*A black background with numbers and red text

Description automatically generated*

# **Guidelines and criteria for evaluating the scientific quality of**

# **research applications**

**NON-ECONOMIC RESEARCH APPLICATIONS**

# **1. Introduction**

1.1 Latvia has a very low number of employed researchers compared to other OECD countries, and one of the lowest numbers of young doctorate holders (as a percentage of the population aged 25–34). The research and innovation system identifies 3 main challenges: 1) increasing the quantitative and qualitative capacity of human capital, especially in RIS3 areas, including in regions (depopulation trends); 2) strengthening the technology transfer system and improving governance processes. 3) weak capacity to commercialise research results. The postdoctoral programme therefore aims to enhance research competences, complement human resources and increase the number of qualified professionals, including through the promotion of private-public partnerships. The project will support postdoctoral applications that are able to attract foreign direct funding in research-enhancing sectors, which will also enhance the skills and scientific capacity of young scientists.

The need to strengthen support for postdoctoral research is based on Latvia's strategic objectives for science and technology development, which include increasing R&D intensity, promoting research excellence, digital transformation and socio-economic value creation. The role of the postdoctoral programme is crucial in the context of human capital, as it would facilitate both internal and external mobility of research staff in the long term, as well as providing a focus for international evaluation recommendations. Funding will be open to research applications that have the highest potential to contribute to the objectives of the Smart Specialisation Strategy of the Republic of Latvia[[1]](#footnote-2) (hereinafter – RIS3): Photonics and smart materials; Biomedicine, medical technologies, bio-pharmacy and biotechnologies; A knowledge-intensive bioeconomy; Smart energy and mobility; Information and communication technologies.

1.2 The funding will be awarded to a scientific institution registered in the Register of Scientific Institutions of the Republic of Latvia for the implementation of an individual research application, including mobility abroad, training and networking activities. The research application will be carried out by a postdoctoral researcher – a Latvian or foreign scientist who has obtained a doctoral degree no more than ten years before the deadline for submission of the research application – at a scientific institution that hosts and provides access to infrastructure or human resources for the research required by the research application.

A research application may be carried out in partnership with a foreign or Latvian scientific institution, university or business.

Funding will be available for both fundamental and industrial research. A research application may also include knowledge and technology transfer, protection of technology rights to industrial property created during the research, participation in international mobility and networking activities, supervising, reviewing and participating in thesis committees for bachelor's, master's and doctoral theses, as well as the preparation of other research and innovation projects.

As part of the research application, the postdoctoral researcher shall carry out public involvement in the research application and communication of the results of the research application outside the scope of intellectual property rights.

1.3 The evaluation of the scientific quality of research applications is organised by the Latvian Council of Science (hereinafter – LCS)

**2. Evaluation objective**

2.1 The purpose of the evaluation is to assess the scientific quality of the research applications in order to select the best research applications for funding under the call for applications. Excellence, impact and implementation form the 3 criteria for evaluating research applications. The evaluation should also contribute to the development of postdoctoral researchers' skills in preparing research applications, so the reasoning behind the evaluations of research applications and the recommendations received on how to improve the applications and recommendations for the implementation of research applications are essential.

2.2 The principles and approach of the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Postdoctoral Fellowships (MSCA) programme of the European Union's Horizon Europe Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (hereinafter – “MSCA”) are used for the evaluation of research applications. Unlike MSCA, it is not supported:

* developing courses and training materials, lecturing,
* development of a separate website dedicated to the research application,
* development of new, stand-alone IT systems or databases that are not related to or justified by the research.

# **3. The Experts**

3.1 The scientific quality of research applications is evaluated remotely and anonymously by foreign experts listed in the database of foreign scientific experts. The experts invited to assess each research application are selected according to their research focus, taking also into account their previous experience in assessing scientific projects, ensuring, as far as possible, a diversity of skills, experience, expertise, private and public sector representation.

The selection of the Experts shall be carried out by using search by the keywords and the summary of the scientific field and/or subsector indicated by the research applicant. Scientific fields and sub-fields are classified according to the OECD classification[[2]](#footnote-3).

3.2 To assess the scientific quality of each research application, 2 experts in the relevant research field are invited, each representing a different foreign scientific institution. One of them is designated as the lead expert or consolidator, who, in agreement with the other expert, draws up the consolidated opinion and approves it. If the research application represents a multi- or inter-disciplinary research, the experts shall be selected who are either experienced in such multi- or inter-disciplinary research or each of them represents his or her field of science covered by the relevant multi- or inter-disciplinary research. One expert may perform evaluation of the scientific quality of several mid-term results of the research application according to his/her research direction.

3.3 The expert must have no conflict of interest with regard to the research applicant and the research application to be assessed. A conflict of interests is recognised if:

1. the expert, his relatives, the resulting institution or institutions may receive material or other benefits in connection with the approval or rejection of this research application for funding;
2. the expert is a relative of the postdoctoral researcher and has supervised the postdoctoral researcher's work;
3. the expert has joint publications with a postdoctoral researcher in the last 3 years (a joint publication does not include a publication resulting from collaboration between more than 5 scientific institutions and the expert or postdoctoral researcher does not represent the scientific institution of the lead author of the publication);
4. the expert has participated in a joint research project with a postdoctoral researcher in the last 3 years (a joint project is not considered to be a project that is the result of collaboration between more than 5 scientific institutions and the expert or postdoctoral researcher does not represent the coordinating scientific institution);
5. the expert acknowledges any other kind of personal attitude towards the postdoctoral research that may call into question the objectivity of his assessment.

The expert shall certify that there is no conflict of interests, as well as that the information related to the content of the research application and its evaluation is confidential and cannot be disclosed to third parties or used in the expert's own interest. The examination of research applications shall be anonymous with regard to the applicant and any third parties. The name, scientific degree and organisation represented by the expert shall be known to the other expert who shall assess the research application after completion of the individual assessment of the scientific quality of its mid-term results and before carrying out a consolidated assessment.

# **4. The Procedure**

4.1 Before the research application is evaluated, the research project proposal is submitted to foreign experts for scientific quality assessment, and the research application is assessed against the administrative non-exhaustive criteria.

4.2 The evaluation of the scientific quality of the mid-term results of the research application is performed in accordance with these guidelines. The expert is entitled to consult with the evaluation organizers on any issue related to the evaluated research application or the evaluation procedure.

4.3 The scientific quality assessment of research applications is organised remotely via the POSTDOC information system. The information system shall contain these evaluation rules, the research applications submitted and to be evaluated, the evaluation procedure and the storage of the evaluations.

4.4 The LCS invites selected experts to carry out an expert review of the research project proposal of specific research applications. When inviting an expert to carry out an expert examination of a specific research project proposal of a research application, the following information is sent to him in English:

1. postdoctoral researcher's name, surname,
2. the institution where the study will be carried out,
3. title and abstract of the research,
4. the invitation to act as the consolidator, if any,
5. these evaluation guidelines,
6. amount of the remuneration,
7. an estimate of the time schedule for the expertise.

When inviting a consolidator to carry out a consolidated assessment of the research project proposal of a specific research application, the LCS shall take into account the scientific qualifications and topicality of the expert.

Upon receiving the expert's (consolidator's) consent and confirmation of the absence of conflict of interest and non-disclosure of confidential information, LCS concludes a contract with the expert (consolidator) and provides him with access to the information system. The information system includes the following information available to experts:

* 1. Cabinet Regulations,
  2. tender regulations,
  3. these evaluation guidelines,
  4. CV of the postdoctoral researcher (in English),
  5. research project proposal of the research application (in English).

4.5 Evaluation of the scientific quality of research applications consists of two stages:

1) initial individual evaluation of each expert according to the scientific quality of evaluation criteria,

2) the formation and approval of the consolidated opinion of the Group of Experts.

4.6 When performing the initial individual assessment, the expert gives a numerical assessment or score, concretely and clearly argues his assessment in each of the assessment criteria. The score is a decimal number from 1 to 5 in increments of 0.2. Once the initial individual evaluations of the two research applications have been uploaded to the POSTDOC information system, they, as well as the expert information, are available to both experts of the application. To help experts make the best possible judgements and to promote a common understanding of the assessment among experts, a rating scale has been developed and is available to experts. The rating scale is available on the POSTDOC information system and is intended for the individual use of experts, is not mandatory and does not need to be submitted to the POSTDOC information system or otherwise validated or disseminated.

In the initial individual assessment of the research project proposal, the expert may indicate compliance with the assessment criteria in increments of 0.2, justifying his/her assessment. If the expert's assessment in the relevant criterion exceeds the requirements of the previous lower assessment, but does not fully meet the requirements of the next higher assessment, the assessment can also be expressed with a step of 0.2 points.

After assessing all three criteria, the expert indicates whether the study fits the research category indicated (fundamental/industrial research) and gives his/her assessment. If the expert's assessment of the research proposal category differs from the category indicated by the applicant, the expert precisely justifies their assessment.

4.7 After the initial individual assessments of the scientific quality of the two research applications have been uploaded into the POSTDOC information system, the consolidator drafts a consolidated opinion. The second expert shall express his agreement with the research application or express his objections and his proposals for score and argumentation. Upon receipt of the objection, the consolidator shall prepare a new draft consolidated opinion. The reconciliation of the opinions may involve several stages. The consolidated opinion of a group of experts shall be deemed to be agreed when the other expert agrees to a draft consolidated opinion prepared by the consolidator.

The consolidated opinion of the expert group contains a numerical assessment or score and a reasoned argumentation for each of the evaluation criteria. The score is a decimal number from 1 to 5 in increments of 0.2. The score is not calculated as the mean or median of the experts' scores, but must result from a coherent reasoning between the experts. The argumentation part of each of the evaluation criteria should also indicate the strengths and weaknesses of the research application, which may serve as suggestions for improving the research application for submission to other calls or contribute to its eventual realisation.

In the consolidated evaluation of the research project proposal, the consolidator may indicate compliance with the evaluation criteria in increments of 0.2, justifying his/her evaluation. The quantitative evaluation of the consolidated opinion of the expert group serves to arrange the research applications in descending order for the allocation of funding within the research application competition.

The postdoctoral researcher and the research applicant have the right to get acquainted with the consolidated opinion of the expert group in an anonymous form without the names of the experts after the decision has been made.

4.8 If the consolidator and the other expert consider that there is a major disagreement between them and that it is not possible to reach a consolidated opinion of the evaluation of the research application, they shall inform the evaluation organiser thereof and shall not continue further evaluation of the research application.

In such a case, LCS invites a third expert – an arbitrator. He/she shall be informed of the preliminary individual assessments made by the two previous experts, the consolidated opinion drafted by the consolidator and the objections of the other consolidator. A third expert prepares a consolidated opinion of a new group of experts and submits it to the evaluation organisers. The score in each of the criteria in this opinion cannot exceed the highest given in the individual evaluations or be lower than the lowest score. The argumentation in each criteria should gather the opinion of all three experts involved.

The LCS shall also be entitled to call upon a third expert in the event that one of the experts fails to provide an evaluation or if there are reasonable doubts as to the quality of the expert's work.

4.9 If, in the consolidated opinion of the expert group, the research application has received a score of less than three in any of the criteria, and/or if the sum of all the scores after recalculation of the coefficients is less than 2.4, the research application is considered to be of insufficient scientific quality and will not be taken forward for further consideration for funding.

If the consolidated evaluation of the experts shows that the category of the research application differs from the category indicated in the research application as originally submitted, the LCS shall assess whether the research application has obtained a score of three or more in all criteria and/or if the sum of all scores after conversion of the coefficients is equal to or more than 2.4. If the minimum score thresholds are met, the LCS Evaluation Committee shall propose that the submitted research application be moved to the list of the research category indicated by the experts, under the heading to which it corresponds in terms of the score it has received.

# **5. Evaluation criteria, explanation**

5.1 The above explanation of the three criteria is not considered to be exhaustive or exclusive, experts are entitled to understand and apply it in accordance with the scientific project evaluation practices and principles adopted in the international scientific community, as well as to adapt it in accordance with the practices adopted in each field of science.

5.2 The compliance of the research project proposal of the research application with the evaluation criterion is indicated by the expert by integers or a score, which has the following meaning:

1 – a weak application, does not meet the requirements in the criterion or the information provided is insufficient to perform an evaluation in the criterion, there are significant deficiencies that make the realization of the research application and the achievement of the goals questionable,

2 – mediocre application, partially or only generally meeting the requirements in the criterion, there are detectable deficiencies that make it difficult to implement the research application in general and achieve the goals,

3 – good application, generally fulfils the requirements of the criterion, but there are shortcomings which may hinder the successful implementation of the research application and the achievement of high results,

4 – very good application, meets the requirements of the criterion, but some shortcomings can be identified,

5 – excellent application, meets the highest requirements or even exceeds them in the criterion, any imperfection of the application is insignificant.

When evaluating the research project proposal of the research application, the experts, interpreting the criteria, should take into account the specifics of the relevant research direction, and especially whether a fundamental or industrial research unrelated to economic activity has been applied for.

5.3 The research project proposal of the research application is assessed according to the following evaluation criteria:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Excellence** | **Impact** | **Implementation** | ***Additional points***  ***(Rated by LCS)*** | |
| Quality and credibility of research/innovation actions (level of novelty, adequate respect of interdisciplinary/multidisciplinary and non-discrimination) | Improvement of the researcher's potential and future career opportunities after receiving research application funding | Coherence and efficiency of the work plan | *The research application will create a new research workplace in the supported structure.* | *The research application is intended to develop a new product or technology that is commercialisable and for which support has been provided under the research application.* |
| Clarity and quality of training, international mobility and knowledge transfer between postdoctoral researchers, research applicants and partner | The quality of the planned activities for the dissemination and use of the results of the research application | Relevance of planned tasks and resources |
| Quality and integration of work management in the research group/institution | Quality of communication activities for different target audiences | Adequacy of management structure and procedures, including risk management |
| The capacity of a postdoctoral researcher to become a professional researcher |  | Appropriateness of the institutional environment (infrastructure) |
| **Maximum points for each criterion** | | | | | |
| **5** | **5** | **5** | ***1*** | ***1*** |
|  | | | | | |
| Evaluation weighting percentages for non-economic research applications | | | | | |
| 35 % | 20 % | 15 % | 15 % | 15 % |
| Maximum points after conversion for non-economic research applications | | | | | |
| 1.75 | 1 | 0.75 | 0.15 | 0.15 |
|  | | | | |

Annex 1

**Evaluation criteria and guidelines for experts**

Applications must be assessed on the basis of the following criteria: excellence, impact and implementation.

The information relevant to the evaluation criteria is to be found throughout the research project proposal, not just in the relevant sections, so all relevant information should be taken into account, even though it may be found in different places in the research project proposal.

Each of the sub-criteria must be assessed.

**First criterion: Excellence**

The excellence criteria include:

* Research quality and innovation,
* The training foreseen in the research application,
* Capacity and interaction between the postdoctoral researcher and the scientific/economic sector advisor.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Excellence sub-criteria** | **What to assess** |
| 1.1 Quality and credibility of research/innovation actions (level of novelty, adequate respect of interdisciplinary/multidisciplinary and gender aspects) | * Modernity of the activities, purpose and description of the current situation in the study area, * Appropriateness of research methodology and research approach, * Originality and innovative aspects of the research application, * Interdisciplinarity aspect (if applicable), * Non-discrimination aspect (if applicable).   *On the gender dimension*. Experts only need to consider gender if it is relevant to the proposed study. In studies involving human participants or end users, gender differences may exist. In such cases, the gender dimension of the study content should be addressed as an integral part of the application to ensure the highest level of scientific quality. |
| 1.2 Clarity and quality of training, international mobility and knowledge transfer between postdoctoral researchers, research applicants and partners | * Assessment of the quality and relevance of the training offered, * Assessment of knowledge transfer between the postdoctoral researcher, the research applicant and the partner:   - As a postdoctoral researcher, you will gain new knowledge during the research at the institution of the research applicant and partner,  - The skills and knowledge previously acquired as a postdoctoral researcher will be transferred to the institutions of the research applicant and partner. |
| 1.3 Quality and integration of work management in the research group/institution | * Experience and achievements as a scientific/economic sector advisor in the planned research topic, * Integration of the postdoctoral researcher in the research group/institution, * The nature and overall quality of the research group/institution, * Planned actions to integrate the postdoctoral researcher into different competences and disciplines, * Networking activities that can be offered by the applicant and partner institutions. |
| 1.4 The potential of a postdoctoral researcher to become a professional researcher. | * Assess how the postdoctoral researcher's professional experience to date and the planned research will contribute to his/her professional development and to the emergence of an independent/professionally mature scientist during the period of the research application, * Taking into account the postdoctoral researcher's existing professional experience, assess how competences and skills will change as a result of the research application, * Evaluate the postdoctoral researcher's curriculum vitae (CV section) and professional achievements in the context of the level of experience. |

***How do sub-criteria 1.3 and 3.3 differ?***

The admission arrangements for the postdoctoral researcher, which are covered in sub-criterion 1.3, concern the integration of the postdoctoral researcher into the new environment and facilities. This does not apply to the infrastructure capacity of the research applicant and partners as described under sub-criterion 3.3.

As part of your application, you must draw up a career development plan. In addition to research and innovation tasks, the plan should include training in the skills to be used, preparation of scientific papers and participation in conferences.

The application should explain the strategy for the postdoctoral researcher's career development (based on sub-criterion 1.4). However, the application is not required to include a career development plan (i.e., a detailed list of career plans and planned objectives). Therefore, the assessment of the application should not be reduced for not including a detailed plan.

***Gender aspects***

Research applicants are invited to assess whether gender equality aspects are relevant to the planned research. A research topic is considered to have gender implications when research involving human subjects (or end-consumers) is expected to have a differential impact on women and men. In such cases, the applicant must integrate the gender aspects into the application. Evaluators should assess this as part of “Excellence” (sub-criterion 1.1). Please note that gender balance is not applied to postdoctoral research applications.

Gender aspects should be assessed if they are relevant to the planned study.

**Second criterion: Impact**

The impact criterion relates to the postdoctoral researcher's career, dissemination and communication.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Impact sub-criteria** | **What to assess** |
| 2.1 Improvement of the researcher's potential and future career opportunities after receiving research application funding | * Assess the expected impact of the planned research and training on the postdoctoral researcher's future career prospects after completion of the research application, * Assess how the new competences and skills acquired during the research application (as explained in sub-criterion 1.4) can make the post-doctoral career more successful in the long term, * Assess the added value of the research application for further career development |
| 2.2 The quality of the planned activities for the dissemination and use of the results of the research application | * How the knowledge generated by the planned actions will be disseminated and used, * Evaluate the strategy aimed at disseminating research results to the target audience (scientific, industrial and other participants, professional organizations, policy makers, etc.) and to the wider public. * The impact of the results achieved on achieving the RIS3 objective, including: * the planned arrangements for the management of the intellectual property arising from the activities carried out under the research application; * the expected socio-economic impact of the results of the research application in the implementation of the directions and priorities for economic transformation identified in RIS3, including the expected contribution of the results of the research application to the achievement of the micro-level indicators of the Smart Specialisation Strategy; * the impact of the results of the research application on strengthening Latvia's innovation capacity, as measured by the deliverable “number of new products and technologies that can be commercialised”. Increasing Latvia's innovation capacity is characterised by: creating new market opportunities, boosting business competitiveness and growth, tackling climate change, the environment or other issues related to meeting society's needs. * Check that the Gantt chart includes specific activities for the use and dissemination of results. |
| 2.3 Quality of communication activities for different target audiences. | * How the planned public participation activities raise awareness of the study, * How the research carried out and its results will be communicated to the public in a way that can be understood by non-specialists, * Whether the Gantt chart includes specific actions. |

***How do sub-criteria 1.4 and 2.1 differ?***

Sub-criterion 1.4 “Postdoctoral capacity to achieve or consolidate professional maturity/independence during the period of the research application”: the postdoctoral researcher needs to demonstrate how his/her personal experience to date and the planned research will contribute to his/her professional development as an independent/professionally mature scientist during the period of the research application.

Sub-criterion 2.1 “Improvement of the researcher's potential and future career opportunities after receiving research application funding”: the application should explain the impact of the planned research and training on the postdoctoral researcher's career prospects after funding of the research application.

*Although you would like to expect the number of articles and scientific content to be published, please do not expect a precise and detailed plan for this, as this will be developed during the implementation of the research application.*

**Criterion 3: Implementation**

The implementation criterion covers the quality of the work plan, the adequacy of the planned tasks and allocated resources, and the governance structure.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Sub-criteria for implementation** | **What to assess** |
| 3.1 Coherence and efficiency of the work plan, including appropriateness of task and resource allocation. | * Whether the activities planned in the application ensure the achievement of the planned research and training objectives and results, * Whether the number of months planned is adequate in relation to the activities planned, * A Gantt chart should be attached.   Please consider:   * Work packages (3–5 packages are optimal), * List of key deliverables (if applicable), * List of key milestones (if applicable), * Mobilities. |
| 3.2 Adequacy of management structure and procedures, including risk management. | * The necessary organisational and management structure and monitoring of implementation are in place to ensure that the objectives and results are achieved, * Risks to research activities and administration that may jeopardise the achievement of results, and action plans to mitigate these risks. |
| 3.3 Appropriateness of the institutional environment (infrastructure). | * Contribution of the research applicant and partner to research and training activities, * Main tasks and responsibilities of the applicant and partners (if applicable), * Infrastructure, logistical solutions and facilities/equipment are available to the extent necessary for the activities to be carried out.   *About a co-operation partner*. Please note that the co-operation partner's letter of confirmation does not need to be attached to the application. |

**Criterion 4: Eligibility for research category**

Provide an assessment of the research application's compliance with the research category according to the definitions of fundamental and industrial research set out in Article 2(84) and (85) of European Commission Regulation No 651/2014:

84) “Fundamental research” is experimental or theoretical work carried out primarily to gain new knowledge about things and phenomena without any direct commercial application or use;

85) “Industrial research” is planned research or major exploratory work aimed at acquiring new knowledge and skills for the development of new products, processes or services or for the substantial improvement of existing products, processes or services. These include the creation of components for complex systems and may involve prototyping in a laboratory environment or in an environment with simulated interfaces with existing systems, as well as the creation of pilot production lines if necessary for industrial research and for the validation of non-patented technologies in particular;

Research proposals can include both fundamental and industrial (applied) research, depending on their goals and application:

**Fundamental research** – if the proposal primarily focuses on the development of new theoretical knowledge and the expansion of the boundaries of science without immediate practical use, it would be more oriented towards fundamental science.

**Industrial (applied) research** – if the proposal aims to develop technologies, prototypes, or innovations directly related to industry or economic development, it refers more to applied research.

If the expert's opinion differs from the research category indicated in the research proposal, the expert outlines and provides justification indicating that the research category has been incorrectly selected.

***In case a Gantt chart is not attached to the application, please make sure that information on work packages, deliverables, milestones and mobility is available in the text.***

# Annex 2

Initial individual evaluation form for each expert

**Initial individual assessment of the scientific quality of research applications by the remote assessment expert**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Research application No. |  |
| Title of the research application |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Expert | *Name, Surname, Degree, Institution* |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Criterion: | Argumentation, comments | Score |
| **Excellence** | Strengths:  Weaknesses |  |
| **Impact** | Strengths:  Weaknesses |  |
| **Implementation** | Strengths:  Weaknesses |  |
| **Research category** | Eligibility for the specified category of research application – fundamental or industrial |  |

# Annex 3

Form of consolidated opinion of the expert group

**Consolidated opinion of the expert group on the remote assessment of the scientific quality of research applications**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Research application No. |  |
| Title of the research application |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| The Experts | *Name, Surname, Degree, Institution*  *Here it is indicated who the consolidator is* |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Criterion: | Argumentation, comments | Score |
| **Excellence** | Strengths:  Weaknesses |  |
| **Impact** | Strengths:  Weaknesses |  |
| **Implementation** | Strengths:  Weaknesses |  |
| **Research category** | Eligibility for the specified category of research application – fundamental or industrial |  |
| **Overall assessment** | |  |

Annex 4

**Scale for the evaluation of research applications**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Sub-criterion name | Sub-  criterion  No. | Assessment | | | | |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| **Excellence** | 1 |  | | | | |
| Quality and credibility of research/innovation actions (level of novelty, adequate respect of interdisciplinary/multidisciplinary and gender aspects) | 1.1 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Modernity of the activities, purpose and description of the current situation in the study area | 1.1 |  | | | | |
| Appropriateness of research methodology and research approach | 1.1 |  | | | | |
| Originality and innovative aspects of the research application | 1.1 |  | | | | |
| Equality, inclusion, non-discrimination and respect for fundamental rights (if applicable) | 1.1 |  | | | | |
| Clarity and quality of training, international mobility and knowledge transfer between postdoctoral researchers, research applicants and partners | 1.2 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Assessment of the quality and relevance of the training offered | 1.2 |  | | | | |
| Assessment of knowledge transfer between the postdoctoral researcher, the research applicant and the partner:  - As a postdoctoral researcher, you will gain new knowledge during the research at the institution of the research applicant and partner,  - The skills and knowledge previously acquired as a postdoctoral researcher will be transferred to the institutions of the research applicant and partner. | 1.2 |  | | | | |
| Quality and integration of work management in the research group/institution | 1.3 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Experience and achievements as a scientific/economic sector advisor in the planned research topic | 1.3 |  | | | | |
| Integration of the postdoctoral researcher in the research group/institution | 1.3 |  | | | | |
| The nature and overall quality of the research group/institution | 1.3 |  | | | | |
| Planned actions to integrate the postdoctoral researcher into different competences and disciplines | 1.3 |  | | | | |
| Networking activities that can be offered by the applicant and partner institutions | 1.3 |  | | | | |
| The potential of a postdoctoral researcher to become a professional researcher. | 1.4 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Assess how the postdoctoral researcher's professional experience to date and the planned research will contribute to his/her professional development and to the emergence of an independent/professionally mature scientist during the period of the research application | 1.4 |  | | | | |
| Taking into account the postdoctoral researcher's existing professional experience, assess how competences and skills will change as a result of the research application | 1.4 |  | | | | |
| Evaluate the postdoctoral researcher's curriculum vitae (CV section) and professional achievements in the context of the level of experience | 1.4 |  | | | | |
| **Impact** | 2 |  | | | | |
| Improvement of the researcher's potential and future career opportunities after receiving research application funding | 2.1 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Assess the expected impact of the planned research and training on the postdoctoral researcher's future career prospects after completion of the research application | 2.1 |  | | | | |
| Assess how the new competences and skills acquired during the research application (as explained in sub-criterion 1.4) can make the post-doctoral career more successful in the long term | 2.1 |  | | | | |
| Assess the added value of the research application for further career development | 2.1 |  | | | | |
| The quality of the planned activities for the dissemination and use of the results of the research application | 2.2 |  |  |  |  |  |
| How the knowledge generated by the planned actions will be disseminated and used | 2.2 |  | | | | |
| Evaluate the strategy aimed at disseminating research results to the target audience (scientific, industrial and other participants, professional organizations, policy makers, etc.) and to the wider public | 2.2 |  | | | | |
| The impact of the results achieved on the achievement of the RIS3 objective, the implementation of growth priorities or the development of areas of specialisation | 2.2 |  | | | | |
| Check that the Gantt chart includes specific activities for the use and dissemination of results. | 2.2 |  | | | | |
| Quality of communication activities for different target audiences | 2.3 |  |  |  |  |  |
| How the planned public participation activities raise awareness of the study | 2.3 |  | | | | |
| How the research carried out and its results will be communicated to the public in a way that can be understood by non-specialists | 2.3 |  | | | | |
| How the research carried out and its results will be communicated to the public in a way that can be understood by non-specialists | 2.3 |  | | | | |
| **Implementation** | 3 |  | | | | |
| Coherence and efficiency of the work plan, including appropriateness of task and resource allocation | 3.1 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Whether the activities planned in the application ensure the achievement of the planned research and training objectives and results | 3.1 |  | | | | |
| Whether the number of months planned is adequate in relation to the activities planned | 3.1 |  | | | | |
| A Gantt chart should be attached. Please consider:   * Work packages (3–5 packages are optimal), * List of key deliverables (if applicable), * List of key milestones (if applicable), * For mobility | 3.1 |  | | | | |
| Adequacy of management structure and procedures, including risk management | 3.2 |  |  |  |  |  |
| The necessary organisational and management structure and monitoring of implementation are in place to ensure that the objectives and results are achieved | 3.2 |  | | | | |
| Risks to research activities and administration that may jeopardise the achievement of results, and action plans to mitigate these risks | 3.2 |  | | | | |
| Appropriateness of the institutional environment (infrastructure). | 3.3 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Contribution of the research applicant and partner to research and training activities | 3.3 |  | | | | |
| Main tasks and responsibilities of the applicant and partners (if applicable) | 3.3 |  | | | | |
| Infrastructure, logistical solutions and facilities/equipment are available to the extent necessary for the activities to be carried out. | 3.3 |  | | | | |
| Eligibility for research category |  |  | | | | |
| Eligibility for the specified category of research application – fundamental or industrial |  |  | | | | |

1. Guidelines for science, technology development and innovation for 2021–2027. Site: <https://polsis.mk.gov.lv/documents/7053> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. OECD scientific fields FORD (Classification and distribution by Fields of Research and Development) classification according to the Frascati Manual). Pages 57–59 of the Frascati Manual. *-* <https://read.oecd-ilibrary.org/science-and-technology/frascati-manual-2015_9789264239012-en#page61> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)