

2015 Annual Work Plan EUROfusion Engineering Grants

Annex 2

Guide for applicants

Contents

	1
1. INTRODUCTION.....		3
2. ELIGIBILITY TO THE PROGRAMME.....		3
3. EVALUATION CRITERIA AND PROCEDURES.....		3
3.1 EXPERTS SELECTION.....		3
3.2 SELECTION CRITERIA OF THE PROPOSAL		4
3.3 THE EVALUATION PROCEDURE		4
3.3.1 <i>Scoring</i>		4
3.3.2 <i>Short Listing</i>		5
3.3.3 <i>Interviews with the short listed candidates</i>		5
3.3.4 <i>Consensus meeting, final scores and ranking</i>		5
4. PROPOSAL CONTENT		6

Appendix 1: Evaluation Criteria, Thresholds and Weightings

Appendix 2: Evaluation Criteria for the interview

1. INTRODUCTION

The EUROfusion Engineering Grants action is set-up through calls for participation to the EUROfusion Consortium Members. The evaluation of submitted proposals is performed through a set of procedures in order to ensure transparency and excellence in the selected projects. This guide details the procedures to be followed for these actions.

2. ELIGIBILITY TO THE PROGRAMME

The following eligibility criteria apply:

- 1) This action supports the career development and training of engineers, typically during the first years of their careers in research. More precisely, this action is directed towards engineers of all nationalities, namely:
 - a) Engineers in possession of a Master Degree in Engineering (or any equivalent university degree in Engineering) with a professional experience of less than 6 years after the Master Degree.
 - b) Engineers in possession of a Doctoral Degree (PhD) who have completed the PhD and defended their thesis within the two years preceding the deadline for proposal submission of the present call;

The candidate shall be recruited and employed by a EUROfusion member or one of its Third Parties stated in the Grant Agreement. The Consortium member/Third Party will have to provide a declaration of intent to recruit the engineer under an employment contract or equivalent contract compatible with the national legislation. He/she must be recruited by 30 August 2015. Candidates who have been already employed by a Consortium member or its Third Party for less than 2 years are also eligible to participate in the programme, provided they meet the requirements specified in points a) and b) above.

- 2) A joint proposal shall be submitted by the candidate and his/her mentor in the respective Research Unit (Consortium Member or its Third Party). The proposal shall refer to one of the advertised positions and the proposed work programme shall be relevant to the topics and activities described in the Annex 1 to the Call for Participation. Candidates may apply to more than one position: in this case the submission of a proposal for each single position the candidate is applying for is required.
- 3) The implementation of this action will be through the *EUROfusion Consortium* for the implementation of the Fusion Roadmap. The application must be supported and sent by the relevant GA member(s).

3. EVALUATION CRITERIA AND PROCEDURES

The evaluation of proposals is carried out by the EUROfusion Programme Manager with the assistance of independent experts.

3.1 Experts selection

The EUROfusion Programme Manager will nominate expert evaluators.

Experts perform evaluations on a personal basis, not as representatives of their employer, their country or any other entity. They are expected to be independent, impartial and objective, and to behave throughout in a professional manner. They sign an appointment letter, including a confidentiality and conflict of interest declaration. Confidentiality rules must be adhered to at all times, before, during and after the evaluation.

Conflicts of interest: Under the terms of the appointment letter, experts must declare beforehand any known conflicts of interest, and must immediately inform EUROfusion if one becomes apparent during the course of the evaluation. EUROfusion will take whatever action is necessary to remove any conflict.

Confidentiality: The appointment letter also requires experts to maintain strict confidentiality with respect to the whole evaluation process. Under no circumstance may an expert attempt to contact an applicant on his own account, either during the evaluation or afterwards.

At the beginning of the evaluation, the experts will be briefed by EUROfusion on the evaluation procedure, the experts' responsibilities, the issues involved in the particular area/objective and any other relevant item.

3.2 Selection criteria of the proposal

On receipt by EUROfusion, proposals will be assessed against the selection criteria specified herein. Proposals which do not fulfil these criteria will not be included in the evaluation.

A proposal will only be selected for evaluation if it meets all of the following conditions:

- It is received by EUROfusion before the deadline given in the call;
- It is compliant with the eligibility criteria defined under section 2;
- It is specifying the position the candidate is applying for.
- It is complete and includes all the documentation required in section 4.

3.3 The evaluation procedure

The evaluation procedure will be carried out in three stages:

- evaluation of the proposal content by the experts in view of the establishment of a short list (the number of short listed candidates should be not higher than twice the number of foreseen grants);
- interviews of all short-listed candidates;
- consensus meeting to define the final ranking of the proposals.

3.3.1 Scoring

Each candidate will be evaluated against the pre-determined evaluation criteria given in Appendices 1 and 2 and be scored according to the thresholds and weightings also given in Appendices 1 and 2.

Each criterion will be scored out of 5. Half marks can be given. The scores indicate the following with respect to the criterion under examination:

- | | |
|-----|-------------------|
| 1 - | <i>Poor.</i> |
| 2 - | <i>Fair.</i> |
| 3 - | <i>Good.</i> |
| 4 - | <i>Very Good.</i> |
| 5 - | <i>Excellent.</i> |

3.3.2 Short Listing.

The evaluation of the candidates by the experts in view of the establishment of a short list will be carried out in three steps:

In the first step the experts are acting individually; they do not discuss the proposals with each other, nor with any third party. The experts record their individual opinion in an Individual Assessment Report (IAR), giving scores and also comments against the evaluation criteria. Each proposal will be assessed by at least two experts.

In the second step, all experts will hold a consensus meeting under the chairmanship of the EUROfusion Programme Manager or his representative to discuss the complete set of proposals. The experts having assessed the same proposal will discuss to reach a consensus on the scoring. All criteria where a significant difference appears (more than 1 point) will be addressed. When, after the discussion, differences in scoring subsist which do not exceed one point, the average marks will be used for this (these) criterion (criteria). The outcome of this meeting is a summary table showing the scores of all candidates agreed between the relevant experts.

In case it is impossible to reach an agreement between the expert evaluators, EUROfusion will designate an additional expert evaluator to act as adjudicator.

EUROfusion will take the necessary steps to assure the quality of the IARs, with particular attention given to clarity, consistency, and appropriate level of detail. If important changes are necessary, the reports will be referred back to the experts concerned.

Based on the definitive marks which are agreed between the experts at the end of this consensus meeting, a short list will be established by EUROfusion. The short list will include not more than twice the number of foreseen grants.

3.3.3 Interviews with the short listed candidates

The evaluation will then progress toward individual interviews of the short listed candidates.

The interview board will be constituted of all the experts involved in the evaluation process and of the EUROfusion Programme Manager (or his representative). The board is chaired by the EUROfusion Programme Manager (or his representative). The secretary of the board is provided by EUROfusion.

During the interviews the Project Leaders/Task Force Leaders may attend as observers. The board may ask them for their opinion on the candidates but they shall not be involved in the attribution of scores for the final ranking.

EUROfusion will ensure fair and equal treatment of the candidates in the interview and in the following Consensus meeting. Presentation in English will be requested.

The interview process and criteria are detailed under Appendix 2.

3.3.4 Consensus meeting, final scores and ranking

After the interview, the board will hold a final meeting in order to:

- (1) Agree on the final score attributed to each short listed candidate (the final score is constituted of the sum of the two marks attributed at the end of the first stage assessment (consensus meeting) and during the interview, with a weight of respectively 40% and 60%.

- (2) Produce a final ranking of candidates and a proposal for the attribution of grants.

In the case of proposals with the same final score, the board will decide the priority order based on the professional experience of the candidates. Preference will be given to young engineers with no more than two years of professional experience.

4. PROPOSAL CONTENT

The proposal shall contain the following information:

1. A letter from the relevant GA member(s) addressing the application to EUROfusion with a declaration of intent to recruit the engineer under an employment contract or equivalent contract complying with the national legislation. In case of candidates already employed by a Consortium member or its Third Party the letter shall indicate the start date of the employment.
2. A motivation letter and a CV of the candidate with all relevant information.
3. A copy of the Master thesis or PhD thesis. If not available in English, a summary of the thesis in English is to be provided.
4. A list of several referees (with their e-mail addresses), including at least one who did not work with the candidate but may know him/her well enough.
5. Short CV of the Mentor and main relevant publications (maximum length: 3 pages)
6. The Work Programme jointly proposed by the candidate and his/her mentor including:
 - a. A description of the activities and the objectives (maximum length: 2 pages). The proposed work programme shall detail the work to be carried out by the candidate for the entire duration of the grant and describe how it will be implemented. It shall be relevant to the topics indicated in the advertisement of the position.
 - b. A comprehensive description of the work programme and career development plan, indicating any foreseen training actions, the organization of the mentoring by the host organisation, the possible contribution of other organisations to the work programme, the experience of the host organisation in the topics indicated in the call (maximum length: 2 pages).
 - c. A description of the actions involving specific expenditure, long term missions in other laboratories, key meetings and conference attendance and showing how these contribute to the achievement of the scientific goals of the work programme (maximum length: 1 page).
 - d. A list of milestones and deliverables to be achieved.
7. A financial summary for resources required by the EUROfusion Member or its Third Party for the implementation of the proposal, including the following information per year and engineer:
 - a. Salary cost (including fees, superannuation and social charges).
 - b. A global forecast of expenses related to the successful execution of the work programme (e.g. purchase of hardware, consumables, mentoring, participation in conferences and training courses, fees for scientific journals, memberships in scientific associations etc.)
 - c. Mission costs with a summary of the foreseen stays in other laboratories indicating the purpose and duration of the stays taking into account the EC Decision on Unit Costs.

Appendix 1: Evaluation criteria, thresholds and weightings for the short-listing

EUROfusion Engineering Grants		
Criterion:	Threshold	Weighting
CV of the candidate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Motivation - Educational Background - International background - Professional achievements - Potential of the candidate for the future of the fusion research programme - Scientific publications 	3/5	30%
Quality of the thesis (Master or PhD) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Soundness of concept, and quality of objectives. - S&T objectives of the thesis. - Scientific quality of the thesis. - Appropriateness of research methodology. - Originality and innovative aspect of the thesis. 	3/5	20%
Quality of the work programme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relevance to the topic addressed by the call - Scientific quality of the work programme - Quality of the objectives - Appropriateness of research methodology - Knowledge of the state-of-the-art 	3/5	30%
Quality of the training programme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consistency with the work programme - Quality of the career development plan - Contribution of the proposed training programme to improvement of the career prospects of the candidate - Quality and relevant experience of the hosting organization (expertise / human resources / facilities / infrastructures) and, where appropriate, of the other organization participating to the programme. 	3/5	20%

Proposals that fail to reach the threshold as indicated for each individual criterion and at least 75 % in the total mark shall be excluded from the final ranking.

Appendix 2: Evaluation criteria for the interview.

Individual interviews will last about 25 minutes and will consist of:

- Presentation by the candidate (about 10 minutes)
- Questions by the interview board (about 15 minutes).

The evaluation criteria for the interview will be based on the following criteria:

- Quality of the presentation
- Scientific/technical background

The knowledge of several languages or some international background will be considered as a plus.

At the end of the interview the board will proceed with a debriefing and attribute an interview mark to each candidate.

In the case of proposals with the same final score, the board will decide the priority order based on the professional experience of the candidates. Preference will be given to young engineers with no more than two years of professional experience.