



GUIDELINES FOR EVALUATING APPLICATIONS

Viability Assessment Projects
in International Markets



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This document provides experts with a description of the evaluation criteria and how to apply them to an INNOWWIDE application. It also serves as a detailed outline of the terms and conditions contained in the Statement of Work.

1. Evaluation process

An application for a viability assessment project (VAP) must navigate through a number of different steps if it is to become approved and receive financial support. INNOWWIDE uses a two-step evaluation process:

- > Evaluation by two remote independent experts
- > Final ranking by a Review Committee in case of equal scores at funding limit

2. Experts' role

The functioning of INNOWWIDE is entirely dependent on the evaluations performed by individual experts who will assess the VAPs of innovative solutions for markets outside of Europe led by small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) resulting from the INNOWWIDE calls.

Each application is reviewed by two independent experts. The experts use their technical and market know-how within their field of expertise to provide objective assessments consisting of scores, comments and recommendations. Particular attention is paid to facilitating highly innovative European SMEs in bringing their solutions to markets outside of Europe, through collaboration with local actors. The development of necessary marketing strategies is a crucial part of INNOWWIDE's objectives. It is therefore vital that the experts have an excellent understanding of R&D planning, dissemination strategies, appropriate market areas and routes to those markets.

The experts can exclude poor quality applications. As with all the other steps (application completeness and eligibility check) not all applications will successfully pass each stage. This is true of both steps involving experts. **Only proposals reaching a total score of 75% and receiving a minimum score in each section will advance to the next stage.**

3. INNOWWIDE scoring system

The proposals will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- 1. Impact = 40% of the final score – 80 points in total**
 - a. Very poor applications will receive 1 point
 - b. Applications which are excellent and can barely be improved upon should be given 80 points.
- 2. Excellence = 30% of the final score – 60 points in total**
 - a. Very poor applications will receive 1 point
 - b. Applications which are excellent and can barely be improved upon should be given 60 points.
- 3. Quality and efficiency of implementation = 30% of the final score – 60 points in total**
 - a. Very poor applications will receive 1 point
 - b. Applications which are excellent and can barely be improved upon should

be given 60 points.

Each expert can award 200 points in total to a single proposal. An application can proceed to the next stage if the following criteria are met:

1. The overall average score of both experts amounts to **150 points or above**
2. The application was awarded on average at least the minimum score in each section:
 - a. **Impact – 50 points**
 - b. **Excellence – 30 points**
 - c. **Quality and efficiency of implementation – 30 points**

4. Evaluation documents

INNOWWIDE uses an [online programme management platform](#)

All the necessary documents and forms for performing work are located on this platform. Expert evaluations are filled out in the platform itself. After assignment, the INNOWWIDE Team will invite selected experts to create an account and review the summaries of applications assigned to the expert. At this stage the expert has the option to accept or reject specific assignments. In case a mission is accepted, the evaluations must be completed using the designated form. No other forms will be accepted. Other legal documentation will be provided by email (see below) after the expert accepts the work assigned to them on the platform.

The evaluation will be based on the Application Forms submitted by the applicants.

The following documentation is needed to successfully complete an evaluation:

1. [Application form](#) (available on [INNOWWIDE online platform](#), consisting of the following sections):
 - a. [Project proposal](#): the VAP objectives, its' business case, technical outline, structure and division of work
 - b. [Financial information](#): business plan, budget and work plan
 - c. [Optional annexes](#): Illustrations and graphics cannot be included in the application form. These may be uploaded separately.
2. [Statement of work](#): this is the official confirmation that work has been assigned. It outlines the specific conditions of a particular mission and contains the unique code which needs to be referenced when submitting invoices. **It is accepted or rejected electronically via email.**
3. [Master Service Agreement](#): This is a contract between the EUREKA Association and the expert. It governs the expectations and terms of future transactions. It also contains the [invoice template](#) that needs to be submitted to receive payment for completed work. **All communication occurs through email.**
4. [Evaluation form](#): a form where scores and justifications are recorded. Available on [the online platform](#).

The email address that the expert provided during the registration to [EUREKA's expert database](#) will be used in all communication regarding the Statement of Work and the Master Service Agreement. If an expert wishes to communicate via a different email, they are required to update their profile in the Expert database accordingly.

5. To do list – first stage

1. After receiving a notification of your assignment from the INNOWWIDE Team, create an account on the INNOWWIDE online platform by following the link communicated to you.
2. After you have created an account, the INNOWWIDE Team will inform you via email of specific tasks assigned to you.
3. Log in to INNOWWIDE's online platform.
4. Access the application summary on the dashboard and carefully read the information
5. Accept or reject assignment(s)
6. If mission(s) were accepted, sign the EUREKA Master Service Agreement (MSA) and accept the INNOWWIDE Statement of Work (SOW) received via email
7. Return the signed MSA and keep the unique SOW reference number safe
8. Rate each of the sub criteria according to the INNOWWIDE scoring system provided above and provide a summary of your thoughts.
9. Double-check the content and make sure the forms are complete.
10. Submit your completed evaluation(s) before the specified deadline.
11. Fill out the invoice (example available in the MSA) using the unique SOW reference number received at an earlier stage and send it to the INNOWWIDE Team at experts.innowwide@eurekanetwork.org

Once your evaluation has successfully been submitted you will receive an email confirmation, which should be kept safe.

To ensure the highest quality of work is accepted by the INNOWWIDE Team, checks for quality control purposes are performed. If improvements are required, the experts will be asked to amend their evaluation. **The expert will be required to correct and return the document to the INNOWWIDE Team.**

If the quality issues continue to be unaddressed the EUREKA Association, on behalf of the INNOWWIDE consortium, reserves the right to refuse payment and, in serious cases, to exclude an expert from our expert database.

Please keep in mind that **the expert must satisfy the following conditions to receive payment for their work:**

- > Return a signed MSA to experts.innowwide@eurekanetwork.org
- > Electronically accept the SOW received via email
- > Complete the mission assigned to them - an assignment is considered complete when a confirmation from the EUREKA Association or INNOWWIDE Consortium is received via email
- > The invoice submitted to the EUREKA Association contains the SOW reference number

Any invoices received from experts that do not fulfill one or more of the conditions will not be processed by neither the EUREKA Association nor the INNOWWIDE Consortium. For each appropriately completed evaluation, the expert will receive 150 EUR (excl. VAT).

Finally, the evaluation output must be useful and relevant. The score justifications will be used to provide feedback to the applicants. They must be coherent, relevant and constructive. Do not be afraid to be direct and honest. The comments will be critical in identifying potential weaknesses. In case of weak applications, it will be the justifications experts provide which will be the basis for excluding the applications.

6. INNOWIDE Evaluation Form – Explanations

6.1. Section one – Three main areas

1. Excellence

An expert should comment on elements such as:

- > Does the proposal introduce comparative novelty and/or technical improvements regarding the specific local market conditions?
- > Are the planned actions relevant for the target market?
- > Will the product, service or business model have a significant advantage over competing products or benefit the customers?
- > Is the ambition presented realistic and well defined? Does the methodology support the intended objectives?

Sections of particular interest within the application form: **Section 1 – Excellence**

2. Impact

An expert should comment on elements such as:

- > Are the estimations for the potential market size and its growth rate realistic? Is the potential market share well considered and justified?
- > Is there substantial demand on the targeted market(s)? Are the estimates of the newly created demand convincing?
- > Has the proposal identified barriers to the market and/or included important customers, or in other ways reduced the time and costs to market
 - o Regulatory
 - o Standards and certification
 - o Commercial
 - o Competition (including IPR)
 - o Quality
 - o Pricing
 - o Market acceptance
- > What is the added value of the proposed product, service or business model?
- > Does the proposal involving the applicant and the local partner cover the local market expectations?
- > What is the global dimension of the proposal in terms of development, commercialisation, co-creation etc.?
- > What is the potential for scale-up and job creation for the applicant? Is there a potential effect on the foreign technology and business partners involved?
- > Is the proposal aligned with the applicant's overall business strategy?
- > What is the relevance of the proposal on societal, environmental, gender and other similar issues?

Sections of particular interest within the application form: **Section 2 – Impact**

3. Quality and efficiency of implementation

An expert should comment on elements such as:

- > Is the research methodology described appropriate for achieving the proposal's objectives (e.g. it includes a programme of design, test, analysis, decision and iteration if appropriate)?
- > Are the objectives, expected impact, approach and proposed activities consistent and well presented? Are the VAP goals clearly identified and logically presented?
- > Is there an appropriate analysis of the risks?
- > Does the team involved possess relevant technical and/or business experience to carry out the VAP?
- > Are the VAP costs clearly justified?
- > Is the involvement of subcontractors realistic and justified? Are their roles and responsibilities clearly described? Is task allocation to sub-contractors clearly identified?
- > Are the estimated budget and the planned procedures for selecting subcontractors appropriate?
- > Does the proposal demonstrate that the necessary resources such as personnel, facilities and networks are/will be available?
- > Are the timeframe and implementation of actions realistic taking the company's overall objectives and ambitions into account?
- > Are key issues, VAP objective(s) and outputs fully identified and precisely formulated from the outset?

Sections of particular interest within the application form: Section 3 – Implementation

6.2. Section 2 – Summary

1. Please provide a brief summary of your conclusions
2. Additionally, please provide three main strengths and three main weaknesses of the application.
3. Does the application represent value for money – do you recommend this application for funding? Please justify your answer.

7. Selection and assignment of INNOWWIDE experts

Availability

An expert will be contacted approximately one month before the submission deadline for applications to confirm their availability and willingness to participate in the evaluation of applications. Upon positive feedback, they will be added to the list of 'available' experts.

Selection

After the submission deadline, the matching of the eligible applications with the potential experts takes place. This is performed by project officers (PO) with an appropriate background, using database search engines. The PO will read the application in question and will search the EUREKA expert database to identify the two most suitable experts from the availability list. For insurance, the PO will usually identify up to two reserve experts.

It is possible that one expert is selected for several applications. Should the workload present a potential problem, the PO will reallocate accordingly to a reserve expert. It could be possible that an available expert receives no evaluations. This can be for a number of reasons:

- > An expert confirms their availability before the applications are even received – we may not receive any within those areas of expertise.
- > An expert may be selected as a reserve but never used.
- > An expert may have an excellent profile, but the database may contain more suitable individuals.

Assignment

The assignment of the selected experts to perform the evaluations will be done with the shortest possible delay. For each evaluation an expert will receive an email informing them of their assignment. To proceed, the expert must create an account on the [INNOWWIDE online platform](#). When an account is successfully created, the expert should receive an email containing the information about the next steps. In order to set up the platform, a delay of a few days could occur. After receiving instructions, the expert will log in and carefully review each application summary and indicate whether or not they accept each mission individually.

Performing the work

Evaluations must be performed in English and in accordance with the expectations of quality outlined previously. **The deadline for performing the work will be 14 calendar days.** The deadline for specific missions is available in the Statement of Work. Depending on the availability, an expert can be assigned to more applications, up to maximum 10.

Should an expert be no longer available for various reasons, they should inform the INNOWWIDE team as soon as possible so that alternative arrangements can be made. Should an expert be unreachable or their work be invisible in the platform for more than a week, the INNOWWIDE team reserves the right to seek an alternative expert – usually one of the reserve experts originally identified.

Delivery

Our platform prevents uploading of empty or incomplete evaluations. Should there be a problem in uploading the evaluation, please check that it is complete. Evaluations can only be uploaded once. If it is submitted in error, or you wish to amend the document please contact experts.innowwide@eurekanetwork.org for support.

8. Second stage evaluation – Expert Committee

Applications proceed to the second stage only if they are close to the funding threshold and receive the same score as another proposal. Two experts from the first stage will be chosen to determine the final ranking following a two-step process:

- > Each expert evaluates the proposals remotely and provides provisional ranking on the INNOWWIDE online platform.
- > A one-day meeting between the two experts will be held to discuss the scores and reach a consensus on the final ranking list

An expert can participate in this stage only if none of the proposals they reviewed in the first stage proceed to the second stage.

Experts will have an opportunity to confirm their interest and availability for the second stage approximately one month before the submission deadline for applications. The selected pair of experts will receive an email informing them about their assignment and instructing them to accept and reject the mission by reviewing application summaries on the [INNOWWIDE online platform](#). This email will also notify experts of the exact deadline by which they must complete evaluation(s). **The experts will have 7 calendar days to complete their remote evaluation(s).**

A new Statement of Work will be sent via email to the experts who accept the mission. The experts will accept the the SOW electronically as soon as possible.

Please note that if you notice a conflict of interest or any other reason why you could not perform the work, you must inform the EUREKA Association as soon as possible.

To do list – second stage

1. After receiving an email informing you of assignment, log in to the INNOWWIDE's online platform
2. Access the application summaries on the dashboard and carefully read the information
3. Accept or reject the assignment
4. If the mission was accepted, electronically accept the SOW received via email
5. Remotely rank the applications by completing the online form
6. Establish the final ranking during the meeting with the other expert
7. Send an invoice to experts.innowwide@eurekanetwork.org (template from MSA) after completing the work. Do not forget to mention the unique SOW reference number.

9. Experts' responsibilities

The experts are expected to follow EUREKA's code of practice:

- > An expert will evaluate applications independently.
- > An expert will evaluate applications objectively and without prejudice.
- > An expert will give sufficient amount of time and effort to the process.
- > An expert will provide accurate scores using the entirety of the scale available
- > An expert will uphold the confidential nature of the application.
 - An expert will clearly justify each score that is provides.
 - Statements which are specific to the application at hand.

- No vague, generic or formulaic answers taken from this document, other INNOWWIDE guidelines, or readily available information sources (e.g. Wikipedia) will be accepted.
- Statements and scores will not be contradictory to one another.

Particular attention is given to conflict of interest

Experts are expected to openly and honestly inform the EUREKA Association if there is any reason why they cannot or might not be able to perform an objective evaluation.

If this is the case, these experts will be unable to evaluate applications during that period but will be welcome to participate again in the future.

Occasionally, it is not clear that a conflict exists until after the initial invitation. As long as an expert informs us as soon as they are aware of the fact, steps will be taken to correct this. If the expert does not do so:

- > The expert will be excluded from working for INNOWWIDE or other EUREKA programmes in the future.
- > EUREKA Association will seek reimbursement of all fees paid to the expert for their work.
- > EUREKA Association will inform the European Commission, and those responsible for managing their expert evaluation processes.

If you have any doubts about this issue, email us immediately at experts.innowwide@eurekanetwork.org with the subject line 'Question regarding conflict of interest for INNOWWIDE applications'.

Conflict of Interest	
Disqualifying: The expert...	Potentially disqualifying: The expert...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - was involved in the preparation of an application; - stands to benefit directly should an application be accepted; - stands to benefit directly should an application be rejected; - has a close or other family relationship with any person representing an applicant legal entity in the applications; - is a director, trustee or partner of an application legal entity; - is employed by one of the applicant legal entities in the applications; - is in any other situation that compromises his/her ability to evaluate the applications objectively. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - was employed by one of the applicant legal entities in an application within the previous two (2) years; - is employed by one of the INNOWWIDE consortium members; - is involved in a contract or research collaboration with an applicant legal entity, or had been so in the previous two (2) years; - is in any other situation that could cast doubt on his/her ability to evaluate the applications impartially, or that could reasonably appear to do so in the eyes of an external third party. - Other circumstances which may arise but are not specifically listed above.

The Expert shall have not submitted nor have been involved in any application to be assessed during the prescribed evaluation period.

If an expert discovers that their assigned application raises a conflict of interest, they are under the obligation to declare this to the EUREKA Association immediately.

10. Glossary

Application: all documents necessary for an INNOWWIDE application (i.e. INNOWWIDE application form and all required and optional annexes).

Eligible costs: costs that are considered eligible in the application for which a financial contribution can be obtained.

Full-time equivalency (FTE): is a measure of worker involvement in an activity. A company with 10 full-time employees has an FTE of 10, while a second company of 10 half-time employees will only have an FTE of 5. Therefore, a fixed percentage of a company's FTE is a percentage of the potential for work across the company, not a percentage of the number of employees.

Output: the outcome or result of the project. It may be a study, business plan, strategy, market analysis etc.

For further information please contact:
experts.innowwide@eurekanetwork.org

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