

**GUIDELINES FOR A COMMON EVALUATION SCHEME
FOR A JOINT BALTIC RESEARCH PROGRAMME**

BONUS Publication Nr. 4

Guidelines for a common evaluation scheme for a Joint Baltic Research Programme

Layout: PixPoint ky

Cover: Antti Kamppinen (ajk@saunalahti.fi)

Press: Kopio Niini Oy, Helsinki 2006

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ISBN 951-715-608-1 (print)

ISBN 951-715-609-X (pdf)

BONUS is an EU 6th Framework Programme ERANET project with a total funding of 3.03 million euros for years 2004-2007. The project brings together the key research funding organisations in all EU Member States and Russia around the Baltic Sea. The aim is to gradually and systematically create conditions for a joint Baltic Sea research and researcher training programme. BONUS operates in close connection with the scientific and management actors.

The objective of BONUS is

to form a network and partnership of key agencies funding research aiming at deepening the understanding of conditions for science-based management of environmental issues in the Baltic Sea

The 'status quo' in ongoing research, research funding, marine research programme management and infrastructures is examined and the necessary communication and networking tools are established. The needs and conditions of a joint research programme from scientific and administrative point of view are examined. The integration of the new EU Member States to the common funding scheme is considered in one of the tasks. Finally, an Action Plan for creating joint research programmes, including all jointly agreed procedures of programme management and aspects of common use of marine research infrastructure is produced. An additional activity is the development of a common postgraduate training scheme.

The consortium is composed of altogether 13 partners: 12 research funding organisations from nine countries and one international organisation. In addition,

BONUS links six funding organisations as observers, which increases the number on involved organisations to 19.

Partners

- Academy of Finland, Coordinator
- Project Management Organisation Juelich, Germany
- Danish Research Agency (Danish Natural Science Council)
- Estonian Science Foundation
- International Council for the Exploration of the Sea
- Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania
- Latvian Council of Science
- Ministry of Science and Higher Education, Poland
- Foundation for Strategic Environmental Research, Sweden
- Swedish Research Council for Environment, Agricultural Sciences and Spatial Planning
- Swedish Environmental Protection Agency
- Russian Foundation for Basic Research
- Institute of Oceanology Polish Academy of Sciences

Observers

- Deutsche Bundesstiftung Umwelt
- Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft
- Estonian Ministry of Environment
- Latvian Environment Agency
- Maj and Tor Nessling Foundation, Finland
- Nordic Council of Ministers: Marine and air pollution group

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Preface

A joint future transnational research programme will require the development of common structures to run and manage the programme. The evaluation of project proposals is a key factor within a research programme, and it is crucial that the partners can agree on the criteria of the evaluation procedure.

This report is based on the outcome of the BONUS task 2.3 – *Development of a common evaluation scheme*. The report presents an overall evaluation scheme covering the tasks from evaluation of project proposals to the assessment of funded projects and the overall research

programme. The suggested scheme should be regarded as a recommendation from the partners for a future programme model.

The authors would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the task by answering to questionnaires, attending the workshop arranged in Stockholm and providing other material on request.

Lotta Liljelund and Katarina Vrede at the Swedish Research Council for Environment, Agricultural Sciences and Spatial Planning completed this report.

1 Introduction

This report presents the results from the BONUS task 2.3 *Development of common evaluation scheme*. Formas, The Swedish Research Council for Environment, Agricultural Sciences and Spatial Planning, has been Task leader and responsible for the work.

The aim of this report is to suggest a common evaluation scheme for a future research programme on the Baltic Sea. In the development of this scheme it is important to take into account the procedures at the different organisations, to make the scheme compatible and acceptable for the partners. The evaluation procedures of the BONUS partners have been studied, as has the review procedure for the ESF EUROCORES programme¹. Taking into account the eventual additional EU funding, the suggested framework also has to be consistent with EU regulations.

The organisational structure of a future BONUS research programme has been put forward in the report *The Joint Baltic Sea Research Programme – Best practice, Possibilities and Barriers*. The current report focuses on the evaluation procedures of the programme. It ranges from evaluation of project applications to the monitoring of ongoing projects. The assessments of funded projects and the overall research programme as well as rules of conflicts of interest and guidelines to evaluators are also included in the report.

The BONUS task 2.3 – *Development of common evaluation scheme* applies the results acquired from task 1.1, *Exchange*

of information on initiation, preparation, implementation and evaluation on research programmes, and Task 2.2, *Analysis of legal and administrative possibilities and barriers for funding transnational programmes*. A questionnaire focusing on mid-term and final evaluation procedures has been sent to the BONUS partners. The collected information has been analysed, and based on this information a working document was sent to the partners prior to the workshop that was held in Stockholm in April 2005. The working document was to function as a basis for the discussions at the workshop and should be regarded as a suggestion. This final task report is based on the results from the workshop and comments from the partners on the material. The BONUS Network Steering Committee and the Advisory Board have also been given an opportunity to comment on the report.

Task 2.3 Development of common evaluation scheme

Applying the results from the BONUS tasks 1.1 and 2.2, the possibilities to develop a common evaluation scheme are explored. The scheme will include:

- Proposal evaluation
- Mid-term evaluation
- Overall evaluation after the termination of the programme

Questions to be discussed are:

- What balance between scientific evaluation and stakeholders' evaluation is preferable?
- Should a follow-up be carried out directly after termination of the programme or after a period of time or both?
- How are scientific, international, socio-economic etc. impacts of the programme evaluated?

¹ A summary of the review processes at the BONUS partners and the European Science Foundation can be found in Appendix 5.

2 Evaluation scheme for a joint Baltic Sea research programme

Summary of suggested proposal and evaluation procedure

As stated in the report *The Joint Baltic Sea Research Programme – Best practice, Possibilities and Barriers* the partners will launch a joint call for proposals within one or several thematic areas of the research programme. The proposals will be submitted to the Programme Management that will act as the administrative body for the evaluation procedure. The outline and desired content of the proposals will be regulated in the call.

Depending on the nature of the call, one or several international evaluation panels will be appointed by the Programme Steering Committee to conduct the scientific rating of the proposals.

The proposals will be evaluated according to a one-step evaluation procedure², which is currently applied by the majority of the BONUS partners for the evaluation of project proposals. A two-step procedure is used for the evaluation of larger programmes.

The task of the evaluation panel is to conduct the **rating** of the proposals based on their scientific quality according to the criteria set by the Programme Steering Committee.

After the rating of the projects, the Programme Steering Committee will make a **ranking** order according to the scientific quality and the relevance of the projects for the call/programme and a recommendation of what projects to fund. The suggested procedure gives the Programme Steering Committee the additional function of acting as the relevance evaluation body as well as the decision-making body.

2 For detailed information on the procedures of the BONUS partners, see Annex 5: *Summary of review process at the BONUS partners*.

3 Scientific publication is to be ranked as follows:

- International peer-reviewed journals
- Regional or national peer-reviewed journals
- Books and book chapters in an international language
- Proceedings and other reports in an internationally used language
- Reports only in the national language

Application procedure

The Programme Steering Committee will launch a call for proposals within the research programme. This call will be open to individual researchers, research groups and institutes from all of the participating countries. The project applications should be submitted to the Programme Management office.

The Programme Management will verify that the submitted proposals meet the eligibility criteria set in the call for proposals. Any proposal found to be non-eligible is excluded from the scientific evaluation and will not be sent to the evaluators.

In cases where there is need for specific scientific expertise, not available in the Baltic countries, collaboration with researchers and/or institutes from countries outside the Baltic region may be accepted. Collaboration with a Baltic country is a requirement.

Contents of application:

Proposal description

Proposed problem
 Project relevance
 General aim of the project
 State of the art
 Theory and method
 Expected outcome of the project
 Research plan/time schedule for the project
 Budget
 List of grants from other sources
 Communication plan
 Socio-economic perspective
 Ethical and gender issues

Applicants

CV of the principal investigator
 CV of the co-applicants
 Publication list for the principal investigator³
 Publication list for the co-applicants
 Justification of a sufficient critical mass to manage the project

If the project includes non-Baltic participation, an appendix should be attached to the application.

3 Project evaluation

Evaluation of project proposals

Incoming proposals will be evaluated both in terms of **scientific** content and **relevance**. Incoming proposals shall be evaluated objectively and impartially.

Scientific evaluation

An international review panel, appointed by the Programme Steering Committee, will evaluate the scientific quality based on the following criteria:

- **Subject of study**
- **Theory and method**
- **Expertise of the applicants**

The proposals will be rated according to the following scale⁴. Only whole numbers shall be used.

- 0- The proposal fails to address the issue under examination or cannot be judged against the criterion due to missing or incomplete information
- 1- Poor
- 2- Fair
- 3- Good
- 4- Very good
- 5- Excellent

The rated projects will be set against a threshold. The purpose of the threshold is to guarantee the quality of the projects to be ranked by the Programme Steering Committee. Any proposal failing to pass the threshold will be rejected and will not progress to the relevance evaluation. There are different ways how to decide on this threshold. One way is to set a limit under the **highest rated** proposals. Another option is to set up specific criteria stating that all projects passing the threshold should have to fulfil a minimum set of criteria in the different sections; subject of study, theory and method and expertise of the applicants. The most crucial factor in this part is to set up a threshold that all the partners can agree upon and that will certify that any project passing the threshold fulfils the sufficient and necessary scientific criteria in order to be a part of the research programme.

⁴ European Commission, Guidelines on Proposal Evaluation and Selection Procedures, p. 13.

Factors to take into account when rating the project proposals are the mobility of researchers and cross-border cooperation. Mobility and international cooperation is encouraged by the programme and is also regarded positively when rating the projects.

The situation for young scientists has been discussed by the BONUS partners. Several of the organisations have a special focus on supporting young scientists in their funding instruments. There is a common concern regarding the decline of interest of young researchers involved in the natural sciences. Many countries are also facing major generational changes, where the majority of the active researchers today have a high average age. There is a consensus among the partners on the importance to promote and support young scientists in the beginning of their careers. This can for example be done by evaluating the publication rate for the last years instead of the total production. The definition of a young scientist may differ at the partner organisations. The major difference is how age is defined, as physical or academic age. The academic age of a researcher is defined as the time after dissertation. It is agreed among the BONUS partners that the definition of a young scientist should be based on her/his academic age. By this procedure, differences in the education systems as well as in the age when researchers earn their PhDs will be taken into consideration.

Relevance evaluation

To guarantee the relevance of the projects in terms of the overall aim of the research programme, the projects passing the threshold from the scientific evaluation will undergo a relevance evaluation that will be conducted by the Programme Steering Committee. The specific criteria for the assessment of relevance will be stated in the call for proposals.

The Programme Steering Committee will **rank** the projects, taking into consideration the aim and the relevance to the overall programme. It is important to get a suitable composition of projects within the programme. The scientific quality will be ensured

by only allowing the projects passing the threshold to progress to this relevance evaluation.

The recommendation on funding will be taken by the Programme Steering Committee and the decision by the national funding organisation.

An anonymous evaluation report shall be sent to the main applicant.

External evaluators

The programme partners will nominate scientific experts from different fields and disciplines to a pool of evaluators.⁵ From this pool, the Programme Steering Committee will appoint members to one or several international review panels to conduct the scientific evaluation of the project proposals. This will be done on the basis of suggestions from the Programme Management.

The evaluators selected to the panel should be active senior researchers, with at least a PhD degree and of high international quality and acknowledgement. Each partner will not have their own representative in the panel, in the sense that the partners select one evaluator each. The scientific expertise of the evaluator and the scientific composition of the panel will be the most important factors when selecting the evaluators. The evaluators should be selected from both Baltic and non-Baltic countries.

It will not be possible for an external evaluator to participate in an application that is evaluated in the scientific panel in which she or he is a member.

The composition of the panel will depend on the size of the call as well as on the number of submitted proposals.

Assessment of funded projects

All projects funded within the research programme will be monitored and assessed over the course of

their duration. The monitoring of projects within the programme will consist of a review of the reports and deliverables that the projects are to generate. It is the responsibility of the main applicant, i.e. the project leader, to submit the report. Additional requirements due to national rules may be added to the requirements stated below.

A mid-term assessment of the work is recommended for projects lasting for more than three years. The aim of the mid-term assessment is to certify that the work is proceeding in accordance with the initial research plan, to assess the scientific quality of the research and the financial situation of the project. External scientific evaluators will be used for the mid-term scientific assessment.

Termination of a project at mid-term is not recommended, if not for extreme cases such as considerable deviations from the original research plan, major disagreements on the project management and on how to continue the work. Extreme spending and misuse of funds will also constitute a reason to terminate the project.

A final report should be submitted at the end of the project to the Programme Management for assessment of the report and control of the fulfilment of formal criteria.

The Programme Management is required to inform the Programme Steering Committee of approved reports. The Programme Steering Committee should be able to take part in the assessment of the reports if they request.

Contents of project mid-term report and final report

- **Project information**
This section presents the project title, funding period and personnel involved in the project.
- **Short summary of the project**
In this section a summary of the results of the project should be presented. The project's general aim and goals should also be included.
- **Introduction**
The background to the project, state of the art,

⁵ A list of evaluators has been compiled in the BONUS Task 1.3, *Directory of evaluator*. This list can act as guide when choosing the evaluators.

general aim and goal should be described.

- **Material and method**

The method and material used in the project should be presented.

- **Results and discussion**

The results from the project should be presented and discussed.

- **Deviation (only in mid-term report)**

This section presents eventual deviations from the original research plan. Explanations for the deviations should be given.

- **Short description of future plans (only in mid-term report)**

This section should emphasise the future of the project and if there are any deviations from the original research plan to expect.

- **Impact**

The impact of the research should be described. The future application and/or utilisation should be described.

- **Communication of results**

In accordance with the communication plan presented in the proposal, each project should describe how the results from the project have been disseminated and communicated to the public, end-users and the scientific community.

- **List of publications and other outcomes**

This section includes the listing of scientific publications and other outputs produced by the projects such as PhD degrees and papers in non-scientific publications.

- **Popular scientific summary**

In this section a summary of the results of the project should be presented. The project's general aim and goals should also be included.

- **Use of funds**

The spending of funds should be indicated and itemised according to the following categories:

- Salaries
- Travel
- Equipment
- Consumables

Project mid-term report	Project final report
Project information	Project information
Short summary of the project	Short summary of the project
Introduction	Introduction
Material and method	Material and method
Results and discussion	Results and discussion
Deviations	
Short description of future plans	
Impact of the results	Impact of the results
Communication of results	Communications of results
List of publications and other outcomes	List of publications and other outcomes
Popular scientific summary	Popular scientific summary
Use of funds	Use of funds

4 Programme evaluation

The assessment of a research programme differs from the evaluation of an individual research projects in several ways. The programme assessment will have a stronger focus on management issues and impact of the results. The main focus should be on the programme as a whole. This requires other expertise in addition to the purely scientific when assessing the research programme, such as stakeholders, decision-makers and people with previous experience from programme management. An international panel that will be appointed by the Programme Steering Committee will carry out the assessment of the programme.

Before the start of the programme, it is imperative to certify the relevance of the programme. Clear and measurable goals need to be stated in the programme plan. These should be goals that can be assessed during the course of the programme, by the end of the programme and some time after programme termination. The Programme Steering Committee should decide on these goals. It is important to reach consensus among partners concerning how these goals should be secured and accepted by the partners.

Programme mid-term assessment

To ensure that the programme is proceeding as planned and that the initial programme plan is followed, the research programme should undergo a mid-term assessment halfway into its duration. An assessment panel appointed by the Programme Steering Committee will perform this mid-term assessment. Apart from the scientific expertise it is also recommended that stakeholders and others, for example decision-makers, are represented. The main purpose of the mid-term programme assessment is to evaluate the relevance of the programme, its management, and to what extent the management and progress of the programme is able to achieve its overall goals.

The goals set up in the programme plan should be assessed together with project reports and other material

that the panel will need for its work, such as interviews, project mid-term and final reports, financial reports etc.

The programme mid-term assessment shall provide feedback and suggest changes to improve the performance and management of the programme. The outcome from the mid-term assessment should work as a basis for the Programme Steering Committee to adjust the programme management and work structure if needed.

Programme final assessment

The objective of the programme final assessment is to estimate to what extent the programme has succeeded in fulfilling the goals set out in the programme plan. The results of the programmes, resource management and impact are analysed. The impact of the research programme is important and should be assessed. Therefore, it is suggested that the programme final assessment be divided into two steps.

First step – Programme management

The initial step of the programme final assessment has a focus on planning and implementation of the programme. The focus will be on the scientific quality and the management of the programme. The panel will have the reports from funded projects and the report from the programme mid-term assessment as a basis for their work. The panel shall also perform interviews with key persons within the programme as well as researchers involved. The results from the programme final assessment are presented in the programme final report, together with the main findings from the funded projects.

This first step of the programme assessment will help to identify challenges, problems and success factors the Programme Management faces in its work. In such a way the final assessment can also give recommendations for future work.

The final assessment should cover the following parts:

- Planning of the research programme
- Scientific quality of the programme
- Success of the implementation of the goals and objectives of the programme
- Contribution to researchers and expert training
- Collaboration and networking
- Applicability and importance of the research to users and stakeholders
- Recommendations for the future
- Impact of the projects

In the initial step the focus will be on issues concerning science and management but the impact of the programme should be included as well.

Second step – Programme impact

The second step of the programme final assessment takes place some time after programme termination and will focus on the impact of the programme. The impact will be examined from a range of perspectives.

It is vital to examine how the research results have been disseminated and communicated to the affected actors such as the public, decision-makers and stakeholders. It is also important to provide decision-makers with relevant knowledge and benefits from the research. The programme's impact on society is also assessed.

The timing of the second step of this part of the assessment is crucial. Impacts on the society cannot be measured until some time after programme termination. However, the value of the assessment will decline with time, so the impact will have to be measured within a certain time frame after the termination of the programme.

The BONUS partners have suggested that HELCOM or representatives from the European Commission would be suitable actors to conduct this part of the final assessment due to their knowledge and interest in this area.

Appendix 1: Guidelines for evaluators

General

These guidelines are to be used when evaluating proposed research projects within the BONUS research programme on the Baltic Sea. The guidelines are composed of three parts: 1) subject of research, 2) method and performance and 3) scientific expertise.

The evaluation of the applications should be based on the following principles:

- **Scientific quality**
The scientific quality of the project should always be the most important factor. Projects selected to be funded should be of high scientific, technical and managerial quality.
- **Impartiality**
All project proposals should be treated impartially on their merits.
- **Equality**
No discrimination of any kind should occur.
- **Ethical issues**
The proposal should not interfere with any fundamental ethical principles.

In more detail, the following aspects should be taken into account when scientific quality of the proposals is evaluated.

Subject of research

- Are the scientific goals of the project realistic?
- Are the research plan and the research objects clearly presented?
- Is the project innovative, will it contribute to the creation of knowledge, new methods or technologies within the scientific field?
- Does the project address the specific issues described in the call?
- Are there any ethical issues involved, if so how are these taken into account?

Theory and method

- Is the chosen methodology appropriate to perform the research project?
- Is the chosen methodology of high standards in international terms?
- Are the costs justified in relation to the description of work and estimated results?
- Is the time-schedule realistic and attainable?
- Is the distribution of tasks and responsibilities among the project group well-considered and effective?
- Do the applicants have access to the necessary equipment to carry out the research?

Expertise of the applicants

The expertise of the applicants is to be assessed in view of documented experience and skills.

- Do the main applicant and co-applicants have the necessary and appropriate scientific expertise and skills to carry out the project?
- Does the project leader have the necessary documented experience to manage the project efficiently and achieve the scientific objectives?
- What is the quality of the applicants' publications?

The publication rate should be evaluated for the last years instead of the total production.

International cooperation is also assessed under this heading. Joint applications with participants from more than one country as well as projects including mobility of researchers are encouraged. The following points should also be taken into consideration when rating the proposals.

- Mobility
- Collaboration
- Joint projects

Marking of proposals

Each of the three sections 1) subject of research, 2) method and performance and 3) scientific expertise will be rated by a six-point scale.

Mark five represents the most suitable research subject, method and expertise of the applicant. Only whole numbers should be used.

- 0- The proposal fails to address the issue under examination or cannot be judged against the criterion due to missing or incomplete information
- 1- Poor
- 2- Fair
- 3- Good
- 4- Very Good
- 5- Excellent

Appendix 2: Management of conflicts of interest

Conflicts of interest may occur in the evaluation process. It is important to have rules for disqualifying evaluators when required. The rules should apply to everyone involved in the evaluation of the projects and the programme as a whole, i.e. to both members of the review panels as well as members of the Programme Steering Committee.

An evaluator cannot participate in a proposal that is evaluated in a panel in which she/he will act as evaluator. This is also the case if the evaluator is a co-applicant or is expected to be involved in the project.

A member of a panel is personally responsible and required to inform the Programme Management of any conflict of interest that might occur.

A conflict of interest occurs in the following situations:

- The evaluator has a close relationship to the applicants

or the research team

- The evaluator is a superior, subordinate or an instructor to the applicant
- The evaluator has an ongoing or recent cooperation with the applicant
- The evaluator, or a relative of her/him, may in any way benefit from the approval or rejection of the proposal
- There are also other circumstances such as close friendship, known hostility, economic dependence and family relations.

In the event of a conflict of interest, the member shall refrain from participating in the consideration and appraisal of the application concerned and cannot be present when the proposal is being discussed or when the decision for the proposal is taken. A member of the panel can assess a proposal including national researchers, as long as she/he is not biased.

Appendix 3: Workshop participants

Stockholm, 14–15 April 2005

Name	Organisation
Aarnio, Tuula	Academy of Finland
Carbonniere, Aurelien	European Science Foundation
Enel, Margit	Estonian Science Foundation
Faulhaber, Susanne	German Research Foundation
Holm, Mette	Danish Natural Science Research Council
Inkinen, Johanna	Academy of Finland
Johansson, Sif	Swedish Environmental Protection Agency
Kononen, Kaisa	Academy of Finland
Liljelund, Lotta	Swedish Research Council for Environment, Agricultural Sciences and Spatial Planning
Lilliesköld, Marianne (15/4)	Swedish Environmental Protection Agency
Massel, Stanislaw	Ministry of Science and Higher Education, Poland
Ristkok, Andrus	Estonian Science Foundation
Sellberg, Björn (15/4)	Swedish Research Council for Environment, Agricultural Sciences and Spatial Planning
Smirnov, Valeriy	Russian Foundation for Basic Research
Stadnike, Ugne	Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania
Stumbrys, Eugenijus	Lithuanian Centre of Quality Assessment in Higher Education
Tanner, Barbara	Project Management Organisation Jülich, Germany
Terlecka, Regina	Ministry of Science and Higher Education, Poland
Thulin, Jan	International Council for the Exploration of the Sea
Umegård, Jessica (15/4)	Swedish Research Council for Environment, Agricultural Sciences and Spatial Planning
Vrede, Katarina	Swedish Research Council for Environment, Agricultural Sciences and Spatial Planning

Appendix 4: Questionnaire sent to the BONUS partners

Name of partner organisation

Mid-term evaluation

Use of mid-term evaluation¹

Yes

No

Elaboration

Major purpose and use of mid-term evaluation?

What aspects are evaluated?

Financial

Scientific

Other

Elaboration

Who conducts mid-term evaluation?

Elaboration

Guidelines for mid-term evaluation?

If guidelines given to evaluators for mid-term evaluation differ from general guidelines please describe below.

Elaboration

¹ If your organisation provides more than one funding instrument, please indicate in what cases mid-term evaluation is used.

Final evaluation

Use of final evaluation²

Yes

No

Elaboration

Major purpose and use of final evaluation?

What aspects are evaluated?

Financial

Scientific

Other

Elaboration

When is final evaluation made?

For example, directly after programme/project termination, five years after etc.

Elaboration

Who conducts the final evaluation?

Elaboration

Guidelines for evaluators

If available, please attach guidelines given to evaluators, if not please describe below.

Elaboration

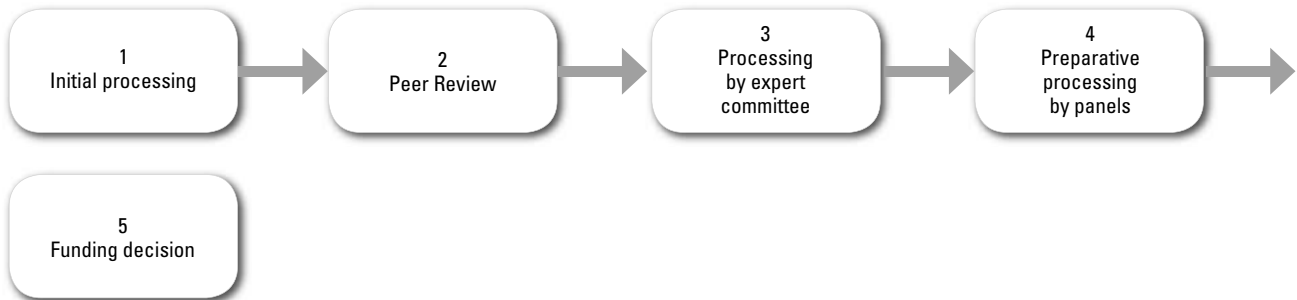
² If your organisation provides more than one funding instrument, please indicate in what cases final evaluation is used.

Appendix 5: Summary review process at BONUS partners

One-step procedure

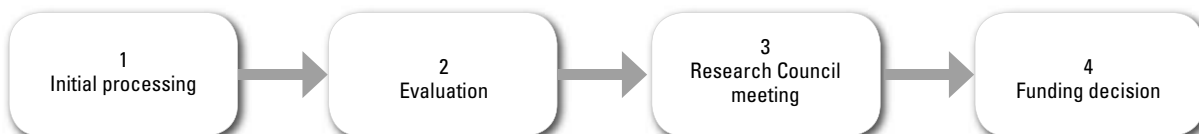
In a one-step review procedure external experts review incoming proposals on one occasion. This is the procedure used in the majority of the partner organisations.

Estonian Science Foundation



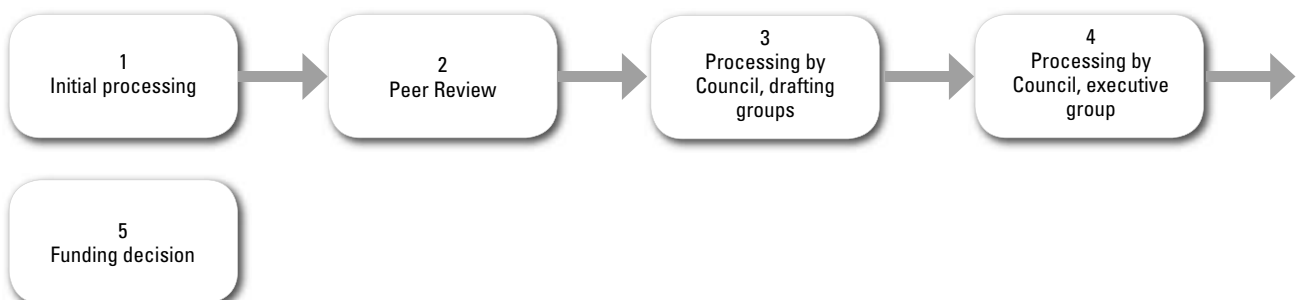
1. Incoming applications are distributed to evaluators.
2. Each application is evaluated by two external scientific experts who make a written statement on the application.
3. The expert committee (internal experts) goes through the applications and statements; each committee lists the applications in order of preference, according to the reviewers' ratings.
4. The experts panels (consisting of external experts) review the applications concerning potential conflicts of interest and recommendations given by the expert committees. Recommendation is given to the EstSF Council.
5. The EstSF Council makes the funding decision.

Danish Natural Science Research Council



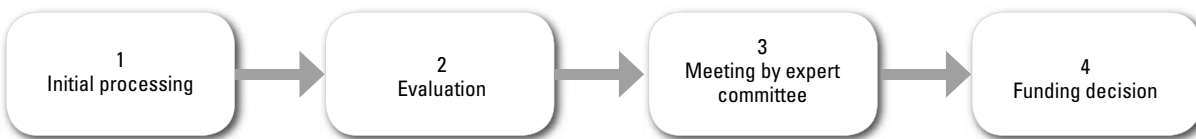
1. Incoming applications are distributed to the Research Councils.
2. 2–3 members of the Council evaluate each application. All members read all the applications.
3. The responsible evaluators give an oral presentation at the Research Council meeting.
4. The Research Council makes the funding decisions. The decision is taken in plenum.

Academy of Finland – project application



1. Incoming applications are distributed to the research councils.
2. Two main procedures for reviewing applications:
 - a) Panels of external experts
The panel members prepare a joint statement on each application
 - b) Statement by individual external experts
In cases when only a few applications are submitted in a certain field individual external experts are used. Each application is reviewed by at least two experts.
3. The members of the Research Council read the applications and expert statements and in the drafting groups they list the applications in order of preference.
4. The members of the Research Council prepare a proposal for the projects to be funded in the executive group.
5. The Research Council makes the funding decision.

Swedish Research Council for Environment, Agricultural Sciences and Spatial Planning



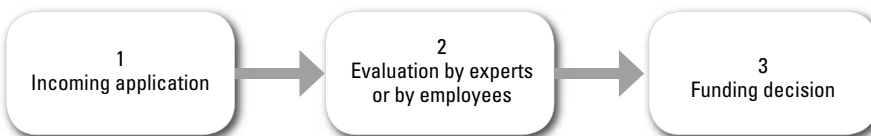
1. Applications are sent to the relevant committee with external experts. There is one committee within each area of research.
2. Members of the committee read and evaluate all the applications; each application has one main evaluator who writes a preliminary judgement.
3. Applications and judgements are discussed at the expert committee meeting. The committee ranks the applications. Recommendation on what projects to be funded is given to the Formas board.
4. The Formas board makes the funding decision.

Latvian Council of Science



1. Incoming applications are distributed to the relevant internal expert committee.
2. Members of the internal expert committee make the evaluation. Two experts evaluate each application.
3. The Council makes the funding decision.

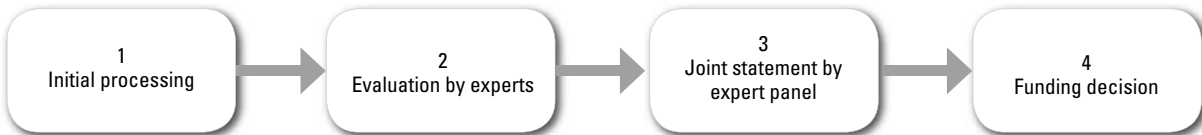
Ministry of Education and Science in the Republic of Lithuania¹



1. Incoming applications are distributed to external evaluators.
2. 2–3 external evaluators review each application; sometimes Ministry employees review the proposals.
3. The final decision on funding is made by Ministry employees.

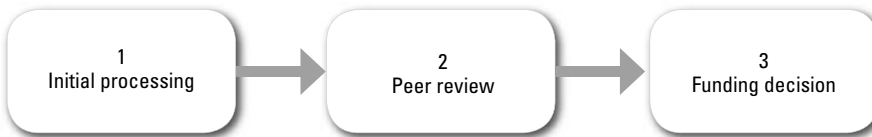
¹ The procedure described is the funding of projects implemented in bilateral programmes.

Ministry of Science and Higher Education, Poland



1. Incoming proposals are distributed to the external experts.
2. 1–3 external experts evaluate each application.
3. Based on the result from the experts evaluation a joint statement is prepared by an external expert panel and a ranking list of the proposals is formed.
4. The Ministry makes the final funding decision.

Russian Foundation for Basic Research

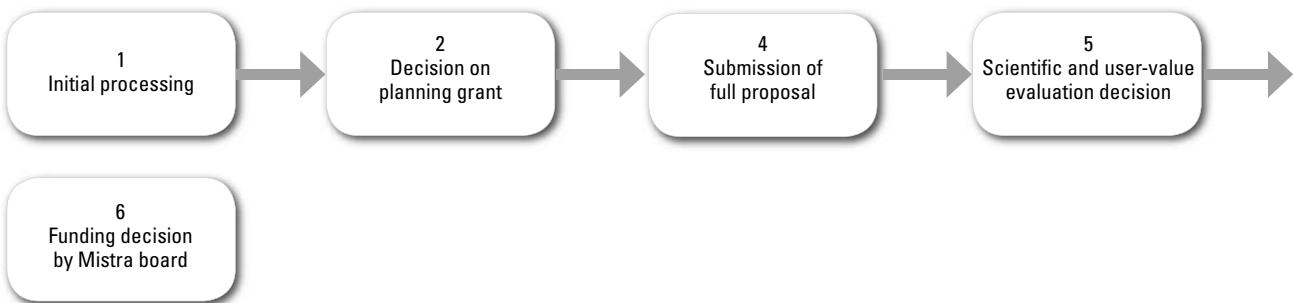


1. Incoming applications to the Foundation are distributed to the different Research Councils.
2. Each application is evaluated by 3 experts who rate the proposal.
3. Based on the peer review by the experts, the Research Council makes the final funding decision.

Two-step procedure

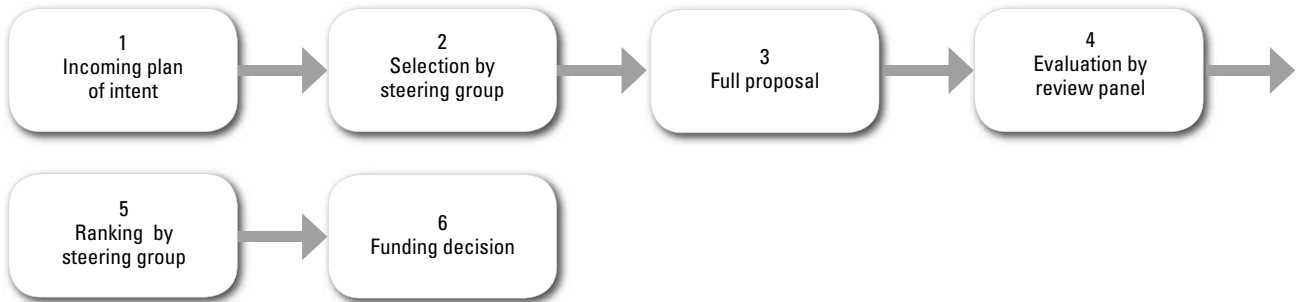
The partners using a two-step procedure:

Foundation for Strategic Environmental Research, Sweden



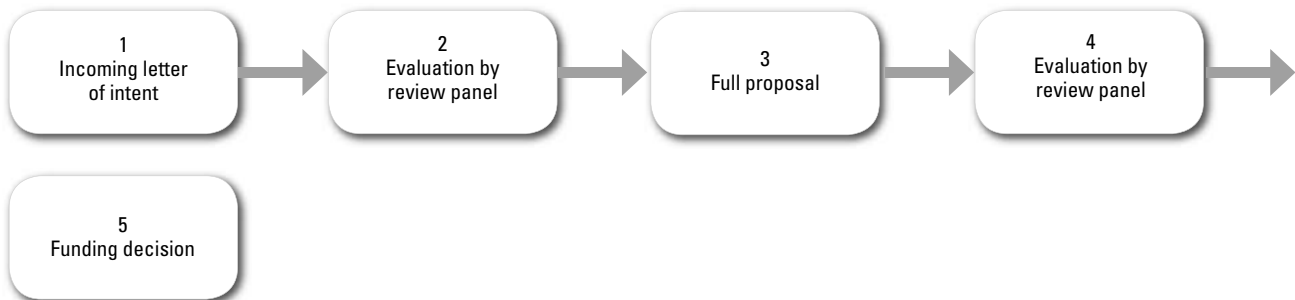
1. Incoming pre-proposal.
2. Decision on planning grant is made by the Managing Director.
3. A full programme proposal is submitted to Mistra.
4. The proposal is evaluated scientifically by an international review panel and from a user value perspective.
5. The Mistra board discusses the results of the evaluation and makes the decision on funding of the proposal.

Academy of Finland – programme application



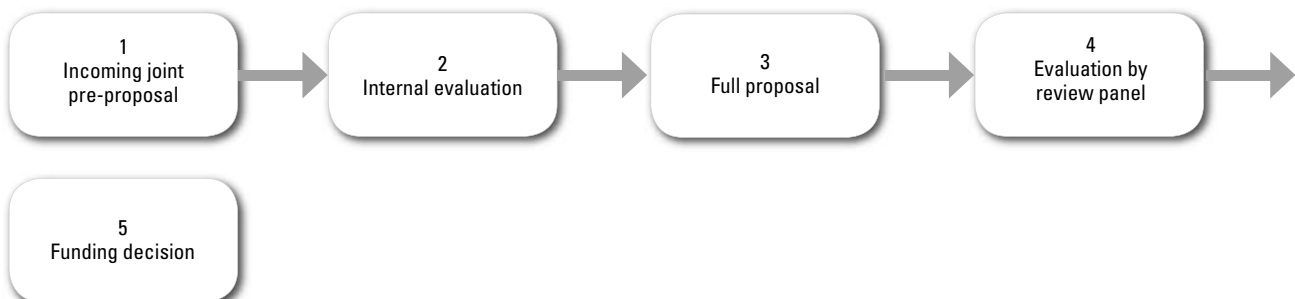
1. Incoming plans of intent are registered at the Research Councils.
2. Based on the plans of intent a Programme Steering Group selects the applicants who are invited to submit a full proposal. The members of the Programme Steering Group represent participating funding organisations.
3. Full proposals are submitted to the Academy.
4. An international evaluation panel, appointed by the Academy, evaluates the full proposals.
5. The Programme Steering Group ranks the applications.
6. If several Research Councils jointly carry out a programme, a sub-committee appointed by the Board of Academy makes the funding decisions.

Swedish Environmental Protection Agency



1. Incoming letter of intent.
2. A scientific review panel with international evaluators review the letters of intent.
3. Based on the results from the evaluation, researchers are invited to submit a full proposal.
4. International experts and representatives from SEPA evaluate the full proposals.
5. The Environmental Research Council (ERC) discusses the applications and results from the evaluation. The Director General makes the final funding decision.

Project Management Organisation Jülich, Germany



1. A pre-proposal is usually based on a given programme and submitted jointly in cooperation with the Principal Investigator and partners from other research groups or institutes.

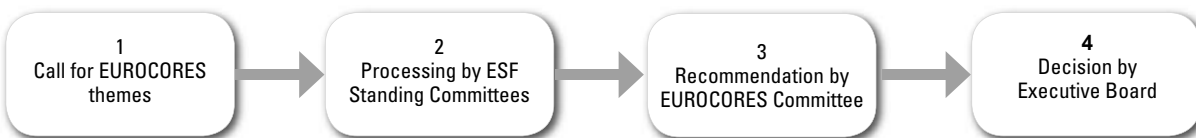
2. The pre-proposals are evaluated internally.
3. The proposals passing the internal evaluation are invited to submit a full proposal.
4. External experts evaluate the full proposals.
5. The decision on funding is made by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research on recommendation for funding given by FZJ-PTJ.

ESF EUROCORES Programmes

ESF EUROCORES, the European Science Foundation Collaborative Research Programmes Scheme, is a funding instrument of the European Science Foundation, ESF.

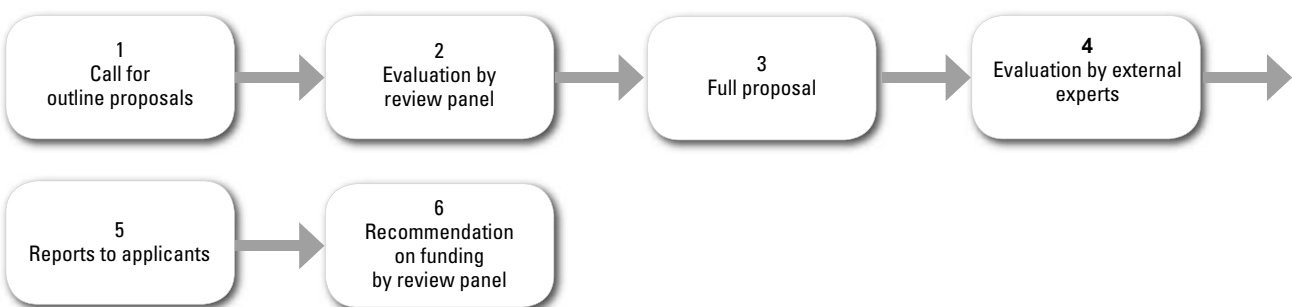
The review process of the EUROCORES scheme is divided into two phases. In the first phase the most promising theme suggestions for further development are selected. In the second phase, after a sufficient number of ESF member organizations agree to participate in a suggested EUROCORES Programme, a Call for project proposals is published.

Phase 1 – Selection of EUROCORES Programme Themes



1. Once a year ESF launches a Call for EUROCORES themes.
2. ESF Standing Committees (SC) rank the proposals (using minimum 3 assessments) within their disciplines and recommend the list to the EUROCORES Committee.
3. Independent, high level EUROCORES Committee recommends the most promising suggestions for further development.
4. Executive Board decides whether to proceed with the EUROCORES theme proposal.

Phase 2 – Selection of proposals



1. The ESF office launches a call for outline proposals within the selected programme themes.
2. A review panel assesses the outline proposals and make decision on what projects to be invited to submit full proposals. Scientific quality is not measured at this stage. Criteria for evaluation are suitability to the call, novelty, originality, feasibility and European added value.
3. Invitations are sent to submit full proposals to those passing the evaluation.
4. Each of the full proposals is sent for a written assessment to at least three experts.
5. The written reports are sent to the applicants for comments.
6. Based on the written reports and the applicants’ comments a review panel ranks and makes recommendations for funding to the national funding organisations. The scientific quality is included in the assessment criteria at this stage.



ACADEMY OF FINLAND

ISBN 951-715-608-1

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