



## ARTEMIS Joint Undertaking selection and evaluation procedures related to Calls for proposals

This Working paper describes the steps that will be followed by the ARTEMIS Joint Undertaking (JU) related to the Calls for proposals, the procedures for evaluation and selection of Projects, the allocation of public funding following such Calls, and the subsequent establishment of grant agreements and monitoring of Projects<sup>1</sup>.

The national funding committed by ARTEMIS Member States to Calls will be dedicated to cover a percentage of the R&D costs of their own national participants in Projects. Nevertheless, an ARTEMIS Member State may decide to fund organisations that are full partners in proposals from other EU Member or Associated States of the Framework Programme. In this case, the "host" ARTEMIS Member State will bear the same rights, responsibilities and obligations vis-à-vis the JU with respect to this foreign participant as if such participant was based in the host ARTEMIS Member State (as specified in the administrative arrangements concluded between the JU and the "host" ARTEMIS Member State e.g. in terms of grant agreements, audits, cost claims, etc.).

### I Preliminary Steps:

1. ARTEMIS Member States<sup>2</sup> shall communicate to the Executive Director an informal indication of the amount of national funding available for Calls for proposals to be launched by the Joint Undertaking for the next year (hereinafter referred to as "pre-commitments"). Every year the Governing Board will establish the deadline to communicate these pre-commitments.
2. The Industry and Research Committee and the Executive Director will take into account the pre-commitments for the elaboration of the draft Annual Budget Plan and Annual Implementation Plan to be submitted by the Executive Director to the Governing Board before **the end of each year**<sup>3</sup>.
3. The Annual Implementation plan will determine the number of Calls to be launched by the ARTEMIS Joint Undertaking in the following year. In general, there will be only one Call per year.

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<sup>1</sup> "Project" is a research and/or development project selected by the ARTEMIS Joint Undertaking following competitive calls for proposals and thereafter partly funded by the ARTEMIS Joint Undertaking

<sup>2</sup> Member and Associated Countries having effectively acceded to membership in the terms described in the Council Regulation establishing the ARTEMIS Joint Undertaking.

<sup>3</sup> The Annual Budget Plan and the Annual Implementation Plan for a particular year shall be adopted by the Governing Board of the ARTEMIS Joint Undertaking normally by the end of the previous year.

## II Preparation of the annual Call(s) of the ARTEMIS Joint Undertaking:

1. The Governing Board will establish a deadline for the communication to the Executive Director of the formal commitments<sup>4</sup> of maximum national budgets made available by the ARTEMIS Member States for the Call(s) to be launched by the Joint Undertaking in any given year.
2. The Industry and Research Committee will take into account the formal commitments (or until they are made available, the pre-commitments) for their proposal to the Public Authorities Board on the scope and objectives of the annual Call(s). The Industry and Research Committee and the Public Authority Board will enter an iterative process of discussion of the proposal for the content of the annual Call(s)
3. The Public Authorities Board will make a decision on the scope, objectives and public budget of the annual Call(s). This budget will consist of the maximum amounts committed at national level by each ARTEMIS Member State and the maximum amount of the ARTEMIS Joint Undertaking's financial contribution<sup>5</sup>.
4. Before any decision related to Calls is made by the Public Authorities Board, each ARTEMIS Member State will communicate to the Executive Director the following information :
  - the percentage(s) of the R&D costs incurred by its participants in Projects that will be covered by the financial contribution of this ARTEMIS Member State (or if relevant, the different percentages according to the type of participant).
  - the national eligibility criteria for funding.
5. The Public Authorities Board will decide, upon proposal of the representative of the Community after consultation with the Exec Director, the percentage of the R&D costs incurred by participants in Projects to be funded by the financial contribution of the ARTEMIS Joint Undertaking. This percentage will not exceed 16.7% of such R&D costs and will be equal for all participants eligible for JU funding in Projects in any given call for proposals.
6. The Public Authorities Board will instruct the Executive Director to publish the Call(s). Each Call will specify the following:
  - Scope and objective(s)
  - Rules for participation, including project eligibility criteria, and Joint Undertaking and national eligibility criteria for funding. Eligibility criteria for funding should be transparent and lend themselves to verification.
  - Maximum budget (indicating the maximum financial contributions from the ARTEMIS Joint Undertaking and from ARTEMIS Member States)
  - the percentage of the R&D costs to be funded by the financial contribution of the ARTEMIS Joint Undertaking

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<sup>4</sup> Formal commitments may differ from pre-commitments

<sup>5</sup> Normally 55% of the sum of national commitments as specified in the Statutes of the ARTEMIS Joint Undertaking in Article 13(4) of its Statutes

- the percentage of the R&D costs to be funded by each ARTEMIS Member State (if relevant, per type of participant, and/or any other condition regarding this percentage)<sup>6</sup>
- the evaluation criteria (with score ranges and the corresponding thresholds and weights, and a minimum total score that a proposal should reach in order to be retained)
- Other conditions for the eventual establishment of the grant agreements

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<sup>6</sup> Any participant must know at the time of the Call what are the conditions and the expected percentage of costs that can be covered by the financial contribution of the corresponding ARTEMIS Member State

### **III Evaluation and Selection process and allocation of public funding**

1. The process of evaluation and selection and for the allocation of public funding is detailed in Annex I.
2. The evaluation process carried out with the assistance of independent experts will respect the principles of transparency, fairness, impartiality and confidentiality. The evaluation and selection process shall ensure that allocation of the ARTEMIS Joint Undertaking public funding follows the principles of equal treatment, excellence and competition.
3. Participants from ARTEMIS member States and their contribution to the project proposals shall be verified by the Executive Director, on the basis of verifications carried out by the respective national authorities, against the pre-defined national eligibility criteria for funding as published in the Call. The verifications by national authorities shall be performed and communicated to the Executive Director at least 20 days before the Public Authorities Board meets to decide the selection of proposals and the allocation of public funding, and as much as possible before proposers submit a full project proposal. Proposers shall be informed on the results of these verifications.
4. For all participants in proposals the Executive Director will carry out the necessary verifications against the pre-defined Joint Undertaking eligibility criteria for funding as set out in the financial regulation or published in the Call, on the basis of verifications carried out by the Commission. These verifications shall be performed at least 20 days before the Public Authorities Board meets to decide the selection of proposals and the allocation of public funding, and as much as possible before proposers submit a full project proposal. Proposers shall be informed on the results of these verifications.
5. Public funding to participants will comply with state aid rules.

### **IV Grant agreements**

1. The decision of the Public Authorities Board on the allocation of public funding to Projects will be binding for ARTEMIS Member States without any further evaluation or selection processes. In particular:
  - the final approved “technical annex” resulting from the evaluation and negotiation process carried out by the ARTEMIS Joint Undertaking will be the same<sup>7</sup> for establishing the grant agreement in all participating ARTEMIS Member States.
  - the national funding bodies responsible for fulfilling the obligations of the ARTEMIS Member States will start the process of establishing national grant agreement with partners in selected proposals for supporting the R&D work, according to national eligibility criteria and other financial and legal requirements.
  - the ARTEMIS Joint Undertaking will conclude grant agreements with participants in Projects that if appropriate will refer to and will rely on corresponding national grant agreements.
  - The administrative and financial conditions of the JU grant agreements will be governed by the Financial Regulation of the ARTEMIS Joint Undertaking and the

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<sup>7</sup> Except for translations if necessary

administrative arrangements between the ARTEMIS Joint Undertaking and ARTEMIS Member States if appropriate.

2. ARTEMIS Member States will make best efforts to synchronize and accelerate their national procedures for concluding the grant agreements and starting the selected Projects.

## Annex I:

### A.- Evaluation and Selection of proposals, and Decision on allocation of public funding

#### A.1 General issues

1. The Governing Board may appoint independent experts (monitors) to monitor the process of evaluation of proposals with full access to documents and evaluation experts. These observers will report to the Governing Board of the ARTEMIS Joint Undertaking on any aspect of the evaluation as required, in particular on the respect of the evaluation rules and procedures.
2. The text of a Call may provide that prior to submitting Full Project Proposal (FPP), proposers shall send a Project Outline (PO) to the Joint Undertaking. PO will be assessed but they will not undergo a formal evaluation. The Call for proposals will state the deadlines for the submission of POs and FPPs and the Guide for Proposers will describe the PO and FPP structure. **Note that for the Call in year 2008 there will be no PO submission and assessment.**
3. For each Call and before the deadline of submission of Project Outlines, the Industry and Research Committee and the Public Authorities Board will propose experts to the Executive Director of the JU that can potentially participate in the evaluation of proposals. These experts must be registered in the lists of experts at the disposal of the ARTEMIS Joint Undertaking in accordance to its Financial Rules.
4. All experts involved in the assessment of POs or in the evaluation of FPPs will sign a declaration of confidentiality and no conflict of interest to be defined by the ARTEMIS Joint Undertaking.
5. The assessment/evaluation of POs and FPPs will require individual expert assessment/evaluation, consolidation of individual evaluator assessments, and panel session. Any of these tasks can be done remotely. The following shall apply for the assignment of experts to a proposal at any stage:
  - Rules for conflict of interest (see Section B of this Annex)
  - A balance of profiles (industrial/academic), technical expertise and nationalities will be sought at proposal and panel level
  - The proposers can send with the FPP a list of companies or experts that should not be assigned to the evaluation of the proposal.
6. The Executive Director of the JU will follow the above rules as well as any other rule indicated in this document for the assignment of experts without however compromising the quality of the evaluation. The Executive Director will justify any exceptions to these rules to the Governing Board.

## **A.2 Project Outline (PO) assessment (except for the Call in year 2008)**

- (1) The Secretariat will receive the POs within a fixed deadline established in the Call text. Each PO will be published on a restricted website<sup>8</sup> accessible by the experts (on a personal basis), by monitors, and by the public authorities having committed funding to the Call.
- (2) The Executive Director will organise the assessment of the POs on the basis of criteria defined in the Call for proposals. The "PO assessment" shall not commit either the Joint Undertaking or any of its members vis-à-vis the proposers.
- (3) "PO assessments" shall be sent by the Executive Director to the proposers at the latest 6 weeks before the closure of the call for FPFs.

## **A.3 Full Project Proposal (FPP) eligibility check**

- (1) The Secretariat will receive the FPPs within a fixed deadline established in the Call text. FPPs will be published on a restricted website<sup>9</sup> accessible by the evaluators (on a personal basis), by appointed monitors, and by the relevant public authorities potentially involved in the financing of FPPs. Public Authorities who are not involved in the proposed projects will receive a summary of the FPPs.
- (2) The Executive Director will check FPPs against the project eligibility criteria and he/she will decide on the exclusion of non-compliant FPPs ; he/she will inform the proposers accordingly.
- (3) The Executive Director will verify FPP participants against the JU and national eligibility criteria for funding. These verifications will be done on the basis of verifications made by national funding authorities of their national participants in FPPs against national eligibility criteria for funding, and by the Commission of all FPP participants against the JU eligibility criteria for funding. The national funding authorities and the Commission will communicate the results of such verifications to the Executive Director at the latest 20 days before the Public Authorities Board meets to decide the selection of proposals and the allocation of public funding(step 1 of Section A.5 below).

## **A.4 Full Project Proposal (FPP) evaluation step**

- (1) The results of the "PO assessment" will be available for the FPP evaluation.
- (2) FPPs will be evaluated and scored in the 0-10 scale according to the following criteria: (1) relevance and contribution to the objectives of the Call, (2) R&D innovation and technical excellence, (3) S&T approach and workplan, (4) market innovation and impact, (5) quality of consortium and management.

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<sup>8</sup> Alternatively, proposals can be sent by courier

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- (3) The Call for proposals will state the evaluation criteria, the score ranges and the corresponding thresholds and weights.

**The FPP evaluation process is as follows:**

- (4) The Executive Director assigns 4 evaluators per proposal: two evaluators from the experts suggested by the IRC and two from experts suggested by the PAB (see point 3 in A.1 above) to evaluate the proposal against the evaluation criteria.
- (5) The FPPs are sent to evaluators for remote evaluation. Each evaluator gives scores and accompanying comments to the five evaluation criteria. In the case of individual remote evaluations, their outcome is communicated to the Executive Director and Secretariat within 5 days upon receipt of the FPP by the evaluator.
- (6) The Executive Director organises the FPP evaluation panel session. The Executive Director assigns the evaluators that will participate in the panel and the Secretariat organises the logistics. The panel session is chaired by the Executive Director or by his/her appointed staff of the JU. In this session, evaluators synthesise and consolidate the individual evaluators' scores, remarks and recommendations for each proposal. These recommendations will address, if appropriate, adjustments to the total costs and the technical content of the proposal, and will identify key partners and activities necessary for the success of the project if selected.
- (7) The panel session produces two lists of proposals: "above threshold" and "below threshold". Proposals with a score below threshold in any criterion or below the minimum total score are included in the "below threshold" list. The "above threshold" list is ordered according to the total score of the proposals.
- (8) The Executive Director submits to the Public Authorities Board the "above threshold" list of proposals with the evaluation results, a suggestion for the allocation of public funding and any other observations and suggestions at the latest 10 days before the PAB proceeds with step A.5(1) below.

## **A.5 Selection and decision to allocate public funding**

- (1) On the basis of this "above threshold" list and the evaluation results, the PAB decides on the final ranking of proposals. Any change to the relative order of proposals as established by the panel of experts (step A.4(7)) is decided by the PAB taking into account the proposals' synergy with EU and national R&D and innovation policies<sup>10</sup> and activities as well as the overall coverage of the objectives of the Call. The justifications for such changes are recorded and communicated by the Executive Director to the proposers.
- (2) Following this decision and on the basis of the final ranking of proposals, the PAB decides on the selection of proposals and the allocation of public funding, taking into account the budgets available and the verifications of national and JU eligibility criteria for funding made in step A.3(3). The PAB will also decide which proposals are

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<sup>10</sup> Only R&D policies that are applied by the Community and national governments at the time of the Call and that have been made widely and publicly available can be taken into account



not viable in the light of the public funding available. ARTEMIS Member States may allocate national funding *beyond* their formal commitment to the Call.

- (3) In case that the total funding allocated by an ARTEMIS Member State is *less* than the national formal commitment made to the Call, this State may allocate the difference to participants in proposals that are not viable without further funding. Alternatively, the non-allocated money may be decommitted by the Member State.
- (4) In case that the total JU funding allocated is *less* than the commitment made to the Call, the non-allocated money may be decommitted.
- (5) The PAB may decide to create a *reserve list of proposals* that could proceed to the negotiation step if sufficient funding becomes available (e.g. following failure of negotiations). This list is made of the proposals that are not viable for reasons of budget availability following the discussions above, and it is ordered according to their final ranking as decided under step (1).
- (6) For each proposal selected that receives JU funding, the Public Authorities Board gives the Executive Director a mandate for negotiation subject to the maximum public funding allocated and taking into account any recommendations for changes.
- (7) The Executive Director communicates the results of the evaluation and selection to the proposers (scores, remarks and for selected proposals possible recommendations for changes during negotiation).
- (8) Following this communication and on the basis of the list of selected proposals approved by the Public Authorities Board, the Joint Undertaking shall launch, under the responsibility of the Executive Director, technical negotiations to agree the 'Technical Annex'<sup>11</sup>, within the limits of the negotiation mandate<sup>12</sup> and the funding per participant decided by the Public Authorities Board.
  - (a) In case that the technical negotiations have been successfully completed within the negotiation mandate, the Executive Director shall transmit the results to the Governing Board and the corresponding national funding authorities of the participants in the project together with all relevant documentation in order to proceed with the establishment of the national grant agreements.
  - (b) In cases of substantial changes of proposals not foreseen by the Public Authorities Board mandate, the Executive Director shall transmit the negotiation results together with a Project change request to the Public

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<sup>11</sup> The 'Technical Annex' is a technical document which presents, in as clear and concise a manner as possible, all activities, actions and tasks which the Project participants are committed to undertake in order to fulfil the scientific and research objectives stipulated in the grant agreements. It is based upon the description of scientific/technological objectives and workplan outlined in the Project proposal and possibly modified according to specific recommendations made by the external experts during evaluation and as further discussed during contract negotiations. In addition to its legal significance, the 'technical annex' is meant to serve as benchmark for the grant beneficiaries, the Joint Undertaking, the national funding authorities and possibly external experts to effectively monitor and check the progress during the Project's lifetime.

<sup>12</sup> The negotiation mandate will include if appropriate the results of verifications carried out by the Commission (Early warning system, outstanding recovery orders, etc.).

Authorities Board for approval. If the change request is approved, the decision of the Public Authorities Board shall be transmitted by the Executive Director to the Governing Board and the corresponding national funding authorities of the participants in the project together with all relevant documentation in order to proceed with the establishment of the national grant agreements, where appropriate.

- (c) In case of failure of the technical negotiations, or in case of change requests refused by the Public Authorities Board, the consortium will be considered as unsuccessful.
- (9) After the end of the successful negotiations the Joint Undertaking shall transmit to the coordinators of the selected consortia the Joint Undertaking's grant agreement and the accession forms for signature, in the terms and conditions specified by this grant agreement.
- (10) The Joint Undertaking shall inform the unsuccessful consortia and the corresponding national funding authorities of the participants in the project of the evaluation results.

## **B.- Rules for conflict of interest**

The general rules applicable to appointment of experts to the assessment/evaluation of a given proposal are the following:

- The expert is not involved in the preparation of the proposal
- The expert does not stand to benefit directly should the proposal be accepted
- The expert is not employed or has not been employed for the last three years by any of the applicant organisation in the proposal
- The expert does not have, to the best of his/her knowledge, any professional, family or other kind of relation with the applicants in the proposal that could influence his/her ability to evaluate the proposal impartially, or that could reasonably appear to do so in the eyes of an external third party.
- The expert is not, to the best of his/her knowledge, in any other situation that could influence his/her ability to evaluate the proposal impartially, or that could reasonably appear to do so in the eyes of an external third party.