

The following is a translation from Estonian. In case of disputes, the Estonian text will prevail.

Guidelines for evaluating Mobility Support applications

1. Scope of Application

- 1.1. These guidelines establish the evaluation criteria and the principles for evaluating and compiling the ranking lists of the Mobility Support applications.
- 1.2. The Estonian Research Council (hereinafter Council) is entitled to make well-considered decisions and consult experts where necessary in relation to matters not covered by these guidelines.

2. Evaluation of the applications

- 2.1. The evaluation of the applications takes place in the Estonian Research Information System (hereinafter ETIS).
- 2.2. All applications are to be evaluated according to the same criteria and procedures in order to ensure equal treatment of all applications.
- 2.3. The final ranking list of the applications is formed by taking into consideration all relevant information and by comparing the applications in a single ranking list.
- 2.4. The evaluation process is carried out as follows:
 - 2.4.1. each application will receive a review by at least two independent reviewers, one of whom shall act as a rapporteur;
 - 2.4.2. the rapporteur will prepare the preliminary final evaluation for the application;
 - 2.4.3. the reviewers will compile the preliminary final evaluation;
 - 2.4.4. the Evaluation Committee approves the final assessment for each application, based on the preliminary final assessment, and confirms the unified ranking of the applications;
 - 2.4.5. when establishing the ranking of applications with equal scores, the Evaluation Committee follows the principles described in point 4.2.

3. Evaluation Criteria and Rating Scale

3.1. Evaluation criteria

When evaluating the applications, the following evaluation criteria are to be used and the scores have to be justified. The justification is based on sub-criteria (points 1.1, 1.2, etc.).

Evaluation criterion	Evaluation Questions	Rating scale
1. Justification of the project.	1.1. How well and clearly is the application scientifically justified? 1.2. How clear and justified is the project's objectives? 1.3. How ambitious are the project's objectives? 1.4. How well thought out and purposeful is the action plan and timeline?	From 1 - 5

	<p>1.5. What additional value and novelty does the application offer compared to the current state of development in the research field?</p> <p>1.6. Other noteworthy observations to highlight.</p>	
<p>2. The competence and potential of the researcher, including his/her research activities in the last five years.</p>	<p>2.1. What is the level of the researcher's scientific achievements in the last five years, primarily the level of postdoctoral research work?</p> <p>2.2. How suitable is the researcher's competence and previous research experience for the successful implementation of the proposed project?</p> <p>2.3. Other noteworthy observations to highlight.</p>	From 1 - 5
<p>3. Integration of the researcher into the institution.</p>	<p>3.1. How clear and well-thought-out is the institution's vision for integrating the researcher into the institution?</p> <p>3.2. How is the researcher and his/her project related to the institution's strategic objectives?</p> <p>3.3. Other noteworthy observations to highlight.</p>	From 1 - 5
<p>4. Research ethics, incl. the potential ethical risks accompanying the implementation of the project</p> <p><i>The criterion will be evaluated by the Council</i></p>	<p>4.1. Has the applicant sufficiently, carefully, and properly assessed the potential ethical risks concerning research which may arise during research?</p> <p>4.2. Has the applicant sufficiently, carefully, and properly described the measures and activities with which the risks concerning research ethics are mitigated?</p> <p>4.3. Has the applicant sufficiently, carefully, and properly addressed the ethical and legal requirements applicable to the research (e.g., requirements related to the processing of personal data or ethics committee approvals) and how the requirements are to be met during the course of the project?</p>	Appropriate, conditionally appropriate
<p>5. Research data management</p> <p><i>The criterion will be evaluated by the Council</i></p>	<p>5.1. Has the applicant sufficiently, carefully, and properly described issues related to the management of research data and other research results throughout their life cycle?</p> <p>5.2. Has the applicant sufficiently, carefully, and properly addressed the ethical and legal requirements regarding the storage or use of research results and research data (e.g., issues related to open science or intellectual property), and explained the fulfilment of the requirements?</p>	Appropriate, conditionally appropriate

3.2. Rating scales and the formation of the final score.

3.2.1. For criteria 1, 2, and 3 a nine-point differentiated rating scale is used:

- Outstanding (5);
- Very good-Outstanding (4.5);
- Very good (4);
- Good-Very good (3.5);
- Good (3);
- Satisfactory-Good (2.5);
- Satisfactory (2);
- Unsatisfactory-Satisfactory (1.5);

- Unsatisfactory (1).

3.2.2. For criteria 4 and 5 a two-point differentiated rating scale is used:

- Appropriate;
- Conditionally appropriate.

3.2.3. The final score will be formed by summing up the scores given to the evaluation criteria. The final score can range from 1 to 15 points.

3.3. Threshold

3.3.1. The qualification threshold for criteria 1, 2 and 3 is 3 points (good).

3.3.2. The application will not be approved if it receives less than 80% of the maximum possible final score, i.e., if the application receives less than 12 points.

4. Basis for the formation of the ranking list

4.1. The applications which have not passed the qualification threshold, or which have received less than 12 points as the final score will not be included in the ranking list.

4.2. The applications will be placed into the ranking list based on the final score given to each application. For ranking the applications with the same final score, the criteria to be used is as follows:

4.2.1. the applications of equal standing will be ranked according to the scores received during the evaluation process in the following order of the evaluation criteria: 2, 1, and 3;

4.2.2. the applications which sustain equal standing after the ranking procedure described in 4.2.1 will be prioritised according to the underrepresented institutions among the applicants whose applications rank above the applications of equal standing;

4.2.3. the applications which sustain equal standing after the ranking procedures described in 4.2.2 will be prioritised according to the underrepresented gender among the applications which rank above the applications of equal standing;

4.2.4. the applications which sustain equal standing after the ranking procedures described in 4.2.3 will be prioritised according to the underrepresented (sub-)field of research among the applications which rank above the applications of equal standing.

5. Interpretations of Evaluation Criteria Scores

Interpretation of Scores for "1. Justification of the project."

Excellent (5)

The scientific justification of the application is clear and excellently described. The research questions/hypotheses posed in the application are excellently outlined and clear. The objectives are very clearly formulated, justified, and ambitious. The proposed project clearly

offers added value and novelty to the research field. The work plan is very clearly described and appropriate for achieving the objectives. An outstanding application in all its aspects.

Very Good (4)

The scientific justification of the application is very well described. The application addresses important research questions/hypotheses that are mostly well thought and clear. The objectives are clearly formulated and justified. The feasibility of the research project is appropriate. The work plan is clear and suitable for achieving the objectives. Most important aspects are very well addressed, with only a few minor deficiencies or questions.

Good (3)

The scientific justification of the application is good and addresses necessary research questions/hypotheses. The project objectives are generally well described. The research project is feasible. The work plan is described but needs some more precise explanations. Several important aspects would have needed a clearer and more detailed explanation. A decent research project with several uncertainties.

Satisfactory (2)

The scientific justification of the application remains general. The objectives are described, but there are several shortcomings. The research project is generally feasible. The work plan is described but is sometimes incomplete and not fully applicable. Most aspects related to scientific justification and feasibility are treated very generally, with significant weaknesses that would require substantial changes and clarifications.

Unsatisfactory (1)

The scientific justification of the application is very weak, and the project is not fully feasible. The application lacks clearly posed research questions/hypotheses. The objectives are incomplete and unclear. The work plan is not well thought out and has significant shortcomings. The feasibility aspects of the project are inadequately addressed and/or have numerous weaknesses.

Interpretation of Scores for "2. The competence and potential of the researcher, including his/her research activities in the last five years."

Excellent (5)

The researcher has excellent potential and is extremely competent and well-suited to implement the planned project. The researcher has published internationally outstanding and significant publications and/or monographs, including during post-doctoral work. The researcher has other significant scientific achievements, including during post-doctoral work. The researcher's previous research experience, including scientific mobility, demonstrates his/her excellent ability to successfully implement the planned project. An exceptionally strong researcher.

Very Good (4)

The researcher is a very competent and very suitable to implement the planned project. His/her publications and/or monographs, including during post-doctoral work, are of very high

international standard. The researcher has other significant scientific achievements, including during post-doctoral work. The researcher's previous research experience, including scientific mobility, demonstrates their very good ability to successfully implement the planned project. A strong researcher.

Good (3)

The researcher is competent to implement the proposed project. His/her publications and/or monographs, including during post-doctoral work, are of good international standard. The researcher has other scientific achievements, including during post-doctoral work. The researcher's previous research experience, including scientific mobility, demonstrates their good ability to successfully implement the proposed project. A good researcher.

Satisfactory (2)

The researcher is not fully competent to implement the proposed project. The researcher has published international publications and/or monographs, including during post-doctoral work, and are somewhat internationally recognized. The researcher's previous research experience, including scientific mobility, demonstrates their limited ability to successfully implement the proposed project.

Unsatisfactory (1)

The researcher is not competent to implement the proposed project. The researcher's publications and/or monographs are somewhat recognized or absent. The researcher's previous research experience, including scientific mobility, does not demonstrate her/his ability to successfully implement the proposed project.

Interpretation of Scores for "3. Integration of the researcher into the institution"

Excellent (5)

The institution has provided excellently thought-out justifications for why they want to recruit the researcher and what role they will play in the institution. The institution has very clearly outlined its strategic goals and explained how the researcher and their project will help achieve these goals.

Very Good (4)

The institution has provided very well thought-out justifications for why they want to recruit the researcher and what role they will play in the institution. The institution has clearly outlined its strategic goals and explained how the researcher and their project will help achieve these goals. There may be only a few minor deficiencies or questions. Few changes are recommended.

Good (3)

The institution's justifications for why they want to recruit the researcher and what role they will play in the institution are general and have deficiencies. The strategic goals are outlined, and it is explained how the researcher will help achieve them, but the explanations and justifications are general. Several important aspects would have required more thorough and clearer treatment.

Satisfactory (2)

The reasons for recruiting the researcher and their role description in the institution are vaguely described. The recruitment of the researcher and the benefits of their project to the institution are implied. The description has significant weaknesses.

Unsatisfactory (1)

The institution has not substantively justified why they want to recruit the researcher and what role they will play in the institution.

Interpretation of Scores for Criteria 4 and 5:

- Suitable – The rating is given to an application in which the topics mentioned in the evaluation criteria are sufficiently, accurately, and appropriately addressed. The application does not have significant deficiencies or questions.
- Conditionally appropriate – The rating is given to an application with significant deficiencies or questions. A condition is set for the application to help mitigate risks or follow necessary requirements.