

Perspectives from an expert evaluator

MSCA-PF

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Key roles during the evaluation process

- **Evaluators** : experts who perform the evaluation of proposals in their field of expertise. Each proposal is assigned to three Evaluators, each drafting an Individual Evaluation Report (IER) in the first phase of the Evaluation
- **Rapporteurs** : are responsible for drafting the Consensus Report (CR), moderating the consensus discussion, integrating comments from the other two Evaluators, and suggesting a CR score
- **Vice-Chair** : experienced Evaluators with in-depth knowledge of the MSCA-PF evaluation process who assist REA with the allocation of experts to proposals and with expert monitoring. VCs do not evaluate the proposals. They perform a quality check and provide feedback on at least the first three IERs from each Evaluator and on all CRs during and at the end of the consensus discussions. Each Evaluator has a Vice-Chair of reference

Working as an evaluator

- **Independence** - act independently and in the public interest
- **Impartiality** - treat all proposals equally and evaluate them impartially on their merits, irrespective of their origin
- **Objectivity** - evaluate each proposal as submitted and not based on its potential if certain changes were to be made
- **Accuracy** - base your judgment on the three official evaluation criteria the proposal addresses, and nothing else
- **Consistency** - same standard of judgment to all proposals
- **Confidentiality**

Evaluator Conflicts of Interest (Col)

Evaluators must not:

- Be involved in any competing proposal;
- Benefit, directly or indirectly, from the acceptance or rejection of a proposal;
- Have a close family or personal relationship with anyone involved in the preparation of any proposal submitted under this call;
- Serve as a director, trustee, partner, or have any managerial role in an organisation involved in the preparation of a proposal submitted under this call;
- Etc., etc.

Content of a MSCA-PF proposal

Proposal Part A content :

- administrative information on the beneficiary (host institution)
- associated partners for a non-academic placement
- information on the supervisor and the researcher
- ethics and security
- the proposal budget

Proposal Part B structure and content:

PART B-1:

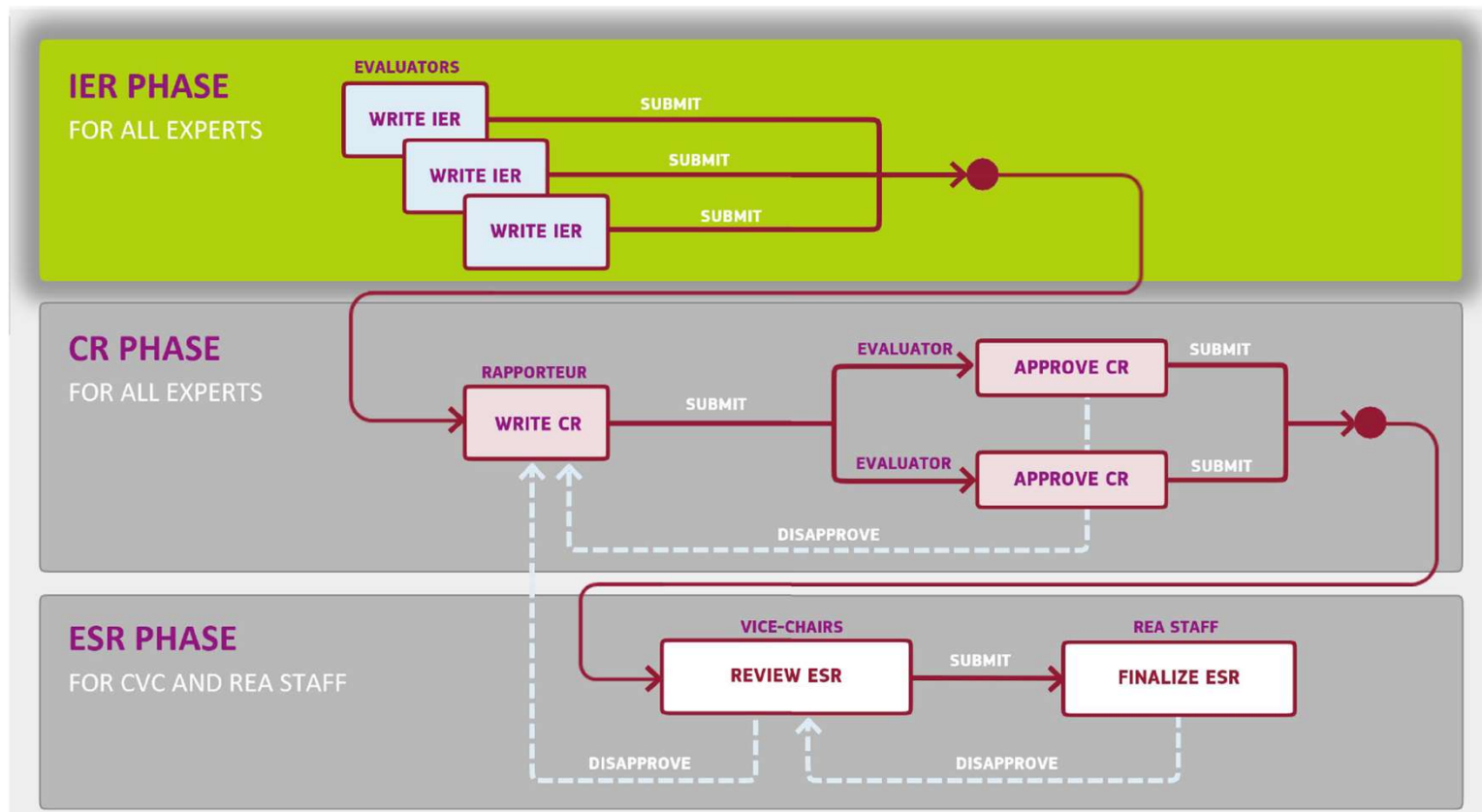
- 1 Excellence
- 2 Impact
- 3 Quality and Efficiency of the Implementation

10 pages
max.

PART B-2 (no page limit):

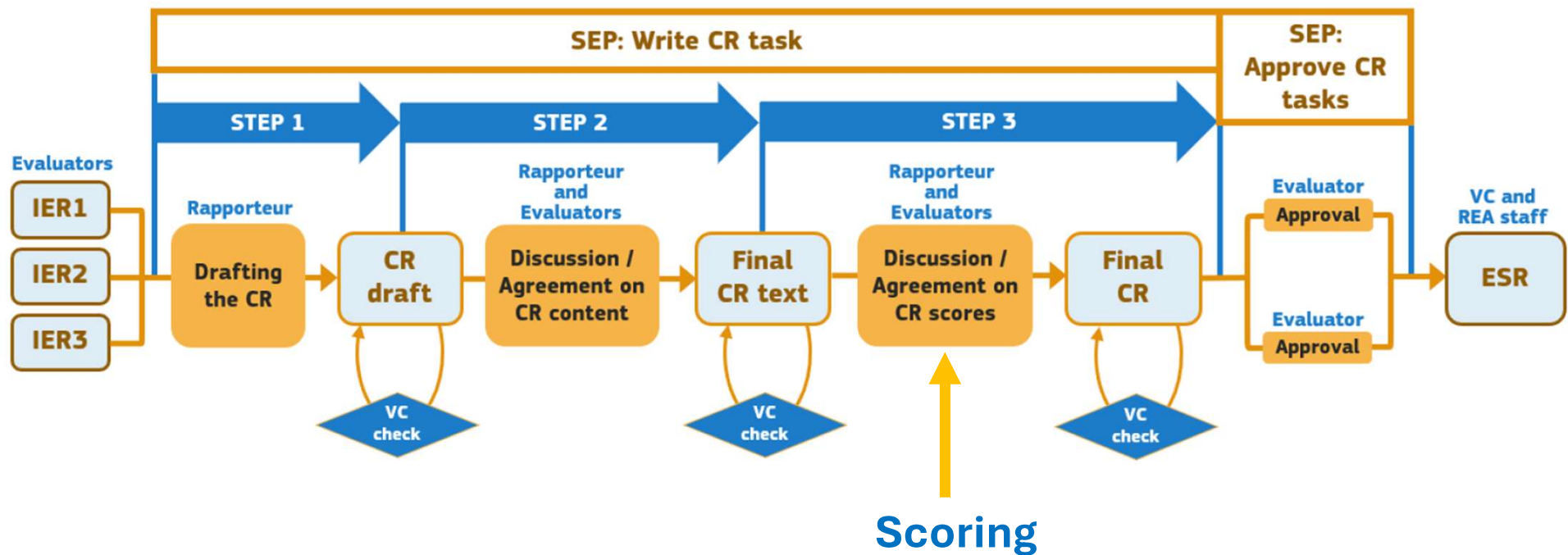
- 4 CV of the researcher
- 5 Capacity of the participating organisation(s)
- 6 Additional ethics information
- 7 Additional information on security screening
- 8 Environmental considerations in light of the [MSCA Green Charter](#)
- 9 Required for Global Fellowships only:
Letter of commitment from associated partners (hosting the outgoing phase)

Evaluation follows a two-step process



IER: Individual Evaluation Report **CR:** Consensus Report **ESR:** Evaluation Summary Report

From Individual Evaluation Reports to a Consensus Report


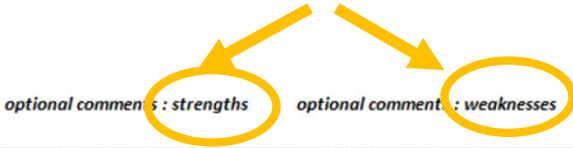


Evaluation criteria

1. **Excellence** - weighted 50%
2. **Impact** - weighted 30%
3. **Quality and Efficiency of the Implementation** - weighted 20%

SCORING SCHEME		
EXCELLENT	The proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion. Any shortcomings are minor. *	5
VERY GOOD	The proposal addresses the criterion very well, but a small number of shortcomings are present.	4
GOOD	The proposal addresses the criterion well, but a number of shortcomings are present.	3
FAIR	The proposal broadly addresses the criterion, but there are significant weaknesses.	2
POOR	The criterion is inadequately addressed, or there are serious inherent weaknesses.	1
The proposal FAILS to address the criterion or cannot be assessed due to missing or incomplete information.		0

How proposals are assessed ?

POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIPS 2024 ASSESSMENT GRID				Qualitative assessment							
		n/a fail poor fair good very good excellent									
CRITERION 1: EXCELLENCE		pending full assessment of criterion 1									
Sub-criterion 1.1 : QUALITY AND PERTINENCE OF THE PROJECT'S RESEARCH AND INNOVATION OBJECTIVES (AND THE EXTENT TO WHICH THEY ARE AMBITIOUS, AND GO BEYOND THE STATE OF THE ART)											
1. How are the quality and pertinence of the research and innovation objectives?		make your choice									
2. Are the research and innovation objectives realistically achievable, measurable and verifiable?		make your choice									
3. To what extent is the proposed work ambitious and goes beyond the current state-of-the-art in the field?		make your choice									
Sub-criterion 1.2 : SOUNDNESS OF THE PROPOSED METHODOLOGY (INCLUDING INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACHES, CONSIDERATION OF THE GENDER DIMENSION AND OTHER DIVERSITY ASPECTS IF RELEVANT FOR THE RESEARCH PROJECT, AND THE QUALITY OF OPEN SCIENCE PRACTICES)											
4. How sound is the proposed methodology, including concepts, models and assumptions that underpin the project? Are important methodological challenges identified and measures to tackle them proposed?		make your choice									
5. Is an interdisciplinary approach necessary for the research? If necessary, how will expertise and methods from different disciplines be brought together and integrated to pursue the project's objectives? <i>If not necessary, please select "not applicable".</i>		make your choice									
6. Are the gender dimension and other diversity aspects relevant for the proposal's research and innovation content? If relevant, how well are they taken into account? <i>If not relevant, please select "not applicable".</i>		make your choice									
7. How are appropriate open science practices implemented as an integral part of the proposed methodology? <i>If open science practices are not considered appropriate in the context of the proposed work, please select "not applicable".</i>		make your choice									
8. Is the use, development and/or deployment of Artificial Intelligence (AI) systems planned in the proposal? If planned, are they technically robust? <i>If not planned in this proposal, please select "not applicable".</i>		make your choice									
Sub-criterion 1.3 : QUALITY OF THE SUPERVISION, TRAINING AND OF THE TWO-WAY TRANSFER OF KNOWLEDGE BETWEEN THE RESEARCHER AND THE HOST											

Do's and Don'ts

- Evaluators are experts in the broader discipline, though not necessarily in your specific area of research. Therefore, your **proposal should be written in a clear and accessible manner**, suitable for both specialists and non-specialists.
- At the same time, **be specific and detailed** — proposals that remain too general tend to score poorly.
- It is easy to identify when there is a poor match between the applicant and the host institution. A Marie Skłodowska-Curie Postdoctoral Fellowship **(MSCA-PF) should be a win-win collaboration**. If you feel the fit is not optimal, it may be worth considering a different host institution.

Do's and Don'ts

- Evaluators must review numerous proposals across a wide range of topics. You can facilitate their work by **presenting your proposal in a clear, well-structured, and accessible manner**. Use diagrams, visuals, and concise explanations to improve the understanding of your project's objectives, methodology, and expected outcomes.
- Keep in mind that evaluators are required to comment on every evaluation criterion and sub-criterion. Therefore, **ensure that you address each one explicitly, providing relevant and targeted information throughout your proposal**.
- Do not underestimate criteria that may seem less important — **neglecting them could cause your proposal to fall below the threshold**.

Do's and Don'ts

- Think carefully about your **fallback plans**. Evaluators are not easily misled and appreciate realistic, well-considered measures to address potential risks or unforeseen situations.
- Do not disregard bibliographic references that may clutter your research. **Be honest, insightful, and realistic, and avoid downplaying any aspects of your scientific work.**

Good luck !