

ANNEX 2 – ASSESMENT PROCEDURE AND ASSESMENT CRITERIA

Part A

Project draft assessment procedure under public call SK-PL 2023

1. The Office of the Slovak Research and Development Agency (hereinafter referred to as “agency” or “APVV”) through the application committee appointed by the director of the agency shall assess the submitted applications for fulfilment of technical and formal requirements (hereinafter referred to as “technical requirements”) stated in the public call SK-PL 2023.
2. If the application does not meet the technical requirements, the APVV shall invite the applicant to remedy the deficiencies within 14 days.
3. If the deficiencies of the application are left not remedied under paragraph 2, the APVV shall decide to reject the application for failure to comply with the technical requirements, and shall notify the applicant of the decision on excluding the application. The decision on excluding the application contains specific reasons for the application’s non-compliance with the technical requirements.
4. Council of the Agency shall appoint one of its members to be a rapporteur for each evaluated application.
5. The agency shall provide three independent reviews prepared by national and foreign expert in the given field for each application complying with the technical and formal requirements. The reviews may be prepared in Slovak, Czech or English languages. The reviews are the basis for the application evaluation by the council of the agency. The council of the agency may set up a working group in the evaluation of applications pursuant to §15 sect. 11 of Act No. 172/2005 Coll. as amended.
6. Assessing the project quality is the basic principle for assessing the application for project funding.
7. Application assessment shall be done based on the assessment criteria set.
8. The evaluator shall provide a verbal evaluation of compliance with the criterion. At the same time, the evaluator shall allocate points to the given criterion from the range of points set for each criterion. The maximum number of points for the application evaluation from one evaluator is 100. In addition, in the conclusion the reviewer shall identify an overall project assessment, which is in line with the point - based project assessment.
9. Weighted average median rounded to one decimal point shall be calculated from the scores given by the evaluators. The score thus obtained shall be considered the weighted average median score of the project given by the evaluators. To calculate the weighted average median of the scores, following formula shall be used:

$$\text{Weighted average median} = \frac{B - \left\{ \frac{[100 - k(B - A)]}{100} \times (B - A) \right\} + B + B + \left\{ \frac{[100 - k(C - B)]}{100} \times (C - B) \right\}}{3}$$

where:

A is the lowest given score

B is the medium given score

C is the highest given score

k is the coefficient; $k = 2/5$

10. Based on an assessment of project proposals, the Council of the Agency may adjust, downward or upward, the average score of two project reviewers by up to **± 3 points**.
11. Council of the Agency shall prepare ranking of the projects according to the final number of points obtained, and identify the projects recommended for funding.
12. The minimum threshold for selection of the projects for funding is 75 points.
13. Subsequently, an international assessment shall be carried out by a joint committee.
14. The Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic organizes the evaluation of the joint commission within the terms agreed with the partner country. Rules for selecting the projects in an international joint commission are as follows:
 - the projects not submitted or unrated on both sides will be excluded due to non-compliance with the terms of the call;
 - two-sided highly rated projects at national levels will benefit against the projects that are assessed differently;
 - differences in project assessment on both sides will be addressed in discussion, taking mutual interest into the account.Final number of the projects selected to be supported by the joint committee depends on the amount of funds allocated to the call in all the participating countries.
15. After completion of the assessment process, i.e. following an assessment of the joint committee that has agreed a list of the projects recommended for funding, the agency shall notify the applicants of the decision on their applications. The annex to the decision comprises an assessment report and information on the reviews.

Part B

Project Assessment Criteria

1. **Topicality, originality and scientific value of the research objective (0-20 points)**
 - Evaluate the timeliness of the topic in the given field of science and technology and the originality of the research intent;
 - Evaluate to what extent the goals of the research project and the identified needs are clearly defined and realistically achievable;
 - Evaluate whether the research part of the project is supported from other sources and whether the methods of using the requested financial resources are adequate in view of the goals set in the project proposal.

2. **Importance and justification of international bilateral cooperation for the implementation the research objective (0-20 points)**
 - Assess the justification of international bilateral cooperation for the implementation of

the research objective

- Evaluate the justification of the participation of an international partner in the implementation of the research objective
 - Evaluate the significance and number of planned joint outputs with an emphasis on planned joint projects, joint scientific and professional publications, joint conference outputs, joint events organization
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3. Qualifications of the principal investigator and the research team on the Slovak side with regard to the involvement of Ph.D. students and/or young researchers (0-20 points)

- Evaluate the quality of scientific outputs and the professional quality of the principal investigator and individual research team members
 - Assess the share of doctoral students and/or young researchers in the project implementation and their potential for professional growth resulting from their participation in the project
 - Evaluate the appropriateness of the significance of the project for the proposed research team
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4. Feasibility of the joint research plan and adequacy of the funds used (0-20 points)

- Assess the feasibility of the research objective with regards to the time schedule, the logical continuity of the research procedures and the fulfilment of the set goals
 - Assess the schedule, type and expediency of bilateral planned mobility activities
 - Evaluate the appropriateness and proportionality of the involvement of the research team in mobility activities
 - Evaluate the adequacy of the required funds in the context of the planned mobility activities
 - Assess the type and purpose of stay of foreign partners at the Slovak institution
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5. Potential for further or future international cooperation (0-20 points)

- Evaluate the social or economic benefit of bilateral cooperation for Slovakia, or for the Slovak institution and the research team
 - Assess the possibilities of maintaining and developing further cooperation
 - Assess the suitability of planned or expected outputs
 - Evaluate how and to what degree the objectives of the call were met
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In criterion 3, the reviewers and the Agency Council take into account the time of the active professional life of the principal investigator the research team members, especially with regard to the maternity and parental leave.