



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

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1. Background

The SNOWMAN partners have decided to undertake a second coordinated research call. The Funders for this call are five of the seven SNOWMAN partner organisations – BMFLUW (AT), ADEME (FR), SKB (NL), SwEPA (SW) and OVAM (BE) plus FORMAS (SW) and UEFISCSU (RO). Details of these organisations are set out in the Letter of Commitment

The technical scope of the call has been defined in a separate paper produced by SKB with input from the other SNOWMAN partners. This 2nd SNOWMAN call represents the second step in the delivery of a longer term SNOWMAN Research Programme.

A call will open in January 2009, with the aim of completing the assessment of proposals by 30th June 2009. Projects will run for up to 36 months, starting in late 2009.

2. The Purpose of this Paper

This paper sets out the principles of the operation of the research call agreed by the call Funders.

Participation as a Funder in the second call, means that each Funder agrees the process and the assessment criteria as set out here and duly empowers and mandates the Steering Committee, which will make the funding recommendations.

3. Status of this Paper

This paper was developed within the SNOWMAN Integration Workpackage. The Partners gave their input via 2 Integration Workshops – Mechelen (September 2008) and Berlin (November 2008). The other Funders gave their input via the 2nd Integration Workshop – Berlin (November 2008).

3.1 Sign off

This paper, forming the basis of procedural guidance for the Coordinated Call, will be signed off by the Funders of the second call, before the call is launched as part of the Letter of Commitment.

4. Management of the Coordinated Call

The SNOWMAN Funders will establish a Call Steering Committee (hereafter referred to as the 'Steering Committee'), which will manage the Coordinated Call. There will also be a Call Secretariat which will provide administrative support to the coordinated call, until the end of the SNOWMAN EC contract (30th of June 2009)

The Steering Committee will consist of one representative for each Funder of the coordinated call Funders, and will be chaired by an elected chairperson. Decisions will be taken by consensus. Members should have sufficient delegated authority to make strong funding recommendations in the relevant decision-making meeting.

If it proves necessary for one Funder, the Steering Committee member may be assisted by a technical expert, especially for the Recommendation meeting.

The Steering Committee has established a Call Secretariat which will provide the administrative support associated with the coordinated call. The Call Secretariat will be provided by Umweltbundesamt Dessau, P.O. Box 1046, D-06813 Dessau, Germany (UBA). Email: secretariat@snowman-era.net up to and including 30 June 2009.

The Steering Committee will act on behalf of the Funders to manage the coordinated call, using the principles and methods set out in this paper.

In doing so it will:

- Make funding shortlisting recommendations. The Steering Committee will not be able to offer funding or research contracts. It will decide the shortlist of projects for funding, recommend them to the Funders, and ask the Funders for confirmation and willingness to contract and fund the projects.
- Manage the Call with the support of the Project Boards.

The Steering Committee will be appointed before the evaluation process begins and will disband only after it has accepted the final project report.

It is recognised that amendments to this principles paper might be necessary during the life of the call to deal with unexpected circumstances. Following initial sign off by the Funders, such amendments will be managed by the Steering Committee, with the agreement of all relevant parties.

From 1 July 2009, Project Boards will be set up by the Funders for each funded project. They will consist of one representative for each of the Funders who are funding the particular project. The Project Boards have the responsibility:

- to assist the Call Steering Committee for the transnational monitoring of the funded projects and to inform the Call Steering Committee of any event occurring in the projects which might adversely affect delivery;
- To provide a helpdesk facility to answer questions and resolve problems raised by the research consortia which cannot be solved within the project consortium itself, or between a project research partner and its national funder;
- To receive signed Contracts and Consortium Agreements delivered by the project coordinators as well as reports;
- To monitor project progress by means of review of progress reports;
- To advise the Funders on the acceptability of project progress and final outputs;
- To approve any changes to contracts;
- Through the Project Board Chair, to present the collective views of the Funders to the project coordinators for each project.

Each Project Board will be chaired by the Funder responsible for the funding of the relevant project coordinator. All communication on matters of common interest

between the project consortium and the Project Board will go via the project coordinator and the Chair of the Project Board.

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

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call for Tenders (precise specification, and direct comparison of submissions primarily by judgement of value for money) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call for proposals (broad specification of a work area, so submissions will be varied and unique, and judged primarily on the basis of quality)
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For the second coordinated call the Funders will offer grant funding (or equivalent).

Grant funding is the normal mode of operation for the majority of the Funders. 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 generally 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 Funders will adopt the Virtual Pot with Juste Retour model for the second coordinated call. Hence each Funder will fund those components of research proposals which take place within their own country.

5.1.3 Funding Offer

Within the second coordinated call, the Call Steering Committee 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 Funder's rules. These rules will be described in an annex to the Applicants' Guide. The maximum funding rates in each country will be made explicit in the Applicants' Guide.

5.1.4 Funding Mechanism

Funding for the second 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.

5.2 Call Publication and Advertising

The second coordinated call will be advertised on the SNOWMAN website and links to this page from the websites of call Funders, from EUGRIS, CORDIS, the Water & Soil Times EU newsletter, and in relevant scientific and technical journals in each of the Funders' countries. This task will be coordinated by the Call Secretariat, which will also be the first point of contact for Applicants.

5.3 Submission and Evaluation of Proposals

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

The Steering Committee will have a role at a number of stages in the evaluation process.

All proposals submitted in response to the coordinated call shall be treated confidentially by the Steering Committee, Call Secretariat, any appointed reviewers, and any other representative of the Call Funders.

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.

Applications shall be submitted in electronic format only to the Call Secretariat by the coordinator of each research project. Within the application, the budget table shall be submitted as an MS Excel™ 2003 (or later version) spreadsheet.

The research coordinator for each project proposal is responsible for ensuring the application includes scanned signatures for the authorised signatory for each party to a proposal in the appropriate part of the application form and for retaining the originals of these documents. The research coordinator shall supply this original application at any time if asked by the Secretariat.

Applications less than 5 Mbytes shall be submitted by email. Applications 5Mbytes or more shall be submitted on CD Rom by post to the address given for the Call Secretariat.

5.3.2 Evaluation 1 - Eligibility Test

Applications will be checked for eligibility by the Call 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 one independent legal entity from each of at least two of the SNOWMAN Funder countries (i.e. all consortia must be trans-national). Consortia involving partners from more than two Funder's countries will be awarded an additional point in the assessment. However, the ability to manage a large consortium to deliver a quality project to time and to budget will be a key criterion in the assessment.

Partners from countries other than the Funders may participate in projects but must provide evidence of suitable financial support to cover their costs which will not be covered by the Funders.

ii. Compliance with Procedures

Only proposals which are fully compliant with the 'Applicants' 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 Steering Committee 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 Steering Committee.

Any Applicant who has committed an irregularity in the implementation of any previous EU or domestically funded programme may be excluded from participation in the 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.

Applicants will not have the right to change any part of the application after the call closing date. However, in exceptional circumstances, the Steering Committee at its sole discretion may allow an Applicant to submit a revised application. The Steering Committee's decision in such matters will be final.

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 both of this Call, and the individual Funders, before any further 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 be carried out by each Funder. It will confirm that both the Applicants and the proposal fall within the funding organisations remit and/or priorities and are therefore capable of being funded in the Coordinated Call. Fundable participants will be those legal entities eligible to participate in the Funder's research programmes in the call 2 funder countries (Austria, Belgium (Flanders), France, the Netherlands, Sweden, and Romania and Slovenia).
- ii. 'Fit to Call' Evaluation. This evaluation will be carried out by the Steering Committee. It will confirm that the proposal makes a suitable 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 and combined by the Call Secretariat on behalf of the Steering Committee. Those proposals which pass both tests will be taken forward to the Peer Review stage.

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 previous 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.

The quality and relevance of the proposals will be judged by an independent, international, peer review panel, nominated by the Steering Committee. 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 applications they are asked to review, and that they are not faced with a conflict of interests on any matter on which they are asked to give opinion. At the time of their appointment reviewers will be required to sign a declaration to the effect that there is no such conflict of interest and that they will not allow one to arise.

Whether or not reviewers are paid shall be at the discretion of individual Funders, in accordance with their own national rules. If reviewers are paid, this shall be funded separately from the Call budget. It is the responsibility of each national Funder to ensure peer reviewers from their own country deliver a suitable assessment by the date required.

Peer review will initially be carried out remotely to ensure that independent views are obtained anonymously. Reviewers will be provided with guidance and will use an evaluation model based on the criteria given in 5.3.7 below. During the peer review the reviewers may, if necessary, seek clarification of parts of the proposal from an Applicant via the Call Secretariat .

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

Following this initial, independent step, the individual peer reviews will be shared amongst the reviewers and a moderation meeting will be convened (either in person or by telephone or video conference) to resolve any differences and agree final scores for each proposal. These moderated final scores will be recorded by the Call Secretariat and passed to the Steering Committee, who will be responsible for funding recommendations.

5.3.4.1 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.
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.

5.3.4.2 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 on the following page, wherein the threshold scores are highlighted in yellow. Proposals failing to achieve the relevant threshold score for any criterion are likely to be excluded from further consideration.

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.

5.3.5 Call Steering Committee Funding Recommendation

The Steering Committee will take the moderated peer review scores as a first input to its funding evaluation. It will then take the following steps:

1. Proposals whose moderated peer review scores were below any of the threshold scores set in the peer review guide will be excluded from further consideration. Although, at the sole discretion of the Steering Committee, they may be considered further. The individual peer review scores will be averaged to obtain a final score on 5 and then multiplied by 2.

SCORE	Scientific & Technological Excellence	Ability to carry out proposal / quality of consortium	Ability to ensure efficient management	European Added Value	Quality of dissemination plan	Cost Effectiveness	Risk
Excellent (5)	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	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
Very Good (4)	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	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
Good (3)	Competitive science – top 50%	Consortium able to deliver the work, but some minor lack of complementarity	Management proposal is generally good but lacks quality in one aspect (structure, integration, PM quality).	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 in kind input.	There is a medium risk that the project will fail to deliver its objectives
Fair (2)	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	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	
Poor (1)	Limited new knowledge, does not advance the field significantly		Management proposal is significantly lacking in a number of areas (structure, integration, PM quality)		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
Unacceptable (0)	Scientific approach flawed or repetitious	Unlikely to deliver	Unlikely to adequately support the project	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

2. Proposals involving three or more funder countries will be awarded 0.5 bonus point
3. Proposals involving non-funder countries will be awarded 0.5 bonus point per third funding country
- 4 Each proposal will be awarded a score 3 to 1 by each Funder, where the scores are defined as:

3 points - This proposal falls within the funding scope of my organisation, addresses a high priority thematic area, and directly addresses a specific, pre-identified research need;

2 points - This proposal falls within the funding scope of my organisation and is in a high priority thematic area;

1 point - This proposal falls within the funding scope of my organisation but is not in a high priority thematic area.

These national scores will then be averaged (eg. a 4 country proposal rated as 3,3,3,1 = 10 points divided by 4 = 2.5 points)

Example :

A four country proposal plus a third country researcher providing the evidence that he will be funded

This proposal would be sent to 4 peer reviewers from the Funders countries and another, preferably independent reviewer. The peer review scores (for example, 30, 28, 33, 32 and 29) would be added together and the total points divided by 7 (number of criteria) and then by the number of reviewers (in this case 5). The average (4,34) would be multiplied by a weighting factor of 2: $4.34 \times 2 = 8.68$.

Bonus point for 3 or more countries : 0.5

Bonus point for third funding : 0.5

National scores: proposal rated as 3,3,3,1 = 10 points divided by 4 = 2.5 points

Total score: $8.68 + 0.5 + 0.5 + 2.5 = 12.18$

In this example, the weight of each score is:

- peer review : 71 %
- bonus point for number of countries: 4 %
- bonus point for third funding: 4 %
- national priorities: 20,5 %

The proposals will be ranked from highest to lowest score and the resultant list will be used as a guide to the Steering Committee, which will make final recommendations on which projects to fund, making use of any relevant information collected in the evaluation process. The Steering Committee will give precedence to the ranking scores but, in determining its funding recommendations, will also seek to ensure the

overall balance of the proposals across the three research areas and to take into account the availability of funding from each Funder in relation to their declared priorities. Only in these or similar circumstances will a lower-ranked proposal be recommended for funding.

The proposals will be divided into one of three categories:

- i. those to be offered funding;
- ii. those rejected for funding; and
- iii. any remaining proposals which will be placed on a reserve list.

Following the Steering Committee meeting, the Call Secretariat will contact the Funders and ask them to confirm that they will fund the recommended projects and each to nominate one Project Board members for each project they are funding. When the Call Secretariat has received confirmation from every funder and the list of all the Project Board members, he/she will then contact the project coordinators to inform them of the outcome. In the case of successful proposals, the project coordinators will be informed 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 every funding body involved in the proposal. The letter sent to successful project coordinators will be called the “award letter”.

5.3.6 Resolution of disputes

The 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 Call Secretariat. The Steering Committee decision will be final and there will be no appeal process.

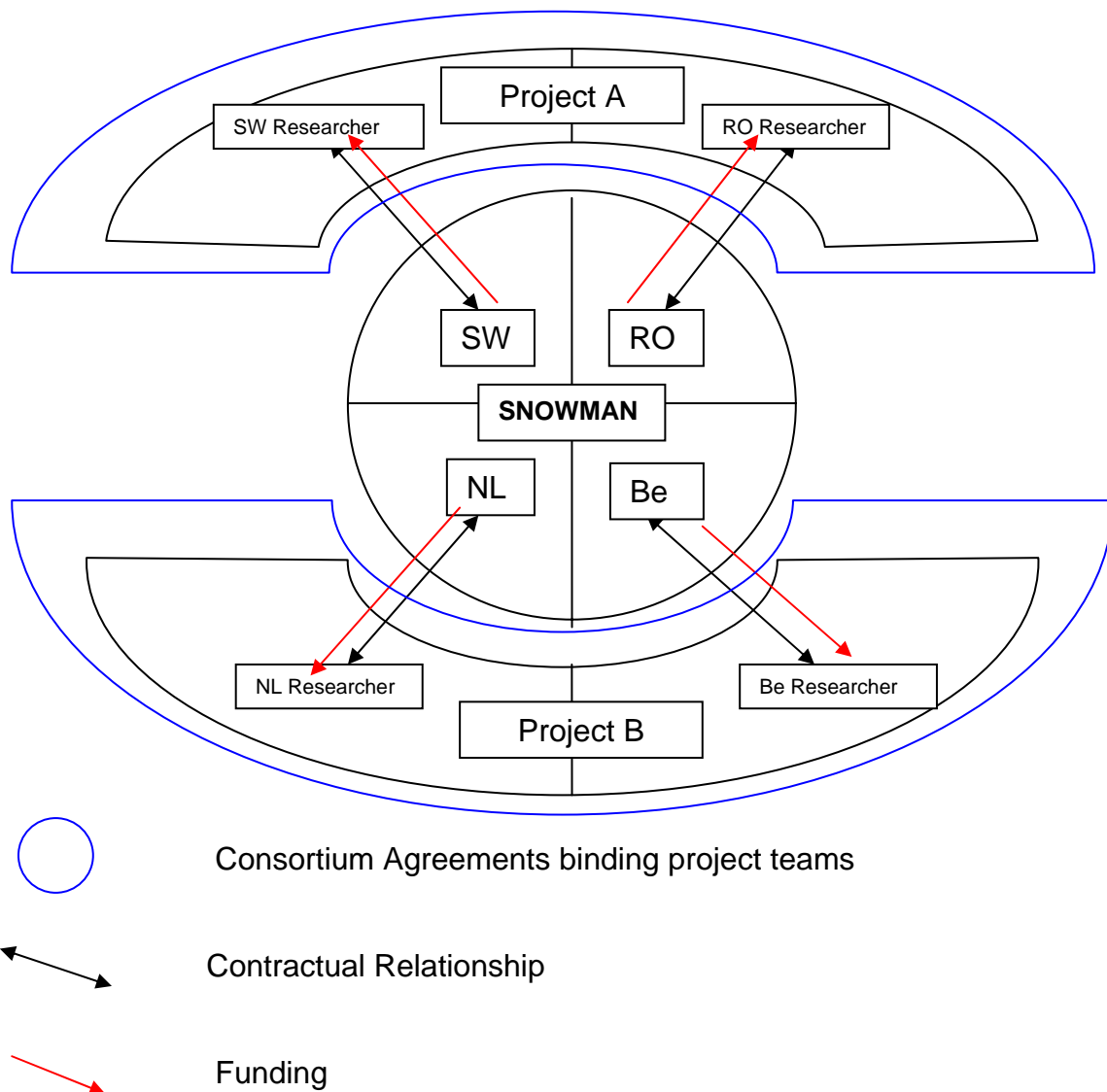
5.4 Contracts

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 virtual pot model has been chosen, there is no expectation within this call that funds will be transferred from one country to another.

Therefore, each Funder will need to 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.

This is illustrated in the diagram below (examples):



This 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 'SNOWMAN conditions'.
2. The Funders are bound by their signature to this letter of commitment covering this paper. They will operate in a coordinated way and within its principles 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 of at least ten per cent of their contribution at the end of each 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 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 the Steering Committee, the Funders and the Project Boards during the life of the project.
- A requirement for all researchers to sign a consortium agreement to bring the research funding contract into effect.
- Entering into force of project contract and definition of the Commencement Day.
- Transnational 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.

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. Applicants should present all the contributors to their project in the proposal.

Where subsequently any sub-contracting is required, it shall only be permitted with the prior agreement of the relevant Funder.

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 project. Technical implementation of the project shall be the collective responsibility of the participants, and final payments will be made only when all transnational outputs have been delivered. The coordinator shall inform the Call Secretariat and the relevant Funders of any event which might affect completion 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 Funders that the consortia will make decisions efficiently and are able to work together effectively.

A project will not start until all the following steps are complete:

1. the research partners have signed their individual contract and their consortium agreement;
2. they have been returned to the Project Board;
3. the chair of the Project Board has informed the relevant Funders and the Call Steering Committee of this and agreed a start date; and;
4. the chair of the Project Board has written to the research coordinator giving the start and end dates for the specific project, the project duration and the relevant reporting dates

This will allow research contracts to be synchronised in all countries in a project.

The consortium agreement should be signed within 30 days of the final offer of funding (signature of the last contract of the consortium). 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 Funders.

5.5.3 Eligibility of Costs

Each participant shall keep accounts as required by the relevant 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.

5.5.4 Progress Monitoring

The Project Board will monitor project progress on the basis of reports provided by the Research Coordinators. These shall also cover the implementation of the plan for use or dissemination of knowledge.

Reporting requirements will be set out in the individual contracts. However, in general, projects should produce

- for duration < 18 months: one mid-term progress report, a draft final report and a final report;
- for duration > or = 18 months, annual progress reports, a draft final report and a final report.

Three meetings will be compulsory for each project :

- a kick-off meeting of the project. It will be organised by the project coordinator and agreed with the Project Board. All the Second Call Funders will be invited to the kick off meeting.
- at the beginning of the project, a meeting between the Coordinator and the Chairman of the relevant Project Board,
- a all-projects-workshop at half the duration of all projects, in order to present and discuss the interim results of the projects.

Final payment will be retained by each Funder until accounts of the project have been received and accepted, and all final transnational reports and other deliverables, including records of all dissemination activities have been submitted to, and accepted collectively by the Steering Committee and individually by the Funders.

The Project Boards 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 a project intends to generate new knowledge, the participants shall agree amongst themselves the allocation of knowledge ownership, taking into account the relative funding of their proposal in each country, prior to submitting their application. This shall form part of any contract into which they enter. This should be explained in the consortium's proposal and covered in the Consortium Agreement.

5.7 Dissemination of Knowledge

A major objective of SNOWMAN is the transnational delivery of research projects and the transfer of knowledge 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 in English, and the language of each participant if required by Funders, suitable for web publication will also be required and as a minimum will be disseminated via the EUGRIS and SNOWMAN websites.

Project reports must be produced in English. They can be produced in other languages, but at the individual researcher's sole discretion and cost. These costs are not payable by from the virtual pot for the Second Call.

Participants in SNOWMAN Second Call projects will be expected to 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 and as set out in the relevant section of the project plan. Should the participants fail to do so, this will be regarded as a breach of contract and the Project Board will, with the agreement of the Steering Committee, either withhold all or part of any further payment ,or, take steps to disseminate the knowledge using the funds that were assigned to this activity.

Annex 1 – Definitions

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

Funder – Those organisations which have committed funds to the Second SNOWMAN coordinated call, by means of signature to the Letter of Commitment.

Call Steering Committee – The Call Steering Committee is the body responsible on behalf of the funding organisations, 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 the Call Secretariat until 30th of June 2009. Then Project Boards will be set up to assist the CSC for the contracting, monitoring stages and the final evaluation of the projects outputs.

Call Secretariat – The administrative support to the coordinated call until 30th of June 2009. The Call 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;
- Organise the peer review process, organise the moderation meetings, prepare the summary evaluation reports;
- Provide administrative support to the SNOWMAN Steering Committee as required : organise the meetings and telephones conferences, ask the funders to confirm the Steering Committee funding recommendations, prepares the award letters to the research coordinators.

Project board – From 1 July 2009, Project Boards will be set up by the Funders for each funded project. They will consist of one representative for each of the Funders who are funding the particular project. The Project Boards have the responsibility:

- to assist the Call Steering Committee for the transnational monitoring of the funded projects and to inform the Call Steering Committee of any event occurring in the projects which might adversely affect delivery;
- To provide a helpdesk facility to answer questions and resolve problems raised by the research consortia which cannot be solved within the project consortium itself, or between a project research partner and its national funder;
- To receive signed Contracts and Consortium Agreements delivered by the project coordinators as well as reports;
- To monitor project progress by means of review of progress reports;
- To advise the Funders on the acceptability of project progress and final outputs;
- To approve any changes to contracts;
- Through the Project Board Chair, to present the collective views of the Funders to the project coordinators for each project.

Each Project Board will be chaired by the Funder responsible for the funding of the relevant project coordinator. All communication on matters of common interest between the project consortium and the Project Board will go via the project coordinator and the Chair of the Project Board.

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

The Second SNOWMAN Coordinated Call will:

- Be open to legal entities eligible to participate in the RTD programmes of the Funders. Each proposal must contain at least one independent legal entity from each of at least two of the Call Funder countries (i.e. all consortia must be transnational).
- Offer grant funding (or equivalent depending upon Funders national rules)
- Use a 'virtual pot with juste retour' 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% final payment retainer (or equivalent) to secure satisfactory final outputs, including the stated dissemination of the results
- Use a common application form and two stage evaluation process in all partner countries
- Make use of international peer review processes, managed by the Call 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 contracting approach based on existing national Funder contracts, supplemented by common SNOWMAN conditions
- Require project participants to place new intellectual property (IP) resulting from the funded work, in the public domain, with an active approach to dissemination of transnational outputs.
- Make use of Project Boards, representing the Funders of each Funded project, to assist the Steering Committee for the transnational monitoring of the funded projects.