



Innovative Medicines Initiative

Answers of the IMI Executive Office to the recommendations from the Independent Observers' report for Call 8 (Stage 1)

RECOMMENDATION A

It is recommended that the IMI-JU consider not launching a Call(s) over an extended holiday period to allow a realistic length of time for applicants and potential applicants to consider their response and write their EoIs. A possibility exists that potential applicants may not have been in a position as of the 19th March to submit an application.

IMI Answer:

While the IMI office does endeavour to avoid holiday periods, due to the on-going nature of Call launches, it is not possible to totally avoid holiday periods. However, in cases where holiday periods interrupt the application period, the deadlines will be appropriately extended, while bearing in mind the need to run a timely and efficient Call process.

RECOMMENDATION B

Summaries should be provided by the Commission of those Projects so far approved under the IMI process and include the Project's key objectives and deliverables. The summaries should also, where applicable, highlight areas where a project's objectives and deliverables potentially overlap with those of other IMI / Commission funded research and / or impending Calls.

IMI Answer:

The IMI executive office prepares fact-sheets of ongoing projects, which are published on the IMI website. The independent evaluators attention will be drawn to projects where there is potential overlap with the Call under evaluation.

RECOMMENDATION C

Prior to a Call being approved under the IMI process, the objectives / deliverables for that Call should be reviewed by a Panel independent of either the IMI-JU or EFPIA Members. The Panel should ensure that where a potential overlap in those objectives / deliverables exists, the overlap is minimal or justifiable based on different research outcomes or negligible / minimal additional cost.

IMI Answer:

During the Call Topic Text development, the text is reviewed by many external stakeholders such as the IMI States Representative Group and the European Commission. As part of this review, the attention of the stakeholders will, again be drawn to any potential overlap with existing IMI projects.

RECOMMENDATION D

The Secretariat is asked to consider whether and how a Proposer or group from a second EoI could be approached to join a lead Proposer, if the Proposer / group has been ruled out of the Call on the basis of their own proposal, but may offer a novel solution or attribute that could substantially enhance the lead EoI.

IMI Answer:

Under current IMI rules, it is not possible to 'cherry-pick' aspects of one proposal to enhance a second. This could be reconsidered under future PPPs. It should be noted that some projects include an open Call process which can allow an unsuccessful EoI applicant to join the project at a later date.

RECOMMENDATION E

The Secretariat is asked to consider whether use of technologies such as Microsoft's "Live Meeting" would enhance the two-way discussion between the Evaluation Panels and EoI Proposers during Stage 1 Hearings. This would change the format of the meeting, and allow a more balanced and insightful two-way discussion.

IMI Answer:

To ensure fair treatment of all applicants, guarantee that the evaluation is based solely on the submitted EoI, and maintain the anonymity of the evaluators, it is not possible to allow an open discussion. However, during the hearings of future EoI evaluations the IMI Executive Office will project the Expression of Interest on screen to allow the applicants to refer to tables, charts and diagrams. The applicants briefing will be amended to include this information.

RECOMMENDATION F

The Secretariat is asked to consider gaining permission from both parties to record the Hearings. This would allow a faithful account of the answers to be made available for the following Panel discussion.

IMI Answer:

With at least 6 evaluators and 2 IMI staff members present during the hearing, the IMI office feels that a consensus account of the hearing should be achievable. However, the IMI office will keep notes of the key detail of the responses in future evaluations.

RECOMMENDATION G

The Secretariat is asked to provide more information on the Hearing process itself to the proponents (the fixed time, the procedure, that the Hearing has an "exam-like" format, and that they cannot expect any interaction with the Panel). This information will allow for better preparation by the proponents.

IMI Answer:

The IMI Executive Office will review the briefing provided to the applicants for the hearing, and ensure that it provides adequate information on the hearing procedure.