Evaluation Criteria in Horizon 2020

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H2020 NCP - Climate Action, Environment, Resource Efficiency and Raw Materials (SC5)
H2020 NCP - Food Security, Sustainable Agriculture and Forestry, Marine, Maritime and Inland Water Research and the Bioeconomy (SC2)

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adapting to Horizon 2020

• New types of call; new types of proposal
  • multi-disciplinary and multi-sectoral; more emphasis on innovation and close-to-market;
• Simplification, for applicants, experts, and for streamlined operations;
• Coherence across the programme
Evaluation Process

Proposal

- Eligible proposal
- Minimum 3 experts
- Individual evaluation
- Consensus
Chooses its experts

• In principle, your proposal will be examined initially by at least three experts (in many cases, five or more).
  • Exception: For the first stage in two-stage submission schemes and for low-value grants, it may be that only two experts are used.

• Additional experts will be appointed for the ethics review.

• In addition, the evaluation process may be followed by one or more independent observers.
Individual evaluation

Each expert carries out an evaluation and prepares an ‘individual evaluation report (IER)’ with comments and scores for each criterion. They also indicate if the proposal:

• falls entirely outside the scope of the part of the call which they are evaluating or
• involves security issues that will need further scrutiny.
Consensus group

• The individual experts then form a ‘consensus group’ to come to a common view and agree on comments and scores (in a ‘consensus report’).
• The group has an impartial ‘moderator’ (normally a Commission/Agency staff member), who:
  • seeks a consensus and
  • ensures that proposals are evaluated fairly, in line with the criteria.
• If a consensus group cannot reach a common view, the consensus report will set out both the majority view and the dissenting views.
Panel review

Finally, a panel will review all the proposals within a call, or part of a call, to:

• make sure that the consensus groups have been consistent in their evaluations;
• if necessary, propose a new set of marks or comments; and
• resolve cases where a minority view was recorded in the consensus report.

It may be possible to arrange for all the consensus group experts to examine all the proposals, and carry out their final review at the same time as they prepare the consensus reports. These experts are thus considered to constitute the pa

• As part of the panel deliberations, the Commission/Agency may organise hearings with the applicants.
Panel review

The ‘panel report’ includes the ‘evaluation summary report (ESR)’ for each proposal (based on the consensus report, including comments and scores, and taking into account the panel’s deliberations and any new scores or comments considered necessary), with explanations and a list of proposals passing all thresholds, along with a final score, (‘panel ranked list’) and, where necessary, the panel’s recommendations for priority order in the event of equal scores, using the procedure set out in the work programme.
Process to grant and signature of GA

- **Time to Grant**
  - From 9 (FR) to 8 months (Exceptions: ERC, complex actions, requested by applicants)
    - 5 months for informing applicants on outcome of scientific evaluation
    - 3 months for signature of GA = grant finalisation process

- **Remarks**:
  - no changes of the composition of the consortium (removal or substitution needs to be duly justified) before signature of the grant agreement
  - No provision for competitive call in order to include new beneficiaries
Award Criteria [Single and second stage]

Details, Weightings and thresholds to be laid down in WP

*Excellence
Sole criterion for ERC frontier research actions

**Impact
Higher weighting for innovation actions
Award Criteria [first stage]

- **Excellence**
  - Thresholds 4/5

- **Impact***
  - Thresholds 4/5

Thresholds 10/15

*Impact
Evaluated only the expected impact
Award criteria: RIA, IA and SME Instrument

**Excellence**  
Clarity and pertinence of the objectives;

Credibility of the proposed approach;

Soundness of the concept, including trans-disciplinary considerations, where relevant;

Extent that proposed work is ambitious, has innovation potential, and is beyond the state of the art (e.g. ground-breaking objectives, novel concepts and approaches).
ESR – weakness: Excellence 1/2

- Lack of credibility due to lack of details concerning the models to be used.
- Limited overall ambition of the proposal/Innovation beyond the state-of-the-art is insufficiently developed.
- No clear evidence of innovation potential.
- No quantitative indicators for the proposed objectives.
- Specific objectives inconsistent with the target of the proposal.
- Objectives are not convincingly addressed, especially concerning the actual analysis of drivers of change and causalities.
- Lack of details on the mechanisms to implement some of the objectives.
- Some of the objectives are missing measurable targets to enable benchmarking of the project results against existing technologies.
ESR – weakness: Excellence 2/2

- The conceptual framework insufficiently elaborated.
- Disadvantages of the proposed approach are not considered enough in the proposal.
- Targeted TRL values are not consistent.
- The linkage with other on-going activities is provided. However the description on how to effectively build upon the achieved results and to cooperate with them is minimal.
- A clear sequence of coordination and support measures is outlined, even if these could have been presented in a more diagrammatic manner.
- The proposal could have developed the gender issues more clearly.
Award criteria: RIA, IA and SME Instrument

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Impact</strong></th>
<th>The expected impacts listed in the work programme under the relevant topic;</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enhancing innovation capacity and integration of new knowledge;</td>
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<td>Strengthening the competitiveness and growth of companies by developing innovations meeting the needs of European and global markets, and where relevant, by delivering such innovations to the markets;</td>
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<td>Any other environmental and socially important impacts;</td>
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<td>Effectiveness of the proposed measures to exploit and disseminate the project results (including management of IPR), to communicate the project, and to manage research data where relevant.</td>
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ESR – weakness: Impact 1/2

- No significant environmental and social impacts beyond the call targets.
- Not quantified impact/clear justification of the forecasts on impacts is missing.
- Provided numbers are not fully convincing, as supporting facts are missing.
- Enhanced citizen awareness and participation mentioned but not sufficiently developed.
- Little discussion about how the new knowledge produced by the project will be integrated to available data sets, and used in broader scale models.
- Insufficient/standard communication measures.
ESR – weakness: Impact 2/2

- In the **dissemination strategy** a clear targeted strategy to reach different stakeholders’ groups is not well mentioned.
- The **performance indicators for dissemination** are not ambitious.
- The possibility to set up **training workshops towards end users** as a way to decrease the barrier for adoption of the project results is not considered enough.
- Ability to effectively **replicate the concept and technology throughout Europe** is not evident.
- **Exploitation plan** is absent/partial or vague.
- Lack of details on **IPR management**.
Award criteria: RIA, IA and SME Instrument

Coherence and effectiveness of the work plan, including appropriateness of the allocation of tasks and resources;

Complementarity of the participants within the consortium (when relevant);

Appropriateness of the management structures and procedures, including risk and innovation management.
ESR – Weakness: Implementation 1/3

- **Workpackages** do not build into a coherent approach.
- The **logical flow of the work plan** is not appropriate to the core objective of the proposal.
- The **work plan is overloaded** as well as tasks and deliverables lists./WPs’ and tasks’ overlap.
- The content of the **work plan** is unequal in the level of details provided.
- **Discrepancies** between work packages, tasks and person months.
- The share of technical/research activities versus networking and dissemination ones and vice versa is sometimes imbalanced comparing with the type of action considered.
- The **allocation of person months** for the project is overestimated.
ESR – Weakness: Implementation 2/3

- More **public deliverables** needed.
- Deliverables defined are limited to reports (e.g. demonstrator deliverables, both for technical demonstrations and for first market exploitation, are missing)
- Limited array of potential end-users included in the **advisory board**.
- **Social scientists are insufficiently represented** which raises questions as to the ability of the consortium partners in delivering the full range of expected impacts.
- **Weak innovation management**. It does not describe enough the potential impact of the project on the innovation capacity of every partner separately, nor is addressed the way new rising ideas will be handled during the project.
ESR – Weakness: Implementation 3/3

• Poor risk management.
• The consortium does not provide a exhaustive geographical coverage.
• Only a minority of the staff in the project teams consists of women.
Award criteria: CSA

**Excellence**  
Clarity and pertinence of the objectives;

Credibility of the proposed approach;

Soundness of the concept;

Quality of the proposed coordination and/or support measures.
Award criteria: CSA

**Impact**

The expected impacts listed in the work programme under the relevant topic;

Effectiveness of the proposed measures to exploit and disseminate the project results (including management of IPR), to communicate the project, and to manage research data where relevant.
Quality and efficiency of implementation

Coherence and effectiveness of the work plan, including appropriateness of the allocation of tasks and resources;

Complementarity of the participants within the consortium (when relevant);

Appropriateness of the management structures and procedures, including risk and innovation management.
Useful link

• Grant Manual – Section on: proposal submission and evaluation