

Backing visionary entrepreneurs

The European Innovation Council

Web-Briefing for Remote Evaluators

Brussels, 16 June 2021

Antonio LOREDAN

EISMEA C02 Call Coordinator

Emanuela GALEAZZI

EISMEA E01 Call Correspondent

Outline



- 1. PATHFINDER OPEN: Cut-off May 2021 some statistical data
- 2. WHAT IS THE EIC?
- 3. PATHFINDER OPEN: Main features
- 4. PATHFINDER OPEN: Evaluation criteria
- 5. Evaluation process (Overview)
- 6. Main actors in the evaluation process
- 7. Admissibility and Eligibility
- 8. Role of the Remote Evaluator
- 9. What is the role of VC-QC? Some tips!
- 10. Feedback to Applicants
- 11. Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest
- 12. How to implement the Quality Checks in SEP
- 13. Important documents & Contact persons



You Can send your questions via Sli.do:

Link: Slido.com Code: K010

You can also vote for the submitted questions by other Vice Chairs Quality Controllers that you would like us to answer

We will answer as many as possible by the end of the presentation



1. Some statistical data

General overview PATHFINDER OPEN - Cut-off May 2021

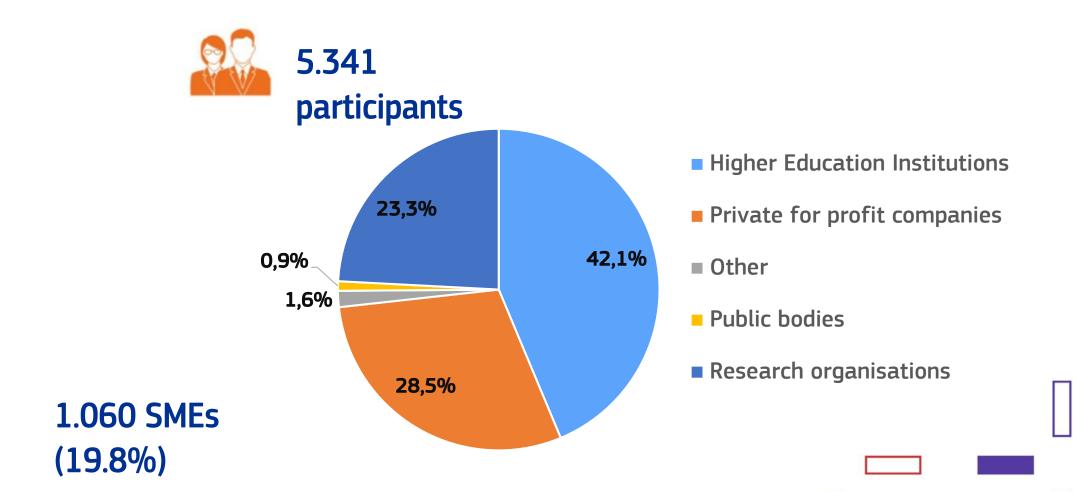


Name	Number of submitted proposals (A)	Number of participants (B)	Total requested grant (in EUR Million) (C)	Indicative available budget (in EUR Million) (D)
PATHFINDER OPEN	908	5.341	2748,58	168

Nome	Average number of participants per submitted	Average requested grant per submitted proposal	Expected number of selected proposals for funding (G) = (D) / (F)	Expected success rate	
Name	proposal (E) = (B) / (A)	(in EUR Million) (F) =(C) / (A)		Proposal (G) /(A)	Budget (D) / (C)
PATHFINDER OPEN	6	3,03	55	6,1%	6,1%

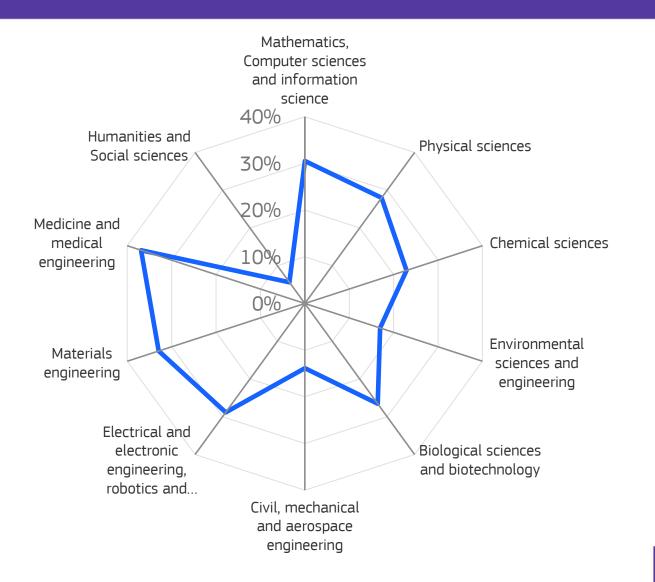
Participants profile in submitted proposals PATHFINDER OPEN - Cut-off May 2021





Disciplines coverage in submitted proposals PATHFINDER OPEN 25 May 2021 cut-off







2. What is the EIC?



Europe's most ambitious innovation initiative

- €10 billion programme to identify, develop and scale up breakthrough technologies and disruptive innovations in Europe
- Unique in the world to combine research on emerging technologies with Accelerator for startups, SMEs and scaleups
- EIC Fund largest VC deep-tech investor in Europe (over €3 billion)
- Innovator-centric steered by Board of leading innovators
- Pro-active approach with flexible funding
- Enhances the European innovation ecosystem

Part of the Innovative Europe pillar of Horizon Europe



European Innovation Council

 Support to innovations with breakthrough and market creating potential

€10 billion

European innovation ecosystems

 Connecting with regional and national innovation actors

€520 million

European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT)

 Bringing key actors (research, education and business) together around a common goal for nurturing innovation

€2.9 billion

Development

SPECIFIC SPECIFIC PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTING HORIZON EUROPE & EIT' **EUROPEAN** Pillar II GLOBAL CHALLENGES & EUROPEAN INDUSTRIAL Pillar I EXCELLENT SCIENCE **DEFENCE** Exclusive focus or European Research Council Culture, Creativity 8 Council Marie Skłodowska-Curie Inclusive Society Civil Security for Society ecosystems Research Resources, Agriculture & novation & Technolog

HORIZON EUROPE

* The European Institute of Innovation & Technology (EIT) is not part of the Specific Programme

What is the EIC?



One stop shop for breakthrough, deep-tech, market-creating innovators

- Open to all innovators, in any field, at any time
- Complemented by targeted funding on strategic challenges
- Highly competitive for Europe's high potential innovators

Agile funding from idea to investment

- Pathfinder for advanced research on emerging technologies
- Transition from lab to commercial setting
- Accelerator & EIC Fund to scale up innovations by start-ups & SMEs

Building ecosystems and comunities

- Access to Business Acceleration Services (coaches, mentors, corporates, investors & knowledge partners)
- EIC Programme Managers to develop visions for breakthroughs, manage portfolios, and connect to ecosystems
- Crowding in other investors (VC, corporates, etc.)



3. PATHFINDER OPEN: Main features



What is the EIC Pathfinder?

The EIC Pathfinder programme funds research to develop the scientific basis to underpin breakthrough technologies.



EIC Pathfinder Open proposals:

- Aim to realise an ambitious vision for radically new technology, with potential to create new markets and/or to address global challenges.
- Support early stage development of such future technologies (e.g. various activities at low Technology Readiness Levels 1-4), based on high-risk/high-gain science-towards-technology breakthrough research (including 'deep-tech').
- Provide the foundations of the envisioned technology.

Bottom-up approach with no predefined topics.

Type of Action: Research and Innovation Action (RIA).

Research and innovation action (RIA)







Essential characteristics:

Collaborative, interdisciplinary research, meeting the following 'gatekeepers':

- Convincing, long-term vision of a radically new technology that has the potential to have a transformative positive effect to our economy and society.
- Concrete, novel and ambitious science-towards-technology breakthrough, providing advancement towards the envisioned technology.
- High-risk & high-gain research approach & methodology, with concrete and plausible objectives.



Expected outcomes of an EIC Pathfinder Open project

- The expected outcome of a EIC Pathfinder project is the **proof of principle** that the **main ideas of the envisioned future technology are feasible**, thus validating its scientific and technological basis;
- Projects are expected to take the necessary measures to allow future uptake to take place, for instance through an adequate formal protection of the generated Intellectual Property (IP);
- Projects are encouraged to involve and empower in their teams key actors that have the
 potential to become future leaders in their field such as excellent early-career researchers or
 promising high-tech SMEs, including start-ups.



You Can send your questions via Sli.do:

Link: Slido.com Code: K010

You can also vote for the submitted questions by other Vice Chairs Quality Controllers that you would like us to answer

We will answer as many as possible at the end of the presentation



4. PATHFINDER OPEN: Evaluation criteria





Proposal template

Part A:

Administrative part of the proposal: General information, Participants, Budget, Ethics (**including the Ethics Self-Assessment**) and Security section, and the Declarations.

Part B:

Scientific narrative part of the proposal (research core proposal)

- Section 1: Excellence
- Section 2: Impact
- Section 3: Quality and efficiency of the implementation
- Additional annex with information on clinical trials (if relevant).

In SEP in H2020:

Documents

Part A Technical Annex Section 1-3 Technical Annex Section 4-5

In SEP in HE:

Documents

Part A Part B Information on clinical trials





The evaluation form includes:

- Main part with the three evaluation criteria:
 - Criterion 1 **Excellence** (4 sub-criteria, 1 score)
 - Criterion 2 **Impact** (2 sub-criteria, 1 score)
 - Criterion 3 **Quality and efficiency of the implementation** (3 sub-criteria, 1 score)

Each criterion includes the 'aspects to be taken into account'. The same aspect is not included in different criteria, so that it is not assessed twice.

8 Additional questions





Evaluating the "Excellence" criterion

- **Long-term vision:** How convincing is the vision of a radically new technology that has the potential to have a transformative positive effect to our economy and society?
- Science-towards-technology breakthrough:
 - How concrete, novel and ambitious is the proposed science-towards-technology breakthrough with respect to the state-of-the-art?
 - What advancement does it provide towards realising the envisioned technology?

Objectives:

- How concrete and plausible are the proposed objectives?
- To what extent are high-risk/high-gain research approach and methodology appropriate for achieving them?
- **Interdisciplinarity:** How relevant is the interdisciplinary approach from traditionally distant disciplines for achieving the proposed breakthrough?





Evaluating the "Impact" criterion



Innovation potential:

- How adequate are the proposed measures for protection of results and any other exploitation measures to facilitate future translation of research results into innovations with societal or economic impact?
- How suitable are the proposed measures for empowering key actors that have the potential to take the lead in translating research into innovations?
- Communication and Dissemination: How convincing and wide reaching are the proposed measures and plans for public/stakeholder engagement and for raising awareness about the project outcomes, including through Open Science, with respect to their potential to establish new markets and/or address global challenges?





Evaluating the "Quality and efficiency of Innovation Council the implementation" criterion



- Quality of the consortium: To what extent do the consortium members have all the necessary high quality expertise for performing the project tasks?
- **Work plan:** How coherent and effective are the work plan (work packages, tasks, deliverables, milestones, time-line, etc.) and risk mitigation measures in order to achieve the project objectives?
- **Allocation of resources:** How appropriate and effective is the allocation of resources (person-months and equipment) to tasks and consortium members?





Additional questions in the evaluation form



Evaluation form includes:

- Main part with the three evaluation criteria where you give comments and scores
- Additional questions: The evaluators are asked to take a position on additional questions linked to the selection procedure or policy considerations.

Additional questions in Horizon Europe evaluations

- Scope of the application
- Additional funding
- Use of human embryonic stem cells (hESC)
- Use of human embryos (hE)

- Activities not eligible for funding
- Exclusive focus on civil applications
- Do not significant harm principle
- Artificial Intelligence



Scope of the application



- Two possible options:
 - out of scope
 - 'in scope' because it corresponds, wholly <u>or in part</u>, to the topic description against which it has been submitted
- Comment in the specific box (in case the proposal is out of scope)

Even if you consider a proposal as out of scope, please still evaluate it fully.



Who is eligible for funding:









EU COUNTRIES

- Member States (MS) including their outermost regions.
- The Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs) linked to the MS.

NON-EU COUNTRIES

- Countries associated to Horizon Europe (AC)*.
- Low and middle income countries.
- Other countries when announced in the call or exceptionally if their participation is essential.

OTHER CASES

- Affiliated entities established in countries eligible for funding.
- EU bodies.
- International organisations (IO):
 - International European research organisations are eligible for funding.
 - Other IO are not eligible (only exceptionally if participation is essential)
 - IO in a MS or AC are eligible for funding for Training and mobility actions and when announced in the call conditions.

Countries associated to H2020



Until association agreements become applicable, the transitional arrangement set out in the EIC Work Programme 2021 is applicable

Albania	Iceland	Morocco	Tunisia
Armenia	Israel	North Macedonia	Turkey
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Kosovo*	Norway	Ukraine
Faroe Islands	Moldova	Serbia	United Kingdom**
Georgia	Montenegro	Switzerland	

^{*} This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

^{**} The UK is associating to the full Horizon Europe programme with the only exception of the EIC Fund.





During the **evaluation** experts give their opinion on the exceptional funding to participants from non-EU countries not eligible for funding and international organisations. Participation is considered **essential** for the action if there are clear benefits for the consortium, such as:

- outstanding competence/expertise
- access to research infrastructure
- access to particular geographical environments
- access to data

In such exceptional cases, the IER should clearly mention whether funding should be granted or not and justify this.

Your assessment will help the EU services to take a decision on the exceptional funding for these participants.





Use of human embryonic stem cells (hESC) and human embryos (hE)



- In two separate questions, experts give their opinion on whether the proposal involves the use of **hESC** and **hE.** This is independent of, and serves to verify, the applicants' answers in the ethics issues table.
- If you consider that the proposal involves hESC, you must state whether the use of hESC is, or is not, necessary to achieve the scientific objectives of the proposal and the reasons why.

Your answers to these questions and the comments provided will be used by the ethics experts in charge of the ethics assessment. Proposals involving hESC can be funded only if the use of hESC is necessary to achieve its objectives.



Activities not eligible for funding



- Participants have declared in proposal part A that the proposal does not include any activity excluded from funding.
- Evaluators are asked to **confirm** that this is the case.
- if you think that the proposal includes one or more activities excluded from funding, you must provide the **reasons** for this conclusion and explain why the beneficiaries' declaration is wrong.
- Evaluators must reflect the **removal of the activities excluded from funding** in the final score (e.g., if the excluded activities were important for reaching the objectives, their removal would lead to a lower score).
- The proposals are not rejected as ineligible during the evaluation phase. Instead, they are **processed according to their score**, including the possibility to go on the main list and be invited for grant preparation.
- Your opinion will help the EU services to decide whether to reject the proposal as ineligible or to fund it in a modified form without the ineligible activities.

The **activities excluded from funding** are activities that:

- aim at human cloning for reproductive purposes, or
- intend to **modify the genetic heritage of human beings** which could make such changes heritable (with the exception of research relating to cancer treatment of the gonads, which may be financed), or
- intend to **create human embryos** solely for the purpose of research or for the purpose of stem cell procurement, including by means of somatic cell nuclear transfer, or
- lead to the destruction of human embryos (for example, for obtaining stem cells).



Do no significant harm principle (DNSH)



European Green Deal In line with the European Green Deal objectives, the research and innovation activities should not make a significant harm to any of the six environmental objectives (EU Taxonomy Regulation)

The DNSH principle needs to be taken into consideration in the scientific methodology under the Excellence criterion and impact of the project.

The six environmental objectives to which no significant harm should be done:



Climate change mitigation



Climate change adaptation



Sustainable use & protection of water & marine resources



Transition to a circular economy



Pollution prevention & control



Protection and restoration of biodiversity & ecosystems



Do no significant harm principle (DNSH)



- Aspects related to the 'Do no significant harm' (DNSH) principle must be part of the proposal and are evaluated as part of the
 excellence criterion. This means that the scientific methodology must be designed in a way it is not significantly harming any
 of the six environmental objectives of the EU Taxonomy Regulation.
- Also, for the evaluation of the impact of the proposal, participants are asked to include any potential negative environmental
 outcome or impact of the project including when expected results are brought at scale (such as at commercial level), and
 explain how the potential harm can be managed.
- It is not expected that a proposal that is not compliant with the DNSH principle is funded, unless the **non-compliance is fully justified** by the applicants.
- Evaluators are asked in one **additional question** whether the proposal is compliant with the DNSH principle and provide comments in the case the answer to the question is 'Partially', 'No' or 'Cannot be assessed'. The answer to this question will be **used for monitoring purposes** and for a proper **follow up in the case the project is funded**.



Exclusive focus on civil applications



- Participants confirm, as part of the **declarations in proposal part A** that the proposal has an exclusive focus on civil applications. Activities intended to be used in military application or aiming to serve military purposes cannot be funded.
- Evaluators are asked to confirm that this is the case.
- If you think that the proposal does not have an exclusive focus on civil applications, you must provide the **reasons** for this conclusion and explain why the beneficiaries' declaration is wrong.
- Evaluators must reflect the **removal of the activities excluded from funding** in the final score (e.g., if the excluded activities were important for reaching the objectives, their removal would lead to a lower score).
- The proposals are not rejected as ineligible during the evaluation phase. Instead, they are **processed according to their score**, including the possibility to go on the main list and be invited for grant preparation.
- Your opinion will help the EU services to decide whether to reject the proposal as ineligible or to fund it in a modified form without the ineligible activities.





- Experts must answer an additional question as part of their individual evaluations on whether the activities proposed involve the use and/or development of Al-based systems and/or techniques.
- If you answer 'yes' to this question, you must **assess the technical robustness** of the proposed AI-system as part of the excellence criterion (if applicable).
- In addition, your answer to this question will help us to with the **proper follow-up** of any aspects related to **Artificial Intelligence** in projects funded under Horizon Europe.

(*) Technical robustness refers to technical aspects of AI systems and development, including resilience to attack and security, fullback plan and general safety, accuracy, reliability and reproducibility.

Al-based systems or techniques should be, or be developed to become:

- **Technically robust**, **accurate and reproducible**, and able to deal with and inform about possible failures, inaccuracies and errors, proportionate to the assessed risk posed by the AI-based system or technique.
- Socially robust, in that they duly consider the context and environment in which they operate.
- Reliable and function as intended, minimizing unintentional and unexpected harm, preventing unacceptable harm and safeguarding the physical and mental integrity of humans.
- Able to provide a suitable explanation of its decision-making process, whenever an AI-based system can have a significant impact on people's lives.



Open Science for EIC funded projects



Open Science

Open science is an approach based on open cooperative work and systematic sharing of knowledge and tools as early and widely as possible in the process, including active engagement of society.

Open science practices include:

- Early and open sharing of research (for example through preregistration, registered reports, pre-prints, or crowdsourcing).
- Research output management including research data management (RDM).
- Measures to ensure reproducibility of research outputs.
- Providing open access to research outputs (e.g. publications, data, software, models, algorithms, and workflows) through deposition in trusted repositories.
- Participation in open peer review.
- Involving all relevant knowledge actors including citizens, civil society and end users in the co-creation of R&I agendas and contents (such as citizen science).

Mandatory OS practices

• Mandatory in all calls: Open access to publications; RDM in line with the FAIR principles including data management plans; open access to research data unless exceptions apply ('as open as possible as closed as necessary').

Reflect in lower score when not sufficiently addressed Recommended OS practices

 All open science practices beyond mandatory will be evaluated positively when sufficiently addressed.

EIC funded projects (or authors) must retain sufficient intellectual property rights to comply with all of their open science requirements, including specific licensing requirements.



Gender dimension in R&I content



Gender dimension

Addressing the gender dimension in research and innovation entails taking into account sex and gender in the whole research & innovation process.

Under Horizon Europe the integration of the gender dimension into R&I content is mandatory.

Why is gender dimension important? It brings added value of research in terms of excellence, rigor, reproducibility, creativity and business opportunities It enhances the societal relevance of research and innovation

- Why do we observe differences between women and men in infection levels and mortality rates in the COVID-19 pandemic?
- Does it make sense to study cardiovascular diseases only on male animals and on men, or osteoporosis only on women?
- Does it make sense to design car safety equipment only on the basis of male body standards?
- Is it responsible to develop AI products that spread gender and racial biases due to a lack of diversity in the data used in training AI applications?
- Is it normal that household travel surveys, and thus mobility analysis and transport planning, underrate trips performed as part of caring work?
- Did you know that pheromones given off by men experimenters, but not women, induce a stress response in laboratory mice sufficient to trigger pain relief?
- Did you know that climate change is affecting sex determination in a number of marine species and that certain populations are now at risk of extinction?



Management of intellectual property (IP)



Beneficiaries must use their best efforts to exploit their results or have them exploited by a third party, in priority those established in a Member State or an Associated country, including through transfer or licensing.

The provision of a results ownership list is mandatory at the end of a project.

The strategy for IP management in a proposal

- Proposers are expected to take the necessary measures to allow future uptake to take place, for instance through an adequate formal protection of the generated Intellectual Property (IP).
- They should foresee protection measures, such as patents, design rights, copyright, trade secrets etc., and how these would be used to support exploitation.
- If exploitation is expected primarily in non-associated third countries, it must include justifications on how that exploitation is still in the Union's interest.



Operational capacity



Important information on role of individual participants and previous experience is included in Part A of proposal.

- Applicants to EIC Pathfinder and Transition calls must have the know-how, qualifications and resources to successfully implement their tasks in the project and contribute their share.
- This assessment of operational capacity will be carried out during the evaluation of the award criterion 'quality and efficiency of the implementation'
- Public bodies, Member State organisations and international organisations are exempted from the operational capacity check.

If the evaluation of the award criterion 'Implementation' leads a score above the applicable threshold, then the applicants are considered to have sufficient operational capacity.

Interpretation of the scores





The proposal **fails to address the criterion** or cannot be assessed due to missing or incomplete information.



Poor. The criterion is inadequately addressed, or there are serious inherent weaknesses.

- 2
- Fair. The proposal broadly addresses the criterion, but there are significant weaknesses.
- 3

Good. The proposal addresses the criterion well, but a number of shortcomings are present.

4

Very Good. The proposal addresses the criterion very well, but a small number of shortcomings are present.

45

Excellent. The proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion. Any shortcomings are minor.

The whole range of scores should be used. Use steps of 0.5

Points for attention



- The quality of the comments in the IER is of utmost importance the quality of your feedback to the Remote Evaluators is even more important.
- Comments must reflect a clear assessment of the proposal based on its merit, with justification.
 - Clear feedback on the proposal's weaknesses and strengths, of an adequate length, and in an appropriate tone.
 - Shortcomings should be explained, but no recommendations given.
 - Ensure that scores (per criterion) are consistent with the corresponding comments (per criterion including all different sub-criteria) using the full scale provided.

To be avoided:

- 1. Comments not related to the criterion in question.
- 2. Comments too long, or too short and inappropriate language.
- 3. Categorical statements that have not been properly verified.
- 4. Scores that don't match the comments.
- 5. Marking down a proposal for the same critical aspect under two different criteria.

Remember: Applicants will read the comments and can challenge them during the rebuttal phase and/or through the evaluation review procedures.

Some typical mistakes in the IER



Please make sure to avoid:

- Comments with examples of research already being conducted elsewhere (followed by citations).
- Suggestions for improvement of the proposal.
- Using speculative expressions such as "seems to be" and "is difficult to see".
- Indicating any names of research investigators (such as Professors, researchers, etc.)
- Making any reference to specific locations and specific numbers (such as number of SMEs present in the proposal, aggregate number of work packages) to avoid the possibility of factual errors.

Remember to always refer specifically to the content of the proposal to substantiate your judgment/statement.



Quality of the IERs – Key principles



Comments must reflect the assessment of the criteria in the frame of what is requested in the call.

Comments should be precise and definite.

Avoid factual mistakes. Whenever factual statements are made, they should be explicitly verified.

Comments should consist of clear, concise and complete sentences.

Comments must not be discriminatory, offending or inappropriate

Comments must not be based on assumptions and should not suggest ignorance or doubt.

Comments must **not contain recommendations or suggestions** to improve the project.

The comment for a criterion, taken as a whole, must be **consistent with the meaning of the score** that is awarded for that criterion.



You Can send your questions via Sli.do:

Link: Slido.com Code: K010

You can also vote for the submitted questions by other Vice Chairs Quality Controllers that you would like us to answer

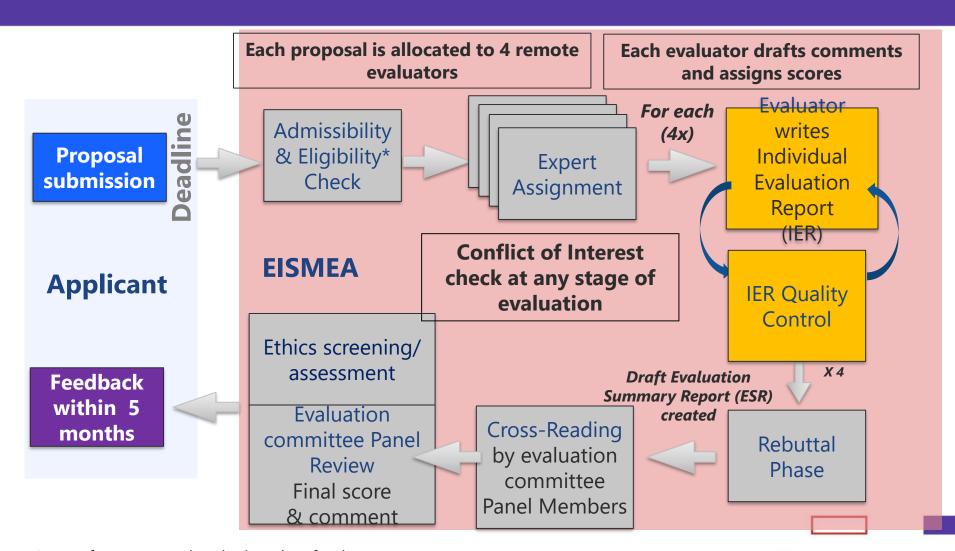
We will answer as many as possible at the end of the presentation



5. Evaluation process (Overview)

PATHFINDER OPEN Evaluation process





^{*}out-of-scope can be declared at further stages



Milestones reached since 25 May 2021

- 908 proposals <u>submitted</u> and transferred to the SEP evaluation tool
- More than 1800 experts were checked for possible Conflict of Interest
- Approximately 1100 Remote Evaluators allocated to between 1 and 8 proposals (apart from few exceptional cases)
- Approximately 98 Vice-Chairs Quality Controllers (VC-QCs) who will work with up to 10 proposals each.
- Approximately 120 Vice-Chairs Cross Readers (VC-CRs) who are now being contracted and who will work with up to 8 proposals each.



Evaluation schedule

<u>Milestones</u>	<u>Deadlines</u>
Call cut-off	25 May 2021
VC-QCs training	14 June 2021
Remote Evaluators online briefing	16 June 2021
Remote evaluation starts	17 June 2021
ALL assignments accepted	21 June 201
Deadline for submission of the 1st IER	24 June 2021
Deadline for submissions of the 3 IERs ready	29 June 2021
6 IERs submitted (or ALL for RE with <=6 IERs assigned)	5 July 2021
Deadline for ALL IERs READY (if more than 6)	12 July 2021
Remote cross-readings launched	15 July 2021
Remote evaluation committee Panel Week	10-17- September 2021
Result letters sent to applicants by	25 October 2021



6. Main actors in the evaluation process



Project officers (PO):

- 6 cluster chairs,
- call coordinator & deputy call coordinator
- Remote Evaluators (RE):
 - Write remotely good quality individual evaluation reports and assign corresponding scores
 - They will be assigned between 1 and 8 proposals.
 - Submit individual evaluation reports within given deadlines
- Vice-Chair Quality Controllers (VC-QC):
 - Check the quality of individual evaluation reports
 - They will be assigned on average to 10 proposals.
- Vice-Chair Cross Readers (VC-CR):
 - o Cross-read proposals and prepare the Remote evaluation committee Panel Week
 - Take part in the Remote evaluation committee Panel Week
- Independent Observer (IO)
 - Observe the evaluation process
 - Provide advice/suggestions to EISMEA on the evaluation process (if needed)



Independent Observer (IO) appointed by the Agency (I)

- to ensure a high degree of transparency of the evaluation process, by:
- checking the functioning and execution of the overall process;
- verifying compliance with the procedures;
- advising on the conduct and fairness of the evaluation sessions, how the experts apply the criteria, and how the procedures could be improved;
- liaising with the staff members involved in the evaluation sessions;
- if necessary, suggesting possible corrections that could be put into practice immediately (or for future evaluations).



- Independent Observer (IO) appointed by the Agency (II)
- The Independent Observer sets out her findings (and suggestions on corrections) in the observer report to the Commission/Agency.
- The Independent Observer:
- does not evaluate proposals nor expresses any opinion on their quality;
- may raise any question, attend any meeting related to the evaluation.
 - Independent Observer for this cut-off Dr. Emily Taylor (ejat2@cam.ac.uk)



You can send your questions via Sli.do:

Link: Slido.com Code: K010

You can also vote for the submitted questions by other Vice Chairs Quality Controllers that you would like us to answer

We will answer as many as possible by the end of the presentation



7. Admissibility and Eligibility



Admissibility and Eligibility of proposals

Admissibility is checked by the Agency.

- Applications must be complete and contain the requested administrative data and the proposal description;.
- Applications must be readable, accessible and printable.
- Applications must include a plan for the exploitation and dissemination of results including communication activities
- A specific page limit of 17 A4 pages apply for part B of the proposal.

Eligibility is checked by the Agency. If you spot an issue, please inform the EISMEA staff.

- Eligible activities are the ones described in the call conditions.
- Minimum number of partners as set out in the call conditions (at least one independent legal entity established in a MS, and, at least two other independent legal entities established either in a MS or AC).
- For calls with deadlines in **2022** and onwards participants that are public bodies, research organisations or higher education establishments from Members States and Associated countries must have a gender equality plan in place.



8. Role of the Remote Evaluator



Remote Evaluator's (RE) tasks

- RE evaluates each <u>proposal as submitted</u>, not on its potential if changes were to be made
- If RE identifies shortcomings/weaknesses, these must be reflected in a lower score
- RE comments on the identified issues, but <u>cannot make recommendations</u>
- <u>Proposals with weaknesses</u> that prevent the project from achieving its objectives should not receive above-threshold scores (<u>should stay below threshold</u> for a given criterion)
- RE should respond within 2 days to the specific QC comments by modifying accordingly your IER and re-submitting it.



Individual Evaluation Report (IER)

- Quality of IER is PARAMOUNT!
 - IERs remain unchanged and are collated all together (ESR) and sent to the applicants with possible additional comments by the evaluation committee panel review
 - Quality is ensured by the fairness of the assessment, completeness and full compliance of the comments with corresponding PATHFINDER Open evaluation criteria/sub-criteria
- Scope of IER is to give:
 - Clear assessment of the proposal based solely on its merits
 - Clear feedback on the proposal's strengths and weaknesses

Quality Control (QC) of IERs instructions given to REs



- In case the VC-QC provides comments for your IER, then it will be reopened and you
 will receive a notification.
- Each evaluator should revise a given IER according to the VC-QCs comments.
- React within 2 days to QC comments by modifying accordingly IER and re-submit
- To finalize the QC process, it may be that several iterations will be needed. Please, be patient and collaborative
- Once the QC phase for a given IER is finalized you will received an email notification with confirmation \Box



You can send your questions via Sli.do:

Link: Slido.com Code: K010

You can also vote for the submitted questions by other Vice Chairs Quality Controllers that you would like us to answer

We will answer as many as possible by the end of the presentation



9. What is the role of VC-QC? Some tips!



IMPORTANT! Deadlines.

- For technical reasons the SEP deadlines are not configurable and DO NOT correspond to the actual deadlines.
- PLEASE RESPECT ALL THE DEADLINES YOU WILL BE GIVEN BY THE EISMEA STAFF.
- If you notice delays for some of the evaluators (IERs), please let us know.:
 - support.evaluator@eic.eismea.eu

Some tips



- Start checking the quality of IERs as soon as an evaluator submitted his/her report.
- Check that the evaluator's scores are consistent with comments. Again, it does not mean that
 you will suggest your score; it is not your evaluation report. It is up to you though to check if
 the range of scores is used properly, for example if an evaluator identifies weaknesses under a
 criterion in this case the evaluator should give a score below threshold. Starting from a score
 of 3 only shortcomings should be present (see table explaining the meaning of scores).
 Another example, if an evaluator finds no shortcomings under a given criterion then a score of
 e.g. 3.5 would not be consistent at all with the comments.
- If you identify a very low quality IER inform the PO by email support.evaluator@eic.eismea.eu always mentioning in the subject: Proposal Acronym and number; RE name;

Some typical problems, requiring the intervention from the VC-QC (I)



- Comments starting with a summary of the proposal
- Particular part of a sub-criterion not addressed at all
- Comments for one (sub-)criterion entered under another (sub-)criterion
- Score for a given criterion not aligned with the corresponding comments
- Comments clearly too short or too long
- Emotional or personal statements (such as 'I believe/I feel' etc) or any form derogative/abusive language
- Hypothetical / conditional statements (such as `seems/would/could' etc)
- Too generic comments that are not substantiated by specific reference to the content of the proposal
- Categorical comments when referring to factual data of the proposal "there is no description of...", "there is complete lack of..."

Some typical problems, requiring the intervention from the VC-QC (II)



- Comments with examples of research already being conducted elsewhere (followed by citations)
- Suggestions for improvement of the proposal

Some instructions given to REs:

- Please avoid using speculative expressions such as "seems to be" and "is difficult to see" please rephrase
- Please remove any names of research investigators (such as Professors, researchers, etc.)
- Please refrain from any reference to specific locations and specific numbers (such as number of SMEs present in the proposal, aggregate number of work packages) to avoid the possibility of factual errors
- Remember : please always substantiate your judgment/statement by referring specifically to
 the content of the proposal

Some of typical inappropriate actions taken by VC-QC



- Challenging RE's assessment and not compliance of the comments with the related evaluation criteria
- Suggesting new wording (potential influence on the outcome of the proposal evaluation)
- Suggesting new score for a set of comments (potential influence on the outcome of the proposal evaluation)
- Focusing only on minuscule details or fixing spelling mistakes
- Using inappropriate language: e.g. "I am the one who is checking the quality and I am telling you that your text need modifications!"
- Arguing at all cost! Whenever there is a potential conflict, inform PO
- Ignore missing action by evaluator (RE) if RE re-submits an IER without implementing
 QC recommendations, inform PO



10. Feedback to Applicants

Feedback to applicants Evaluation Summary Report (ESR)



- Collation of all individual comments, per sub-criterion, from all 4 Individual Evaluation Reports (IER) may be mutually contradicting (no consensus): <u>full transparency</u>
- Consensus score of the proposal, per criterion, is calculated as a <u>median of all individual</u> scores from IERs
- Final score, per criterion, is <u>decided by the final EIC evaluation committee Panel Review</u> and the proposal total score is <u>calculated as a weighted sum of scores from all 3 criteria</u>
- Final EIC evaluation committee Panel Review adds also some <u>additional comments</u>, possibly including the advice <u>not to resubmit the proposal</u>



11. Confidentiality and Conflict of Interest experts-video

Confidentiality



You must:

Social media: Take great care not to post pictures or comments on evaluation matters through social media

- Not discuss evaluation matters (e.g. content of proposals, evaluation results or opinions of fellow experts) with anyone, including:
 - Other experts or EU staff or any other person (e.g. colleagues, students...) not directly involved in the evaluation of the proposal.
 - The sole exception: Your fellow experts who are evaluating the same proposal in a consensus group or Panel review.
- Not contact partners in the consortium, sub-contractors or any third parties.
- Not disclose names of your fellow experts.
- Maintain confidentiality of documents, paper or electronic, at all times and wherever you do your evaluation work (on-site or remotely).
 - Please take nothing away from the evaluation building (be it paper or electronic).
 - Return, destroy or delete all confidential documents,
 paper or electronic, upon completing your work, as instructed.



Conflicts of interest (COI) (I)



You have a COI if you: Were involved in the preparation of the proposal.

Stand to benefit directly/indirectly, if the proposal is successful or fails.

Have a close family/personal relationship with any person representing an applicant legal entity.

Are a director/trustee/partner of an applicant or involved in the management of an applicant's organisation.

Are employed or contracted by an applicant or a named subcontractor.

Are a member of an Advisory Group or Programme Committee in an area related to the call in question.

Are a National Contact Point or are directly working for the Enterprise Europe Network.

Are involved in a competing proposal.

Conflicts of Interest (COI) (II)



More in detail, in the following situations, the Commission/Agency will decide whether a COI exists

- If you were employed by an applicant including third parties or linked third parties involved in the proposal in the last three years
- If you were involved in a grant agreement/decision, the membership of management structures or a research collaboration with an applicant (or Marie Skłodowska Curie research fellow) in the last 3 years
- If you are in any other situation that casts doubt on your impartiality or that could reasonably appear to do so

Conflicts of Interest (COI) (III)





You must inform the Commission/Agency/JU as soon as you become aware of a COI before the signature of the contract, upon receipt of proposals, or during the course of your work.

- If there is a COI for a certain proposal you cannot evaluate it neither individually, nor in the consensus group, nor in the panel review.
- The Agency will determine if there is a COI on a case-by-case basis and decide the course of action to follow.
- If you knowingly hide a COI, you will be excluded from the evaluation and your work declared null and void.
 - The allowance/expenses you claimed may be reduced, rejected or recovered.
 - Your contract may be terminated.



You can send your questions via Sli.do:

Link: Slido.com Code: K010

You can also vote for the submitted questions by other Vice Chairs Quality Controllers that you would like us to answer

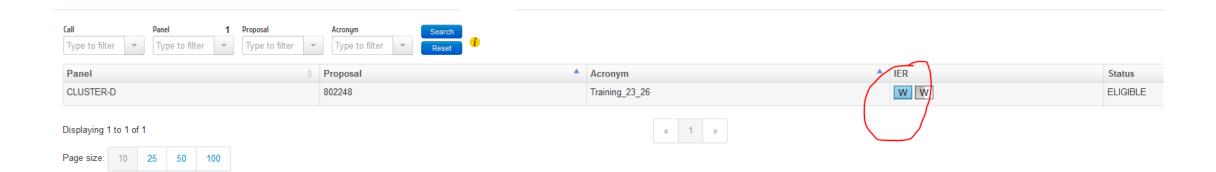
We will answer as many as possible by the end of the presentation



12. How to implement the Quality Checks in SEP



When you receive a notification that an IER has been submitted, go to the proposal and click on the blue icon





On the next screen click on "Expand"

09 June 2021 < Hide task details and comments Go to task list Task Details Individual Evaluation Report - PATHFINDER - OPEN Task Write IER Acronym Training_23_26 Help Proposal 802248 Status: Above Documents Part A Total score: 4 80 Threshold: 0 Evaluation progress: 100.00% Status ELIGIBLE Expand / collapse all criteria Panel CLUSTER-D Call HORIZON-EIC-2021-+ Criterion 1 - Excellence PATHFINDEROPEN-01 Current score: 5.0 / 5.0 ; Threshold 4; Weight 60% ; Priority 1 Deadline 16 June 2021 17:00 + Criterion 2 - Impact Task Status Finished Current score: 5.0 / 5.0 ; Threshold 3.5; Weight 20% ; Priority 2 Task Owner Antonio LOREDAN + Criterion 3 - Quality and efficiency of the implementation Current score: 4.0 / 5.0 ; Threshold 3; Weight 20% ; Priority 3 + Scope of the application Task Comments : Current status: Yes This task was successfully submitted at 09 June 2021 10:50 + Exceptional funding Expand comments > + Use of human embryonic stem cells (hESC) Current status: No + Use of human embryos Current status: No + Activities excluded from funding Current status: No + Do no significant harm principle Comment at a tour Mark a continue black



You can now check the comments and scores of the IER

ments

Write IER
Training_23_26
802248
Part A
ELIGIBLE
CLUSTER-D
HORIZON-EIC-2021PATHFINDEROPEN-01
16 June 2021 17:00
Finished
Antonio LOREDAN

ts i essfully submitted at 09 June 2021 10:50 Individual Evaluation Report - PATHFINDER - OPEN

Total score: 4.80 Threshold: 0 Evaluation

Expand / C

- Criterion 1 - Excellence

Current score: 5.0 / 5.0 ; Threshold 4; Weight 60% ; Priority 1

Your score:

5

The following aspects will be taken into account, to the extent that the proposed work corresponds to the description in the work programme:

Long-term vision: How convincing is the vision of a radically new technology that has the potential to have a transformative positive effect to our economy and society?

This proposal is excellent

Science-towards-technology breakthrough: How concrete, novel and ambitious is the proposed science-towards-technology breakthrough with respect to the state-of-the-art? What advancement does it provide the envisioned technology?

very good sectio

Objectives: How concrete and plausible are the proposed objectives? To what extent are high-risk/high-gain research approach and methodology appropriate for achieving them?

objective ore OK

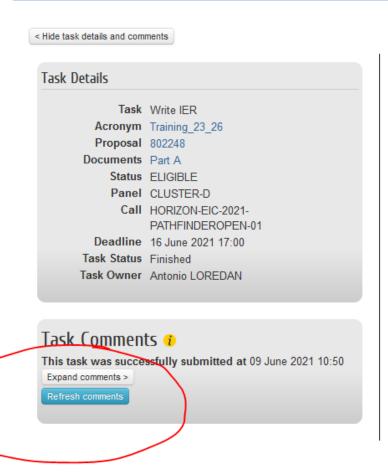
Interdisciplinarity: How relevant is the interdisciplinary approach from traditionally distant disciplines for achieving the proposed breakthrough?

interdisciplinarity is poor

- Criterion 2 - Impact



On the next screen click on "Expand Comments"



Individual Evaluation Report - PATHFINDER - OPEN

- Criterion 1 - Excellence

Current score: 5.0 / 5.0; Threshold 4; Weight 60%; Priority 1

Your score:

5

The following aspects will be taken into account, to the extent that the proposed w

Long-term vision: How convincing is the vision of a radically new technology that h:

This proposal is excellent

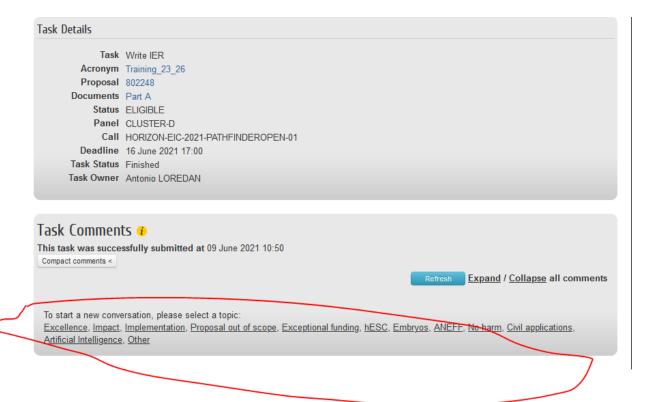
Science-towards-technology breakthrough: How concrete, novel and ambitious is t the envisioned technology?

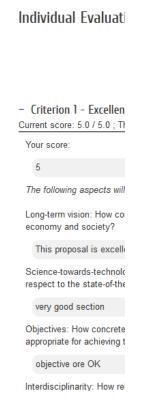
very good section

Objectives: How concrete and plausible are the proposed objectives? To what exte



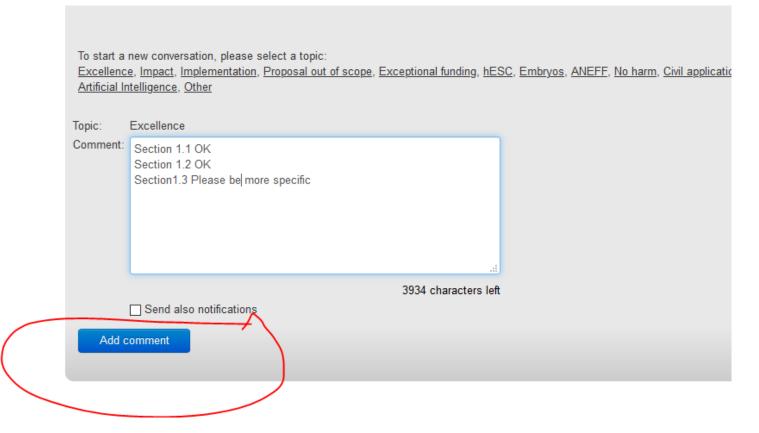
In expanded view you will use one of the links to the sections to the different sections of the IER I "Excellence", "Impact", "Implementation" etc...to enter your comments





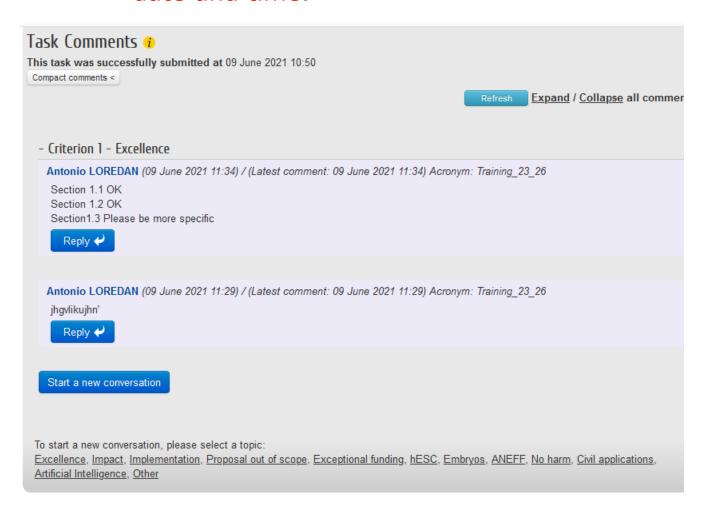


You can now enter your comments. Please always indicate the sections of the Criterion!. and click "add comment"





When you add the comment, it appears as below, showing the date and time.

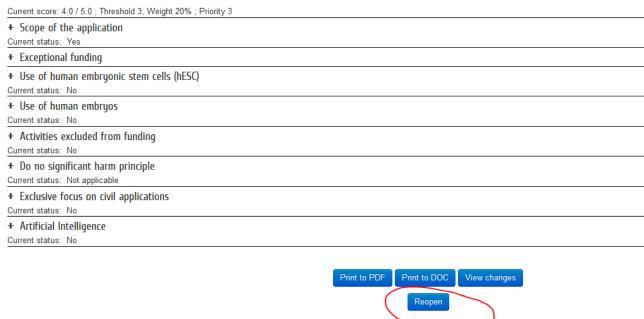




Now, click on "reopen" to reopen the IER for the Remote Evaluator.

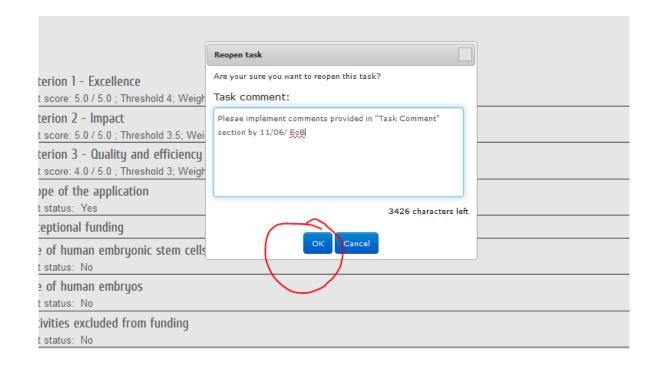
Go to task list





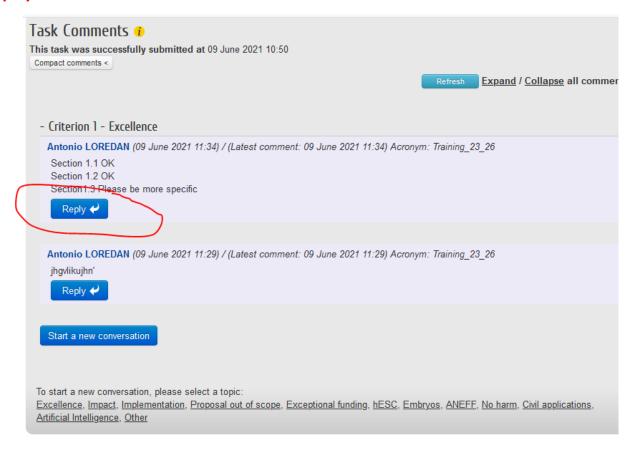


Leave short comment and don't forget to indicate a deadline





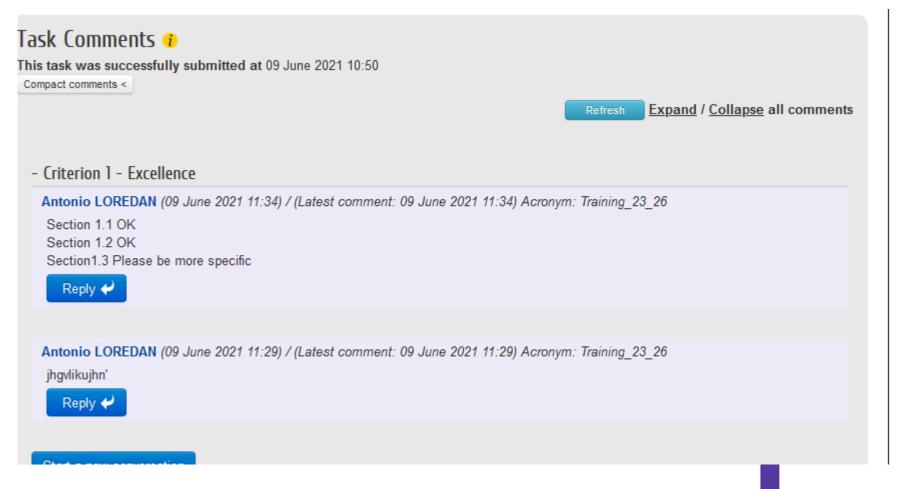
Second round of comments – expert Loredan has submitted a modified IER. Because this is a second round of comments, do not use "Start a new conversation" but use "Reply" in the relevant field





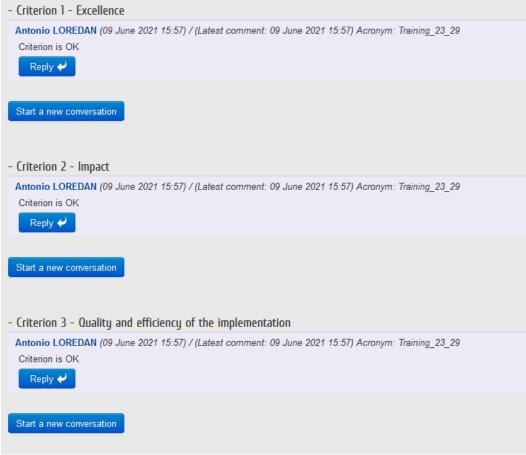
After several iterations you will see blocks of comments, one per expert, the blocks repeated in the different sections.

You will have to scroll down!





When you are satisfied with the quality of a given criterion, please say so, do the same for the additional questions





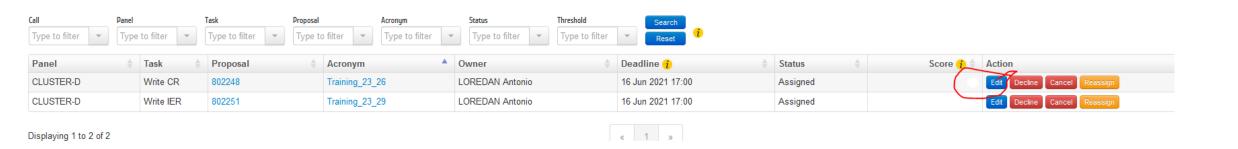
When you are satisfied with an Expert's IER, please send an Email to the POs. In this case, send an email with a Subject:

Proposal Acronym and number ; RE name; IER satisfactory

support.evaluator@eic.eismea.eu



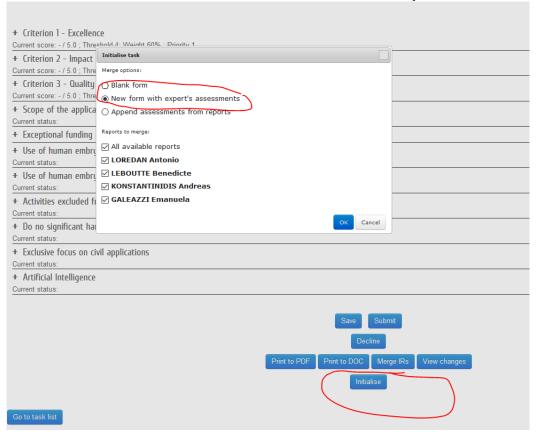
Now you can create and submit the CR. Click on edit CR in your task list





Select "Initialise" and then select "All available reports" and "New form with expert's assessments".

This will create a CR with all IERs as an input





Check that the comments of the for Res are present and then click on "submit".

This action will end your QC task for the proposal.

soy.com	

aesdrfc	
i5o6rol	
· Criterion 2 - Impact	
current score: 4.0 / 5.0 ; Threshold 3.5; Weight 20% ; Priority 2	
· Criterion 3 - Quality and efficiency of the implementation	
current score: 4.0 / 5.0 ; Threshold 3; Weight 20% ; Priority 3	
Scope of the application	
urrent status:	
Exceptional funding	
· Use of human embryonic stem cells (hESC)	
Purrent status:	
· Use of human embryos	
urrent status:	
Activities excluded from funding	
Current status:	
Do no significant harm principle	
Current status:	
Exclusive focus on civil applications Current status:	
- Artificial Intelligence	
Turnet status:	
Save	
Decline	
Print to PDF Print to DOC Merge IRs View changes	
Print to PDF Print to DOC Merge IRs View changes	



13.Important documents & Contact persons



EIC Work Programme 2021: https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/wp-call/2021/wp-horizon-eic-2021_en.pdf

Admissibility and Eligibility conditions:

https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/horizon/wp-call/2021/wp_horizon-eic-2021_en.pdf(Annex 2)

Proposal template:

Standard Application Form (EIC Pathfinder Open 2021)



Email to be used: support.evaluator@eic.eismea.eu

<u>Call Coordinator:</u> Antonio Loredan <u>Antonio.Loredan@ec.europa.eu</u>

Independent Observer: Dr. Emily Taylor (ejat2@cam.ac.uk)



Questions?

Slido.com

Code: K010



Thank you!

https://eic.ec.europa.eu

@EUeic

#EUeic



Reuse of this document is allowed, provided appropriate credit is given and any changes are indicated (Creative Commons Attribution

4.0 International license). For any use or reproduction of elements that are not owned by the EU, permission may need to be sought directly from the respective right holders.

All images © European Union, unless otherwise stated. Image sources: ©Tom Merton/Caia Image, #315243588; ©REDPIXEL, #220695664; ©Halfpoint, #180578699; ©bnenin #213968072; ©MyMicrostock/Stocksy, #3094437622021. Source: Stock.Adobe.com. Icons © Flaticon – all rights reserved.