

Independent Observer's (IO) Report EIT 2018 Call for Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs)

Final Report

**On the conduct of the evaluation process and
application of the evaluation criteria by the
evaluators**

31 January 2019

Executive Summary

The report describes the observations, findings, suggestions & recommendations made by Joseph Prieur as an independent observer for the evaluation of proposals submitted in response to the EIT 2018 call for proposals for the designation of 2 new EIT Innovation Communities (KICs), one on Urban Mobility, the other one on Manufacturing. The observer attended all evaluation phases from the remote individual evaluation by experts (remote observation in August/September 2018) through to the consensus phase (October 10-12, 2018 in Budapest) and the hearing phase (December 4-5, 2018 in Budapest), until the decision by the EIT Governing Board (December 5, 2018).

Overall, the observer is of the opinion that throughout the complete evaluation process, all evaluation activities were conducted with fairness, diligence & transparency, and in compliance with all guiding principles (independence, impartiality, objectivity, accuracy & consistency) and all relevant rules, procedures & criteria as described in the call text, at all stages of the process (individual evaluation, consensus and hearings). The evaluation procedures are robust, and the methodology well adapted to the evaluation of Innovation Communities. Compared with the standard Horizon 2020 call evaluation for projects, which the observer is familiar with, the KIC call evaluation has basically one additional stage, namely the hearing stage, with a direct involvement of the EIT Governing Board, which is very important and well suited for a decision on the designation of large sustainable entities such as Innovation Communities.

A few remarks and suggestions for possible improvements of the evaluation procedures are made, but these are in general minor improvements in response to minor issues which did not impact adversely the KIC evaluation process nor its end results.

Throughout the process the dedication, competence and professionalism of all participants to the evaluation (EIT staff, EIT Governing Board and Experts) were outstanding and contributed greatly to the high quality of the evaluation and to facilitate the task of the observer.

1. Introduction

The presence of an independent observer in the evaluation process is foreseen in the call text: “The EIT will appoint a high-level Independent Observer who will give an opinion on the conduct and fairness of the evaluation process”. The independent observer was first approached by EIT in May 2018 to check his availability and willingness to participate, then selected after a skype interview on May 28. The contract was signed by EIT on July 25, after checking the absence of conflict of interest.

The approach used by the observer was as follows:

- During the expert remote evaluations: monitor the progress of the evaluation on the SEP system at about 3 to 4 days' intervals
- During the consensus phase: attend consensus meetings in Budapest, trying to cover consensus meetings for as many proposals as possible (evaluation of both KICs being performed in parallel, not all meetings could be attended in full by the observer)
- During the extraordinary EIT GB meeting of October 25, 2018: provide (by telephone) a brief verbal report on the observation of the consensus phase
- During the hearings in Budapest: attend the full meeting, and give the EIT Governing Board a brief account of the observations up to that point
- After the GB decisions of December 4 & 5, 2018 on the 2 KICs: prepare the present report for the EIT Director and the Chairman of the EIT Governing Board

The independent expert Joseph Prieur has been retired from ONERA, the French national aerospace lab, since June 2011. He was not involved at all with the EIT call 2018 under evaluation. He has a significant experience of European Commission research proposal evaluations, first as END between 2001 and 2005 in DG RTD and DG ENTR (now DG GROW) then, from 2006, as an independent expert (evaluator, rapporteur and frequently observer) on various occasions and on several themes (Aeronautics, Surface Transport, Security, Space, Clean Sky JU, S2R JU, BBI JU, NMP, Energy) for both FP7 and Horizon 2020 programmes.

It is the first time this observer is involved in a KIC call evaluation.

2. Observations by the Independent Observer

Key observations are presented in a chronological order.

- The July 26, 2018, briefing for the experts, rapporteurs, and observer was very good, very informative and comprehensive. The same goes for the 12 September remote briefings (start of rapporteurs' work) and the 10 October briefings (start of Consensus phase).
- The checking of the absence of conflict of interest of all participants to the evaluation (EIT Governing Board members, experts, rapporteurs and

observer) with respect to all applicants to the call (all proposal partners, including also associated partners and linked third parties) was very thorough.

- Not all evaluators followed strictly the prescribed order of reading/evaluating the proposals assigned to them.
- The mix of expertise in the evaluation panels was excellent to cover the many facets of the proposals
- Consensus discussions were always very thorough (sometimes even very lively) in both expert panels.
- Some unbalance was noted in consensus panels in terms of speaking time between experts, consensual mindset vs. stubbornness between experts, time distribution between criteria, and overall time allocated to each proposal.
- Good cooperation and complementarity between moderator and rapporteur are key to move discussions along and maintain the schedule of consensus meetings as planned.
- The hearings of 4 & 5 December 2018 in Budapest went very smoothly.
- The time spent by the GB members to discuss the Strengths & Weaknesses table and to score the proposals, seems to be rather short in comparison with the considerable time spent by the experts in performing their part of the evaluation, and considering also that this information needs to be of high quality as it is part of the feedback going to the applicants, and therefore should not contain any invitation for a redress claim.

2.1 Experts Briefing Meeting on 26 July 2018 and Panel Briefing Meetings on 12 September 2018

The expert briefing of July 26, 2018 was conducted remotely (webinar) after all experts, rapporteurs and independent observer had signed their contract and after a thorough check by the EIT of the absence of any actual and potential conflict of interest for all external participants to the evaluation (experts, rapporteurs, observer). The briefing was very comprehensive and detailed.

This briefing is very important considering also that, unlike standard Horizon 2020 calls' evaluations where experts are generally experienced and repeatedly acting as evaluators (only about 25% of them are first-time evaluators for each evaluation), the KIC calls are unique and infrequent, requiring each time a novel specific team of evaluators: therefore they have to be briefed very thoroughly about the EIT (EIT nature, EIT model, EIT pillars, knowledge triangle, funding, contractual and governance aspects of KICs, etc.), the specificities of the KIC call 2018 and all aspects of the evaluation process (methodology, rules and procedures, actors involved, phasing, timing, criteria & scoring, legal/administrative and logistical issues).

In addition to the remote briefing of July 26 at the start of the remote individual evaluation phase, additional specific briefings (one for each KIC, i.e. one for each

expert panel) were delivered to the external participants (experts, rapporteurs and observer) by moderators on 12 September very close to the end of the individual evaluation phase. To a significant extent, these briefings were repeating some information delivered at the first general briefing of July 26, but it is believed that this was a very useful and timely exercise at a moment when rapporteurs were about to start drafting their consensus reports and when all participants had to be reminded about the subsequent evaluation phases (consensus and hearing phases). It was also a good opportunity to let all participants know about progress so far and press experts to complete their individual assessments.

2.2 Remote Evaluation Phase

The individual evaluation phase was scheduled from July 27 to September 14 (7 weeks). The most loaded experts were those dealing with the Urban Mobility KIC proposals as there were 5 eligible proposals to be evaluated. The observer believes that the allocated time for such an individual evaluation was such that the workload was very reasonable (less than 1 proposal per calendar week) even for experts who do generally have a job. The workload was even lighter for experts dealing with the 3 eligible Manufacturing KIC proposals (more than 2 weeks per proposal).

By looking on the SEP system at 3 to 4 days intervals, the observer noted that progress of the individual evaluation was rather uneven. For any given proposal, some IERs were well advanced or even almost complete while others would be hardly started or less than 30% complete, which does not make it easy for rapporteurs to start drafting the CRs before the very end of the individual phase. This is to some extent reflected in the progress shown in one slide of the specific briefings delivered to experts on September 12 (2 days before the end date of the individual evaluation phase): at that date about 45% of IERs were less than 30% complete for both KICs, while only 16% were 100% complete for Urban Mobility (and 33% for Manufacturing). In some cases, it was noted that the rapporteur had already advanced his draft CR (up to 30% complete) while only 50% of the IERs contributing to this CR were completed. It might be also that some experts do not submit immediately their IERs until they had a chance to calibrate/align their own relative degree of leniency /harshness over several proposals, with the result that IERs do not get submitted until late in the individual evaluation phase. The 12 September briefings were an excellent occasion to press late or slow reader evaluators and tell them that their IERs were urgently awaited by rapporteurs. Maybe the instruction to experts to follow very strictly the prescribed order of reading/evaluating proposals should be more strongly emphasized.

2.3 Consensus Meetings 10-12 October 2018

The consensus meetings took place in Budapest at EIT Headquarters on 10, 11 and 12 October 2018. The evaluation of proposals for the 2 KICs was performed in parallel sessions and the observer moved several times from one consensus room to the other one to observe large parts of the evaluation of the 2 KICs.

A specific briefing for each KIC was delivered to the experts on October 10 in the morning before starting consensus meetings.

The new information in these briefings were essentially the planning of the consensus meetings and some logistical aspects. The rest of the briefing was to a large extent a reminder of essential information already delivered to experts in earlier briefings to perform their work.

The common feature of the consensus meetings for all proposals, for both KIC expert panels, is that there were very thorough, sometimes lively, discussions between experts on all criteria and sub-criteria. This is not surprising as panels are made of experts of different types of expertise (education, research, industry, analyst, business, human capital) who necessarily may look at the proposal each from his own angle and from his own perspective. This mix of expertise is an excellent necessary feature for the evaluation of a KIC which, by nature, is a wide scope multi-pillar (education, entrepreneurship/business, innovation, outreach), multi-site and open community.

For the **Manufacturing KIC**, the format of the consensus meeting was rather simple with a short summary of the proposal content given by the panel moderator, followed by a short tour de table for experts to give a brief overview of their assessment of the proposal without going into details. This was then followed by the detailed discussions on each criterion and sub-criterion. The tour de table is useful as it gives, from the start, an impression as to whether reaching a consensus is going to be an easy or difficult exercise. The rapporteur had prepared a well elaborated draft consensus report with a set of positive and negative comments on each sub-criterion, with an initial indication on how strongly positive or how strongly negative was the judgement. After the discussions between experts these judgements were then qualified using the wording of the score interpretation table (good, very good, excellent, shortcoming, minor shortcoming, weakness, significant weakness) which makes it easier afterwards to attribute scores in line with the table. For this KIC, the draft CRs were projected on a large screen which helps (or should help) focusing the attention.

For this Manufacturing KIC panel the meeting durations were much longer than the anticipated 3 hours per proposal for several reasons:

- One expert seemed to want to have the final word on every comment made by his co-experts, be it to disagree with his fellow experts, or be it to agree with them, and he would keep the floor for too long. The result was not only an overlong discussion but also a rather significant unbalance between the speaking time of the experts.
- The observer believes that this expert was not excessively authoritarian; he was simply over enthusiastic about expressing his views, to the extent that he would express them for too long, or would want to reformulate in his own words the comments made by his co-experts, and sometimes even dictate to the rapporteur what he should write, without even checking that his words reflect the common opinion of the panel.
- At times, there were some bilateral discussions as an aside between 2 experts on side issues, or bilateral discussions continuing or coming back

on an already treated sub-criterion, thus slowing down the progress of the discussion already started on the following sub-criteria.

As an example of the overlong discussion, the observer noted a discussion of 1.5 hour on one single sub-criterion (sub-criterion 1.1 strategic approach) for one proposal.

It would be good that, if need be during the discussion, the moderator would remind the experts that (1) there is a tentative schedule and the panel should attempt to stick to it, (2) Experts are ALL equally important and entitled to express their views, and (3) the rapporteur is supposed to write the consensus view of the panel and not the views of one particular expert (at least not until it becomes clear the panel agrees with this view).

In general, the moderator, with the help of the rapporteur (and vice versa), should have enough authority and be prepared to put some discipline into the discussion, in the interest of clarity, efficiency and time keeping.

It was noted, and it is a positive aspect, that whenever there is an initial tour de table concerning a criterion or sub-criterion, the floor is not given first always to the same expert but to a different expert so that each of them has, in turn, the opportunity to deliver the first judgement. Indeed, it is often seen in other panels (H2020) that several experts are sometimes too happy to simply agree with whoever speaks first and do not express really their opinions.

For the Urban Mobility KIC, there were 5 proposals going through the consensus phase. Fortunately, the duration of the consensus meetings did allow all 5 to be dealt with within the allocated time.

A good complementarity between the moderator and the rapporteur was noted, which contributed to move discussions along efficiently and maintain, as far as possible, the schedule as planned.

Although it may sound trivial, but the observer noted a rather bad room acoustics in the consensus meeting room for this KIC, with quite some echoing, and this was noted also by some experts. Indeed, it is important that the meeting conditions should be adequate to enable all experts to participate unambiguously to the consensus debate.

It was noted also that, in contrast with the other KIC, there was no projection of the draft CR on a screen for all experts to focus on the proposed text. Instead, the rapporteur was drafting her text as the discussion was developing. It would be preferable and more efficient to start the discussion with an already edited draft visible by all experts.

In this panel, there was a very strongly opinionated expert making sometimes very blunt unsupported statements demonstrating a degree of stubbornness (described by some co- experts as being close to rudeness or even impoliteness) and a lack of consensual mind.

In that respect it would be good for the moderator, supported by the rapporteur if necessary, to remind the experts that (1) this is supposed to be a **consensus** meeting where they are all invited to have a consensual attitude, as reminded to them in the briefing at the start of the consensus phase, (2) they are all of different background and expertise domains, and (3) ALL opinions are in principle equally respectable and worth considering. This could also be made

more visible by providing experts with short CVs (typically half a page) of their co-evaluators to show that each of them is an expert in one (or more) relevant aspect(s) of the KIC but that other experts may be more conversant with other relevant aspects of the KIC.

In the last day of the consensus phase a calibration session was held for each KIC with the objective to check consistency of scores with comments and smoothen, if necessary, relative differences in leniency/harshness between proposals related to the same KIC. The call coordinator acted as a quality controller of the different CRs for this exercise and made clear to the experts that the session is in no way an opportunity to re-open the consensus discussions. Surprisingly a small debate took place with one rapporteur who would want to allow a granularity of scores of 0.1 instead of 0.5. The observer would rather advise against this practice for 2 reasons: first, reflecting a quality difference by a score difference of 0.1 is hardly credible, and second after applying all weightings the score can range from 0 to 100, with steps of 0.5, which is enough to avoid frequent equal score situations, and therefore give an automatic mathematical ranking of all proposals.

It was noted that the time allocation for the calibration session in the meeting agenda was 3 hours for the Manufacturing KIC (3 proposals), i.e. 1 hour per proposal, and 1.5 hour only for the Urban Mobility KIC (5 proposals) i.e. less than 20 minutes per proposal: a more balanced duration should be aimed at.

2.4 Extraordinary EIT Governing Board Meeting 25 October 2018

An EIT GB Extraordinary Meeting was held on October 25 in Budapest to assess and endorse the evaluation results obtained after the consensus phase and prepare for the hearing phase of the KIC 2018 evaluation to be held in Budapest on 4 & 5 December. The observer was given the agenda for the extraordinary GB meeting and participated remotely and partly to the meeting. The observer involvement was simply to provide to the GB his first remarks on the evaluation process until that time. These remarks were provided verbally by telephone and are all included at various places in the present report.

2.5 Experts' feedback on the Evaluation Process

The feedback received from the experts was limited to informal conversations the observer had with some of them.

One expert mentioned that one of her co-evaluators for the Urban Mobility KIC had been unpleasantly stubborn and even impolite to the rapporteur during part of the discussion on a proposal. This is already reported in the present report.

One of the experts seemed to be slightly surprised to have been asked to remove his quality of evaluator from his LinkedIn profile. The observer took the liberty to remind him that the requirement not to disclose the names of the experts applies also to himself and that by signing his expert contract he had agreed to abide by this non-disclosure rule.

One expert expressed his tiredness of having one of his co-evaluators monopolizing excessively the floor during consensus meetings related to the Manufacturing KICs. This is already reported in this report.

Some experts mentioned the relatively poor acoustic quality in the consensus meeting room used for the Urban Mobility KIC and for the harmonization sessions.

One expert, seemingly disappointed of not having succeeded to convince her co-evaluators on one sub-criterion assessment, suggested to the observer that she may bring back the discussion on this detail the next day. In the end, she didn't.

2.6 Hearings of the Applicants with the EIT Governing Board 04-05 December 2018

The applicants of the KIC proposals scored by the experts 70 or more (out of a maximum score of 100) were invited to attend the hearings with the EIT Governing Board on 4 and 5 December 2018 at the EIT headquarters in Budapest.

The Governing Board makes its own assessment of the proposals on the basis of:

- Call text and its annexes
- Its own reading of the proposals
- The ESRs and scores obtained by the experts after the consensus stage of the evaluation
- A pre-prepared short description of the key strengths and weaknesses of the proposals identified by the experts at the consensus stage
- The hearings (10 minutes presentation by the applicants + 55 minutes Q & A session)
- A short (10 minutes) discussion within GB after each Q & A session
- At the end of the hearings under each thematic area, the GB held a comparative discussion (about one hour) on the applicants' hearings/proposals.

It is noted that the questions for the Q & A session are a generic set of questions prepared in advance for each evaluation criterion, plus specific questions suggested by the experts after the consensus stage, plus possibly questions which may spontaneously arise from the applicant presentation.

The evaluation by the Governing Board takes the form of (1) a list of strengths and weaknesses for each criterion, drafted during the hearings, and discussed, amended as needed and finally agreed at the end of the evaluation process for each of the 2 KICs, and (2) a score for each criterion.

A short discussion on the "strengths and weaknesses" took place after each proposal hearing and a short calibration session (as done by the experts at the end of the consensus sessions) took place at the end of the hearings of all proposals pertaining to a KIC invited to the hearing session. The scores were

then entered into a table by all GB members and the final score was the arithmetic average of the individual scores for all criteria and all proposals.

Some detailed observations were made during the hearings as follows:

- For all proposals the Q & A sessions terminate by a round of applause when representatives of the applicants leave the meeting room. Some applicants may understand, rightly or wrongly, that applauding does reflect some positive appreciation of their performance by the Governing Board. It is suggested that the session should end in a more neutral way (without applauding).
- It is suggested that when they enter the hearing room, the applicants should be formally reassured that whatever they might say, it will be kept confidential par all participants (GB members, EIT staff, observer).
- It would also be fair to tell the applicants who are the people they are facing, not a formal tour de table, but just mentioning to them the function of the many people in the audience (the Governing Board, the EIT director, call coordinator, the EIT KIC evaluation staff, legal EIT staff, 2 observers from DG EAC, one independent observer).

It was noted that, in compliance with the relevant EIT regulations, some members of the Governing Board were excluded from participating in the evaluation whenever a conflict of interest was detected, which was the case for 3 members for Urban Mobility, and 2 members for Manufacturing.

The evaluation by the Governing Board at the hearing, and their decision thereafter, are made in full compliance with the EIT rules and procedures described in the call text. The GB members have the benefit of the hearings as an additional element of judgement that the experts did not have. In addition, although the criteria for the experts and those for the GB have the same overall headings (Strategy, Operations, Impact) their detailed content (criterion description and sub-criteria) are indeed quite different. Therefore, the GB opinion may justifiably depart from the expert opinion, and having significant differences of judgement, or even contradictions, between the experts and the Governing Board on any given proposal is normal. In the end the decision belongs to the Governing Board and the scoring system allows, mathematically, the GB to exercise this prerogative.

3. Summary of findings and recommendations for improvements

The observer wishes to present some findings and offer some suggestions/recommendations

1. Overall the evaluation of proposals for both KICs was conducted with fairness, diligence & transparency in accordance with all guiding principles (independence, impartiality, objectivity, accuracy & consistency) and all relevant rules, procedures & criteria as described in section 7 of the call text, at all stages of the procedure (individual evaluation, consensus and hearings).

2. All briefings for experts and for the Governing Board were excellent and comprehensive
 - on July 26, by the EIT evaluation staff, at the start of the individual evaluation phase,
 - on September 12, by EIT moderators, at the start of drafting of the CRs by the designated rapporteurs,
 - on October 10, by the call coordinator, at the start of the consensus phase,
 - on December 4 & 5, by the EIT Interim Director, at the start of the hearing phase.
3. The expert panel composition, for both KICs, reflected an excellent mix of expertise to cover all relevant facets of the proposals to be evaluated (education, research, industry, business, human capital, specialized skills).
4. All discussions in the consensus panels were very thorough, covering all criteria and sub-criteria.
5. It seems that all experts of a panel did not perform their individual reading/evaluation in the prescribed order, thus preventing rapporteurs from starting to draft the CRs as early as possible and in the same order.
6. More discipline would be desirable in the consensus panels in order to (1) maintain the schedule as much as possible as planned, (2) ensure a good balance of time spent on each criterion/sub-criterion, depending on its weighting, (3) ensure a good balance of speaking time between experts and (4) enforce mutual respect, fairness and a consensual spirit within the panels.
7. Also, it might be useful to remind strongly the experts at the start of the consensus meetings that the CR, and eventually the ESR going to the applicant, is the collective ownership of the whole panel. There is not on one side a group of evaluators who keep discussing and ignore the rapporteur, and on the other side a rapporteur who struggles to make sense of the evaluators' opinions. They all should help each other.
8. Achieving the above requires, ideally, a strong and complementary tandem moderator/rapporteur. In addition, consideration should be given to provide each expert in the panels with a short CV of his (her) co-evaluators: this might help reinforce the mutual understanding by each expert as to what are the strong points of his co -evaluators in comparison with his own strong points and encourage them to listen to each other.
9. The observer would like to suggest that an uneven number of experts should be a preferred option (easier to reach a consensus in general, and always a majority in case of vote).
10. Experts should be made aware that the requirement for non-disclosure of the expert names apply also to themselves and therefore they should refrain from publishing their expert role on social networks...even though they may be proud of having been selected as experts.
11. For the hearings the procedure is very clear. It was noted that the time to compile the initial draft of the strengths/weaknesses table for each proposal is rather short (55 +10 minutes for 3 criteria, i. e. just over 20

minutes for each criterion). The time to discuss this table after each hearing, and to perform the calibration and scoring after all hearings are complete is also rather short. It is important to spend enough time to ensure that the proposed feedback to the applicants does not open a door for the unsuccessful ones to file a claim for redress.

12. Concerning the hearings, a few small improvements are suggested:
 - When the representatives of the invited applicants enter the hearing room the short introduction preceding the 10 minutes presentation by the applicant should include (1) a short statement that any information delivered by the applicant will be kept confidential, and (2) a brief description of who is in the audience (GB of course, but also EIT director, call coordinator, EIT note takers, EIT legal staff, DG EAC observers, independent observer, moderators of consensus meetings, etc.)
 - When the applicants leave the hearing room, the audience should take a strictly neutral attitude and refrain from applauding as applause might be misinterpreted by the applicants.
 - A very visible large clock should be displayed during the 55 minutes Q & A session for the benefit of all participants especially the applicants who can permanently see the time left and thus adapt their responses accordingly.
13. A minor detail concerns the wording of some briefings. For example, the observer noted a small difference in the wording of the score interpretation table between the 26 July briefing, and the briefing made by the EIT Director to the GB on December 4 & 5. The description for score 0, score 2, and score 5 are worded differently. Although the differences are minor, it would be desirable to have a unique version.

Appendix 1: Timeline of the EIT 2018 Call Evaluation

The timeline of the EIT 2018 call evaluation was as follows:

- 26 July 2018: briefing (webinar) of the evaluation experts
- 27 July-13 September 2018: remote individual assessment by experts
- 14 September 2018: Individual Experts' assessments deadline.
- 3 October 2018: Draft Consensus Reports (CR) submitted to EIT
- 4-10 October 2018: Experts to comments on draft CRs
- 10-12 October 2018: Consensus meetings (in Budapest at the EIT offices)
- 25 October 2018: Extraordinary EIT Governing Board meeting on expert evaluation results
- 04-05 December 2018: EIT Governing Board Hearings
- 05 December 2018: EIT Governing Board decision: designation of the selected proposal and the reserve one for each KIC
- December 2018: preparation of the present report

Appendix 2: Key documents on the Evaluation

The EIT 2018 KICs call documentation (reviewed by the observer) comprises:

- EIT's 2018 Call for Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KICs) Proposals with annexes
https://eit.europa.eu/sites/default/files/amended_2018_call_for_proposals.pdf
(with particular emphasis on section 7 of this document on "Evaluation procedure and criteria (admissibility, eligibility, exclusion, selection and technical evaluation criteria)")
- Framework of Guidance for the EIT's 2018 Call for Proposals for EIT Manufacturing and EIT Urban Mobility.
https://eit.europa.eu/sites/default/files/framework_of_guidance_2018.pdf
- The SIA thematic factsheet on Urban Mobility
https://eit.europa.eu/sites/default/files/urban_mobility_sia_factsheet.pdf
- The SIA thematic factsheet on Added-Value Manufacturing
<https://eit.europa.eu/interact/bookshelf/added-value-manufacturing-sia-factsheet>
- Presentations made at the "2018 call for KICs" Info Day in February 2018 in Brussels
<http://eitinfoday.onetec.eu/doc.html>
- PowerPoint presentations of the general expert briefing of 26 July, and of the specific panel briefings for each KIC on 12 September
- Decision 30/2018 of the Governing Board of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology on the Approval of the results of the panel of experts evaluation stage in the 'Urban Mobility' theme
- Decision 31/2018 of the Governing Board of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology on the Approval of the results of the panel of experts evaluation stage in the 'Added-value Manufacturing' theme
- Decision 36/2018 of the Governing Board of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology on the Designation of the Knowledge and Innovation Community (KIC) in the "Urban Mobility" thematic area
- Decision 37/2018 of the Governing Board of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology on the Designation of the Knowledge and Innovation Community (KIC) in the "Added value Manufacturing" thematic area
- PowerPoint presentations of the GB Hearings of 4-5 December

- The template of the independent observer report “Independent Observer’s (IO) Report EIT 2018 KICs Call”

Appendix 3: Experts' Questionnaire on the Evaluation Process

All experts (evaluators and rapporteurs, i.e. 14 experts) for both KICs were invited to respond to a questionnaire sent to them after completing their evaluation work. All experts (except 1 evaluator for Urban Mobility) did respond to the questionnaire.

A brief analysis reflecting the observations and comments of the observer on these answers is provided hereafter:

- All experts expressed rather unanimously their global satisfaction with the evaluation process. ***As observer I share and support this view.***
- There was good agreement between all respondents that the time allocated for remote evaluation was adequate and that no IT issue was encountered with the SEP system.
- There was also a good general agreement that the consensus process was properly run with however 2 notable reservations:
 - One expert expressed the opinion that in the Manufacturing panel, one particular expert was rather dominant and very vocal, hence preventing the views of some other experts from being properly heard, and that the moderator was not able to enforce a more balanced, and more efficient, discussion between ALL experts.
 - The rapporteur for this panel was rather critical about the planned duration of the consensus meetings being too short.

As observer I support the first reservation and believe that these 2 reservations are not unrelated, but rather than the allocated meeting duration being too short, it was the excessively talkative expert who made the consensus meetings unnecessarily long.

- All respondents agreed that their opinion was sufficiently well heard in consensus meetings, with however a few reservations, presumably from those who felt somehow overshadowed by the vocal expert. Surprisingly, even the rapporteur (who is not supposed to express an opinion) for Urban Mobility felt her views were well heard.
- There was a good agreement between all respondents on the final scoring for each proposal.
- In terms of how challenging was the evaluation exercise per criterion and sub-criterion (both for remote individual and local consensus phases), there were no extreme difference of opinions but the scatter was however significant. ***The observer believes that this is no surprise as each proposal is looked at under various perspectives (technical, business, financial, education, industrial) by experts having a wide range of***

backgrounds, and therefore the expert views on the difficulty of the evaluation exercise may differ significantly.

- Several experts would have liked to see in proposals more quantified information rather than long descriptive write ups.
- One expert commented that the page limit imposed upon proposals was an unnecessary constraint preventing the applicant to give enough explanations. ***As observer, I would rather strongly disagree with this comment. Applicants should be encouraged to be concise and not encouraged to believe that the score reflects the weight of the proposal!***
- A number of expert comments relate to their perceived need to have more detailed explanations about the interpretation of the sub-criteria in order to have a better view and more coherence on where (under which criterion or sub-criterion) should a particular strength or weakness be assessed and scored. The same need applies also to clarify and have a unique (if possible) interpretation on the differences between business plan and business model, between dissemination and communication.
- The idea of allocating 1 day per proposal for the consensus meetings was raised by several experts. ***As observer, I would not necessarily support this idea. Experts tend always to fill and even exceed the time allocated to them, no matter how long this allocated time is. And the actual duration of the consensus meeting is very much dependent on how strongly the moderator acts as the time keeper, enforces discipline and balance amongst the experts, and helps moving the discussion along.***
- One interesting idea submitted by one expert is that EIT may consider convening a meeting in Budapest for experts (or a selected number of them), rapporteurs, observers of all KICs so far, in order to share, compare and discuss their views and experiences as experts with a view to suggest possible improvements for future KIC evaluations. ***As observer I would support this idea and have already been invited twice by DG RTD to participate to 2 “observer workshops” for H2020 in Brussels where about 50 observers confronted their views in order to draw some “lessons learned” so far.***