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INTRODUCTION

The National Research, Development and Innovation Office (further on referred to as “the NRDI Office”) was established with the mission to provide predictable funding and implement an efficient and transparent use of available resources for research, development and innovation in Hungary, under the umbrella of the National Research, Development and Innovation Fund. The OTKA funding of individual excellence in basic research is granted in a panel-based system with a total of 28 scientific panels, many of which are operating with foreign experts. Panel members are selected on the basis of scientific excellence with due consideration of affiliations and gender balance. Applications are subject to rigorous peer review, remote experts from all over the world are invited to review applications and aid panel work. Scientific councils exercise control over panels and delegate individuals, acting as supervisors, to panel meetings. Ranking lists established in each category of proposals are delivered from the panels to the scientific councils and serve as a basis for the councils to prepare funding recommendations. The president of the NRDI Office forwards the consolidated funding recommendation to the minister in charge of coordinating science policy. Upon the funding decision, anonymous reviews along with the panel summary, are conveyed to the applicant.

Applications as well as reviews and panel reports are submitted online. Reviewers as well as panel members should respect confidentiality and handle data and intellectual property with due care. Confidential information shall not be made available to a third party.

This handout will guide you through the key steps of evaluation of applications both in technical and academic terms. First, kindly declare any conflict of interest with the applicant by considering the rules below and then commit yourself to observe confidentiality.

There is a conflict of interest if the reviewer

(i) is in an employment relation with the applicant;
(ii) is in a work supervision relation with the applicant or a close colleague in the same unit;
(iii) have had a PhD student–supervisor relationship with the applicant;
(iv) works on a common project with the applicant or they share a common firm;
(v) is a relative of the applicant according to Civil Code;
(vi) is a senior official or a proprietor of the research institution concerned in the proposal;
(vii) is affected by other circumstances that interfere with the impartial evaluation of the proposal.
In case you are currently applying for a fund, you may not accept the invitation to review an application submitted to the same panel, so as to avoid interference.

**Before accepting the invitation to prepare the review, please proceed as follows:**

- Make sure you have sufficient time to prepare the review/reviews to the best of your capacity by the given deadline. If you cannot accept the invitation or prepare the review/reviews for any reason, please inform the NRDI Office staff in time.

- For processing the remuneration, read, complete, and sign the framework agreement on expert duties in three copies and mail it to the Department for Researcher Excellence at NRDI Office.  

**Please pay attention to the following details while reviewing the proposals:**

- You can view the publication list of the applicant recorded in MTMT (database of Hungarian scientific publications) by clicking on „Publications, citations (database, in new window)”; alternatively, you can access it in the evaluation form using the reference in the line of „scientometric details and link to MTMT database of publications”, through the scientometric summary page of the applicant.

- All proposals admitted to the review process have to be given the same level and quality of evaluation (regardless of the indicator of the applicant at rudomanymetria.com – „scientific rank in Hungary”).

- Please prepare a separate review for each proposal.

- Please prepare the reviews before the given deadline.

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1 It is not necessary if you already have a framework agreement signed in one of the two previous calendar years. The framework agreement is not the same as the contract of commission for performing expert group member duties.
Conceptual framework for the decision-making process. Dashed lines indicate subsidiary functions, dashed arrows indicate feedbacks. As a rule, “external panels” invite remote experts to undertake reviews, in “internal panels” reviews are performed by the panel members. As a consequence, individuals serving internal panels evaluate higher number of applications. In both cases, each application, along with the reviews it has received, is assigned to two panel members, acting as rapporteurs in the meeting.
OVERVIEW OF CALLS

Before you start with your review, it is recommended that you consult the Call for applications. Please note that the calls below aim at funding basic (discovery) research on the grounds of individual excellence.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Call ID</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Targeted individuals</th>
<th>Eligible Applicants</th>
<th>Eligible Costs</th>
<th>Budget</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PD</td>
<td>Supporting promising young researchers to start their research careers</td>
<td>Postdoctors</td>
<td>PhD degree received within the last 5 years</td>
<td>Salary of the applicant, travel costs, consumables, equipment + overhead and Open Access costs. Consumables + equipment costs total HUF 9 million for the duration of the project.</td>
<td>Up to HUF 30 million for a maximum of 3 years (HUF 10 million/year on average)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FK</td>
<td>Supporting promising young researchers to start their own research projects</td>
<td>Postdoctors and young researchers (research group can join the application)</td>
<td>PhD degree received within the last 12 years</td>
<td>Personnel costs – including the salary of the applicant –, travel costs, consumables, equipment + overhead and Open Access costs.</td>
<td>Up to HUF 44 million for a maximum of 4 years (HUF 11 million/year on average)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>Supporting research groups or individuals with clearly identifiable achievements in their respective fields</td>
<td>Established researchers (research group can join the application)</td>
<td>PhD degree; no age limitations</td>
<td>Personnel costs, travel costs, consumables, equipment + overhead and Open Access costs</td>
<td>Up to HUF 48 million for a maximum of 4 years (HUF 12 million/year on average)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SNN</td>
<td>Supporting international cooperation between Hungarian and Slovenian partners</td>
<td>Established researchers and postdoctors (research group can join the application)</td>
<td>PhD degree; no age limitations</td>
<td>Personnel costs, travel costs, consumables, equipment + overhead and Open Access costs</td>
<td>Up to HUF 36 million for a maximum of 3 years (HUF 12 million/year on average)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ETHICAL ISSUES

Applicants have to present the ethical questions that may arise, remote experts as well as scientific panels are required to deal with ethical issues addressed in the applications. Proper discussion of ethical issues ensures that the NRDI Office will fund projects meeting the legal and ethical requirements of research. Ethical issues are not considered as score-driving factors and are not steering decision-makers unless major shortcomings have been observed.
COMPLETING REVIEWS

General evaluation criteria

Applications should be reviewed according to the following main criteria:

- scientific significance of the project, its justification, novelty, expected results, scientific and social impact of the results;
- professional quality of the Principal Investigator (PI), scientific and research results to date measured in the number, quality, and international impact of scientific publications; 5 publications of the last 5 (active career) years appended to the proposal; further 5 publications freely selected from the complete publication list and related to the subject of the proposal; the outcome of the research projects supported by OTKA/NRDI Office and concluded in the last 5 (active career) years;
- infrastructural and methodological conditions of the host institution to carry out the research at high level;
- credibility and consistency of the submitted research plan, work plan, budget plan, expected results, and time commitment. Coherence between the activities proposed in the work plan and the budget, as well as the planned number and time commitment of the participants, is an important aspect of the evaluation process.

Evaluation criteria in the application expert review form

1/A. Evaluation of the PI’s scientific contributions in the last 5 active career years in the research field, considering the stage of his/her scientific career:
   - amount and quality of publications in the last 5 active career years as first/last/corresponding author

1/B. Quality of the PI’s professional achievements, competences, and skills:
   - amount and quality of publications throughout the entire research career
   - number of citations; impacts
   - registered patents, if relevant in the given research field

1/C. Quality and appropriateness of the PI’s scientific expertise in relation to the research proposal and the expected success of project implementation:
   - required scientific and research experience
   - skills for managing team work and international collaborations, if relevant
2/A. Scientific importance of the project proposal:
   - importance of the expected scientific, societal, and economic impacts
   - expected impact beyond the implementation of the proposal
   - novelty/originality/ creativity of the proposed research concept

2/B. Quality and elaboration of the research plan:
   - pertinence of the research objectives
   - the research objectives are realistically achievable, measurable, verifiable, and reproducible
   - soundness of the methodology
   - if relevant, important methodological challenges are identified and measures to tackle them proposed

2/C. Quality and elaboration of the work plan:
   - structure and effectiveness of the work plan
   - appropriateness of the efforts assigned to work packages, if specified - risk assessment

2/D. Justification of the requested budget in terms of personal, material, and investment costs (please disregard lines 3A and 3B, as these are overhead costs.)

3/A. Parallel research:
   - in case the applicant leads or participates in parallel research projects, the proposal under review contains significantly new research

3/B. Potential risks and ethical concerns:
   - risks arising in connection of the project implementation
   - ethical acceptability and concerns - necessity of permission from authorities

3/C. Infrastructural and methodological conditions at the host institution:
   - availability of adequate resources

4/A. Credibility and consistency of the submitted research plan, work plan, budget plan, expected results, and time commitment.

4/B. Strengths of the proposal

4/C. Weaknesses of the proposal
Competence of the PI

Please evaluate the PI’s:

- scientific contributions in the last 5 (active career) years in the research field, considering the stage of his/her scientific career;
- professional achievements, competences, and skills demonstrated throughout the entire research career;
- scientific expertise in relation to the research proposal and the expected success of project implementation.

Enclosed to the application, you will find 10 selected publications from the PI (the most important 5 achievements published in the last 5 years and 5 more with no limitations on the date of publication). The number of independent citations is a good indicator of visibility and impact, but the SCImago Journal Rank (http://www.scimagojr.com/index.php) can be a more explicit measure, because recent papers need more time to gather citations. Thus, applicants are expected to provide their selected track records as follows:

- 5-year track record (5 selected papers)2 along with the SCImago ranks of the journals the papers were published in, and the number of independent citations per paper;
- 5 additional publications along with the number of independent citations per paper (SCImago ranks also provided).

Applicants can provide additional information regarding their track records in the box below their selected publications. For example, Journal Impact Factor values, short description of author contributions and information on shared authorship roles, if any, along with a short description of how their individual papers are connected to the submitted application.

You may ignore Journal Impact Factors unless otherwise stated.3 Give due care to the following criteria instead:

- quality and scientific value of publications, authorship, individual value of scientific papers, contribution of the PI’s publications to the discipline;
- complete publication list of the principal investigator: at „Senior participant(s): list of publications and citations (download file or database), CV, scientometrics;”

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2 Please consider the age of the applicant when ranking his or her scientific track record. Applicants experiencing career breaks (maternity leave, paternity leave, long-term illness, national service, or clinical training) can get an extension to the 5-year time period; track records can be adjusted accordingly.

3 Applicants are not required to provide Journal Impact Factors in their applications, but some panels may require applicants to provide these data.
• “D” (decile) value of the applicant according to scientometrics.org, based on the position among Hungarian researchers working in similar disciplines and with a similar period of research career starting from the date of the first scientific publication, where „D1” stands for the top 10%;

• quality indicators of research impact (less measurable credits, e.g. unique contributions, patents, software, database);

• professional activities of the PI (honours and awards; invited presentations to international workshops and advanced schools; professional membership of scientific societies, advisory boards of peer-reviewed scientific journals, scientific panels, etc.).

When evaluating a postdoctoral researcher and proposal, attention needs to be given to what can realistically be expected from the PI in terms of scientific experience, publication results, and the international relevance of the research.

Applicants are required to provide a summary of their scientometric data, for which they are fully responsible. Please note that the formal eligibility check does not include the validation of these data, thus, handle them with due care.

Competence of the PI

Publications

Citations

Quality indicators

Professional activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author contributions</th>
<th>SCImago Journal Rank</th>
<th>Individual value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Score-driving factors in the assessment of the
PI's competence to lead/perform the proposed project

Evaluation form – the PI's scientific contributions in the last 5 active career years in the research field, considering the stage of his/her scientific career:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Outstanding scientific contribution to the research field in the last 5 active career years, including quality and quantity of papers published as first/last/corresponding author.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Internationally very good contribution to the research field in the last 5 active career years, significant first/last/corresponding author publication activity in well above-average journals (at least some in the top 10%).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Evaluation form – Quality of the PI’s professional achievements, competences, and skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Outstanding achievements, competences and skills, highly impressive publication profile and significant impact (considering the stage of scientific career), remarkable number of citations and/or registered patents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Internationally high achievements, competences and skills, strong publication profile and impact (considering the stage of scientific career), remarkable number of citations and/or registered patents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Internationally good achievements, competences and skills, good publication profile (considering the stage of scientific career) with strong citation records and/or registered patents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Internationally somewhat above average achievements, competences and skills, above average publication profile (considering the stage of scientific career) and at least average citation records.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Internationally average achievements, competences and skills, average publication profile (considering the stage of scientific career) and average citation records.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Internationally somewhat below average achievements, competences and skills (considering the stage of scientific career).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Internationally below average achievements, competences and skills (considering the stage of scientific career) with negligible number of citations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Internationally negligible achievements, competences and skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The CV, publication and citation record is poorly presented.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The CV, publication and citation record is not presented.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Evaluation form – Quality and appropriateness of the PI’s scientific expertise in relation to the research proposal and the expected success of project implementation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>The PI is highly experienced and internationally acknowledged expert of the field of the research proposal, capable of coordinating and successfully implementing the proposed project. The project is expected to conclude with outstanding success.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The PI is experienced and acknowledged expert of the field of the research proposal, capable of coordinating and successfully implementing the proposed project. The project is expected to conclude with high success.

The PI is an acknowledged expert of the field of the research proposal, with some shortcomings regarding previous experience or skills of coordinating and implementing the proposed research project. However, the project is expected to conclude with remarkable success.

The PI is an expert of the field of the research proposal, however, the proposed research project seems to be ambitious in view of the PI’s expertise and skills. The project is expected to conclude with partial, but notable scientific success.

The PI is an expert of the field of the research proposal, however, the proposed research project seems to be too ambitious in view of the PI’s expertise and skills. The project is expected to conclude with partial success.

The PI has some experience in the field of the research proposal, however, the implementation of the proposed research project would require somewhat more expertise and skills. The project is expected to conclude with low success.

The PI has some experience in the field of the research proposal, however, the implementation of the proposed research project would require way more expertise and skills. The project is expected to conclude with very low success.

The PI’s scientific expertise does not cover the field of the research proposal, thus the project is expected to conclude with negligible scientific success.

Considering the scientific expertise of the PI the proposed project is unrealistic.

No information is given about the PI’s scientific expertise.

Evaluation of the research project

Please evaluate the project proposal in view of

- it's scientific importance and expected impact;
- the quality and elaboration of the research plan;
- the quality and elaboration of the work plan.

Proposal type (postdoctoral, young researcher, or thematic research) also has to be considered while using the evaluation criteria below.

Please note that applicants are required to provide their research plan in 5 pages.⁴

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⁴ If the detailed research plan contains preliminary results illustrated with figures, its length may be up to 6 pages. In the case of applications submitted in the field of humanities and social sciences, the length of the research plan is a maximum of 10 pages, when submitting a bilingual research plan, the length of the research plan is a maximum of 20 pages. The maximum file size is 5 MB.
### Evaluation form – Scientific importance of the project proposal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>An original research concept with outstanding scientific importance and exceptionally strong expected impact, even beyond the implementation of the project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>An original research concept with high scientific importance and very strong expected impact, even beyond the implementation of the project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>An original research concept with high scientific importance and very strong expected impact.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>The proposed project is of high scientific importance with strong expected impact.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The proposed project is of reasonable scientific importance with some originality and some expected impact.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The proposed project is of reasonable scientific importance with some expected impact.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The project plan is of moderate scientific importance, its expected impact is not significant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The project plan is of low scientific importance, with some expected impact.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The project plan is of low scientific importance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The project plan has no scientific importance.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Evaluation form – Quality and elaboration of the research plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>The research objectives are well defined and are aimed at solving an outstanding scientific problem. The research plan is realistically feasible, the expected results are reproducible. The methods to be used are innovative, and the methodological challenges are clearly identified.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>The research objectives are well defined and are aimed at solving a scientific problem of international interest. The research plan is realistically feasible, the expected results are reproducible. The methods to be used are innovative, and the methodological challenges are clearly identified.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>The research objectives are well defined and are aimed at solving a scientific problem of international interest. The research plan is realistically feasible, the expected results are reproducible. In the case of using an innovative method, the methodological challenges were not, or were not fully covered.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Comprehensible research objectives, focusing on solving a problem that is not particularly important in an international context. The research plan is realistically feasible, and the expected results are reproducible. Research methods are reliable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Comprehensible research objectives, focusing on solving a real scientific problem. The feasibility of the research plan or the reproducibility of the expected results are somewhat doubtful.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Broad, multiple investigated objectives and/or outdated methods. The research plan is feasible and the expected results are reproducible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Broad, multiple investigated objectives and/or outdated methods. The feasibility of the research plan or the reproducibility of the expected results are somewhat doubtful.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Broad, multiple investigated objectives, poorly chosen methods. The feasibility of the research plan is highly doubtful.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Goals that are unrealistic or not worthy of scientific investigation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The research plan has major deficiencies, relevant information is missing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Evaluation form – Quality and elaboration of the work plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>The work plan is highly efficient and elaborated in detail for each work phase, the planned tasks can be implemented within the given time and budget. Has an adequate risk management plan (if relevant).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>The work plan is efficient and elaborated in detail for each work phase, the planned tasks can be implemented within the given time and budget. Has an adequate risk management plan (if relevant).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>The work plan is elaborated in detail, the planned tasks can be implemented within the given time and budget. Has an adequate risk management plan (if relevant).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>The work plan is elaborated in detail with minor deficiencies, the planned tasks can be implemented within the given time and budget.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The work plan is elaborated in detail, however, is not ambitious enough and/or not feasible within the given time and budget.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The work plan is comprehensible but insufficient, achieving the research objectives would require a more detailed plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The work plan has major deficiencies, achieving the research objectives would require a significantly more detailed plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The work plan is sketchy and contains few specific commitments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The work plan is sketchy and cannot be accounted for in this form.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The work plan does not contain specific tasks to be performed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The implementation conditions of the proposal

Parallel research:

- in case the applicant leads or participates in parallel research projects, the proposal under review must contain significantly new research.

Potential risks and ethical concerns:

- risks arising in connection of the project implementation;
- ethical acceptability and concerns;
- necessity of permission from authorities.

Infrastructural and methodological conditions at the host institution:

- availability of adequate resources.

Assess the research environment and staff of the host institution based on the evidence derived from the application.
Evaluation form – Infrastructural and methodological conditions at the host institution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>The host institution has excellent equipment and resources in the given research field.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>The host institution has excellent equipment and resources for the implementation of the given project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>The necessary modern equipment and resources for the successful implementation of the project are provided.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>The infrastructural conditions of the host institution are not state of the art, however, are sufficient for the implementation of the project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The resources of the host institution are somewhat lacking for the successful implementation of the project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The resources of the host institution are insufficient for the successful implementation of the project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The host institution has weak equipment and infrastructure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The host institution is not suitable for fully implementing the proposed project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The host institution is not suitable for even a partial implementation of the proposed project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The host institution is not suitable for implementing any significant research project in the given research field.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall evaluation

As a comprehensive evaluation of the application

- please evaluate the credibility and consistency of the submitted research plan, work plan, budget plan, expected results, and time commitment;
- list the strengths of the application;
- list the weaknesses of the application.

► Please note that the overall score is not the average of individual scores listed above.

Evaluation form – Credibility and consistency of the submitted research plan, work plan, budget plan, expected results, and time commitment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>The research plan, the work plan and the budget plan are consistent with each other, the planned time commitment and requested support for the implementation of the project are realistic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>The research plan, the work plan and the budget plan are consistent with each other, the requested support is realistic, but the justification of the planned time commitment is questionable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>The work plan is aligned with the research plan, the requested support is realistic, but the justification of the budget plan is somewhat incomplete.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>The work plan is aligned with the research plan, the requested support seems realistic, but the budget plan is sketchy and contains few specifics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The work plan is aligned with the research plan, but the justification of the requested support is questionable.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The research plan and the work plan are not consistent, however, the requested support seems realistic and the budget plan is justified.

The research plan and the work plan are not consistent, the justification of the budget plan is also incomplete.

The research plan and the work plan are not consistent, the justification of the requested support is questionable.

The submitted project plan is mostly sketchy, there are few specific objectives, tasks and cost requirements so it is difficult to evaluate the coherence of the application.

The submitted research plan, work plan and budget plan do not match each other in any way.

Please pay attention to the following:

► Your scores should reflect the written review.
► Do not reiterate objectives in the written review, rather focus on the rationale, novelty, and expected impact of the proposed study.
► Balance strengths and weaknesses against each other and identify score-driving factors. Identify possible pitfalls and weigh their importance.
► If you have any questions about criteria not associated with scoring, let the jury know, but do not change your scores for other criteria.

Please be aware that the panel relies heavily on your scores as an accurate measure of the quality of application. It is therefore important that your scores be underpinned by solid argumentation.

► Reviews, along with the panel summary, are delivered to the applicant, who may well be interested in the details on how the application can be further improved. Therefore, you are expected to give a detailed review with sensible comments rather than descriptive phrases.
COMPLETING REVIEWS – TECHNICAL GUIDELINES FOR REVIEWERS

Once you have received an invitation to review an application, follow the link provided in the invitation letter. If you already have an existing registration in the online system, enter your username and password to access the main menu. You will find your duties in your mailbox on the left.

Access to the online system:
https://www.otka-palyazat.hu/

Please find below a step-by-step guide as how to proceed with your review in the online system.

Please note that you can download the application in a single PDF file, but some attachments (e.g. declaration on the international collaboration) may deliver further significant pieces of information. You can open the attachments in the drop-down menu.

We recommend that you prepare the longer parts of the evaluation in a word processor and then copy them in the appropriate box in the evaluation form. The system logs the user out after a given inactive time; as typing in the box is unfortunately not registered as activity, the text you do not save can be lost. We recommend therefore saving the form during completion regularly.

1. This screen will be displayed when you follow the link provided in the invitation letter. Clicking on the project title, you can access the summary of the application. Click on “Accept” to confirm your willingness to complete the review.
2. Declare that you have no conflict of interest with the applicant and then commit yourself to observe confidentiality. Tick the checkbox and click on the “Accept” button, or decline invitation when you are positive about your conflict of interest.

3. Click on “Prepare review” to access the evaluation form.

4. Click on “Prepare review” to start with your evaluation. You can access the application via the project title.
5. Go through the review criteria by clicking on the title, begin with the first one. You might well add some pieces of confidential information to the chair under item #0.

6. Enter your comments into the text box and select your score from the drop-down menu as indicated below. Do not forget to save your comments. (*Remember that your scores should comply with your written evaluation.*)
7. Click on “Check review” to have a look at your comments.

8. Submit your review by clicking on the button “Finalize and send review to NKFIH.”

9. Once submitted, you can check the status of your review. This page is particularly useful when you are invited to review more applications.
PRE-MEETING DUTIES

- Each application is allocated to two panel members (further on referred to as the “rapporteurs”) by considering their expertise. (In internal panels, reviewers act as rapporteurs as well, but each application should receive at least one rapporteur without prior review of the proposal.) You are likely to receive applications that may lie beyond your field of experience. This is an inherent feature of the panel-based system.

- Complete your reports by summarizing individual reviews per application. You are strongly encouraged to add your own comments as well and balance the corresponding reviews against each other. Purely descriptive reviews should be given less weight, if any.

- Please note that applicants should be provided with sensible comments rather than descriptive phrases.

- Please check the reviews carefully and identify possible disagreements between reviewers and then make an attempt to reach a consensus or act as an advocate of the reviewer you agree with.

- You can suggest to the panel to ignore a review or part of it when you have solid evidence that it is strongly biased, or simply lacks moral or scientific foundation.

- You might well add your suggested priority level for funding in your comment.

- Rank the applications assigned to you and present your ranking to the panel. It is recommended that you assign a score to each application. Please feel free to use the scores from the list presented under “overall evaluation.”

► Make sure that you have uploaded your reports in due time to ensure that fellow panel members can read your comments while preparing for the meeting.
PRE-MEETING TECHNICAL GUIDELINES FOR PANEL MEMBERS

Access to the online system:
https://www.otka-palyazat.hu/

Follow the instructions below so as to enter the page of reports and complete your duties as a rapporteur.

1. Click on “Change your role/right” on the left and then on “Panel functions” to enter the page of reports.

2. Tick the checkbox “Reviewing tasks only” and click on the “Search” button to list the applications that have been assigned to you. You can further refine your hits by using the drop-down menu.
3. Click on the title of the application to access details. Click on your name to get reviews and complete your report. Under the names of your fellows, you will find their reports.

4. Click on the headline to download reviews and scores.
5. Enter your comments into the text boxes and then select an item from the list and enter your score.

6. Do not forget to save your report. Now, the task is finished.
THE PANEL MEETING

► Do not forget to have your password in mind. You will need it to access reports and proceed with the online voting.

- Be sure that you have completed your pre-meeting duties as discussed above.
- According to the available budget, the panel will identify applications that are expected at the border line of the funded and non-funded projects and the discussion will be steered accordingly. It is therefore important that you give due consideration to the better-than-average applications.
- The panel can identify promising projects in terms of scientific value that carry considerable risk of feasibility.
- Applications receiving low scores are not discussed in the meeting, but each panel member can recall any application to be discussed.
- The panel discusses the applications one by one as follows:
  (i) Rapporteur 1 is expected to summarize briefly the project, shed light on strengths and weaknesses, balance reviews against each other, propose his/her scores and, in the end, stimulate discussion.
  (ii) Rapporteur 2 and panel members can join the discussion and propose their scores.
  (iii) Panel chair asks rapporteurs for their final scores.

► Do not influence your fellows with personal remarks or assertions without support from the application.

► Avoid descriptive phrases, focus on strengths, weaknesses, and score-driving issues.

- In case of unrealistic budget plan, rejection of the proposal can be recommended.
- New task: Verification of undertaking scientific performance (publication) requirements in the work plans, as prescribed in point G.1. of the Call for applications.
- At the end of the meeting, panel members proceed to the online voting, which ensures confidentiality. Applications are ranked by handling conflicts of interest with due care. The online voting must be endorsed by open ballot (simple majority).

Some applications may receive additional reviews from secondary panels to bring in special expertise. Secondary panels deliver panel summaries to the primary panel prior to the meeting. If the research topic justifies it, you are encouraged to take advantage of such contributions to get a more holistic view of the application.
1. Click on “Change your role/right” on the left and then on “Panel functions” to enter the page of reports.

2. Click on “Vote” on the upper left corner of the window to reach the voting panel.
3. Assign a number to each application, the best one gets #1, etc. By clicking on the hashtag, applications are ranked in the order they are clicked, but you can modify the ranks manually. After finishing, save your ranks!

4. Check your list, then confirm your votes by clicking on “Submit votes.”
POST-MEETING DUTIES

- Rapporteur 1 is expected to prepare the panel summary with due consideration of the initial reviews as well as the key points emerged during the discussion. The evaluation should comply with the final rank of the application.

- Applicants should be provided with sensible comments rather than descriptive phrases.

- Make sure that the panel summary delivers funding recommendation clearly to the applicant.

- Please do not simply “copy-and-paste” from the rapporteur report: be aware that all points discussed in the meeting are properly added and rejected criticisms are removed. Even if the original rapporteur report was written in first person, the panel summary should reflect the opinion of the whole panel and should be written in third person.

- Be explicit about ignored reviews, if any, and explain why the panel has omitted a particular review or comment.

- Take care of applications not discussed in the meeting due to their low reviewer score and check if panel summaries clearly articulate the status of such applications.

5. You can modify your ranks by clicking on the “Modify vote” button. When panel members have finished with their votes, the project administrator closes the system and final ranks are presented to the panel.
POST-MEETING TECHNICAL GUIDELINES FOR PANEL MEMBERS

You can access the page of reports as described under pre-meeting technical guidelines. Panel summaries should be edited as follows.

1. Click on “Panel summary” to access the page “Forum” where panel summary can be edited.

2. Click on “Add new comment” to prepare panel summary.
3. Save your comment. The Chair will then check and finalize your summary.

Further information at nkfialap@nkfih.gov.hu

Thank you for your attention and valuable cooperation