

Experts
and
Evaluation



20th of April,
2018

Contents

1	Introduction.....	2
2	Overall Evaluation Process.....	2
2.1	A two step call process	2
2.2	Proposal evaluation process	3
2.3	How SMART selects, assigns and works with experts	3
2.3.1	Availability	3
2.3.2	Selection	3
2.3.3	Assignment	4
2.3.4	Performing the work.....	4
2.4	Confidentiality	4
2.4.1	The SMART Office	4
2.4.2	The Expert.....	5
2.5	Information Security.....	6
2.5.1	Data Protection Act	6
3	Becoming an expert.....	6
3.1	Criteria for becoming an expert.....	6
3.2	Procedure to become an expert.....	6
3.2.1	Applying.....	6
3.2.2	Expert acceptance	7
4	What experts do	7
4.1	Your output must be useful and relevant	7
4.2	We expect assessments of excellent quality	7
4.3	We expect you to follow our code of practice.....	8
4.4	We take conflict of interest seriously	8
4.5	Conflict of Interest.....	9
4.6	Evaluation documents	9
4.7	To do list	9
5	Evaluation criteria.....	10
5.1	Main areas and subareas.....	10
5.2	Focus on PO and FPP evaluation.....	10
5.3	Questions and comments for evaluators.....	11
5.3.1	Section 1 - Main criteria and their sub criteria	11
5.3.2	Section 2 – Evaluation Summary	14

1 Introduction

This document establishes the basis of the expert's participation in SMART and projects evaluation related aspects.

The structure of this document included the following chapters:

- Overall Evaluation process, which includes an overview of the evaluation process with the participation of the Technical Committee and the Experts.
- Becoming and expert, with the criteria and process for the selection of the Technical Committee members and experts.
- What the experts do, that includes the tasks and processes to be fulfilled by the experts, confidentiality and
- Evaluation criteria, which includes the different criteria to be taken into account in the evaluation of project proposals

2 Overall Evaluation Process

2.1 A two step call process

Periodically, SMART organises a Call to submit R&D&I project proposals in the area of Advanced Manufacturing applications and technologies. The SMART call process is designed to be quick and efficient, while at the same time maintaining a high quality standard.

Two-stage Call process

The SMART Call Process follows a two-step approach,

- 1. Project Outline (PO):
The Project Outline (PO) provides a short overview of the concept, the objectives of the project and the partnership even if they are not entirely settled. This document allows early advice and feedback from the evaluation. This step is highly recommended, but participants may submit a Full Project Proposal straightforward.
- 2. Full Project Proposal (FPP):
The second step in the SMART evaluation procedure is, for projects that have been accepted at PO (Project Outline) level, to submit a Full Project Proposal (FPP). The FPP is an important document within SMART. It is used for the evaluation and labelling of new projects and it is also the basis for the reporting and monitoring procedure.

Following the evaluation of the FPP, the Technical Committee will give its recommendations to the SMART Board, who in turn will decide to label the project.

With this label, project participants can **apply for funding** in their respective countries.

SMART

2.2 Proposal evaluation process

The proposal evaluation follows the same path in each of the two step process mentioned in the previous section.

The SMART office will perform an initial check ensure the proposal meets the eligibility criteria and that the application proposal is complete. If the proposal is complete and eligible, the evaluation process starts. Additionally, the Office will check that the participating NFA have been contacted and informed.

The application must navigate through a number of different steps if it is to become approved and receive the cluster label, which are:

- Evaluation by two or three remote experts
- Scoring and ranking by SMART's Technical Committee
- Labelling by the cluster board

Expert evaluators are compensated by their work as defined in the *Annex II: SMART Compensations*, of the *SMART Rules and regulations* document.

2.3 How SMART selects, assigns and works with experts

2.3.1 Availability

Experts will be contacted shortly before the submission deadline [for applications] to see if they are available and willing to evaluate applications. If they respond positively, we add you to the list of 'eligible' experts.

2.3.2 Selection

After the submission deadline, and once we have filtered out the ineligible applications, and checked that the application is within SMART scope, we begin to match applications to potential experts. This is performed by SMART officers (SO) and counting when necessary, with the assistance of the Technical Committee. The SO will read the application in question and, will identify the -most suitable experts from the eligible list: two experts for the PO phase and three experts for the FPP

For security, the SO will usually identify one or two reserve experts too.

It is possible that one expert is selected for several applications. If we think that the workload presents a potential problem we will reallocate some to the reserve expert instead. It is also possible that an eligible expert receives no evaluations. This can be for a number of reasons:

- You confirm your availability before the applications are even received – we may not receive any within your specialist areas.
- You may be selected as a reserve but never used.

- You may have an excellent profile, but the expert panel may contain more suitable individuals.

2.3.3 Assignment

Evaluation is a fast process. We have an evaluation window measured in weeks, not months. As soon as we are able, we will begin to assign the experts who have been chosen to perform an evaluation. Depending on the number of applications we receive, this may take several days to complete. For each project you will be sent an Appointment email confirming the work, the instructions to perform your work with the necessary documentation and the deadline by which you must send us your completed evaluation. The Appointment email contains a unique assignment code, that you should use in any communication with SMART regarding the assignment, and reference when submitting your invoice.

2.3.4 Performing the work

Evaluations must be performed in accordance with the expectations of quality outlined previously. Evaluations must be performed in English. The specific instructions for the evaluation will be given by an email, explaining the assigned work and associated deadlines and we expect you to acknowledge the reception and confirmation that you are able to perform the assigned work in the specific deadlines. In any case, the general rules we follow are:

- For a single application, we typically will give you 5-7 days to perform and deliver the work.
- For up to three applications, you will be typically expected to deliver them all within 7-10 days.
- Where you will be given more than three applications, we will contact you and make specific arrangements.

There are many experts in many different countries - we cannot take into account your personal holidays or national holiday within the countries.

However, we understand that things can happen, and that circumstances can change. If you are called away for a few days, or are no longer available, please let us know as soon as possible so that we can discuss the situation and plan alternative arrangements that suit everyone.

If we cannot reach you and we cannot see that you are working, we will have to withdraw the invitation to evaluate and seek an alternative expert – usually one of the reserve experts originally identified.

2.4 Confidentiality

2.4.1 The SMART Office

We aspire to be as transparent and open as possible. SMART does follow the ideas of peer review.

SMART

Paseo Mikeletegi, 59 Parque Científico y Tecnológico de Gipuzkoa
San Sebastián, 20009
Tel. 943 309 009 Fax 943 309 191
info@smarteureka.com | www.smarteureka.com

We know that confidentiality can give experts the confidence to provide critical assessment without fear of retaliatory remarks. The anonymity given to experts will be upheld by as long as experts adhere to our code of conduct, and do not abuse it.

As a rule, the only people who have the ability to match specific evaluations to the people who wrote them are the employees of the SMART Office and Technical Committee Members. -We do not comment on the status of individual experts. If you contact us and request a reference, we will only confirm whether or not you have performed any evaluations. We will be unable to provide an endorsement of your abilities.

We will not publicly acknowledge your role in the evaluation of a particular project. SMART, is subject to performance reviews. Undertakings of this nature require the disclosure of certain information to a number of organisations or individuals. Within this context, it may be possible to identify the specific work of specific individuals.

Such information may be available to:

1. Organisations:
 - The EUREKA secretariat
 - The national funding agencies funding SMART projects
 - Auditors of the above organizations,
 - Organisations charged with analysing the effectiveness of SMART as a EUREKA Cluster programme.

All employees of these organizations are subject to confidentiality clauses within their employment contracts.

2. Individuals
 - officers charged with analysing the effectiveness of SMART as a EUREKA Cluster programme.

Officers are required to sign confidentiality agreements and to declare any potential conflict of interest. They are required to treat information contained within applications in the strictest confidence.

Occasionally, we are asked to provide data for the purposes of academic studies and scientific literature. Data is provided in an aggregate and anonymous manner, and the users are subject to the same confidentiality agreements as you, the experts evaluating the applications.

2.4.2 The Expert

The Expert is responsible for ensuring and maintaining confidentiality of any data, documents or other material related to the evaluation process, during and after completion of the evaluation. In the cases of a breach of the confidentiality, SMART reserves the right to suspend any payment or compensation and in serious cases to undertake legal action.

2.5 Information Security

2.5.1 Data Protection Act

The SMART Office is situated in Spain and as such is governed by Spanish data protection Law. More information can be found in English, at <http://www.agpd.es/portalwebAGPD/CanalDelCiudadano/derechos/index-iden-idphp.php>.

The information that evaluators provide will be used in the processing of all aspects of the relevant evaluation. This will include recording on the in-house and the SMART-contracted Programme Manager's processing computer and management information systems and in the preparation of material for applicants and for use by the assessment panels. In addition, information may be used in the generation and collation of output and performance indicators and other management statistics. It may also be used in policy and strategy studies to inform management in carrying out the business of the SMART and in improving business processes.

Any queries on issues relating to data protection should be addressed to: SMART Office, info@smarteureka.com.

3 Becoming an expert

3.1 Criteria for becoming an expert

To become an expert you will need to fulfil the following criteria

- Have a university level degree
- have a high level of expertise in one or more Advanced Manufacturing fields
- have experience in participating and managing R&D projects
- be available for occasional, short-term assignments
- have good knowledge of English
- be able to use IT tools

Anyone can become an expert, but please note that most experts selected will come from EUREKA countries and associated countries.

3.2 Procedure to become an expert

3.2.1 Applying

If you are interested in becoming an expert, please send us your curriculum to experts@smarteureka.com

Please note that only one single file in word or pdf format can be sent, preferably using the [Europass format](#), although other layouts are also accepted.

SMART

Paseo Mikeletegi, 59 Parque Científico y Tecnológico de Gipuzkoa
San Sebastián, 20009
Tel. 943 309 009 Fax 943 309 191
info@smarteureka.com | www.smarteureka.com

SMART will require experts to provide additional information regarding its expertise in specific SMART technical domains, and any other additional information that is considered of interest to evaluate the candidate profile.

The working language of the SMART is English, therefore the CV must be provided in English, as other languages are not accepted.

3.2.2 Expert acceptance

The acceptance to become a member of the SMART expert panel will be granted by the SMART cluster Board, after analysing the expert's curriculum. If your profile matches the criteria and it is accepted, you will receive an e-mail confirmation.

4 What experts do

The functioning of SMART is entirely dependent on the evaluations performed by our individual experts. An expert uses their technical and market expertise within their specialist field to provide objective assessments consisting of scores, justifications, comments and recommendations.

We pay particular attention to the application of technology to produce marketable products, processes and services. The applied marketing strategy of projects is considered as important as the degree of innovation and the technical merits. It is therefore vital that you, the expert, have an excellent understanding of dissemination strategies, appropriate market areas and routes to that market.

4.1 Your output must be useful and relevant

Your justifications will be used to provide feedback to the applicants. They must be coherent, relevant and of use. Do not be afraid to be direct and honest.

Your comments will be critical in identifying potential weaknesses.

In the case of weak applications, it will be the justifications you provide which will be the basis for excluding the application. Your comments will be the basis of the feedback given to applicants.

4.2 We expect assessments of excellent quality

SMART expects excellence. This is true whether you are applying for funding, or whether you are evaluating the applications.

If you fall short of our expectations you will be asked to repeat the work. If you continue to produce unsatisfactory work we reserve the right to suspend any payment or financial compensation.

SMART

4.3 We expect you to follow our code of practice

- You will evaluate applications independently.
- You will evaluate applications objectively.
- You will evaluate applications without prejudice.
- You will give sufficient time and effort to the process.
- You will provide accurate scores using the entirety of the scale available.
 - Very poor applications will receive 1 point.
 - Applications which are excellent and can barely be improved upon should be given 6 points.
- You will clearly justify each score that you provide.
 - Statements which are specific to the application at hand.
 - Not vague, generic or formulaic answers taken from this document, other SMART guidelines, or readily available information sources (e.g. Wikipedia).
 - Statements and scores will not be contradictory to one another.
- You will uphold the confidential nature of the application.

4.4 We take conflict of interest seriously

A conflict of interest undermines everything that we are trying to achieve. We need you to openly and honestly inform us if there is any reason that you cannot or might not be able to perform an objective evaluation.

Experts who inform us of such an issue will be unable to evaluate applications during that period, but will be welcome to participate again in the future.

Occasionally, it is not clear that a conflict exists until after the initial invitation. Do not worry – as long as you inform us as soon as you are aware of the fact, we can take steps to correct this.

However we have a zero tolerance approach to individuals who fail to declare a conflict which we later discover.

- You will be excluded from working for SMART or EUREKA in the future.
- We will seek reimbursement of all fees paid to you for your work.
- We will inform the Ministries in the affected countries.

If you have any doubts about this issue, email us immediately at experts@smarteureka.com with subject 'question regarding conflict of interest'.

4.5 Conflict of Interest

<u>DISQUALIFYING</u> : The Expert	<u>POTENTIALLY DISQUALIFYING</u> : The expert
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • was involved in the preparation of an application; • stands to benefit directly should an application be accepted; • stands to benefit directly should an application be rejected; • has a close or other family relationship with any person representing an applicant legal entity in the applications; • is a director, trustee or partner of an application legal entity; • is employed by one of the applicant legal entities in the applications; • is in any other situation that compromises his/her ability to evaluate the applications objectively. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • was employed by one of the applicant legal entities in an application within the previous two (2) years; • is involved in a contract or research collaboration with an applicant legal entity, or had been so in the previous two (2) years; • is in any other situation that could cast doubt on his/her ability to evaluate the applications • impartiality, or that could reasonably appear to do so in the eyes of an external third party. • Other circumstances which may arise but are not specifically listed above.

The Expert shall have not submitted nor be involved in any application to be assessed during the prescribed evaluation period.

If you discover that your assigned application raises a conflict of interest you are under the obligation to declare this to the SMART Office immediately.

4.6 Evaluation documents

Evaluation forms and instructions, created according to the evaluation criteria defined in chapter 5, will be provided by the cluster office after assigning the projects to the evaluators,

4.7 To do list

1. Carefully read the application (and annex if provided).
2. Rate each of the sub criteria on the 6 point scale
 - 1 being the lowest
 - 6 being the highest
3. Provide a summary of your thoughts and provide necessary recommendations (For FPP in the PO phase and for Project Execution of the FPP)
4. Double-check content.
5. Send your completed evaluation experts@smarteureka.com

SMART

Once you have successfully submitted your evaluation you will receive an email confirmation. This should be kept safe.

To ensure the highest quality we select evaluations at random for quality control purposes.

If we feel for any reason that improvements are required, we will ask you to amend your evaluation. You will be required to correct and return the document to us.

If the quality issues continue to be unaddressed we reserve the right to refuse payment and, in serious cases, to exclude you from our expert database.

5 Evaluation criteria

5.1 Main areas and subareas

1. Relevance to SMART Program
2. Quality and efficiency of the implementation – Project planning and consortium quality
 - Quality of the consortium
 - Added value through co-operation
 - Realistic and clearly defined project management and planning
 - Reasonable cost structure
3. Impact - Market and Commercialisation
 - Market application and impact
 - Market access and risk
 - Competitive advantage
 - Clear and realistic commercialisation plan
4. Excellence - Innovation and R&D
 - Degree of innovation
 - New applied knowledge
 - Level of Technical challenge
 - Technical achievability and risk
5. Contact with NFAs
 - Contact with National Funding Authorities

5.2 Focus on PO and FPP evaluation

For the PO evaluation, the main focus is on the following criteria:

- Relevance to SMART Program
- Quality and efficiency of the implementation: Quality of the Consortium and Added value through cooperation
- Impact: Market application and impact and competitive advantage
- Excellence: Degree of innovation and level of technical challenge

In addition to the above-mentioned criteria, the following are taken into account for the FPP evaluation:

- Quality and efficiency of the implementation: Realistic and clearly defined project management and planning, Reasonable cost structure

SMART

- Impact: Market application access and risk; clear and realistic commercialisation plans
- Excellence: New applied knowledge and Technical achievability& risks
- Contact with NFAs

Please note that the SMART Evaluation Template will specify which subset of the questions to be answered are required for the PO Evaluation Phase. For the FPP evaluation the full questionnaire is to be answered.

5.3 Questions and comments for evaluators

5.3.1 Section 1 - Main criteria and their sub criteria

5.3.1.1 Quality and efficiency of the implementation – Project planning and consortium quality

Quality of the consortium

- As a consortium, do the partners possess necessary and complementary key qualifications to meet the objectives and results?
- As individuals, does each partner have the necessary technological experience to carry out their tasks? ›
- Do all of the partners have commercial and/or scientific interests in achieving the results?

Added value through co-operation

- The benefits brought through cooperation – does this need to be done/benefit from being done cooperatively and/or internationally?
- Does the project demonstrate clear sharing of risks, of costs, of know-how, of benefits?
- Is there a clear synergy in the partnership, i.e. the collaboration results in outputs which are not independently obtainable and which are greater than what could be achieved by any partner on its own?
- Does the cooperation support and expand capabilities and knowledge of each partner beyond project results e.g. admittance to a new market, new technology and new skills?

Realistic and clearly defined project management & planning

- Does the project plan include a realistic time schedule in relation to tasks and objectives?
- Are key issues to be addressed and project objective(s) and outputs fully identified and precisely formulated from the outset?
- Are the project's goals clearly identified and logically set out through well described work packages?
- Are the work packages broken-down into logical, well-defined tasks which are relevant to the expected results?
- Are the milestones and deliverables clearly identified? Do they allow verification of progress during project implementation, including go/no-go decisions?
- Are the roles and responsibilities of each partner within each work package clearly described and differentiated in the work plan? Is task allocation by any partners to sub-contractors clearly identified?

- Is the project management structure well described? Is there an appropriate and capable structure for implementing the project (e.g. taking decisions, tracking and ensuring progress, reporting, etc.)?
- Does the main partner (as project manager) have relevant project management experience, including experience of multi-partner projects?
- Do all partners have a well-defined role in the project and the assigned project tasks are in-line with that partner's core business?
- If required, are the potential ethical/legal issues identified?

Reasonable cost structure

- Is the cost breakdown well-structured and corresponds to the tasks and activities to be implemented by each partner?
- Are the costs reasonable (i.e. neither underestimated nor overestimated) for the proposed work and for each of the partners?
- Are the project costs clearly justified?
- Are subcontracting costs appropriately justified?

5.3.1.2 Impact - Market and Commercialisation

Market application and impact

- Have the applicants quantified the economic impact: cost savings, market size, growth prospects, etc.?
- Are these descriptions realistic?
- Is there a profitable market application for the product/process/services?
- Does this represent a strong foundation for sustainable competitiveness?
- Is the potential market share well considered and justified?

Market application access and risk

- Are the partners qualified to break into the application market or, preferably, do they already have an established position?
- Has the proposal identified barriers to the market application and/or included important customers, or in other ways reduced the time and costs to market application?
 - Regulatory
 - Standards and certification
 - Commercial
 - Competition
 - Quality pricing
 - Market acceptance

Competitive advantage

- Will the product/process/service be unique with very few competing alternatives?
- Will the product/process/service have a significant price or quality advantage over competing products/process/services or benefit to the customer?
- Will the partners be able to generate strong IP to prevent copying of the end results? Will they need to?
- Will the know-how developed within the project be such that they would have a very strong and clear time to market advantage over competition?

- Have they carefully analysed existing IP and assessed whether it might affect their marketing approach?

Clear and realistic commercialization plans

- Has the consortium clearly outlined the plans for commercialization of the product/process/service?
- Has the split or sharing of project outputs been defined with a view to commercialization?
- Have the individual participant's business plans for the commercialization been defined and are they realistic?
- Do the commercialization plans include realistic and credible projections for
 - revenue,
 - investment required,
 - anticipated costs associated with the product/process/service market implementation?
- Have the participants a proven track record of commercial application of innovations?

5.3.1.3 Excellence - Innovation and R&D

Degree of innovation

- Is the product/process/service technologically new or a significant improvement on existing solutions?
- Does it deliver objectively new products, processes or services to the consumer with an added value? ›
- Is the product/process/service an advance on commercial state-of-the-art?

New applied knowledge

- Will the project lead to the creation of new knowledge which is not yet known in the area?
- Will the project resolve an issue of technical uncertainty, resulting in new knowledge?
- Will the new knowledge bring the partners to the forefront of the area in question and thus well beyond the present state-of-the-art?
- Could the technology or knowledge being developed be the potential basis for a wide number of applications?
- Does the application for the technology/knowledge have the potential to be expanded into other areas/ sectors beyond the scope of the application being developed in this project?

Level of technical challenge

- Does the project involve a high degree of technical challenge?
- Does achieving the project results require the application of a significant level of specialist's know-how and knowledge?
- Is the level of technical challenge such that the project results could not easily be replicated by others?

Technical achievability & risk

- Is the approach technically sound or is it fundamentally flawed?
- Is the appropriate technology being employed for the envisaged development?
- Are the proposed technical developments achievable within the defined budget and timescale?

- Is the research method described appropriate for achieving the technical developments (e.g. it includes a programme of design, test, analysis, decision and iteration if appropriate)?
- Is there an appropriate analysis of the risks?
- Are the associated technical risks well described and approach to minimizing the effects of the risks has been outlined?
- Does the project incorporate go/no-go decision points for appropriate outcomes and at regular intervals?

5.3.2 Section 2 – Evaluation Summary

Please provide a brief explanation of the evaluation results (about four/five sentences per issue):

1. Quality and efficiency of the project implementation – Project planning and consortium quality
2. Impact: Market and commercialization
3. Excellence: Innovation and R&D
4. Evaluator's overall conclusions and recommendations (for FPP in PO Phase and for Project Execution at FPP phase)

Here, please provide a brief summary of your conclusions (max. 1500 characters). Additionally, in the PO phase please provide direct and clear recommendations for elaborating a success full FPP Proposal). In the FPP phase please provide recommendations for a successful project execution.