

# **COST Action BESTPRAC**

## **WG1.4: Recycling strategies for rejected proposals**

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## Who we are

- **Research Institute with 82 researchers & 26 staff members (3 of which dedicated to EU pre-award and post-award management);**
- **We are dedicated to Social Sciences and Humanities;**
- Strategic approach to **international cooperation** - general openness to international participation where relevant;
- We are now aiming at **improving our participation in European projects** and thus take part of the EU funds more effectively;
- We have had some success recently with the ERC grants, with COST Actions, and with some H2020 projects in collaboration (as participants);
- We are now prepared to go to the next level and clearly position ourselves as a 'must go' institute as far as H2020 and other EU instruments are concerned.

**Check us out @ [ics.ulisboa.pt](https://ics.ulisboa.pt)**

# Why H2020 proposals most often fail

- 3 criteria: Excellence/Impact/Implementation
- Excellence - Scientific and Technological Quality and the **relevance to the call topic**
- Impact – **Related to the call requirements** and EU competitiveness
- Implementation – **Appropriate work plans**, partners and management process

 **RELEVANCE (call) & APPROPRIATENESS (work plan)**

# Common problems (i)

## General

- Proposal is hard to read, inconsistent and boring
- Unclear and over complex language
- Insufficient detail provided to understand the key aspects
- Lack of coherence between the sections

## S&T Quality

- Poorly defined objectives that are not entirely consistent with the scope of the call text
- Unclear and inconsistent state of the art
- Lack of clear innovative aspects
- Fundamental concept is unrealistic
- Method and approach are poorly described or missing key aspects

# Common problems (ii)

## Impact

- Insufficient quantified details about potential impact
- Lack of realistic analysis of the actual markets suitable for the project results
- Lack of evidence to support stated claims
- Lack of clear exploitation plans
- Poor strategy for exploitation

## Implementation

- Illogical work plan
- Missing key work packages
- Insufficient description of partner roles
- Poorly quantified deliverables and milestones
- Wrong partners to undertake the work – missing skills or overlapping roles
- Insufficiently clear management structures
- Lack of sufficiently detailed risk analysis

# How a H2020 proposal is evaluated

The evaluation process is generally handled in three phases:

## Individual Evaluation Report (IER)

3-5 evaluators  
IER submitted online

## Consensus Report (CR)

Evaluators assembled in Brussels and CR provided by Rapporteur

## Evaluation Summary Report (ESR)

Panel Review  
Proposals with the same mark – listed into 4 main categories (\*)

(\*) Proposals that have failed one or more evaluation criterion

Proposals that have passed all evaluation criteria but are too low in the ranking list to be funded

Proposals that have passed all evaluation criteria and are at the borderline mark for funding

Proposals that have passed all evaluation criteria and are above the funding level

# The ESR

- The Evaluation Summary Report

Very often, when proposals have failed the team responsible for writing them is unclear on the specific reasons since the Evaluation Feedback is too general and they are unsure whether there is any possibility to re-submit.

Read carefully the evaluators' comments – usually there are **hints** on what has “failed” the most.

## Deconstructing the ESR (i)

- What does the Evaluation Summary Report tell us?

The ESR presents the overall and detailed score of the proposal with a textual evaluation according to three main criteria: Excellence; Impact; Quality and efficiency of the implementation.

Whether we get into the Grant Agreement Preparation (GAP) phase or our proposal is rejected, the ESR shall be read carefully and the conclusions should be drawn.

## Deconstructing the ESR (ii)

- Reading the ESR might be discouraging, however it should not let us down. It might happen that we find the evaluation and the scores improper and unjust.
- The coordinator then has the right to initiate a so-called **redress procedure** to express complaint officially. This occurs rarely in really special cases.

## A few tips

- Please the eye of the evaluator – don't hide the impact: pay attention to the presentation of the Impact-section (graphics / boxes)
- Have it proof read and the logic to impact checked: ask for help!
- **Ask to see successful applications**
- Horizon 2020 Annotated Research and Innovation Actions Template with excellent and practical section for addressing impact (pp. 16-23)  
[Link](#)
- Standard Evaluation Form: [Link](#)

# Thank you



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