Quality and pertinence of the project's research and innovation objectives

Estonian Research Council

- The main research objectives are **well-defined and important**, and are clearly reflected in the work packages. The integration of the projects of the individual researchers into the overall programme is carefully considered and convincing.

- The overview of the proposed research is relevant for the specific objectives, which are identified with respect to the comprehensive state-of-the-art description.

- The general **objectives are clear, justified and well contextualized**. These are appropriately broken down into more specific research questions linked to the different PhD research projects.

- The description of the project's research and innovation objectives is restricted to **general statements; missing** are important details on the state of the art and the major objectives of research.

- The originality of the research is **insufficiently demonstrated**, as the proposal does not adequately present its contribution to advance the state-of-the-art in terms of new […] approaches and techniques.

- Some individual projects are **not clearly linked** to the overall project objectives.

- The proposal is **not sufficiently clear** on the complementarity and contribution of individual research projects to the overall research programme. Some of the Doctoral Candidates' topics are excessively specific, which limits integration within the whole project and exchange between the different doctoral candidates.

Strengths

Weaknesses

Soundness of the proposed methodology

Estonian Research Council

- The choices of methodology are **well described and justified**, and are suitable to solve the research questions. **Inter- and multidisciplinary aspects** are very well considered in the research methodology, with strong interaction foreseen between partners coming from different domains.

- **Gender dimensions** and other diversity aspects are credibly discussed as being relevant for the proposed research.

- The proposal clearly describes the ways in which **open science practices** will be followed including provision to deal with the tension between open access and the protection of IP to facilitate exploitation. The plan for **data management** is comprehensive and sound.

- The whole section on methodology has been insufficiently described and **it is not clearly indicated** which parts of the proposal are novel, particularly in terms of the introduction of novel technologies.

- The proposed research methodology is **not sufficiently detailed**. It lacks information on the specific use cases in the proposed application sectors.

- The plans for adopting open science practices and how they are integrated in the overall methodology are described **briefly and in generic terms**. The concrete measures to adapt these practices to the activity are missing. For example; open access tools, reproducible research, open science evaluation and citizen science are neither adequately presented nor explained.

- **Diversity** issues beyond gender are not addressed.

Strengths

Weaknesses

Quality and credibility of the training programme

Estonian Research Council

- The proposal involves an **excellent doctoral training programme** with clearly defined objectives focused on specialist training, emphasizing digital skills, as well as broader training.

- A **well designed** training programme is proposed. The network activities are carefully planned, involving all network nodes, and planning **both scientific and** useful **complementary** skills training. There is a good consistency between the **local training**, research activities, and the **network training** programme.

- The **role of the non-academic sector** in the training programme is clear and relevant. Non-academic partners will consistently advise, guide, and contribute to planned training activities.

- The overview of the training program is not cohesive and **not in line** with the scientific and non-scientific objectives of the proposal.

- The network-wide training events and their complementarity with the programmes offered locally at the participating organisations are **insufficiently elaborated,** and do not adequately consider gender and diversity effects.

- The proposal **lacks detail** on the duration of webinars and on-site training events across the network.

- It is **not fully clear** what the nature of the secondments will be and how they will complement the research programme carried out in their home institutions.

Strengths

Weaknesses

Quality of the supervision

Estonian Research Council

- All supervisors have the necessary **research qualifications** and a **strong record of training** and mentoring young researchers to become experienced, mature and independent scientists. All partners agree to comply with the comprehensive standards supervising of PhD candidates.

- **Progress monitoring** of the individual projects of PhDs are very well described and have all elements to ensure the success of Fellows' individual research projects and equip them with transferable skills for their life and career.

- All beneficiary supervisors have **international research teams** with PhD students and postdocs leading large teams that include visiting scientists. **The supervisor and co-supervisor** will work together and will **complement** each other.

- The supervision arrangements are clearly described and well designed, assuring an **interdisciplinary and intersectoral oversight** of the doctoral candidates' activities.

- The proposal **does not sufficiently address** supervisory arrangements or the specific support of co-supervisors. Mentoring and guidance for the professional development of future careers are not sufficiently demonstrated.

- The supervision arrangements are **insufficiently described and imprecisely planned**; moreover, the proposal lacks a clear plan of supervisors' involvement, appropriate progress monitoring and feedback mechanisms.

- A shortcoming is that details on the qualifications and experience of some of the specific supervisors are **difficult to disentangle** from the proposal.

Strengths

Weaknesses