



Evaluation Activities at the European Science Foundation: An Update

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Outline of the presentation

- ESF in brief
- Evaluation OF ESF
- ESF Member Forum on Evaluation of Funding Schemes and Research Programmes

The views expressed in this presentation are mine and do not necessarily reflect neither the views nor the policies of the European Science Foundation or its member organizations

Outline of the presentation

ESF in brief

-  Evaluation OF the ESF
-  ESF Member Forum on Evaluation of Funding Schemes and Research Programmes

About ESF

- Independent, Non-Governmental Institution
- Established in 1974
- Offices in Strasbourg and Brussels
- Budget: 41M€
- Staff: 128



Our Member Organisations



78 Member Organisations
in 30 countries:

- Research performing organisations
- Research funding organisations
- Academies

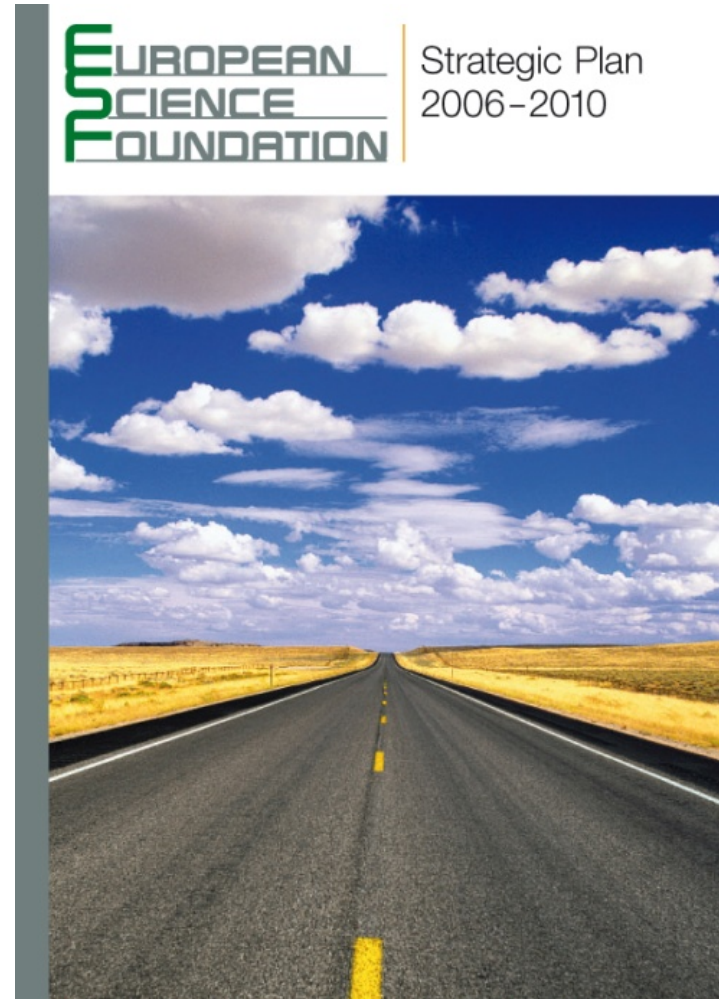
Mission Statement and Strategy

ESF provides a common platform
for our Member
Organisations (MOs) to:

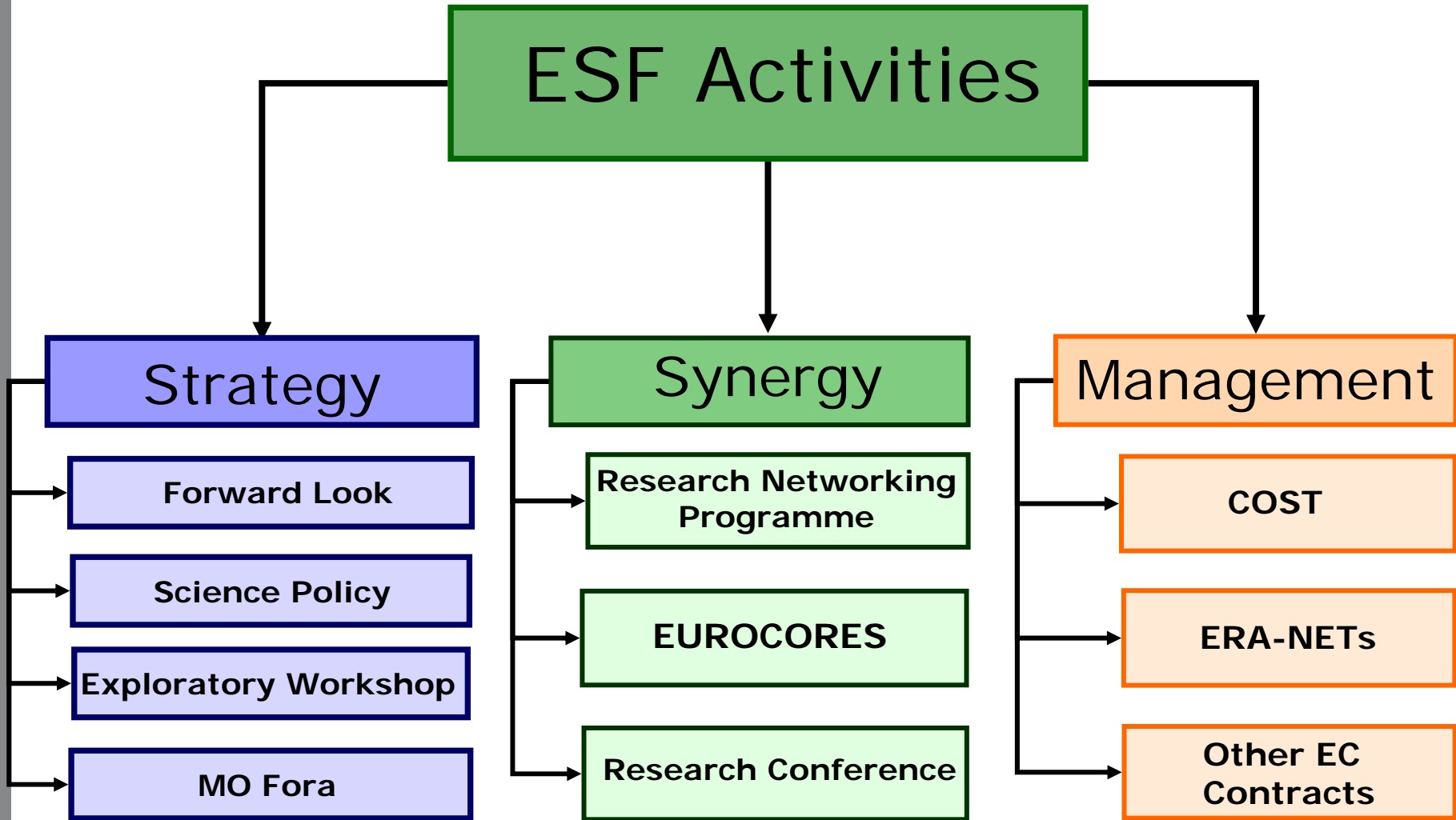
Advance European research

**Explore new directions for
research
at the European level**

Through our activities, we serve the
needs of the European research
community in a global context.



ESF Activities



Outline of the presentation

- ESF in brief

● Evaluation OF ESF

- ESF Member Forum on Evaluation of Funding Schemes and Research Programmes

Evaluation OF ESF

- This presentation refers to **the evaluation of ESF as a research organisation** i.e. assessment of its activities, overall strategy and scientific and governing bodies etc ...
- It does not cover how ESF assess and select grant proposals (neither how ESF or ESF appointed panels evaluate external activities (ex. Evaluation of major research infrastructures)
- In other words: **Evaluation OF ESF** and not *Evaluation BY ESF*.

Evaluation OF ESF

- **Prior to 2004**, evaluation of ESF included mainly “Reviews of the Standing Committees “.

Statute Article IX 1.2 : Governing Council “shall review the terms of reference, composition and activities of each Scientific Standing Committee at least every five years”.

- **After 2005** (in Strategic Plan 2006)
 - Increasingly : evaluation of ESF activities (Instruments, strategic consultation)
 - An emerging evaluation framework : „Policy Audits“ (*Changes in Statutes in 2006 General Assembly*)

Statute article V 8.13 Governing Council “initiates ... regular reviews of key aspects of the operations of the ESF Office”.

Evaluation 2008 / 2009

	Study	Pub. year	
1	Impact of ESF Instruments	2005	Technopolis
2	Evaluation of the European Young Investigator Award Scheme (EURYI) Award Scheme	2005	NIFU STEP
3	Joint Review of the ESF Marine Board (EMB) and The European Polar Board (EPB) (<i>ESF Expert Boards</i>)	2005	Corell Panel
4	The 2nd evaluation of the European Young Investigator Award Scheme (EURYI). Analysis of the first three calls for proposals	2007	NIFU STEP
5	EUROCORES Scheme Review Panel	2007	Grunwald Panel; Technopolis
6	ESF Grant Application Procedures in Focus: Views and Experiences of Applicants to ESF Exploratory Workshops and Research Networking Programmes	2007	GES Kassel
7	Review of the European Collaborative Research Projects (ECRP) Scheme	2008*	

www.esf.org * Running, expected second half of 2008

Survey of applicants



2007 ESF commissioned independent analysis of the views and experiences of ESF

Focus on Applicants in Exploratory Workshops and Research Networking Programmes in 2005 and 2006

objectives:

- ✓ To measure satisfaction with ESF operational procedures
- ✓ To assess the perceived quality of the procedures
- ✓ To get systematic feedback on how to improve them

474 responses (return rate of 57.5 %)

Results

High level of satisfaction with the quality of call texts, information provided about how to apply, and the application and selection procedures.

High satisfaction also with their interaction with its staff members.

Relatively high level of dissatisfaction with the Peer Review (criteria, feedback ..)

A great number of comments and suggestions on how to improve the quality of operations.



**Providing an even better service
ESF Office Comment to the Survey
of applicants**

highlighting concrete measures which
will be undertaken to improve the
quality of services.

- ❖ published with the report
- ❖ sent to applicants invited to take part in the survey (feedback to the surveyed applicants)

Evaluation 2008 / 2009

Satisfaction of ESF Member Organisations



- ❖ MOs are our “shareholders” but also “clients”
- ❖ Are they satisfied with our activities / services
- ❖ What can/ should we do to improve our services (in their views)
- ❖ Challenge: “how to dissociate this with a general discussion about “Grand Strategy” ? (should we at all ?)

Statutory reviews of Standing Committees

- ❖ Role and responsibilities changed in the new strategic plans
- ❖ 3 of the 5 chairs are leaving at the end of 2008
- ✓ Self-evaluation reports
- ✓ Assessed by an External Panel assisted by a consultant



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- Evaluation OF ESF
- **ESF Member Forum on
Evaluation of Funding Schemes
and Research Programmes**

ESF Member Forum on Evaluation of funding schemes and research programmes



Focus:

“Post-Grant” Evaluation i.e. if the funding schemes or the research programmes achieve their stated aims.

Objectives

- exchange and document experiences with current practices
- facilitate networking of science officers engaged in evaluation
- explore needs and possibilities for collaboration in future evaluation exercises.

Participation

41 Organizations (ESF Mos, EC, ERC as observer)

Workshops

1st Workshop

“Evaluation of Funding Schemes and Research Programmes: Expectations, Practices and Experiences“

DFG Berlin Office, 22 and 23 October 2007 [43 participants]

2nd Workshop

Quantitative Indicators in ex-post Evaluation of Funding Schemes and Research Programmes: Case Studies and Rationales

Including a session on:

“The use of progress and final reports in indicator-building for ex-post evaluation of funding schemes”

INFN Headquarters, Rome 31 March – 01 April, 2008 [39 participants]

3rd Workshop

Quality of Quality Assurance: Striving for Highest Standards in ex-post evaluation

Hosted by FWF, Vienna 6-7 October 2008

Follow up activities under discussions

Quality assurance of ex-post evaluation ?



CUIS CUSTODIET IPSOS
CUSTODES ?

Who shall guard the guardians ?

In hindsight ... perhaps it was naive to imagine that there will be joint evaluation studies (benchmark, resources sharing etc ...) in short term



**Thank you for your
attention**