European Commission

COMPETITIVENESS AND INNOVATION FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME

ICT POLICY SUPPORT PROGRAMME

The ICT PSP Programme focuses on Community activities in the field of competitiveness and innovation for the period 2007 to 2013

HANDBOOK

on Evaluation and Selection of Proposals

CIP – ICT Policy Support Programme

Fixed deadline calls

ICT PSP Call 4

ICT POLICY SUPPORT PROGRAMME

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Introduction

This handbook specifies the procedures for evaluation and selection of proposals in the CIP-ICT Policy Support Programme (ICT PSP) in calls with a fixed deadline.

The evaluation of proposals is one of the most critical elements within any programme. The uncertainty as to how many proposals will be received for each objective and theme until the day of call closure, and the responsibility of the Commission services to provide to proposers the result of the evaluation of their proposals in the shortest possible time, means that the process for the receipt and allocation of proposals to evaluators must be clearly defined to be as efficient as possible.

To ensure the equal treatment of all proposals, the procedure of the evaluation itself must also be as standardised as possible – the evaluators indeed use their own expert judgement, but within the framework of predefined evaluation criteria and a fixed scale of scoring. Because in most cases more proposals pass the evaluation thresholds than there is budget to pay for, they must then be prioritised. This priority is firmly rooted in their quality as reflected in their overall scores. Additional evaluator judgement at panel level is called for to solve cases of proposals with tied scores.

These priority lists from the evaluation provide the basic recommendations for the selection decision, which is made within the limits of the budget available and modified from the arithmetical priority order only with explicit input from the evaluators' reports and from the other Commission services, all of which are explicitly recorded in the final Implementation Plan.

The procedures described in this document are set out to ensure that the real purpose of the evaluation, to select the best quality proposals (within the budget available) in the fairest, most transparent and most efficient way possible, can be reached. The procedures described here take into account the recommendations made by the external observers who monitored the evaluations of the evaluations in the Commission programmes.

Notes:

- In the text which follows the grammatical form *he, his* etc. is used for ease of reading. *He/she* should always be understood.

1 Programme planning

1.1 Establish the Work programme

Responsible for task: ICT Directors with staff of Unit "Strategy for ICT research and development"

Background for carrying out task: Decision No 1639/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 2006 establishing a Competitiveness and Innovation Framework programme (2007 to 2013)

The Work programme contains:

- Details regarding the content of the themes covered by the Work Programme,
- Implementation details including timetable,
- Information regarding the funding instruments (types of projects) to be used,
- Information on the conditions for participation including, where appropriate, minimum numbers,
- Any provisions for third country participation,
- Details of the Community financial contribution,
- Details on the submission and evaluation process, including evaluation process and evaluation (eligibility, award and selection) criteria to be applied,
- Information on the calls for tender,
- Content of calls for proposals,
- Background information.

Focusing a Work Programme is considered essential, and as something that should emerge naturally through reconciling a bottom-up approach (e.g. through consultations which may be internally with other services of the Commission or externally through the Advisory Groups, Programme Committees and other stakeholders and possibly through expressions of interest) and a top-down approach (e.g. from the Specific programme decisions). While such focusing helps to address the problem of over-subscription, it should not lead to situations where competition between proposals with similar technological focus is prevented.

A Work programme may be changed at any time, to correct it or to update it.

Procedure for carrying out task: The following steps need to be followed:

Step 1 The preparation:
Draw up a timetable and a draft Work programme on the basis of the above instructions. The current ICT PSP Work Programme includes:

- **Themes**:Six themes, comprising in total 20 objectives.
- **Financing**: The budget is pre-allocated to the different themes in the Work Programme to provide an indication of the resources which will be devoted to each of them. Objectives within each theme may also carry an indicative funding or a fixed or maximum number of projects to be funded
- **Funding Instruments**: The objectives are open for specific funding instruments depending on their requirements. The funding instrument for each objective is clearly defined in the Work Programme.
- **Calls**: Themes and objectives are included in calls based on an analysis of the ICT and policy area's readiness for implementation and within the limits of the total funding available.
- **Evaluation criteria**: Based on the criteria established in the chapter on Grants in the Financial regulation and its Implementation rules and on the experience in previous evaluations DG INFSO staff defines the evaluation criteria to be specified in Work Programme. The evaluation criteria defined for the current Work Programme cover eligibility criteria, award criteria and selection criteria. The detailed criteria, weights and thresholds (if applicable) are published as part of the Work Programme.

Step 2 The inter-service consultation:

Obtain agreement of the Commissioner to initiate inter-service consultation. The inter-service consultation is divided into the consultation of the other Commission services including SG, DG BUDG and the Legal Service. The inter service consultation for the ICT PSP is the responsibility of DG INFSO.

Step 3 The programme committee consultation:

The committee has to provide an opinion on the text of the Work Programme (including content detail, timetable, use of funding instruments, content of calls for proposals, budget distribution, evaluation, award and selection criteria). In addition, a Work Programme must take into account relevant activities carried out by the Member States, Associated States, and European and international organisations. In accordance with the legal base, modifications of the Work Programme concerning budgetary allocations of more than EUR 1 million also require an opinion by the programme committee before the modified Work Programme is adopted by the Commission. The committee can only be consulted after the inter-service consultation has been completed successfully.

Step 4 The Commission adoption:

Decisions adopting the Work Programme require a Commission decision by written procedure. The same applies to amendments of the Work Programme that require an opinion of the committee in accordance with the legal base. DG INFSO is responsible for the preparation and follow-up of these written procedure dossiers.

Approval of result: Commission adoption of the Work Programme.

1.2 Publish the call

Responsible for task: Unit “Strategy for ICT research and development” and "ICT Operations unit"

Background for carrying out task: The Grant Chapter in the FR and its IR

Calls for proposals must give references to the Work Programme topics against which proposals are invited, indicative call budgets, available funding instruments and deadline for submission. A call for proposals will also specify whether a single or two-stage stage submission and evaluation procedure is to be followed, and whether consortium agreements are required.

Procedure for carrying out task:
A call fiche covering the above points is included in the Work Programme. It is published on the ICT PSP website. A brief formal call announcement is published in the Official Journal

Approval of result: The budgets, funding instruments, included under each theme, timetable etc. contained in the calls for proposals are approved with the approval of the Work Programme.

1.3 Inform and support the constituency

Responsible for task: The DG INFSO units responsible for themes and objectives open in the call, with Unit “Strategy for ICT research and development”, and "ICT Operations unit".

Background for carrying out task: Decision on the CIP Framework Programme

Procedure for carrying out task: DG INFSO carries out a number of activities to prepare the constituencies for the call and to support the preparation of proposals.

- **The Guides for applicants and other supporting documents**

Guides for applicants (one per funding instrument) are prepared by staff in the ICT Operations unit, following a standard format agreed (at the time of the first ICT PSP call) in the intra DG INFSO CIP operations group. These are made available to proposers on the ICT PSP website. The Guides for applicants include in annex a description of the evaluation process; this annex serves as the basis for the Guidance notes for evaluators, which are issued to the experts participating in the evaluation. Other supporting material for

proposers (FAQs, background information material) is similarly prepared and published by ICT Operations unit on the ICT PSP website.

- **The ICT PSP Programme Information Desk**

The ICT Operations unit maintains an Information Desk to respond the proposers' questions by telephone, fax or email[1].

- **National Contact Points**

The ICT Operations unit supports and trains – in co-operation with the other relevant units in DG INFSO - a network of National Contact Points to provide help at the national level to prospective proposers. For each call the ICT Operations unit arranges a briefing and training session for the NCPs in co-operation with Unit "Strategy for ICT research and development" and the operational units which have objectives open in the call.

- **Call contact person list**

For each theme and/or objective in the call, Heads of Unit nominate a contact person to respond to proposers' questions on the technical content of the call. The contact person list, with their email address and phone number of the contact persons, may be published on the call page on EUROPA, if appropriate.

- **Notification of intention to propose**

In order to register to use the Electronic Proposal Submission System (compulsory for ICT PSP calls) proposal coordinators provide in advance basic details of their planned proposals. This information is tabulated by the ICT Operations unit and circulated within DG INFSO to support evaluation planning.

- **Pre-proposal check service**

A pre-proposal check service is offered for all objectives within the call. Staff in the units managing the objectives provide basic comments to proposers on consortium eligibility and correspondence of the planned proposal to the scope of call.

- **Events**

Under the supervision of Unit "Strategy for ICT research and development" one or more information events are organised to support and publicise the ICT PSP relevant work of the DG INFSO. Individual Directorates may also organise "Information Days", at which potential proposers can make contact with each other and with INFSO staff, and discuss issues of proposal preparation and submission. These events are open for all interested parties up to the physical limits of space at the event.

Approval of result: Information material used is defined and approved by the intra DG working group on CIP operations. The information events are covered by the normal Commission procedures for relations with the public. Head of Unit of the involved units approve any other specific information and support activities.

[1] Calls normally close in mid-week, so that a help facility is available to proposers throughout the last days of the call, and that there are working days after the close of call to deal with any unresolved problems

2 The Evaluation Process

2.1 Preparation

2.1.1 Establish timetable of evaluation

Responsible: ICT Directors

Background for carrying out task: ICT PSP Work Programme. Submission and Evaluation Process section.

Procedure for carrying out task: The ICT Operations unit prepares a detailed timetable for the execution of the evaluation and implementation, based on the pre-determined call closure date as published in the call text. The objective is to provide results to proposers as swiftly as possible, within the limits of the available personnel resources and the necessity of ensuring a high level of quality control of the process.

Approval of result: The Deputy Directors General and the ICT Directors approve the proposed timetable.

2.1.2 Appoint independent observers of the evaluation process

Responsible: Head of Unit “Evaluation and Monitoring” on behalf of the Director General.

Background for carrying out task: ICT PSP Work Programme. Submission and Evaluation Process section.

Procedure for carrying out task: The Work Programme allows that independent experts may be appointed as observers to examine the evaluation process. The role of the observers is to give advice to the Commission on the conduct, fairness and equity of the evaluation process, ways in which the procedures could be improved, on the evaluation criteria and the way in which the evaluators apply the criteria.

The unit "Evaluation and monitoring" draws up terms of reference for the observation and identifies a number of independent experts with a high level of experience in the field and propose them for selection and appointment. They observe the evaluation process and convey their opinions and recommendations subsequently to DG INFSO in a written report.

Each observer subscribes to a Code of conduct and signs a Conflict of interest and confidentiality declaration.

Approval of result: The Director General approves the terms of reference for the observation, the list of observers selected and later on receives their report, which is also presented to the ICT PSP committee.

2.1.3 Select Theme and Objective coordinators to manage evaluation

Responsible: INFSO Heads of Unit.

Background for carrying out task: ICT PSP Work Programme, sections 'Content of the Call for proposals ' and 'Submission and Evaluation Process'.

Procedure for carrying out task: The Theme coordinator takes responsibility for the management of the evaluation of proposals addressed to that theme. The Head of Unit responsible for the objectives represented by a particular theme in the call can either nominate a senior member of the staff experienced in evaluation management as Theme coordinator, or alternatively in agreement with his Director nominate himself as Theme coordinator.

During the evaluation the Theme coordinator operates under the supervision of his Head of Unit and with his authority.

For each of the objectives within a theme, the Head of Unit responsible for the objective may also appoint a member of staff as Objective coordinator. The Objective coordinator takes responsibility for the management of the evaluation of proposals addressed to that objective under the supervision of the Theme coordinator.

Approval of result: Each ICT Director approves the list of Theme coordinators and Objective coordinators proposed for his Directorate. The names of the Theme and Objective coordinators are published in an annex to the final Evaluation report.

2.1.4 Establish evaluation Panels in each theme

Responsible: Theme coordinator together with the Heads of Units responsible for the objectives in each theme.

Background for carrying out task: ICT PSP Work Programme. Submission and Evaluation Process section.

Procedure for carrying out task:

1. Where themes have defined targets for proposals to be funded for their objectives (e.g. a certain fixed number, a maximum number or a fixed budget), panels will be constituted at the level of objective ("Objective Panels") so as to fulfil these defined targets.

> A single panel of experts is responsible for the evaluation of all the proposals which address a particular objective to ensure equality of treatment, as all proposals competing in that objective are evaluated to the same standards and are prioritised against each other.
>
> In the event that too many proposals are received within one objective to be handled in a single conveniently-sized panel, or if sub-objectives (goals) involved require substantially different expert skills, then subpanels can be organised, but then there must in that case be a final Objective panel meeting composed of members of each of the subpanels, to ensure common standards and to produce a single merged priority list for the objective.
>
> No proposal may be moved to/from an objective without the consent of both Objective coordinators concerned and the approval of the Proposal Assignment Group (PAG) secretariat (see below).
>
> In themes with different objectives from different ICT/policy areas the Theme co-ordinator may decide, if agreed by his Head of Unit, also to establish an "Integration Panel" composed of members of each of the objective panels, to ensure common standards and to produce a final priority list for the theme (see section 2.2.8).

2. Where themes have not defined targets of proposals to be funded for their individual objectives, a single panel will be constituted at the theme level ("Theme Panel")

> The Theme Panel will consider the Relevance, Impact and Implementation qualities of each proposal in relation to the goals of the theme as a whole.
>
> The Theme Panel may initially work as subpanels per objective if this is necessary due to an excessive number of proposals being received, or in order to be able to use in one subpanel experts who would have conflicts of interest with proposals which are being considered in another. Experts who participated in subpanels but who have a conflict of interest for proposals coming from another subpanel, will not participate in the Theme Panel's discussions of those proposals.

Approval of result: The Theme coordinator devises the panel structure in his theme and ensures selection of Objective coordinators. In case the Theme coordinator or the Objective coordinator is the Head of Unit the choices are approved by the Director responsible. Otherwise choices are approved by the Head of Unit.

2.1.5 Select a pool of independent experts for the evaluation

Responsible for task: Theme coordinators.

Background for carrying out task: ICT PSP Work Programme. Section "Selection of independent experts for evaluations and reviews".

Procedure for carrying out task: The Work Programme foresees that the selection of actions will be based on open calls for proposals and independent peer review. The experts will be drawn from a list of experts that have responded to an open call. From the response to this call a database of experts has been drawn up. The call remains open for applications and the database is constantly updated.

Based on their best assessment of proposals expected to arrive - supported by information from the database of pre-notified proposals – each Theme coordinator in close cooperation with the Objective coordinators selects a pool of experts adequate in number and expertise to carry out the evaluation of proposals within the theme. This initial selection provides a sufficiently broad pool to ensure that the final choice will conform to requirements of competence and geographic and gender balance.

Approval of result: The Director for the theme or objective concerned approves the initial pool of experts; any experts added subsequently are also subject to his approval.

2.1.6 Select the final list of experts to be used in the evaluation

Responsible: Theme coordinators

Background for carrying out task: ICT PSP Work Programme. Submission and Evaluation Process section.

Procedure for carrying out task: When the list of actually received proposals and the availability of experts are known, the Theme coordinator in close cooperation with the Objective coordinators establishes the final list of experts to be invited for the evaluation and informs the Heads of Unit responsible. At this stage it may be necessary to invite additional experts with specific expertise which is needed to evaluate the proposals actually received but not covered by the pool of experts initially invited. The final list must respect the need to have

- A high level of expertise;
- An appropriate range of competencies.
- A reasonable gender balance[1];
- A reasonable distribution of geographical origins;
- Regular rotation of experts[2]

Each expert contracted for the evaluation subscribes to a Code of conduct and signs a Confidentiality and conflict of interest declaration.

Approval of result: The final list of experts to be invited for the evaluation of the theme is approved by the Head of Unit or in case the Theme coordinator is the Head of Unit by the responsible Director.

2.1.7 Assign received proposals to appropriate objectives for evaluation

Responsible: The Proposal Assignment Group (PAG).

Background for carrying out task: Established DG INFSO procedure to check and confirm proposal allocation.

Procedure for carrying out task: The PAG comprises one or more representatives of each of the objectives open in the current call, each nominated by his Theme coordinator, with a secretariat provided by the ICT Operations unit.

After the closure of each call but before the evaluation begins, the PAG confers on the assignment of each received proposal to an appropriate theme and objective, which will take the responsibility for managing the evaluation of that proposal and reporting the result to the proposer. Proposals are printed and delivered to

[1] The European Communities pursue an equal opportunities policy and aims in particular at achieving in the medium term at least 40 % of members of each sex in each expert group and committee (2000/407/EC: Commission Decision of 19 June 2000 relating to gender balance within the committees and expert groups established by it).

[2] In general, the Commission will ensure that at least a quarter of the experts used by a /theme/objective will be replaced each call for proposals.

DG INFSO at a fast rate, so the process has to be as efficient as possible. It must also be as error-free as possible, since the consequences of evaluating a proposal in an objective to which it was not addressed are serious.

Normally the proposal's own declared first choice of theme and objective as indicated on the proposal form A1 is taken. Where the proposer omits this information on his A1 form, or gives invalid or erroneous information, the proposal assignment is agreed by the group based on the centre of gravity of the proposal. This clear assignment of responsibility is essential to avoid double-evaluations or accidental omissions.

Approval of result: The Objective coordinator agrees the list of proposals assigned to his objective. In case of need, a system of later transfer from objective to objective by mutual agreement is employed.

2.1.8 Proposal eligibility check, pre-screening and data correction

Responsible: Theme/Objective coordinator.

Background for carrying out task: ICT PSP Work Programme. Submission and Evaluation Process section.

Procedure for carrying out task: When proposals are received from the PAG by the objective to which they are assigned, staff supporting the Theme/Objective coordinator carry out an eligibility check of the following points on each proposal:

- the proposal arrived before the call deadline via the EPSS, or on paper with a proper derogation
- the proposal is presented by an eligible consortium as required in the rules set out in the Work Programme[1]
- the proposal is complete with a Part A and a Part B

Failure on any of the criteria above eliminates the proposal from evaluation. In all other cases where a judgement is needed the proposal will continue to evaluation by the experts, who will also incorporate the question of scope (i.e. whether or not the proposal is within the scope of the Work Programme and the relevant objective) in their judgement of the proposal under criterion 1 Relevance.

For proposals arriving after the deadline the call coordinator will obtain details of the circumstances from the EPSS management and will consult if necessary with the DG INFSO Legal unit in order to make a recommendation on the eligibility of each proposal to the ICT Directors. The Directors decide based on this report the eligibility of the proposals concerned.

All eligible proposals are then read in detail (pre-screened) for three purposes, which are significant later in the process

- to identify the proposing organisations, so that experts can be assigned to evaluate it without risk of conflict of interest.
- to confirm the type of funding instrument and technical areas covered by the proposal, to assist with its assignment to the appropriate panel of evaluators. The Commission will not change the funding instrument selected by the proposer except in case of obvious submission error.
- to confirm or if necessary correct in the Commission database the proposal data if there are discrepancies (e.g., the financial data does not add up to the reported total, data entry errors on the A2 forms etc.). This is to ensure consistency in the statistics prepared by the Commission for the Member states; the proposals themselves as seen by the experts are not changed.

Approval of result: The ICT Directors approve the list of proposals which are judged to be ineligible for evaluation.

2.1.9 Assign evaluators to panels (where Objective Panels are used)

Responsible: Theme coordinator.

[1] Pilot Type A: At least six relevant national administrations or a legal entity designated to act on their behalf from six different EU Member States or associated countries; Pilot Type B: At least four independent legal entities from four different EU Member States or Associated Countries; Thematic Networks: At least seven independent legal entities from seven different EU Member States or Associated Countries.

Background for carrying out task: ICT PSP Work Programme. Submission and Evaluation Process section.

Procedure for carrying out task: The Theme coordinator, with the advice of his Objective coordinators divides his selected experts among his Objective Panels according to their known areas of expertise and to the number of proposals needed to be handled in each panel. The assignment is flexible according to circumstances - evaluators may be re-assigned according to need, and may "visit" panels in other objectives as necessary.

Approval of result: The Objective coordinator takes responsibility for the assignment of evaluators to his panel(s). The subsequent detailed assignment of these experts to the proposals within the panel is subject to a further level of approval (see below 'conflict of interest').

2.1.10 Conflict of interest

Responsible: Theme/Objective coordinators

Background for carrying out task: ICT PSP Work Programme. Submission and Evaluation Process section.

Procedure for carrying out task: An expert who is named as participant in a proposal and/or has a disqualifying conflict of interest of the following types:

- was involved in the preparation of the proposal,
- stands to benefit directly should the proposal be accepted
- has a close family relationship with any person representing an applicant organisation in the proposal
- is a director, trustee or partner of an applicant organisation
- is in any other situation that compromises his or her ability to evaluate the proposal impartially

shall not participate in any way in the evaluation of proposals in the panel dealing with the proposal he is involved with, nor in any panel competing for the same budget segment.

When justified by the requirement to appoint the best available experts and by the limited size of the pool of qualified experts, an expert employed by one of the applicant organisations may be assigned to the panel. Such an expert may however solely attend the panel meeting if he/she works in a different department/laboratory/institute from the one where the work is to be carried out, and if the constituent bodies operate with a high degree of autonomy. He must nevertheless withdraw from the panel meeting when a proposal for which he has a conflict of interest is discussed.

Such an expert will not read or take part in Consensus groups involving the proposal with which he has a conflict of interest.

Approval of result: The Theme/Objective coordinator takes responsibility for the distribution of evaluators to his panel(s) and reports any exceptions to the ICT Operations unit. The subsequent detailed assignment of these experts to the proposals within the panel is subject to a further level of approval (see below).

2.1.11 Assign evaluators to each proposal

Responsible: Theme/Objective coordinators.

Background for carrying out task: ICT PSP Work Programme. Submission and Evaluation Process section.

Procedure for carrying out task: Within each panel, the Theme/Objective coordinator assigns at least three experts to each proposal received by his panel. These experts will read that proposal in detail and comprise the Consensus group for it. The assignment is based on

- their known areas of expertise,
- the avoidance of potential conflicts of interest,
- the avoidance of national bias,
- variation in the composition of the Consensus groups[1]
- an even distribution of the workload

[1] i.e. fixed groups of experts always working together should normally be avoided if possible

Experts may be replaced in a Consensus group and re-assigned elsewhere at any time on the discovery of previously unknown conflicts of interest.

Normally the Consensus group consists only of evaluators from a single panel.

Proposal Recorders may be drawn from a small pool of experts specifically recruited for this task, with responsibility for completing proposal-reporting forms accurately reflecting the opinion of the Consensus group. Such experts are confined to these reporting duties and do not evaluate any proposal. Alternatively, one member of each Consensus group may be nominated by the coordinator as the Proposal rapporteur for that proposal; the role is distributed among all the experts on the panel on the principle of equal distribution of the workload.

Approval of result: The Theme/Objective coordinator proposes the assignment of experts to the proposals in his panel. The assignment is approved by the Head of Unit for the objective. This includes approval of any last-minute changes to evaluator assignment caused by sickness, conflicts of interest etc.

2.1.12 Prepare evaluators' dossiers

Responsible: Theme/Objective coordinators.

Background for carrying out task: Established DG INFSO procedure to support the evaluation process

Procedure for carrying out task: Using the data on the assignment of proposals to evaluators, support staff prepare for each expert in their panel a dossier containing one copy of each proposal to which he has been assigned. The dossier also contains an adequate number of reporting forms plus other supporting information such as a copy of the Work Programme etc.

Approval of result: The Objective coordinator manages the correct completion of the task.

2.1.13 Assign a Commission Moderator to each proposal

Responsible: Theme/Objective coordinator. *Background for carrying out task:* Established DG INFSO procedure.

Procedure for carrying out task: The Theme/Objective coordinator proposes a member of staff to act as "Commission Moderator" to each proposal from among his support staff, based on an equal distribution of the workload. The Moderator chairs the Consensus group discussion for that proposal (see below). In large and complex cases an Assistant Moderator can be appointed. Where a proposal is for a follow-up or continuation of an existing project, the project officer for the existing project will not be appointed as Moderator or Assistant moderator. Objective coordinators may also act as Moderators.

Approval of result: The Head of Unit for the objective approves the assignment of Moderators or Assistant Moderators to each proposal.
Where a Seconded National Expert (Expert National Détaché) is employed in the Moderating role he is mandated for the task by the Director-General (the Director-General may choose to delegate the mandate to a Director). He is not assigned to any Consensus group for a proposal involving his own organisation.

2.2 Execution

2.2.1 Brief the evaluators

Responsible: ICT Operations unit, ICT Directors and Theme/Objective coordinators.

Background for carrying out task: ICT PSP Work Programme. Submission and Evaluation Process section.

Procedure for carrying out task: Detailed instructions on the evaluation procedure are included as annex in the Guide for applicants. A "Welcome pack" containing these instructions and other key documents and briefing material is sent electronically to the experts prior to their arrival in Brussels.
Presentations are also made to evaluators in each theme/objective on arrival at the evaluation, covering:

- the evaluation procedure
- the objective and funding instrument(s) which they will be evaluating
- their rights and responsibilities as independent experts, and particularly, their confidentiality obligation

The briefing of the evaluators emphasises the principles for evaluation of proposals, that all proposals are treated equally on their own merit, that the evaluation concerns the proposal as presented and that it is evaluated only against the evaluation criteria set out in the Work Programme.

Approval of result: The Guidance notes and briefing materials are approved by ICT Directors, who may also participate in the briefing session.

2.2.2 Conduct individual readings (on-site)

Responsible: Objective coordinator and proposal moderators

Background for carrying out task: ICT PSP Work Programme. Submission and Evaluation Process section.

Procedure for carrying out task: Each evaluator of a proposal reads it in detail and makes an individual assessment of the proposal without discussion with others. He records his conclusions on an IER form, which he signs[1] and returns to the Commission Moderator for that proposal (or the Objective coordinator).

The reading sessions are at all times supervised by Commission staff to ensure there is no discussion or sharing of views on any proposal, and to ensure the confidentiality of the contents of the proposals.

Approval of result: The Commission Moderator checks that each form returned is complete and properly signed. The IER forms are input to the consensus group meeting.

2.2.3 Conduct individual readings (remote)

Responsible: Objective coordinator and proposal moderators

Background for carrying out task: ICT PSP Work Programme. Submission and Evaluation Process section.

Procedure for carrying out task: Individual readings are done remotely. A briefing pack containing instructions and other key documents is provided to the experts. Each evaluator of a proposal reads it in detail and makes an individual assessment of the proposal without discussion with others. He records his conclusions on an IER form, which he submits to the Commission electronically before the consensus meeting is scheduled or alternatively signs and returns (or brings) to the central evaluation address. If the individual form has been returned electronically the expert signs the form before the consensus meeting begins.

[1] This form includes the statement "I declare that, to the best of my knowledge, I have no direct or indirect conflict of interest in the evaluation of this proposal"

No proposal material is sent to an expert until he has completed and returned Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality declaration.

Approval of result: The objective coordinator checks that each IER form is returned in time and is complete and properly signed before the consensus meeting. The IER forms are input to the consensus meeting.

2.2.4 Conduct Consensus groups

Responsible: Commission Moderator.

Background for carrying out task: ICT PSP Work Programme. Submission and Evaluation Process section.

Procedure for carrying out task: Once all of the evaluators assigned to a proposal have completed their individual evaluation, they confer together under the chairmanship of the Commission Moderator to discuss and agree scores (for each award criterion – together with accompanying comments) and an overall score for the proposal.

Their discussion of the proposal continues until a consensus is achieved (i.e. a conclusion with which all the experts agree) regarding the comments and the accompanying scores for each award criterion. In the event of persistent disagreement, the Commission Moderator may – but is not obliged to - bring in additional evaluators to examine the proposal. In the case that it is impossible to reach a consensus within a reasonable time, the Consensus report sets out the majority view of the independent experts but also records any dissenting views. In the event of the discovery of a concealed conflict of interest, the meeting may be suspended and the procedure in section 2.2.12 applied.

The Commission Moderator does not evaluate the proposal, his role is to ensure that the discussion is properly and fairly conducted, that all issues are discussed, that all voices are heard and that the conclusions are accurately recorded on the Consensus meeting forms by the Proposal rapporteur/recorder.

The Objective coordinator or the Theme coordinator should periodically attend groups to ensure proper procedures are followed. The independent observers to the evaluation process may also attend groups at will.

Approval of result: The forms recording the result of the discussion are signed for approval by the Proposal rapporteur/recorder[1] and the Commission Moderator. The conclusions of the group are subject to further review by the panel as a whole (see below).

2.2.5 Resubmitted proposals

Responsible: Commission Moderator.

Background for carrying out task: ICT PSP Work Programme. Submission and Evaluation Process section

Procedure for carrying out task: In the case of proposals that have been submitted previously to the Commission in ICT PSP or eContentplus, the moderator may, after the conclusion of the Consensus group, ask the experts to review the previous Evaluation Summary Report. If necessary, the experts will be required to provide a clear justification for their scores and comments if these differ markedly from those awarded to the earlier proposal (a comparison with the text of the previously submitted version of the proposal may also be carried out if necessary). These additional remarks may be included by the Panel in the final ESR.

Approval of result: The Proposal minute form recording the result of any additional discussion by the experts is signed for approval by the Proposal rapporteur/recorder or the Commission Moderator. The additional remarks if any are subject to review by the panel as a whole (see below).

2.2.6 Panel discussion – review of Consensus group results

Responsible: Objective coordinator, Theme coordinator or Head of Unit.

[1] Optionally, the whole Consensus group may sign along with the rapporteur

Background for carrying out task: ICT PSP Work Programme. Submission and Evaluation Process section.

Procedure for carrying out task: When the last Consensus group for the proposals assigned to a particular panel (Theme or Objective Panel as appropriate – see section 2.1.4) is completed, that panel confers to review the results of the consensus meetings for each proposal and to prepare the Evaluation Summary Reports (ESR). The panel (i.e. the experts at the panel meeting) may consist of all the evaluators that have evaluated proposals in the panel area or a subset of them. The meeting is normally chaired by the Theme/Objective coordinator or may be chaired by the Head of Unit. As a Commission official he does not evaluate any proposal, but assures that the discussion is properly and fairly conducted, that all voices are heard and that the conclusions are accurately recorded on the ESRs. He is supported by an independent expert in the role of Panel recorder.

The panel comes to an agreed conclusion on each proposal. This is recorded as the Evaluation Summary Report for that proposal. Thus the conclusion for each proposal is based on the collective wisdom of the whole panel, and consistency of the scoring is assured. If appropriate, the panel can agree to new scores or comments that differ from the scores or comments given in the Consensus Report.

In the special case where the Consensus group failed to reach a consensus, the panel as a whole now reaches an agreed conclusion, which can be communicated to the proposer without contradictory majority/minority views. Another task for the panel discussion is to review any suggestions for reductions in effort suggested in the consensus reports for the proposals that have passed all thresholds. Such recommendations are set out in the ESR.

Any expert who had a conflict of interest with a proposal in the panel (and therefore did not take part in the Consensus group) will also leave the room when that proposal is discussed in the panel.

The scoring on the ESR now agreed in the panel is final.

Approval of result: The Panel report, which includes all the ESRs, is signed by the chair of the panel meeting and at least three of the independent experts, normally including the Panel recorder.

2.2.7 Prioritise proposals (Theme or Objective Panel)

Responsible: The evaluating panel

Background for carrying out task: ICT PSP Work Programme. Submission and Evaluation Process section.

Procedure for carrying out task: All above-threshold proposals are listed in order of total score. In case of proposals with equal total scores, their scores for the award criteria will be used to differentiate them by taking account of the scores in criteria A1, A2 and A3 in descending order or priority, i.e. if the scores for criterion A1 are the same, the scores for criterion A2 are taken into account and if the scores are still equal the scores of criterion A3 decides the priority order. Where proposals on the list achieve the same score on all three award criteria A1, A2 and A3 the experts will recommend a priority order between them.

The panel will also detect work-overlaps which may exist among the above-threshold proposals, and will give recommendations concerning such cases.

The outcome of the panel's deliberations is a list of proposals in priority order. This ordered list therefore governs the selection of proposals to be funded.

As part of their written report the experts provide any necessary supplementary information on these proposals to support the later selection decision e.g.:

- Suggestions of proposals to work together in a cluster or to be negotiated together as a merged project.
- Proposals for reduction in efforts – if relevant.
- Proposals requiring special attention due to the importance of ethical issues raised

Other issues of strategic importance, coverage of the Work Programme and the theme, political or industrial relevance, SME participation, third country participation etc. as relevant.

These supplementary remarks do not change the priority order of the proposals, but give input to the Implementation plan and negotiation of grant agreements by the Commission services.

Approval of result: The Panel report, which includes the list or lists of proposals in priority order, is signed by the Objective coordinator and at least three of the experts normally including the Panel recorder.

2.2.8 Integration Panel (optional procedure)

Responsible: The Theme coordinators and support staff

Background for carrying out task: ICT PSP Work Programme. Submission and Evaluation Process section.

Procedure for carrying out task: Where panels were organised on the basis of individual objectives, after the completion of the panel reports for each objective the Theme coordinator may optionally convene a meeting of all or a subset of the evaluators that evaluated the objectives in the theme. The task of the Integration Panel will involve the detection of work-overlaps between prioritised proposals and if feasible the establishment of a prioritised list of proposals in the theme. It will not involve any change in the scores awarded to the proposals by the panel in their earlier discussion.

The result of the work of the Integration Panel is a list of proposals in the theme in prioritised order based on the scores of the proposals and the rules defined for the objectives in the Work Programme. The report must clearly set out the reasons for the prioritisation.

Approval of result: The optional Integration Panel report, which includes the list or lists of proposals in priority order, is signed by the Theme coordinator and at least three of the experts normally including the Panel recorder.

2.2.9 Prepare Evaluation Reports

Responsible: The Theme coordinators and support staff

Background for carrying out task: ICT PSP Work Programme. Submission and Evaluation Process section.

Procedure for carrying out task: Where Objective Panels were used, the Theme coordinator with the help of support staff generates a Theme evaluation report on a predetermined format, containing lists of proposals in prioritised order by objective and summary extracts from the Objective Panel reports concerned.

If the optional Integration Panel procedure was used, the report of the Integration Panel replaces this Theme Evaluation report

Where a single Theme Panel was used, their final panel report replaces this Theme Evaluation report

Approval of result: The Theme evaluation report is signed by the Theme coordinator and counter signed by the Director.

2.2.10 Finalise Evaluation Summary Reports (ESRs)

Responsible: Theme/Objective coordinator.

Background for carrying out task: ICT PSP Work Programme. Submission and Evaluation Process section.

Procedure for carrying out task: The ESR of every evaluated proposal, showing scores and comments on all criteria, is reviewed by the Theme/Objective coordinator and his support staff. The contents of the ESR are subject to quality control by the Objective coordinator and the Panel recorder. The quality control ensures that the comments recorded give sufficient and clear reasons for the scores and in the case of proposals with high scores, any recommendations for modifications to the proposal are included. Proposal scores are not changed.

Approval of result: Individual ESRs are not signed. The Panel report, which includes the ESRs, is signed by the Objective coordinator and at least three of the experts, normally including the Panel recorder.

2.2.11 Prepare consolidated Evaluation report and Statistical annex

Responsible: ICT Operations units, ICT Directors.

Background for carrying out task: ICT PSP Work Programme. Submission and Evaluation Process section.

Procedure for carrying out task: ICT Operations unit quality controls the various panel reports, drafts an introduction with overall comments on the evaluation and adds overall call statistics. After approval by the ICT Directors the final Evaluation report is submitted for information to the Director General, the Deputy Directors General, the ICT PSP Programme Committee, and the Commissioner.

Approval of result: ICT Directors.

2.2.12 Discovered conflicts of interest

Responsible: Theme/Objective coordinators

Background for carrying out task: : ICT PSP Work Programme. Submission and Evaluation Process section

Procedure for carrying out task: Disqualifying or potential conflict of interest, known before the commencement of the evaluation, are treated as described in Section 2.1.10 above. It may be however that a conflict of interest is discovered at some later stage during the evaluation procedure.

An expert[1] may declare to Commission staff a discovered conflict of interest at the individual reading stage. In this case he will be removed as reader of that particular proposal (normally by exchange of proposals with another reader) and subsequently the rules described in Section 2.1 will apply; or alternatively he will be asked to leave the evaluation.

If at any later point in the evaluation suspicion is aroused or brought to the attention of a staff member of the Commission that an expert has not behaved impartially, the situation must be reported immediately to the theme or objective co-ordinator, who will bring it to the attention of his Head of Unit. If the Head of Unit considers the suspicion is well-founded, he immediately convenes an *ad hoc* committee comprising the theme or objective coordinator, the Head of Unit for the objective(s) concerned, the call coordinator and the Head of Unit of ICT Operations. The committee will examine the outcomes of all of the Consensus groups in which the expert has participated.

The committee may recommend that one or more of the Consensus reports (or ESRs, if this stage has been reached) be declared null and void, and that new readings and consensus meetings are arranged using new experts to the greatest extent possible.

If the panel meeting for the proposal(s) concerned has not yet been held, the new consensus report is discussed in the panel meeting and converted to an ESR and ranked in the panel meeting..
If the panel members are not any longer available the new consensus report(s) is directly converted to an ESR(s) and if the proposal(s) is above threshold, it is placed in the priority list by Commission staff by the application of the tie-breaking rules or considerations applied by the experts in the original panel meeting as described in the panel report. The text(s) and table(s) of the panel report(s) is updated as needed with regard to the proposal(s) that have been re-evaluated. A note to the file records the incident and the decisions made by the Head of Unit or the ad hoc committee. The note is approved by the director concerned. This note is filed with the evaluation report.

[1] The expert may be an evaluating expert or a specifically recruited rapporteur.

Approval of result: The Objective coordinator handles declared conflicts of interest at the individual reading stage. All other cases are handled by the *ad hoc* Committee whose recommendations are approved by the Director concerned.

2.2.13 Confidentiality of information and breaches thereof

Responsible: Objective coordinators

Background for carrying out task: FP7 Rules for submission of proposals, and the related evaluation, selection and award procedures Section 3.3

Procedure for carrying out task: The Appointment letter signed by each expert contains a confidentiality undertaking; the significance of which is also specifically referred to during the evaluator briefing. Consequently, any expert who reveals to third parties, including other experts outside the panel, information concerning the contents of proposals, the results of the evaluation or the identities or opinions of his fellow evaluators is in breach of contract.

When a leak is suspected or detected, the objective coordinator informs his Head of Unit and the call coordinator. If the evaluations are ongoing, the expert concerned shall be asked to explain the circumstances. If, in the judgement of the Head of Unit, the expert concerned has indeed deliberately breached the code of conduct, that expert will cease work. The appointment is then formally terminated by registered mail.

If the Head of Unit and call coordinator consider that the leak might jeopardise the evaluation results, any evaluation reports already produced by the expert should be discarded, and another expert asked to perform the work. The call coordinator should report the incident to the ICT Directors, with a description of the measures already taken, and possibly with a recommendation for follow-up. This could include removal of the experts' name from EMM for a time-limited period, or indefinitely. The ICT Directors report the incident and recommended actions to the Director General.

The measures taken will be commensurate with the gravity of the breach of confidentiality; the leakage of an evaluation result to a proposer is merely a premature disclosure of information which he will be given later anyway, the leaking of proposal information not only embarrasses the Commission services which are responsible for the security of proposals but may lead to legal action taking against the Commission for covering any damage incurred and, , the leakage of the names and opinions of fellow-evaluators places them at risk of harassment or reprisal.

The fact that an appointment letter was terminated prematurely will be recorded in EMM. When selecting experts, Objective coordinators should take note of any such flag relating to a previous appointment and investigate the situation before finally selecting the expert (The fact that an appointment had been terminated prematurely is not necessarily a sign of wrongdoing. For example, an expert may finish work early due to a lower than expected volume of proposals; or hitherto unknown conflicts of interest may come to light only after appointment).

Approval of result: The ICT Directors agree on the measure taken in each case and report the recommended actions to the Director General.

2.2.14 Prepare Evaluation information for the National Contact Points (NCPs)

Responsible: ICT Operations units.

Background for carrying out task: Guiding principles for establishing NCPs for the ICT PSP Programme.

Procedure for carrying out task: Shortly after the information on the evaluation has been distributed to the ICT PSP Programme committee the ICT Operations unit releases the Evaluation report and its statistical annex to the NCPs. This information material is distributed to the NCPs under a confidentiality agreement.

Approval of result: ICT Operations Unit Head(s).

2.2.15 Distribution of Evaluation Summary Reports (ESR) to proposers

Responsible: Units responsible for the evaluation of proposals in the call.

Background for carrying out task: ICT PSP Work Programme. Submission and Evaluation Process section.

Procedure for carrying out task: Shortly after the Evaluation report has been sent to the ICT PSP Programme Committee and the Commissioner, each unit responsible for proposals evaluated sends promptly by email a copy of the ESR – without identification of the evaluators involved - to the proposal coordinator (the individual named as the contact person for partner no. 1 in the proposal) to inform him of the result of the evaluation of his proposal.

Where a proposal was found to be ineligible and was therefore not seen by the independent experts, an ESR is prepared by the Commission services without scores and comments except for an overall comment identifying the proposal as ineligible and giving the reason or reasons why.

Subsequently each unit sends a hard copy of each ESR - without identification of the evaluators involved – by registered mail to the proposal coordinator, with a covering letter signed by the Head of Unit or Director involved. This letter provides an address to be used if the coordinator has any enquiries on the evaluation of the proposal.

Approval of result: The Head of Unit or Director for the units concerned signs the cover letters for the ESRs.

3 Proposal selection and implementation

3.1 Overview of the selection process

The selection process defines the final distribution of the indicative budget between the themes and objectives open in the calls and also describes the procedure for the selection of proposals for funding based on the pre-allocation of funds per theme and/or objective and/or per funding instrument defined in the Work Programme.

3.1.1 Establishment of a "Recommended funding" figure per proposal

Responsible: Head of units, Theme/Objective coordinators, ICT Directors

Background for carrying out task: ICT PSP Work Programme. Submission and Evaluation Process section.

Procedure for carrying out task: The Theme/Objective coordinator together with the staff of the unit responsible for the objective analyses the financial data of each above-threshold proposals and proposes a recommended EC contribution for each, taking into account any suggestions for reductions proposed by the evaluators, the merging of proposals or other justified reasons for budget adjustments arising from the analysis of the financial data in the proposal. Where a proposal is eventually selected for implementation the reasons for significant budget reductions or cuts in duration, if any, are set out in the Implementation Plan and are specified in the letter inviting the proposers for negotiation.

The financial analysis is always based on an analysis of each proposal individually; budget cuts will not be made for the purpose of supporting additional projects that would not otherwise be funded.

Approval of result: The resulting "Recommended funding" for each proposal above threshold is approved by the Director responsible.

3.1.2 Preparation of an initial implementation plan by the objective

Responsible: Heads of unit, Theme/Objective coordinators, ICT Directors

Background for carrying out task: ICT PSP Work Programme. Submission and Evaluation Process section.

Procedure for carrying out task: The Head of Unit for each of the objectives prepares with his Theme/Objective coordinator and support staff an initial implementation plan for each objective. The initial implementation plan is firmly based on the quality of the proposals as defined by their score as defined by the experts in the panel reports. Only in cases where proposals address topics (areas of work) not covered by any of the other selected proposals, or cover the same topics with some indicated as a backup to others by the experts, or are in contradiction to EU policies, or are overlapping with work already being funded can they be moved in the priority order. In such cases, there must be a clear explanation of the rationale behind the change to the priority order set out in the initial Implementation plan.

The initial implementation plan is drawn up according to the award and selection criteria for each objective as described in the Work Programme. The initial implementation plan shall also describe the overall coverage of the objective by the portfolio of the projects proposed for funding.
If applicable a reserve list is identified.

Approval of result: The resulting initial implementation plan for each objective is approved by the Director responsible for the objective.

3.1.3 Preparation of an initial implementation plan by theme

Responsible: Heads of unit, Theme coordinators, ICT Directors

Background for carrying out task: ICT PSP Work Programme. Section Submission and Evaluation Process and section Indicative Budget.

Procedure for carrying out task: The Head of Unit for each of the themes prepares with his Theme coordinator and support staff an initial implementation plan for each theme. The initial implementation plan is firmly based on the initial implementation plans of the objectives in the theme.

The initial implementation plan for each theme is drawn up based on the following principles:

1. Proposals for Pilot As have priority over proposals for other funding instruments. Proposals are selected in order of priority and up to and including the minimum number of proposals defined for selection in each objective in the Work Programme. If budget for the theme is still available after the selection of the pilot A proposals and the objective is open for Thematic Network or pilot B proposals:
2. Proposals for Thematic Networks are selected in order of priority and up to and including the minimum number of proposals defined for selection in each objective in the Work Programme. If budget for the theme is still available after the selection of the pilot A and Thematic Network proposals and the objective is open for Pilot B proposals:
3. Proposals for Pilot Bs and Best Practice Networks are selected in order of priority and up to and including the minimum number of proposals defined for selection in each objective in the Work Programme, until the budget for the theme is exhausted or until the last proposal above the evaluation thresholds has been selected.

If any budget for the theme remains unused, the remaining budget is distributed to the other themes pro-rata to the indicative budget breakdown of the themes.

In themes with several objectives open for the same funding instrument, the proposals are selected first in order of total score until the minimum number of proposals defined for selection in the objective is selected or until the indicative budget for the theme is consumed.

The theme report describes the selection process and indicates clear prioritised lists for each of the objectives. Finally, a Reserve list is drawn up for each objective and theme, in case negotiation fails with one or more of the selected proposals. The initial implementation plan for the theme shall also describe the overall coverage of the theme by the portfolio of the projects proposed for funding.

Approval of result: The resulting initial implementation plan for each theme is approved by the Director responsible for the theme.

3.1.4 Draft Implementation Plan

Responsible: The INFSO Director General, Deputy Directors General together with the ICT Directors

Background for carrying out task: ICT PSP Work Programme. Section Submission and Evaluation Process section and section Indicative Budget.

Procedure for carrying out task: The purpose of this stage is to integrate the initial implementation plans prepared by each theme into a single draft Implementation Plan for the call ensuring the best possible coverage of the actions involved.

The distribution of the indicative pre-allocated budget between the themes given in the Work Programme is summarised in an annex to this document.

In case budget remains available in a specific theme, it will be distributed to the other themes pro-rata to the indicative budget breakdown of the themes. Any remaining unused amount is then used to fund remaining above-threshold proposals anywhere within the call, in priority order starting from the highest scoring.

At this stage the resulting selection is checked for coverage within each theme and its objectives, and if there are obvious holes in the selection and at the same time other subtopics that are more than adequately covered, a correction may be made by deselecting the lowest ranked proposal in the well-covered subtopic and selecting the highest scoring proposal in the uncovered subtopic. Any such deviations from the ranking order by score will be noted and justified in the Implementation plan.

After having allocated the total indicative budget for the call, the ICT Directors review the portfolio of projects selected, and decide whether there are any objectives which would merit selection of additional proposals above those covered by the indicative budget. If this is the case these proposals are added to the Implementation plan. The maximum amount that can be added to the indicative call budget is 10% of the indicative budget up to the limit of the total budget available for the implementation of the ICT PSP Programme.

Finally, if applicable - a Reserve list is drawn up for each objective and theme, in case negotiation fails with one or more of the selected proposals.
Approval of result: The draft Implementation plan is approved by the Director General and then submitted to the ICT PSP Programme committee and to the Commissioner for information.

3.1.5 Ethical issues screening

Responsible: Theme coordinators, ICT Directors,

Background for carrying out task: ICT PSP Work Programme. Submission and Evaluation Process section.

Procedure for carrying out task:
Evaluators (to be selected by the theme/objectives coordinators) with an ethics background or ethics expertise in the field under consideration will do an ethical issues screening of all the selected and reserve list proposals included in the Implementation Plan. For each of these proposals the experts will complete an Ethical Issues Report (EIR) which identifies any possible ethical risks and provides recommendations on how to address them during negotiation by including safeguards in the 'Description of Work'. The aim is to ensure that there is a minimisation of the risk of funding ICT PSP proposals that may contravene fundamental ethical principles.

The negotiating project officer will ensure that any specific safeguards proposed/ recommended in the EIR will be included in the Description of Work. In cases where there are particularly sensitive or difficult ethical issues it may be prudent to consult experts with an ethics background/expertise during the negotiation of the grant agreement contract.

Approval of result: The Director concerned ensures that the proposed safeguards are addressed satisfactorily during project negotiation and that the 'Description of Work' includes them.

3.1.6 Invitation to negotiations

Responsible: Units responsible for the proposals in the call.

Background for carrying out task: ICT PSP Work Programme. Submission and Evaluation Process section.

Procedure for carrying out task: When the Director General has approved the draft Implementation plan and it has been communicated to the Commissioner and the ICT PSP Programme Committee, the units responsible invite the proposals on the short list for negotiations of a grant agreement for their proposal. This discussion will concentrate on informing the consortia on the formal requirements for administrative data and the technical changes needed for establishing a grant agreement Proposers are informed that an eventual agreement is conditional on the completion of a final Implementation plan approved by the Commission (and in some cases, depending on the results of the ethical screening, on the satisfactory inclusion of safeguards in the Description of Work to ensure that proposals (for which their EIR raises ethical issues) do not contravene fundamental ethical principles.

Approval of result: The Head of Unit for the units concerned signs the invitation letters.

3.1.7 ICT PSP Programme committee information

Responsible: ICT Directors

Background for carrying out task: DG INFSO established practice

Procedure for carrying out task: The Commission services present the evaluation results and the draft implementation plan to the ICT PSP Programme committee. The presentation highlights the coverage of the Work Programme achieved by the selected project proposals, participation of important groups (industry, SMEs, public administrations etc). The evaluation results and the draft Implementation Plan are presented to the Committee together with the timetable for selection of proposals. The Committee members provide their comments on the evaluation report and draft Implementation plan in view of their national strategies. In addition the committee members have the possibility to ask for clarification from the Objective coordinators on the evaluation results for specific proposals, in a series of dedicated meetings ("bilaterals").

Approval of result: The presentations and the discussions are set out in minutes.

3.1.8 Inter service consultation

Responsible: ICT Directors supported by ICT Operations unit

Background for carrying out task: DG INFSO established practice

Procedure for carrying out task: The draft Implementation plan is circulated to the relevant services for formal consultation to ensure that the other relevant services are informed of the projects to be selected and to avoid double funding. If needed a meeting is held.

Approval of result: The output of the inter service consultation is incorporated in the final Implementation plan.

3.2 Finalisation of the Implementation Plan

Responsible: The INFSO Director General, Deputy Directors General together with the ICT Directors

Background for carrying out task: ICT PSP Work Programme. Submission and Evaluation Process section.

Procedure for carrying out task: Following the presentation of the draft implementation plan to the Programme Committee and the consultation with other relevant services , the ICT Directors review the draft Implementation plan and decide if there is a need to deselect any of the proposals proposed for selection in the draft Implementation plan, or to adjust the proposed funding for any of the selected proposals, or if there

is a need to select any further proposals for funding by adding extra budget to the call. If needed the draft Implementation plan is amended. The final Implementation plan decides the final budget allocated to the call. After the approval of the final Implementation plan no extra budget can be allocated to the call, except for small adjustments to allow negotiation of proposals from the reserve list in case negotiations with proposals selected for funding fails.

Approval of result: The final Implementation plan is approved by the Director General and then submitted to the ICT PSP Programme Committee and Commissioner for information.

3.2.1 Information to the NCPs on the implementation

Responsible: ICT Operations unit

Background for carrying out task: Guiding principles for establishing NCPs for the ICT PSP Programme.

Procedure for carrying out task: When the Final Implementation Plan has been approved, the ICT Operations unit prepares three lists of proposals, one of proposals selected for funding, one list of proposals on the reserve list and one list of proposals neither selected for funding nor on the reserve list and distributes these lists to the NCPs on a confidential basis for their information.

Approval of result: Head of the ICT Operations unit.

3.2.2 Selection and rejection decision

Responsible: ICT Operations unit.

Background for carrying out task: ICT PSP Work Programme. Submission and Evaluation Process section.

Procedure for carrying out task: On the basis of the approved Implementation Plan, a selection and rejection decision is prepared that sets out the list of proposals selected for funding, the list of proposals on the reserve list and the list of proposals that are neither selected for funding nor on the reserve list and therefore have to be rejected, and states the reasons for that choice. The decision is presented to the Director-General of DG INFSO for decision.

Approval of result: The Director-General signs the decision as Authorising Officer of the Commission.

3.2.3 Rejection decision (initial round)

Responsible: ICT Operations unit.

Background for carrying out task: ICT PSP Work Programme. Submission and Evaluation Process section.

Procedure for carrying out task: The proposals from the call that are neither on the short list nor reserve list for negotiation are included in a rejection decision, which is presented to the Director General of DG INFSO for decision.

Approval of result: The Director-General signs the decision as Authorising Officer of the Commission.

3.2.4 Information of rejected proposals (initial round)

Responsible: Units responsible for the evaluation of the proposals in the call.

Background for carrying out task: ICT PSP Work Programme. Submission and Evaluation Process section.

Procedure for carrying out task: As soon as the rejection decision has been taken by the Commission, the units concerned are informed by the ICT Operations unit. They prepare letters, to be signed by the Director responsible, informing the unsuccessful consortia of the rejection decision.

Approval of result: The letters are signed by the Director with the respective budgetary delegation.

3.2.5 Selection of proposals from the reserve list

Responsible: ICT Directors

Background for carrying out task: ICT PSP Work Programme. Submission and Evaluation Process section.

Procedure for carrying out task: In case negotiation with a proposal on the short list fails the unit concerned immediately informs the Director responsible. In case there is a proposal on the reserve list for the objective/theme concerned that can be negotiated within the budget which has become available, the Director instructs the unit responsible to invite this proposal for negotiations. In case there are no proposals on the reserve list for that objective/theme, the Director informs the ICT Operations unit on the failure and on the budget that has become available.

If budget is saved in negotiations with a proposal on the short list the unit concerned informs the Director, who in turn informs ICT Operations unit on the budget saving.

When negotiations have progressed sufficiently to be able to establish the total savings of budget in the negotiations, the ICT Operations unit informs the ICT Directors on the budget savings and presents a list of proposals with which negotiations could start within the available budget envelope. The ICT Directors then decide which proposals shall be invited for negotiations. In this decision a very limited adjustment of the budget envelope for the call may take place to allow for negotiation of a proposal on the reserve list to be able to fully spend the budget for the call. An amendment to the Implementation Plan is drafted by the ICT Operations unit and submitted through the ICT Directors for approval and signature of the Director General.

Approval of result: The Director with the respective budgetary delegation approves the invitation for negotiation of proposals from the reserve lists within his theme/objectives. The Director General approves the invitation for negotiations of proposals funded from any remaining savings once this is done.

3.2.6 Rejection decision (final round)

Responsible: ICT Operations unit.

Background for carrying out task: ICT PSP Work Programme. Submission and Evaluation Process section.

Procedure for carrying out task: When the budget for the call has been consumed by selected proposals, any proposals from the reserve list that has not been negotiated, or any proposals which were on the short list but failed in negotiation, are included in a rejection decision, which is presented to the Director General of DG INFSO for decision.

Approval of result: The Director-General signs the decision as Authorising Officer of the Commission.

3.2.7 Information on rejected proposals (final round)

Responsible: Units responsible for the evaluation of the proposals in the call.

Background for carrying out task: ICT PSP Work Programme. Submission and Evaluation Process section.

Procedure for carrying out task: As soon as the rejection decision has been taken by the Commission, the units concerned are informed by ICT Operations unit. They prepare letters, to be signed by the Director responsible, informing the unsuccessful consortia of the rejection decision.

Approval of result: The letters are signed by the Director with the respective budgetary delegation.

Annex 1: Indicative timetable for call

Publication of draft Work Programme 2010	*December 2009*
Call for Proposals launched	*21st January 2010*
Deadline for submission of proposals	*1st June 2010; 17h00 CET*
Evaluation, selection	*June - early July 2010*
Letters to applicants	*mid-July 2010*
Negotiations with successful proposers commence	*September 2010*
Signature of first grant agreements	*November 2010*

Annex 2: Budget allocation to themes ICT PSP Call 4

Themes and objectives	Funding Instrument	Budget and Intended number of proposals to be funded
Theme 1: ICT for a low carbon economy and smart mobility		***19 M€***
1.1: ICT for energy and water efficiency in social housing	*Pilot B*	Several pilots EU funding up to 9,5 M€
1.2: ICT for water efficiency	*Thematic network*	1 TN EU funding up to 0,5 M€
1.3: Energy efficient co-operative transport management systems	*Pilot B*	up to 3 pilots EU funding up to 4 M€
1.4: Support to eCall implementation based on 112	*Pilot A*	1 pilot EU funding up to 5 M€
Theme 2 : Digital Libraries		***30 M€***
2.1: Coordinating Europeana	*Thematic network*	1 TN EU funding up to 9 M€
2.2: Enhancing/Aggregating content in Europeana	*Best Practice Network*	Several BPNs
2.3: Digitising content for Europeana	*Pilot B*	Several pilots
2.4: Access to European Rights Information / Registry of Orphan Works	*Best Practice Network*	1 BPN
2.5: Open access to scientific information	*Pilot B*	Several pilots
2.6: Statistics on cultural heritage digitisation activities	*Thematic network*	1 TN
Theme 3 : ICT for health and inclusion		***14 M€***
3.1: Enlargement of the Pilot "epSOS" on eHealth Interoperability for patient's summaries and ePrescription	*Pilot A*	1 pilot EU funding up to 7 M€
3.2a: Scaling up of eHealth services	*Thematic Network*	1 TN EU funding up to 0.5 M€
3.2b: Supporting the EU eHealth governance initiative	*Thematic Network*	1 TN EU funding up to 0.5 M€
3.3: e-Accessibility of Public Digital Terminals	*Pilot B*	One large or several pilots
3.4: Assistive technologies and accessibility portal	*Thematic network*	One large or several TN EU funding up to 1 M€
Theme 4: Open innovation for future internet-enabled services in "smart" cities		***15 M€***
4.1: Open Innovation for future Internet-enabled Services in "smart" Cities	*Pilot B*	Several pilots
Theme 5: ICT for improved public services for citizens and businesses		***13 M€***
5.1: Enlargement of the Pilot "SPOCS" preparing the implementation of the Services Directive	*Pilot A*	1 pilot EU funding up to 5 M€
5.2: eJustice services	*Pilot A*	1 pilot EU funding up to 7 M€
5.3: Universal ID	*Thematic network*	1 TN EU funding up to 1 M€
Theme 6: Multilingual Web		***16 M€***
6.1: Open linguistic infrastructure	*Pilot B*	Several pilots
6.2: Multilingual online services	*Pilot B*	Several pilots

Annex 3: Summary of roles in Evaluations

Function	Role
Committee	Gives opinion on Work Programme Gives comments on the evaluation result
Commission	Approves Work Programme by Commission decision
Director General	Appoint Observers for evaluation Approves terms of reference for observation of the evaluation Approves Draft Implementation Plan Approves Final Implementation Plan Takes rejection decisions
Deputy Directors General	Chairs Preparation of Work Programme Chairs Preparation of Evaluation planning Chairs decision on evaluation procedures Chairs preparation of Implementation Plans
ICT Directors	Prepares work programme in their areas Approves list of objective coordinators Approves list of experts who are candidates to be invited to evaluation Decides on eligibility issues Chairs panel meetings (optional) Approves evaluation report in their domain Prepares Implementation plan in their domain Approves negotiation results Takes selection decisions
ICT Heads of Units	Prepare staff allocation during evaluation Propose list of evaluators Approve final list of evaluators to be invited Approves final allocation of evaluators to proposals Can act as Theme/Objective coordinator Appoint Theme/Objective coordinator Chair panel meetings (optional) Appoint staff for negotiation Approves negotiation results
Senior staff	Act as Theme coordinator Act as Objective coordinator Act as consensus group moderator Act as negotiator
Other staff	Support the evaluation