Overview decentralised evaluation

Decentralised evaluation - carried out by national bodies	
Stage 1 *(Optional, but recommended if a high number of proposals is expected)*	**Stage 2**
Pre-proposals received by national programmes/funding agencies	Full proposals received by national programmes/funding agencies
▼	▼
Eligibility check according to • national rules & requirements • network suitability	Eligibility check according to • national rules & requirements • network suitability
▼	▼
Evaluation of pre-proposals at national level • use of existing procedures of each agency	Evaluation of full proposals at national level • rules according to P2P network
▼	▼
Consensus meeting of the P2P network: • Compilation of nationally evaluated proposals • Joint list of pre-proposals to be invited to the full proposal stage	Consensus meeting of the P2P network: • Compilation of nationally evaluated proposals • Joint selection list of projects to be funded
▼	▼
Feedback to the applicants	Feedback to the applicants and funding decisions by national bodies

Some issues that need to be considered are described below (not repeating issues already covered by the central evaluation description).

Preparation

Evaluation criteria, scores or categories:
The P2P network needs to agree on common evaluation criteria and evaluation forms to be used by the national programmes/funding agencies.
Instead of a ranking list it may be preferable to come up only with categories such as "'recommended for funding" and "recommended for funding, if funds are still available" vs. "not recommended for funding", or similar. This leaves room for some flexibility in decision making: A categorisation will allow the funding of some (but maybe not all) of the good proposals according to the availability of funding and is therefore appropriate for the virtual common pot model. Funding can thus be optimally distributed to projects with good quality. A common understanding of the evaluation criteria is necessary (e.g. via briefing of evaluators, calibration at the beginning).

Stage 1 - evaluation of pre-proposals (optional)

Eligibility check:
The check of formal eligibility of proposals with respect to the P2P call criteria could either a.) be done by the call secretariat before the actual evaluation or b.) be part of a decentralised assessments. In addition, the eligibility with respect to national programme criteria will be assessed as part of the overall evaluation.

It has proven useful to do it the way b) for two reasons: balanced efforts across the P2P consortium (as not only the secretariat is involved, which usually is not too familiar with all national requirements) and timely rejection of non-suitable proposals (less effort for evaluation and quicker information to applicants).

Assessment of pre-proposals:
Even with limited details available in the pre-proposal it should be possible to assess the scientific and technical excellence and innovation, the quality of project consortia and the (economic) potential of applicants to reach the project goals, which is particularly essential in terms of financial feasibility in the case of applied RTD projects.

Consensus meeting - compiling results of pre-proposal assessments:
The call secretariat collects the outcome of the assessment by the national programmes and communicates this to all involved agencies.
For each proposal, all funding organisations involved agree if a project consortium should be invited to submit a full proposal for the 2nd step or not, in accordance with the agreed ERA-NET goals. It needs to be clarified in advance how to deal with diverging national results, and how recommendations/ decisions are made.

Feedback to applicants and invitations to step 2:
Applicants will appreciate quick feedback. Invitations can be sent to successful project consortia and should include any requirements and recommendations for step 2. Non-successful applicants should also receive clear feedback from the P2P coordinating office.

Instead of a single communication to the proposal coordinator it could be beneficial to inform all participants of a project consortium in order to emphasise the necessity of contacting respective funding organisations for detailed feedback.

Templates are provided.
It will be helpful to arrange a comprehensive collection of available background information on the proposals among agencies in order to ensure coherent communication of the P2P coordinator with individual project participants.

Special cases - to be considered individually:
Procedure when some of the project participants drop out (e.g. because they have been identified as non-eligible or the involved funding programmes are running out of budget) - is the project consortium still viable? Do they get the opportunity to substitute the non-eligible participant, etc. It is up to the consortium of the P2P initiative to decide whether or not to allow a rebuttal process.
It needs to be agreed if the pre-proposal assessment results in a definite yes/ no decision or if there is some room for flexibility with respect to potential improvements in the full proposal, i.e. if project consortia should be allowed to step 2 despite of major alterations, and/ or whether recommendations can be put "under condition" (e.g. condition to revise/ reduce a specific work package).

Stage 2- evaluation of full proposals

Assessment of full proposals (and national funding applications, if applicable):
The full proposals contain the complete project information. This is the common basis for decentralised evaluations organised by the P2P consortium. It is therefore recommended to provide a joint proposal form.
In addition, national funding organisations may have to insist on *separate national application forms* according to programme requirements.
Full proposals (and national applications, if required) will be evaluated according to programme requirements, which can include in-house evaluations or external experts and/or panels. Eligibility is checked as well.

Double evaluation of proposals needs to be avoided by choosing a suitable method for integrating evaluation of P2P full proposals and evaluation of national funding applications.

The applicants or project consortium leaders confirm that the proposals have not been submitted to other calls at the same time – double funding is illegal.

Consensus meeting - compiling results of full proposal assessment:
The call secretariat collects the outcome of the assessment by the evaluators and communicates the results to all involved agencies. Usually, a meeting (could be a personal meeting, a telephone or video conference or a virtual meeting) is scheduled. For each proposal, all funding organisations involved have to agree if a proposal should be rejected or recommended for funding. In this process, it may be necessary to explain the individual national results in detail.

The Call Steering Committee of the P2P initiative finally assembles a list of proposals which are recommended for funding vs. not-recommended for funding.

All proposals on this list that are considered of high quality must have the support of all funding organisations involved and budget has to be secured. This list is forwarded to the decision makers (programme owners) and is considered the ultimate binding basis for the national funding decisions.

Communication of result to project coordinators:
As soon as the P2P initiative has issued the final outcome of the evaluation to the decision makers, all individual programmes/funding organizations will take their funding decisions. Since this process will vary from country to country due to decision making dates it has proven useful to inform the applicants about the end of the joint call process. Applicants will appreciate quick feedback.
Templates are provided.
This feedback shall inform about the fact that all further steps are taken at the national level and leaves all communication duties to the national organisations according to their regulations. The P2P consortium decides what to include in the notification (e.g. summary of the evaluators comments, etc.)

It will be helpful to arrange for a comprehensive collection of available background information on the proposals among agencies in order to ensure coherent communication of the P2P coordinator with individual project participants.