









### **FIRST TEAM**

### Project selection criteria

under

Programme European Funds for Smart Economy 2021-2027

Priority 2: Enhancing research and innovation

Measure FENG.02.02 First Team



### Project evaluation takes place in three stages:

- Formal evaluation stage
- Stage I of substantive assessment
- Stage II of substantive assessment

Separate sets of criteria are provided for each stage.

### The project selection criteria are divided into:

- Mandatory criteria YES/NO a project that fails to meet these criteria will be assessed negatively;
- Ranking criteria a project that does not achieve the required minimum number of points indicated in a criterion will be assessed negatively.

### General principles of project evaluation:

- To meet the criterion, the project must obtain a "YES" in the obligatory criteria and the minimum number of points indicated for each ranking criterion.
- Projects which meet all criteria for each of the appraisal stages and the total number of
  points obtained for all ranking criteria (applies to the stage of substantive appraisal) is equal
  to or exceeds the minimum point threshold specified for each stage of project appraisal will
  be recommended for the next appraisal stage or for funding.
- The sum of points obtained in the criteria within the first and second stage of substantive appraisal determines the place on the ranking list of projects recommended for funding with respect to the determining criteria.

### **PROJECT EVALUATION CRITERIA:**

### Stage I - Formal assessment

Obligatory criteria YES/NO - a project failing to meet these criteria will be assessed negatively

### 1. The application was submitted in accordance with the requirements

Under this criterion, we will check that:

- a) The application is complete, i.e. all required fields have been filled in according to the requirements indicated in the Regulations for Project Selection;
- b) The application contains all required and completed annexes in accordance with the Instructions for filling in the Application Formand the Regulations for Project Selection;



c) The application has been signed on the final and closed for editing version of the application by an authorised person in the Applicant's organisation (in accordance with the rules described in the RPS).

EVALUATION PRINCIPLES: A YES rating for this criterion is only possible if all the conditions in the criterion description are fulfilled.

The information we are verifying in this criterion will be able to be corrected in the application during the evaluation, according to the procedure set out in the Regulations for Project Selection

### 2. Eligibility of the project

We will check that:

- a) The research organisation indicated in the application has its seat in the territory of the Republic of Poland and the project will be carried out in the territory of the Republic of Poland, 1;
- b) The applicant is an entity defined in Article 7(1) of the Act of 20 July 2018. Law on Higher Education and Science and meeting the definition of an organisation conducting research and disseminating knowledge as defined in the Commission Regulation (EU) NR 651/2014 of 17 June 2014 declaring certain types of aid compatible with the internal market in application of Article 107 and 108 of the Treaty (Article 2, point 83);
- c) The leader of the research team (principal investigator) is a scientist with a minimum of a doctoral degree (irrespective of nationality), who defended his/her doctorate no earlier than 12 years before the date of submission of the application<sup>2</sup>;
- d) **The leader of the research team** (principal investigator) contracted under (c) will be involved in the project at least half-time during the whole project implementation period and will also be the main author of the concept presented in the application.

**PRINCIPLES OF EVALUATION:** A score of YES for this criterion is only possible if all the conditions of the criterion description are fulfilled.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> In the case of commissioning the implementation of services, in particular research works, by the Applicant to a foreign contractor, including a research unit, the condition is considered fulfilled. This condition is also considered to be met if activities are performed outside Poland, which in scientific activity are usually performed internationally - in particular training, participation in conferences or related to cooperation with a scientific partner from abroad, provided that it is demonstrated that such activities are necessary for the achievement of project objectives.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> The beginning of this period is the annual date of the award of the degree and the end is the year preceding the deadline for submission of applications in the competition. The 12-year period may be extended by all documented periods of interruption of academic work occurring after the date of award of the degree, and breaks of not less than 6 months will be taken into account. Documented breaks in service include, but are not limited to, unpaid leave, parental leave, breaks due to long-term illness, work in the R&D sector without participation in research, work in other sectors of the economy, etc., For women who have given birth or who have adopted a child, the 12-year period is extended by one year for each child, regardless of the date of birth or adoption of the child, even if the period of documented leave or related breaks in service was shorter.



The information we verify in this criterion will be able to be corrected in the application during the evaluation, according to the procedure set out in the Regulations for Project Selection.

### 3. Eligibility of expenditure planned in the project

We will check that:

- a) the period of eligibility of expenditure covered by the project shall not extend beyond 31
   December 2029 as the final date of eligibility of expenditure under the European Funds for Smart Economy 2021-2027 programme;
- b) the amounts requested are in line with the percentage limits for the individual expenditure categories indicated in the Regulations for Project Selection;
- c) the amount of funding requested is in line with the Regulations for Project Selection.

**PRINCIPLES OF EVALUATION**: A score of YES for this criterion is only possible if all the conditions of the criterion description are fulfilled.

The information we are verifying in this criterion will be able to be corrected in the application during the evaluation, according to the procedure set out in the Regulations for Project Selection.

### RULES FOR QUALIFYING A PROJECT TO STAGE I OF SUBSTANTIVE APPRAISAL:

Only projects which at the stage of formal appraisal received a positive score of "YES" in all criteria will be recommended to stage I of substantive appraisal. **Stage I of substantive** assessment

### **RANKING CRITERIA:**

# 1. The leader of the research team (principal investigator) has the scientific track record and experience necessary to complete the project

The leader of the research team (principal investigator) of the project is responsible for realising the objective of the project which is to establish a research team in Poland in order to conduct scientific research at the highest level, to develop scientific international cooperation and to establish cooperation with business entity(ies) operating in Poland.

We will assess the competences of the Leader of the research team (principal investigator) taking into account:

- a) scientific excellence up to 5 most important scientific achievements of the candidate (publications, patent applications n, patents, prototypes, etc.);
- b) contribution of the above-mentioned scientific achievements to the development of the scientific field in question (whether the published work concerns hypotheses put forward by the applicant himself/herself or by other researchers, whether the work raises new hypotheses that are important for the scientific field in question or for other fields;



- c) experience gained during the research internship;
- d) experience in the implementation of projects or in supervising students or doctoral students.

#### **EVALUATION PRINCIPLES:**

We will score the entire criterion on a scale of 0 - 5 taking into account all the aspects indicated above, whereby:

- 5- criterion met with excellence;
- 4- criterion met very well;
- 3 criterion sufficiently met;
- 0 2 criterion not met.

The required point threshold for the successful assessment of an application in this criterion is not less than 3 points. The final mark in the criterion is the arithmetic mean of the marks obtained in each letter, where the failure to meet any of the letters at least sufficiently regardless of the result of the arithmetic mean will mean that the criterion has not been met.

**It is not permissible to** supplement or correct the application as regards the information verified in this criterion.

### 2. Novelty and originality of the proposed R&D work in the project

We will assess the following aspects of the proposed research:

- a) the level of novelty of the proposed R&D work in relation to the state of the art (the applicant shall, in addition to the description of the proposed research, indicate up to 5 items from the scientific literature or up to 5 items from publicly available international patent document databases representing the state of the art of the proposed R&D work);
- b) originality of the solution to the problem posed by the project, taking into account the latest developments in the field(s) concerned;
- c) the novelty of the project in relation to the doctoral project and to the candidate's scientific experience.

### **EVALUATION PRINCIPLES:**

We will score the entire criterion on a scale of 0 - 5 taking into account all the aspects indicated above, whereby:

- 5- criterion met with excellence;
- 4- criterion met very well;
- 3 criterion sufficiently met;
- 0 2 criterion not met.

The required score threshold for the successful assessment of an application in this criterion is not less than 3 points. The final mark in the criterion is the arithmetic mean of the marks obtained in



each letter, the failure to meet any of the letters at least sufficiently regardless of the result of the arithmetic mean will mean that the criterion has not been met.

**It is not permissible to** supplement or correct the application as regards the information verified in this criterion.

#### MAXIMUM NUMBER OF POINTS AT STAGE I OF SUBSTANTIVE EVALUATION: 10

### RULES FOR QUALIFYING A PROJECT TO STAGE II OF SUBSTANTIVE EVALUATION:

Applications which at stage I of substantive appraisal met all ranking criteria and received a total of at least 8 points in ranking criteria 1 and 2 will be recommended for stage II of substantive appraisal.

### **Stage II of substantive assessment**

### Obligatory criteria [Y/N].

### 1. The project will be implemented in the defined areas and types of research

We will check that:

- a) the project does not concern activities excluded on the basis of Article 7 of Regulation (EU) 2021/1058 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 on the European Regional Development Fund and the Cohesion Fund (OJ L 231, 30.06.2021, p. 159 and OJ L 261, 22.07.2021, p. 58);
- the scope of R&D work described in the application for co-financing is in line with the document entitled "National Intelligent Specialisations" in force on the day the call for proposals is announced;
- c) the research planned in the project shall include industrial research or experimental development. Basic research is excluded from support.

**PRINCIPLES OF EVALUATION**: A score of YES for this criterion is only possible if all the conditions in the criterion description are fulfilled.

The information that we verify in this criterion will be able to be corrected in the application during the evaluation in accordance with the procedure set out in the Regulations for Project Selection.

### 2. Project cooperation

We will assess, whether the project will be carried out in collaboration with at least one foreign scientific partner and at least one national economic partner (entrepreneur) and check that:



- a) the foreign scientific partner has adequate experience in the thematic area of the project and its participation will bring significant added value to the project;
- b) the activity of the national economic partner indicated in the application is relevant to the theme of the project and its participation will bring significant added value.

**PRINCIPLES OF EVALUATION:** A score of YES for this criterion is only possible if all the conditions of the criterion description are fulfilled.

The information we are verifying in this criterion will be able to be corrected in the application during the evaluation, according to the procedure set out in the Regulations for Project Selection.

# 3. The reasonableness of the expenditure planned in the project in relation to the subject and scope of the project.

We will check that:

- a) the planned costs for the involvement of project team members are reasonable and justified;
- b) the planned expenditure for the implementation of individual tasks in the project is adequate to the scope of the project and reasonable;
- the planned expenditure is correctly allocated to the relevant expenditure categories, and complies with the rules on eligibility of costs set out in the Eligibility Guidelines for 2021-2027 in force on the date of announcement of the call for proposals and in the Catalogue of Costs annexed to the Regulations for Project Selection;
- d) the scientific and research equipment planned to be purchased is necessary for the proper implementation of the project and is within the cost limits of the category. If the equipment proposed for purchase is not unique in Poland, we will verify the substantive and economic justification of the need to purchase it within the project. Acceptance of the purchase of the proposed equipment will be conditional on the fact that objective conditions (organisational or technical) resulting from the nature of the planned experiments do not allow the use of equipment of this type existing at the Applicant or in any other research organisations.

During the appraisal, if the project expenditure is deemed to have been overestimated, the Evaluation Committee may decide to reduce the project budget, giving reasons.

**PRINCIPLES OF EVALUATION**: A score of YES for this criterion is only possible if all the conditions of the criterion description are fulfilled.

The information we are verifying in this criterion will be able to be corrected in the application during the evaluation, according to the procedure set out in the Regulations for Project Selection.

However, amendments may not result in an increase in the amount of project funding requested compared to that indicated in the application before the amendment.



### 4. Output and result indicators

Environmental indicators are not assessed in this criterion - they are assessed in the criterion 'The project meets the principle of sustainable development'.

We will assess whether:

- the scope of the project's planned tasks and expenditure is defined by output and result indicators:
- the output and result indicators available in the application form are adequately indicated for the support requested;
- the indicators are coherent, measurable, well defined, objectively verifiable and realistic to achieve;
- the applicant has set out how the baseline and end target values for the output and result
  indicators were calculated and how the achievement of the planned indicator values will be
  verified.

**PRINCIPLES OF EVALUATION:** A score of YES for this criterion is only possible if all the conditions in the criterion description are fulfilled.

The information we verify in this criterion will be able to be corrected in the application during the evaluation, according to the procedure set out in the Regulations for Project Selection

### 5. The project meets the horizontal principles of equal opportunities and nondiscrimination

We will assess whether the project meets the requirements resulting from the horizontal principles of equal opportunities and non-discrimination, including accessibility for persons with disabilities and equality between women and men in accordance with Article 9(2)-(3) of Regulation 2021/1060 of the European Parliament and of the Council. The assessment of the project's compliance with the above-mentioned horizontal principles is made on the basis of the provisions of the Guidelines for the Implementation of Equality Principles under the EU Funds for 2021-2027 and Annex No. 2 to the above-mentioned Guidelines.

The evaluation will be carried out separately in relation to each of the two aforementioned principles: the principle of equal opportunities and non-discrimination and the principle of equality between women and men on the basis of the information contained in the grant application:



### The principle of equal opportunities and non-discrimination:

We will assess whether the Applicant has demonstrated in the application that the project meets the horizontal principle of equal opportunities and non-discrimination, i.e. whether:

- the application shows that the project has a positive impact on the principle of equal opportunities and non-discrimination on the grounds of sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation,
- the applicant has demonstrated in the application that all products/services of the project will be accessible for persons with disabilities in accordance with accessibility standards appropriate to the scope of the implemented project (including the concept of universal design), constituting an appendix to the Guidelines on the implementation of equality principles in the framework of the EU funds for the years 2021-2027 or, in justified and described in the application, has demonstrated the neutrality of the project product/service in the meaning of these Guidelines, including the impossibility of meeting all accessibility standards.

For products and services under the principle of equal opportunities and non-discrimination, including accessibility for people with disabilities, the applicant shall justify their positive or neutral impact.

### The principle of equality between women and men:

We will assess whether the Applicant has demonstrated in the application that the project complies with the horizontal principle of equality between women and men, i.e. whether the application shows that the project complies with the principle of equality between women and men or is neutral with respect to this principle in justified cases described in the application within the meaning of the Guidelines for the Implementation of Equality Principles under EU Funds 2021-2027.

**PRINCIPLES OF EVALUATION:** A score of YES for this criterion is only possible if all the conditions in the criterion description are fulfilled.

The information we verify in this criterion will be able to be corrected in the application during the assessment in accordance with the Regulations for Project Selection.

### 6. The project is compatible with the Charter of Fundamental Rights (CFR)

We will assess whether the project complies with the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union of 26 October 2012 insofar as it relates to the manner of implementation and scope of the project.

Assessment of compliance with the criterion will be made with reference to Articles 1, 3-8, 10, 15, 20-23, 25-28, 30-33 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights. The applicant should provide in the application information on how, within the scope of its own capabilities and the scope of the project implementation and impact, the compliance of the project with the listed articles of the Charter of



Fundamental Rights or neutrality towards the listed articles will be ensured. At the same time, the applicant shall ensure that its project is neutral with respect to the other articles of the Charter of Fundamental Rights.

**PRINCIPLES OF EVALUATION:** A score of YES for this criterion is only possible if all the conditions in the criterion description are fulfilled.

The information we verify in this criterion will be able to be corrected in the application during the assessment in accordance with the Regulations for Project Selection.

# 7. The project is in line with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)

We will assess whether the project complies with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities of 13 December 2006 as regards the manner of implementation and scope of the project. Assessment of compliance with the criterion will be made with reference to Articles 2-7, 9 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The applicant should provide in the application information on how, within the scope of its own capabilities and the scope of the implementation and impact of the project, the compliance of the project with the listed articles of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities or neutrality towards the listed articles will be ensured. For the other articles of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Applicant shall ensure that its project is neutral with respect to them.

**PRINCIPLES OF EVALUATION:** A score of YES for this criterion is only possible if all the conditions in the criterion description are fulfilled.

The information we verify in this criterion will be able to be corrected in the application during the assessment in accordance with the Regulations for Project Selection.

### 8. The project meets the principle of sustainable development

It shall be assessed whether the project complies with the principle of sustainable development as referred to in Article 9(4) of Regulation 2021/1060 of the European Parliament and of the Council (The objectives of the Funds shall be pursued in accordance with the objective of promoting sustainable development as set out in Article 11 of the TFEU and taking into account the UN's Sustainable Development Goals as well as the Paris Agreement and the 'do no serious harm' principle. The objectives of the Funds shall be pursued in full respect of the Union environmental acquis), i.e. whether:

- 1) The project will be implemented in accordance with the relevant environmental legislation related to the implementation of the project.
- 2) The project will be implemented in accordance with:



- ✓ with at least two of the principles from the 6Rs, i.e. refuse; reduce; reuse; recover; recycle; rethink; or
- ✓ with at least one rule from the 6Rs or
- ✓ a positive impact on other environmental aspects of the project (than the 6R principles) or
- ✓ at least one principle from the 6Rs <u>and</u> according to the positive impact on other environmental aspects within the project (than the 6Rs).
- 3) The applicant has provided adequate environmental indicators:
  - ✓ where compliance with two principles from the 6Rs is selected, at least one relevant indicator has been provided for each principle;
  - ✓ in the case of compliance with one principle from the 6Rs, at least two relevant indicators are provided;
  - ✓ in the case of a positive impact on other environmental aspects, at least two relevant indicators are presented, one of which will improve the value of the indicator by at least 10% compared to the value before the implementation of the project;
  - ✓ in the case of compliance with one of the principles of the 6Rs and compliance with another environmental aspect, at least two relevant indicators are presented at least one for the 6Rs and at least one for another environmental aspect (other than the 6Rs), with an improvement of at least 10% compared to the value of the indicator before the implementation of the project.
- 4) Environmental indicators:
  - ✓ relate to the project being carried out;
  - ✓ are coherent, measurable, well-defined, objectively verifiable and realistic to achieve:
  - ✓ have defined baseline and target values and a means of calculating target values for indicators, as well as a means of verifying the achievement of target values for indicators;
  - ✓ are selected from the List of Key Indicators or are self-defined.
- 5) Meeting the sustainability principle applies to the entire project.

**EVALUATION RULES**: A score of YES for this criterion is only possible when all the conditions of the criterion description are fulfilled. The information verified in this criterion may be corrected in the application during the assessment according to the procedure specified in in the Regulations for Project Selection.

### 9. Management of conflicts of interest of the principal investigator of the project

We will check that:

1) any personal or capital links of the principal investigator of the project with companies active in the field of scientific activities of the project are demonstrated in the application;



2) the way in which the Applicant proposes to manage the conflict of interest includes a regular way of reporting to the Applicant's authorities on the results of the research carried out under the project and the intention to give related parties access to these results;

In assessing this criterion, we will base ourselves on the information provided in the application and that appearing in the publicly available KRS database.

In order to define personal or capital links within the meaning of this criterion, rules analogous to the definition of a link relationship from the 2021-2027 Expenditure Eligibility Guidelines Section 3.2.2(8)(a-c) for procurement procedures have been adopted. Thus, a personal or capital relationship of team leaders with enterprises should be understood as a relationship consisting in:

- ✓ participation in a company as a partner in a civil partnership or partnership, holding at least 10% of shares or stocks, acting as a member of an advisory, supervisory or management body, proxy or attorney;
- ✓ remaining with the entrepreneur: in a marriage, in a relationship of kinship or affinity
  in a straight line, kinship or affinity in the collateral line to the second degree, or
  relationship by adoption, guardianship or custody, or remaining in cohabitation
  with the entrepreneur, his/her legal deputy or members of management or
  supervisory bodies of enterprises operating in an area similar or tangential to the
  R&D works of the Project;
- ✓ remain in such a legal or factual relationship with the entrepreneur that there is reasonable doubt as to their impartiality or independence in connection with granting access to the results of the Project.

EVALUATION RULES: The criterion will receive a score of "YES" if all the requirements indicated in its description are met.

The information we verify in this criterion will be able to be corrected in the application during the evaluation or clarified, according to the procedure set out in the Regulations for Project Selection.

### **RANKING CRITERIA:**

### 1. Potential for project implementation

As part of the assessment we will check that:

a) the applicant has demonstrated that the planned work is adequate (i.e. necessary, justified and sufficient) to achieve the project's objective/solution of the problem identified and that the timetable for implementation is clear and realistic, that the planned tasks are necessary and form a logical whole and that measurable milestones for each of the tasks have been identified;



- the applicant has demonstrated that the technical and human resources which it has at its disposal and which the project is capable of acquiring are sufficient for the implementation of the project;
- c) the project is planned to **involve young researchers**<sup>3</sup> and **students**<sup>4</sup> (the team conducting R&D work in the project within 6 months of the start of the project will consist of a minimum of 3 people together with the principal investigator);
- d) the applicant has identified the key risks, including scientific or technological risks, associated with the achievement of the project milestones and targets and has foreseen actions to mitigate the identified risks.

#### **EVALUATION PRINCIPLES:**

We will score the entire criterion on a scale of 0 - 5 with:

- 5- criterion met with excellence;
- 4- criterion met very well;
- 3 criterion sufficiently met;
- 0 2 criterion not met.

The required score threshold for the successful assessment of an application in this criterion is not less than 3 points. The final mark in the criterion is the arithmetic mean of the scores obtained for each letter, where the failure to meet any of the letters to at least a sufficient degree regardless of the result of the arithmetic mean will mean that the criterion has not been met.

The information we are verifying in this criterion will be able to be corrected in the application during the evaluation, according to the procedure set out in the Regulations for Project Selection.

### 2. Management plan for project results

We will assess whether the applicant:

 a) identified an area of research that could lead to the creation of intellectual property of potential implementation value and describe the relevance of the proposed solution in terms of solving economic or socio-economic problems;

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> According to Article 360(2) of the Act of 20 July 2018. - *Law on Higher Education and Science, a young researcher* is a person conducting scientific activity who: 1) is a doctoral student or an academic teacher - and does not have a doctoral degree, or 1a) is preparing an extramural doctoral thesis and does not have a doctoral degree - if no more than 4 years have elapsed from the date of appointment of a promoter or promoters or a promoter and an assistant promoter pursuant to Article 217, or 2) has a doctoral degree, from the award of which no more than 7 years have elapsed, and is employed in an entity referred to in Article 7(1).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Bachelor's, Master's or equivalent studies.



b) identified markets or customers with a potential interest in the project results and outlined the planned strategy for commercialisation of the research results.

#### **EVALUATION PRINCIPLES:**

We will score the entire criterion on a scale of 0 - 5 taking into account all the aspects indicated above, whereby:

- 5- criterion met with excellence;
- 4- criterion met very well;
- 3 criterion sufficiently met;
- 0 2 criterion not met.

The required score threshold for the successful assessment of an application in this criterion is not less than 3 points. The final mark in the criterion is the arithmetic mean of the marks obtained in each letter, the failure to meet any of the letters to at least a sufficient degree regardless of the result of the arithmetic mean will mean that the criterion has not been met.

The information we are verifying in this criterion will be able to be corrected in the application during the evaluation, according to the procedure set out in the Regulations for Project Selection.

# 3. Competitive advantage of the proposed project with respect to other research carried out in the subject area of the proposal

As part of the evaluation, we will check whether the applicant has identified an opportunity to make a breakthrough in the area to which the project relates, and whether the applicant has demonstrated that the proposed work will contribute to the development of solutions that are competitive with other research carried out in the subject area of the project.

### **EVALUATION PRINCIPLES:**

We will score the entire criterion on a scale of 0 - 5 taking into account all the aspects indicated above, whereby:

- 5- criterion met with excellence;
- 4- criterion met very well;
- 3 criterion sufficiently met;
- 0 2 criterion not fulfilled

The required threshold for the proposal to pass this criterion is no less than 3 points.

The information we verify in this criterion will not be able to be corrected in the application during the evaluation.



### MAXIMUM POSSIBLE AMOUNT OF POINTS AT STAGE II OF SUBSTANTIVE ASSESSMENT: 15

## RULES FOR RECOMMENDING A PROJECT FOR FINANCING AFTER STAGE II OF SUBSTANTIVE APPRAISAL:

Only projects that have met all the obligatory criteria and have received at least 20 points in total at the first and second stage of substantive assessment will be recommended for funding within the available allocation.

### **Decisive criterion**

The total number of points obtained in the criteria determines the place of the application on the ranking list of projects recommended for funding. If several projects receive an identical total number of points, and the allocation for a given call for proposals is not sufficient to finance all of them, the order on the ranking list and the financing will be determined by the number of points received in the determining criteria, in the following order:

- 1. Novelty and originality of the proposed R&D work in the project.
- 2. The leader of the research team (principal investigator) has the scientific track record and experience necessary to complete the project.
- 3. Management plan for project results.