



# **Submission and Evaluation of Proposals**

**Ralf König**

FFG - Austrian Research Promotion Agency

Division European and International Programmes (EIP)

# Evaluation of proposals: basic facts and figures



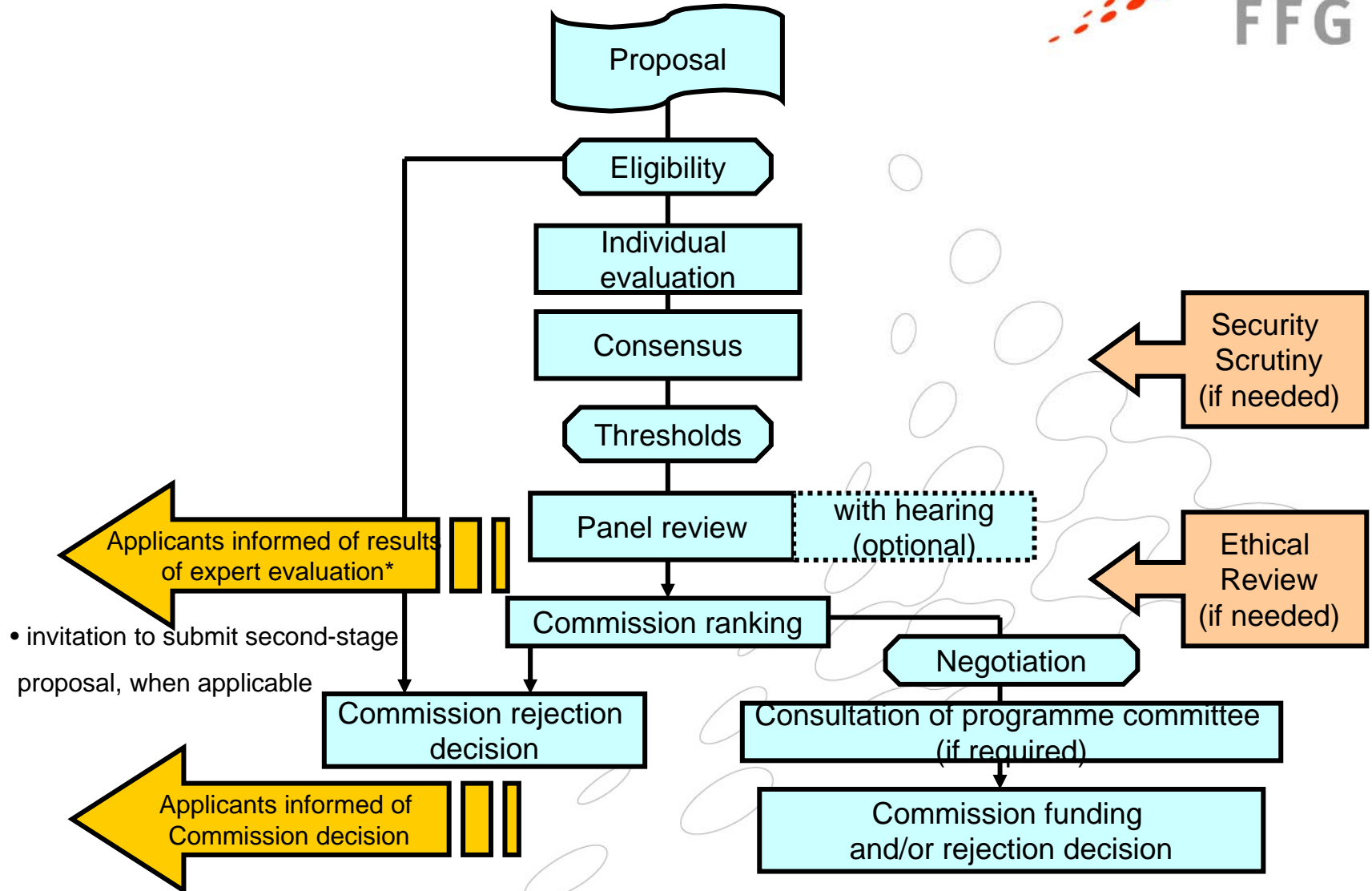
- Funding decisions are based on peer review of research proposals
- High quality evaluators are at the core of the evaluation system
- Involves 4500 to 5000 independent experts every year
- About 16,000 proposals (and rising) are evaluated annually

# Evaluation of proposals: what's new?



- Eligibility criteria (includes “scope”)
- Evaluation criteria (3 instead of 5 or 6)
- More clarity on conflicts of interest
- Enquiries and redress
- Clearer page limits

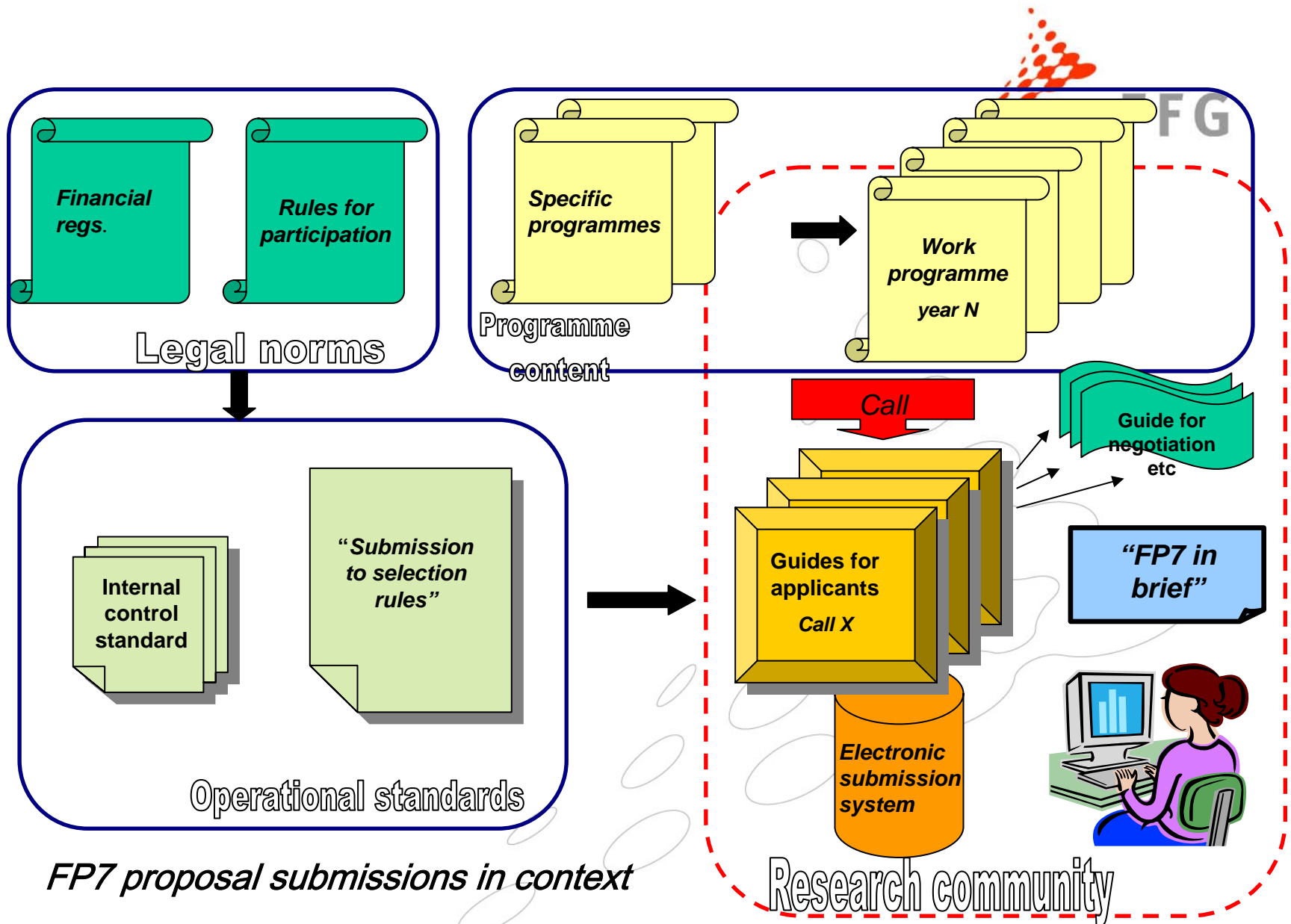
# Submission and evaluation in FP7



# Guide for Applicants



- First section completely generic
  - ⇒ General principles / Basic rules / How to apply
- Written with newcomers in mind
  - ⇒ Includes a glossary and a checklist
- All call-specific information is found together in annex
  - ⇒ No need to hunt around for important details
- Includes the evaluation criteria and procedure
  - ⇒ Formerly 'guidance notes for evaluators'



# Submission



- Must be through the Electronic Proposal Submission System
- Proposals are normally submitted and evaluated in a single stage
- Proposal template given in Guide for applicants
  - Closely aligned to the evaluation criteria
- Two-stage submission of proposals
  - May be used for large, 'bottom up' calls
  - First stage
    - short proposal (about 10-20 pages), dealing with main scientific concepts and ideas
    - use of limited set of criteria
    - successful proposers invited to submit complete proposals
- Deadlines are strictly enforced

# Eligibility checks



- Date and time of receipt of proposal on or before deadline for receipt
  - Firm deadlines
- Minimum number of eligible, independent partners
  - As set out in work programme and the call
- Completeness of proposal
  - Presence of all requested forms
- “Out of scope”
- Others (e.g. budget limits)



# The criteria



- Three main criteria:
  - S&T Quality (relevant to the topic of the call)
    - Concept + objectives, progress beyond state-of-the-art, methodology + work-plan
  - Implementation (+management structure)
    - Individual participants and consortium as a whole
    - Allocation of resources (budget, staff, equipment)
  - Impact
    - Contribution to expected impacts listed in work programme
    - Plans for dissemination/exploitation/IPR

# The criteria

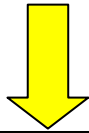


- Criteria adapted to each funding scheme and each thematic area
  - specified in the work programme
- Criteria generally marked out of 5
- Individual threshold = 3; overall threshold = 10
- Can vary from call-to-call

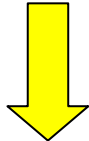
# Principal Process of an Evaluation



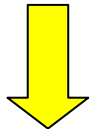
Individual  
Evaluation



Consensus + Threshold



Panel Review (+ hearings)



Ranking lists + follow up

remote or in Brussels; awarding of individual scores; first assessment of the thresholds for each criterion

overview of individual observations; collection of discussion points; overview over the evaluation of thresholds and the dispersion of scores

Comparison consensus results: lowest common denominator from all evaluations; final score and comments

EC decisions; if necessary thematic/budgetary adjustments

# Individual evaluation

Individual  
Evaluation



- Remotely carried out (on the premises of the experts concerned)
- Experts will be briefed by EC staff
- Each proposal first assessed independently by at least three (3) experts (chosen by EC from the pool)
- Proposal will be evaluated against pre-determined evaluation criteria

# Consensus

## Consensus + Threshold



- Built on the basis of the individual assessments of all the evaluators
- Usually involves a discussion
- Moderated by a commission staff-member
- One expert acts as *rapporteur*
- Agreement on consensus marks and comments for each of the criteria

# Panel review

## Panel Review (+ hearings)



- Panel Meeting
  - Compare consensus reports
  - Examines proposals with same consensus score (if needed)
  - Final marks and comments for each proposal
  - Suggestions on order of priority, clustering, amendments, etc.
- Hearings with proposers may be convened
  - Questions to the invited proposal coordinators
  - Small number of proposal representatives

# Commission Follow-up



## Ranking lists + follow up

- Evaluation summary reports sent to applicants (*“initial information letter”*)
- Draw up final ranking lists
- Information to the Programme Committee
- Commission decisions on rejected proposals
- Contract negotiation
- Formal consultation of Programme Committee (when required)
- Commission decisions on proposals selected for funding
- Survey of evaluators
- Independent Observers’ reports

# Personal recommendations



- Evaluators do not have enough time to read the whole proposal...
  - Excellent Abstract
  - Concise and comprehensive problem description (Examples!)
  - Logical procedure (Objectives  $\Leftarrow$  Deliverables  $\Leftarrow$  Activities)
  - Manageable and comprehensible number of work-packages
- Evaluators have also a limited margin of concentration...
  - Navigation aids, Tables, Bold / Italics, Graphics
  - Catchy Acronym



# Personal recommendations



- Evaluators come from diverse expertise areas...
  - Legibility enhancement  
(explanation of abbreviations, etc.)
  - Focus on the benefits and applicability of the approach
  - Reduction of theoretical details  
(eventually refer to Annexes)
  - Emphasis on complementary activities  
(Dissemination and Exploitation)
  - Communicate solid proficiency in project-management  
(clear budget, clear role allocation, Gantt-Chart,  
organisation's diagram, project references, etc.)



FFG

**! Many thanks for your attention !**

**Ralf König**

Head of Unit

FFG – Austrian Research Promotion Agency  
European and International Programmes (EIP)  
Unit of International Cooperation and Mobility

Phone: +43-(0)5-7755-4601

Email: [ralf.koenig@ffg.at](mailto:ralf.koenig@ffg.at)

<http://rp7.ffg.at>