



## **Principles of the SNOWMAN Coordinated Research Call**

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## 1. Background

The SNOWMAN Core Group has decided to undertake a coordinated research call. The technical scope of the call has been defined in a paper produced by SNOWMAN Workpackage 3 (Pilot Projects for Sustainable Land Management Under the Pressure of Pollution).

The Core Group partners have sought funding contributions from each of their countries, and a commitment of up to €700k research funding has been obtained.

A call 'roadmap' has been agreed which demands the opening of the research call in mid-2006, followed by an assessment process. Projects will run for approximately 12 months, starting in early 2007.

## 2. The Purpose of this Paper

Before the research call can be publicised and implemented, it is necessary for the SNOWMAN Core Group, and its partner research funding organisations, to agree the principles of its operation. The purpose of this paper is to document those principles.

## 3. Status of this Paper

This paper was developed within the SNOWMAN Integration Workpackage. The Core Group gave its input via 4 Integration Workshops - Angers (April 2005), Vienna, (December 2005), Amsterdam (February 2006), and Paris (March 2006).

### 3.1 Sign off

This paper, forming the basis of procedural guidance for the Coordinated Call, will be signed off by the research funders, before the call is launched. It is essential that all the funders agree to operate within the framework set out.

## 4. Management of the Coordinated Call

The SNOWMAN Core Group will establish a Call Steering Committee (hereafter referred to as the 'Steering Committee'), which will manage all aspects of the Coordinated Call. There will also be a Secretariat which will provide administrative support to the coordinated call.

The Steering Committee will set out to manage the call within the framework established in this paper. However, the operation of the Coordinated Call will be a 'learning process'. As such it is recognised that amendments to this paper might be necessary during the life of the call to deal with unexpected circumstances. Following initial sign off by the research funders, such amendments will be managed by the Steering Committee, with the agreement of all relevant parties.

The Steering Committee will not be able to directly offer funding or research contracts. It will decide the shortlist of projects for funding, recommend them to the research funders, and ask the funders for confirmation and willingness to contract and fund the projects

#### 4.1 Terms of Reference for the Call Steering Committee

The Steering Committee will act on behalf of the Research Funders and Core Group to manage the coordinated call, using the principles in this paper as its operating framework.

In doing so it will:

- Make funding shortlisting decisions;
- Monitor project progress by means of review of progress reports;
- Advise the research funders on the acceptability of project progress and final outputs.

The Steering Committee will consist of one representative per country of the coordinated call funding bodies, and will be chaired by an elected chairperson. Decisions will be taken by consensus.

## 5. The Principles of the Coordinated Call

The remainder of this paper deals with detailed aspects of the structure of the coordinated call Topics covered include:

Call funding – including funding rates and the funding model

Submission of Proposals

Eligibility requirements

Evaluation and Peer Review – including mode of operation and selection models

Contractual arrangements

Knowledge and IPR

Dissemination Requirements

### 5.1 Call Funding

#### 5.1.1. Form of SNOWMAN Funding

Two forms of funding process can be generally recognised across Europe - grant funding and public procurement. There are key differences between the two routes, and so the choice of one or the other has implications for the selection process, ownership of intellectual property, and the make up of the financial contribution. These differences are summarised in the table below:

Public Procurement	Grant
Subject	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purchase of goods or services which the funders need for their operation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promotion and encouragement of an action recognised as useful by the funders, but which falls primarily in the scope of the beneficiaries activities</li> </ul>
Regulatory Framework	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EU Public Procurement Directive (but R&amp;D activities are specifically excluded, and so do not influence SNOWMAN)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EU state aid / competition rules apply. These generally prohibit government subsidy to businesses but special conditions apply for R&amp;D.</li> </ul>
Financial Contribution	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generally 100% of a price, which might include a profit element.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A contribution, up to 100% of the eligible costs</li> <li>• Rule of non-profit</li> </ul>
Ownership of Outcomes / Results	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Goods are purchased and paid for by the procurers, and so the outcome or result belongs to them</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In principle, the outcome / result belongs to the contractors generating the results</li> </ul>
Selection Procedure	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call for Tenders (precise specification, and direct comparison of submissions primarily by judgement of value for money)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call for proposals (broad specification of a work area, so submissions will be varied and unique, and judged primarily on the basis of quality)</li> </ul>

Some of the participants in SNOWMAN are accustomed to operating under the public procurement system, whilst others are accustomed to giving grant.

#### Position for the First Coordinated Call

**The SNOWMAN coordinated call will offer grant funding (or equivalent).**

#### Underlying philosophy

Grant funding is the normal mode of operation for the majority of the SNOWMAN contributors. Grant funding provides flexibility in the funding process and allows the consortium to set selection criteria focussed toward maximising the scientific quality of proposals. It allows the consortium to specify that applicants should originate from the funding countries. Ownership of IPR lies with the proposer and so there is good opportunity to bring new thinking into the research process.

### **5.1.2 The Funding Model**

The SNOWMAN Think Tank described four possible funding models for coordinated calls. These are summarised in the table below, with advantages and disadvantages shown by +/-:

<p><b>Common Pot</b></p> <p>All countries contribute to pot which finances the projects</p> <p>Flexible (+)          Attracts extra funds (in FP7)          Shared responsibility (-)          Money moves between countries (-)          Need to agree procedures (-)</p>	<p><b>Project Adoption</b></p> <p>Each country adopts the project that fits their national programme best</p> <p>Clear responsibility (+)          Use national procedures (+)          Some funding of researchers in other countries (-)</p>
<p><b>National Contributions</b></p> <p>Each country funds their 'own' component of the transnational projects</p> <p>Use national procedures (+)          Only fund 'own' researchers (+)          Mixed responsibility for financial control (-)          Potentially complex for the researcher (-)</p>	<p><b>Mixed Funding</b></p> <p>Management activities and research funded in different ways</p> <p>Flexible (+)          Complex (-)</p>

### Position for the First Coordinated Call

**SNOWMAN will adopt the National Contributions model for the coordinated call.**

### Underlying Philosophy

Under the National Contributions model, each country will fund those components of research proposals which take place domestically.

Ultimately we should aspire to the common pot approach (in which the partner countries contribute to a funding pot, and projects are then selected purely on the basis of need and quality of proposal). This approach is likely to obtain best science and value for money, and may also facilitate access to the ERANet+ funding stream in Framework Programme 7. The Common Pot could ultimately give a higher level of flexibility for project cooperation and help to overcome administrative borders. However this more sophisticated approach will require SNOWMAN to become established as a 'legal entity' in order to coordinate and manage the common pot fund. This level of sophistication is not achievable for the first coordinated call.

### **5.1.3 Funding Offer**

#### Position for the First Coordinated Call

**Within the first coordinated call, SNOWMAN will aim to fund a 'balanced portfolio' of projects. Only after proposals are received will there be a decision on the funding rates and distribution of funds across topic areas. The call will state the total value of funding available in each country, as an indication to applicants of the scale of proposals expected.**

The call selection process will then be used to balance participation between the different countries, to make up a project portfolio dependent upon the quality of

submissions in each work area. This flexible approach allows the funders to manage the risk that the funding contributions from some countries might be inadequate, or alternatively under-used.

**The maximum funding rate will differ between countries depending upon individual funders rules.** These rules will be described in an annex to the Applicants Guide. The maximum funding rates in each country will be made explicitly clear in the Applicants Guide.

#### Underlying Philosophy

By stating that we will aim for a 'balanced portfolio' of work, SNOWMAN keeps open its funding options. If the proposals received are of good quality then it should be possible to make a selection which covers the whole work area. However if quality is more variable or costs too high it may be wiser to focus on a particular area.

Applicants will be encouraged to bring in third party funding through the proposal selection criteria, but this will not preclude the funding of strong science which lacks such contributions.

### **5.1.4 Funding Mechanism**

#### Position for the First Coordinated Call

**Funding for the coordinated call will be based on existing national funding rules.**

**All funders will retain at least a 10% final payment (or an equivalent specific amount of money) until satisfactory final outputs have been approved.**

#### Underlying Philosophy

Most SNOWMAN funders normally operate through cost reimbursement, where funds are released to the researcher as milestones are reached and staged outputs are signed off. A significant minority also offer pre-financing. It will not be possible to harmonise procedures in the time available to prepare for the coordinated call, with the exception of the retainer requirement which allows the consortium control over the quality of outputs.

### **5.2 Call Publication and Advertising**

The coordinated call will be advertised on the SNOWMAN website and links to this page from the websites of SNOWMAN partners and funding organisations, from EUGRIS, CORDIS, the Water & Soil Times EU newsletter, and in relevant scientific and technical journals in each of the partner countries. This task will be coordinated by the secretariat, which will also be the first point of contact for applicants.

### 5.3 Submission and Evaluation of Proposals

The Steering Committee will establish a Secretariat and an office base which will handle the administrative tasks associated with the coordinated call. The Secretariat and office base will in principle be established for the duration of the call, and so far as is practically possible will remain at a single address throughout its life. The Steering Committee will manage the coordinated call, and will have a role at a number of stages in the evaluation process. The Steering Committee will be appointed before the evaluation process begins.

Proposals shall be submitted to the Secretariat, at the address given, and within the terms of the 'Applicants Guide'. Applications must be made in English, in compliance with the timescales given in the call documentation.

All proposals submitted in response to the coordinated call shall be treated confidentially by the SNOWMAN partners, the Steering Committee, Secretariat, and the appointed reviewers.

#### 5.3.1 Submission & Evaluation Procedure

The submission procedure will involve a single stage application, followed by an eligibility check, and two stage evaluation process. A single common application form will be used which will be subdivided into 'A' (summary) and 'B' (detailed) components to feed each of the two evaluation phases. The common application form will be provided to applicants via the SNOWMAN website.

It is especially important that the funders agree participation in this process and the assessment criteria before the call is launched, so that the Steering Committee, which will take the final decision, is suitably empowered or mandated by the funders.

#### 5.3.2 Evaluation 1 - Eligibility Test

Applications will be checked for eligibility by the Secretariat. This eligibility test will be an administrative procedure, and will use the following criteria:

i. Number of participants and their place of establishment

Each proposal must contain at least two independent legal entities from at least two of the SNOWMAN partner countries (i.e. all consortia must be trans-national). Larger consortia offering a greater degree of trans-national collaboration may be at an advantage in the evaluation process.

Partners from countries outside the SNOWMAN partnership may participate in projects but must provide evidence of suitable financial support to cover their costs, which will not be covered by SNOWMAN.

ii. Compliance with Procedures

Only proposals which are fully compliant with the procedures outlined in the 'Applicant's Guide' shall be eligible for consideration for funding.

### iii. Ethics

Applicants will be asked to sign a declaration as part of the proposal process, that the project does not contravene any principle of ethics.

Any proposal which appears to the SNOWMAN Steering Committee or peer reviewers to contravene fundamental ethical principles shall not be selected, and may be excluded from the evaluation and selection procedure at any time. Judgement of the significance of ethical issues will be made by the SNOWMAN Steering Committee using the criteria published by the Commission in its guidelines for the Sixth Framework Programme ([http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/science-society/page\\_en.cfm?id=3205](http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/science-society/page_en.cfm?id=3205)).

### iv. Irregularity

Any participant who has committed an irregularity in the implementation of any previous EU or domestically funded programme may be excluded from participation in the SNOWMAN coordinated call, due regard being had to the principle of proportionality. Applicants will be asked to sign a declaration as part of the proposal, that they have not committed any such irregularity.

Eligible applications will be passed forward into Evaluation 2 – the fundability test.

## **5.3.3. Evaluation 2 - Fundability**

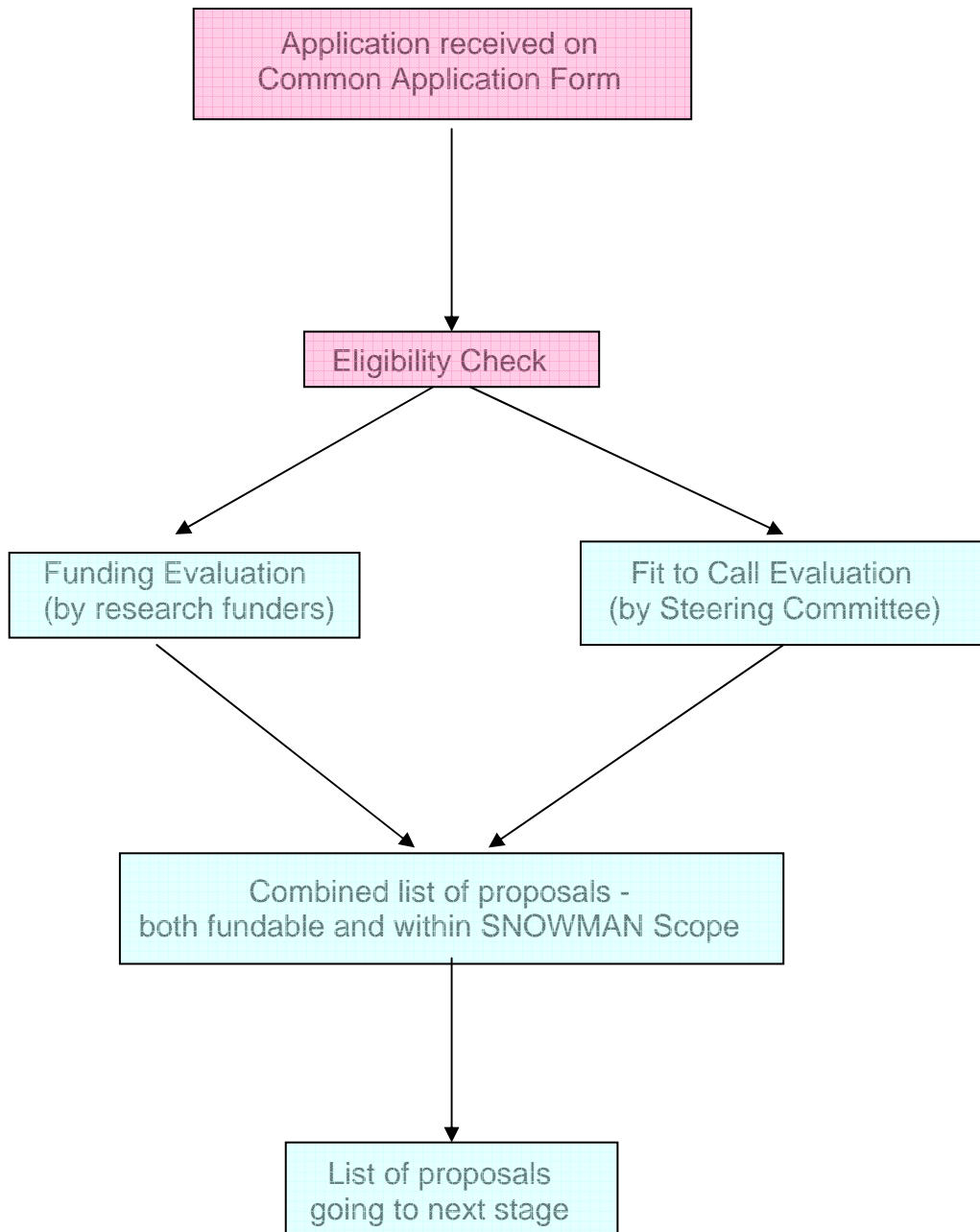
The objective of this test is to confirm that proposals lie within the remit of both SNOWMAN, and the individual Research Funders, before any further qualitative assessment is made. This stage of the evaluation procedure is described in the text below and in the flowchart on the following page.

The stage will consist of two ‘tests’:

- i. Funding Evaluation. This evaluation will happen at the ‘individual funder’ level. It will confirm that both the participants and the proposal fall within the funding organisations remit and / or priorities and is therefore capable of being funded in the Coordinated Call. Fundable participants will be those legal entities eligible to participate in the funders RTD programmes in the SNOWMAN partner countries (Germany, Austria, the Netherlands, France, United Kingdom, Sweden, and Belgium (Flanders))
- ii. ‘Fit to Call’ Evaluation. This evaluation will happen at the ‘SNOWMAN consortium’ level and will thus be carried out by the Steering Committee. It will confirm that the proposal makes a significant contribution to the work area described in the call, and that a range of proposals covering the full scope of the call are taken forward to the second stage.

These two tests will be carried out in parallel, and the results documented. The results combined by the Secretariat. Those proposals which pass both tests will be taken forward to the Peer Review stage.

### Evaluations 1 & 2 (Eligibility and Fundability Checks)



Step carried out by Secretariat (provided by UBA)



Step carried out by Peer Review Service Provider (provided by BMLFUW)

### **5.3.4 Evaluation 3 – Peer Review**

Peer Review and the Final Funding Recommendation are described in the following two sections and in the flowchart on the following page. These two steps will be carried out in series, so that the final recommendation can be made using advice from the peer review process.

In Peer Review, the quality and relevance of the proposals will be judged by an independent, international peer review panel, nominated by the Steering Committee and Research Funders in each partner country. A pool of potential reviewers will be established before the start of the evaluation process, but final selection of reviewers will not be made until the applications have been received. Where possible, panels will consist of one reviewer per involved country, and one additional independent reviewer.

The Steering Committee shall ensure that the reviewers are independent experts with the skills and knowledge appropriate to the tasks assigned to them, and are not faced with a conflict of interests on the matter on which they are asked to give opinion. The reviewers will be required to sign a declaration to the effect that there is no such conflict of interest at the time of their appointment.

Peer review will be carried out remotely to ensure that independent views are anonymously obtained. Reviewers will be provided with guidance and will use an evaluation model based on the criteria given in 5.3.7 below. The peer review process will provide an opportunity for the reviewers to ask for clarification of parts of the proposal if necessary.

Each peer reviewer will produce a textual report for each of the evaluation headings, a score for each criterion, and a total score for each proposal.

### **5.3.5 Final Recommendation**

The Steering Committee will make final recommendations on the SNOWMAN work programme, making use of the scientific advice provided by peer review. Where the peer review process has resulted in review reports which are contradictory, the Steering Committee may invite the relevant reviewers to the meeting to ensure resolution.

The Steering Committee will aim to create a balanced portfolio of projects in the programme, taking into account the availability of funding from each SNOWMAN country. The Committee will consist of one representative from each funding country. These will be nominated by each country, and should have sufficient delegated authority to make strong funding recommendations in the meeting.

The proposals will be divided into one of three categories:

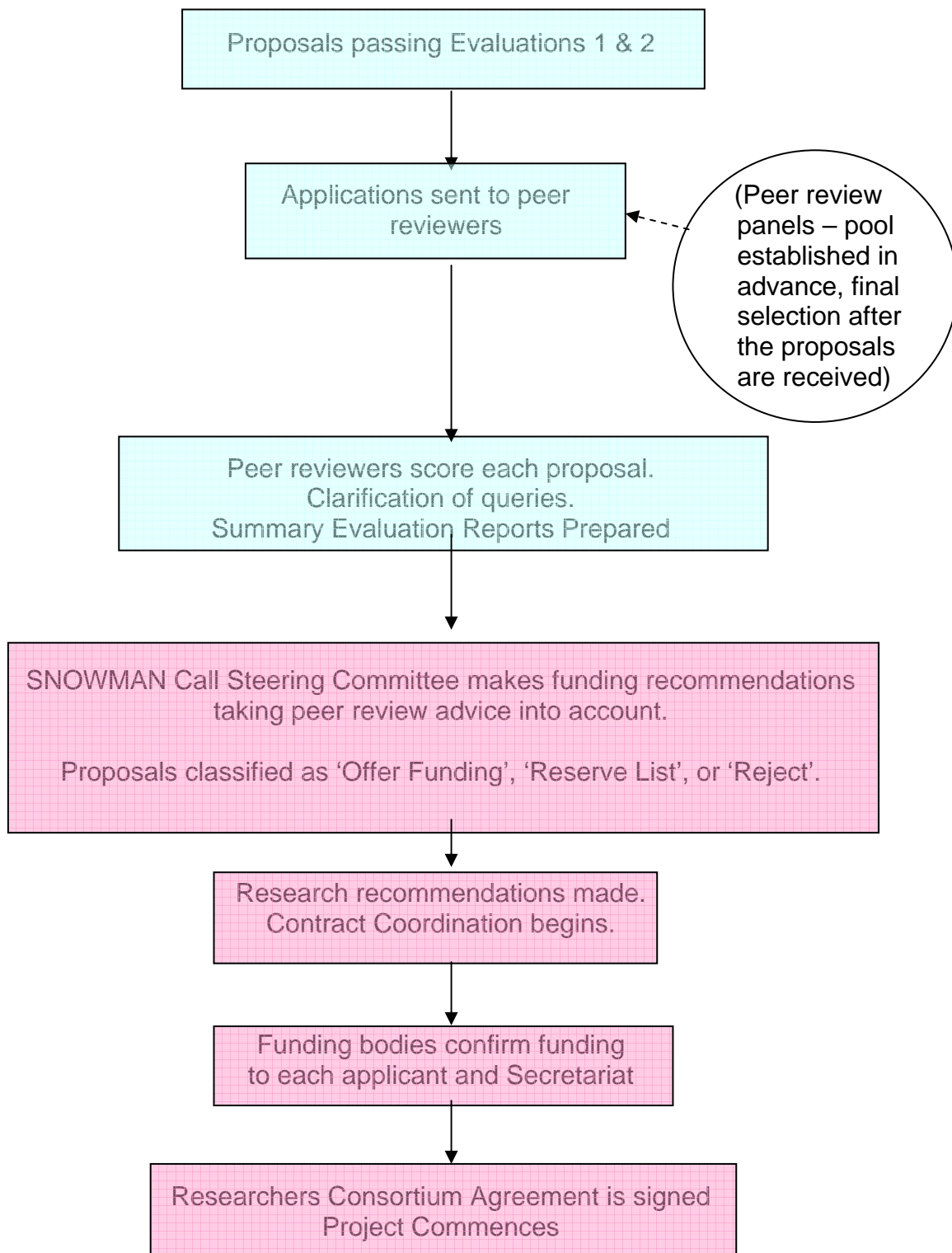
- i. Offer funding
- ii. Reserve list
- iii. Reject

Following the Steering Committee meeting, the Secretariat will contact the funding organisations and project coordinators to inform them of the outcome. In the case of successful proposals, this will state that the proposal has been positively evaluated, but that no work should be undertaken until contract discussions have been concluded and funding confirmation is received from each funding body.

### **5.3.6 Resolution of disputes**

The SNOWMAN Steering Committee will take final decisions on project selection taking into account advice from the peer review process. Written feedback will be provided to all research coordinators by the Secretariat. The Steering Committee decision will be final and there will be no appeal process.

### Evaluation 3 (Peer Review & Final Recommendation)



- Step carried out by Secretariat (provided by UBA)
- Step carried out by Peer Review Service Provider (provided by BMLFUW)

### 5.3.7 Peer Review Selection Criteria

The proposals will be evaluated in Peer Review using the following criteria:

Criterion	Judgement based upon
Scientific and technological excellence and degree of innovation	Judgement of the quality of the project idea, its objectives, overall project description, and workpackage descriptions.
Ability to carry out the proposal successfully, assessed in terms of resources and competencies of project team	Quality of the project team (CV's of key personnel), availability of suitable resources (sufficient critical mass of resources mobilised)
Ability to ensure the efficient management of the work, including the organisational arrangements laid down by the participants	Quality of project management workpackage, previous project management experience of the coordinators team.
Relevance to the objectives of the call and significance of contribution to the call work area	Alignment of the proposal objectives to those of the call, and peer review assessment of the significance of the work.
European added value	Judgement of the synergies between the partners, and the degree of transnationality of the outputs. To what extent can the outputs be achieved only through transnational collaboration.
Quality of the plan for using and disseminating the knowledge, potential for promoting innovation, and clarity of plans for the management of intellectual property.	Judgement of the quality of the dissemination and exploitation plan.
Cost effectiveness	Cost of the proposal set against its relevance, significance, and scientific excellence.
Risk	Likelihood of success, and presence of weaknesses in any part of the proposal.

### 5.3.8. Application of the Selection Criteria – the Evaluation Model.

Each of the criteria above will be subject to evaluation on a scale of 0 to 5, where a score of 0 indicates an unacceptable response and 5 an excellent one. Definitions of each level are given in the table below, wherein the threshold scores are highlighted in yellow. Proposals failing to achieve the threshold scores may be excluded from further consideration, at the discretion of the Steering Committee.

Peer Reviewers will be provided with evaluation guidance, and a feedback sheet wherein they will be asked to record feedback commentary, and to summarise their evaluation in a score for each category.

SCORE	Scientific & Technological Excellence	Ability to carry out proposal / quality of consortium	Ability to ensure efficient management	Relevance to objectives of the call	European Added Value	Quality of dissemination plan	Cost Effectiveness	Risk
<b>Excellent (5)</b>	Exceptional scientific merit and originality, expected to have major scientific impact, top 5%	High quality consortium with excellent complementarity, well suited to the tasks envisaged	Organisational structure well matched to the complexity of the project, integration of work is ensured, project management is of high quality	Completely aligned with SNOWMAN's objectives and likely to deliver beyond SNOWMAN's expectations	Clear added value, offering a significant insight into national and European level initiatives	Excellent provision for the management of knowledge and IPR. Dissemination plan proactively addresses all target audiences, some of whom are part of the consortium.	Excellent value for money. A significant part of the cost (>40%) is borne by third party funding or in kind input.	There is little or no risk that the project will fail to achieve its objectives
<b>Very Good (4)</b>	At the forefront of the field, will advance understanding – top 25%	Good quality consortium with some complementarity, Suited to the tasks envisaged.	Organisational structure well matched to the complexity of the project, integration of work is ensured, project management is of high quality	Completely aligned with SNOWMAN's objectives	Clear added value, taking account of research at national level and under European initiatives.	Good provision for the management of knowledge and IPR. Dissemination plan proactively addresses all target audiences.	Very good value for money. Some of the project cost is borne by third party funding or in kind input	There is a low risk that the project will fail to deliver its objectives
<b>Good (3)</b>	Competitive science – top 50%	Consortium able to deliver the work, but some minor lack of complimentarity	Management proposal is generally good but lacks quality in one aspect (structure, integration, PM quality).	Aligned with SNOWMAN's objectives	Demonstrates some European added value,	Good provision for the management of knowledge and IPR. Dissemination plan partially addresses target audiences	Good value for money but no third party funding or inkind input.	There is a medium risk that the project will fail to deliver its objectives
<b>Fair (2)</b>	Fair quality science but not leading edge, modest advance	Consortium lacking in significant areas which may impair progress on aspects of the project	Management proposal is adequate	Partially aligned with SNOWMAN's objectives	Limited european added value, with a failure to relate to national or european initiatives in some parts of the project.	Dissemination plan is directed towards scientific /technical audiences only	Fair value for money with no third party input	
<b>Poor (1)</b>	Limited new knowledge, does not advance the field significantly		Management proposal is significantly lacking in a number of areas (structure, integration, PM quality)	Limited alignment with SNOWMAN objectives		Dissemination by publication in scientific press only	Poor value for money with no third party input	There is a high risk that the project will fail to achieve its objectives
<b>Unacceptable (0)</b>	Scientific approach flawed or repetitious	Unlikely to deliver	Unlikely to adequately support the project	Not aligned with SNOWMAN's priorities	No European Added Value	No dissemination plan given	Unacceptably high costs for the work proposed.	There is an unacceptably high risk that the project will fail to deliver its objectives

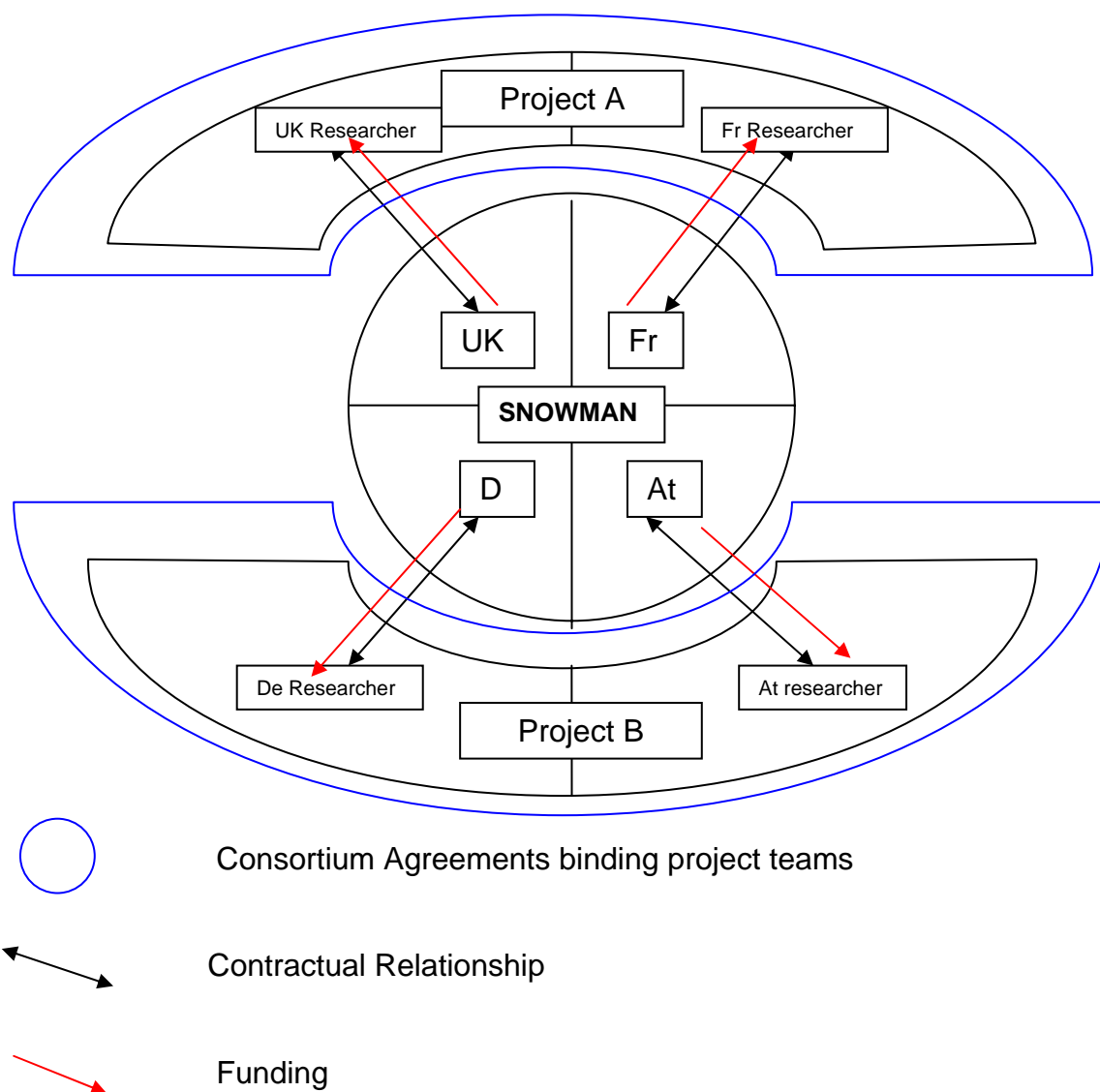
## 5.4 Contracts

### 5.4.1 Contractual Relationships in SNOWMAN Projects

SNOWMAN has chosen to undertake a 'coordinated call' and this involves aligning the provision of funding from each country around a common set of research needs. As the national contributions model has been chosen, there is no expectation within this call that funds will be transferred from one country to another.

In this situation, and to allow the coordinated call to be undertaken rapidly, the most expedient contracting mechanism is for each research funder to simultaneously offer a contract to the successful applicants in their own country, in order that each successful proposal can be delivered in a transnationally coordinated way.

The SNOWMAN Core Group has called this 'Direct Contracting' and it is described in the diagram below:



The Direct Contracting approach has the following characteristics:

1. Contractual relationships are established between the researchers and funders within each country, using existing contract models which will be supplemented by extra 'SNOWMAN conditions'.
2. The funders are bound by their signature to this paper. They will operate in a coordinated way for the duration of the coordinated call.
3. The researchers are bound by a consortium agreement and are jointly responsible for the delivery of the work.

The funders will all hold a retainer at the end of the project so that the research consortium does not receive final payment until the transnational outputs are delivered.

### **5.4.2 Contract Contents**

The research contracts offered within SNOWMAN will consist of three components:

#### **Component 1**

This will contain the standard research terms and conditions for each funder, and their conditions for eligibility of costs, and will thus be different and specific to each country. It will be written in the native language of the country concerned but an English translation may be optionally produced.

#### **Component 2**

This will contain SNOWMAN specific terms and conditions which will be common across all countries and all SNOWMAN projects. It will be written in English and will include:

- A generic description of the role of SNOWMAN, its Core Group, Call Steering Committee and Secretariat during the life of the project.
- A requirement for all researchers to sign a consortium agreement to bring the research funding contract into effect.
- Progress monitoring, reporting requirements and the mechanics for approval of deliverables.
- SNOWMAN final payment conditions.
- Ownership of knowledge, rights of property and utilisation of results.
- Requirements for deliverables.
- Dissemination requirements.

In these areas, where there is a conflict between national funder terms & conditions and these SNOWMAN terms & conditions, the SNOWMAN conditions will take precedence.

The text of this component can be found in Annex 4 to the Applicants Guide.

### **Component 3**

This will be the Technical Annex of the project. It will be specific to each project and the content will be common to all the research partners within the same project. It will be written in English. It will be derived from the application and will include:

- The detailed project description, including the summary costs for each partner;
- A list of funding organisations contributing to the project;
- A list of project partners (=researchers), and description of the role of each partner. This will include the nomination of the coordinator of the research consortium and a description of the role of the coordinator.
- A project schedule showing the timescales for each workpackage, and timing of deliverables;
- A list of project deliverables with content description of each deliverable ;
- If relevant, schedule of payments (in coherence with component 1).

#### **5.4.3 Sub-Contracting**

Sub-contracting of substantive parts of the project will not normally be permitted in the coordinated call. Applicants should present all the main contributors to their project in the proposal.

If sub-contracting is required for specific tasks, the prior agreement of the funder will be necessary.

#### **Underlying Philosophy**

The projects within the first coordinated call will be relatively short, with a duration of approximately 12 months. Because of the restricted time available, to prevent time being lost during project execution, and to ensure clarity of the resources to be mobilised for the project, applicants should present all the contributors to their project at the outset.

#### **5.5 Project Execution**

The research consortium shall implement the work under the terms agreed in the funding contracts, and shall take all necessary and reasonable measures to that end.

A project coordinator will manage each joint project. Technical implementation of the project shall be the collective responsibility of the participants, and final payments will be made only when complete transnational outputs have been delivered. The coordinator shall inform the Secretariat and the relevant research funders of any event which might affect the implementation of the project.

### **5.5.1 Researchers Consortium Agreement & Project Commencement**

Participants in successful research consortia will be required to enter into a consortium agreement setting out, as a minimum, the items listed in Annex 6 to the Applicants Guide . The purpose of this document will be:

To underpin the researchers collaboration, and provide the Researchers with mutual assurance on project management structures and procedures, and their rights and obligations towards one another, and;

To assure the Research Funders that the consortia have a satisfactory decision making capability and are able to work together in a synergistic manner.

Commencement of the project will be triggered when all research partners have signed their consortium agreement and it has been returned to the secretariat. This will ensure that research contracts are synchronised in all countries in a project.

The consortium agreement should be signed within 30 days of the final offer of funding. If this does not occur the Steering Committee may, at its discretion, withdraw the funding offer.

### **5.5.2 Breaches of contract**

Breaches of funding contract will be dealt with according to the rules established by the relevant research funders.

### **5.5.3 Eligibility of Costs**

Each participant shall keep accounts as required by the project research funders, making it possible to determine the use to which funding has been put, and the eligibility of such expenditure.

Eligibility of costs, claim, audit and other financial procedures will be determined by the research funder in each country using their usual funding rules. These rules will be presented in the Applicants Guide. Those presently available have been collated in Annex 5 to the Applicants Guide .

### **5.5.4 Progress Monitoring**

Project technical progress shall be periodically evaluated by the Secretariat and Steering Committee or other persons who they nominate, on the basis of progress

reports provided by the participants. These shall also cover the implementation of the plan for use or dissemination of knowledge.

In general, projects should produce one mid-term progress report, a draft final report, and a final report (subject to variation within individual project plans). Final payment will be retained by funders until final technical reports have been submitted to, and accepted by the Steering Committee and the national funding bodies.

The Steering Committee shall have the right to carry out audits of the participants, in order to ensure that the project is being performed under the conditions claimed and in accordance with the project proposal.

## 5.6 Ownership of Knowledge

As a general rule it is expected that new Intellectual Property resulting from SNOWMAN funded projects will be owned by the researchers, who will be expected to exploit and disseminate the new Intellectual Property for public benefit. Findings of SNOWMAN funded projects will be published.

Where several participants have jointly carried out work generating new knowledge, they shall agree amongst themselves the allocation of knowledge ownership, taking into account the funding contracts into which they have entered.

## 5.7 Dissemination of Knowledge

Project reports must be produced in English, and may be produced in other languages at the researchers discretion and cost.

Participants in SNOWMAN Coordinated Call projects will be expected to proactively promote the knowledge resulting from the work undertaken. The participants should ensure that the knowledge resulting from the work is disseminated within the period of the project. Should the participants fail to do so, the Steering Committee may take steps to disseminate the knowledge.

A major objective of SNOWMAN is the transnational delivery of a work programme and knowledge transfer of the common results amongst the participating countries and more widely. The dissemination of project results should generate multiplier effects within Europe. Project proposals should thus contain well thought out and detailed dissemination plans. Public access to deliverables should be given a high priority by proposers and dissemination activity should be described in project final reports. Executive Summaries suitable for web publication will also be required and as a minimum will be disseminated via the EUGRIS and SNOWMAN websites.

## Annex 1 – Definitions

SNOWMAN Core Group – The decision making unit of the SNOWMAN project. It consists of a single nominated representative of each partner organisation

SNOWMAN Partners – Those organisations which make up SNOWMAN, as signatories of the contract (ERAC-CT-2003-003219)

Research funder – Those organisations which have committed funds to the SNOWMAN coordinated call, by means of signature to the Letter of Intent

Call Steering Committee – The Call Steering Committee is the body responsible on behalf of the funding organisations, and together with the SNOWMAN Core Group will be responsible for the execution of the co-ordinated call (from the announcement to the approval of final reports) in line with the 'Principles of the Call' paper. It will consist of one representative per country of the co-ordinated call funding bodies, and will be chaired by an elected chair-person. The steering committee will be assisted by a secretariat.

Secretariat – The administrative support to the coordinated call. The secretariat will provide general support including the following activities:

- Coordination of call advertising and promotion
- Provide a 'first stop shop' point of contact for applicants;
- Provide a mailing address for applications
- Check the eligibility of proposals when they are received.
- Provide administrative support to the SNOWMAN Steering Committee and Core Group as required

SNOWMAN Administrative Base – The location of the Secretariat (this will not change once it has been advertised in the coordinated call).

## Annex 2 – The Key Characteristics of the First Coordinated Call – A Summary

The First SNOWMAN Coordinated Call will:

- Be open to legal entities eligible to participate in the RTD programmes of the SNOWMAN research funders. Here must be at least two independent legal entities from at least two of the SNOWMAN partner countries
- Offer grant funding ) (or equivalent depending upon funders national rules)
- Adopt a 'National Contributions' funding model
- Aim to fund a balanced portfolio of research projects, deciding on funding rates and distribution of funding across topic areas after proposals have been evaluated.
- State the total value of funding available in each country
- Be based on existing national funding rules (and so may offer different maximum funding rates in each country)
- Use a 10% (or equivalent) final payment retainer to secure satisfactory final outputs
- Use a common application form and two stage evaluation process in all partner countries
- Make use of international peer review processes, managed remotely by the Secretariat.
- Make use of a Steering Committee, representing the research funders, with a mandate to make strong proposal funding recommendations which will be accepted by the research funders
- Use a 'direct contracting' approach, based on existing national funder contracts, supplemented by common SNOWMAN conditions
- Require project participants to place new IPR resulting from the funded work, in the public domain, with an active approach to dissemination of transnational outputs.