



RESEARCH
& INNOVATION
FOUNDATION



THE RESEARCH AND INNOVATION FOUNDATION

PROGRAMMES

FOR RESEARCH, TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT AND

INNOVATION

“RESTART 2016 – 2020”

GUIDE FOR EVALUATORS & RAPPORTEURS
(Two-stage Evaluation)

PROPOSAL DETAILS	
PILLAR	I. SMART GROWTH
PROGRAMME	Research in Enterprises
CALL IDENTIFIER	ENTERPRISES/0223



**Funded by the
European Union**
NextGenerationEU



Republic of Cyprus

GUIDELINES AND GENERAL INFORMATION FOR EVALUATORS & RAPPORTEURS

1. The Proposal under evaluation was submitted under the “**Research in Enterprises**” **Programme** of the Research Promotion Foundation **Programmes for Research, Technological Development and Innovation “RESTART 2016-2020”**.
2. The objectives of the abovementioned Programme and all necessary definitions and procedures are described in:
 - the relevant **Calls for Proposals**, and
 - the **Work Programme (relevant Programme description in Section II/Pillar I)**.
3. Before producing the Individual Evaluation Reports and the Consensus Report, the Evaluators and the Rapporteur are expected to study the relevant Proposal thoroughly. This consists of:
 - Proposal Part A – General Information & Budget,
 - Proposal Part B – Technical Annex, and
 - Annex I – Curricula Vitae.
4. The Evaluation Procedure is carried out on the Research and Innovation Foundation’s (RIF) **IRIS (Innovation Research Information System) Portal** (<https://iris.research.org.cy/#/>). Evaluators and Rapporteurs should first register on the Portal in order to be granted access to the Proposal and the relevant documents.
5. According to this two-stage Evaluation Procedure, each Proposal should first be evaluated by **three (3) Independent Evaluators**. An **additional (4th) expert is assigned as Rapporteur** for each Proposal in order to guide and facilitate the preparation of a Consensus Report.
6. The three (3) Independent Evaluators and the Rapporteur form the Consensus Group (the Group).

Stage I – Preparation of Individual Evaluation Reports by the Evaluators:

7. As a first step, each of the three (3) Evaluators provides his/her own independent assessment by filling in his / her own Individual Evaluation Report Form, which consists of 3 Parts.
8. In Part I, the Evaluator should provide:
 - a. A fully justified assessment on whether the Proposal is **compatible with**:
 - (i) the objectives of the selected Programme, and
 - (ii) the objectives of the specific Call of Proposals, and
 - (iii) the proposed Technology Readiness Levels (TRLs), and

- (iv) the selected priority area(s)/topic(s) (**where applicable**).
- b. A score on each of the **3 evaluation criteria (assigning marks between 0,00 and 5,00 with an accuracy of 0,25 marks)** as well as relevant comments and detailed justification. It is noted that each criterion carries a **different weight**, as shown on the respective part of the Evaluation Report Form.

The Evaluator will not proceed with the scientific evaluation of the 3 criteria should a Proposal fail the compatibility assessment.

9. The evaluation criteria on which the scientific evaluation will be based are:
- Excellence,
 - Added Value and Benefit, and
 - Implementation.
10. The **Evaluation Score** will be automatically calculated (in the relevant Table in Part III) by adding the scores assigned to each of the three criteria following the application of the relevant weights.
11. The table below provides an interpretation of the scores and should be applied for the evaluation of all Proposals:

Score	Evaluation Interpretation
0	The proposal fails to address the criterion or cannot be assessed due to missing or incomplete information.
< 0,99	The criterion is addressed in an inadequate manner or there are serious inherent weaknesses.
1,00 – 1,99	The proposal addresses the criterion to a limited degree and there are significant weaknesses.
2,00 – 2,99	The proposal addresses the criterion partly and a number of shortcomings/weaknesses are observed.
3,00 – 3,99	The proposal addresses the criterion quite sufficiently but a small number of shortcomings/weaknesses are observed.
4,00 – 5,00	The proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion. Any shortcomings are minor.

12. Proposals are deemed eligible for funding if they secure a **Final Evaluation Score of at least 12,00/15,00**. However, as this is a two-stage Evaluation Procedure, the Final Evaluation Score will be determined after completion of Stage II and preparation / agreement of the Consensus Report (all proposals will undergo both stages of the Evaluation Procedure irrespective of their scores in the Individual Evaluation Reports in Stage I).
13. **Comments provided by the Evaluators should be written in a manner that would justify and explain the specific score provided for each criterion.** Proposals should be judged on merit and scored as they were submitted, rather than on their potential if certain changes were to be made. If significant shortcomings are identified (including in budget issues such as size, structure, allocation, aid intensity etc.), this must be reflected by

awarding a lower score for the criterion concerned. **No recommendations for improving Proposals should be provided.**

14. Please note that Proposal Part B – Technical Annex has a **max page limit of 30 pages**. Any excess pages must be disregarded and not taken into consideration when carrying out the evaluation.
15. In Part II of the Evaluation Report, Evaluators are asked to provide supplementary comments (but no scores) with regards to:
 - the need for an Ethics Review for the Proposal under evaluation,
 - any potential negative impacts and/or risks to the environment stemming from the implementation of the proposed activities or the delivery of the Project's expected results/products, and
 - the degree to which the Proposal under evaluation is gender balanced.
16. A positive reply to the first question would mean that the Proposal should **undergo an Ethics Review** before a funding decision can be reached, whereas a positive reply to the second question should be **reflected in the comments and scores** provided for individual criteria, if applicable. Finally, the reply to the third question will be taken into account as one of the **ranking factors** for Proposals eligible for funding that have achieved equal Evaluation Scores, when budget restrictions apply.
17. Information relevant to both the evaluation criteria and the issues for which supplementary comments are requested can be found throughout the Proposal and, thus, Evaluators are advised to study it thoroughly before starting their work. References to the most relevant Sections of the Proposal (Part B) for each criterion / supplementary issue can be found in the next section of this document.
18. Once finalised, the Evaluator submits his / her Individual Evaluation Report through the IRIS Portal.

Stage II – Preparation of Consensus Report by the Rapporteur:

19. After submission of the Individual Evaluation Reports by the three (3) Evaluators, access to these Reports is granted to all Evaluators, as well as to the Rapporteur.
20. The Rapporteur:
 - a. Does not evaluate the Proposal.
 - b. Prepares a first draft of the Consensus Report based on the Individual Evaluation Reports. In doing so, he / she takes into consideration all agreements / divergences / contradictions and proposes comments and scores that could potentially be acceptable by all three (3) Evaluators involved.

➤ ***The format of the Consensus Report is exactly the same as that of the Individual Evaluation Report (evaluation criteria and weights, score***

assignment, issues for supplementary comments etc.). The same guidelines also apply with regards to providing detailed feedback and comments that would justify and explain the specific score provided for each criterion and the final consensus decision.

- c. Submits the first draft of the Consensus Report through the IRIS Portal for the Evaluators to review and provide (also through the IRIS portal) their comments / feedback on it.
 - d. Coordinates the editing of the draft Consensus Report based on comments / feedback seeking to reach consensus resulting in the **Final Consensus Report**.
 - It is noted that in cases where the Group cannot reach consensus, the Rapporteur will arrange for an online / remote meeting with all three (3) Evaluators present to discuss the matter and, if required, a decision will be reached by means of majority voting among the three (3) Evaluators.
 - e. Will not proceed with assigning Evaluation Scores and providing comments for the three (3) Evaluation Criteria should a Proposal, according to the consensus opinion of the Evaluators, fail the compatibility assessment with the objectives of the selected Programme, the specific Call of Proposals, the proposed TRLs and the selected priority area(s)/topic(s) (where applicable). **This should be sufficiently argued and reflected in the relevant Section of the Consensus Report.**
 - f. Submits the Final Consensus Report through the IRIS Portal, for approval by the Evaluators.
21. The **Final Evaluation Score** of the Proposal in the Consensus Report will be automatically calculated (in the relevant Table in Part III) by adding the scores assigned to each of the three criteria following the application of the relevant weights.
 22. The Proposal Evaluation Procedure is completed and the Consensus Report is received by the RIF once it is approved by all three (3) Evaluators.

PART I – EVALUATION

COMPATIBILITY WITH THE OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAMME AND THE CALL FOR PROPOSALS

The following should be considered in the assessment of this criterion:

- *Compatibility with the Objectives of the Programme.*
- *Compatibility with the Objectives of the Call for Proposals.*
- *Compatibility with the proposed Technology Readiness Levels (TRLs) (This specific Programme/Call for Proposals addresses research activities that fall within Technology Readiness Levels (TRLs*) 4-7, thus covering both «Industrial Research» and «Experimental Development».*
- *Compatibility with the the selected priority area(s)/topic(s) (where applicable).*
- *Compatibility of the proposed type(s) of research activities with those allowed by the Programme/Call for Proposals (As selected in “Proposal Part A – General Information and Budget” and analysed in “Proposal Part B – Technical Annex”).*

The relevant information can be found in:

1. Section “General Profile of the Project Proposal” and “Aid Intensity” Table in “Proposal Part A – General Information and Budget”, and
2. Sections B1 & 4 in “Proposal Part B – Technical Annex”.

** The Technology Readiness Levels adopted by the EU are the following:*

- *TRL 1 - basic principles observed,*
- *TRL 2 - technology concept formulated,*
- *TRL 3 - experimental proof of concept,*
- *TRL 4 - technology validated in lab,*
- *TRL 5 - technology validated in relevant environment,*
- *TRL 6 - technology demonstrated in relevant environment,*
- *TRL 7 - system prototype demonstration in operational environment,*
- *TRL 8 - system complete and qualified,*
- *TRL 9 - actual system proven in operational environment (competitive manufacturing in the case of key enabling technologies).*

1. EXCELLENCE (20%)

The following should be considered in the assessment of this criterion:

Technological Breakthrough:

- *The technology has a high degree of novelty compared to other technologies available, or in development.*
- *The Novelty creates the potential for new applications and functionalities.*
- *The results of the technology demonstration and validation so far indicate the potential for application.*

Project Objectives:

- *The proposed research activities (experimental development, industrial research) are relevant given the core activities of the Host Organisation and compatible with the project’s,*

the Programmes's and the Call's Objectives (activities fall within technology readiness levels (TRL 4-7).

- *Objectives for the planned technology development and validation of the innovation in relevant application environments are appropriate, credible and feasible.*
- *Potential applications been identified and are they plausible.*
- *The timing for this technology/innovation is right.*

The relevant information can be found in [Sections B1, 2 & 4](#) in "Proposal Part B – Technical Annex".

2. ADDED VALUE AND BENEFIT (40%)

The following should be considered in the assessment of this criterion:

Credibility of the Impacts:

- *Expected impacts described are credible and realistic within the project and beyond.*
- *The technology has added value for users/customers in factors such as, usability, functionality, cost and ease of use.*
- *The proposed business model of the Host Organisation, as described in the proposal (Business Model Canvas) is sound and credible.*

Economic, Scientific and/or Societal Benefits:

- *The project is expected to contribute to the enhancement of the Host Organisation's competitiveness in domestic and/or international markets, and subsequently in the growth of the local economy.*
- *There is substantial demand for the proposed innovation, including the willingness of buyers to purchase the product/service.*
- *The project is expected to generate other benefits such as the increase of employment in the Host Organisation or the broader economy (Partner Organisations, Vendors etc), contribute in addressing one or more existing environmental, societal, scientific and/or other local or EU challenges etc.*

Investment readiness and go-to-market Strategy:

- *The proposal and its activities, including IPR Protection and Market Validation, contribute to a large extent to make the technology and the team investment ready from internal and/or external sources. There is demonstrated awareness of potential funding sources.*
- *There is a convincing go to market pathway/strategy, including what regulatory approvals, standardisation, certifications may be needed (if relevant), time to market, possible business and revenue model.*

The relevant information can be found in [Sections B3 & 4](#) in "Proposal Part B – Technical Annex".

3. IMPLEMENTATION (40%)

The following should be considered in the assessment of this criterion:

Quality and Motivation of the Team:

- *The project team has the necessary capabilities and motivation to implement the proposed technological innovation and market-related activities.*
- *The applicant(s) have the necessary expertise to create a unique commercial value from the emerging technology and develop an attractive business and investment proposition.*

Workplan and Allocation of Resources:

- *The allocation of resources (person-months, budget and equipment) in the workplan/work packages and project partners is appropriate.*
- *Milestones and KPIs are present, relevant and clearly defined (measurable, timed, comparable etc.) to track progress along the pathway towards objectives.*

Risk assessment:

- *The main risks (technological, market, financial etc.) have been identified, together with measures to mitigate in order to achieve the project objectives.*
- *Risks that might prevent the validation of the innovation in relevant application environment and/or market success been appropriately considered.*

The relevant information can be found in:

1. *["Project Budget Overview"](#) and ["Aid Intensity" Tables](#) in ["Proposal Part A – General Information and Budget"](#),*
2. *[Sections B4-6](#) in ["Proposal Part B – Technical Annex"](#), and*
3. *[Annex I – Curricula Vitae](#).*

**Including a validation of the selected distribution (%) of proposed type(s) of research activities per Partner, available in ["Proposal Part A – General Information and Budget"](#).*

Important Notes:

- *The calculation of the Proposal Budget will be based on the simplified cost method "Personnel costs plus 40% on Personnel Costs for covering the rest of the Project costs".*
- *The Consortium is presented in ["Proposal Part A – General Information and Budget"](#) and is analysed in [Section B5 "Consortium and Resources to be Committed"](#) in ["Proposal Part B – Technical Annex"](#). If any inconsistencies between Part A and Part B are observed with regards to the proposed participating organisations, Part A should be the one considered as valid for evaluation purposes.*

PART II - SUPPLEMENTARY COMMENTS

QUESTION
<p><i>Do you believe that any part of the Proposal under evaluation (e.g. methodology, Work Packages and activities, expected results, products etc.) requires to undergo an Ethics Review (e.g. a bioethical assessment by the Cyprus National Bioethics Committee)?</i></p> <p><i>The relevant information can be found in Sections B4 & 7 in “Proposal Part B – Technical Annex”.</i></p>
<p><i>Do you believe that the implementation of the proposed activities or the delivery of the expected results/products could have any potential negative impacts and/or pose risks to the environment?</i></p> <p><i>The relevant information can be found in Sections B4 & 7 in “Proposal Part B – Technical Annex”.</i></p>
<p><i>Do you believe that the Proposal under evaluation is gender balanced*, both in terms of its research content as well as the key research personnel to be involved in its implementation?</i></p> <p><i>The relevant information can be found in Sections B4-5 in “Proposal Part B – Technical Annex”.</i></p>

***Note:**

The RIF recognizes that evaluators play a critical role in ensuring excellence in the funded research and, therefore, acknowledges the importance of integrating in the proposals gender and/or sex analysis. Please take a minute to consult the following [informative videos](#) that have been developed by the Canadian Institute for Gender and Health to guide evaluators when assessing Health-related proposals. The information provided in the videos may also apply when assessing proposals in other thematic areas.