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# How to apply

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*European Commission*

***FP7 Information Days for Transport (Surface Transport)***  
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# FP7 The first two years: *basic facts and figures*

## FP7 is large !

- 37,000 proposals received
- Evaluated by 12,000 independent experts
- Leading to 25,000 grant agreements
  - And an EC contribution of €3.6 bn
- Over 60 000 registered for FP7 in the database
  - Selection made for each call



# Proposal handling: Six principles

- **Excellence.** Projects selected for funding must demonstrate a high quality in the context of 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 of their proposals.
- **Fairness and impartiality.** All proposals submitted to a call are treated equally. They are evaluated impartially on their merits, irrespective of their origin or the identity of the applicants.
- **Confidentiality.** All proposals and related data, knowledge and documents communicated to the Commission are treated in confidence
- **Efficiency and speed.** Evaluation, award and grant preparation should be as rapid as possible, commensurate with maintaining the quality of the evaluation, and respecting the legal framework.
- **Ethical and security considerations:** Any proposal which contravenes fundamental ethical principles, or which fails to comply with the relevant security procedures may be excluded at any time [...]



# Three “Bibles”

## → Rules on submission and evaluation

- The common reference for FP7
- Consistency vs flexibility!
- Plus, internal standards and guidelines



## → Guide for applicants

- How the rules will be applied for a certain call



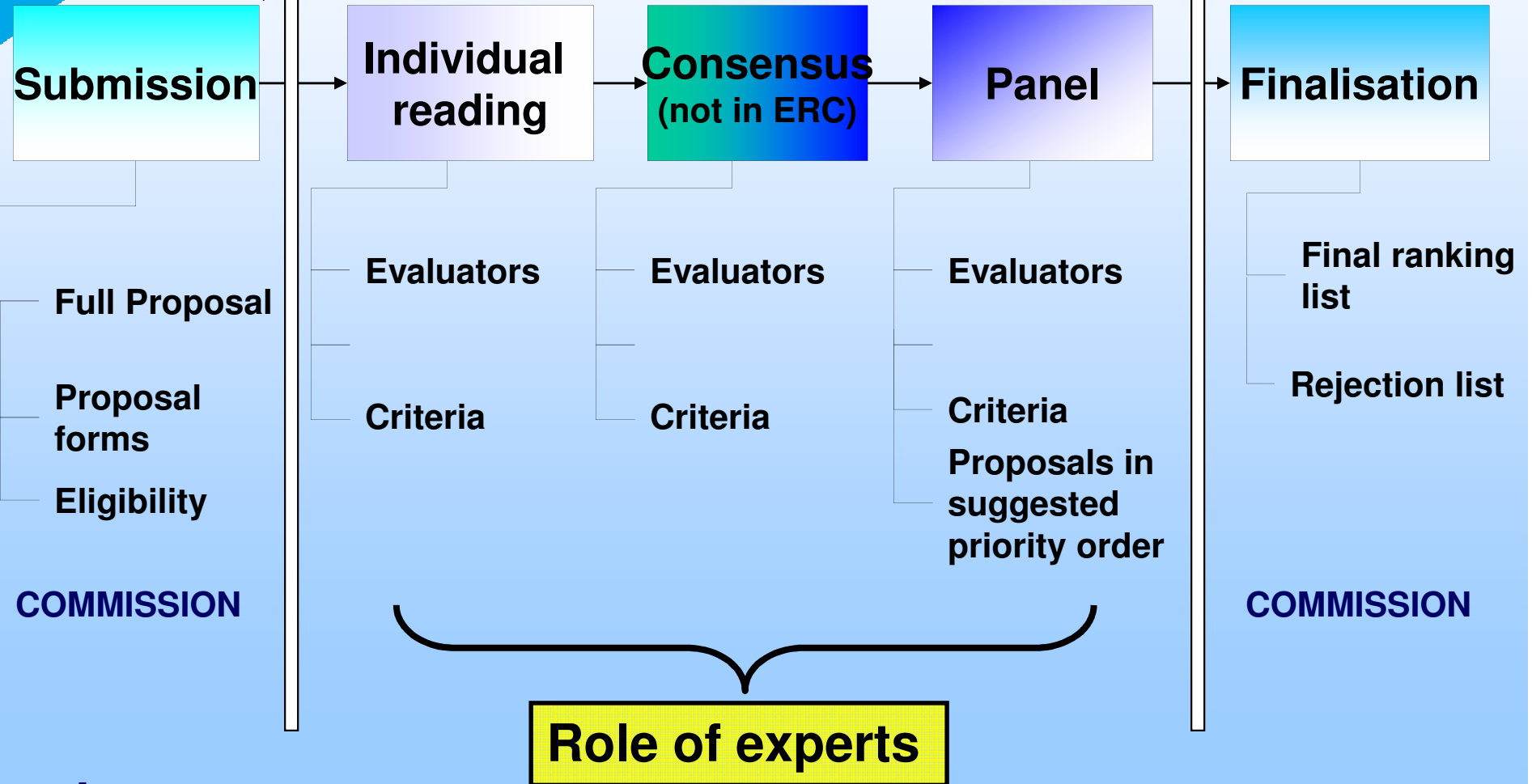
## → The work programme

- The topics and criteria against which the proposals will be judged



# Overview of the Evaluation Process

May be  
"remote"





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**Submission**

- **All applications must be electronic via EPSS.**
- **All call information is on “Cordis” call pages.**
- **<http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/dc/index.cfm>**
- **Transport is part of Co-operation programme.**
- **Key documents:**
  - **Call fiche, guides for applicants, specific work programme**



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# ***Unique Registration Facility (URF) and the Participant Identification Code (PIC)***

## **URF ?**

- Allows organisations to register their details and status once and for all
- Obviates the need to provide the same information with each submission

## **PIC?**

- A unique 9 digit number, allowing organisations to identify themselves in all transactions related to FP7.

**Recommend to register organisation at the time of application. If you have a PIC: Use it !**

**Ref: Guide for Applicants**



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## Submission Eligibility

- **Date and time of receipt of proposal on or before deadline for receipt**
  - **Firm deadlines**
- **Minimum number of eligible, independent partners**
  - **As set out in work programme and the call**
- **Completeness of proposal**
  - **Presence of all requested forms**
- **“Out of scope”**
- **Other; Budget limits, ICPC partners for SICA**





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Individual  
reading

Consensus  
(not in ERC)

Panel

## Expert selection

### → Based on:

- A high level of expertise
- An appropriate range of competences

### → If the above conditions can be satisfied, then also:

- Balance academic/industrial
- Gender
- Geography
- Rotation

### → But also, of course, constrained by:

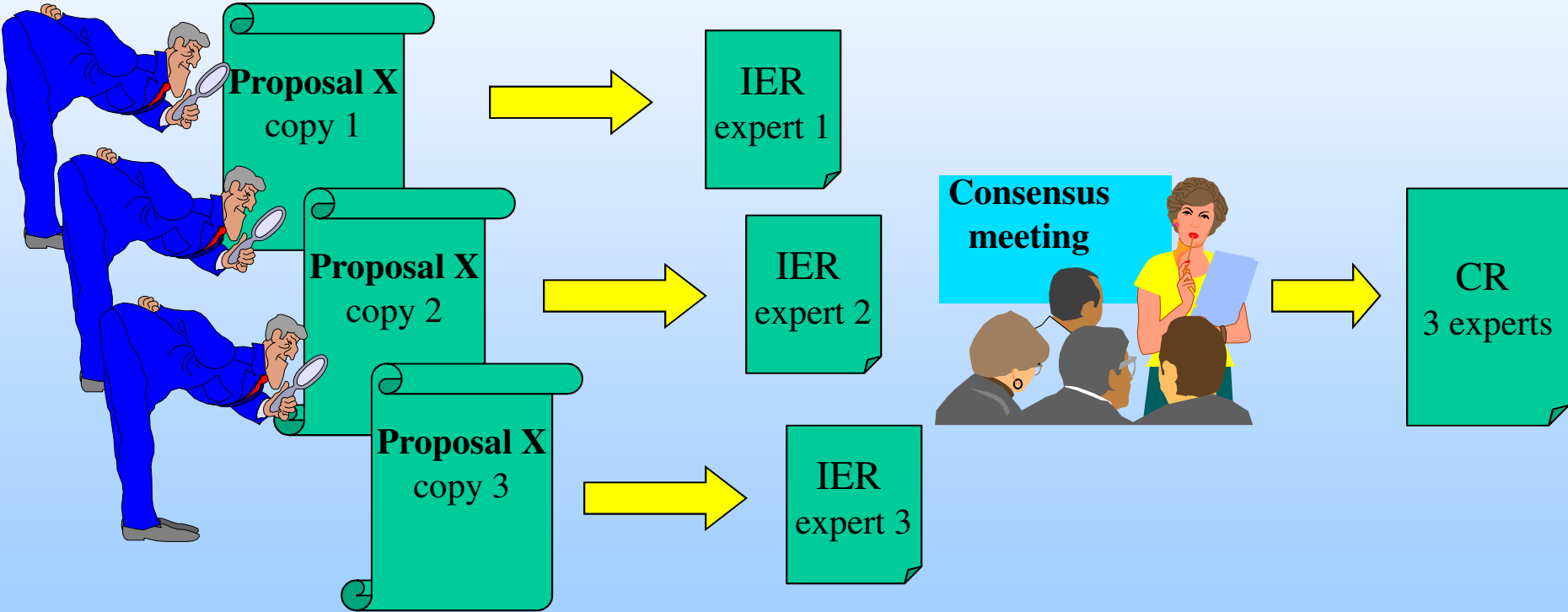
- avoidance of conflicts of interest

Individual reading

Consensus (not in ERC)

May be "remote"

# For each proposal:



*Note: There may be more than 3 evaluators*  
IER=Individual evaluation report  
CR=Consensus Report



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# The criteria

## → Criteria adapted to each funding scheme

- specified in the work programme

## → Three main criteria:

- **S&T Quality** (relevant to the topic of the call)
  - *Concept, objective, progress beyond state-of-art, work-plan*
- **Implementation**
  - *Management*
  - *Individual participants and consortium as a whole*
  - *Allocation of resources*
- **Impact**
  - *Contribution to expected impacts listed in work programme*
  - *Plans for dissemination/exploitation*



Individual  
reading

Consensus  
(not in ERC)

Panel

# Interpretation of the scores

- 0 - The **proposal fails to address** the criterion under examination or cannot be judged due to missing or incomplete information
- 1 - **Poor**. The criterion is addressed in an inadequate manner, 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 improvements would be necessary.
- 4 - **Very Good**. The proposal addresses the criterion very well, although certain improvements are still possible.
- 5 - **Excellent**. The proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion in question. Any shortcomings are minor.



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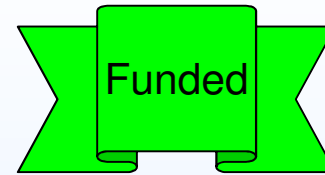
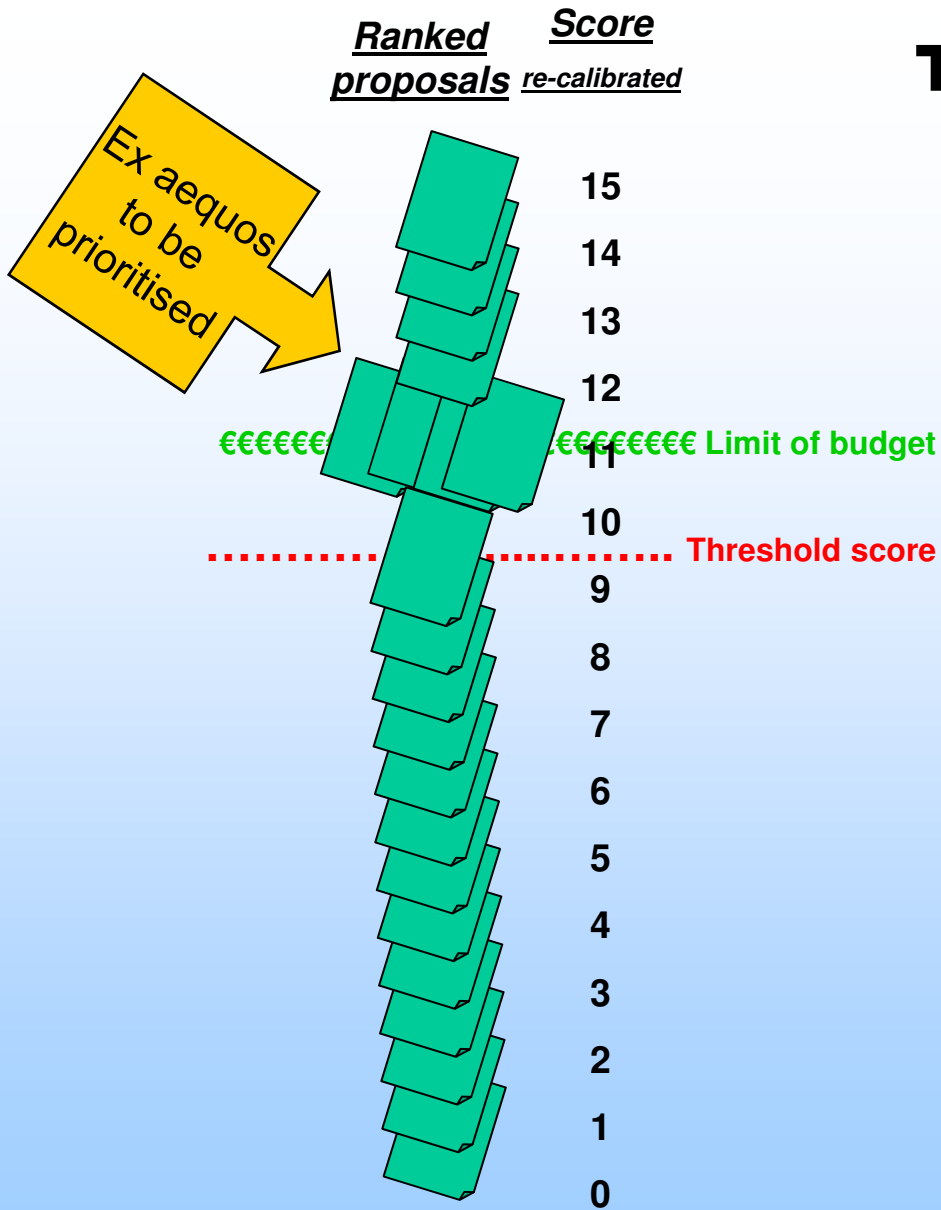
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## The final Panel

- **Key function is to ensure consistency**
- **Final marks and comments for each proposal**
  - Evaluation Summary Reports (ESR)
  - Any new scores (if necessary)
  - Guidance for contract negotiation
- **Ranking proposals with identical consensus scores:** -Approach is spelled out in WP and GFA
- **Resolve cases if a minority view was recorded in consensus stage**
- **[*Exceptionally*] recommendations for combining**
- **List of proposals for priority order**
- **Hearings (if applicable)**

# The ranked list



\*unless selected via a reserve list



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# Quality assurance

- **Expert questionnaire**
- **Independent observers**
- **Redress procedure**
- **Internal Audit**





# FP7 redress – experience so far

- Applicants have one month window, after receipt of evaluation results
- Complaints must relate to evaluation process
  - The procedure will not call into question judgement of appropriately qualified experts
- Examined by internal committee, working independently
- Out of 30,600 proposals, 1259 redress requests have been received (4%)\*
  - 1008 have been fully processed
- Of these 11 have led to a re-evaluation
  - 1% of complaints, or 0.05% of proposals received).
  - Two previously unselected proposals are funded as a result
- Re-evaluations are very rare indeed
  - .. Usually, but not always, confirm the original result
- Redress provides a systematic quality assurance...
  - ...upholding principles of transparency and fairness...
  - ...and highlighting areas for improvement.

*\*ERC not included in these statistics*





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# Tips and advice (1)

- **FP is highly competitive: average success rate is 21% ; *But it not a lottery!***
- **Read the documentation (work programme, call fiche, guides for applicants) *No hidden agenda!***
- **Prepare yourself in good time**
- **Check the eligibility criteria**
- **You must align your proposal with the work programme**
  - “Shoe-horning” a marginally relevant proposal into call never works!
  - Don't forget the ‘expected impact’
- **Follow the structure in the Guide for applicants**
  - Make sure you properly address all criteria



# Tips and advice (2)

- Put yourself in the mind of the experts
- Ask a disinterested colleague look at your proposal, using the Commission criteria
- Be clear and concise, and obey the page limits, font etc
- Submit early, submit often!
  - Revise your proposal once it's uploaded in EPPS

The experts evaluation is based on the content of the proposal. So be clear and logical concerning progress beyond state of the art, impacts, methodology, resources, consortia and work planning.



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**Thank you for your  
attention!**