



GUIDE FOR APPLICANTS

Marie Curie Actions *People*

Marie Curie Initial Training Networks

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Foreword

This is version number 1 of the Guide for Applicants for the call:

FP7-PEOPLE-ITN-2008

The main changes made since the 2007 Guide are:

- **The proposal submission and evaluation are now carried out in a single stage** and this is reflected in the instructions to Part B of the proposal (Annex 4 of this Guide)
- The sub criteria for Criterion 3 Implementation have been simplified in the 2008 People Work programme. These changes have been reflected in this Guide.
- In order to give greater guidance to potential applicants on how the ethical review procedure is organised and suggestions for best practice in describing ethical issues in the proposal, this guide now contains a dedicated Annex 5 on ethical issues.
- The reference rates for monthly living allowances have been adjusted in the 2008 People Work programme and the respective tables and calculations of this Guide have been modified accordingly.
- The composition of minimum consortia in ITN has been simplified, (removing the previous requirement for a minimum number of organisations from Member States) – this change is reflected in section 2.2.3 of this Guide.
- Based on the experience from the first call, a number of clarifications and additional guidance have been added in Section 2 of this Guide as well as in the new Annex 6 containing frequently asked questions about the Marie Curie Initial Training Networks

About this Guide

This Guide explains the principles of Marie Curie Initial Training Networks to be funded under the EU's Seventh Framework Programme.

Similar documents are available for the other Marie Curie Actions namely:

Marie Curie Intra-European Fellowships for Career Development (IEF)
Marie Curie European Re-integration Grants (ERG)
Marie Curie Co-funding of Regional, National, and International Programmes (COFUND)
Marie Curie Industry-Academia Partnerships and Pathways (IAPP)
Marie Curie International Outgoing Fellowships for Career Development (IOF)
Marie Curie International Incoming Fellowships (IIF)
Marie Curie International Re-integration Grants (IRG)
Marie Curie International Research Staff Exchange Scheme (IRSES)
Researchers' Night (NIGHT)

The structure required for a proposal, and the rules which will govern its evaluation, vary according to the type of action and may also vary from call to call. It is therefore important to ensure that you are using the right guide.

Please check that this is the right guide for you by consulting the Work programme, the call text and the description of the Marie Curie Action in section 2.

Please note:

This Guide is based on the rules and conditions contained in the legal documents relating to FP7 (in particular the Seventh Framework Programme, Specific Programmes, Rules for Participation, and the Work programmes), all of which can be consulted via the CORDIS web-site. The Guide does not in itself have legal value, and thus does not supersede those documents.

THE ESSENTIALS

What are Marie Curie Initial Training Networks?

Marie Curie Initial Training Networks (ITN) are aimed at improving the career perspectives of researchers who are in the first five years of their career by offering structured training in well defined scientific and/or technological areas as well as providing complementary skills and exposing the researchers to other sectors including private companies.

Who can apply?

Normally, a network will comprise at least three participants (e.g. universities, research organisations, industrial firms, SME's, international organisations) proposing a coherent and integrated research training programme. However, in certain cases single or twinning host organisations may also be eligible.

Which research topics are supported?

There are no pre-defined priority areas. Research fields are chosen freely by the applicants and all domains of research and technological development addressed under the EC Treaty are eligible for funding (except areas of research covered by the EURATOM Treaty).

How does it work?

Networks will be selected competitively following a **single-stage evaluation process**. Successful proposals will be invited to enter into negotiations with the Commission in order to define the implementation of the project in more detail. Researchers can be appointed from the start date of the project.

Who can be appointed in a network?

Eligible researchers are primarily those who are in the first four years of their research career. Some networks might justify the involvement also of early post-docs (within the first five years of their career) for the purpose of completing their initial training. In addition, a limited number of senior visiting scientists from either the public or private sector who are of outstanding stature in international training and collaborative research may be recruited to complement the network's capacity to transfer new knowledge and strengthen supervision. The action will be mainly for researchers from Member States and Associated countries, but also open to researchers from third countries.

Available positions will be published by the Initial Training Networks, notably on ERACAREERS: http://ec.europa.eu/eracareers/index_en.cfm. Applicants should contact the network directly.

What does the funding cover?

Funding is primarily provided for the benefit of the researchers appointed by the host (including their living allowances, travel expenses etc). There is also a contribution to the expenses linked to the execution of the training project in the host organisation as well as to networking activities, organisation of workshops and conferences (involving the participants' own research staff and external researchers), and to overheads and management related expenses.

How to apply?

This Guide contains the essential information for you to prepare and submit a proposal for a **Marie Curie Initial Training Network**. You should also consult the relevant legal documents (listed in the Annex 1 of this document) in order to better understand the evaluation process, rules of participation, contractual and financial issues, etc. Proposals are submitted electronically via the Commission's Electronic Proposal Submission Service (EPSS). Detailed instructions are available in this Guide.

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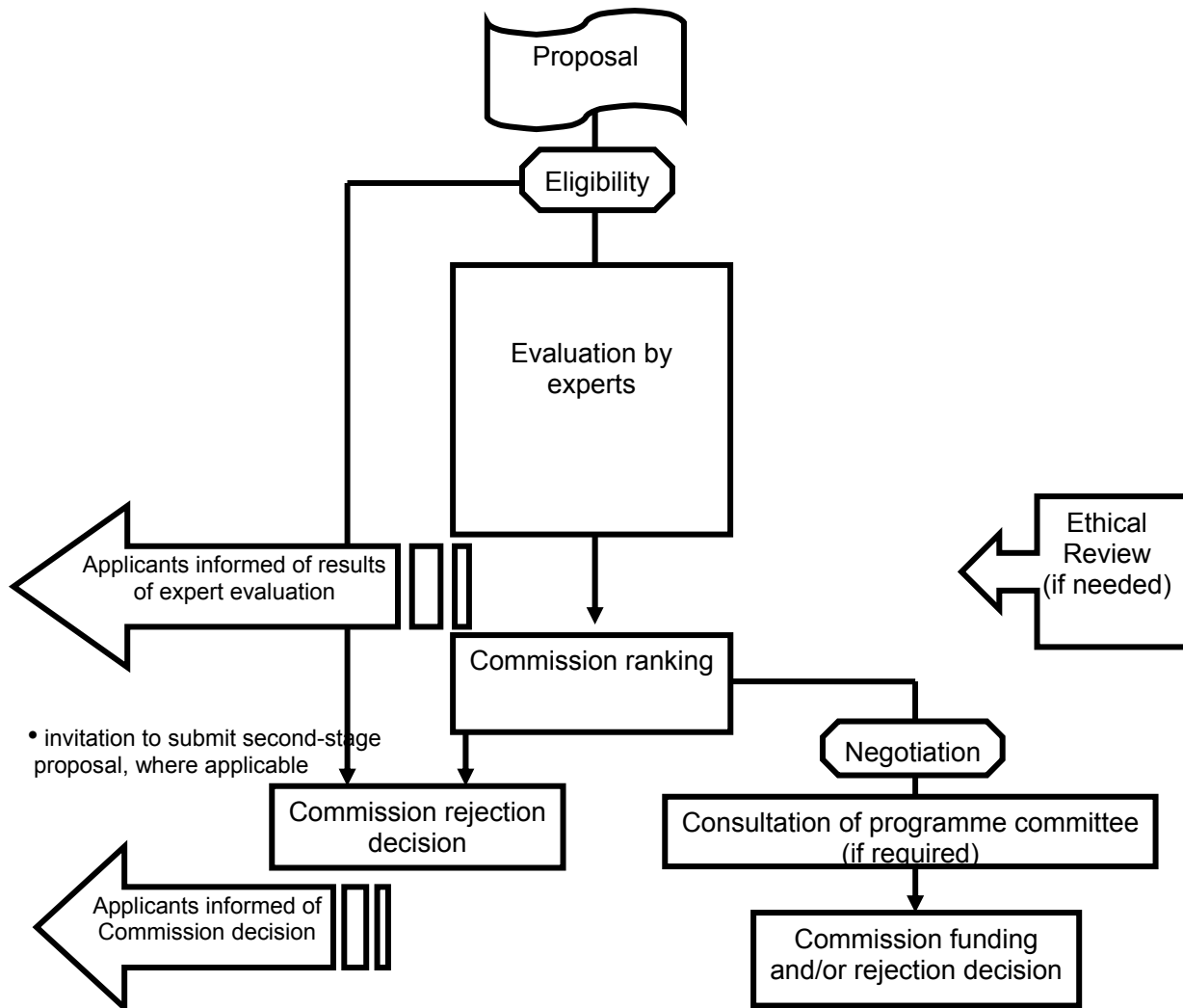
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1. Getting started

Funding decisions in the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7) are made on the basis of **proposals** submitted following **calls** published by the Commission. Proposals describe planned research, training or transfer of knowledge activities, information on who will carry them out, and how much they will cost. They must be submitted using a special web-based service before a strictly-enforced **deadline**. The Commission evaluates all eligible proposals in order to identify those whose quality is sufficiently high for possible funding. The basis for this **evaluation** is a peer-review carried out by independent experts.

The Commission then **negotiates** with some or all of those whose proposals have successfully passed the evaluation stage, depending on the budget available. If negotiations are successfully concluded, **grant agreements** providing for an EU financial contribution are established with the participants.

The sequence of steps is summarised in this flow chart:



This **Guide for Applicants** contains the essential information to guide you through the mechanics of preparing and submitting a proposal.

You must also refer to the "**People**" **Work programme** This provides a detailed description of the Marie Curie Actions, their objectives and scope, the eligibility criteria, the Community contribution and the evaluation criteria. Work programmes are revised each year, so make sure you refer to the latest version before preparing your proposal.

*Please check that this is the right guide for you by consulting the Work programme, the **call fiche**, and the description of the Marie Curie Action in the next section.*

This Guide and the Work programme are essential reading. However, you may also wish to consult other reference and background documents, particular those relating to negotiation and the grant agreements, which are available on the Commission's CORDIS web site (see annex 1 to this guide).

2. About the Marie Curie Initial Training Networks

2.1. General aspects

2.1.1 Purpose

This action has been created on the basis of past experiences from the Marie Curie Research Training Networks and Marie Curie Host Fellowships for Early-stage Research Training. The Marie Curie Initial Training Networks aim to **improve the career perspectives** of researchers who are in the first five years of their research career, **in both public and private sectors**.

Institutions which are actively involved in research training (universities, public and private research centres, companies, SME, spin-offs, etc) will propose a network and apply for funding to the Commission. If selected they will collaborate to recruit research fellows and provide them with opportunities to undertake research in the context of **a joint research training programme**. The joint research training programme should respond to well identified needs in defined scientific or technological areas, **expose the researcher to other sectors** including private companies, and offer a comprehensive set of complementary skills (entrepreneurship, IPR, etc.). It should reflect existing or planned research collaborations among the partners, in which the fellow will take part through individual training-through-research projects.

The organisations participating in the network will be expected to **mutually recognise the quality of the training**. This should contribute to the **structuring effect** on European research training capacities through the establishment of long term collaboration among the teams.

2.1.2 Size

The size and budget of the network will depend on the scope of the research training programme, along with the needs in this respect for the disciplines concerned and management considerations. Large networks may be important to provide training in certain fields of research that are fragmented and have many smaller groups active in different locations. Such networks would have to demonstrate a very high degree of organisation. Normally a network will be composed of at least three participants (multi-site networks), but mono-sites and twinings are also possible under certain conditions (see section 2.2). There is no predefined size for multi-site networks. However, past experience has shown that **a manageable size of such networks would be in the range of 6 to 10 partners**. It is expected that the budget will range from € 1.5 million for mono-sites and twinning, through € 2.5 million for the typical multi-site, and up to € 4.5 million for the largest multi-sites.

2.1.3 Duration

The usual duration of funding for Initial Training Networks is four years from the start date of the grant agreement.

2.1.4 The topic of the Project

All Marie Curie actions have **a bottom-up approach**, i.e. research fields are chosen freely by the applicants. All domains of research and technological development addressed under the EC Treaty are eligible for funding (except areas of research covered by the EURATOM Treaty).

ITN proposals will define the scientific and technological area within which the individualised research projects of the recruited researchers will be developed with appropriate reference to interdisciplinary and newly emerging supra-disciplinary fields.

All research carried out must respect fundamental ethical principles, and the requirements set out in the text of the People Specific Programme. (See also Section 3.1 of this Guide).

2.1.5 The Concept of Panels

For practical organisational reasons, proposals will be classified under eight major areas of research (known as 'panels'): Chemistry (CHE); Social and Human Sciences (SOC); Economic Sciences (ECO), Information science and Engineering (ENG); Environmental and Geo-Sciences (ENV); Life Sciences (LIF); Mathematics (MAT), and Physics (PHY). The applicant chooses the panel to which the proposal will be associated at the proposal stage (using the field 'Scientific Panel' on the A1 proposal submission form) and this should be considered as the core discipline. Additional keywords are used to define the other disciplines that may be involved. The choice of panel and keywords will guide the Commission in the selection of experts for proposal evaluation. Note that there is no predefined budget allocation among the panels in the call for proposals. As a general rule the budget will be distributed over the panels based on the proportion of eligible proposals received in each panel.

To help you select the most relevant panel for your proposal a breakdown of each research area into a number of sub-disciplines is provided in Annex 3 of this document.

2.2 Which research organisations can take part?

2.2.1 Who are the participants?

Full Network partners:

Full network partners have rights and obligations with regard to the Community under the terms of the Rules for Participation and will be signing the grant agreement as *beneficiaries*. Full network partners are organisations (legal entities) that contribute directly to the implementation of the joint training programme of the network, by recruiting and employing eligible researchers, and providing training and other dedicated network actions.

Associated partners:

In some cases networks may also involve organisations that participate in network activities as associated partners. Such partners will participate in addition to the minimum number of full network partners required (see section 2.2.3 below), and they will not be signatories to the grant agreement itself but rather to a strategic partnership agreement with the full network partners. The associated partners will contribute as *third parties* to the research training programme, e.g. by providing specialised training modules.

Many different types of organisations can take part in an ITN:

- National organisations (e.g. universities, research centres etc., whether private or public);
- Commercial enterprises, especially those of small and medium size (SMEs);
- Non-profit or charitable organisations (e.g. NGOs, trusts, etc.);
- International European interest organisations (e.g. CERN, EMBL, etc.);
- The Joint Research Centre of the European Commission;
- International organisations (e.g. WHO, UNESCO, etc) (funding subject to certain conditions – see below).

Definitions for some of the above categories of organisations are provided in the Rules for Participation for FP7 (http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/find-doc_en.html).

The eligibility of organisations to participate in an ITN will depend on the **location** of the organisation as well as on the overall **composition** of the network.

2.2.2 Definition of country groups

For the purposes of the Marie Curie Initial Training Networks four categories of countries can be distinguished:

- EU Member States (MS)
- Associated Countries (AC)
- International Cooperation Partner Countries (ICPC)
- Other Third countries (OTC)

EU Member States

The EU Member States are:

Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, The Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom.

Associated Countries (AC)

The Associated Countries are:

Albania, Croatia, FYR Macedonia, Iceland, Israel, Liechtenstein, Montenegro, Norway, Serbia, Switzerland and Turkey

Other countries may become associated during the course of FP7. The latest news will be posted on the CORDIS web site.

International Cooperation Partner Countries (ICPC)

The ICPC are a series of low-income, lower-middle income and upper-middle-income countries. Organisations from these countries can participate and receive funding in FP7, providing that certain minimum conditions are met.

The list of ICPC is given in annex 1 to the Work programme and is reproduced for convenience on the next page.

Up-to-date information on the status of individual countries relative to the 7th Framework Programme for RTD is available at:

http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/who_en.html#countries

Other Third countries (OTC)

This group comprises countries that are not part of any of the three previous country groups mentioned above, such as the United States, Canada, Japan, Australia, Singapore etc.

ICPC Countries

ACP**African**

Angola
Benin
Botswana
Burkina-Faso
Burundi
Cameroon
Cape Verde
Central African Republic
Chad
Comoros
Congo (Republic)
Congo (Democratic Rep.)
Côte d'Ivoire
Djibouti
Equatorial Guinea
Eritrea
Ethiopia
Gabon
Gambia
Ghana
Guinea
Guinea-Bissau
Kenya
Lesotho
Liberia
Madagascar
Malawi
Mali
Mauritania
Mauritius
Mozambique
Namibia
Niger
Nigeria
Rwanda
Sao Tome & Principe
Senegal
Seychelles
Sierra Leone
Somalia
South Africa¹
Sudan
Swaziland

Tanzania
Togo
Uganda
Zambia
Zimbabwe

Caribbean

Barbados
Belize
Cuba
Dominica
Dominican Rep.
Grenada
Guyana
Haiti
Jamaica
Saint Kitts & Nevis
Saint Lucia
St Vincent & Grenadines
Suriname
Trinidad & Tobago

Pacific

Cook Islands
Timor Leste
Fiji
Kiribati
Marshall Islands
Micronesia,
Federal States of
Nauru
Niue
Palau
Papua New Guinea
Solomon Islands
Tonga
Tuvalu
Vanuatu
Samoa

Asia

Afghanistan
Bangladesh
Bhutan

Burma/Myanmar
Cambodia
China¹
India¹
Indonesia
Iran
Iraq
Lao People's Democratic Rep.
Malaysia
Maldives
Mongolia
Nepal
Oman
Pakistan
Philippines
Sri Lanka
Thailand
Vietnam
Yemen

Eastern Europe & Central Asia (EECA)

Armenia²
Azerbaijan²
Belarus²
Georgia²
Kazakhstan
Kyrgyz Republic
Moldova²
Russia¹
Tajikistan
Turkmenistan
Ukraine^{1, 2}
Uzbekistan

Latin America

Argentina¹
Bolivia
Brazil¹
Chile¹
Colombia
Costa Rica
Ecuador
El Salvador
Guatemala

Honduras
Mexico¹
Nicaragua
Panama
Paraguay
Peru
Uruguay
Venezuela

Mediterranean Partner Countries (MPC)²

Algeria
Egypt¹
Jordan
Lebanon
Libya
Morocco¹
Palestinian-administered areas
Syrian Arab Rep.
Tunisia¹

Western Balkan Countries (WBC)

Albania*
Bosnia-Herzegovina³
Kosovo⁴
Montenegro*

1. Signed an agreement with the EC covering Science & Technology.

2. These countries are also part of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP).

3. Until the country becomes associated to FP7.

4. As defined by UNSC resolution 1244 of 10 June 1999.

* As from 1 January 2008 Albania and Montenegro are associated to FP7.

2.2.3 How are ITNs composed?

ITNs are typically set up as **multi-site projects**, but in certain cases **mono-sites or, twinnings are also possible**.

Multi-site

A multi-site network must be composed of **at least three participants** established in at least three different Member States (MS) or Associated countries (AC). One of the participants is the coordinator of the ITN.

If there are more than three participants in the network the additional organisations may be located anywhere in the world (but the funding of participants from Third countries is restricted in some cases – see section 2.2.4).

Example A: *a multi-site ITN composed of Law departments from 4 universities located in Poland (MS), Romania (MS), Argentina (ICPC), and Canada (OTC) is not eligible. There needs to be at least one additional team from EU Member States or Associated countries.*

Example B: *a multi-site ITN composed of 2 universities located in Slovenia (MS) and Turkey (AC) and 3 SMEs located in Germany (MS), Israel (AC) and China (ICPC) is eligible.*

Mono-sites & Twinnings

ITNs with **less than three participants** can also be considered, provided that the organisation(s) involved have **well-established transnational collaborations** with other research institutes that can contribute actively to the research training programme without being formal (contractual) participant(s) in the ITN (i.e. involvement as *associated partners*).

For **mono-site** applications the single research organisation must be established in a Member State (MS) or an Associated Country (AC). The organisation must have a large recruitment capacity and provide an international and interdisciplinary training environment for the recruited researchers. The involvement of associated partners should be based on past records of joint operation of training programmes and should exploit existing synergies between the partners (e.g. existing collaborative research programmes, exchange of early-stage researchers), to further strengthen the interdisciplinarity and the complementary skills component of the research training programme where appropriate, and ensure cooperation between academia and industry. Involvement of industry as associated partners should preferably be at level at level 2 (see section 2.2.6) in order to facilitate intersectoral mobility and training of the researchers and prepare them for a wider range of career options.

For **twinnings** the proposal should comprise two research organisations located in two different Member States (MS) or Associated Countries (AC). As for mono-sites, the partners (full and associated) in a twinning are expected to be already engaged in a joint training collaboration. Industry involvement at *level 1* (as full network partner) would be welcomed; alternatively, the involvement of industry would be as associated partner at level 2.

*In all cases the nature of **the existing international collaboration** and the way in which this will be exploited in the proposed training programme **must be clearly described** in the proposal.*

Example A: *A large particle physics international laboratory is offering research training in the application of advanced microelectronics, optoelectronics and data processing technologies in particle detector systems. This research organisation has been operating a joint inter-disciplinary training programme for the past ten years in collaboration with a series of university departments and private companies. The international laboratory can submit a proposal as a mono-site ITN that will recruit and host early-stage researchers. It will provide and supervise the main part of the research training and recruited researchers will access the state-of-the-art equipments. It will also provide specialised seminars and colloquia on relevant research areas such as electronics, detectors and accelerators. In addition and through its existing network of Universities, research institutes and industries, the research training will be complemented by 6 associated partners of which 2 are from the industry sector. Secondments to these associated partners will ensure complementary training and skills and will ensure exposure to industrial environments.*

In mono-sites and twinings, the contractual participant(s) take(s) full responsibility for executing the proposed training programme, while the recruited researchers are expected to benefit from the informal network with the associated partners during the training period. Although most of their training period will be spent at the contractual participant(s), active mobility of the recruited researchers towards the associated partner organisations in the form of secondments will be expected.

In twinings the allocation of person-months between the two contractual participants would normally be balanced. Most of the period of the recruited fellows would be spent at those institutions while profiting from the training opportunities offered by the established network associated to the twinning.

2.2.4 Rules for funding of research teams

No more than 40% of the total Community contribution may be allocated to the benefit of organisations within one country in Multi-site ITNs.

EU Member States, Associated Countries and International European Interest Organisations

Network teams located in EU Member States (MS) or Associated Countries (AC) which have signed up for participation in FP7, as well as in International European Interest Organisations¹ (IEIO) are eligible for funding according to the definitions of minimum numbers of participants described above. For the purposes of determining whether the minimum conditions for participation in an ITN are fulfilled, the participation of an IEIO or of the Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) will be counted as a MS or AC other than those represented by the other participants in the consortium.

Example: the JRC will be eligible to participate as the third partner in a multi-site ITN comprising also 2 micro-biological institutes from universities located in Poland (MS) and Italy (MS). Although the JRC is physically located in Italy, it will not count as an Italian participant and thus the minimum requirement for the participation of 3 different MS/AC is fulfilled.

¹ 'International European Interest Organisation' is defined in the Rules for Participation as: "an international organisation, the majority of whose members are Member States or Associated countries, and whose principal objective is to promote scientific and technological cooperation in Europe";

International Cooperation Partner Countries (ICPC)

Legal entities established in an FP7 International Cooperation Partner Country (ICPC) are eligible for funding above the minimum number of Member States and Associated Countries **in a multi-site ITN**. ICPC countries can never be participants in a Mono-site ITN or a Twinning.

Example A: a multi-site ITN composed of 2 research institutes located in Sweden (MS) and Croatia (AC) and 3 SMEs located in France (MS), Norway (AC) and China (ICPC) is eligible.

Example B: a twinning ITN composed of 2 universities located in Sweden (MS) and China (ICPC) is not eligible.

Other Third Countries and International Organisations (OTC)

As for ICPCs, the participation of teams from OTC countries is **only possible in multi-site ITNs**. Teams from these countries can never be participants in a Mono-site ITN or a Twinning. Furthermore, their funding will depend on the status of the country:

A Community financial contribution may be granted to international organisations (other than IEIOs) and to legal entities established in an OTC country, if such funding is foreseen in a **bilateral scientific and technological agreement or any other arrangement** between the Community and the country of the legal entity.

If this is not the case then the proposal needs to present strong arguments in order for the participant to be funded. It must be demonstrated that the financing is **essential** to achieve the objectives of the training programme. **OTC countries** such as the USA, Canada, Australia, Japan, Singapore etc. **and international organisations would normally be expected to fund their own participation in the consortium**. In practice this means that their institutions could second researchers to the network partners and these researchers would be paid (according to the Marie Curie rules) by the hosting organisations through the project, but researchers being hosted at the OTC universities or companies would have to be paid for with OTC funding (according to the Marie Curie rules), as would their associated research costs.

Example A: a multi-site ITN comprises 5 teams from EU Member and Associated countries (MS/AC) and two teams without funding from USA (OTC) and Japan (OTC). This allows the researchers within the network to travel to the teams in OTC countries in order to collaborate and benefit from their expertise. While no direct funding is provided, the teams located in the OTC countries will benefit from the scientific interaction and transfer-of-knowledge and could be invited to take part in network events.

2.2.5 Overview

The following table summarizes the possible location of the participants in an ITN.

Type of ITN	Country of participant(s)
Multi-site ITN	<p>Minimum: 3 different countries: MS/AC + MS/AC + MS/AC</p> <p>Additional participants: from anywhere in the world (MS, AC, ICPC, OTC*)</p> <p>*However, OTC participants can only be funded if funding is foreseen in a special agreement between the country and the EU, or in very exceptional cases if funding is essential for the training programme.</p>
Twinning ITN	<p>2 different countries: MS/AC + MS/AC.</p>
Mono-site ITN	<p>1 country: MS/AC</p>

2.2.6 Industry participation

The ITN action is targeted at the training of researchers in the early stages of their research career and aims to contribute to the structuring of the existing initial research training capacity in Europe and to increase the attraction of young people to a career in research. In particular, the action aims to add to the intersectoral and transnational employability of the recruited researchers. Therefore, an essential part of an ITN, whether multi-site, mono-site or twinning is the involvement of organisations from different sectors in order to ensure better skills planning and a more coherent dialogue and collaboration in training and research between the sectors.

Specifically, **industry** is expected to participate concretely in the ITN. Note that "industry" is to be seen in a wider scope than just the traditional manufacturing and/or production industries and is to comprise enterprises and organisations in the general sense of commercial or socio-economic actors.

In all cases industry should be involved **at the highest possible level**:

	Network Status	Recruitment of researchers	Training and/or hosting of seconded researchers	Participation in Supervisory Board
Level 1 - Full	Full Network Participant	X	X	X
Level 2 - Intermediate	Associated Partner		X	X
Level 3 – Minimum	Associated Partner			X

The degree of involvement and the level of commitment of industry will be assessed by the expert evaluators under each of the evaluation criteria.

In fields that are known to usually have interactions with industry, proposals are likely to receive a less favourable assessment if they do not foresee industry participation at level 1.

For fields not having normally interactions with industry, its participation should be at levels 2 or 3 as appropriate.

Given that a career resulting in academic tenure is a possibility for only a minority of postdoctoral researchers, the presence of the private sector on the supervisory board in all ITNs is important to ensure that researchers leave the network with a wide skill set, maximising their employment prospects wherever their career takes them (see also section 2.4)

Level 1: Industry participates as (a) full network partner(s), including as network coordinator, recruiting the eligible researchers, offering research training and participating in the supervisory board;

Level 2: Industry provides research training and complementary skills courses (e.g. communication, enterprise cycles, innovation, IPR etc.), as well as secondment opportunities, and participates in the supervisory board;

Level 3: Industry participates as members of the supervisory board of the network, thus contributing to the definition of the skills requirements for the targeted researchers.

At **levels 2 and 3**, the industrial organisations will be involved as associated partners. However, because such partner institutions will not receive Community financial contribution, the level 2 costs related to the organisation of the specific research and/or complementary training including secondments/visits opportunities etc. will have to be incurred by the full network partners where researchers are recruited. These actions are considered as core elements of the projects and cannot be subcontracted. Therefore the costs should just be invoiced by the industrial partner to the full network partners.

In all cases, the proposals should include clear evidence of the commitment of industry to be involved.

*Example A: An ITN in the area of engineering is composed of 7 full network partners and 1 associated partner. 5 of the full network partners are universities (from Bulgaria, Greece, Germany, Ireland and Turkey) and 2 are industrial partners (1 large company and 1 SME). The SME will be recruiting an ESR for a period of 12 months whilst the large company will employ an ESR for 36 months (**level 1** participation). In addition, a multi national enterprise is involved as an associated partner in the ITN offering specific training opportunities on marketing and international negotiations as well as secondments of the recruited fellows – the involvement of the associated partner is on **level 2**.*

*Example B: The ITN is undertaking research in the area of the economics and actuarial science of climate change and how this relates to risk mitigation. In addition to the 6 full network partners that are recruiting Marie Curie fellows (5 universities and 1 large private research institute (**level 1** participation)), the network counts 2 associated partners which are offering opportunities for secondments and training (**level 2** participation). These partners are the insurance company Lloyds of London and Zurich Re, both active players in the research field, but neither able in this instance to recruit early stage researchers, preferring instead to host each researcher for several months at a time. In addition a further partner: Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, of Berkeley, USA has agreed to sit on the advisory board and lend its expertise to the definition of the training programme (**level 3** participation).*

2.3 Eligible researchers

The Marie Curie actions address researchers in terms of their skills and competence development at different stages of their careers, in both public and private sector. In all cases the targeted researchers are at least at post-graduate or equivalent level and the definitions of eligible researchers are based on their professional experience in research and not on their age.

2.3.1 Who are the targeted researchers in ITN?

Recruitment for Initial training

ITNs support the initial training of researchers who are still **within the first five years** (or full-time equivalent) of their careers in research, at the time of their appointment.

Early-stage researchers (ESR)

The network's training aims must be **predominantly directed at early-stage researchers**, including *inter alia* training within Ph.D. programmes.

Definition:

Early-stage researchers are defined as those who are, at the time of selection by the host institution, in the first four years (full-time equivalent) of their research careers. This is measured from the date when they obtained the degree which would formally entitle them to embark on a doctorate, either in the country in which the degree was obtained or in the country in which the research training is provided, irrespective of whether or not a doctorate is envisaged.

Example A: a researcher has graduated with a first degree in biology in 2004 and would like to start her Ph.D. studies in 2007. She is eligible as an ESR within the ITN as she has less than 4 years of research experience and no PhD.

Example B: a researcher has already been working as a researcher in industry for two years since graduating with his first degree in chemistry. He would be able to benefit from participation in an ITN as an ESR even without pursuing a Ph.D. degree.

Example C: a researcher obtained her PhD after 3 ½ years. She is **not** eligible as an ESR within the ITN even though she has less than 4 years of research experience. However, she would be eligible to be appointed as an ER within the first five years of her career.

Experienced Researchers within their first five years of their career (ER)

While maintaining the training of Early-stage Researchers as the primary objective, **some networks might justify the involvement of experienced researchers within the first five years of their research career** for the purpose of completing their initial training.

Definition:

Experienced researchers must, at the time of recruitment **either** be in possession of a doctoral degree, irrespective of the time taken to acquire it, **or** have at least four years of full-time equivalent research experience. This is measured from the date when they obtained the degree which formally allowed them to embark on a doctorate in the country in which the degree was obtained or in the host country (irrespective of whether or not a doctorate was envisaged).

The research experience of an experienced researcher recruited for initial training may not exceed 5 years at the time of the appointment.

Example A: a researcher obtained her PhD after 4 years and subsequently worked in research for 13 months under a postdoctoral position. She would **not** be eligible to be appointed as an ER within the first five years of her career.

Example B: three years after obtaining his undergraduate degree, a researcher obtained his PhD. He took a career break of two years for family reasons but would like to continue his research career. He is eligible to take part in an ITN as an ER to complete his initial training.

It should be noted that an individual researcher may not be recruited first as an early-stage researcher and subsequently as an experienced researcher in the same network.

Recruitment for the Transfer of new competences

Visiting Scientists (VS)

To complement the network's capacity to transfer new knowledge and strengthen supervision of the network-wide training activities, **a limited number of senior researchers** originating from the public or private sector can be recruited where duly justified to take part in the research training programme as visiting scientists. These visiting scientists must *be experienced researchers of outstanding stature in international training and collaborative research*.

Visiting scientists are recruited as experienced researchers (see definition above). Their salary will be determined according to the two brackets for experience (4-10 years; > 10 years) laid out in Annex 3, Table 1 of the People Work programme. For each of the brackets the basic salary of the table will be topped up by 30% to reflect the outstanding stature of the visiting scientist. (For more details on the role of visiting scientists, please refer to section 2.4.4 below).

For all recruitments in a network the eligibility of the researcher will be determined at the time of recruitment and the status of the researcher will *not* evolve over the life-time of a contract.

2.3.2 Duration of appointments

The length of individual appointments for researchers will be limited to between 3 months and 36 months for *early-stage researchers* and 3 to 24 months for *experienced researchers* that are in the first five years of their research careers.

Example: a researcher is in the process of writing up her Ph.D. after 4½ years of research and would like to apply for an appointment within an ITN. While she has not yet gained her doctorate, she would **not** be considered as an ESR due to her level of experience. However, she would be eligible for recruitment as an Experienced Researcher (ER). The appointment as an ER in the network could be for up to 2 years – within the limits of the overall duration of the ITN project.

Visiting scientists will usually be recruited for multiple stays within the network. Together the stays should add up to a minimum period of one month.

2.3.3 Conditions of nationality and mobility of researchers

Researchers are normally required to undertake trans-national mobility (i.e. move from one country to another) when taking up their appointment. Two general rules apply to the appointment of researchers in a network:

- Researchers can be nationals of any country other than the country of the premises of the host organisation where they will carry out their project; however nationals of countries outside the EU and Associated States can only be recruited by hosts that are located in Member States or Associated States.
- Researchers must not have resided or carried out their main activity (work, studies, etc.) in the country of the host for more than 12 months in the 3 years immediately prior to their recruitment. This rule does not apply in cases where a researcher is subsequently appointed in another node of the same network within the same country.

Example: a French researcher has moved to Germany for the first time and has carried out research there for the last six months. He can be appointed within an ITN team in Germany.

The People Work programme specifies a number of specific exceptions to these rules (WP section I.2)

2.3.4 Relative distribution of researcher-months in an ITN

The main aim of the ITN is the training of Early-stage researchers. As a general rule Early-stage researchers (ESR) must be present in significantly higher proportions compared to Experienced researchers (ER). Typically the share of ESR researcher months in an ITN should be 100% but the minimum expected is 80%. **Visiting Scientists should be exceptional and duly justified in the context of the training programme.**

2.4 Typical Activities of an ITN

2.4.1 Training activities

Networks will primarily develop a dedicated joint research training programme that focuses upon exploiting both the local possibilities available from the participants and the collective multidisciplinary expertise of the network as a whole. Training should be directed towards the needs of researchers that are within the first 5 years of their career, including those undertaking Ph.D. studies and to a certain extent early postdocs. Such training activities might include:

- Primarily, training-through-research under supervision by means of individual personalised projects within the frame of the research topics defined by the network;
- Provision of structured training courses (e.g. tutoring, lecture courses, teaching) that are available either locally or from another participant of the network within the framework of the joint training programme; local training programmes between the participants are expected to be coordinated to maximise added value (e.g. joint syllabus development, opening up of local training to other network teams, joint Ph.D. programmes, etc.).
- Exchanging knowledge with the members of other teams in the network through undertaking intersectoral visits and secondments;
- Development of network-wide training activities (e.g. workshops, summer schools) that exploit the interdisciplinary and intersectoral aspects of the project and exposure of the participants to different schools of thought. Where relevant visiting scientists may also contribute to such activities;

Further training activities with a particular view to widening the career prospects of the researchers would include:

- Organisation of courses to provide complementary training both within and outside the network. Topics of interest would include, for example, project management, presentation skills, language courses, ethics, IPR, communication, entrepreneurship, etc.;
- Involvement in the organisation of network activities and other aspects such as proposal writing, enterprise start-up, task co-ordination, etc;

For researchers that are recruited for initial training and for a period of more than 6 months, a **Personal Career Development Plan** will be established in order to aid in the provision of the research training programme that best suits the needs of the each researcher.

Training activities specifically for experienced researchers would be:

- Intersectoral or interdisciplinary transfer of knowledge, training in new techniques,
- Capacity to build collaborations,
- Taking active part in the management of the research project,
- Developing organisational skills through organisation of training events,

Where a network seeks funding to appoint early postdocs, it must still be in the context of a research training programme. In these cases the training which is particularly directed at the early postdocs must be made clear and the expert evaluators must be able to see from the proposal how the opportunities offered within the network would be exploited for the career enhancement of these early postdocs, both in terms of research and transferable skills training appropriate to their experience. Training of such "early postdocs" **should aim at making them more independent and providing them with the skills to become team leaders in a near future.**

In cases of twinning or mono-site ITNs, the participating organisations must demonstrate clearly that the necessary elements of the research training programme are complemented by well-established, trans-national collaborations with other research institutions. It is expected that both contractual and associated partners will mutually recognise the quality of the training and, if possible, of diplomas and other certificates awarded.

2.4.2 Networking & Other Training activities

Networks will establish and/or strengthen the collaboration between the teams, as well as between itself and its wider scientific community. Community funding will also be provided for networking activities.

Each network will be expected to organise workshops, seminars, summer schools, etc. which should be directly related to the research training programme of the network. Content and quality of such events should be detailed and fully justified in the proposal.

Networking activities could further include:

- Organisation of scientific or managerial network meetings.;
- Visits and secondments between participants for the purpose of exchanging knowledge;
- Invitation of external experts for specialist inputs into the joint research-training programme;
- Attendance at international conferences and workshops for the representation and dissemination of the networks' research by the researchers recruited for initial training;
- Electronic networking via the active use of Internet WebPages, Email and video conferencing;
- Collaboration with other ITNs in similar or complementary fields is also encouraged for exchange of "best practice", and transfer of knowledge;
- Organisation of a final network conference which would be widely publicised and showcase the achievements of the network.

2.4.3 Secondments

Recruited researchers can be seconded to other partner institutions within the network and/or to associated partners for a duration of up to 30% of their recruitment period.

Normal practice during secondments is for the researcher to be appointed by the sending institute, which also pays his/her travel and subsistence expenses (e.g. accommodation). In multi-site ITNs the receiving institution would be expected to pay the expenses associated with the research activities of the researcher at its site. For mono-site ITNs and twinings the research expenses of the seconded researcher would usually be covered by the sending institute.

Example: an Early-stage researcher recruited for a period of 36 months by an astrophysics institute in Germany will spend two periods of secondment of each 5 months at two industrial partner institutions within the Network in order to profit from specific training facilities.

2.4.4 Visiting Scientists

Exceptionally, visiting scientists from outside the network can be recruited to actively take part in the research training programme by sharing their knowledge and skills through direct involvement in the transfer of knowledge of the recruited fellows and in the conception and organisation of training events. Any participation of the visiting scientists in the network should be aimed at improving the skills and know-how of the fellows and must be explicitly justified in the proposal. Visiting scientists should not be seen as a vehicle to substitute for a host's capacity to supervise the recruited fellows. It is not anticipated that a visiting scientist would be appointed without explicit reference to the punctual training events he or she would be expected to provide or organise. Nor should the duration of appointment exceed what is reasonable in order to impart training or expertise for the benefit of the fellows in the network. The role of visiting scientists and the value added by their involvement in the training programme will be assessed by the expert evaluators.

Example: An ITN in the area of renewable energies consisting of a multidisciplinary network including industrial partners has outlined in the proposal that it would like to organise 3 summer schools. In order to implement these training events for the network the involvement of three world-class experts in the area of renewable energies from different disciplines (e.g. environmental economy, engineering, physical sciences, etc.) is foreseen. The experts would take the lead for the conception and implementation of the summer schools as well as taking up a considerable part of the lecturing. A contract of 3 times 1 month would be offered to these three different visiting scientists.

2.4.5 International conferences and other training events open to external researchers

Each network is founded on training events organised first and foremost for the members of the network and in particular the recruited fellows. However, a network also has the possibility to open its research training programme to researchers from outside the network. Such opening will be an opportunity for the recruited researchers to exchange knowledge with more experienced researchers and for the members of the network to disseminate the skills and knowledge that the teams have to offer. Such open training events can take the form of international conferences, workshops, seminars, summer schools etc. and must be directly related to the research training programme of the network. Funding is available as a fixed amount per researcher-day for researchers from outside the network. Full details of the content, quality and expected number of participants of such events should be given and fully justified in the proposal. The budget requested for conferences should be in reasonable relation to the proposed research training programme, bearing in mind that the funding of conferences is not the primary objective of the ITN action, but rather one of many elements envisaged to improve the training and career perspectives

of early-stage researchers. The justification and integration of the proposed events in the joint training programme will be assessed by the expert evaluators.

Example: an ITN in the area of nano-materials suggests in the proposal to open two of the training events organised for their own researchers to allow attendance also of external researchers. A summer school "Polymer synthesis and characterization" will be organised during the 2nd year for 4 days. 30 participants are expected. A workshop "From bench to market" will be organised during the 3^d year for 2 days. This workshop will be led by the industrial partners of the consortium, and speakers from the economic world such as business consultants will be invited. 20 participants are expected.

2.4.6 The Supervisory Board

Each network will have a clearly identified **supervisory board** co-ordinating the network-wide training activities.

Composition

The supervisory board will be composed of representatives of each of the participants in the network as well as of external representatives. However, all ITNs must have as a minimum representation of industry at the level of the supervisory board. The involvement of industry in the supervisory board aims to ensure that the skills requirements for the recruited researchers are defined on the basis of a thorough understanding of the sectoral needs of both academia and enterprise thus giving the trained researchers the widest possible employment prospects. The expert evaluators will be looking for evidence of the commitment of industry to participate in the ITN.

Tasks

The supervisory board will define the skills requirements for the recruited researchers taking into account the needs of both the industrial and academic sectors and ensuring an adequate exploitation of complementarities and synergies among the network partners. It will ensure that scientific and technological training through personalised research projects is balanced with complementary skills training, appropriate to the needs of each recruited researcher. It will also establish active and continuous communication and exchange of best practice among the network participants to maximise the benefits of the partnership.

2.4.7 Management and Recruitment

The network will distribute responsibilities among its teams and co-ordinate its activities to ensure that co-operation and communication are as open and efficient as possible, with appropriate involvement of recruited fellows (for organisation of meetings and identification of training needs for example).

The network will be responsible for the selection and appointment of its eligible researchers. An important aspect of the Commission's policy towards researchers is to improve their working and living conditions while being mobile thereby opening up new perspectives for research careers within Europe. The Marie Curie Actions should act as a catalyst in this respect. The host organisations will therefore be required to meet certain conditions when appointing researchers and the recruitment procedure should be in line with the principles set out in the European Charter for Researchers and in the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers. These documents may be downloaded from: <http://ec.europa.eu/eracareers/europeancharter>

2.5. Financial Regime

The financial support for Marie Curie Networks for Initial Training is calculated on the basis of eligible activities and takes the form of grants covering up to 100% of the budget.

2.5.1 What types of expenses are covered?

According to the Work Programme, the eligible expenses may be broadly divided into:

- Eligible expenses for the activities carried out by the researchers;
- Eligible expenses for the activities carried out by the host organisations

(See also Work programme, Annex 3, Table 4)

2.5.2 Expenses for the activities carried out by the researchers

Category A: Monthly living and mobility allowances

Living allowance

This refers to the basic amount to be paid to the researcher in monthly instalments according to the table reproduced on the next page.

This amount is then adjusted, applying a correction factor for the cost of living according to the country in which the researcher will be appointed. **The correction factors are indicated in Table 3 in Annex 3.3 to the Work programme.**

For each eligible researcher, the host organisation can opt between recruiting him/her under an employment contract with full social security coverage (including all compulsory deductions under national legislation in the context of the project), or a fixed-amount fellowship with minimum social security.

As a general rule researchers shall be appointed under an employment contract, except in adequately documented cases (such as for short stays, e.g. visiting scientists) or where national regulation would prohibit this possibility. When an employment contract cannot be provided, the researcher shall be recruited under a status equivalent to a fixed amount fellowship, provided that it is compatible with the national legislation and that adequate social security is provided (but not necessarily paid from the fellowship).

As a general principle the choice of recruitment type should be made in accordance with the best interests of the researchers. The European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the recruitment of researchers offer a reference framework for the employment of researchers.

In all cases, the hosts must ensure that the researcher is covered under the social security scheme, which is applied to employed workers within the country of the contractor, or under a social security scheme providing an adequate protection and covering the researcher in every place of implementation of the ITN activities. In the case of secondments for short stays in other partner institutions, the social security provision should also cover the researchers during these periods.

The basis for calculating the monthly living allowance of the recruited researchers is given in the following table:

Purpose	Researcher Categories	A. Employment contract (€/year)	B. Fixed-amount fellowship (€/year)
Initial training	Early stage researchers	34 500	17 250
	Experienced researchers (up to 5 years experience) – recruited for initial training	53 000	26 500
Transfer of new competences & supervision	Visiting Scientist (< 10 years experience)	68 900	34 450
	Visiting Scientist (>10 years experience)	103 350	51 675

Important notice: A. Living allowance

*NOTE: The living allowance is a **gross Community contribution** to the salary costs of the fellow. Consequently, the net salary results from deducting all compulsory social security contributions as well as direct taxes (e.g. income tax) from the gross amounts. The host organisation may pay a **top-up** to the eligible researchers in order to complement this contribution as long as these funds come from the host's own resources and not through third-party funding for the same project.*

Mobility allowance

This is a monthly payment of a fixed amount to cover expenses of the researcher related to his/her mobility (e.g. relocation, family charges etc.). As for the living allowance, a correction factor for the cost of living of the country of execution of the project is applied (see Table 3.3 in Annex 3 to the Work programme). There are two reference amounts depending on the family situation of the researcher *at the time of the recruitment of the researcher*.

- €800/month: Researcher with family obligations (marriage or relationship with equivalent status to a marriage recognised by the national legislation of the country of the host organisation or of the nationality of the researcher, and/or children).
- €500/month: Researcher without family obligations

Category B: Travel allowance (yearly)

This refers to an allowance upon taking up employment and yearly thereafter. The allowance is a fixed-amount based upon the direct distance between the location of origin of the researcher and the location of the host institution.

Important notice: A. Mobility and B. Travel allowance

NOTE: The mobility and travel allowances are only paid in those cases where there is trans-national mobility of the researcher, consequently, a researcher who is carrying out the project in an international organisation located in his/her country of nationality, would not receive a mobility allowance.

Category C: Career exploratory allowance (single payment)

This allowance of one single payment of €2000/fellow, only for stays of at least one year, is intended to enable each researcher to help develop their career by e.g. attending job interviews, additional courses, job fairs, etc. This allowance is only paid to early-stage and experienced researchers recruited for initial training.

Important notice: Allowances A, B & C

Please note that social security contributions and taxation of the different allowances vary from country to country. The travel, mobility and career exploratory allowances have been conceived as separate flat rate amounts and where national taxation allows, it is the intention that these amounts should not be subject to personal taxation or employers deductions. In order to obtain an estimation of the actual net allowances for the researchers, it is recommended to consult the host institution and/or the relevant National Contact Point (see Annex 1).

Category D: Contribution to the participation expenses of eligible researchers

This contribution is managed by the hosting organisation for expenses related to the participation of the researchers in research and training activities (contribution to research-related costs, meetings, conference attendance, training actions, etc). It consists of a fixed amount:

- €600 per researcher-month recruited for initial training: for laboratory based research projects
- €300 per researcher-month recruited for initial training: for non-laboratory based research projects

2.5.3 Expenses for the activities carried out by the host organisations**Category E: Contribution to the research/training/transfer of knowledge programme expenses:**

This is a contribution of a fixed amount of €600 per researcher month. As opposed to the allowances A, B, C & D this contribution is not directly linked to the individual researchers but it rather goes to the host organisation to contribute to the overall expenses related to the execution of the training project (publication of vacant positions, internal joint training actions, teaching material, etc.) and to the co-ordination between participants (network meetings, detachment of staff, etc).

Category F: Contribution to the organisation of international conferences, workshops and events:

This contribution is managed by the host institution for the organisation of international conferences, workshops and events open to participants outside the network, including organisational expenses (invitation of keynote speakers, publications, rental of premises, web casting) and participation fees of eligible researchers from outside the network.

It is a fixed amount contribution of €300 per researcher-day for researchers from outside the network, for the duration of the event.

Category G: Management activities

This refers to a *maximum of 7 % of the total Community contribution for multi-site networks* and a *maximum of 3% for Mono-sites and Twinnings* that will be paid towards the management of the project. It will be based upon actual expenses (e.g. towards the salary of a person dedicated to assist with the management of the project, or a contract with an external independent auditor for audit certification).

Category H: Contribution to overheads

This refers to a flat rate payment of 10% of the direct costs, excluding costs for subcontracting.

2.5.4 How do I estimate the EC contribution?

Applicants are not required to calculate the amount of the estimated EC contribution. This will be automatically calculated from the information contained in the A4 form of the proposal, using the rates, allowances and coefficients given in Annex 3 of the Work programme. If the proposal is selected by the Commission for funding, the EC contribution will be estimated more accurately during the negotiations taking into account the anticipated conditions of appointment (e.g. fixed-amount fellowship or employment contract) and any recommendations made by the independent evaluators.

It is an intrinsic feature of host-driven actions that the expenses related to the appointment of researchers cannot be accurately calculated in advance. This is because some of the allowances to be paid depend upon the personal circumstances of the researcher (e.g. place of origin, family status etc). The level of funding will be determined with the Commission services on the basis on an average level.

The example below aims to help understand the way the contributions are calculated.

Example: A multi-site ITN of 8 partners proposes to provide initial training of 36 months to 11 ESRs (total 396 person months) and complementary training to 4 ERs (total 42 person months). A senior visiting scientist (VS) will be recruited to share his knowledge and skills during the workshop and summer school organised in year 3 (recruitment for 1 period of 2 months). A conference will be organised in year 3. The event is programmed to run over 2 days and it is expected that 40 external researchers will attend. 25 of these external researchers will be paying their attendance themselves, whilst additional funding from the Commission is sought for the remaining 15 researchers. . Thus support for a total of 30 external researcher days is requested. The Commission estimates that the approximate total budget for this network will be M€ 2.5.

Participant	Initial Training 0-5 years				Visiting Scientists				Open training events and conferences	
	Early-Stage Researchers		Experienced Researchers		Visiting Scientists (<10 years)		Visiting Scientists (>10 years)		Number of researcher days for researchers from outside the network	Number of events
	Fellow Months	Number of researchers	Fellow Months	Number of researchers	Person Months	Number of scientists	Person Months	Number of scientists		
Partner 1 - Germany	72	2	12	1			2	1	30	1
Partner 2 - Spain	72	2	12	1						
Partner 3 - Romania	36	1	6	1						
Partner 4 - Estonia	36	1	0	0						
Partner 5 - Italy	36	1	0	0						
Partner 6 - Croatia	36	1	0	0						
Partner 7 - UK	72	2	12	1						
Partner 8 - France	36	1	0	0						
Total	396	11	42	4	0	0	2	1	30	1

In the following is detailed how the budget of one of the partners (Partner 1 - Germany) can be estimated.

(a) Eligible expenses for the activities carried out by researchers

- Category A – Monthly living and mobility allowance

Based on the following assumptions:

- the three researchers (ESR, ER and VS) will be recruited under an employment contract,
- the ER and the VS both have family charges, while the ESR does not yet have a family,
- the VS has more than 10 years of research experience and will be paid according to the stipend rate due to the short duration of her appointment

the monthly living and mobility allowance can be calculated as follows:

	ESR	ER	VS
Appointment duration	3 years = 36 months 2 researchers	12 months	2 months
Monthly living allowance (€/year)	34 500	53 000	51 675
Monthly mobility allowance (€/month)	500	800	800
Country correction coefficient (%)	101.5	101.5	101.5
Living and mobility allowance (€)	$= 2 \times (34\,500 \times 3 + 500 \times 36) \times 101.5\%$ $= 246\,645$	$= (53\,000 + 800 \times 12) \times 101.5\%$ $= 63\,539$	$= (51\,675 \times 2/12 + 800 \times 2) \times 101.5\%$ $= 10\,366$

The budget for Category A is equal to $246\,645 + 63\,539 + 10\,366 = \text{€}320\,550$

- Category B – Travel allowance

	ESR	ER	VS
Assumed direct distance between the place of origin and the host institution (km)	Between 1000 and 1500	Between 500 and 1000	Between 1500 and 2500
Fixed-amount contribution (€)	750	500	1 000
Number of travel allowances to be paid	3 / researcher	1	1
Travel allowance (€)	$= 2 \times 3 \times 750 = 4\,500$	$= 1 \times 500 = 500$	$= 1 \times 1\,000 = 1\,000$

The budget for Category B is equal to $4\,500 + 500 + 1\,000 = \text{€}6\,000$

- Category C – Career exploratory allowance

	ESR	ER	VS
Appointment duration	3 years = 36 months 2 researchers	12 months	2 months
One single payment / fellow for stays of at least one year(€)	$= 2\,000 / \text{researcher} = 2\,000 \times 2 = 4\,000$	$= 2\,000$	$= 0$

The budget for Category C is equal to $4\,000 + 2\,000 + 0 = \text{€}6\,000$

- Category D – Contribution to the participation expenses of eligible researchers

	ESR	ER	VS
Appointment duration	3 years = 36 months 2 researchers	12 months	2 months
assumption	Laboratory based research project	Laboratory based research project	-
Fixed-amount / researcher-month (€)	600	600	0
Participation expenses of eligible researchers (€)	$= 2 \cdot 36 \cdot 600 = 43\,200$	$= 12 \cdot 600 = 7\,200$	$= 0$

The budget for Category D equals $43\,200 + 7\,200 + 0 = \text{€}50\,400$

(b) Eligible expenses for the activities carried out by the host organisations

- Category E – Contribution to the research/training/transfer of knowledge programme expenses

	ESR	ER	VS
Appointment duration	3 years = 36 months 2 researchers	12 months	2 months
Fixed-amount / researcher-month (€)	600	600	600
Research/Training/ToK expenses (€)	$= 2 \cdot 36 \cdot 600 = 43\,200$	$= 12 \cdot 600 = 7\,200$	$= 2 \cdot 600 = 1\,200$

The budget for Category E is equal to $43\,200 + 7\,200 + 1\,200 = \text{€}51\,600$

- Category F – Contribution to the organisation of international conferences, workshops and events

A large conference of 2 days is planned to close the summer school planned in year 3. 15 external researchers will be invited to attend the event along with a number of other researchers who will bring their own funding.

The network may claim a lump sum contribution of €300 per researcher-day for researchers from outside the network and for the duration of the event.

The budget for Category F = $2 \cdot 15 \cdot 300 = \text{€}9\,000$

- Category G – Management activities and Category H – Contribution to Overheads

The Total Community contribution is the basis for the calculation of the management costs, whereas to calculate the overheads the total direct costs need to be known. While in reality

management costs can be made up of both direct and indirect cost, they will be treated as direct costs for the purposes of the initial budget estimation:

Directs costs = expenses for the activities carried out by the researchers + contribution to the research/training programme expenses + contribution to the organisation of international conferences + management activities

Overheads = 10% of direct costs (1)

Total Community contribution = direct costs + overheads (2)

Management costs = 7% of total community contribution (3)

The total community contribution and the budget of cost categories G and H can be estimated by solving this system of 3 equations with 3 unknown factors.

	TOTAL (€)
A. Living and Mobility allowance	320 550
B. Travel allowance	6 000
C. Career Exploratory allowance	6 000
D. Contribution to the participation expenses of eligible researchers	50 400
E. Contribution to the research / training / transfer of knowledge programme expenses	51 600
F. Contribution to the organisation of international conferences, workshops and events	9 000
G. Management activities (including audit certification)	37 003
Total Direct Costs	480 553
H. Contribution to Overheads	48 055
TOTAL COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTION TO PARTNER 1	528 608

3. How to apply

3.1. Turning your idea into an effective proposal

The coordinator

For a given proposal, the coordinator acts as the single point of contact between the participants and the Commission. The co-ordinator is generally responsible for the overall planning of the proposal and for building up the consortium that will do the work.

Focusing your planned work

Refer to the description of the Marie Curie Action in section 2 of this Guide and the Work programme to check the **eligibility criteria** and any other special conditions that apply.

Refer also to the **evaluation criteria** against which your proposal will be assessed. These are given in annex 2. Keep these in mind as you develop your proposal.

National Contact Points

A network of National Contact Points (NCPs) has been established to provide advice and support to organisations which are preparing proposals. You are highly recommended to get in touch with your NCP at an early stage. (Contact details are given on the CORDIS call page – see annex 1 to this Guide).

Please note that the Commission will give the NCPs statistics and information on the outcome of the call and the outcome of the evaluation for each proposal. This information is supplied to support the NCPs in their service role, and is given under strict conditions of confidentiality.

Other sources of help

Annex 1 to this guide gives references to these further sources of help for this call. In particular:

- The Commission's general **enquiry service** on any aspect of FP7. Questions can be sent to a single e-mail address and will be directed to the most appropriate department for reply.
- A dedicated help desk has been set up to deal with technical questions related to the **Electronic Proposal Submission Service** (EPSS). See section 3.2 below.
- A further help desk providing assistance on intellectual property matters.
- Any other guidance documents or background information relating specifically to this call.
- The date and contact address for any '**information day**' that the Commission may be organising for this call.
- Other services, including partner search facilities, provided via the CORDIS web site.

Ethical principles

Please remember that research activities in FP7 should respect fundamental ethical principles, including those reflected in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. These principles include the need to ensure the freedom of research and the need to protect the physical

and moral integrity of individuals and the welfare of animals. For this reason, the European Commission carries out an ethical review of proposals when appropriate. The following fields of research shall not be financed under this Framework Programme:

- research activity aiming at human cloning for reproductive purposes;
- research activity intended to modify the genetic heritage of human beings which could make such changes heritable¹;
- research activities intended to create human embryos solely for the purpose of research or for the purpose of stem cell procurement, including by means of somatic cell nuclear transfer.

Concerning human embryonic stem cell research, the Commission will maintain the practice of the Sixth Framework Programme, which excludes from Community financial support research activities destroying human embryos, including for the procurement of stem cells. The exclusion of funding of this step of research will not prevent Community funding of subsequent steps involving human embryonic stem cells. For more details on ethics, please refer to Annex 5 at the end of this document.

Presenting your proposal

A proposal has **two parts**:

Part A will contain the administrative information about the proposal and the Full network members. The information requested includes a brief description of the work, contact details and characteristics of the participants, and information related to the funding requested (see annex 3 to this Guide). This information will be encoded in a structured database for further computer processing to produce, for example, statistics, and evaluation reports. This information will also support the experts and Commission staff during the evaluation process.

The information in part A is entered through a set of on-line forms.

Part B is a "template", or list of headings, rather than an administrative form (see annex 4 to this Guide). You should follow this structure when presenting the scientific and technical content of your proposal. The template is designed to highlight those aspects that will be assessed against the **evaluation criteria**. It covers, among other things, the nature of the proposed work, the participants and their roles in the proposed project, and the impact that might be expected to arise from the proposed work. Only black and white copies are used for evaluation and you are strongly recommended, therefore, not to use colour in your document.

Part B of the proposal is uploaded by the applicant into the Electronic Proposal Submission Service (EPSS) described below.

A *maximum length* is specified for Part B as a whole (see annex 4 to this Guide). You must keep your proposal within these limits.

Proposal language

The working language of the expert evaluators is English and it is recommended that proposals are prepared in English. However, proposals may be prepared in any official language of the European Union. If your proposal is not in English, a translation of the full proposal would be of assistance to the experts. An English translation of the abstract must be included in Part A (Form A1) of the proposal.

¹ Research relating to cancer treatment of the gonads can be financed.

3.2. Proposal submission

About the EPSS

Proposals must be submitted electronically, using the Commission's **Electronic Proposal Submission Service (EPSS)**. Proposals arriving at the Commission by any other means are regarded as 'not submitted', and will not be evaluated¹.

All the data that you upload is securely stored on a server to which only you and the other participants in the proposal have access until the deadline. This data is encrypted until the close of the call.

You can access the EPSS from the call page on CORDIS.

Full instructions are found in the "EPSS preparation and submission guide", available from the EPSS entry page (click on "EPSS user guide").

The most important points are explained below.

Use of the system by the proposal coordinator

As a coordinator you can:

- register as interested in submitting a proposal to a particular call
- set up (and modify) your consortium by adding/removing participants
- complete all of Part A of the proposal, pertaining to the proposal in general, and to your own administrative details
- download the document template for writing Part B of the proposal, and when it is completed, upload the finished Part B
- submit the complete proposal Part A and Part B.

Use of the system by the other participants (Full Network members only)

Other participants can:

- complete their own sections A2 (participant details)
- download the document template for writing Part B of the proposal, in order to assist the coordinator in preparing it (however, only the coordinator can upload the finished version)
- view the whole proposal

Use of Participant Identification Codes (PICs)

Participants possessing a Participant Identification Code (PIC) can use this number to identify themselves in the Electronic Proposal Submission system. On entering the PIC, parts of the A forms will be filled in automatically. Please note that in the cases where a PIC is not available it will

¹ In exceptional cases, when a proposal co-ordinator has absolutely no means of accessing the EPSS, and when it is impossible to arrange for another member of the consortium to do so, an applicant may request permission from the Commission to submit on paper. A request should be sent via the FP7 enquiry service (see annex 1), indicating in the subject line "Paper submission request". (You can telephone the enquiry service if web access is not possible: 00 800 6 7 8 9 10 11 from Europe; or 32 2 299 96 96 from anywhere in the world. A postal or e-mail address will then be given to you). Such a request, which must clearly explain the circumstances of the case, must be received by the Commission no later than one month before the call deadline. The Commission will reply within five working days of receipt. If a derogation is granted, a proposal on paper may be submitted by mail, courier or hand delivery. The delivery address will be given in the derogation letter.

always be possible to submit a proposal by entering the organisation details manually. However, the use of PICs will lead to more efficient handling of the proposal.

The process for assigning a PIC is triggered by a self-registration of an organisation at the following website: <http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/urf> [Available early May]. On this website you will also find a search tool for checking if your organisation is already registered (and has thus a PIC).

Submitting the proposal

Only the coordinator is authorised to submit the proposal.

Completing the Part A forms in the EPSS and uploading a Part B does **not** yet mean that your proposal is submitted. Once there is a consolidated version of the proposal you must press the button "SUBMIT NOW".

(If you don't see the button "SUBMIT NOW", first select the "SUBMIT" tag at the top of the screen.)

Please note that "SUBMIT NOW" starts the final steps for submission; it does not in itself cause the proposal to be submitted.

After reading the information page that then appears, it is possible to submit the proposal using the button marked "*Press this button to submit the proposal*".

The EPSS then performs an automatic validation of the proposal. A list of any problems ("validation error message") such as missing data, viruses, wrong file format or excessive file size will then appear on the screen. **Submission is blocked until these problems are corrected.** Once corrected, the coordinator must then repeat the above steps to achieve submission.

If successfully submitted, the coordinator receives a message that indicates that the proposal has been received. This automatic message is not the official acknowledgement of receipt (see Section 5).

The coordinator may continue to modify the proposal and submit revised versions overwriting the previous one right up until the deadline. The sequence above must be repeated each time.

If the submission sequence described above is not followed, the Commission considers that no proposal has been submitted.

For the proposal Part B you must use exclusively PDF ("portable document format", compatible with Adobe version 3 or higher, with embedded fonts). Other file formats will not be accepted by the system. Irrespective of any page limits specified in annex 4 to this Guide, there is an overall limit of 10Mbyte to the size of proposal file Part B. There are also restrictions to the name you give to the Part B file. You should only use alphanumeric characters. Special characters and spaces must be avoided.

You are advised to clean your document before converting to PDF (e.g. accept any track changes). Check that your conversion software successfully converts all pages and the original document (e.g. there is no problem with page limits).

Please note that the Commission prints out proposals on plain A4 paper. The printable zone on the print engine is bounded by 1.5 cm right, left, top bottom. No scaling is applied to make the page "fit" the window. Printing is done at 300 dots per inch.

About the deadline

Proposals must be submitted on or before the deadline specified in the Call fiche.

The EPSS will be closed for this call at the call deadline. After this moment, access to the EPSS for this call will be impossible.

Do not wait until the last moment before submitting your proposal!

Call deadlines are absolutely firm and are strictly enforced.

Please note that you may submit successive drafts of your proposal through the EPSS. Each successive submission overwrites the previous version. It is a good idea to **submit a draft well before the deadline**.

Leaving your first submission attempt to the last few minutes of the call will give you no time to overcome even the smallest technical difficulties, proposal verification problems or communications delays which may arise. Such events are never accepted as extenuating circumstances; your proposal will be regarded as not having been submitted.

Submission is deemed to occur at the moment when the proposal coordinator completes the submission sequence described above. It is not the point at which you start the upload. If you wait until too near to the close of the call to start uploading your proposal, there is a serious risk that you will not be able to submit in time.

If you have registered and submitted your proposal in error to another call which closes after this call, the Commission will not be aware of it until it is discovered among the downloaded proposals for the later call. It will therefore be classified as ineligible because of late arrival.

*The submission of a proposal requires some knowledge of the EPSS system, a detailed knowledge of the contents of the proposal and the authority to make last-minute decisions on behalf of the consortium if problems arise. **You are advised not to delegate the job of submitting your proposal!***

In the unlikely event of a failure of the EPSS service due to breakdown of the Commission server during the last 24 hours of this call, the deadline will be extended by a further 24 hours. This will be notified by e-mail to all proposal coordinators who had registered for this call by the time of the original deadline, and also by a notice on the Call page on CORDIS and on the web site of the EPSS.

Such a failure is a rare and exceptional event, therefore do not assume that there will be an extension to this call. If you have difficulty in submitting your proposal, you should not assume that it is because of a problem with the Commission server, since this is rarely the case. Contact the EPSS help desk if in doubt (see the address given in annex 1 to this Guide).

Please note that the Commission will not extend deadlines for system failures that are not its own responsibility. In all circumstances, you should aim to submit your proposal well before the deadline to have time to solve any problems.

Correcting or revising your proposal

Errors discovered in proposals submitted to the EPSS can be rectified by simply submitting a corrected version. So long as the call has not yet closed, the new submission will overwrite the old one.

Once the deadline has passed, however, the Commission can accept no further additions, corrections or re-submissions. The last eligible version of your proposal received before the deadline is the one which will be evaluated, and no later material can be submitted.

Ancillary material

Only a single PDF file comprising the complete Part B can be uploaded. Unless specified in the call, any hyperlinks to other documents, embedded material, and any other documents (company brochures, supporting documentation, reports, audio, video, multimedia etc.) sent electronically or by post, will be disregarded.

Withdrawing a proposal

You may withdraw a proposal by submitting a revised version with an empty part B section, with the following words entered in the abstract field of form A:

"The applicants wish to withdraw this proposal. It should not be evaluated by the Commission".

If you wish to withdraw a proposal after the deadline, please contact the EPSS help desk.

4. Checklist

4.1. Preparing your proposal

- **Are you applying for the right action?** Check that your proposed work falls within the scope of this call, and that you have applied for the right action¹ (see the "People" Work programme).
- **Is your proposal eligible?** The eligibility criteria are given in the Work programme. See also section 2 of this Guide. Any proposal not meeting the eligibility requirements will be considered ineligible and will not be evaluated.
- **Is your proposal complete?** Proposals must comprise a Part A, containing the administrative information including participant and project cost details on standard forms; and a Part B containing the scientific and technical description of your proposal as described in this Guide. A proposal that does not contain both parts will be considered ineligible and will not be evaluated.
- **Does your proposed work raise ethical issues?** Clearly indicate any potential ethical, safety or regulatory aspects of the proposed research and the way they will be dealt with in your proposed project. An ethical check will take place during the evaluation and an ethical review will take place for proposals dealing with sensitive issues. Proposals may be rejected on ethical grounds if such issues are not dealt with satisfactorily. For more details on ethics, please refer to Annex 4 (section **B6**) to this Guide.
- **Does your proposal follow the required structure?** Proposals should be precise and concise, and must follow exactly the proposal structure described in this document (annex 4 of this Guide), which is designed to correspond to the evaluation criteria which will be applied. This structure varies for different actions. Omitting requested information will almost certainly lead to lower scores and possible rejection.
- **Have you maximised your chances?** There will be strong competition. Therefore, edit your proposal tightly, strengthen or eliminate weak points. Put yourself in the place of an expert evaluator; refer to the evaluation criteria given in annex 2 of this Guide. Arrange for your draft to be evaluated by experienced colleagues; use their advice to improve it before submission.
- **Do you need further advice and support?** You are strongly advised to inform your National Contact Point of your intention to submit a proposal (see address in annex 1 of this Guide). Remember the Enquiry service listed in annex 1.

4.2. Final checks before submission

- **Do you have the agreement** of each partner in the project to submit this proposal on their behalf – including evidence of the commitment of any industrial associated partners where applicable (please refer to section 2.2.6 of this guide)?
- **Is your Part B in portable document format (PDF)**, including no material in other formats?
- **Is the filename made up of the letters A to Z, and numbers 0 to 9?** You should avoid special characters and spaces.

¹ If you have in error registered for the wrong call or funding scheme, discard that registration (usernames and passwords) and register again before the call deadline. If, after the close of the call, you discover that you have submitted your proposal to the wrong call, notify the EPSS Helpdesk.

- **Have you printed out your Part B**, to check that it really is the file you intend to submit, and that it is complete, printable and readable? After the call deadline it will not be possible to replace your Part B file
- **Is your Part B file within the size limit of 10 Mbytes?**
- **Have you virus-checked your computer?** The EPSS will automatically block the submission of any file containing a virus.
- **Have you made yourself familiar with the EPSS in good time?**
- **Have you allowed time to submit a first version of your proposal well in advance of the deadline** (at least several days before), and then to continue to improve it with regular resubmissions?
- **Have you completed the submission process for your latest version?**

4.3. Following submission

- Information submitted to the EPSS remains encrypted until the deadline and can only be viewed by the applicant.
- It is recommended that you check that all your material has been successfully been uploaded **and** submitted.
- You can revise and resubmit your proposal up to call deadline.

5. What happens next

Shortly after the call deadline (or cut-off date, in the case of continuously open calls), the Commission will send an **acknowledgement of receipt** to the e-mail address of the proposal coordinator given in the submitted proposal. This is assumed to be the individual named on the A2 form for participant no. 1. Please note that the brief electronic message given by the EPSS system after each submission is not the official Acknowledgement of Receipt.

The sending of an acknowledgement of receipt does not imply that a proposal has been accepted as eligible for evaluation.

If you have not received an acknowledgement of receipt within 12 working days after the call deadline (or cut-off date, in the case of a continuously open call), you should contact the FP7 Enquiry Service without further delay (see annex 1 of this Guide). However, first please check that you are the person named in the proposal as contact person for partner no. 1, check the email address which you gave for yourself, and check the junk mail box of your email system for the first few days following the close of call for any mail originating from FP7Aor@ess-fp7.org.

The Commission will check that your **proposal** meets the **eligibility criteria** that apply to this call and funding scheme (see the Work programme and section 2 of this Guide).

All eligible proposals will be evaluated by independent experts. The evaluation criteria and procedure are described in annex 2 to this Guide.

Soon after the completion of the evaluation, the results will be finalised and all co-ordinators will receive a letter containing **initial information** on the results of the evaluation, including the Evaluation Summary Report giving the opinion of the experts on their proposal. Even if the experts viewed your proposal favourably, the Commission cannot at this stage indicate if there is a possibility of EU funding.

If you have not received the "initial information letter" by the date referred to in annex 1 to this Guide, please contact the Commission via the FP7 enquiry service.

The letter will also give the relevant contact details and the steps to follow if you consider that there has been a shortcoming in the conduct of the evaluation process ("redress procedure").

The Commission also informs the relevant **programme committee**, consisting of delegates representing the governments of the Member States and Associated countries.

Based on the results of the evaluation by experts, the Commission draws up the final list of proposals for possible funding, taking account of the available budget. The Commission must also take account of the strategic objectives of the programme, as well as the overall balance of the proposals to be funded.

Official letters are then sent to the applicants. If all has gone well, this letter will mark the beginning of a **negotiation** phase. Due to budget constraints, it is also possible that your proposal will be placed on a reserve list. In this case, negotiations will only begin if funds become available. In other cases, the letter will explain the reasons why the proposal cannot be funded on this occasion.

A description of the negotiation process will be provided in the "**Negotiation Guidance Notes for Marie Curie Initial Training Networks**" (to be made available on CORDIS).

Negotiations between the applicants and the Commission aim to conclude a grant agreement which provides for EU funding of the proposed work. They cover both the scientific/technological, and the administrative and financial aspects of the project. The officials conducting these negotiations on behalf of the Commission will be working within a predetermined budget envelope. They will also refer to any recommendations which the experts may have made concerning modifications to the work presented in the proposal, as well as any recommendations arising from an ethical review of your proposal if one was carried out. Where relevant, security aspects shall also be considered.

The negotiations will also deal with gender equality actions, and, if applicable to the project, with gender aspects in the conduct of the planned work, as well as the relevant principles contained in the European Charter for researchers and the Code of Conduct for their recruitment.

Members of the proposal consortium may be invited to Brussels or Luxembourg to facilitate the negotiation.

For participants not yet having a Participant Identification Code (PIC), i.e. not yet being registered and validated in the Commission's Unique Registration Facility (URF) their existence as legal entities and their legal status will have to be validated before a grant agreement can be signed. For these participants, the procedure of registration and validation is triggered by a self-registration in the Web interface of the URF available at <http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/urf> [Available early May]. This self-registration will lead to a request by the Commission to the organisation to provide supporting documents and to nominate a Legal Entity Authorised Representative (LEAR).

Annexes

- Annex 1 Timetable and specific information for this call
- Annex 2 Evaluation criteria and procedure
- Annex 3 Instructions for completing "part A" of the proposal
- Annex 4 Instructions for drafting part B of the proposal
- Annex 5 Ethical Issues
- Annex 6 Frequently Asked Questions about ITN

Annex 1: Timetable and specific information for this call

- The "**People**" **Work programme** provides the essential information for submitting a proposal to this call. It describes the content of the topics to be addressed, and details on how it will be implemented. The Work programme is available on the CORDIS call page. The part giving the basic data on implementation (deadline, budget, deadlines, special conditions etc) is also posted as a separate document ("call fiche"). You must consult these documents.
- **Indicative timetable for this call**

Publication of call	<i>4 April 2008</i>
Deadline for submission of proposals	<i>2 September 2008, 17:00:00 (Brussels local time)</i>
Evaluation of proposals	<i>October-November 2008</i>
Evaluation Summary Reports sent to proposal coordinators ("initial information letter")	<i>January 2009</i>
Invitation letter to successful coordinators to launch grant agreement negotiations with Commission services	<i>January 2009</i>
Letter to unsuccessful applicants	<i>From January 2009</i>
Signature of first grant agreements	<i>From March 2009</i>

- **Further information and help**

The CORDIS call page: <http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/calls> contains links to other sources that you may find useful in preparing and submitting your proposal¹. Direct links are also given where applicable.

Call information

CORDIS call page and Work programme
Evaluation forms

General sources of help:

The Commission's FP7 Enquiry service
National Contact Points

<http://ec.europa.eu/research/enquiries>
http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/ncp_en.html

Specialised and technical assistance:

CORDIS help desk
EPSS Help desk
IPR helpdesk

http://cordis.europa.eu/guidance/helpdesk/home_en.html
support@epss-fp7.org
<http://www.ipr-helpdesk.org>

Legal documents generally applicable (see http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/find-doc_en.html for Find a Document – on Fp7 - service)

Decision on the Framework Programme: *Decision* No 1982/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 concerning the Seventh Framework Programme of the

¹ Not all documents will be available at the moment of the first call publication of FP7.

European Community for research, technological development and demonstration activities (2007-2013), available in all Community languages

Rules for Participation: Regulation (EC) No 1906/2006 **of** the European Parliament and **of** the Council **of** 18 December 2006 laying down the **rules** for the **participation of** undertakings, research centers and universities in actions under the Seventh Framework Programme and for the dissemination **of** research results (2007-2013)), available at http://ec.europa.eu/research/fp7/documents_en.html#Rules)

Specific Programmes at http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/home_en.html

Rules for proposal submission, evaluation selection and award at

http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/participate_en.html

Brochure “**The FP7 in Brief**” can be downloaded from the Europa web site at

http://ec.europa.eu/research/fp7/pdf/fp7-inbrief_en.pdf

The **European Charter for Researchers** and the **Code of Conduct** for their recruitment can be downloaded from <http://ec.europa.eu/eracareers/europeancharter>

International cooperation on CORDIS at

<http://cordis.europa.eu/inco/>

Ethical issues

http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/ethics_en.html

<ftp://ftp.cordis.europa.eu/pub/fp7/docs/ethics-for-researchers.pdf>

Annex 2 – Evaluation criteria and procedures to be applied for this call

1. General

The evaluation of proposals is carried out by the Commission with the assistance of independent experts.

Commission staff ensures that the process is fair, and in line with the principles contained in the Commission's rules¹.

Experts perform evaluations on a personal basis, not as representatives of their employer, their country or any other entity. They are expected to be independent, impartial and objective, and to behave throughout in a professional manner. They sign an appointment letter, including a confidentiality and conflict of interest declaration before beginning their work. Confidentiality rules must be adhered to at all times, before, during and after the evaluation.

In order to help with the management of the evaluation, the Commission may also appoint independent experts as chairs and vice-chairs.

In addition, independent experts will be appointed by the Commission to observe the evaluation process from the point of view of its working and execution. The role of the observer is to give independent advice to the Commission on the conduct and fairness of the evaluation sessions, on the way in which the experts apply the evaluation criteria, and on ways in which the procedures could be improved. The observers will not express views on the proposals under examination or the experts' opinions on the proposals.

Conflicts of interest: under the terms of the appointment letter, all experts must declare beforehand any known conflicts of interest, and must immediately inform the responsible Commission staff member if one becomes apparent during the course of the evaluation. The Commission will take whatever action is necessary to remove any conflict.

Confidentiality: the appointment letter also requires experts to maintain strict confidentiality with respect to the whole evaluation process. They must follow any instruction given by the Commission to ensure this. Under no circumstance may an expert attempt to contact an applicant on his own account, either during the evaluation or afterwards.

Proposals are submitted in a single stage and evaluated in one step by the experts against all evaluation criteria.

2. Before the evaluation

On receipt by the Commission, proposals are registered and acknowledged and their contents entered into a database to support the evaluation process. Eligibility criteria for each proposal are also checked by Commission staff before the evaluation begins. Proposals which do not fulfil these criteria will not be included in the evaluation.

For this call a proposal will only be considered eligible if it meets all of the following conditions:

- It is received by the Commission before the deadline given in the call text
- It involves at least the minimum number of participants given in the call text
- It is complete (i.e. both the requested administrative forms and the proposal description are present)

¹ Rules on Proposal Submission, Evaluation, Selection and Award Procedures (to be posted on CORDIS)

- The content of the proposal relates to the topic(s) and funding scheme(s), including any special conditions set out in the relevant parts of the Work programme

Where a maximum number of pages has been indicated for a section of the proposal, or for the proposal as a whole, the Commission reserves the right to instruct the experts to disregard any excess pages.

The Commission establishes a list of experts capable of evaluating the proposals that have been received. The list is drawn up to ensure:

- A high level of expertise;
- An appropriate range of competencies;

Provided that the above conditions can be satisfied, other factors are also taken into consideration:

- An appropriate balance between academic and industrial expertise and users;
- A reasonable gender balance;
- A reasonable distribution of geographical origins;
- Regular rotation of experts

In constituting the lists of experts, the Commission also takes account of their abilities to appreciate the industrial and/or societal dimension of the proposed work. Experts must also have the appropriate language skills required for the proposals to be evaluated.

Commission staff, eventually assisted by the chairs and vice-chairs, allocates proposals to individual experts, taking account of the fields of expertise of the experts, and avoiding conflicts of interest.

The evaluation session comprises three phases: the individual evaluation of the proposals, the consensus meeting and the panel review.

3. Individual evaluation of proposals

This phase will be carried out on the premises of the experts concerned ("remotely").

At the beginning of the evaluation, experts will be briefed by Commission staff, covering the evaluation procedure, the experts' responsibilities, the issues involved in the particular area/objective, and other relevant material.

Each proposal will be assessed independently by at least three experts, chosen by the Commission from the pool of experts taking part in this evaluation. One of these experts will be designated to be the proposal "rapporteur", who will take up additional responsibilities at the end of this phase and in the following phases of the evaluation session.

The proposal will be evaluated against pre-determined evaluation criteria, applying weighting factors and thresholds. The evaluation criteria are reproduced on the following page.

Evaluation Criteria for Marie Curie Initial Training Networks			
S&T Quality	Training	Implementation	Impact
S&T objectives of the research programme, including in terms of inter/multi-disciplinary, intersectoral and/ or newly emerging supra-disciplinary fields.	Quality of the training programme. Consistency with the research programme. Complementary skills offered: Management, Communication, IPR, Ethics, Grant writing, Commercial exploitation of results, Research Policy, entrepreneurship, etc.	Capacities (expertise / human resources/ facilities / infrastructures) to achieve the research, and adequate task distribution and schedule.	Contribution of the proposed training programme to improvement of the career prospects of the fellows.
Scientific quality of the research programme .	Importance and timeliness of the training needs (e.g. multidisciplinary, intersectoral , and newly emerging supra-disciplinary fields)	Appropriateness of industry involvement.	Provision to establish longer term collaborations and /or lasting structured training programme between the partners' organizations, including between private and academic partners.
Appropriateness of research methodology.	a) For multi-site proposals: Adequate combination of local specialist training with network-wide training activities. b) For mono-site proposals: Adequate exploitation of the international network of the participants for the training programme.	Adequate exploitation of complementarities and synergies among partners in terms of research and training.	Where appropriate, justification of the training events open to external participants and their integration in the training programme.
Originality and innovative aspect of the research programme. Knowledge of the state-of-the-art.	Appropriateness of the size of the requested training programme with respect to the capacity of the host	How essential is non-ICPC Third Country participation, if any, to the objectives of the research training programme.	Where appropriate, mutual recognition of the training acquired by multi-partner hosts.
		Appropriateness of the plans for the overall management of the training programme (demarcation of responsibilities, rules for decision making, recruitment strategy etc.).	Where applicable, relevance of the role of visiting scientist with respect to the training programme.
		Networking and dissemination of best practice among partners. Clarity of the plan for organizing training events (workshops, conferences, training courses).	

Evaluation scores will be awarded for each of the four criteria, and not for the sub-criteria. The sub-criteria are issues which the experts should consider in the assessment of that criterion. They also act as reminders of issues to raise later during the discussions of the proposal.

Each criterion will be scored out of 5. Scores will be awarded with a resolution of one decimal place.

The scores indicate the following with respect to the criterion under examination:

- | | |
|-----|--|
| 0 - | <i>The proposal fails to address the criterion under examination or cannot be judged due to missing or incomplete information</i> |
| 1 - | <i>Very poor. The criterion is addressed in a cursory and unsatisfactory manner.</i> |
| 2 - | <i>Poor. There are serious inherent weaknesses in relation to the criterion in question.</i> |
| 3 - | <i>Fair. While the proposal broadly addresses the criterion, there are significant weaknesses that would need correcting.</i> |
| 4 - | <i>Good. The proposal addresses the criterion well, although certain improvements are possible.</i> |
| 5 - | <i>Excellent. The proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion in question. Any shortcomings are minor.</i> |

The threshold and weightings for the different criteria are summarized in the table below.

Criteria	Weighting (%)	Threshold
S&T Quality	30	3
Training/Transfer of knowledge	30	4
Implementation	20	3
Impact	20	N/A

In addition to the thresholds applied to the individual criteria, an overall threshold of 70% will be applied to the total score.

Examples of the evaluation forms and reports that will be used by the experts in this call will be made available on CORDIS.

At this first step the experts are acting individually; they do not discuss the proposal with each other, nor with any third party. The experts record their individual opinions in an Individual Assessment Report (IAR), giving scores and also comments against the evaluation criteria.

When scoring proposals, experts must *only* apply the above evaluation criteria.

Experts will assess and mark the proposal exactly as it is described and presented. They do not make any assumptions or interpretations about the project in addition to what is in the proposal.

Concise but explicit justifications will be given for each score. If needed, recommendations for improvements to be discussed as part of a possible negotiation phase, will be given.

The experts will also indicate whether, in their view, the proposal deals with sensitive ethical issues. (See Annex 5 to this Guide).

Signature of the IAR also entails a declaration that the expert has no conflict of interest in evaluating the particular proposal.

Scope of the call: It is possible that a proposal is found to be completely out of scope of the call during the course of the individual evaluation, and therefore not relevant. If an expert suspects that this may be the case, a Commission staff member will be informed immediately, and the views of the other experts will be sought.

If the consensus view is that the main part of the proposal is not relevant to the call, the proposal will be withdrawn from the evaluation, and the proposal will be deemed ineligible.

4. Consensus meeting

Once all the experts to whom a proposal has been assigned have completed their IAR, the evaluation progresses to a consensus assessment, representing their common views.

This entails a consensus meeting to discuss the scores awarded and to prepare comments.

The consensus discussion is moderated by the rapporteur assigned to the proposal and can be attended by a Commission official, and/or the chairs/vice-chairs. The role of the rapporteur is to seek to arrive at a consensus between the individual views of experts without any prejudice for or against particular proposals or the organisations involved, and to ensure a confidential, fair and equitable evaluation of each proposal according to the required evaluation criteria.

The rapporteur is responsible for drafting the consensus report.

The experts attempt to agree on a consensus score for each of the criteria that have been evaluated and suitable comments to justify the scores. Comments should be suitable for feedback to the proposal coordinator. Scores and comments are set out in a consensus report. They also come to a common view on the questions of scope and ethics.

If during the consensus discussion it is found to be impossible to bring all the experts to a common point of view on any particular aspect of the proposal, the Commission may ask up to three additional experts to examine the proposal.

Evaluation of a resubmitted proposal

In the case of proposals that have been submitted previously to the Commission, the panel coordinator discloses to the experts the previous evaluation summary report (see below) at the consensus stage. If necessary, the experts will be required to provide a clear justification for their scores and comments should these differ markedly from those awarded to the earlier proposal.

Ethical issues (above threshold proposals): If one or more experts have noted that there are ethical issues touched on by the proposal, and the proposal is considered to be above threshold, the relevant box on the consensus report (CR) will be ticked and an Ethical Issues Report (EIR) completed, stating the nature of the ethical issues. Exceptionally for this issue, no consensus is required.

The EIR will be signed by the Commission official or one of the chairs/vice-chairs, and one member of the consensus group (normally, the proposal rapporteur).

The Commission may decide to submit any of the proposals proposed for funding to a specific ethical review panel. Projects raising specific ethical issues such as research intervention on human beings; research on human embryos and human embryonic stem cells and non-human primates are automatically submitted for ethical review.

Outcome of the consensus meeting

The outcome of the consensus step is the consensus report. This will be signed (either on paper, or electronically) by all experts, or as a minimum, by the rapporteur, and by the Commission official or the chairs/vice-chair persons. The moderator is responsible for ensuring that the consensus report reflects the consensus reached, expressed in scores and comments. In the case that it is impossible to reach a consensus, the report sets out the majority view of the experts but also records any dissenting views.

The Commission will take the necessary steps to assure the quality of the consensus reports, with particular attention given to clarity, consistency, and appropriate level of detail. If important changes are necessary, the reports will be referred back to the experts concerned.

The signing of the consensus report completes the consensus step.

5. Panel review

This is the final step involving the independent experts. It allows them to formulate their recommendations to the Commission having had an overview of the results of the consensus step.

The panel comprises at least the rapporteurs of the various proposal(s), the Panel Chair and Vice-Chair(s) and Commission officials. Several panels can be established to cover the main scientific areas of the subject of the proposals.

The main task of the panel is to examine and compare the consensus reports in a given area, to check on the consistency of the marks applied during the consensus discussions and, where necessary, propose a new set of consensus scores.

The tasks of the panel will also include:

- reviewing cases where a minority view was recorded in the consensus report;
- recommending a priority order for proposals with the same consensus score;
- making recommendations on possible clustering or combination of proposals.

The panel is moderated by the Commission representative or by the chair person appointed by the Commission. The Commission will ensure fair and equal treatment of the proposals in the panel discussions. A panel rapporteur will be appointed to draft the panel's advice.

The outcome of the panel meeting is a report recording, principally:

- An evaluation summary report (ESR) for each proposal, including, where relevant, a report of any ethical issues raised and any security considerations;
- A list of proposals passing all thresholds, along with a final score for each proposal passing the thresholds and the panel recommendations for priority order.
- A list of evaluated proposals having failed one or more thresholds;
- A list of any proposals having been found ineligible during the evaluation by experts;
- A summary of any deliberations of the panel;

The panel report is signed by at least three panel members, including the panel rapporteur and the panel chairperson.

Subsequently, a special ethical review of above-threshold proposals may be organised by the Commission.

Annex 3 - Instructions for completing "Part A" of the proposal

Proposals in this call must be submitted electronically, using the Commission's Electronic Proposal Submission System (EPSS). The procedure is given in section 3 of this guide.

In Part A you will be asked for certain administrative details that will be used in the evaluation and further processing of your proposal. Part A forms an integral part of your proposal. Details of the work you intend to carry out will be described in Part B (annex 4).

This section provides guidance on how to complete the administrative forms (A1, A2 and A4) for an ITN proposal. Form A1 gives a snapshot of your proposal, form A2 concerns the Host organisation(s), and form A4 details your request for funding in terms of researcher-months.

How to complete the forms (A1, A2 & A4).

- **Full Network Partners**

The **co-ordinator** fills in one form A1 and one form A4 with details for each participant (one per line). The participant numbers correspond to those defined in the A2 forms. (Participant number one always corresponds to the network co-ordinator).

The **participants** (including the co-ordinator) fill in one A2 form each.

- **Associated Partners**

Associated partners should **not** fill in the A2 form, but should be identified in Part B of the proposal.

- When you complete part A, please make sure that *numbers are always rounded to the nearest whole number*

Note:

The following notes are for information only. They should assist you in completing the A-part of your proposal. On-line guidance will also be available. The precise questions, options and forms presented on EPSS may differ slightly from these below.

Section A1 – Information on the Proposal	
Proposal number	[pre-filled]
Participant Identification Code	The Participant Identification Code (PIC) enables organisations to take advantage of the Unique Registration Facility. Organisations who have received a PIC from the Commission are encouraged to use it when submitting proposals. By entering a PIC, parts of section A2 will be filled in automatically.
Proposal Acronym	The short title or acronym will be used to identify your proposal efficiently in this call. It should be of <u>no more than 20 characters</u> (use standard alphabet and numbers only; no symbols or special characters please). The same acronym should appear on each page of part B of your proposal.
Proposal Title	The title should be <u>no longer than 200 characters</u> and should be understandable to the non-specialist in your field.
Marie Curie Action code	This field will be pre-filled with the code corresponding to the action of the call: Networks for Initial Training (ITN) Industry-Academia Partnerships and Pathways (IAPP) Co-funding of Regional, National and International Programmes (COFUND) Intra-European Fellowships (IEF) European Re-integration Grants (ERG) International Outgoing Fellowships (IOF) International Incoming Fellowships (IIF) International Re-integration Grants (IRG)
Scientific Panel	Please choose a code from the list below indicating the main scientific area of relevance to your proposal. This information will help the Commission in the organisation of the evaluation of proposals. Chemistry CHE Social and Human Sciences SOC Economic Sciences ECO Information science and Engineering ENG Environment and geosciences ENV Life sciences LIF Mathematics MAT Physics PHY To help you select the most relevant panel code please refer also the breakdown of each scientific area into a number of sub-disciplines at the on the following page
Total Duration in months	Insert the estimated duration of the project in full months (preferably 48).
Call identifier	[pre-filled] The call identifier is the reference number given in the call or part of the call you are addressing, as indicated in the publication of the call in the Official Journal of the European Union, and on the CORDIS call page. A call identifier looks like this: <i>FP7-PEOPLE-XXX-200X</i>
Keywords	Please enter a number of keywords that you consider sufficient to characterise the scope of your proposal choosing from the available list and/or adding free keywords. There is a limit of 200 characters.
Abstract	The abstract should, at a glance, provide the reader with a clear understanding of the objectives of the proposal, how they will be achieved, and their relevance to the Work programme. This summary will be used as the short description of the proposal in the evaluation process and in communications to the programme management committees and other interested parties. It must therefore be short and precise and should not contain confidential information. Please use plain typed text, avoiding formulae and other special characters. If the proposal is written in a language other than English, please write the proposal abstract in English. There is a limit of 2000 characters.
Similar proposals	A 'similar' proposal or contract is one that differs from the current one in minor ways, and in which some of the present consortium members are involved.
Ethical Issues in Part B	Please choose YES or NO on the following basis: In the Part B Proposal Description you are asked to describe any ethical issues that may arise in your proposal and to fill in the table "RESEARCH ETHICAL ISSUES". If your proposal involves any of the sensitive ethical issues detailed in the table, please choose YES in this field. If not, choose 'NO'. This information will be used by the Commission to flag proposals with potential ethical issues that need further follow-up (but not necessarily a formal ethical review).

Scientific Panels - Sub-disciplines

To help you in selecting the most relevant panel code please find below a breakdown of each research area:

CHEMISTRY (CHE)

- Biological, Pharmaceutical and Medicinal Chemistry
- Environmental Chemistry
- Homogeneous and Heterogeneous Catalysis
- Instrumental Techniques, Analysis, Sensors
- Molecular Aspects of New Materials, Macromolecules, Supramolecular Structures, Nanochemistry
- New Synthesis, Combinatorial Chemistry
- Reaction Mechanisms and Dynamics
- Surface Science and Colloids
- Theoretical and Computational chemistry
- Other Chemistry

- Ecology and Evolution (incl. Population Biology)
- Environmental Engineering and Geotechnics
- Fisheries and Aquaculture
- Geochemistry and Mineral Sciences
- Geophysics, Tectonics, Seismology, Volcanology
- Marine Sciences
- Natural Resources Exploration and Exploitation
- Physical Geography, Earth Observation and Remote Sensing
- Pollution, Waste Disposal and Ecotoxicology
- Soil and Water Processes
- Stratigraphy, Sedimentary Processes and Palaeontology
- Other Environment and Geosciences

SOCIAL & HUMAN SCIENCES (SOC)

- Education and Training
- Law (European or Comparative National)
- Linguistics (applied to: Education, Industrial Efficiency or Social Cohesion)
- Media and Mass Communication
- Political Sciences (European or Comparative National)
- Psychology (Social, Industrial, Labour, or Education)
- Sociology
- Other Social and Human Sciences

LIFE SCIENCES (LIF)

- Bioenergetics
- Biological Membranes
- Biomedicine, Public Health & Epidemiology
- Cancer Research
- Cell Biology
- Computational Biology and Bioinformatics
- Developmental Biology
- Enzymology
- Genetic Engineering
- Genomics and General Genetics
- Immunology
- Macromolecular Structures and Molecular Biophysics
- Medical Pathology
- Metabolic Regulation and Signal Transduction
- Metabolism of Cellular Macromolecules
- Microbiology and Parasitology
- Neurosciences (incl. Psychiatry and Clinical Psychology)
- Pharmacology and Toxicology
- Physiology
- Virology
- Other Life Sciences

ECONOMIC SCIENCES (ECO)

- Financial Sciences
- Industrial Economics (incl. Technology & Innovation)
- International Economics
- Labour Economics
- Macroeconomics
- Management of Enterprises (incl. Marketing)
- Microeconomics
- Natural Resources & Environmental Economics
- Public Sector Economics
- Quantitative Methods
- Research Management
- Social Economics
- Urban & Regional Economics (incl. Transport Economics)
- Other Economic Sciences

MATHEMATICS (MAT)

- Algebra and Number Theory
- Algorithms and Complexity
- Analysis and Partial Differential Equations
- Applied Mathematics and Mathematical Physics
- Discrete Mathematics and Computational Mathematics
- Geometry and Topology
- Logic and Semantics
- Statistics and Probability
- Other Mathematics

ENGINEERING & INFORMATION SCIENCE (ENG)

- Automation, Computer Hardware, Robotics
- Bioengineering
- Chemical Engineering
- Civil Engineering
- Computer Graphics, Human Computer Interaction, Multimedia
- Electrical Engineering
- Electronics
- Information Systems, Software Development and Databases
- Knowledge Engineering and Artificial Intelligence
- Materials Engineering
- Mechanical Engineering
- Parallel and Distributed Computing, Computer Architecture
- Signals, Speech and Image Processing
- Systems, Control, Modelling & Neural Networks
- Telecommunications
- Transport Engineering
- Other Engineering and Information Science

PHYSICS (PHY)

- Astronomy, Astrophysics and Cosmology
- Atomic and Molecular Physics
- Biophysics and Medical Physics
- Condensed Matter- Electronic Structures, Electrical and Magnetic Properties
- Condensed Matter- Mechanical and Thermal Properties
- Condensed Matter- Optical and Dielectric Properties
- Elementary Particles and Fields
- Fluids and Gases
- Non Linear Dynamics and Chaos Theory
- Nuclear Physics
- Optics and Electromagnetism
- Physical Chemistry, Soft Matter and Polymer Physics
- Physics of Superconductors
- Plasmas and Electric Discharges
- Statistical Physics and Thermodynamics
- Surface Physics
- Other Physics

ENVIRONMENT & GEOSCIENCES (ENV)

- Agriculture, Agroindustry and Forestry
- Biodiversity and Conservation
- Climatology, Climate Change, Meteorology and Atmospheric Processes

Section A2 – Information on the Host organisations:	
Participant number	The number allocated to the participant for this proposal. In proposals with only one participant, the single participant is always number one. In proposals that have several participants, the co-ordinator of a proposal is always number one.
Participant Identification Code	The Participant Identification Code (PIC) will enable organisations to take advantage of the Unique Registration Facility. The allocation of PICs will be done progressively, starting with larger organisations. It is expected that the PIC field will be implemented in the EPSS during Spring 2008. An announcement will be made on CORDIS when this possibility becomes available. From then on, organisations who have received a PIC from the Commission are encouraged to use it when submitting proposals.
Legal name	For Public Law Body , it is the name under which your organisation is registered in the Resolution text, Law, Decree/Decision establishing the Public Entity, or in any other document established at the constitution of the Public Law Body; For Private Law Body , it is the name under which your organisation is registered in the national Official Journal (or equivalent) or in the national company register. For a natural person , it is for e.g. Mr Adam JOHNSON, Mrs Anna KUZARA, and Ms Alicia DUPONT
Organisation Short Name	Choose an abbreviation of your Organisation Legal Name, only for use in this proposal and in all relating documents. This short name should not be more than 20 characters exclusive of special characters (./:…), for e.g. CNRS and not C.N.R.S. It should be preferably the one as commonly used, for e.g. IBM and not Int.Bus.Mac.
Legal address	For Public and Private Law Bodies, it is the address of the entity's Head Office. For Natural Persons it is the Official Address. If your address is specified by an indicator of location other than a street name and number, please insert this instead under the "street name" field and "N/A" under the "number" field.
Non-profit organisation	Non-profit organisation is a legal entity qualified as such when it is recognised by national or, international law.
Public body	Public body means any legal entity established as such by national law and international organisations.
Research organisation	Research organisation means a legal entity established as a non-profit organisation which carries out research or technological development as one of its main objectives.
Higher or secondary education establishment	A secondary and higher education establishment means organisations only or mainly established for higher education/training (e. g. universities, colleges …).
International organisation	"international organisation" means an intergovernmental organisation, other than the European Community, which has legal personality under international public law, as well as any specialised agency set up by such an international organisation;
International European Interest organisation	"international European interest organisation" means an international organisation, the majority of whose members are Member States or Associated countries, and whose principal objective is to promote scientific and technological cooperation in Europe;
Joint Research Centre of the European Commission	The European Commission's research laboratories
Entity composed of one or more legal entities	European Economic Interest Groups, Joint Research Units (Unités Mixtes de Recherche), Enterprise Groupings. Decision DL/2003/3188 27.11.2003

Commercial Enterprise	Organisations operating on a commercial basis, i.e. companies gaining the majority of their revenue through competitive means with exposure to commercial markets, including incubators, start-ups and spin-offs, venture capital companies, etc.
NACE code	<p>NACE means "<u>Nomenclature des Activités économiques dans la Communauté Européenne</u>".</p> <p>Please select one activity from the list that best describes your professional and economic ventures. If you are involved in more than one economic activity, please select the one activity that is most relevant in the context of your contribution to the proposed project. For more information on the methodology, structure and full content of NACE (rev. 1.1) classification please consult EUROSTAT at:</p> <p>http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/ramon/nomenclatures/index.cfm?TargetUrl=LST_CLS_DLD&StrNom=NACE_1_1&StrLanguageCode=EN&StrLayoutCode=HIERARCHIC .</p>
Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs)	<p>SMEs are micro, small and medium-sized enterprises within the meaning of Recommendation 2003/361/EC in the version of 6 May 2003. The full definition and a guidance booklet can be found at http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/enterprise_policy/sme_definition/index_en.htm</p> <p>To find out if your organisation corresponds to the definition of an SME you can use the on-line tool at http://ec.europa.eu/research/sme-techweb/index_en.cfm</p>
Dependencies with (an) other participant(s)	<p>Two participants (legal entities) are dependent on each other where there is a controlling relationship between them:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – A legal entity is under the same direct or indirect control as another legal entity (SG); – A legal entity directly or indirectly controls another legal entity (CLS); – A legal entity is directly or indirectly controlled by another legal entity (CLB). <p>Control:</p> <p>Legal entity A controls legal entity B if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – A, directly or indirectly, holds more than 50% of the nominal value of the issued share capital or a majority of the voting rights of the shareholders or associates of B, – A, directly or indirectly, holds in fact or in law the decision-making powers in B. <p>The following relationships between legal entities shall not in themselves be deemed to constitute controlling relationships:</p> <p>(a) the same public investment corporation, institutional investor or venture-capital company has a direct or indirect holding of more than 50 % of the nominal value of the issued share capital or a majority of voting rights of the shareholders or associates;</p> <p>(b) the legal entities concerned are owned or supervised by the same public body.</p>
Character of dependence	<p>According to the explanation above mentioned, please insert the appropriate abbreviation according to the list below to characterise the relation between your organisation and the other participant(s) you are related with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SG: Same group: if your organisation and the other participant are controlled by the same third party; • CLS: Controls: if your organisation controls the other participant; • CLB: Controlled by: if your organisation is controlled by the other participant.
Contact point	It is the main scientist or team leader in charge of the proposal for the participant. For participant number 1 (the coordinator), this will be the person the Commission will contact concerning this proposal (e.g. for additional information, invitation to hearings, sending of evaluation results, convocation to negotiations).
Title	Please choose one of the following: Prof., Dr., Mr., Mrs, Ms.
Sex	This information is required for statistical and mailing purposes. Indicate F or M as appropriate.
Phone and fax numbers	Please insert the full numbers including country and city/area code. Example +32-2-2991111.

Section A4 – Requested Fellows (ITN):	
Early-Stage Researchers	<p><i>Early-stage researchers</i> are those who are, at the time of selection by the host institution, in the first four years (full-time equivalent) of their research careers. This is measured from the date when they obtained the degree which would formally entitle them to embark on a doctorate, either in the country in which the degree was obtained or in the host country, irrespective of whether or not a doctorate is envisaged.</p> <p>Their training within a network may range from 3 months to 3 years.</p>
Experienced Researchers	<p><i>Experienced researchers</i> must, at the time of recruitment either be in possession of a doctoral degree, irrespective of the time taken to acquire it, or have at least four years of full-time equivalent research experience measured from the date when they obtained the degree which formally allowed them to embark on a doctorate in the country in which the degree was obtained or in the host country (irrespective of whether or not a doctorate was envisaged)</p> <p>Their training within a network may range from 3 months to 2 years.</p>
Visiting scientists (< 10 years)	<p>Means experienced researchers (according to the above definition) who have at the time of the recruitment less than 10 years (full-time equivalent) research experience since obtaining the degree which formally allowed them to embark on a doctorate, either in the country in which the degree was obtained or in the host country.</p> <p>They shall have outstanding past achievements in international training and collaborative research.</p>
Visiting scientists (> 10 years)	<p>Means experienced researchers (according to the above definition) who have at the time of the recruitment more than 10 years (full-time equivalent) research experience since obtaining the degree which formally allowed them to embark on a doctorate, either in the country in which the degree was obtained or in the host country.</p> <p>They shall have outstanding past achievements in international training and collaborative research.</p>
Fellow/Person months	<p>In the first stage of submitting an ITN proposal only the overall number of fellow/person months for the project should be indicated in the line of the coordinator. Only if the proposal is selected for the second stage will it be necessary to provide the full breakdown.</p>
Number of researcher days for researchers from outside the network	<p>Please indicate the expected total number of days spent by researchers from outside the network on participating in training events. A separate budget category is dedicated to these actions - please refer to column F of Table 4 in the Work programme.</p> <p>In the first stage of submitting an ITN proposal only the overall number of researcher days should be indicated in the line of the coordinator. Only if the proposal is selected for the second stage will it be necessary to provide the full breakdown.</p>
Number of events	<p>Please indicate the number of training events to be organised by each participant (e.g. conferences, summer schools, workshops, seminars and specialised training courses).</p> <p>In the first stage of submitting an ITN proposal only the overall number of training events for the project should be indicated in the line of the coordinator. Only if the proposal is selected for the second stage will it be necessary to provide the full breakdown.</p>

Proposal Submission Forms



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

7th Framework Programme on
Research, Technological
Development and Demonstration

Marie Curie Actions
Initial Training Networks (ITN)

A1

<i>Proposal Number</i>	<i>Proposal Acronym</i>
------------------------	-------------------------

GENERAL INFORMATION ON THE PROPOSAL

<i>Proposal Title</i>			
<i>Marie Curie action-code</i>		<i>Scientific Panel</i>	
<i>Total duration in months</i>		<i>Call identifier</i>	
<i>Keywords (up to 200 characters)</i>			
<i>Abstract (up to 2000 characters)</i>			

Has a similar proposal been submitted to a Marie Curie Action under this or previous RTD Framework Programmes?		YES/NO
<i>If yes:</i>		
<i>Programme name(s) and year</i>	<i>Proposal number(s)</i>	

Does this proposal include any of the sensitive ethical issues detailed in the Research Ethical Issues table of Part B?	YES/NO
--	---------------

Proposal Submission Forms



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
7th Framework Programme on
Research, Technological
Development and Demonstration

Marie Curie Actions
Initial Training Networks (ITN)

A2

Proposal Nr		Proposal Acronym		Participant Nr	
-------------	--	------------------	--	----------------	--

INFORMATION ON ORGANISATIONS

If your organisation has already registered for FP7, enter your Participant Identity Code	[PIC or 'none']
---	-----------------

Organisation legal name	
-------------------------	--

Organisation short name	
-------------------------	--

Administrative data

Legal address			
Street name		Number	
Town			
Postal Code / Cedex			
Country			
Internet homepage (optional)			

Status of your organisation

Certain types of organisations benefit from special conditions under the FP7 participation rules. The Commission also collects data for statistical purposes.

The guidance notes will help you complete this section.

Please 'tick' the relevant box(es) if your organisation falls into one or more of the following categories.

- Non-profit organisation
- Public body
- Research organisation
- Higher or secondary education establishment
- International organisation
- International European Interest organisation
- Joint Research Centre of the European Commission
- Entities composed of one or more legal entities [European Economic Interest Group/ Joint Research unit (Unité mixte de recherché) / Enterprise groupings]
- Commercial Enterprise
- Main area of activity (NACE code):** [dropdown list]

1. Is your number of employees smaller than 250? (full time equivalent)	[yes/no]
2. Is your annual turnover smaller than € 50 million?	[yes/no]
3. Is your annual balance sheet total smaller than € 43 million?	[yes/no]
4. Are you an autonomous legal entity?	[yes/no]
You are not an SME if your answer to question 1 is "NO" and/or your answer to both questions 2 and 3 is "NO". In all other cases, you might conform to the Commission's definition of an SME. Please check the additional conditions given in annex X.	
Following this check, do you conform to the Commission's definition of an SME?	[yes/no]

Proposal Submission Forms



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
7th Framework Programme on
Research, Technological
Development and Demonstration

Marie Curie Actions
Initial Training Networks (ITN)

A2

Dependencies with (an)other participant(s)

Are there dependencies between your organisation and (an)other participant(s) in this proposal? (Yes or No)					
If Yes:					
Participant Number		Organisation Short Name		Character of dependence	
Participant Number		Organisation Short Name		Character of dependence	
Participant Number		Organisation Short Name		Character of dependence	

Contact points

Person in charge (For the coordinator (participant number 1) this person is the one who the Commission will contact in the first instance)					
Family name		First name(s)			
Title		Sex (Female – F / Male – M)			
Position in the organisation					
Department/Faculty/Institute/Laboratory name/ ...					
Is the address different from the legal address?					YES/NO
Street name			Number		
Town					
Postal Code / Cedex					
Country					
Phone 1		Phone 2			
E-mail		Fax			

Proposal Submission Forms



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

7th Framework Programme on
Research, Technological
Development and Demonstration

Marie Curie Actions
Initial Training Networks (ITN)

A4

Proposal Number

Proposal Acronym

REQUESTED FELLOWS

Participant No	Initial Training 0-5 years				Visiting Scientists				Training events	
	Early-Stage Researchers		Experienced Researchers		Visiting Scientists (<10 years)		Visiting Scientists (>10 years)		Number of researcher days for researchers from outside the network	Number of events
	Fellow Months	Number of researchers	Fellow Months	Number of researchers	Person Months	Number of scientists	Person Months	Number of scientists		
1										
(Sub-) Total										

Page .../...

Annex 4 - Instructions for drafting part B of the proposal

Instructions for preparing proposal Part B for Marie Curie Initial Training Networks

A description of this action is given in section 2 of this Guide for Applicants. Please examine it carefully before preparing your proposal.

This annex provides guidelines for drafting Part B of the proposal.

It will help you present important aspects of your planned work in a way that will enable the experts to make an effective assessment against the evaluation criteria (see annex 2).

General information

Part B of the proposal contains the details of the proposed research and training programmes along with the practical arrangements foreseen to implement them and their impact. They will be used by the independent experts to undertake their assessment. We would therefore advise you to address each of the evaluation criteria as outlined in the following sections. Please note that "Explanatory notes" in the following serve to illustrate the evaluation criteria without being exhaustive. To draft your proposal you should also consult the current version of the People Work programme.

For practical reasons, you are invited to structure your proposal according to the headings indicated in the table of contents for outline and full proposals.

Please note that there will be a single evaluation following a single proposal submission. The template for the submission can be downloaded from the EPSS.

In order to ensure comparability between proposals the **maximum length** of Part B is **30 A4 pages** (excluding table of contents, section B7 (ethical issues), letter of commitment from industrial partners where applicable, and start and end pages).

The font should correspond to Times New Roman size 12 pt with single line spacing and standard margins of 2 cm.

Please make sure that

- you use the right template to prepare your proposal;
- you respect the maximum number of pages. Commission Services reserve the right to disregard parts of a proposal that clearly exceed the maximum lengths specified along with any attachments/additional information provided to the proposal;
- Part B of your proposal carries the proposal acronym as a header to each page and that all pages are numbered in a single series on the footer of the page to prevent errors during handling. It is recommended that the numbering format "Part B - Page X of Y" is used;
- Your proposal is complete, including the set of forms requested for **Part A** as well as a free text **Part B**. Incomplete proposals are not eligible and will not be evaluated.

STARTPAGE

PEOPLE
MARIE CURIE ACTIONS

Marie Curie Initial Training Networks (ITN)
Call: FP7-PEOPLE-ITN-2008

PART B

“PROPOSAL ACRONYM”

Table of Contents

To draft PART B of the proposal applicants should take into account the following structure. If required for the description of the project, applicants may wish to add further headings.

- B.1 LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**
- B.2 PROJECT OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES**
- B.3 S&T QUALITY**
- B.4 TRAINING**
- B.5 IMPLEMENTATION**
- B.6 IMPACT**
- B.7 ETHICAL ASPECTS**

PART B (max. 30 A4 pages!)

Practical Information:

- PART B shall be limited to **30 A4 pages** (excluding table of contents, section B7 (ethical issues), letter of commitment from industrial partners where applicable, start and end pages).
- Proposals are evaluated against **four criteria**, these being "**S&T Quality**" (30%), "**Training**" (30%), "**Implementation**" (20%) and "**Impact**" (20%). The weight of each of the criteria is shown in the brackets.
- Please make sure that the **free text** used to describe the proposed project takes into account the issues covered by the 4 evaluation criteria.
- In addition, applicants are requested to provide information on ethical aspects (where relevant) and information on participation in previous projects under the Marie Curie actions.

B.1 LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Please provide an overview of the consortium composition by providing details of the legal entity, the department carrying out the work and the person-in-charge of the project.

In addition, partners contributing to the research training programme – without being formally part of the consortium – should be named, where already known at the time of the application.

	<i>Industrial partners only:</i> Level of involvement (see section 2.2.6 of this guide)			Legal Entity	Department	Person-in-charge
	1	2	3			
Network Participants						
-						
-						
-						
Associated Partners						
-						
-						

B.2 PROJECT OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES

Please provide an introduction to the proposal, describing its main objectives and how they will be achieved.

B.3 S&T QUALITY (30%)

In assessing the proposal, experts will be asked to review this criterion on the following basis (see People Work programme Annex 2, table 1).

- S&T objectives of the research programme, including in terms of inter/multi-disciplinary, intersectoral and/or newly emerging supra-disciplinary fields.
- Scientific quality of the research programme.
- Appropriateness of research methodology.
- Originality and innovative aspects of the research programme. Knowledge of the state-of-the-art.

Explanatory note:

The scientific part of the proposal should allow experts to assess the quality of **the proposed scientific and technological area**, including interdisciplinary and inter-sector aspects (where relevant for the research area) taking into account the foreseen **participation of industry**.

Please provide a detailed description of the research topics and of the **research sub-programmes** to be implemented by the network teams, highlighting planned research collaborations. Indicate how the individual projects of the recruited researchers will be integrated into the overall research training collaboration.

Explain the key elements of the **research methodologies** that will be followed, taking into consideration ethical and other relevant issues, where appropriate. If necessary, describe how complementary methods will be integrated.

If relevant, and more specifically for mono-site proposals, **the role of associated partners** (which are not formally partners of the consortium) and their active contribution to the research activities should also be described.

The text should contain information on the current **state of the art** and the **objectives** of the research programme. It should describe how the synergies/complementarities between the teams will be exploited to create an innovative research environment in the chosen field.

B. 4 TRAINING (30%)

In assessing the proposal, experts will be asked to review this criterion on the following basis (see People Work programme Annex 2, table 1).

- Quality of the training programme. Consistency with the research programme. Complementary skills offered: Management, Communication, IPR, Ethics, Grant writing, Commercial exploitation of results, Research policy, Entrepreneurship, etc.
- Importance and timeliness of the training needs (e.g. multidisciplinary, intersectoral and newly emerging supra-disciplinary fields).
 - a) For multi-site proposals: Adequate combination of local specialist training with network-wide training activities.
 - b) For mono-site proposals: Adequate exploitation of the international network of the participants for the training programme
- Appropriateness of the size of the requested training programme with respect to the capacity of the host.

Explanatory note:

The description of the training programme should allow assessing the need for research training in the chosen scientific area as well as the quality of the proposed training measures with regard to the targeted researchers.

Please provide a **description of the proposed training programme**, including:

- content (overview of the various training elements, including training in scientific and complementary skills; articulation of the individual research projects within the overall proposed training programme);
- structure (local versus network-wide training activities);
- role and foreseen contribution of participants from within and outside the network to the training programme.
- Role of industry in the training programme
- Role of the supervisory board in the definition of the skills requirements

Where **conferences** are expected to be open to members from outside the partnership, clearly specify the number of participants expected (as listed in the proposal Part A (A4)), and give details on the organisation and scope.

The proposal should clearly show how the network's potential will be exploited for the benefit of the researchers over and above that which could be provided in a narrow, national context. This is essential for mono-site or twinning applications where the proposal must clearly demonstrate how an international network of **associated training partners** will be concretely involved in the training programme.

Specify the amount of early-stage and experienced researchers (including visiting scientists) to be recruited in terms of **person-months** as well as the breakdown of this number by participant (see model table). Indicate the typical length of the appointments for early-stage and/or experienced researchers.

It is important that a sound justification is provided for the **proposed balance of early-stage versus experienced researchers** ("early post-docs") (*see section 2.3.4 of this guide*) and that the **role of the visiting scientists** is well defined, where relevant.

Early-stage and experienced researchers to be financed by the grant agreement				
Network Team	Early-stage researchers (ESR) (person-months) (A)	Experienced researchers (ER) (person-months) (B)	Visiting Scientists (VS) (person-months) (C)	Total (A+B+C) ⁷
1				
2				
3				

⁷ Ensure that the values provided in columns (a), (b) and (c) of the table are consistent with those declared in Part A4 of the proposal submission forms

B.5 IMPLEMENTATION (20%)

In assessing the proposal, experts will be asked to review this criterion on the following basis (see People Work programme Annex 2, table 1).

- Capacities (expertise/human resources/facilities/infrastructure) to achieve the research and adequate task distribution and schedule.
- Appropriateness of industry involvement.
- Adequate exploitation of complementarities and synergies among partners in terms of research and training.
- How essential is non ICPC Third Country participation, if any, to the objectives of the research training programme.
- Appropriateness of the plans for the overall management of the training programme (demarcation of responsibilities, rules for decision making, recruitment strategy etc).
- Networking and dissemination of best practice among partners. Clarity of the plan organising training events (workshops, conferences, training courses).

Explanatory note:

Please describe in this section **the capacities of each host institution** in terms of research expertise, human resources, facilities and infrastructure to demonstrate that each network team has sufficient resources to host and/or offer a suitable environment for training and transfer of knowledge to recruited early-stage and experienced researchers.

Provide an **overview of the work** plan showing work packages, task distribution, milestones, foreseen deliverables and schedule. The schedule should be in terms of number of months elapsed from the start of the network programme.

Describe the **level of industry participation** in the network (*see section 2.2.6 of this guide*). Provide clear **evidence of the commitment of industry** to be involved (e.g. a letter attached within the PDF file). Ensure that the involvement is at the highest possible level in function of the training programme and the research discipline.

Each team should supply information on the **key scientific staff** who will be involved in the research, their individual expertise and the foreseen extent of involvement (in percentage of full time employment).

List the three most significant recent publications for each of the teams in the network.

Please outline the **financial management strategy** of the network. Any relevant project management experience of the participants should be described (such as previous and current involvement in projects under the Marie Curie Actions).

Describe in practical terms, how the teams complement each other and how **possible synergies** will be exploited to benefit the research training programme. Where relevant, highlight the involvement of **participants from different sectors** (academia, industry, others) and provide details on the nature of the collaborations.

If one or more of the network teams is based in a **Third country** which is not an ICPC country or in an **international organisation**, special care must be taken in the proposal to explain why the involvement of this team is essential to the success of the research training programme, since only in exceptional cases will these organisations receive Community funding.

Describe the **organisation and management structure** of the network and the techniques to be used to co-ordinate its activities as well as the methods foreseen to ensure good **communication** between the research teams and **monitoring** progress.

Describe the composition and function of the **supervisory board**.

Outline the practical steps the network would take to ensure effective **dissemination of the results** of the joint research training programme, both during the project duration and after completion of the grant agreement.

Where appropriate, describe the approach to be taken regarding any **intellectual property** that may arise from the research activities of the network⁸.

The proposal should contain information on the **recruitment strategy** to meet the request for competitive international recruitment and to promote equal opportunities, including information on conditions for employment where possible. Explain how you intend to act in line with the principles of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for their recruitment. Describe how you intend to ensure that gender balance is also addressed at the level of decision-making when implementing the project.

B.6 IMPACT (20%)

In assessing the proposal, experts will be asked to review this criterion on the following basis (see People Work programme Annex 2, table 1).

- Contribution of the proposed training programme to the improvement of the career prospects of the fellows.
- Provision to establish longer term collaborations and/or lasting structured training programme between the partners' organisations, including between private and academic partners.
- Where appropriate, justification of the training events open to external participants and their integration in the training programme.
- Where appropriate, mutual recognition of the training acquired by multipartner hosts.
- Where applicable, relevance of the role of visiting scientist with respect to the training programme.

Explanatory note:

The chapter outlining the impact of the project shall allow experts to assess the **immediate and longer term benefits** of the proposed research training programme **at the level of the individual** (early-stage and experienced) **researchers, of the participating institutions and** ultimately at the level **of European research**.

Please specify how the training programme is expected to enhance the researchers' capacity to progress in research, as well as their capabilities to work and/or communicate across disciplines and sectors.

The proposal should also provide information on the benefits of the project collaboration for the institutions involved. More specifically, it should outline how the proposed programme will foster

⁸ background information on IPR issues can be found at <http://www.ipr-helpdesk.org>

existing and/or create new collaborations in the chosen area of research training. This could include, for example, formalising agreements of mutual recognition of training modules or by opening opportunities for new scientific and training collaborations between the participating institutions (e.g. between academia and industry).

Where relevant, specify the benefits expected from

- a) opening up **conferences** to participants from outside the network partnership
- b) the contribution of the **visiting scientists** to the research training programme.

B.7 ETHICAL ISSUES

NOTE: Any ethical review will be carried out **on the proposal as it is submitted**. It is important therefore that you address all relevant issues properly. (Please refer also to Annex 5 of this Guide)

Describe any ethical issues that may arise in the proposal. In particular, you should explain the benefit and burden of the experiments and the effects these may have on the research subject. The following special issues should be taken into account:

Informed consent: When describing issues relating to informed consent, it will be necessary to illustrate an appropriate level of ethical sensitivity, and consider issues of insurance, incidental findings and the consequences of individuals leaving the study prematurely.

Data protection issues: Avoid the unnecessary collection and use of personal data. Identify the source of the data, describing whether it is collected as part of the research or is previously collected data being used. Consider issues of informed consent for any data being used. Describe how personal identity of the data is protected.

Use of animals: Where animals are used in research the application of the 3Rs (Replace, Reduce, Refine) must be convincingly addressed. Numbers of animals should be specified. Describe what happens to the animals after the research experiments.

Human embryonic stem cells: Research proposals that will involve human embryonic stem cells (hESC) will have to address all the following specific points:

- the necessity to use hESC in order to achieve the scientific objectives set forth in the proposal.
- whether the applicants have taken into account the legislation, regulations, ethical rules and/or codes of conduct in place in the country(ies) where the research using hESC is to take place, including the procedures for obtaining informed consent;
- the source of the hESC
- the measures taken to protect personal data, including genetic data, and privacy;
- the nature of financial inducements, if any.

Identify the countries where research will be undertaken and which ethical committees and regulatory organisations will need to be approached during the life of the project.

Include the Ethical issues table below. If you indicate YES to any issue, please identify the pages in the proposal where this ethical issue is described. Answering 'YES' to some of these boxes does not automatically lead to an ethical review. It enables the independent experts to decide if an ethical review is required. If you are sure that none of the issues apply to your proposal, simply tick the YES box in the last row.

(No restricted length for section B.7 - depends on the number of such issues involved)

Notes:

Any ethical review will be performed solely on the basis of the information available in the proposal. Only in exceptional cases will additional information be sought for clarification. **ATTENTION! Proposals with insufficient information on how to address the ethical issues touched in the proposal may risk to be rejected as experts may not be able to judge these issues properly.**

"Proposal Acronym"

Projects raising specific ethical issues such as research intervention on human beings⁹; research on human embryos and human embryonic stem cells and non-human primates are automatically submitted for ethical review.

To ensure compliance with ethical principles, the Commission Services will undertake ethics audit(s) of selected projects at its discretion.

A dedicated website that aims to provide clear, helpful information on ethical issues is now available at: http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/ethics_en.html

⁹ Such as clinical trials, and research involving invasive techniques on persons (e.g. taking of tissue samples, examinations of the brain).

ETHICAL ISSUES TABLE

	YES	PAGE
Informed Consent		
• Does the proposal involve children?		
• Does the proposal involve patients or persons not able to give consent?		
• Does the proposal involve adult healthy volunteers?		
• Does the proposal involve Human Genetic Material?		
• Does the proposal involve Human biological samples?		
• Does the proposal involve Human data collection?		
Research on Human embryo/foetus		
• Does the proposal involve Human Embryos?		
• Does the proposal involve Human Foetal Tissue / Cells?		
• Does the proposal involve Human Embryonic Stem Cells?		
Privacy		
• Does the proposal involve processing of genetic information or personal data (e.g. health, sexual lifestyle, ethnicity, political opinion, religious or philosophical conviction)		
• Does the proposal involve tracking the location or observation of people?		
Research on Animals		
• Does the proposal involve research on animals?		
• Are those animals transgenic small laboratory animals?		
• Are those animals transgenic farm animals?		
• Are those animals cloned farm animals?		
• Are those animals non-human primates?		
Research Involving Developing Countries		
• Use of local resources (genetic, animal, plant etc)		
• Impact on a local community		
Dual Use and potential for terrorist abuse		
• Research having direct military application		
• Research having the potential for terrorist abuse		
I CONFIRM THAT NONE OF THE ABOVE ISSUES APPLY TO MY PROPOSAL		

ENDPAGE

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Marie Curie Initial Training Networks (ITN)
Call: FP7-PEOPLE-ITN-2008

PART B

“PROPOSAL ACRONYM”

Annex 5 – Ethical Issues

Ethics Issues in Research

Ethics is central to scientific integrity, honesty and clarity of science. It is considered essential by the European Commission in the research activities that it funds or carries out itself. This means that in any proposal submitted to the 7th Framework programme, ethics issues must be identified and addressed. Proposals that pose ethics concerns will be flagged. Considering **ethics issues** from the concept stage of a proposal enhances the quality of research. Applicants should take time to consider the benefit/burden balance of each work package; consider the impact of the research, not only in terms of scientific advancement, but also in terms of human dignity and social and cultural impact; consider elements such as the ethics and social impact of the research and whether there is a balance between the objectives and the means.

Major Changes from FP6 to FP7

- The Ethical Review will be carried out **on the proposal as it is submitted**.
- No additional information will be requested at Ethical Review.
- **Drafts** of Information Sheet and Consent Form have to be submitted.
- No need to submit copies of legislation.

Take Home Message:

GET IT RIGHT FIRST TIME!

Identify and contact the ethics expert in your organisation now!

Main Ethics Issues that MUST be addressed

- Informed consent
- Human embryonic stem cells
- Privacy and data protection
- Use of human biological samples and data
- Research on animals
- Research in developing countries
- Dual use

Areas excluded from funding

1. Research activity aiming at human cloning for reproductive purposes.
2. Research activity intended to modify the genetic heritage of human beings which could make such changes heritable (Research related to cancer treatment of the gonads can be financed).
3. Research activities intended to create human embryos solely for the purpose of research or for the purpose of stem cell procurement, including by means of somatic cell nuclear transfer.

Elements for a good approach

- The content of the Ethics part of the proposal should reflect that the issue was thought of thoroughly.
- Address possible ethics issues, even if to justify that they are not applicable, give justification.
- Justify the choice of animals, estimate the numbers.
- Take into account data, data transfer, banks, collecting samples, future clinical trials.
- Specifically include: Insurance of participants, Conflict of interest, Incidental findings.
- Foresee Ethics Responsibility at the level of Work-Package Leadership.
- Include an Ethics Standing Committee or at least a periodic monitoring for ethics.
- Include a flowchart of the Ethics review process within the partnership.
- Include an appropriate periodic report on ethics.
- Include a Work Package on Ethics (if relevant).

Ethics Reviews in Practice

All proposals submitted to the European Commission for funding are evaluated by a panel of independent experts on the basis of the criteria detailed in Annex 2 of the Guide for Applicants. The independent experts will also detect proposals raising Ethics issues and recommend Ethics Review.

Ethics review and the reviewers

Ethics review aims to prevent Community funding being used for research activities that contravene fundamental rights.

- Reviewers are selected on the basis of their expertise.
- Reviewers must first register online on CORDIS.
- Reviewers have a wide range of skills. They include doctors, biologists and clinicians, ethicists, lawyers.
- Gender balance is promoted.
- Reviewers come from the European Union and other countries.

Every proposal gets a report outlining the views of the reviewers. No marks are given.

Ethics review is automatic if a proposal includes:

- interventions on human beings;
- the use of human embryonic stem cells (hESC); and/or
- the use of non-human primates.

Ethics Review may be necessary if the proposal is flagged by the scientific expert as raising specific ethics issues.

Informed Consent

When is it needed?

- When children are involved
- Healthy volunteers
- Human genetic material
- Human biological samples
- Human data collection

What must be in a Consent form?

- A statement that this is a research project.
- The purpose of the research, the duration, procedures to be used and identification of any experimental procedure.
- A description of the foreseen risks and benefits to be included.
- A statement describing the extent to which confidentiality of records identifying the subject will be maintained.
- A disclosure of any alternative procedures that might be beneficial.
- For research involving more than minimal risk, an explanation as to whether there are any treatments or compensation if injury occurs and if so what they consist of or where further information can be obtained.
- Identify the contact person for answers to questions about the research and research subject's rights, and whom to contact in the event of injury to the subject.
- A statement that participation is voluntary, withdrawal from the research can be undertaken at any time without loss of benefits which the subject is otherwise entitled to.

How to deal with informed consent in practice?

Ensure that:

- it is understood. Explain how you check the critical part of the process;
- it excludes vulnerable persons, prisoners, mentally impaired persons, severely-injured patients, very young children, but avoid lost opportunities for these persons. The framework should guarantee their participation (notion of surrogate legal/therapeutic representative);
- you address the fact that people rarely recall what they have agreed upon when signing an informed consent form.

Human Embryonic Stem Cell Research (hESC)

Each proposal using hESC is assessed by at least two independent ethics reviews: one in the country where the research is carried out and one at the EU level. No system in the world offers a higher guarantee regarding the respect of fundamental ethics principles.

When involving the use of hESC in their research project, researchers should take into account and specify:

- if it does not destroy embryos (including to procure stem cells);
- if the consortium has taken into account the legislation, regulations, ethics rules and/or codes of conduct in place in the countries where the research using the hESC will take place, including the procedures for obtaining informed consent;
- the source of the hESC;
- the protection of personal data (genetic data and privacy);
- the nature of financial inducements, if any;
- positive opinion from a Committee constituted by Member States representatives;
- approval of the relevant national or local ethics committee prior to the start of the research activities.

Privacy and data protection

Privacy problems exist wherever uniquely identifiable data relating to a person is collected or stored, in digital form or otherwise. Improper disclosure control can be the root cause for privacy issues.

Data affected by privacy issues

- Health Information
- Financial and Genetic information
- Criminal justice

- Location information

The main challenge in data privacy is to share data while protecting identifiable information

How to address Data protection and Privacy?

- Describe the procedures for informed consent confidentiality.
- Informed consent for duration and limited purposes.
- Code or anonymise banked biomaterial, security for storage and handling and make sure it is lawfully processed.

Eight principles of good practice - Data must be:

- Fairly and lawfully processed
- Processed for limited purposes
- Adequate, relevant and not excessive
- Accurate
- Not kept longer than necessary
- Processed in accordance with the data subject's rights
- Secure
- Not transferred to countries without adequate protection

Research on Animals

- Explain and justify your choices of species and give an estimate of numbers of animals you will use.
- Make a detailed and convincing explanation for the application of the 3Rs: **Reduction, Replacement, Refinement**.
- Describe and justify humane end points and pain suffering.
- Check for alternatives.

Double Standards

The issues at stake when conducting research in Developing Countries are linked with applying the same criteria to other cultures. This implies that you take into account the wide disparities in health systems and access to health care, the burden of disease, the level of literacy and the scientific and ethics infrastructures.

Dual use

Dual use is a term used to refer to technology which can be used for both peaceful and military aims.

Ethical issues of dual use might arise in cases where:-

- Classified information, materials or techniques are used in research
- Dangerous or restricted materials e.g. explosives are used in research
- The specific results of the research could present a danger to participants, or to society as a whole, if they were improperly disseminated

Common problems related to ethics in research:

- Lack of consistency
- Failure to describe insurance cover
- No information on handling incidental findings
- No information on any incentives used (financial inducements, etc.)
- Issues related to children: failure to describe if child obtains a real and direct benefit. If child is not directly benefited, a minimum risk and minimum burden must be illustrated
- Research on animals: failure to describe (i) numbers used; (ii) humane end points; (iii) if non animal alternatives were sought
- Developing Countries: failure to describe why it is necessary to include the developing countries and whether any benefits will reach these countries
- Conflict of Interest: independence is central to obtaining informed consent. A treating doctor should not be involved in counselling a patient on the benefits of his / her research

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Ethics Review: http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/ethics_en.html
- Research on Animals: <http://www.nc3rs.org.uk/category.asp?catID=3>
http://www.vet.uu.nl/nca/links/databases_of_3r_models

- Experts' registration: <https://cordis.europa.eu/emmfp7/>

Annex 6 – Frequently Asked Questions about ITN

Composition of the network

1Q: What is meant by "full network partner" and "associated partner"?

A: Full network partners have rights and obligations with regard to the Community and will be signing the grant agreement as *beneficiaries*. Associated partners will contribute as *third parties* to the research training programme, e.g. by providing specialised training modules. They will not be signatories to the grant agreement itself but rather to a strategic partnership agreement with the full network partners and they will be named in Annex 1 to the grant agreement. Associated partners are typically part of mono-site and twinning applications where the participants must have a well-established trans-national collaboration with other research institutes.

2Q: Will the "associated partner" be financed?

A: The associated partners will not receive funding directly from the Community and therefore they will not recruit. However they will host the recruited researchers for periods of secondments/visits. They may also organise training activities, and such activities will have to be financially supported by one of the full network partners who have signed the grant agreement.

3Q: Is the involvement of industry important?

A.: The ITN action aims to add to the intersectoral and transnational employability of the recruited researchers, and the involvement of organisations from different sectors is therefore essential. Industry participation in ITN is defined at three levels: 1. Full; 2. Intermediate; 3. Minimum (see section 2.2.6 of the Guide for Applicants). The involvement of industry should be at the highest possible level, taking into account the nature of the joint training programme and the research field. The minimum level of involvement of industry would be as part of the supervisory board (i.e. level 3). Involvement at level 2 & 3 must be well justified in the proposal. It is important to provide clear evidence of the commitment of industry to be involved (e.g. a letter attached within the proposal PDF file) (see also 27Q).

4Q: Is it possible to include industry as a full partner without industry recruiting anyone in cases where it makes a real contribution to the research training programme (and deliverables) by hosting secondments and providing training?

A: No, a full partnership (beneficiary) implies recruitment since the budget allocation is proportional to the researcher months. Each full partner of the consortium, industrial or academic, is expected to recruit at least one young researcher.

5Q: Would a US partner be acceptable as a full partner if they are not recruiting researchers, but e.g. receiving researchers on secondment, contributing significantly to the training project and to the research deliverables?

A: No, a full partnership (beneficiary) implies recruitment since the budget allocation is proportional to the researcher months. Special financial conditions apply to OTC participants as full partners (possible only in multi-site ITNs) as indicated in the Guide for Applicants (section 2.2.4). An associated OTC partner (in this example a US partner) that is not recruiting can receive a researcher for a visit/secondment. The role has to be described and justified in the proposal. Cost allocation: (see also 21Q)

6Q: What is meant by "Coordinator"?

A: Among the various partners in a network, there will be a coordinating institution. The coordinator is the partner identified in the grant agreement who, in addition to its obligations as a beneficiary, is obliged to carry out the specific coordination tasks provided for in the grant agreement. The coordinator shall be the intermediary between the partners and the Commission (with the exceptions foreseen in the grant agreement) and responsible for monitoring and reporting progress. The network coordinator should therefore have the appropriate management expertise, as well as the technical expertise. The network coordinator's tasks also include administrative and financial matters, such as arranging the formalities for all beneficiaries to accede to the grant agreement, general liaison with the Commission, the submission of all documents, including cost statements and technical reports, and the distribution of the financial contribution from the Community.

The coordinator institution is always participant nr. 1 in the application.

7Q: What are the tasks and responsibilities of a scientist-in-charge (in a host organisation)?

A: The main responsibility of the scientist-in-charge is to ensure the fulfilment of the contractual commitments as defined in the grant agreement and its annexes. He/she monitors and reports on the work under the project in his/her organisation. He/she usually is the regular contact point for the EC and the network coordinator concerning all issues relating to the implementation of the project.

Size of the network**8Q. Are there any special requirements for mono-sites and twinnings?**

A: ITNs with **less than three participants** can be considered, provided that the organisation(s) involved have **well-established transnational collaborations** with other research institutes that can contribute actively to the research training programme without being formal signatories to the grant agreement (i.e. involvement as *associated partners*). The applicant institution(s) must have a large recruitment capacity and provide an international and interdisciplinary training environment for the recruited researchers. The involvement of associated partners should be based on past records of joint operation of training programmes and should exploit existing synergies between the partners (e.g. existing collaborative research programmes, exchange of early-stage researchers), to further strengthen the interdisciplinarity and the complementary skills component of the research training programme where appropriate, and ensure cooperation between academia and industry. For twinnings industry involvement at *level 1* (as full network partner) would be welcomed whilst for mono-sites the involvement of industry should preferably be at level at level 2 (see section 2.2.6 of the Guide for Applicants) in order to facilitate intersectoral mobility and training of the researchers and prepare them for a wider range of career options.

The nature of the existing international collaboration and the way in which this will be exploited in the proposed training programme must be clearly described in applications for mono-sites and twinnings.

9Q: What is the expected size of a network?

A: There is no predefined size for multi-site networks. However, past experience has shown that a manageable size of such networks would be in the range of 6 to 10 partners. It is expected that the budget will range from € 1.5 million for mono-sites and twinnings, through € 2.5 million for the typical multi -site, and up to € 4.5 million for the largest multi –sites. The distribution among participants should be balanced, i.e. no more than 40% of the total Community contribution may be allocated to the benefit of organisations within one country in Multi-site ITNs.

Eligible researchers**10Q: Who can be appointed in a network?**

Eligible researchers are primarily the early stage researchers (ESR), who are in the first four years of their research career. Some networks might justify the involvement also of experienced researchers/early post-docs (within the first five years of their career) for the purpose of completing their initial training. In addition, a limited number of senior scientists of outstanding stature in international training and collaborative research may also be recruited.

11Q: How are the years of full-time research experience calculated?

Research undertaken after the researcher has gained a university degree/diploma giving access to doctoral studies (the degree/diploma must entitle the holder to embark on doctoral studies without having to acquire any further qualifications) in the country in which the degree/diploma was obtained or in the country in which the research training is provided, will be counted. Applicants lacking or exceeding the requisite years of full-time postgraduate research experience at the time of the recruitment are not eligible.

Recruitments**12Q: What is the proportion of Early-stage researchers and Experienced researchers to be recruited in an ITN?**

A.: The main aim of the ITN is the training of Early-stage researchers. As a general rule Early-stage researchers (ESR) must be present in significantly higher proportions compared to Experienced researchers (ER). (Typically the share of ESR researcher months in an ITN should be 100%, but the minimum expected is 80%).

13Q: Is a proposal with 100% ESR recruitment acceptable, or does it need special justification?

A: No explanation is expected in the case of 100% ESR recruitment, since ESR training is the main objective of the FP7 ITN action.

14Q: How many Visiting scientists can be recruited in a network?

A.: In addition to the Early-stage researchers, a limited number of senior Visiting scientists from either the public or private sector who are of outstanding stature in international training and collaborative research may be recruited to complement the network's capacity to transfer new knowledge and strengthen supervision. Visiting scientists should be exceptional and duly justified in the context of the training programme.

15Q: For how long can appointed researchers be trained within an ITN?

A: An Early-stage researcher can be appointed under an ITN for a minimum of 3 months up to a maximum of 36 months. In case of an Experienced researcher, the appointment is 3 to 24 months.

Secondments**16Q: What does a secondment period mean and how can these costs be accounted?**

A: A researcher appointed under the project by one network partner can spend a period of secondment at another network partner's premises. A secondment period must not represent more than 30% of the total period of the agreement in force between the researcher and the original appointing institution. If the secondment period exceeds this maximum, the receiving network partner will have to appoint the researcher instead. In a multi-site ITN secondments cannot take place to an organisation outside the network.

17Q: When researchers who are seconded for more than 30% have to be recruited by the institution to which they are seconded, do they have to fulfil all eligibility criteria again, including mobility and experience criteria?

A: Yes, there would have to be a new recruitment and all eligibility criteria must be met.

Remuneration of researchers**18Q: What is the difference between an employment contract and a stipend?**

A: According to the various social security schemes applicable in all Member States, an employment contract shall guarantee a "package" of social security coverage made of several items, such as sickness and maternity benefits, invalidity benefits, old age benefits, survivor's benefits, benefits in respect of accidents at work and occupational diseases, unemployment benefits, family benefits, etc.

The contractor shall appoint experienced researchers under an employment contract, except in duly justified cases (such as for short stays, e.g. for Visiting scientists). When an employment contract cannot be provided, the researcher shall be recruited under a status equivalent to a fixed amount fellowship or stipend, provided that it is compatible with the national legislation and that adequate social security is provided (but not necessarily paid from the fellowship). The stipend is a sort of grant that can be proposed as an alternative to the employment contract.

19Q: Are the allowances stated in the Guide for Applicants gross or net amounts?

A: The living, mobility, travel and career development allowances are gross Community contributions to the salary costs of the fellow. Consequently, the net salary results from deducting all compulsory social security contributions as well as direct taxes (e.g. income tax) from the gross amounts. Please note that social security contributions and taxation of the different allowances vary from country to country. The travel, mobility and career exploratory allowances have been conceived as separate flat rate amounts and where national taxation allows, it is the intention that these amounts should not be subject to personal taxation or employers deductions. For more detailed information about the taxation in a specific country, please consult the relevant National Contact Point (http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/ncp_en.html).

20Q: Can Visiting scientist keep their salary at a third institution during their engagement on the contract, provided it is clear that they are working 100% of their time on the project, and they have no other commitments outside the network?

A: As stated in the grant agreement form, the researcher shall not be allowed to receive, for the activities carried out in the frame of the project, other incomes than those received from the recruiting institution. A

100% effort is expected from a Visiting scientist in the project. This does not rule out that he/she has an employment contract and receives remuneration from his/her "home" institution.

Conferences, workshops, events

21Q: How many conferences can be foreseen in an ITN?

A: In the context of ITNs, conferences, workshops, seminars, summer schools etc. are an opportunity for the recruited researchers to exchange knowledge with more experienced researchers and to open the research training programme to researchers from outside the network. However, ITN is not a scheme for conferences, but rather a scheme for improving training and career perspectives of researchers. Therefore, the number/budget for conferences should be in reasonable relation to the proposed research training programme.

Proposal Part B

22Q: The Guide for Applicants makes reference to letters of support for industry: do you envisage consortia including this for all industrial participants, including full partners? – Or is the main issue with industrial partners at the level of the associate partners / board members, as these will not be signatories to the grant agreement?

A: Letters of support from industry would be expected in all cases. Full partners (beneficiaries) have a commitment to recruit as indicated in the work program. Associated partners are expected to confirm their commitment to the research training program in terms of their described role. The evaluators would like to see a letter of support from the management of the company and not only from the R&D department.

23Q: Must letters of the commitment from industry be included within the limit of 30 pages of the proposal?

A.: No, the letters of the commitment are not taken into account in the page limit, but they have to be included in the part B PDF file as the EPSS only allows upload of a single PDF file per proposal. Please note that there is a size limit for the PDF file to be uploaded (see the instructions in the EPSS system).

24Q: For example if 'Implementation' accounts for 20% of the overall score, is it recommended to take into account the overall % in deciding how much space to spend on each section, i.e. a rough guide would be that 20% of the pages should also be spent on 'implementation' and so on?

A: The maximum length of the proposal is 30 pages (excluding table of contents, section B7 -ethical issues -, letter of commitment from industrial partners where applicable and start & end pages). It is up to each applicant to decide how these 30 pages shall be used, whilst ensuring that the proposal addresses all evaluation criteria outlined in the Guide for Applicants in a clear and concise manner.

Proposal Forms & Submission

25Q: Do the participants have to fill in the A2 form?

A: Yes, all the participants (including the Coordinator) must fill in one A2 form each. The coordinator also fills in one form A1 and one form A4 with details for each participant (one per line). The participant numbers correspond to those defined in the A2 forms (participant number one is always the network coordinator). Associated partners should not fill in the A2 form and are not listed separately in the A4 form. Note, however, that each associated partner must be identified in the proposal narrative (Part B).

In order to avoid any problems or delays in the communication between the applicants and the Commissions please make sure that:

1. The name of the legal entity is correct (in the original language)
2. The address provided in the field 'administrative data' corresponds to the legal entity (and not to the institute or department – this should be provided in the field 'contact points')
3. The e-mail address is and stays valid as this will be used for further correspondence.

26Q: Who has to be contacted for electronic submission problems?

A: Please contact the EPSS helpdesk (support@epss-fp7.org - telephone +32 2 233 3760) for any query relating to the use of the electronic submission tool.

Acknowledgement of Receipt

27Q: How does the European Commission confirm the safe receipt of an ITN proposal?

A: Shortly after the call deadline, the Commission will send an **acknowledgement of receipt** to the e-mail address of the proposal coordinator given in the submitted proposal. This is assumed to be the individual named on the A2 form for participant no. 1. Please note that the brief electronic message given by the EPSS system after each submission is not the official Acknowledgement of Receipt.

The sending of an acknowledgement of receipt does not imply that a proposal has been accepted as eligible for evaluation.

If you have not received an acknowledgement of receipt within 12 working days after the call deadline, you should contact the FP7 Enquiry Service without further delay (<http://ec.europa.eu/research/enquiries>). However, first please check that you are the person named in the proposal as contact person for partner no. 1, check the email address which you gave for yourself, and check the junk mail box of your email system for the first few days following the close of call for any mail originating from FP7Aor@ess-fp7.org.

Evaluation

28Q: How are proposals classified in the evaluation results? Is it simply based on the total score awarded, or are other criteria considered?

A: All submitted proposals have to undergo a peer-review evaluation. Based on the evaluation results, the proposals are ranked and the Commission draws up a priority list of those proposals for immediate negotiation, taking into account of the available budget.

The ranks A, B and C are separated as follows:

- A: the necessary budget is available.
- B: reserve list (in case of withdrawal of a candidate in A). It is unlikely that all B-list proposals will be financed.
- C: although projects are of good quality, the available budget is not sufficient and the projects will be rejected.

After negotiations, a formal Commission Decision is made and grant agreements signed with successful proposers.

29Q: When will the results of the evaluations be published?

A: The deadline for the submission of the proposals is 2 September 2008. The individual evaluation of proposals (remote evaluations) will start soon after the deadline and the final evaluation phase (consensus and panel meetings) will take place between October and November. It is expected that preliminary results will be available on CORDIS by December 2008.

30Q: Do projects placed on the reserve list of a previous call for proposals automatically go forward to the next call?

A: No. The proposals on the reserve list within the previous call are not automatically transmitted to the next call. Applicants should resubmit a revised version, specifying that it had been submitted before, and providing the following information: proposal number and the main differences between the new proposal and the old one. The proposal's previous assessment mark will not be taken into account.

Regular updates of the FAQs will be made available from:

<http://ec.europa.eu/research/mariecurieactions/index.htm>