

# **Proposals evaluation: an expert perspective**

**Dr Jean Arcamone**

# The context

- **Integrated Projects for SMEs**
- **Evaluator for FP6 and FP7**
- **Large Experience of research projects**
- **Involved in numerous collaborative projects (definition and management)**
- **Industry oriented**

# Evaluation: the process

- **Two stages**
- **Stage 1 : evaluation of the relevance of the project and its potential impact**
- **Stage 2 : the team, the leadership, the budget, the comprehensive approach**
- **Process modified to decrease the cost of the proposal**

# Who are the experts

- **Those who have applied for this task: a will to be involved**
- **Convinced by the importance of collaborative projects in Europe**
- **Deeply European**
- **Various skills**
- **Various jobs (consultants, professors, managers from SMEs or groups)**

# The choice

- **At stage 1**
- **Each expert studies 6 to 8 proposals in 3 to 4 days and gives notes and scores with well defined criteria**
- **A proposal is carefully studied by 5 experts and an EC officer**
- **The reading and the notes are confidential before the consensus meetings**

# First level of decision: end of stage 1

- The decision can be Go, NO Go and Go with some comments with necessary improvements.
- For some projects, the decision is clear with Go or NO Go
- The consensus meeting at stage 1 with the project officer and the experts: confirmation of Go or NO Go, or discussion: the decision is taken in common
- If Go, discussion with a view to propose the improvements for stage 2

# The final decision

- **The final decision at stage 2: 4 months later**
- **Same process with less projects to study**
- **The improvements are a key point**
- **During the consensus meeting, if Go, the group defines the modifications to be done by the project team**
- **Modifications to be explained during the oral discussion between the project officer and the leading team of the**

# A clear statement

- **The process is well defined**
- **There is no shadow**
- **It is strictly audited**
- **There are good projects but there are projects which seem strange ! it means not understandable**
- **The experts want to select the best projects**
- **They have a moral commitment to do a good job**

# Let's make simple

- **A good proposal**
- **for a good project, clear and well explained**
- **with a real need for the research: relevant**
- **a group of companies with a clear involvement and a fair commitment**
- **a real leadership**
- **a reasonable budget**
  
- **A will, a need, skills and expertise**
- **but no artificial recipes**

# The SMEs (20 M€, 80 people)

?

- SMEs need to make money every days
- The ROI is between 2 and 3 years if not less
- The research plan is defined in this frame
- 5 years (proposal, project, innovation and marketing) .... too far away
- IP for SMEs: nebulous for the SMEs if not sustained “locally” by the research centres
- The cost of the proposal ; a need for sponsoring

# Too few SMEs involved !

- **The European industrial associations: a key to improve the situation, Markets for the future, Key topics (depending on the sector)**
- **The research centres: topics and technologies**
- **Collaborative research with grouped SMEs : they have to meet**
- **Brokerage meetings: free and sponsored**
- ***Production industrial equipments:***

# Perspective

- More good proposals (less expensive to set up, new communication means, *more productive*)
- More SMEs involved with the support of the industrial associations: an example
- An increased Cross fertilization between large groups, research centres linked to the universities and SMEs
- A real feed back of the + given by the IP for SMEs in the FP6 : it would be helpful to show the advantages of these large collaborative projects
- During the project: **more support to the leading**