



PLATFORM2 Masterclass: Cofund related issues

**Project evaluation – what changed
with ERANET+ and Cofund**

Overview

- Overview BESTF
- Change in evaluation process
- BESTF2 assessment process
- Lessons learned for BESTF3 proposal
- Best practice and other issues to consider



What is BESTF?

Bioenergy: Sustaining the Future

- A trans-national programme to support Bioenergy demonstrator projects that are close to commercialisation
- Goals:
 - Encourage investment in close-to-market bioenergy projects to enable commercial availability of advanced bioenergy at large scale by 2020;
 - Enhance synergies and collaboration between national bioenergy programmes
 - Provide financial and managerial support to collaborative bioenergy demonstrator projects.
- Successful projects receive financial support from a consortium of national programmes and the European Commission via the FP7 ERANET plus programme (future schemes will fall under H2020).

Consequences of change in evaluation

- Decision making process taken away from the funding bodies and passed to expert evaluators

Need to factor in national priorities at stage 1 as part of eligibility checks

- Need to respect final ranking

More flexibility with “barrels” than with a spread of evaluation scores



BESTF2 Assessment

Stage 1 assessment: 45 proposals

- National eligibility
- BESTF eligibility
 - a. Fit to call
 - b. Industry led
 - c. Matched funding
 - d. Resources to deliver the project
 - e. Value for money

13 proposals were invited to submit full proposals

Stage 2 assessment: 12 proposals

Full techno-economic assessment of eligible proposals by independent experts

Evaluation panel

- 20 individuals from all BESTF participating member states, appointed by the BESTF2 Management Group using suggestions from the BESTF2 Advisory Board.
- Pool of 7 experts were used with broad range of expertise across the seven EIBI identified value chains, with geographical spread and gender balance.
- All evaluators were paid.
- The chair was appointed from the BESTF Advisory Board to provide a knowledgeable and independent perspective to the moderation process.

Evaluation process

- Remote evaluation by 3 experts against scoring template. Separate score for subcriteria under each of the 3 main evaluation criteria, some of which were weighted. Evaluators were sent Stage 1 “evaluation” summary reports.
- Each criteria had threshold score to give “green’ and “red” proposals
- “Moderation meeting” – Meeting of all experts under independent chair (EUMG and Commission invited to attend)
- Moderator requested a summary from each expert and encouraged open discussion on any significant variances in the scores / feedback. A final score and feedback comments were agreed by the panel.

Results

- Six of the twelve proposals failed to meet the quality thresholds on one or more of the FP7 evaluation criteria and were therefore not recommended for funding. The combined national and EU budget was sufficient to ensure that all of the remaining six projects were selected for funding.
- Funding from funding bodies and EU approx €15m with a further €7m from partners
- Lessons learned were fed into BESTF3 plans

Masterclass for call managers 2013 - feedback

“The bioeconomy ERA-NET community stresses the importance of sufficient flexibility in the evaluation and selection procedures, e.g. in the freedom to use different models for ERA- NET calls, such as multiple topics or different participation rules for sub calls, and different modes for evaluation outcomes (barrels / same score possibility / full ranking list). This would foster a larger impact of the investment provided through national funds and EC top-up funding on building the ERA.”

Masterclass for call managers 2013 - feedback

“ranking within nearest neighbours do not necessarily represent a (measurable) sequence of quality. They may rather represent an intellectual artefact when comparing equally good proposals. There is practical need for a limited range of scores in order to avoid artefacts in the ranking”.

Lessons learned

- Pre submission – continue to advise to contact national funding bodies to identify priorities
- Stage 1 – continue to provide feedback for stage 2 development
- Experience mirrored feedback from 2013 Masterclass – need flexibility and more limited range of scores given range of evaluators
- Adapt subcriteria to ensure relevance for topic and TRL, but don't necessarily apply weighting
- Score out of 15 rather than 210! Provide more detailed written guidance to evaluators to support compulsory webinar

Best practice and other issues to consider

- Evaluation and ranking list at stage 1 – depends on number of proposals submitted, time and resources available
- Limiting number of eligible proposals for stage 2 – depends on number submitted and balance between countries if some heavily over-subscribed
- Evaluators merging scores into one common report for rapporteur to present prior to moderation meeting
- Number of different call topics – how do you rank projects between different topics?
- Are all national priorities of equal importance?
- Informal steer within barrel of equally ranked proposals?

Final thought – sharing best practice

- How to ensure recommendations are disseminated within ERANET+/ERANET Cofund community



BioEnergy Sustaining The Future BESTF

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