Peer Review Guidelines
PSP-FLAGSHIP
PEER REVIEW GUIDELINES

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Appendix: PSP-Flagship Review Form
1. PSP-Flagship objectives

To establish Luxembourg as a leading knowledge society, science and research need to be anchored sustainably in the public consciousness. Therefore, the Luxembourg National Research Fund (FNR) encourages and supports all actors engaged in scientific activities to promote an active exchange between science and society.

To further strengthen this exchange, the FNR programme PSP-Flagship (PSP: Promoting Science to the Public) has been developed to help set up long-term science outreach activities with a sustainable and lasting impact on the promotion of science to the public in Luxembourg.

The programme co-funds projects that allow lay audiences (e.g. pupils, students, teachers, educators or adult laypeople of any kind) to come into contact with science and research in an interactive way. The choice of format and scientific themes is free, and the funding programme is open to all disciplines.

The promotion of science or research needs to be placed at the centre and projects must include the active participation of the audience. Projects are expected to achieve qualitative aims like increasing scientific literacy, explaining the scientific method, stimulating curiosity and receptiveness to scientific themes, increasing critical judgement as regards scientific themes, developing an understanding of scientific professions, getting feedback from the target audience on a scientific theme, promoting gender-balance in science, promoting life-long learning, training “vectors” that will enable better communication towards the general public etc.

PSP-Flagship funding is intended for a 3-year period (compulsory duration). Projects may obtain co-funding of up to EUR 350,000 - 400,000 (exceptions may be possible if duly justified). Co-funding by the applicants and/or other sources than the FNR is expected in view of self-sustainability in the long term.
2. PSP-Flagship selection criteria

Remote reviewers and panel members are requested to evaluate all proposals according to the selection criteria of the PSP-Flagship programme:

1. **Project idea and suitability of methods/contents with regard to the target audience**
   - Clarity and pertinence of the project idea
   - Promotion of science/research at the forefront of the project
   - Clearly defined lay target audience
   - Potential of the project to attract the target audience
   - Interactive and practice-oriented, with actively engaged participants (if possible: repeated exposure of the audience to science/research)
   - Awareness of the Luxembourg context and motivation to address a current challenge in Luxembourg
   - Knowledge of current best practice/literature regarding science outreach/communication and appropriateness of references

Ongoing projects: please explain how a PSP-Flagship will enable you to further develop your project.

2. **Feasibility, quality and efficiency of the project plan**
   - Efficient and ambitious project plan, but feasible within the 3-year timeframe
   - Appropriate requested human resources and budget (including co-funding)
   - Where applicable: necessary infrastructure(s) to be available at the start of the project

3. **Experience of the Project Leader and the team**

   The track record of both the Project Leader and the team will be evaluated. The Project Leader and the team members need to be experienced in promoting science or research to lay audiences. The respective roles of the team members in the project need to be clear. Project Managers/staff that will work at least 50% of their time on the project should be known at the time of submission. If this is not possible, a detailed job description and profile of the person(s) to be hired must be included in the application. In addition, applicants will need to detail how administrative and financial tasks associated with the project will be taken care of, and how communication and management decisions will be organised.

4. **Expected outcomes and potential for long-term impact**
   - Number of people to be reached and effect on the target audience (e.g. a change in knowledge and understanding, skills, attitudes and values, enjoyment, behaviour)
   - Visibility of the project
If applicable: Collaborations with similar, complementary projects/institutions in Luxembourg

Sustainability (beyond the initial 3-year period)
  - Long-term vision and strategy of the project
  - Sustainable and lasting impact in Luxembourg
  - Financial strategy to support self-sustainability in the long term
3. PSP-Flagship selection process

The PSP-Flagship selection process consists of the following stages:

- Proposals undergo an administrative eligibility check.
- Eligible proposals are peer-reviewed in writing by minimum three independent, international experts (remote reviewers).
- Based on the remote reviews, a shortlist is established; shortlisted candidates are invited to present their proposals to the PSP-Flagship expert panel and to react to issues raised by the remote reviewers.
- The expert panel rates the proposals, based on the remote reviews and the interviews, and issues a funding recommendation.
- The FNR decision bodies select the proposals to be funded based on the recommendations by the expert panel.
- The funding decision is communicated to the applicants.

3.1. Eligibility check

Prior to entering the external peer-review process, proposals undergo an eligibility check at the FNR. In order to be eligible, proposals must

- be submitted before the deadline via https://grants.fnr.lu by an eligible institution,
- be complete (i.e. all of the requested components and completed forms must be present),
- be written in English,
- respect the format and page limitations,
- respect the eligibility criteria for the Project Leader (name needs to be known at the time of submission), and
- fall within the scope of the PSP-Flagship programme.

Proposals not conforming to one of these elements are rejected at this stage and are not peer-reviewed. The provision of false information as well as plagiarism may also result in a rejection of the proposal.

3.2. Remote review

Eligible proposals are then sent to minimum three international, independent reviewers who are asked to complete a written review (see appendix) with regard to the PSP-Flagship selection criteria (see section 2). Remote reviewers are selected by the FNR based on their expertise in the field of the proposal and taking care that conflicts of interest are avoided.

Before accessing the proposals, remote reviewers must sign a Confidentiality Agreement abiding by the FNR Ethics Charter and Code of Conduct for Research Assessment¹. The identity of the remote reviewers is confidential and will not be disclosed to the applicants.

In the Review Form (see appendix), remote reviewers will be asked to provide

- a detailed evaluation and rating for each selection criterion (see section 2)

¹ See https://www.fnr.lu/download-center/
Reviewers must comment concisely on each selection criterion to the best of their abilities, professional skills, knowledge and ethics. In addition to the written assessment, a scoring system is used to underline the comments and arguments provided:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Fair/Poor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

- an **overall assessment** and rating of the project proposal

The following points should be addressed:
- most important strengths and weaknesses of the project proposal;
- any modifications to the proposal that the reviewers think would be necessary;
- any further comments.

In addition to the written assessment, an overall scoring of the proposal is foreseen to underline the comments and arguments provided:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Final Score</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>Proposal of excellent quality that should be funded as proposed. The proposal scores excellent on all or most criteria.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Proposal of very good quality that should be funded. The proposal scores very good (and even excellent) on all or most criteria.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Proposal of very good quality, but with shortcomings on one of the selection criteria. The proposal could be improved to become a very good/excellent proposal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Proposal of insufficient quality, with major shortcomings.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on the remote reviews, a shortlist is established; shortlisted candidates are invited to present their proposals to the PSP-Flagship expert panel and to react to issues raised by the remote reviewers (anonymised remote reviews are sent to the candidates prior to the interview session).

### 3.3. Expert panel (interview panel)

In the second step of the external evaluation, an **international expert panel** is established by the FNR, composed of a chair and several domain experts. Panel members are high-level experts selected by the FNR based on their senior expertise in the fields covered by the programme and taking care that conflicts of interest are avoided. Before accessing the project proposals, panel members must sign a Confidentiality Agreement abiding by the FNR Ethics Charter and Code of Conduct for Research Assessment².

During the **panel interviews**, candidates are invited to give a presentation of 20 minutes comprising the following parts:
- a brief presentation of themselves and their team,
• a description of their project, explaining how it fits the programme selection criteria (see section 2), including their strategy and long-term vision to set up a sustainable, high-impact outreach activity in Luxembourg, and

• specific answers to the questions raised by the remote reviewers (anonymised remote reviews are sent to the candidates prior to the interview session).

The post-presentation interview of 15 minutes is conducted by one of the panel members (first referee). All panel members may address additional questions to the candidates.

In the deliberation after the interviews (closed meeting), the expert panel gives each proposal an overall score, ranks the proposals and issues a funding recommendation.

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</table>

The final funding decision is then taken by the FNR’s decision bodies based on the expert panel's recommendation.

For all proposals, the panel draws up a Panel Conclusion after the panel meeting. This synthesis will be sent to the candidates together with the funding decision.

The FNR Programme Manager in charge of the PSP-Flagship programme supports all involved experts during the evaluation process. In cooperation with the panel chair, the FNR Programme Manager takes care that the FNR rules and procedures are respected. The FNR Programme Manager also provides the panel with background information on the Luxembourg context.
APPENDIX – PSP-Flagship Review Form

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Acronym</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project Leader</td>
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<td>Coordinating Institution</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reviewer Code</td>
<td>To be filled out by FNR:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please consult the PSP-Flagship Peer Review Guidelines before completing this form.

Please note that the anonymised remote reviews will be sent to the applicants.

**PART 1: DETAILED EVALUATION**

Please write a short assessment for each of the selection criteria and rate each criterion.

1. **Project idea and suitability of methods/contents with regard to the target audience (min. ¼ page)**

   Type your text here

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Fair/Poor</th>
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2. **Feasibility, quality and efficiency of the project plan (min. ¼ page)**

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### 3. Experience of the Project Leader and the team (min. ¼ page)

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### 4. Expected outcomes and potential for long-term impact (min. ¼ page)

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PART 2: OVERALL ASSESSMENT

Overall assessment of the proposal (½ - 1 page)

Please write an overall assessment of the proposal, in accordance with your criteria scoring above.

The following points should be addressed in the overall assessment of the proposal:
- most important strengths and weaknesses of the project proposal,
- any modifications to the proposal that you think would be necessary,
- any other comments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FINAL SCORE (see definitions below)</th>
<th>A+</th>
<th>A</th>
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PART 3: FURTHER COMMENTS