THE RESEARCH AND INNOVATIONFOUNDATION

PROGRAMMES

FOR RESEARCH, TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT AND INNOVATION

"RESTART 2016 – 2020"

GUIDE FOR EVALUATORS

(Single-stage Evaluation)

PROPOSAL DETAILS	
PILLAR	**I. SMART GROWTH**
PROGRAMME	**Proof of Concept for Technology / Knowhow Applications**
CALL IDENTIFIER	**CONCEPT-HYDRO/1026**

Co-funded by the European Union

Republic of Cyprus

RESEARCH & INNOVATION FOUNDATION

GUIDELINES AND GENERAL INFORMATION FOR EVALUATORS

1. The Proposal, which the Evaluator is called upon to evaluate, was submitted under the **"Proof of Concept for Technology / Knowhow Applications" Programme** of the Research & Innovation Foundation **Programmes for Research, Technological Development and Innovation "RESTART 2016-2020" for the period 05/2022 – 06/2025.**
2. The objectives of the abovementioned Programme and all necessary definitions and procedures are described in:
    - the relevant **Call for Proposals**, and
    - the **Work Programme (relevant Programme description in Section II/Pillar I)**.
3. Before producing the Evaluation Report, Evaluators are expected to study the relevant Proposal thoroughly. This consists of:
    - Proposal Part A – General Information & Budget,
    - Proposal Part B – Technical Annex, and
    - Annex I – Curricula Vitae
    - Annex II- Business Strategy or Strategy for the Commercial Exploitation of Research Results for EACH participating organisation in the Consortium..
4. The Evaluation Procedure is carried out on the Research and Innovation Foundation's (RIF) **IRIS (Innovation Research Information System) Portal** (https://iris.research.org.cy/#!/). Evaluators should first register on the Portal in order to be granted access to the Proposal and the relevant documents.
5. According to the Evaluation Procedure, each Proposal should be evaluated by **two (2) independent Evaluators**. Each Evaluator fills his / her Evaluation Report Form, which consists of 3 Parts.
6. In Part I, the Evaluator should provide:
    a. A fully justified assessment on whether the Proposal is **compatible with**:
        (i) the objectives of the selected Programme and the Call of Proposals, and
        (ii) the proposed Technology Readiness Levels (TRLs), and
        (iii) the selected priority area(s)/topic(s), and
        (iv) the «Do No Significant Harm» Principle.
    b. A score on each of the **3 evaluation criteria (assigning marks between 0,00 and 5,00 with an accuracy of 0,25 marks)** as well as relevant comments and detailed justification. It is noted that each criterion carries a **different weight**, as shown on the respective part of the Evaluation Report Form.

The Evaluator will not proceed with the scientific evaluation of the 3 criteria should a Proposal fail the compatibility assessment.

7. The evaluation criteria on which the scientific evaluation will be based are:
    - Excellence,
    - Added Value and Benefit, and
    - Implementation.
8. The **Evaluation Score** will be automatically calculated (in the relevant Table in Part III) by adding the scores assigned to each of the three criteria following the application of the relevant weights.
9. The table below provides an interpretation of the scores and should be applied for the evaluation of all Proposals:

Score	Evaluation Interpretation
0	The proposal fails to address the criterion or cannot be assessed due to missing or incomplete information.
< 0,99	The criterion is addressed in an inadequate manner or there are serious inherent weaknesses.
1,00 – 1,99	The proposal addresses the criterion to a limited degree and there are significant weaknesses.
2,00 – 2,99	The proposal addresses the criterion partly and a number of shortcomings/weaknesses are observed.
3,00 – 3,99	The proposal addresses the criterion quite sufficiently but a small number of shortcomings/weaknesses are observed.
4,00 – 5,00	The proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion. Any shortcomings are minor.

10. The **Final Evaluation Score** for each Proposal will be equal to the **average** of the Evaluation Scores assigned by the two independent Evaluators. In case the difference between the scores of the two evaluations is **greater than 3.00 marks**, then the Proposal will be sent for evaluation to a third Evaluator and the Final Evaluation Score will be determined as the average of the two closest evaluation scores. If both initial scores are lower than 12.00/15.00 then the proposal shall be considered ineligible and shall not be forwarded to a third evaluator even if there is a bigger difference than 3.00/15.00 between the two scores.
11. Proposals are deemed eligible for funding if they secure an **Evaluation Score of at least 12,00/15,00**.
12. **Comments provided by the Evaluators should be written in a manner that would justify and explain the specific score provided for each criterion. Proposals should be judged on merit and scored as they were submitted**, rather than on their potential if certain changes were to be made. If significant shortcomings are identified (including budget issues such as size, structure, allocation, aid intensity etc.), this must be reflected by awarding a lower score for the criterion concerned. **No recommendations for improving Proposals should be provided**.
13. Please note that:

- Proposal Part B – Technical Annex has a **max page limit of <u>20 pages</u>**, excluding the Cover and Instructions pages. Any excess pages must be disregarded and not taken into consideration when carrying out the evaluation.
- Annexes should only include the information described in the Call for Proposals (e.g. Annex I should only include Curricula Vitae). Any extra information that might be included must be disregarded and not taken into consideration when carrying out the evaluation.

14. In Part II of the Evaluation Report, Evaluators are asked to provide supplementary comments (but no scores) with regards to:
    - the need for an Ethics Review for the Proposal under evaluation,
    - any potential negative impacts and/or risks to the environment stemming from the implementation of the proposed activities or the delivery of the Project's expected results/products, and
    - the degree to which the Proposal under evaluation is gender balanced.
15. A positive reply to the first question would mean that the Proposal should **undergo an Ethics Review** before a funding decision can be reached, whereas a positive reply to the second question should be **reflected in the comments and scores** provided for individual criteria, if applicable. Finally, the reply to the third question will be taken into account as one of the **ranking factors** for Proposals eligible for funding that have achieved equal Evaluation Scores, when budget restrictions apply.
16. Information relevant to both the evaluation criteria and the issues for which supplementary comments are requested can be found throughout the Proposal and, thus, Evaluators are advised to study it thoroughly before starting their work. References to the most relevant Sections of the Proposal (Part B) for each criterion / supplementary issue can be found in the next section of this document.

PART I – EVALUATION

COMPATIBILITY WITH THE OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAMME AND THE CALL FOR PROPOSALS

The following should be considered in the assessment of this criterion:

- *Compatibility with the Objectives of the Programme and the Call for Proposals.*
- *Compatibility with the proposed Technology Readiness Levels (TRLs)* ***(This specific Programme/Call for Proposals addresses research activities the majority of which fall within Technology Readiness Levels (TRLs*) TRL 3 - experimental proof of concept and TRL 4 - technology validated in lab. Both TRLs fall within the spectrum of «Industrial Research») ****
- *Compatibility with the selected priority area(s)/topic(s) (where applicable)*
- *Compatibility of the proposed type(s) of research activities with those allowed by the Programme/Call for Proposals* ***(As selected in "Proposal Part A – General Information and Budget" and analysed in "Proposal Part B – Technical Annex").***
- *Compatibility with the «Do No Significant Harm» principle as per Article 17 of Regulation (EU) No 2020/8521 on the establishment of a framework to facilitate sustainable investment (EU Taxonomy Regulation). The proposed methodology must not include or support activities that could cause significant harm to any of the six environmental objectives of the Taxonomy Regulation.*

Please note that a proposal should be deemed incompatible if it fails to fulfill any of the abovementioned compatibility criteria.

The relevant information can be found in:

1. ***Section "General Profile of the Project Proposal" and "Aid Intensity" Table in "Proposal Part A – General Information and Budget", and***
2. ***Sections B1 & 4 in "Proposal Part B – Technical Annex".***

As a general guideline, if the majority of the proposal's activities lies outside any of the compatibility requirements, then the proposal should be judged as 'out of scope'.

**** The Technology Readiness Levels adopted by the EU are the following:***

- ***TRL 1 - basic principles observed,***
- ***TRL 2 - technology concept formulated,***
- ***TRL 3 - experimental proof of concept,***
- ***TRL 4 - technology validated in lab,***
- ***TRL 5 - technology validated in relevant environment,***
- ***TRL 6 - technology demonstrated in relevant environment,***
- ***TRL 7 - system prototype demonstration in operational environment,***
- ***TRL 8 - system complete and qualified,***
- ***TRL 9 - actual system proven in operational environment (competitive manufacturing in the case of key enabling technologies).***

1. EXCELLENCE (30%)

The following should be considered in the assessment of this criterion:

- *Quality of Project Objectives. Clarity, completeness, scientific / technical documentation.*
- *Degree of Project Innovation and Originality in relation to the existing knowledge (state-of-the-art) at international level.*

- *Soundness, credibility and feasibility of the proposed idea.*
- *Relevance with the Programme's objectives including the objective for the implementation of industrial research which falls within Technology Readiness Levels (TRL) 3-4 (TRL 3 - experimental proof of concept, TRL 4 - technology validated in lab).*

The relevant information can be found in Sections B1, 2 & 4 in "Proposal Part B – Technical Annex". The justification for the TRLs of the Project activities can be found in Section B1.3.

**** The RIF would like to draw the Evaluator's attention to the requirement that Projects must fall within Technology Readiness Levels (TRL) 3-4 in compliance with the relevant definitions adopted by the EU. Within this context, the Evaluators for each Proposal should provide fully justified comments on the Relevance of the proposed research activities (industrial research) with the Project's, Programme's and specific Call's objectives (majority of activities falling under Technology Readiness Levels (TRLs) 3-4).***

2. ADDED VALUE AND BENEFIT (40%)

The following should be considered in the assessment of this criterion:

- *Industrial application potential of the technology / knowhow, potential scientific/ technological, social and/or economic benefit and prospects for the exploitation of the project results by the participating Organisations.*
- *Effectiveness of the proposed measures for the exploitation of results (including management of Intellectual Property Rights) and maximizing their dissemination.**
- *Justification of the proposed Project's selected topic in relevance with the business / commercialisation strategy of the participating Organisations.*

The relevant information can be found in Sections B3 & 4 in "Proposal Part B – Technical Annex".

**** Please note that eligible exploitation activities (and, thus, expenses) include only those related to the preparation of the IPR Management & Exploitation Plan. Any other exploitation/commercialization activities described in section B3 of the proposal may be included however will not be eligible for funding and applicants are advised not to include them in the implementation plan of the project.***

3. IMPLEMENTATION (30%)

The following should be considered in the assessment of this criterion:

- *Completeness and appropriateness of the Work Packages' content, the allocation of the various activities* **(including the allocation of person-months for each participating Organisation per Work Package)**, the timetable and the budget.*
- *Effectiveness of the proposed methodology for the implementation of the deliverables.*
- *Completeness, quality and capacity of the Consortium or the Host Organisation (in case there is no Consortium) for the implementation of the Project (at the level of Organisations and/or individuals) and the achievement of the proposed objectives.*
- *Suitability and adequacy of the proposed management activities, including identification and handling of potential risks.*

The relevant information can be found in:

1. ***"Project Budget Overview" and "Aid Intensity" Tables in "Proposal Part A – General Information and Budget",***
2. ***Sections B4-6 in "Proposal Part B – Technical Annex", and***
3. ***Annex I – Curricula Vitae.***

**Including a validation of the selected distribution (%) of proposed type(s) of research activities per Partner, available in "Proposal Part A – General Information and Budget".*

Important Notes:

- *The calculation of the Proposal Budget will be based on the simplified cost method "Personnel costs plus 40% on Personnel Costs for covering the rest of the Project costs".*

- *The content of Sections B4 – B7 (such as the description of the Work Packages, the Budget Description, the Consortium members etc) has to be consistent with the information provided in the corresponding sections of Proposal – Part A. If any inconsistencies between Part A and Part B are observed, Part A should prevail for evaluation purposes.*

PART II - SUPPLEMENTARY COMMENTS

QUESTION
Do you believe that any part of the Proposal under evaluation (e.g. methodology, Work Packages and activities, expected results, products etc.) requires to undergo an Ethics Review (e.g. a bioethical assessment by the Cyprus National Bioethics Committee)? ***The relevant information can be found in Sections B4 & 7 in "Proposal Part B – Technical Annex".***
Do you believe that the implementation of the proposed activities or the delivery of the expected results/products could have any potential negative impacts and/or pose risks to the environment? ***The relevant information can be found in Sections B4 & 7 in "Proposal Part B – Technical Annex".***
Do you believe that the Proposal under evaluation is gender balanced, both in terms of its research content as well as the key research personnel to be involved in its implementation?* ***The relevant information can be found in Sections B4-5 in "Proposal Part B – Technical Annex".***

Note:

The RIF recognizes that evaluators play a critical role in ensuring excellence in the funded research and, therefore, acknowledges the importance of integrating in the proposals gender and/or sex analysis. Please take a minute to consult the following ***informative videos*** *that have been developed by the Canadian Institute for Gender and Health to guide evaluators when assessing Health-related proposals. The information provided in the videos may also apply when assessing proposals in other thematic areas.*