The selection procedure under the CEF instrument

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Overview

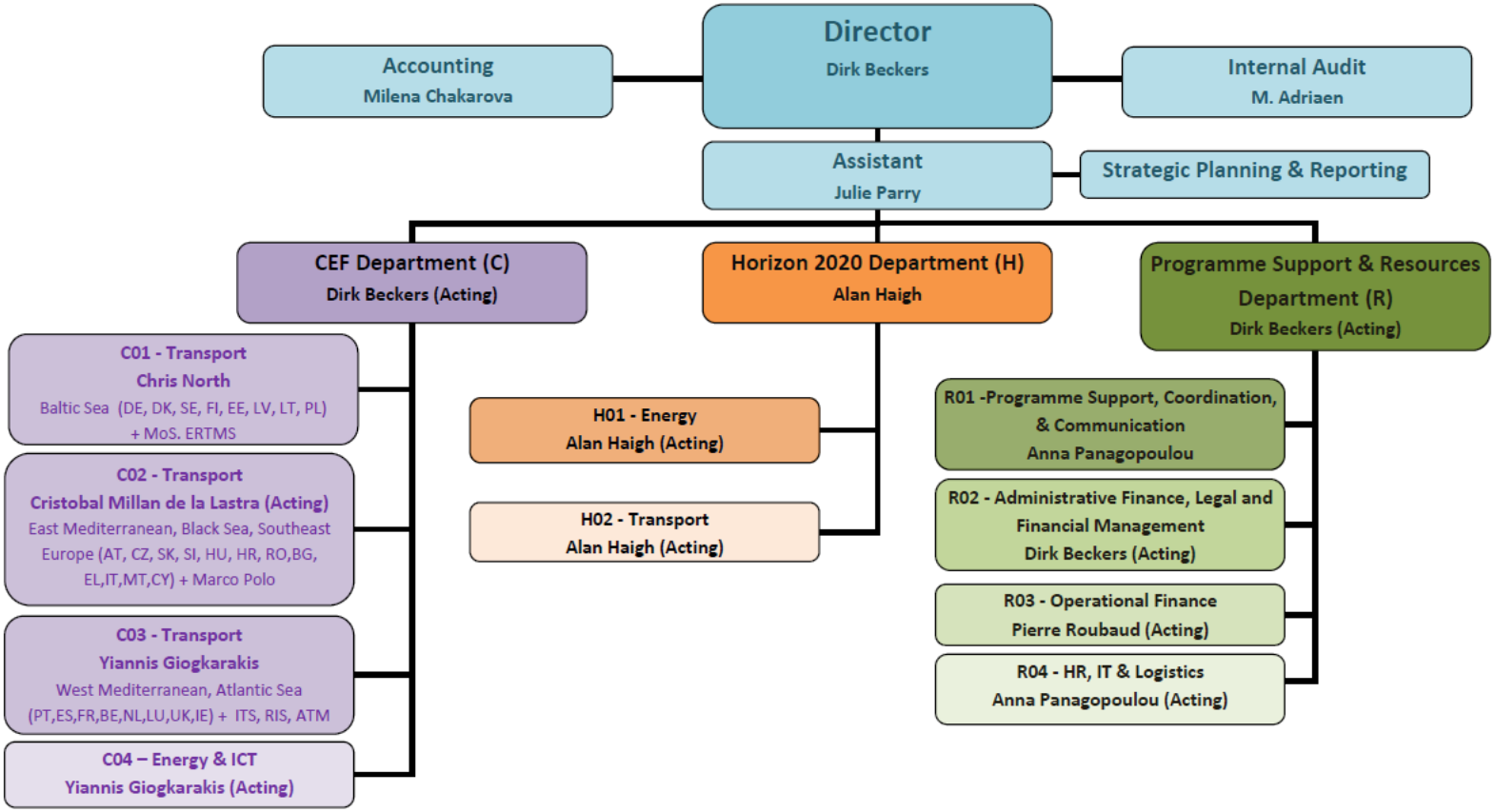
- *Introduction to the Innovation and Networks Executive Agency (INEA)*
- *The call process*
- *Evaluation and selection process*
- *Main aspect of the financing decisions*
- *Financial aspects*
- *Monitoring of the projects by the Agency*

INEA

- ***INEA*** *is the successor of the* ***TEN-T EA***
- *Officially started its activities on 1 January 2014 in order to implement parts of the following EU programmes:*
  - ✓ **Connecting Europe Facility (CEF)**
  - ✓ **Horizon 2020** (Smart green and integrated transport; Secure, clean and efficient energy)
  - ✓ **Legacy programmes: TEN-T and Marco Polo 2007-2013**
- *Ensures the technical and financial implementation of projects throughout their entire life cycle*

European Commission

INEA 2014 Organigramme



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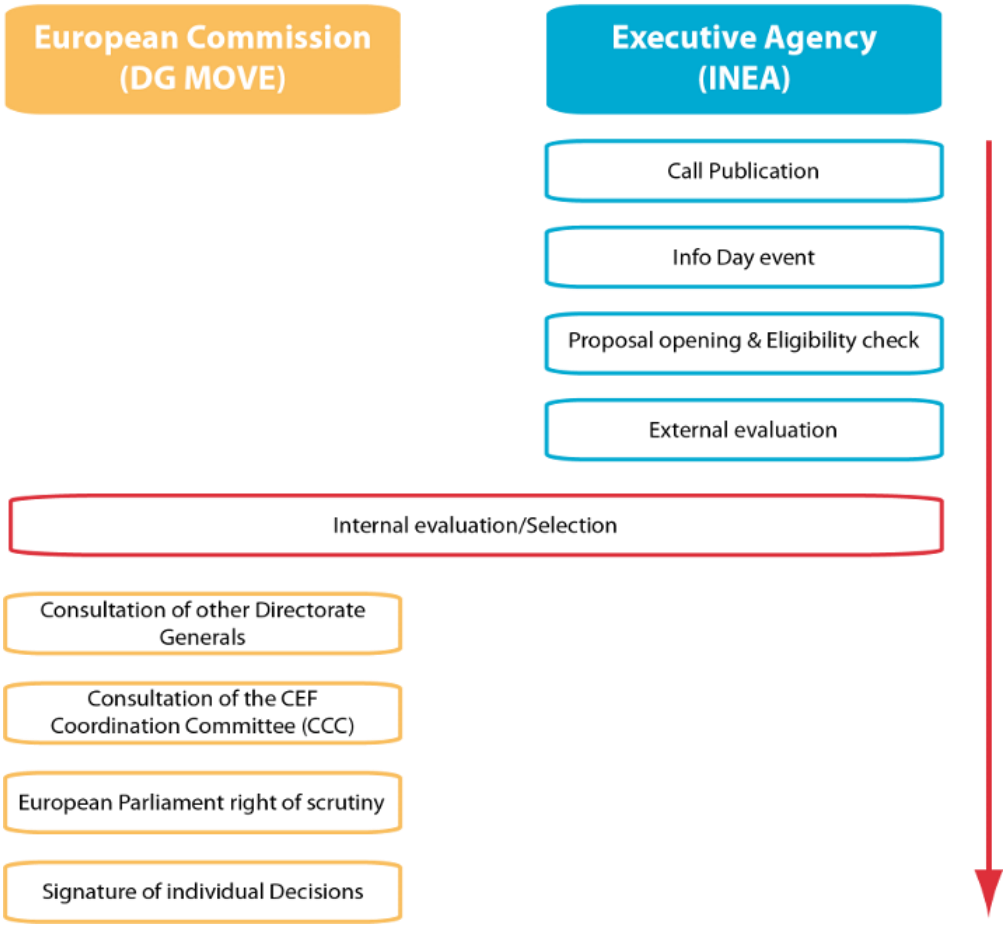
Delivering CEF grants

The Call Process



Calls for proposals: Role of INEA in pre-submission period

- *Detailed call-related texts*
- *Central Info Day in Brussels*
- *Availability for national Info Days upon request*
- *Call-specific Help Desk for applicants' support*
- *Frequently Asked Questions*

INEA is responsible for:

- ***Checking the eligibility of the proposals:***
  - ✓ Arrived on time, are complete, signed by the applicant, approved by the Member State…
  - ✓ In compliance with EU legislation (environment…), applicants have the financial and technical capacity to carry out the project…
- ***Conducting the external evaluation:***
  - ✓ All proposals are reviewed independently by at least three external experts
  - ✓ The external experts meet in a 'consensus meeting' to reach a consensus recommendation and score for each proposal
  - ✓ DG MOVE participates in the consensus meetings as Observer

DG MOVE is responsible for:

- ***Final selection of proposals*** *(with the assistance of the INEA), based on:*
  - ✓ Recommendations of the external evaluation
  - ✓ Available budget, strategic objectives of the calls and the policy relevance of the proposals
- ***Consultation of other EU services*** *(DG Environment, DG REGIO, …)*
- ***Consultation of****:*
  - ✓ CEF Committee (Member States)
  - ✓ European Parliament (right of scrutiny)
- ***Adoption of Framework Decision followed by individual funding Decisions***

Reference documents for applicants

- *Legal reference documents*
  - ✓ TEN-T guidelines (1315/2013)
  - ✓ CEF regulation (1316/2013)
  - ✓ Work Programme for the call in question
  - ✓ Call for Proposal's text

- *Other useful information*
  - ✓ Guide for Applicants
  - ✓ Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

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Evaluation & selection of proposals: Principles (1/2)

Strict guiding principles *are followed:*

- ***Equal treatment:*** *All proposals evaluated against the same criteria. No preferential treatment to any candidate*
- ***Transparency:*** *Adequate feedback to applicants on the outcomes of the evaluation*
- ***Consistency:*** *the same standard of judgment is applied to all proposals*

Evaluation & selection of proposals: Principles (2/2)

- ***Objectivity:*** *each proposal is assessed strictly on the basis of the information submitted*
- ***Accuracy:*** *each proposal is assessed against the four official award criteria:*
  - ✓ Relevance
  - ✓ Maturity
  - ✓ Impact
  - ✓ Quality

External evaluation – Checking eligibility

- *Applicants are not in an exclusion situation*
- *Applicants have the financial and technical capacity to carry out the project…*
- *Proposals arrived on time, are complete, signed by the applicant, approved by the Member State…*
- *Proposals in compliance with EU legislation (environment…)*

External evaluation
The award criteria

Four blocks of award criteria:

1. ***Relevance:*** *Contribution of the Action to the TEN-T policy and the objectives of the calls, and EU dimension*
2. ***Maturity:*** *Is the Action ready to go?*
3. ***Impact:*** *Anticipated socio-economic effects and impact on the environment*
4. ***Quality:*** *Completeness and clarity of the proposal, description of the planned activities, coherence between objectives, activities and planned resources, soundness of the project management process*

The role of external experts

- *Conduct an individual, impartial and in-depth technical evaluation of submitted proposals*
- *Check that proposals address the objectives and priorities defined in the work programmes and calls for proposals*
- *Award independently, for each criterion, a score on a six-point scale from 0 to 5*
- *The (at least) three experts per proposal meet in a consensus meeting moderated by an Agency staff to agree on:*
  - ✓ Comments and a score for each of the 4 criteria
  - ✓ A general recommendation

Scoring

0 – Insufficient: *The proposal fails to address the criterion under examination or cannot be judged due to missing or incomplete information*

1 – Poor: *The criterion is addressed in an inadequate manner, or there are serious inherent weaknesses.*

2 – Fair: *While the proposal broadly addresses the criterion, there are significant weaknesses.*

3 – Good: *The proposal addresses the criterion well, although improvements would be necessary.*

4 - Very good: *The proposal addresses the criterion very well, although certain improvements are still possible.*

5 – Excellent: *The proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion in question. Any shortcomings are minor.*

Internal evaluation

An Internal Evaluation Panel composed of representatives of DG MOVE, DG REGIO, INEA and DG ENV review each proposal individually to:

- *Consider each proposal in view of the TEN-T objectives, priorities and restrictions*
- *Take decision on final support*
- *Recommend a selection of proposals for funding*

Communication on the results

- *After the eligibility check:*
  *Applicants whose proposals have **not** met the eligibility criteria will be informed in writing*
- *After the external evaluation and the internal selection:*
  Results will be submitted to and agreed with the Financial Assistance Committee (Member States) and scrutinised by the European Parliament
- *Following the institutional agreement:*
  - ✓ Successful applicants will be invited to enter into discussions with the INEA to finalise their individual financing Decision
  - ✓ The lists of successful proposals will be published on the INEA and DG MOVE websites

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Financing Decision (1/3)
Main objectives of the Action

- *Current situation and the need for EU support (what is the justification for the Action: what are the bottlenecks)*
- *Short description of the Global Action*
- *Description of the Action – the objectives and which needs it addresses*
- *Description of the expected results (e.g. how it removes/reduces bottlenecks, how a study improves the maturity of a works project etc.)*

Financing Decision (2/3)
Activities

- *Description of the Activities and how they contribute to the overall objectives of the Action*
- *Description of the steps in the implementation of the Activities*
- *Description of the expected output/result, preferably quantified*

Financing Decision (3/3) Milestones

- *Clear and logical 'check points' during the implementation of an Activity. There can be one or more milestones per Activity depending on the size and duration*
- *The 'Means of verification' should be easy to verify, e.g. copy of 'reception of works' reports, 'certification/approval by competent authorities', award of contracts etc.*

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Financial aspects

Projects with yearly instalments (typically MAP):

- ✓ **If yearly instalments are foreseen in the Decision, then:**
  - 50% of pre-financing for each instalment (first yearly payment after notification, further instalments subject to ASRs analysis – subject to bank guarantee if required)
  - Other 50% of each instalment subject to acceptance of interim payment requests
- ✓ **Final balance after submission and acceptance of final report (technical and financial)**

Projects with pre-financing and final payment only (typically AP):

- ✓ **50% pre-financing after notification of Decision (subject to bank guarantee if required)**
- ✓ **Other 50% after acceptance of final report (technical and financial)**

Except for PFs, all payments (IPs, FPs) are subject to ex-ante checks

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Monitoring of the projects (1/4)

- *Strategic Action Plan (SAP)*
  - ✓ Due 90 days after notification of the decision
  - ✓ Detailed implementation plans, Gantt chart showing interdependencies, project management procedures and risk management
  - ✓ Guidelines and model available on the INEA website

- *Action Status Report (ASR)*
  - ✓ Due 31 March every year
  - ✓ Annual update on technical and financial progress

Monitoring of the projects (2/4)

- *Interim financial statement – if applicable*
  - ✓ Every year provided that the oldest instalment can be consumed
- *Final report and financial statement*
  - ✓ Within 12 months (and preferably earlier) after end of project
- *Eligibility of costs (ex-ante controls)*
  - ✓ No need to send all invoices: a sample will be requested
  - ✓ Implementation period is crucial (the dates when costs were incurred, NOT the invoice/payment date)

Monitoring of the projects (3/4)

- *Modifications*
  - ✓ *Should be an exception and will only be accepted in duly justified and substantiated cases*
  - ✓ *Must be submitted by specific letter at the latest 3 months before end date with prior approval of the Member State(s)*
  - ✓ *Transfer between activities and/or beneficiaries are allowed (INEA's written agreement required if the total of transfers amounts to more than 20% of total eligible costs)*

Monitoring of the projects (4/4)

- *Different scenarios in case of partial or non-completion*
  - ✓ By the Beneficiary
    - Suspension
    - Termination (all or part of financial aid is renounced)
  - ✓ By the Commission
    - Cancellation, in situations where the actions has not been started in the two years following the start date of the Action (the Commission may recover all or part of the sums already paid)
    - Reduction and discontinuance in the event of an irregularity committed in the implementation of the Action and/or in the event of failure to comply with the conditions governing the financial aid (again the Commission may recover all or part of the sums already paid)

Useful links and contacts

- *INEA website: http://inea.ec.europa.eu/*
- *INEA Contact Point: inea@ec.europa.eu*

European Commission

Thank you for your attention!

Innovation and Networks Executive Agency