



FCH2 JU under Horizon2020 rules

Proposal Submission and Evaluation



- **H2020-JTI-FCH-2016-1 call conditions**
- **Proposal submission and evaluation**
- **Closing Recommendations / 'lessons learned'**

H2020-JTI-FCH-2016-1 call conditions

Call Conditions in the AWP2016

(page 77)

Call identifier: H2020-JTI-FCH-2016-1

Total budget* : EUR 117.5 million

Publication date: 19 January 2016

Deadline: 03 May 2016

Proposals are required to provide a **draft plan for dissemination and exploitation of project' results !**

	No. of topics	Type of action**	Indicative budget (mill EUR)
TRANSPORT PILLAR	8	RIA	20
	2	IA	37
ENERGY PILLAR	6	RIA	16
	5	IA	40
OVERARCHING PROJECTS	1	RIA	2
CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES	2	CSA	2.5
Total call			117.5

6 different ranking lists !

**The final budgets awarded to actions implemented through the Call for Proposals may vary by up to 20% of the total value of the indicative budget for each action.*

***RIA= Research and Innovation Action; IA= Innovation Action; CSA= Coordination and Support Action*

Call management rules (chapter 3.3 of AWP2016)

There is no derogation from the H2020 Rules for Participation !

General Annexes to H2020 work-programmes apply *

- *List of countries eligible and rules for their funding (Annex A)*
- *Admissibility and eligibility conditions (Annexes B and C)*
- *Types of action and funding rates (Annex D)*
- *Technology readiness level (TRL) (Annex G)*
- *Evaluation rules (Annex H)*

Exceptions* for this call:

Eligibility: Additional condition for participation in some topics:

at least one constituent entity of the Industry Grouping or Research Grouping should be among the participants

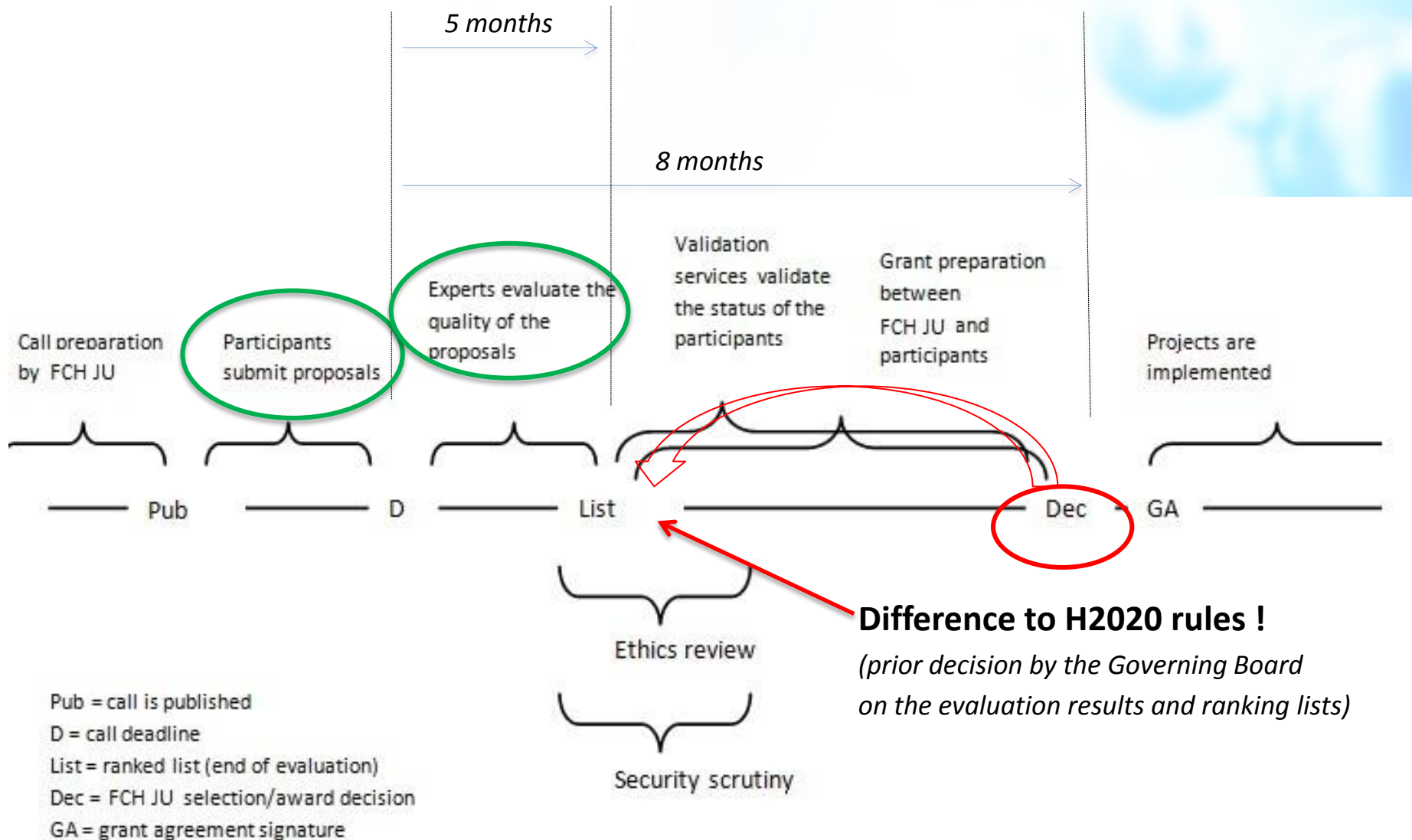
Eligibility: Additional eligibility criteria on **max required contribution** for Topics 1.9 and 1.10

Additional requirements on **Manufacturing Readiness Levels (MRL)** for some topics focused on manufacturing processes (see definitions <http://www.nrel.gov/hydrogen/pdfs/45406.pdf>) - in addition to the TRL requirements !

* Exceptions mentioned by the AWP2016

Proposal submission

Overview of selection process



Participant Portal

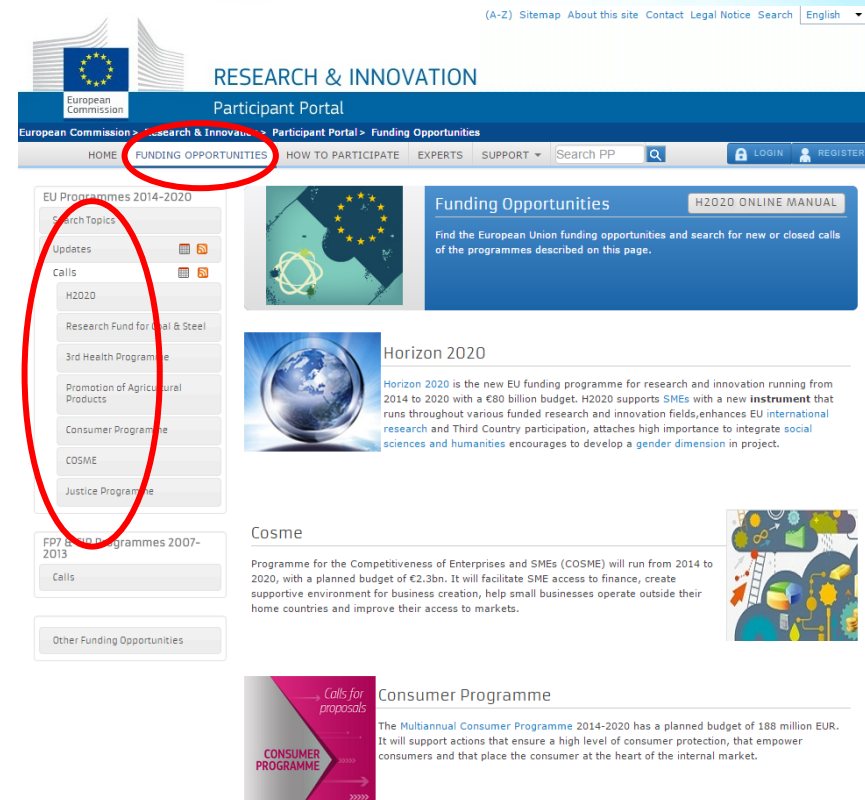
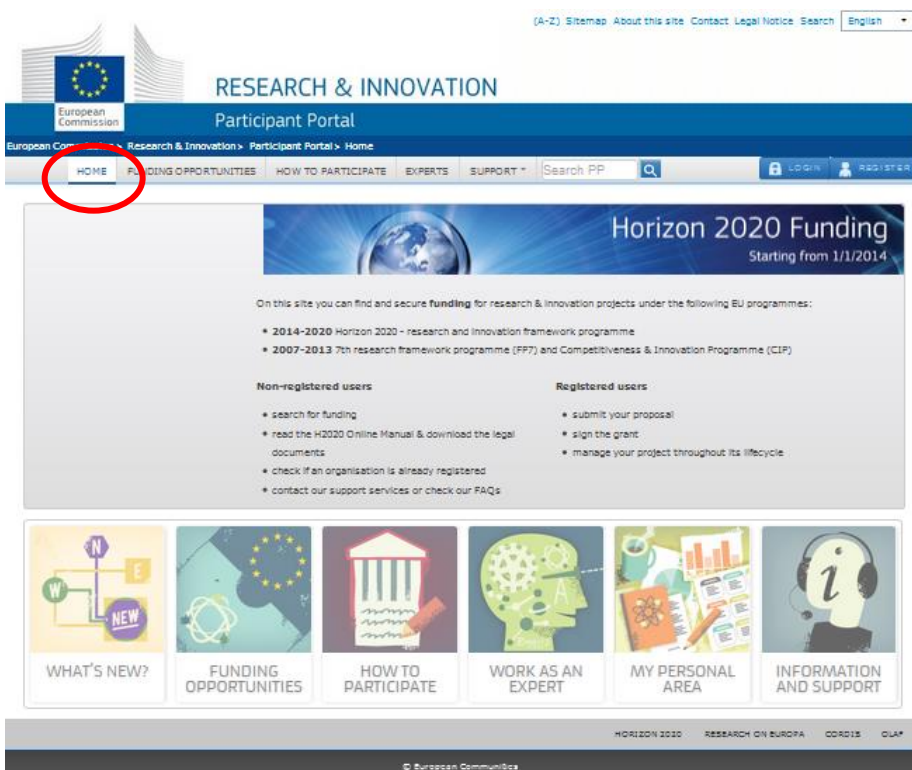
Funding Opportunities

NEW more ergonomic and user-friendly Participant Portal

<http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/home.html>

Funding Opportunities page gives a short overview of the information and some **priority highlights** of H2020

- left hand menu: go directly to the **calls** of specific parts of H2020 or click on "Search topics" and **search** funding opportunities just with free **keywords**, **without having to know the structure of the programme**



Participant Portal

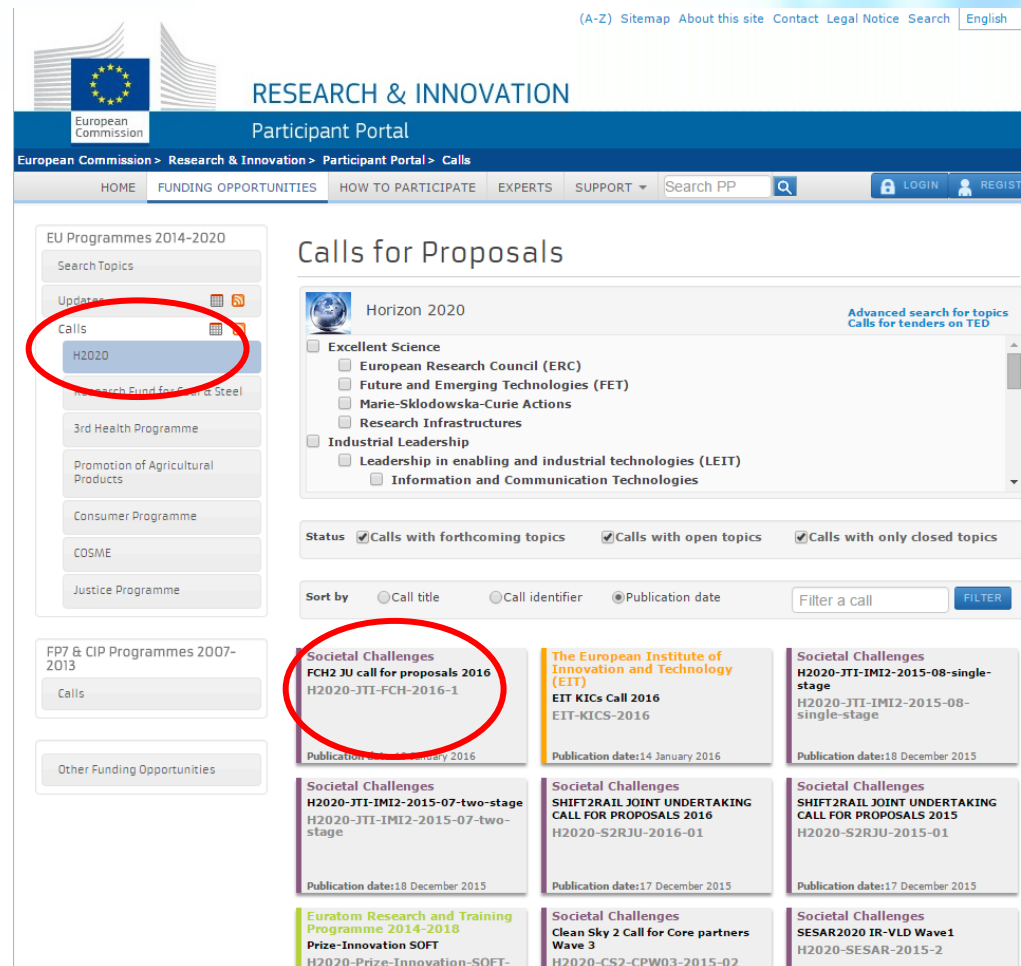
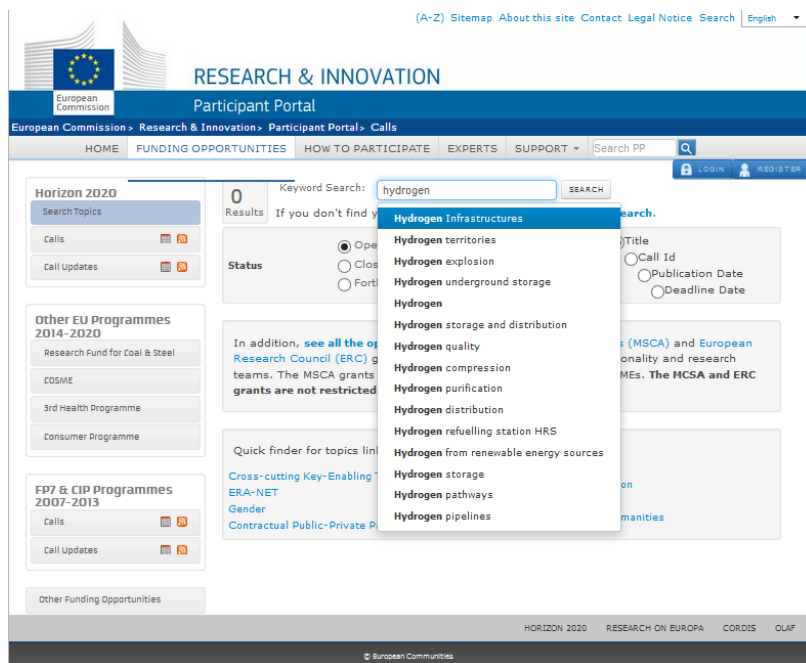
Calls

Calls are presented as **clickable "cards"** that lead to the call details.

When landing on the page the user will see all the **open calls in the order of their publishing dates** (possibility to see forthcoming and open calls when filtering accordingly). The user can also filter calls by programmes and themes.

Newcomers:

searching for call topics by **free keywords without having to know the structure of the programme**



Principles

Getting started

- A call is a list of distinct, separate topics
- **A proposal is submitted to one and only one topic**
- A topic is linked to one and only one call
(the same topic applicable in two years will be considered as two distinct topics)
- A topic can have **only one action type**
("funding schemes"; e.g. RIA, IA, CSA)
- A topic can have **only one deadline**

First access to the system from each **Topic's page**

Draft and submitted proposals to be accessed later from the "My Proposals" page

The screenshot displays the European Commission Research & Innovation Participant Portal. The main header includes the European Commission logo and the text "RESEARCH & INNOVATION Participant Portal". Below the header, there are navigation tabs: HOME, FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES, HOW TO PARTICIPATE, EXPERTS, and SUPPORT. A search bar is also present.

On the left sidebar, there are sections for "EU Programmes 2014-2020" and "FP7 & CIP Programmes 2007-2013". The "EU Programmes 2014-2020" section includes a "Search Topics" box and a list of calls: H2020, Research Fund for Coal & Steel, 3rd Health Programme, Promotion of Agricultural Products, Consumer Programme, COSME, and Justice Programme.

The main content area shows a list of calls. The first call is "CALL: FCH2 JU CALL FOR PROPOSALS 2016" with a call identifier of "H2020-JTI-FCH-2016-1" and a publication date of "19 January 2016". Below this, there is a "Call summary" section with a "Scene Setter" and an "Indicative timetable for evaluation and grant agreement signature".

Below the call summary, there is a "Call update" section. A red circle highlights the text: "12 January 2016 11:53 The submission deadline is now available for: FCH-03-1-2016(FCH2-RIA), FCH-04-1-2016(FCH2-CSA), FCH-02-8-2016(FCH2-IA), FCH-01-10-2016(FCH2-IA), FCH-01-7-2016(FCH2-RIA), FCH-02-4-2016(FCH2-RIA), FCH-01-6-2016(FCH2-RIA), FCH-01-4-2016(FCH2-RIA)".

Below the call update, there is a "Topics and submission service" section. A red circle highlights the text: "Topic: FCH-01-1-2016:Manufacturing technologies for PEMFC stack components and stacks". Below this, there is a table with columns for "Status", "Sort by", "Topic", "Publication date", "Types of action", "Deadline", and "Opening date". The table lists several topics, including "FCH-01-1-2016:Manufacturing technologies for PEMFC stack components and stacks", "FCH-01-10-2016:Validation of fuel cell urban trucks and related infrastructure", and "FCH-01-2-2016:Standardisation of components for cost-efficient fuel cell systems for automotive applications".

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RESEARCH & INNOVATION
Participant Portal

European Commission > Research & Innovation > Participant Portal > Opportunities

HOME FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES HOW TO PARTICIPATE EXPERTS SUPPORT Search PP LOGIN REGISTER

EU Programmes 2014-2020
Search Topics
Updates
Calls
H2020
Research Fund for Coal & Steel
3rd Health Programme
Promotion of Agricultural Products
Consumer Programme
COSME
Justice Programme
FP7 & CIP Programmes 2007-2013
Calls
Other Funding Opportunities

TOPIC: Manufacturing technologies for PEMFC stack components and stacks

Topic identifier: FCH2-RIA-2016-1
Publication date: 19 January 2016
Types of action: FCH2-RIA Research and Innovation action
DeadlineModel: single-stage
Opening date: 19 January 2016
Deadline: 03 May 2016 17:00:00
Time Zone: (Brussels time)

Horizon 2020

Topic Description [+ More](#)
Specific Challenge:
Even though the development of PEMFC components and stacks for transport applications have reached a mature level in which the operational performance specifications are met, certain aspects like

Topic conditions and documents [+ More](#)
Please read carefully all provisions below before the preparation of your application.

Submission Service

To access the Electronic Submission Service of the topic, please select the **type of action** that is most relevant to your proposal from the list below and click on the **'Start Submission'** button. You will then be asked to confirm your choice of the type of action and topic, as these cannot be changed in the submission system. Upon confirmation you will be linked to the correct entry point.

To access existing draft proposals for this topic, please login to the Participant Portal and select the My Proposals page of the My Area section.

Type of Action: **Research and Innovation action [FCH2-RIA]** [START SUBMISSION](#)
Topic: Manufacturing technologies for PEMFC stack components and stacks - FCH-01-1-2016

Guidance on proposal submission: [H2020 ONLINE MANUAL](#)
IT Guidance: [HOW TO](#)

Get support [+ More](#)
[H2020 Online Manual](#) your online guide on the procedures from proposal submission to managing your

Please read carefully

Topic Description (see 'Scope' section for budget, additional requirements, TRL etc)

Topic conditions and documents
before starting your application/submission

Templates of proposals only available once you start the submission process !
(however, available off-line on the FCH2 JU website)

Please confirm your choice of the **topic** and **type of action** for the call, as these cannot be changed subsequently in the submission system.

Topic: Manufacturing technologies for PEMFC stack components and stacks - FCH-01-1-2016
Type of Action: Research and Innovation action [FCH2-RIA]
Call: FCH2 JU call for proposals 2016

[CANCEL](#) [CONFIRM](#)

Guidance:

- **H2020 Online Manual**
- **HOW TO (IT issues)**

Part A

- General information
Abstract, panel and fixed keyword (if relevant),
Declarations, checklist questions
- Participants and contact persons: **data is read-only** from the Organisation Registry/PIC Validation database (URF/PDM)
- **Budget table** – specific per action types
- Ethics Issues Table: structured, reference to Part B
- **Call specific questions: limited set of specific questions related to the call (IG/RG membership!)**
- The **system offers validation checks** & any problems are listed at the end of the administrative part

Part B and Annex

- Templates per calls/topics – **downloadable from the submission system!**
- Page limit will apply per attachments (**65+5 pages**) - The check is based on pages of the PDF documents
- **Watermark to be applied to mark the pages above the limit**
- General constraints: 10 MB, PDF
- The complete proposal package receives an **e-receipt upon submission**
- **Annex:** Separate template for the **‘Draft Plan for dissemination and exploitation of results’!**
(possibility to include additional activities and/or investments along the project to increase impact of results, as part of beneficiaries’ business plans)

Proposal evaluation

H2020 calls and proposals

- Calls are **challenged-based**, and therefore more open to **innovative proposals**
 - Calls/topics descriptions allow scope for applicants to propose innovative solutions
- More emphasis on **innovation**
 - Substantial support to activities such as **prototyping and testing, demonstrating and piloting**
 - Leveraging and boosting **engagement of industry**
 - When the experts evaluate a proposal, they need to take into account innovation activities in both the targeted innovation actions (IA) as well as in research and innovation actions (RIA)
- **Greater emphasis on impact**, in particular through each call/topic impact statements
 - Applicants are asked to explain how their work will contribute to the described impacts (**see separate plan for dissemination and exploitation of project' results!**)
 - During the evaluation, the experts are asked to assess this potential contribution.
- **Cross-cutting issues** are fully integrated in the work plan (AWP):
 - **Gender dimension** - a standard question on relevance of sex/gender analysis is included in proposal templates
 - **Strategic approach to international cooperation**: the approach to providing 'automatic funding' to third country participants is restricted & **the experts should check requests for 'exceptional funding'**
 - **Other cross-cutting issues** such as science education, **open access to scientific publications**, ethics, standardisation ... are also included in the AWP

Impact of grant preparation on evaluation

- **No grant negotiation phase!**

- The time from submission of a proposal, incl. evaluation to the signature of the grant has been reduced to a maximum of 8 months
(max. 8 months for grant signature, including max. 5 months for evaluation)

- What does this mean for the evaluation of proposal?

- **The experts evaluate each proposal as submitted**
not on its potential if certain changes were to be made
- **The experts do not recommend substantial modifications**
such as change of partners, additional work packages, significant budget or resources cut, additional scientific activities to strengthen the concept, trans-disciplinary aspects not appropriately covered...
- **If the experts identify significant shortcomings, they must reflect those in a lower score for the relevant criterion**
Proposals requiring substantial modifications are not expected to pass the relevant thresholds !
- **Any proposal with scores above the thresholds and where there is sufficient budget will be selected as submitted**
Successful applicants are invited to address only the minor shortcomings

- Is there a **margin for making some recommendations?**

- Minor and specific corrections to be implemented without negotiation, e.g. timing of work package...
- Obvious clerical errors

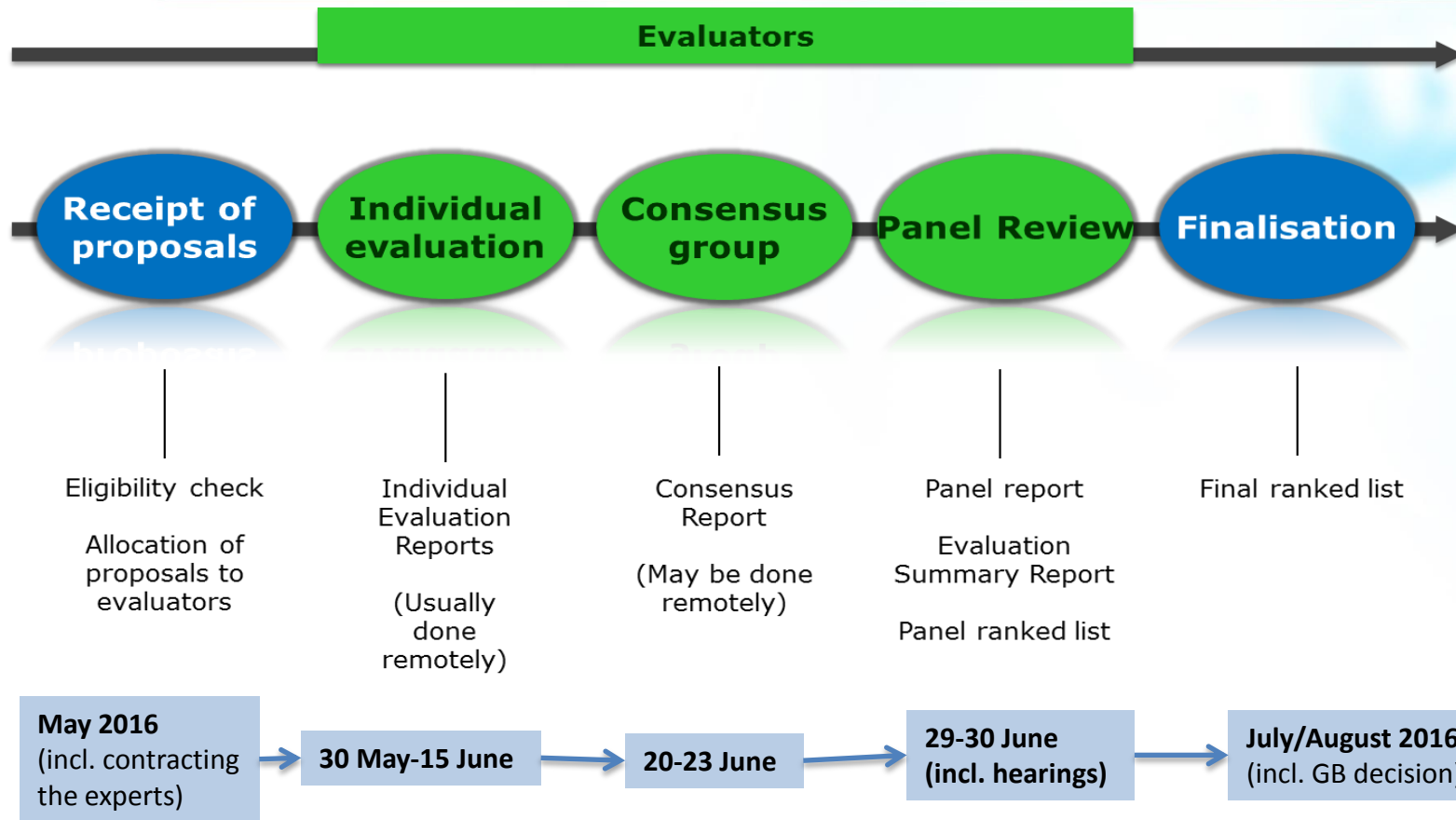
Admissibility and eligibility checks

- **Admissibility** is checked by the FCH2 JU (against **General Annex B**):
 - Submitted before the deadline in the electronic system (SEP)
 - Readable, accessible and printable
 - Completeness of proposal, presence of all requested forms (**Forms A, B & Annex**)
 - **Annex (Part B – section 2.2): Draft Plan for dissemination and exploitation of project' results**
- **Eligibility** is also checked by the FCH2 JU (against **General Annexes A and C**):
 - Minimum number of partners as set out in the call conditions
 - “Out of scope” - a proposal will only be deemed ineligible in clear-cut cases

+ **Other criteria** may apply on a call-by-call basis (**IG/RG membership & budget limit for some topics of this call !**)
- **However, if the experts spot an issue relating to eligibility when evaluating a proposal, they should inform the FCH2 JU**

Page limits: Clearly set out in electronic system; excess page marked with a watermark

Overview of the Evaluation Process



- We will evaluate the proposals with the help of independent external experts (**‘evaluators’**)
- As part of the **Panel** deliberations, the **FCH2 JU will organise hearings with the applicants for the Innovation Actions (IA) of this call**

Guiding principles

- **Excellence**
 - Proposals must demonstrate **high quality** in relation to the topics and criteria set out in the calls.
- **Transparency**
 - Funding decisions must be based on clearly described **rules and procedures**, and applicants should receive **adequate feedback** on the outcome of the evaluation.
- **Fairness and impartiality**
 - All proposals submitted in response to a call are **treated equally and evaluated impartially** on their merits, irrespective of their origin or the identity of the applicants.
- **Efficiency and speed**
 - Evaluation, award and grant preparation should be done **as quickly as possible** without compromising quality or neglecting the rules.
- **Ethics and security**
 - Proposals must not contravene fundamental ethical principles or relevant security procedures.

Evaluation by independent experts

How are the evaluators selected?

We appoint independent evaluators for each call from the **European Commission database of experts**

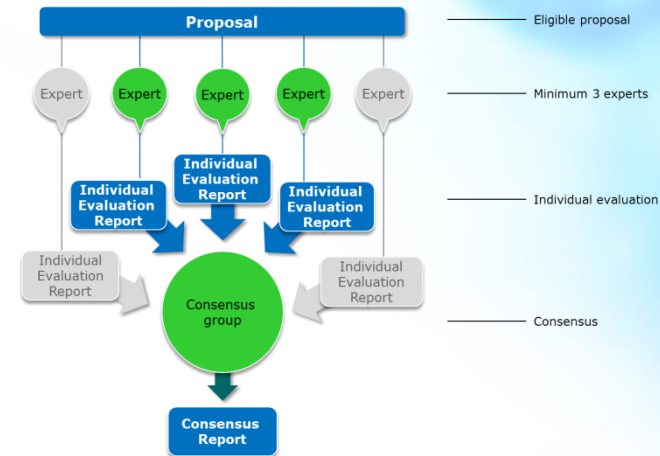
<http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/experts/index.html>

When selecting evaluators, we look for:

a high level of skill, experience and knowledge in the relevant areas (e.g. project management, innovation, exploitation, dissemination and communication)

and, provided the above condition can be satisfied, **a balance** in terms of:

- skills, experience and knowledge
- geographical diversity
- gender
- where appropriate, the private and public sectors, and
- an appropriate 'rotation' from year to year.



In principle, **each proposal will be examined by at least three experts** (in many cases, five or more).

In addition, the evaluation process may be followed by **one or more independent observers**

Experts that have a **conflict of interests** will be excluded by us !

European Commission publishes on the Participant Portal at least once a year the list of experts who have assisted all programmes (incl. FCH2 JU) together with their area of expertise.

- The proposals will be evaluated against the following **award criteria**:
 - **Excellence** (incl. relevance to the topic of the call)
 - **Impact** (incl. Draft Plan for dissemination and exploitation of project' results)
 - Quality and efficiency of the **implementation**
 - Applicants are required to provide **summary of staff effort** in each WPs and **breakdown of 'Other direct cost' items** (travel, equipment, other goods and services, large research infrastructures) in case their total **exceeds 15% of the personnel costs !**
 - Methodology to declare '**large research infrastructure**' costs should be previously assessed (and accepted) by the European Commission services

and according to the **weighting** and **thresholds** that are set out in the **General Annex H**

- For each criterion, the proposal will be given **scores of 0 to 5** (half marks are possible)
Thresholds apply to individual criteria...
The **default threshold is 3**
...and to the total score
The **default overall threshold is 10**
- The criteria are **adapted to each type of action (RIA/IA and CSA)**

Interpretation of the scores

0

The proposal fails to address the criterion or cannot be judged due to missing or incomplete information

1

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

2

Fair. While the proposal broadly addresses the criterion, there are **significant weaknesses**.

3

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

4

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

5

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

Elements to be reflected in the evaluation

If a proposal

- is only **marginally relevant** in terms of its scientific, technological or innovation content relating to the [call/topic] addressed, the experts must reflect this in a **lower score for the Excellence criterion**
 - **No matter how excellent the science!**
- does **not significantly contribute to the expected impacts** as specified in the AWP for that [call/topic], the experts must reflect this in a **lower score for the Impact criterion**
- would **require substantial modifications in terms of implementation** (i.e. change of partners, additional work packages, significant budget or resources cut...), the experts must reflect this in a **lower score for the “Quality and efficiency of the implementation” criterion**
- *If cross-cutting issues are explicitly mentioned in the scope of the [call/topic], and not properly addressed (or their non-relevance justified), the experts must reflect this in a lower score for the relevant criterion*
 - *Proposals addressing cross-cutting issues which are not explicitly mentioned in the scope of the [call/topic] can also be evaluated positively*

The experts will be instructed to disregard excess pages !

As part of the Panel deliberations, the **FCH2 JU will organise hearings with the applicants for the Innovation Actions (IA) of this call** to:

- *clarify the proposals and help the panel establish their final assessment and scores or*
- *improve the experts' understanding of the proposal.*

Hearings will not be used to modify proposals!

Invitations to hearings will be sent **only** to the coordinators of proposals with **consensus scores above the individual and overall thresholds** and to those whose proposals passed the individual thresholds, but fell short of the overall threshold.

The coordinator (on behalf of the consortium) should **only provide explanations and clarifications in response to questions** submitted in advance.

If a consortium fails to reply to the questions, the panel will arrive at a final score and comments for the proposal on the basis of the originally submitted material only.

Hearings will be conducted **by a written procedure**

Estimated time for this call: **second half of June 2016**

Ranking: Proposals with identical total scores

- For each group of proposals with identical total scores, the panel considers **first proposals that address topics which 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
[for Innovation actions, first their score for Impact and second for Excellence]
- If there are still 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

- **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 soon after the scientific evaluation
- For those proposals in which one or more ethical issues have been identified, ethics 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

- **Maximum 5 months from the call deadline !** (*includes necessary time for GB decision*)
 - *We will always rank the proposals that passed the thresholds according to the results of the evaluation by the experts and according to available budget*
- **Complaints** (*request for evaluation review*): within **30 days** of receiving the proposal rejection letter (through Participant Portal)
- **Flash Info** on Participant Portal (*similarly on FCH2 JU website*):
 - Publishing number of proposals submitted per budget/list of topics, **after the call deadline**;
 - Publishing basic statistics on the outcome of the call (e.g. total proposals, ineligible, above/below-thresholds) **at the same time with the feedback/evaluation results to all applicants**

CLOSING RECOMMENDATIONS

(lessons learned)

FCH2 JU calls under H2020

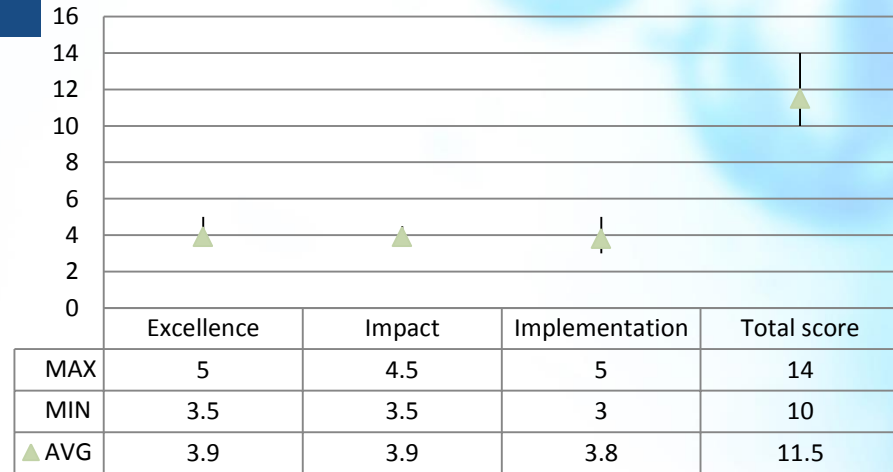
Analysis of first two closed calls

Success rate

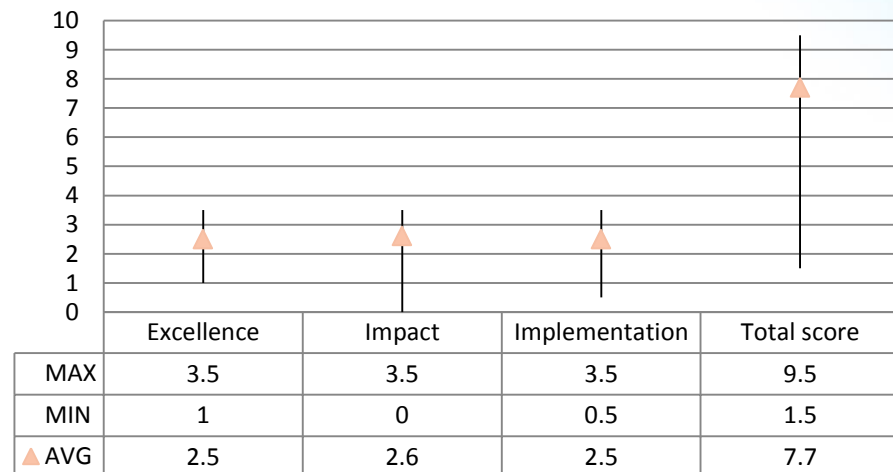
of about 40% (proposals above thresholds)
and 27% in terms of funding

- Overall quality of above threshold proposals is high (avg. 11.5)
- Below thresh. proposals fail to address most of the criteria (avg. 2.5)
- In gen, in most proposals the criteria are equally addressed (well/poorly)
- In general, **1 proposal out of 4 is funded**
- Approx. 6-7 topics/call not covered !

Proposals above thresholds



Proposals below thresholds



Excellence criteria

Example of 'failing' comments:

- ***Objectives** are general and not quantifiable;*
- *Not credible, lacking technical details on the proposed **approach**;*
- *Project is overly ambitious and the **approach** is not convincing;*
- *Insufficient evidence that the adopted approach takes into account the **state of the art** knowledge or the know-how acquired from past and currently running projects by some of the consortium members;*
- ***Clarity and relevance** of the proposal are weak;*
- *Low level of **innovation**, no **progress beyond SoA**;*
- ***SoA** and existing know-how is not fully described, and it is **not clear the current TRL**;*

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Make sure your **proposal addresses the call topic entirely and clearly**
- **Explain the SoA and how your proposal will go beyond it** (especially if proposal builds on previous funded projects, including current results!)
- **Define clear KPIs**, quantify them and show how you will reach them
- Clearly state **what is the "science" behind your proposal**
- **Explain the innovation potential** and what your proposal brings **different to the already existing/funded activities**
- Provide **details of any "preliminary" activities** already performed by some members of the consortium to show that they don't start from 'scratch' and that the risk is limited (or **address the risk!**)

Impact criteria

Example of 'failing' comments:

- *Impact **not adequately outlined**; The overall impact of this project **is expected to be low**;*
- *Expected impact **is not credible, no convincing plan is presented** to show how this will be achieved;*
- *Fail to explain **how the project would build on SoA to provide significant potential impacts** either technologically or academically;*
- *It is not clear **how the project will impact the industry**;*
- ***No gap analysis is provided** for the proposed technology;*
- ***Exploitation plan** is not provided/convincing/ lacks credible engagement of several partners;*
- ***Dissemination plan, IPR management** not addressed/not adequately reasoned out;*
- ***Targeted audience** and how, where and when a targeted audience will be engaged is not specified;*

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Clearly state **what the outcomes of your projects will be, and how will you use them**
- There must be a **clear description of the next steps** too: **who will use the outcomes of the project?**
- **Dissemination plan:**
 - Identify **what** you want to communicate, **to whom, why** and **how**
 - **New communication paths/methods** are welcomed
- If the project is successful, **how will it help reach the objectives in the AWP/MAWP?** Impact should be measured not for the technology in general, but **for the particular project** and **which will be the measures/activities in the project to reach this impact?**
- What **other implications** will it have: socio-economic impact (e.g. job creation etc)

Implementation criteria

Example of 'failing' comments:

- ***Work-plan is poor and does not have an adequate structure; Details are missing; Information about the overall governance and project management scheme is lacking;***
- ***No risk analysis as well as no flow chart are provided;***
- ***Resource allocation is not justified and is unbalanced; Breakdown of resources/cost categories is missing;***
- ***Limited number of milestones that remain general and not appropriate;***
- ***Unbalanced consortium towards Academia/Research - demonstrating poor industrial support;***
- ***Key expertise is missing in the consortium, e.g. end users not included in the consortium;***
- ***A clear management structure and risk analysis plan is not provided;***
- ***Does not show convincing mitigation or contingency plans;***

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- **Work plan:** make sure is **credible and coherent**
- **Deliverables:** there must be enough **public deliverables**
- **Milestones:** they must represent a way to follow the project (**measurable, go/no-go decision points**)
- **Risk assessment and mitigation plan:** they must be credible too
- **Budget:** proper **justification of major items and especially of subcontracting**
- Since there is no negotiation, **overestimated budgets imply failure!**
- **Consortium:** in gen, it has to comply with the requests of the call
- There must be a **European dimension to the project** (if too much focused on one company/country, then other sources of funding should be sought!)
- Try to have a balanced (sectorial and geographical) and complementary consortium; **avoid adding "cosmetic" partners**

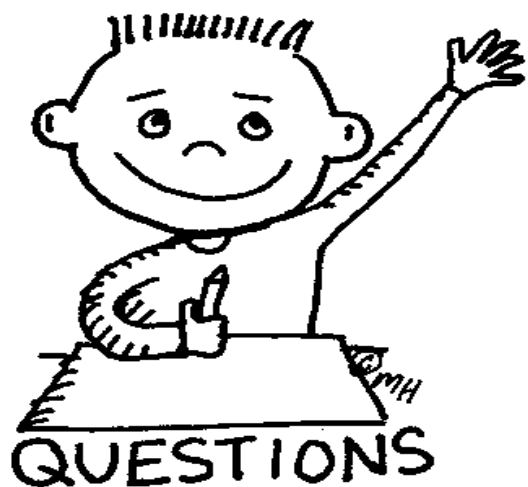
Do's and Don'ts

(general recommendations)

- Demonstrate the **“innovation” of the proposal vs. advancement of SoA** (not only in numbers)
 - **Be pragmatic and not over-ambitious**
- **The impact of the project must be credible/measurable**
- It is not the impact of the technology but **the impact of the proposal**
- **Draft exploitation plan should already exist**
- When you present a proposal: **convince the experts that the proposal is credible and that it fits entirely the topic**



Thank you for your attention !



further info
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