

Recommendations from EURAB on Evaluation

1. General Recommendations for Evaluation:

Excellence as a criterion: EURAB recommends that scientific excellence should be the major criterion for the selection of proposals for research projects.

It is further recommended that optimal funding of excellent proposals be ensured through retaining the flexibility to move programme budgets between topic areas following the evaluation process.

Ensuring a quality Evaluator Database: The quality of evaluations is mainly dependent on the evaluators involved. EURAB therefore strongly supports initiatives which will enhance the range and quality of expertise available for evaluation purposes. Excellent Research Centres should be encouraged and assisted to ensure (a) that their personnel make themselves available for this purpose and (b) that they also nominate experts in other organisations that would be competent evaluators. In addition, the identity of the broad panel of evaluators used should be disclosed (without relating an individual evaluator to a particular project).

Dissemination plans for basic/applied project proposals: EURAB recommends that a distinction should be made between basic and applied research projects in regard to the need for dissemination plans in proposals. In basic research, publication in relevant and peer-reviewed journals should be the only required means of dissemination of outputs. For applied research, the current requirement for a plan that will ensure dissemination to relevant potential users should apply.

2. Mid-term Programme Evaluation:

Both quantitative and qualitative indicators are required to capture the diversity and complexity of the programmes and instruments used. It is fully appreciated that qualitative indicators may have quantitative aspects, and vice versa. It is accepted that these indicators will vary in importance depending on whether Networks of Excellence or Integrated projects are being considered. Taking account of these qualifications (for both Mid-term and Final evaluations) the indicators below are recommended:

Suggested Quantitative Indicators: MID-TERM Evaluation.

Number of: IPs and NoEs with scores above threshold
Researchers/countries/disciplines involved
Companies/SMEs involved
Joint publications (abstracts/proceedings)
Ph.D. Students in training in the consortium
Shared facilities & resources
Staff exchanges per total no. of researchers
Patent submissions

Percentage of: Proposals above threshold that were funded
Use of shared facilities by other participants
Budget used in project administration
Budget retained in the project account
Private investment so far

Suggested Qualitative Indicators: MID-TERM Evaluation.

- Real participation and role of key players of high reputation
- Are joint research plans being made for a future period
- Joint standards and methodology (progress, intent etc)
- Extent to which network has been structured
 - Regular meetings
 - Consortium agreements
- Submissions to journals with top 20% impact factor ratings in relevant field
- Base for new legislation
- Image/ Advertising/ participation in technical workshops
- Views of participants re Management etc
- Activities aimed at developing public interest in science
- Gender disaggregated data

3. Indicators of success for Final Evaluation of FP6

For the final evaluation of the research results of the Integrated Projects and Networks of Excellence, the following set of indicators of Success of New Instruments is recommended. The qualifications noted in section 2 also apply here. Of course the final evaluation should absolutely take into account the targets as defined at the beginning of the project.

Suggested Quantitative Indicators: FINAL Evaluation

Number of: Companies/SMEs still actively involved
Joint publications & proceedings
Newly trained Ph.D. Students
Shared facilities
Staff exchanges per total no. of researchers
Patents and Patent submissions

Percentage of: Use of facilities by other participants
Budget used in project administration
Private investment so far
Increasing market share/ new/ income
New Business
Success in leveraging additional funding

Suggested Qualitative Indicators: FINAL Evaluation

- Involvement of key players of high reputation
- Joint research & development plans
- Joint plans for continuation of collaboration & activities to develop same
- Degree of clustering with other networks
- Joint standards and methodology
- Publications in journals with top 20% impact factor ratings in relevant field
- Bases for new legislation
- Image development/ Advertising/ participation in technical workshops
- Teaching, Training and Framework Development
- Activities aimed at developing public interest in science
- Gender disaggregated data

4. EU/US Collaboration on Evaluation.

EURAB recommends that the identification of evaluation criteria and methodologies be included as a topic for discussion in the current round of S&T collaboration meetings between EU and US.