



HORIZON 2020 PROPOSAL EVALUATION

ROLE OF INDEPENDENT EXPERTS



Who can be an expert?

You have a chance of being selected as an expert if you:

- have high-level of expertise in the relevant fields of research and innovation (see call for details on types of expertise).
- can be available for occasional, short-term assignments

REGISTER AS EXPERT



<http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/experts/index.html>

What do expert assignments involve?

Experts, as peer reviewers, assist in the:

- evaluation of proposals
- monitoring of actions

In addition, experts assist in the :

- preparation, implementation or evaluation of programmes and design of policies. This includes the Horizon 2020 Advisory Groups

Assignments mainly concern research and innovation, falling within the Horizon 2020 programme designed to address the challenges Europe is facing through funding excellent science, technology and innovation

The SME instrument

Business innovation coaches support SMEs funded via the SME instrument. An expression of interest for experts willing to become Business Innovation Coach for the SME instrument is available on the EASME website. Candidate coaches will also be asked to provide more detailed information on their competence and experience.

<https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/CoachProfile/management/overview>

Role of independent experts

- **As an independent expert, you evaluate proposals submitted in response to a given call**
- **You are responsible for carrying out the evaluation of the proposals yourself**
 - You are not allowed to delegate the work to another person!
- **You must close reports in the electronic system within a given deadline**
 - This is part of your contractual obligations!
 - The allowance/expenses you claim may be reduced or rejected otherwise
- **Significant funding decisions will be made on the basis of your assessment**

Guiding principles

- ***Independence***
 - You are evaluating in a personal capacity
 - You represent neither your employer, nor your country!
- ***Impartiality***
 - You must treat all proposals equally and evaluate them impartially on their merits, irrespective of their origin or the identity of the applicants
- ***Objectivity***
 - You evaluate each proposal as submitted; meaning on its own merit, not its potential if certain changes were to be made
- ***Accuracy***
 - You make your judgment against the official evaluation criteria and the call or topic the proposal addresses, and nothing else
- ***Consistency***
 - You apply the same standard of judgment to all proposals

Confidentiality

You must:

- **Not discuss evaluation matters**, such as the content of proposals, the evaluation results or the opinions of fellow experts, with anyone, including:
 - Other experts or Commission/Agencies staff or any other person (e.g. colleagues, students...) not directly involved in the evaluation of the proposal
 - *The sole exception*: your fellow experts who are evaluating the same proposal in a consensus group or Panel review
- **Not contact partners in the consortium, sub-contractors or any third parties**
- **Not disclose the names of your fellow experts**
 - The Commission publishes the names of the experts annually - as a group, no link can be made between an expert and a proposal
- **Maintain the confidentiality of documents**, paper or electronic, at all times and wherever you do your evaluation work (on-site or remotely)
 - Please take nothing away from the evaluation building (be it paper or electronic)
 - Return, destroy or delete all confidential documents, paper or electronic, upon completing your work, as instructed

Conflicts of interest (COI) (1)

You have a COI if you:

- were involved in the preparation of the proposal
- stand to benefit directly/indirectly if the proposal is successful
- have a close family/personal relationship with any person representing an applicant legal entity
- are a director/trustee/partner of an applicant or involved in the management of an applicant's organisation
- are employed or contracted by an applicant or a named subcontractor
- are a member of an Advisory Group or Programme Committee in an area related to the call in question
- are a National Contact Point or are directly working for the Enterprise Europe Network

Conflicts of interest (COI) (2)

You have a COI if you:

- **Act as a referee in the case of Marie Skłodowska Curie Actions evaluators**
- **In the following situations, the Commission/Agency will decide whether a COI exists**
 - Were employed by an applicant or sub-contractor in the last 3 years
 - Were involved in a grant agreement/decision, the membership of management structures or a research collaboration with an applicant in the last 3 years
 - Are in any other situation that casts doubt on your impartiality or that could reasonably appear to do so

COI conditions are spelled out in your contract, and in the Code of Conduct (Annex 1)

Conflicts of interest (COI) (3)

- **You must inform the Commission/Agency as soon as you become aware of a COI**
 - Before the signature of the contract
 - Upon receipt of proposals, or
 - During the course of your work
- **If there is a COI for a certain proposal you cannot evaluate it**
 - Neither individually
 - Nor in the consensus group
 - Nor in the panel review
 - The Commission/Agency will determine if there is a COI on a case-by-case basis and decide the course of action to follow
- **If you knowingly hide a COI, you will be excluded from the evaluation and your work declared null and void**
 - The allowance/expenses you claimed may be reduced, rejected or recovered
 - Your contract may be terminated