

Criteria and Methodology for the Scientific Evaluation of the Grant Application and Individual/Consolidated Evaluation Form for the Grant Application

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I. Terms Used

1.	Postdoctoral Researcher	The scientist who prepares and submits the Grant Application, ensures its implementation - plans and carries out the tasks, is responsible for the execution and achievement of the Project objectives, activities, deliverables and results to the extent, time and quality as foreseen in the Research Application, is responsible for his/her activities in accordance with the norms of scientific ethics, is responsible for the timely preparation and submission of documentation describing the overall and scientific progress of the Grant, in accordance with the terms of the Grant Contract.
3.	Scientific Advisor	The scientist who coordinates the submission of the Grant Application, supervises the quality of the tasks foreseen in the Grant, advises the Postdoctoral Researcher, supervises the execution of the results, in accordance with the terms of the Grant Contract.
4.	Head of Unit	The head of the Unit in which the Grant is being implemented, who approves the submission of the Grant Application, within whose headed Unit the Grant is being implemented, who assumes responsibility for the achievement of the Project results and is accountable for the execution of its parts, in accordance with the terms of the Grant Contract.
5.	Grant contact person	A natural person registered in the National Scientific Activity Information System completes the information about the Project, uploads its annexes and reports, and, if necessary, maintains contact with the staff of the Latvian Council of Science (the Grant contact person may be the Postdoctoral Researcher or the Grant Scientific Advisor).

6.	Expert	A foreign scientist who carries out an independent individual scientific evaluation of the Grant Application, the Final Report of the Grant and whose scientific qualifications, evaluation expertise and work experience are relevant to the scientific field and subject matter of the Grant Application and the Final Report of the Grant.
7.	Reporter	The expert who carries out the individual scientific evaluation of the Grant Application, the Final Report of the Grant and the consolidated scientific evaluation of the Grant Application, the Final Report of the Grant, in agreement with the other expert.

II. Scientific Evaluation of the Grant Application

1. The Latvian Council of Science (hereinafter - LCS), on behalf of RTU, shall organise and carry out the scientific assessment of the Project Proposals, involving two independent foreign experts for the evaluation of each Project Proposal.
2. The selection of foreign scientific experts by the LCS shall be carried out in accordance with established guidelines and guiding principles, ensuring the confidentiality of scientific information and research data, as well as the protection of personal data.
3. The experts declare that there is no conflict of interest and that the information relating to the content of the Research Project and its evaluation is confidential and cannot be disclosed to third parties or used for the expert's own interests. The scientific quality evaluation of the results of the Research Project is anonymous with respect to the implementer of the Research Application and any third parties. The name, scientific degree and organisation of the expert shall be made known to the other experts assessing the Research Project after the completion of the individual scientific quality evaluation of the Grant Application and before the consolidated assessment.
4. The scientific quality of Grant Applications shall be assessed by foreign scientific experts in accordance with the evaluation methodology and the evaluation criteria.

III. Individual evaluation of the Grant Application

5. The expert shall complete the Individual Evaluation Form for the Grant Application and approve the individual evaluation of the Grant Application within two months from the date of conclusion of the Expert Contract and receipt of access to the Grant Application and all necessary information, unless a different deadline is set in the Expert Contract.
6. In the individual evaluation, the expert shall assess each criterion and provide a score in points for each criterion, taking into account the considerations set out in this methodology.
7. The criteria shall be evaluated by awarding between 1 and 5 points per criterion. If the Grant Application's score in a given criterion exceeds the requirements of the previous lowest score but does not fully meet the requirements of the next highest score, the score may also be expressed as an intermediate score in increments of 0.2. Description of the score for each point:
 - 7.1. Excellent - 5 points (excellent submission, meets or exceeds the highest requirements of the criterion in the relevant scientific field, any imperfections in the Proposal are minor);

- 7.2. Good - 4 points (good Project Proposal, meets the requirements of the criterion in the relevant scientific field, but there are some shortcomings);
- 7.3. Satisfactory - 3 points (satisfactory Project Proposal, generally meets the requirements of the criterion in the relevant scientific field, with some shortcomings that will make it difficult to implement the Project and achieve high results);
- 7.4. Weak - 2 points (weak Project Proposal, partial or only general compliance with the requirements of the criterion in the relevant scientific field, identifiable shortcomings that make it difficult to successfully implement the Project and achieve its objectives);
- 7.5. Unsatisfactory - 1 point (unsatisfactory Project Proposal, does not meet the requirements of the criterion in the relevant scientific field, and the information provided is insufficient for the assessment in the criterion, and there are significant shortcomings that make the implementation of the Project and the achievement of the objectives questionable).
8. The consolidated score in points of the Grant Application shall be calculated as a percentage in accordance with Section 36 of the Regulations.
9. Based on Section 36 of the Regulations, the weighting of the criteria against the total score in points of Application shall be:
- 9.1. the scientific quality of the Project Proposal - 50%;
- 9.2. the impact of the Project's results - 30%;
- 9.3. the Project's feasibility and provisions - 20%.
10. The expert shall provide a reasoned justification for the scores in points given for each criterion.
11. Within three (3) working days from the date of receipt of the expert's individual evaluation of the Grant Application, the LCS shall assess the compliance of this individual evaluation with the criteria as well as the methodology of the expert evaluation, if necessary returning this evaluation to the expert for clarification/revision, justifying the reasons for the return, by sending a notification by e-mail. In case of a return, the expert shall, within three (3) working days from the date of receipt of the notification from the LCS, update, revise and approve the individual evaluation in the Information System.
12. The expert shall complete the individual evaluation in the Information System according to the following criteria and considerations:

Individual/Consolidated Evaluation of the Grant Application		
Grant title:		
Expert(s):		
1.	Criterion: Scientific Quality of the Grant Application	Maximum 5 points
1.1.	Consideration: scientific quality, reliability and novelty of the research	<i>The expert shall justify the score in points given by taking into account the fulfilment of the criterion as a whole and the fulfilment of each criterion consideration.</i> <i>1. Specific information for the criterion is given in Chapter 1 "Scientific Excellence" of Part B "Description of the Grant Application" of the Project Proposal, as well as Sub-chapter 2.1 "Grant Scientific Results and Technological Insights and Their Dissemination Plan", but the evaluation of the criterion shall take into account the Grant Proposal as a whole.</i>
1.2.	Consideration: scientific quality of the chosen research strategy and methodological approaches, and relevance to the objectives	
1.3.	Consideration: ability of the Proposal to generate new knowledge or technological insights	

1.4.	Consideration: contribution of Cooperation Partners (in particular QS WUR 2024 TOP 500 universities and their scientific staff), their scientific capacity, the planned quality of the cooperation	2. <i>The scientific excellence of the Project, including the chosen research strategy and methodological approaches, as well as the ability to generate new knowledge or technological insights and the justification of the need for the Project and the novelty of the Project in the context of the field of research, shall be assessed according to the specificities of the relevant scientific field or fields and of the Project, as well as the specificities of the institutions of the Applicant and of the Project Partners (if any). Particular attention shall be paid to the involvement of foreign research staff from the QS WUR 2024 TOP 500 universities. The highest score shall only be awarded if scientific cooperation is foreseen and quality with scientific/academic staff from QS WUR 2024 TOP 500 universities is described.</i> 3. <i>In the case of an interdisciplinary Project Proposal, the expert shall assess the synergies between the disciplines by evaluating the contribution of each discipline to the achievement of the objectives of the research.</i>
2.	Criterion: Impact of Grant Results	Maximum 5 points
2.1.	Consideration: expected transfer of generated knowledge and skills to further activities and scientific capacity building	<i>A project website is not a project requirement. The expert shall justify the score in points given by taking into account the fulfilment of the criterion as a whole and the fulfilment of each criterion consideration.</i>
2.2.	Consideration: opportunities for research development, including contributions to the preparation of new projects for submission to the European Union's Horizon Europe calls for proposals and other research and innovation support programmes and technology initiatives	<i>1. Specific information for the criterion is given in Chapter 2 "Impact" of Part B "Description of the Grant Application" of the Project Proposal, but the assessment of the criterion shall take into account the Grant Proposal as a whole.</i> <i>2. The results and their expected impact, including the intended transfer of results to further activities and scientific capacity building, opportunities for further development of research (e.g. new research project preparation, engagement in international cooperation networks, in particular with QS WUR TOP 500 universities), shall be assessed according to the specificities of the relevant scientific field or fields and of the Project, as well as the specificities of the Applicant's institution.</i>
2.3.	Consideration: the research will generate knowledge relevant to the sector, the economy and society	<i>3. The expert shall assess the plans described in the Project Proposal for identifying stakeholders, applying the right forms of cooperation and transferring the knowledge generated by the Project (e.g. in recommendations, guidelines, prototyping, etc.). Assess the cooperation of the Postdoctoral Researcher with national and local authorities, non-governmental organisations and businesses.</i>
2.4.	Consideration: sustainability of the knowledge generated and a qualitative dissemination plan, including planned scientific publications (Q1/Q2 publications with co-authors from QS WUR TOP 500 universities) and raising public awareness	<i>4. The sustainability of the Project's results shall be assessed in relation to the expected scientific publications and the dissemination of the research results in scientific conferences.</i>
2.5.	Consideration: the implementation of the research contributes to strengthening the scientific capacity of the Postdoctoral Researcher, including cooperation with QS WUR TOP 500 universities.	

		<p><i>Consideration shall be given to whether original scientific articles included in Q1 and Q2 quartile journals indexed in SCOPUS or Web of Science databases, and written with co-authors from QS WUR 2024 Top 500 universities, are foreseen. The highest score shall be awarded only if such articles are foreseen in Q1 journals.</i></p> <p><i>5. The expert shall assess whether the Project will contribute to raising public awareness and involvement, to ensure the transfer of knowledge generated by the research, involving the public and increasing their understanding of the knowledge generated by the Project, and to contribute to society in addressing the specific issues discussed in the Project. Assess whether the Grant has a plan for involving stakeholders in the use of the results, the potential of the Grant to communicate the results achieved to the public and to increase the socio-economic impact (in Sub-chapter 2.2 "Socio-economic Impact and Publicity of the Results" of Part B "Description of the Grant Application" of the Grant Application)</i></p>
3.	Criterion: Grant Feasibility and Provisions	Maximum 5 points
3.1.	Consideration: quality of the research work plan and its relevance to the objective. The resources foreseen are adequate and sufficient to achieve the objective. The research aims to ensure efficient use of resources. The planned work steps and tasks are clearly defined, relevant and reliable	<p><i>The expert shall justify the score in points given by taking into account the fulfilment of the criterion as a whole and the fulfilment of each criterion consideration. Specific information for the criterion is given in Chapter 3 "Implementation" of Part B "Description of the Grant Application" and in Part C "Curriculum Vitae" of the Project Proposal, but in assessing the criterion the Grant Proposal as a whole shall be taken into account.</i></p>
3.2.	Consideration: Scientific qualifications of the Postdoctoral Researcher, as indicated in the curriculum vitae (CV) submitted	<p><i>The feasibility of the Grant, including the research work plan prepared, the research management and quality management foreseen, the information provided on the data management plan, the resources foreseen, the infrastructure available, shall be assessed according to the specificities of the relevant scientific field or fields and of the Project, as well as the specificities of the Applicant and of the Consolidation Partner (if any).</i></p> <p><i>The Project Applicant is a scientific institution. It has the possibility to involve partners, if this is necessary to achieve the Project's objectives. Particular attention shall be paid to the involvement of foreign research staff from the QS WUR 2024 TOP 500 universities.</i></p> <p><i>The expert shall assess the relevance of the scientific qualifications and experience of the Postdoctoral Researcher to the achievement of the Project's objectives and the performance of the tasks envisaged, on the basis of the curriculum vitae submitted in Part C "Curriculum Vitae" of the Grant Application;</i></p>

3.3.	Consideration: appropriate research management, including quality management, is foreseen. The management organisation allows to follow the progress of the research. Potential risks have been assessed and a plan developed to avoid or mitigate them	<i>It shall be noted that the duration of the implementation of a single Grant is 12 months. The planned implementation of the Grant shall be assessed in relation to the completed Part A, Chapter 3 "Project Budget" of the Grant Application, which provides for the costs of salaries, material and technical support, travel and publication costs. There are no conditions for mutual costs sharing within the Call for Proposals.</i>
3.4.	Consideration: the research plans to involve researchers from QS WUR TOP 500 universities, the necessary research infrastructure is in place, including access to Mobility Partners' facilities (if applicable)	
3.5.	Consideration: the institution carrying out the research and the Consolidation Partner (if applicable) have the necessary knowledge and expertise	

IV. Consolidated Evaluation of the Grant Application

13. The Reporter shall, in accordance with the terms of reference and deadlines of the Expert Contract, prepare a consolidated evaluation in points of the Grant Application in points in accordance with the Individual/Consolidated Evaluation Form for the Grant Application. The Reporter shall prepare a consolidated evaluation score in points for the Grant Application taking into account the individual scores of the two experts on the Grant Application and agree on it with the other expert before submitting it to the LCS Information System.
14. The LCS shall assess the conformity of the consolidated scores in points of the Grant Application with the methodology within three working days and validate them in the Information System. If the consolidated evaluation score in points of the Grant Application is inadequate or does not provide sufficient reasoning for the evaluation given, it shall be returned to the Reporter, indicating the shortcomings and weaknesses of the Grant Application. Within three working days from the date of receipt of the notification of the returned evaluation by e-mail from the Information System, the Reporter shall revise the consolidated evaluation score in points of the Grant Application and submit it in the Information System for approval by the LCS, subject to prior agreement with the other expert.

Individual/Consolidated Evaluation of the Grant Application		
Grant title:		
Expert(s):		
1.	Criterion: Scientific Quality of the Grant Application	Maximum 5 points
1.1.	Consideration: scientific quality, reliability and novelty of the research	
1.2.	Consideration: scientific quality of the chosen research strategy and methodological approaches, and relevance to the objectives	
1.3.	Consideration: ability of the Proposal to generate new knowledge or technological insights	
1.4.	Consideration: contribution of Cooperation Partners (in particular QS WUR 2024 TOP 500 universities and their scientific staff), their scientific capacity, the planned quality of the cooperation	
2.	Criterion: Impact of Grant Results	Maximum 5 points
2.1.	Consideration: expected transfer of generated knowledge and skills to further activities and scientific capacity building	
2.2.	Consideration: opportunities for research development, including contributions to the preparation of new projects for submission to the European Union's Horizon Europe calls for proposals and other research and innovation support programmes and technology initiatives	
2.3.	Consideration: the research will generate knowledge relevant to the sector, the economy and society	
2.4.	Consideration: sustainability of the knowledge generated and a qualitative dissemination plan, including planned scientific publications (Q1/Q2 publications with co-authors from QS	

	WUR TOP 500 universities) and raising public awareness	
2.5.	Consideration: the implementation of the research contributes to strengthening the scientific capacity of the Postdoctoral Researcher, including cooperation with QS WUR TOP 500 universities.	
3.	Criterion: Grant Feasibility and Provisions	Maximum 5 points
3.1.	Consideration: quality of the research work plan and its relevance to the objective. The resources foreseen are adequate and sufficient to achieve the objective. The research aims to ensure efficient use of resources. The planned work steps and tasks are clearly defined, relevant and reliable	
3.2.	Consideration: Scientific qualifications of the Postdoctoral Researcher, as indicated in the curriculum vitae (CV) submitted	
3.3.	Consideration: appropriate research management, including quality management, is foreseen. The management organisation allows to follow the progress of the research. Potential risks have been assessed and a plan developed to avoid or mitigate them	
3.4.	Consideration: the research plans to involve researchers from QS WUR TOP 500 universities, the necessary research infrastructure is in place, including access to Mobility Partners' facilities (if applicable)	
3.5.	Consideration: the institution carrying out the research and the Consolidation Partner (if applicable) have the necessary knowledge and expertise	

Criteria	Scientific quality	Impact	Implementation	TOTAL
Points				
Weight	50%	30%	20%	