



# 2021 MSCA DN call

## Expert Evaluator's testimony

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# Testimony

- Lessons learnt from my past experience ... without breaking the confidentiality 
- Chair or Vice Chair for ITN EJD and EID, never acted as individual expert
  - 3 individual expert reports consolidated in a consensus report drafted by the VC (remotely)
  - Further approval and quality check steps
  - Finalisation by thematic VC panels
- Highly competitive calls (~10%; > 90/100)

# ITN 2020 Call

- 3 modes: ETN, EID, EJD
  - Mind the specificities
- 8 scientific panels: CHE, ENG, ENV, LIF, MAT-PHY, ECO-SOC
- 2 multidisciplinary panels: EJD, EID
- 3 weighted criteria
  - Excellence
  - Impact
  - Implementation

# ITN 2020 Call

- Typical weaknesses or points of attention
  - Recollection from past experience
  - Warning: it is a peer review process
- Mind the format: length and size font

# Excellence

- Quality, innovative aspects and credibility of the research programme (including inter/multidisciplinary, intersectoral and, where appropriate, gender aspects)
  - Needs – state of the art at forefront of research
    - Including your contribution 😊
    - Refer to EU policies and ambitions
  - Added value compared to existing programmes/research
  - Consistency between the project, WPs and ESRs objectives
  - Specific objectives for each ESR
  - Strong connection between academic and industrial beneficiaries
  - Gender aspects if relevant to the research

# Excellence

- Quality and innovative aspects of the **training programme** (including transferable skills, inter/multidisciplinary, intersectoral and, where appropriate, gender aspects)
  - Beyond research – be ambitious for your students
  - Make room for training. Better plan it.
  - Innovative
    - Be complete: learning outcomes, methods, assessment, QA
  - Make full use the network incl. industrial partners
  - Certified training? CPD?
  - Gender aspects ... relevant for any transversal training + check the training team

# Excellence

- Quality of the supervision (including mandatory joint supervision for EID and EJD projects)
  - Check the balance
  - Available expertise for every topic?
  - Feedback mechanisms to the ESRs?
  - Joint agreement if relevant

# Excellence

- Quality of the proposed interaction between the participating organisations
  - Existing and planned
  - Research, training and management
  - Looking for complementarity
  - Avoid overlapping activities/expertise
  - Synergies?
  - If non EU partners, how interactions are funded?

# Impact

- Enhancing the career perspectives and employability of researchers and contribution to their skills development
  - Review the career prospects (not limited to academia)
  - Discuss the skill and competency development
    - Added value for their career
  - Entrepreneurship skills

# Impact

- Contribution to structuring doctoral / early-stage research training at the European level and to strengthening European innovation capacity, including the potential for:
  - a) meaningful contribution of the non-academic sector to the doctoral/research training, as appropriate to the implementation mode and research field
  - b) developing sustainable joint doctoral degree structures (for EJD projects only)

# Impact

- Contribution to structuring doctoral / early-stage research training at the European level and to strengthening European innovation capacity
  - Refer to EU policies, ambitions, capacity
  - Innovation capacity: mind the other programmes
  - Detailed info on joint/double degrees (if relevant)
  - Long-term training cooperation academia/industry
  - Limited impact if there is only one degree awarding institution

# Impact

- Quality of the proposed measures to exploit and disseminate the project results
  - Exploitation **plan**: what, when, IPR, KPIs
  - IPR is a joint topic (academia, industries, ESRs)
  - Dissemination **plan**: audience, content, frequency, KPIs
    - Using social media is not enough
  - Dissemination <> communication
    - Dissemination: the project results
    - Communication: the whole project
  - Drafting the plans in MX is too late, better draft it before submission

# Impact

- Quality of the proposed measures to communicate the project activities to different target audiences
  - Communication plan: audience, content, frequency, KPIs
  - Communication manager? (<> dissemination manager)
  - Involve ESRs
  - Public events
  - Promote EU science beyond EU

# Implementation

- Coherence and effectiveness of the work plan, including appropriateness of the allocation of tasks and resources (including awarding of the doctoral degrees for EID and EJD projects)
  - Consistency – interrelation
    - WPs vs ESRs
  - Interactions between individual projects
  - Do not wait too long to deliver (risk management)
  - Measurable outcomes (not restricted to reports)
  - Enrolment and awarding the degrees (if relevant)

# Implementation

- Appropriateness of the management structures and procedures, including quality management and risk management (with a mandatory joint governing structure for EID and EJD projects)
  - All risks: scientific, technical, administrative, personnel + mitigation measures
  - Clear and transparent management structure
    - Mind the supervision during placement
    - Including financial management strategy
    - Recruitment strategy and procedures
    - External advisory board
  - ESR's representation in decision-making body
  - QA including quality of outputs

# Implementation

- Appropriateness of the infrastructure of the participating organisations
  - Consistent description of all available infrastructure ... related to the project!
    - All you need is available and described
    - What you do not need is not described
  - If external players, be clear about their role

# Implementation

- Competences, experience and complementarity of the participating organisations and their commitment to the programme
  - End of proposal: mind the gap
  - Consistency of the partners