What are the different steps of a call for proposals?

A call for proposals typically involves several key steps to ensure a structured and fair evaluation process. Here are the different steps usually involved:

1. **Announcement**: The funding organization or agency releases a call for proposals, outlining the funding opportunity, eligibility criteria, and submission guidelines.

2. **Pre-Proposal (Optional)**: Some calls may require a pre-proposal or letter of intent, which is a brief summary of the proposed project. This step helps the funding agency gauge interest and filter proposals before the full submission.

3. **Proposal Preparation**: Interested applicants prepare their proposals according to the guidelines provided. This typically includes:

   - **Executive Summary**: A brief overview of the project.

   - **Project Description**: Detailed information about the project's objectives, methodology, timeline, and expected outcomes.

   - **Budget**: A detailed breakdown of the project's costs.

   - **Team Information**: Details about the project team, including their qualifications and roles.

   - **Supporting Documents**: Any additional documents required, such as letters of support, CVs, or institutional approvals.

4. **Submission**: Proposals are submitted to the funding organization by the specified deadline, usually through an online portal or email.

5. **Eligibility Check**: The funding organization reviews the submitted proposals to ensure they meet the eligibility criteria and submission guidelines.

6. **Initial Screening**: Proposals are screened to remove any that do not align with the call's objectives or are incomplete.

7. **Peer Review**: Qualifying proposals undergo a peer review process. Independent experts in the field evaluate the proposals based on predefined criteria, such as:

- **Scientific Merit**: The significance and potential impact of the project.

- **Feasibility**: The likelihood of the project's success.

- **Innovation**: The novelty and originality of the project.

- **Relevance**: The alignment of the project with the call's objectives.

- **Budget Appropriateness**: The reasonableness and justification of the proposed budget.

8. **Panel Review**: A review panel, composed of experts and representatives from the funding organization, discusses the peer review evaluations and makes recommendations for funding.

9. **Decision Making**: The funding organization makes the final decision on which proposals to fund, based on the review panel's recommendations and available budget.

10. **Notification**: Applicants are notified about the outcome of their proposals. Successful applicants receive information about the next steps, including any conditions or requirements for receiving the funds.

11. **Contract Negotiation**: Successful applicants negotiate the terms and conditions of the funding agreement with the funding organization.

12. **Award**: Funds are disbursed to the successful applicants, and the projects begin according to the agreed timelines and milestones.

13. **Monitoring and Reporting**: Funded projects are monitored by the funding organization to ensure progress and compliance with the agreed terms. Regular reports are submitted by the project team.

14. **Final Evaluation**: At the end of the project, a final evaluation is conducted to assess the project's achievements, outcomes, and impact.

These steps may vary depending on the specific call for proposals and the funding organization's processes, but they generally follow this structured approach.