

## Instructions for SYS-LIFE reviewers

To ensure a fair and open process, each application will be evaluated by three independent reviewers.

### Before starting the review process

Please consider possible conflicts of interest between yourself as a reviewer and the applicant before starting the review process. Immediately contact SYS-LIFE staff if you have conflict of interest e.g. of the following type:

- Close collaboration with the applicant (e.g. co-authorship and/or publishing of an article with the applicant over the past 3 years; involvement in the preparation of the application and/or in the exploitation of research results).
- Occupies or has occupied a position of a superior, subordinate or instructor to the applicant.
- Concurrent application for the same post as the applicant.
- Close association with the applicant (e.g. spouse, child, sibling, formally or otherwise, or close friend).

Please note that in Finland the disqualification of an assessor is governed by the provisions in sections 27–29 of the Administrative Procedure Act (<https://www.finlex.fi/fi/laki/kaannokset/2003/en20030434>). In the execution of their duties, reviewers are required to commit to all relevant UTU policies and abide by Finnish law.

### When evaluating

The review is divided into 4 criteria, based upon which the excellence of (i) the applicant, (ii) the research project, (iii) its impact and (iv) its implementation is assessed. The reviewer is also required to provide a separate assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the research proposal as a whole, giving this an overall score, which should not be simply the mathematical average of the other 4 sub-ratings.

Please rate the application using the scale below. *You are encouraged to use the whole scale.*

- 6 = Outstanding** Proposal stands out with exceptional novelty, innovation and renewal of science at global level.
- 5 = Excellent** Proposal is extremely good in international comparison – no elements to be improved.
- 4 = Very good** Proposal contains only minor elements that could be improved.
- 3 = Good Proposal** contains some elements that should be improved.
- 2 = Satisfactory** Proposal is in need of substantial modification or improvement.

**1 = Poor Proposal** contains severe weaknesses that are intrinsic to the proposed project.

In addition to providing a numeric score, please **write short comments** under each criterion, (up to a maximum of 200 words). *Please note that while the identify of the reviewer will not be disclosed the review, including these comments, will be sent to the applicant.*

### 1. Excellence of applicant (score & comments)

*Guiding questions:*

- Quality of applicant at international level, in relation to their career stage and research plan
- A significant record not only of scientific publications but also of activities such as teaching, supervision, knowledge transfer, public outreach and innovation (e.g. contributions to patents, development or inventions)
- Engagement in networks at international level (e.g. collaborations and conference presentations)
- Evidence of recognition for academic excellence (e.g. awards and grant funding)
- Evidence of any relevant technical competency required to support the proposed activities

### 2. Scientific Excellence of research project (score & comments)

*Guiding questions:*

- Quality and credibility of research project, including:
- Originality, ambition and level of innovativeness of the project
- Theoretical and methodological framework
- Strategic fit within UTU and SYS-LIFE
- Potential of the applicant to reach or re-enforce professional maturity/independence during the fellowship
- Quality and relevance of proposed partners, supervisors and working groups (including any secondments)
- Quality and appropriateness of any planned research, training and knowledge exchange activities outside UTU

### 3. Impact (score & comments)

*Guiding questions:*

- Potential of the plan to result in significant new scientific breakthroughs
- Potential of the plan to enhance the applicant's future career prospects
- Quality of the proposed measures to exploit and disseminate the project results
- Quality of the proposed publication and output plan to communicate the project activities to different target audiences, both within and outside academia

#### 4. Implementation (score & comments)

*Guiding questions:*

- Methodological framework, coherence and effectiveness of the work plan
- Appropriateness of the allocation of tasks and resources
- Appropriateness of the management structure and procedures, including risk management
- Appropriateness of the institutional infrastructure and relevance of the secondment in terms of complementarity
- Feasibility of completion within the 36-month duration of the fellowship

#### 5. Overall assessment of the research proposal as a whole (score & comments)

*Note that this rating should not be just a mathematical average of the sub-ratings. Reviewers may consider, for example, any mobility or diversity as a potentially valuable contribution to an applicant's professional development.*

Please provide comments on strengths and weaknesses of the application.

#### Ethical aspects of the research plan, including the data management plan (comments only)

*Guiding questions:*

Are ethical issues involved and if so, how well are they taken into account? Is the data management plan suitable? (Please note that all applicants are required to acknowledge that their work will accord with [guidance issued by the Finnish Advisory Board on Research Integrity](#)).

#### After evaluating

Please note that where there is a significant difference (10 points or more), between reviews of the same application, a consensus committee will be convened online. In line with MSCA practice, this will comprise of the application's reviewers, one of whom will act as rapporteur, responsible for preparing a Consensus Report at the end of the process. If necessary, the SC Vice-Chair may act as facilitator to help reach consensus.