Moderated by Commission/Agency staff (or an expert in some cases)**
  - Manages the evaluation, protects confidentiality and ensures fairness
  - Ensures objectivity and accuracy, all voices heard and points discussed
  - Helps the group keep to time and reach consensus

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Consensus report (CR)

- **The *rapporteur* is responsible for drafting the CR**
  - Including consensus comments and scores
  - In some cases, the rapporteur does not take part in the discussion

- **The quality of the CR is paramount**
  - It often remains unchanged at the panel stage

- **The aim of the CR is to give:**
  - A clear assessment of the proposal based on its merit, with justification
  - Clear feedback on the proposal's weaknesses and strengths

The panel review

- **Consists of experts from the consensus groups and/or new experts**

- **Ensures the consistency of comments and scores given at the consensus stage**

- **Resolves any cases where a minority view is recorded in the CR**

- **Endorses the final scores and comments for each proposal**
  - Any new comments and scores (if necessary) should be carefully justified

- **Prioritises proposals with identical total scores, after any adjustments for consistency**

- **Recommends a list of proposals in priority order**

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Proposals with identical total scores

- **For each group of proposals with identical total scores, the panel considers first proposals that address topics that are not already covered by more highly-ranked proposals**

- **The panel then orders them according to:**

  - First, their score for Excellence,

  - And second, their score for Impact

- **If there are ties, the panel takes into account the following factors:**

  - First, the size of the budget allocated to SMEs

  - Second, the gender balance of personnel carrying out the research and/or innovation activities

- **If there are still ties, the panel agrees further factors to consider:**

  - e.g. synergies between projects or contribution to the objectives of the call or of Horizon 2020

- **The same method is then applied to proposals that address topics that are already covered by more highly-ranked proposals**

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Ethics review

- **Only proposals that comply with the ethical principles and legislation may receive funding**

- **For proposals above threshold and considered for funding, an ethics screening and, if necessary, an ethics assessment is carried out by independent ethics experts in parallel with the scientific evaluation or soon after**
  - Proposals involving the use of human embryonic stems cells automatically undergo an ethics assessment

- **For those proposals in which one or more ethical issues have been identified, the experts will assess whether the ethics issues are adequately addressed**

- **The ethics experts will produce an ethics report and give an opinion on the proposal, including:**

  - Granting ethics clearance (or not)

  - Recommending the inclusion of 'ethics requirements' in the grant agreement, or

  - Recommending a further Ethics Assessment and/or an Ethics Check or Audit

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Grazie per l'attenzione!