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Application review form

Centres of Excellence Programme 2024
1st-stage evaluation, plan of intent

Name of reviewer:
Name of applicant:
Title of proposed project:

Application number:

How to review Centre of Excellence applications

A Centre of Excellence (CoE) is a research community that is already at or striving for the international cutting edge of research in its field. CoEs may consist of one or more research teams working closely together under a joint research plan. The units selected as CoEs are scientifically first-rate research communities that have capacity for renewal and high societal impact. The CoE programmes contribute to the renewal of science by supplying new research topics, new methods and approaches, and new research teams.

The review criteria for Centres of Excellence are scientific quality, novelty and innovativeness of the research as well as its impact within academia. In addition, the scientific added value of consortium is important. Other main review criteria are feasibility of plan of Intent/research plan and the quality of research environment, competence of applicants and research team(s), and quality of collaboration networks including researcher mobility, and researcher training.

The CoEs are selected with a two-stage evaluation process. At the first stage, the plans of intent are reviewed by international individual reviewers. At the second stage, the full proposals are reviewed and CoE candidates interviewed by an international evaluation panel.

Provide both a written review and numerical ratings for section 1 (Quality of research) and section 2 (Implementation). Provide main strengths and weaknesses of the proposal in section 3 (Summary assessment) and give an overall rating in section 4. Write evaluative comments rather than descriptive ones.

Use a rating scale ranging from 6 (outstanding) to 1 (insufficient). The consistency between the numerical rating and the written comments is particularly important.

Rating scale	Description
6 (outstanding)	Demonstrates extremely high novelty and/or innovation; has potential to substantially advance science at global level; presents a high-gain plan that may include risks

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5 (excellent)	Is very good in international comparison – contains no significant elements to be improved
4 (good)	Is in general sound but contains some elements that should be improved
3 (fair)	Is in general sound but contains important elements that should be improved
2 (poor)	Contains flaws and needs substantial modification or improvement
1 (insufficient)	Contains severe flaws that are intrinsic to the proposed project or the application

1 Quality of research

1.1 Scientific quality, novelty and innovativeness of research — Subrating (1–6)

Please review:

- scientific quality and significance of project's objectives and hypotheses
- ambitiousness and state of the art of objectives, including possible novel concepts and approaches or development across disciplines
- scientific added value of consortium for attainment of research objectives
- impact of research within academia
- potential for breakthroughs or exceptionally significant outcomes including possible high-risk, high-gain research
- project's potential to generate new knowledge, new methods, new technology or new practices

  - See **plan of intent**.
  - A consortium application consists of two or more subprojects each with nominated PIs and separate budgets but a joint research plan. The consortium implements the joint research plan together with a view to achieving more extensive added value than through normal cooperation.

1.2 Comments on aspects of societal effects and impact of project

(no numerical rating)

- Comments on societal effects and impact should not affect the scientific review/rating or ranking. Instead, they will be considered as an additional factor when the funding decisions are made.

2 Implementation

2.1 Feasibility of plan of intent — Subrating (1–6)

Please review:

- feasibility of project, taking into account extent to which proposed research may include high risks

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- materials, research data and methods
- working arrangements and management of research tasks
- research environment including research infrastructures
- identified potential scientific or methodological problem areas and mitigation plan

  - See **plan of intent**.

2.2 Expertise, human resources, and collaborations, including aspects of responsible science

Sub-rating (1–6)

Please review:

- competence and scientific expertise of applicants in terms of project implementation
- complementary expertise of team(s)
- adequateness of human resources for project implementation, with attention to promoting equality and nondiscrimination within project
- contribution of both national and international research collaborators, who are engaged with their own funding, and impact of their environment on project's potential success
- significance of mobility and researcher training

  - See **plan of intent**.
  - See **most relevant publications and other key outputs** in the application form.
  - See **CV(s)** of the applicant(s) in the application form.
  - See **list of publications**.

3 summary assessment

3.1 Main strengths and weaknesses of proposal and their justifications; possible other remarks

3.1.1 Main strengths and their justifications **(no numerical rating)**

- Summary assessment of the application's main strengths with justifications

3.1.2 Main weaknesses and their justifications **(no numerical rating)**

- Summary assessment of the application's main weaknesses with justifications

3.1.3 Other remarks (if any):

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4 Overall rating	**Rating (1–6)**

- Please note that the final rating should not be a mathematical average of the subratings. For example, the application should not be penalised if it has a slight weakness in one evaluation item that is later strengthened in another item (e.g. lack of some expertise in a local team but compensated through international collaboration).