FET: Sharing Experience

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What Experience?

Professor at EPFL since 2000
Director of the Swiss National Center of Robotics

Research areas: flying robotics, evolutionary robotics, soft robotics, biomimetic and wearable sensors, artificial evolution, swarm intelligence

Involved in FET since ca. 1998 as proposer, participant, coordinator, evaluator, expert:
- 7 failed proposals
- 7 funded proposals
- 5 projects as expert

Assemblying a proposal

YES: innovative, game-changer, sharp
NO: incremental, low impact, vague or “half-cooked”

Prep effort: equivalent to high-profile journal paper

- Precisely know what you will do
- Find a unique role in the consortium
- Address a specific need of the project

Participating in a project

Aim for work publishable in high-impact publications / patents

Problems and deviations can happen: they can be handled, but inform immediately the coordinator

Inform media (and officer) of important results

Coordinating a project

Choose partners according to project needs and complementary competences

Make sure you have a good manager

Address quickly problems and deviations, consult with project officer, who is your ally

Communication is key (consortium, EC, media)

Evaluating a project

Look for innovation and disruption (not always what makes you confortable)

Proposals cannot give solutions, but they should describe a sound method to get there

Are there redundant or lacking competences in the consortium?

Serving as expert

Give constructive suggestions, do not steer

Help coordinator solving problems

Foster rewarding and enthusiastic environment

Last words for the FET team

Proposers should be allowed to list potential competition for review choice

Reviewers should be asked to indicate confidence level, which should be considered in project grading

Guide successful projects to next funding phase (coordinate with other divisions?)