

PROJECT ASSESSMENT CRITERIA AND METHODOLOGY

Generic document for all programmes operated by Innovation Norway within EEA & NORWAY GRANTS 2014-2021

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1. Assessment methodology

This document presents information about the assessment process conducted by Innovation Norway for Programmes financed under EEA & Norway Grants 2014-2021. Project applications will be assessed by Innovation Norway which, as the Fund Operator, bears the responsibility for the handling of the applications and the project selection. The assessment will be based on a combination of appraisal methods as presented in section 2 Project assessment criteria.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND ELIGIBILITY CHECK

Innovation Norway will check the fulfilment of administrative conformity and eligibility criteria based on the information included in the Application Form and in the attachments to the Application Form, as they were requested in the Call for Project Proposals.

If any shortcomings are found related to criteria included in the section called ADMINISTRATIVE CHECK, Innovation Norway will revert to the Applicant to verify if there is any misunderstanding in the provided information. The Applicant will be given 10 working days from Innovation Norway's notification to re-submit missing information/complete documentation. Applications filled in a language other than English language will be automatically rejected.

All applications meeting the formal/administrative criteria and the eligibility criteria, will be subject to full assessment organised by Innovation Norway. A "no" assessment corresponding to any of the criteria will disqualify the project application from further assessment and will lead to the rejection of the application. A letter to the applicant will indicate the main reason for rejection. The rejection decision is final and will be communicated to the Applicant via e-mail, using the e-mail address indicated in the Application Form under the section "Contact person".

TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL ASSESSMENT

All applications which fulfil administrative and eligibility criteria will be further assessed by case handlers appointed by Innovation Norway.

The financial and technical assessment criteria presented at section 2 will be scored in a rating from zero to six points (0 lowest, 6 highest). The scoring will constitute a basis for an assessment profile and will be used in order to rank the projects. Each of the assessment criteria may be a critical success factor, a factor that can jeopardize the whole project. The main principle will be that those project applications with the highest scoring, as a result of the assessment process, will have the highest probability to be awarded a grant.

On a case by case basis, external expertise will be used to assess some financial and/or technical aspects of the respective Application. Based on the case handler's appraisal, the Selection/Credit Committee established within Innovation Norway will take decisions to reject or approve the applications. In case of a decision to approve the application, the Applicant will be informed about the decision and will receive a Grant Offer Letter, containing the contractual conditions, including the maximum grant rate, the expected project results and project costs. Specific issues may be subject to further formalisation in the Special Conditions in the Grant Offer Letter.

DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

For each criterion that will be assessed, Innovation Norway will check information included in the sections from the electronic Application Form and in the mandatory documentation attached to the Application Form. Please note that specific attachments like "business plan" or "project document" will be mandatory for submission by the Applicant if they are listed in the Call for Project Proposals.

During the assessment process, Innovation Norway reserves the right to request clarifications and further documentary proof as may be necessary function of the complexity and specificity of the project being assessed. A Project Contract, including a Grant Offer Letter, will be sent to the applicant in case the application is successful.

2. Project assessment criteria

	ADMINISTRATIVE CHECK	DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE	APPRAISAL METHOD
1	The Application Form has been filled in according to the instructions given in the Call for Project proposals, Electronic Application Form, Application Form Guidelines and all mandatory documentation is attached to the application	Application Form and attachments	Yes/No
2	The Application Form and requested supporting documents are submitted and presented in English (For documents issued by authorities in local language, an English translation will be attached to the Application Form, if not allowed by the Call for proposals to be presented in the local language)	Application Form and attachments	Yes/No
3	The appropriate electronic Application Form has been used (corresponding to the type of Programme and type of the Applicant)	Application Form	Yes/No

	ELIGIBILITY CHECK	DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE	APPRAISAL METHOD
1	The Applicant is constituted as legal entity in the Beneficiary country/Donor States ¹ and the entity fits in one of the categories of eligible applicants listed in the Call for Project Proposals	Application Form: “Applicant details”, “Contact person” Attachments: Relevant registration documents listed in the Call for Project Proposals	Yes/No
2	The Applicant has been in operation for at least a period of time, as set out in the Call for Project Proposals, and its main activity is closely related to the activities for which the application is made – different requirements for different programmes and schemes	Application Form: “Applicant details”, “Activity of the Applicant” Attachments:	Yes/No

¹ Certain types of Norwegian entities will be eligible applicants under Social Dialogue – Decent Work programme

		Certified accounts, Relevant registration documents listed in the Call for Project Proposals	
3	The Partner(s) is constituted as legal entity in Beneficiary/Donor State	Application Form: "Partnership" Attachments: Relevant registration documents listed in the Call for Project Proposals	Yes/No
4	The Partner(s)' main activity is closely related to the activities in which its contribution is proposed	Application Form: "Partnership" Attachments: Relevant registration documents listed in the Call for Project Proposals	Yes/No
5	If the case of a partnership project, a draft project Partnership agreement has been attached to the Application Form	Application Form: "Partnership" Attachment: Partnership agreement	Yes/No
6	The Applicant and the legal representative signing the Application have clean criminal and tax record	Attachments: Self-declarations regarding clean criminal and tax record	Yes/No
7	The Partner(s) and the legal representative signing the Partnership agreement have clean criminal and tax record	Attachments: Self-declarations regarding clean criminal and tax record	Yes/No
8	The Applicant is not an undertaking in difficulty (<i>applicable only to entities in state aid position</i>) ² .	Attachment: Self-declaration regarding undertaking in difficulty	Yes/No
9	The proposed project fits into one of the focus areas of the Programme and within the eligible activities defined in the Call for Project Proposals	Application Form: "Project Information", "Outcomes" Attachments: Expected outcomes and outputs	Yes/No

² Not applicable to Social Dialogue – Decent Work programme

10	Maximum and minimum grant amounts and co-financing rates are complied with	Application Form: "Project Information", "Financing plan"	Yes/No
11	The project implementation period is not longer than the deadline for cost eligibility mentioned in the Call for Project Proposals	Application Form: "Activities and schedule", "Project Implementation plan"	Yes/No
12	No overlapping/double funding arises from the applications for a similar project from EU/EEA/International Financial Institution/Bilateral or other sources	Application Form: "Legal/other issues relevant to the project"	Yes/No
13	The project is in compliance with both EU and national legislation of the Beneficiary State (in particular state aid, public procurement and environment requirements)	Application Form: "Legal/other issues relevant to the project"	Yes/No
14	Compliance with plans -The extent to which the project is in compliance with national, regional and local policies, strategies, plans and programmes in the Beneficiary State	Application Form: "Project information", "Legal/other issues relevant to the project"	Yes/No
15	Incentive effect – work on the project did not start before the submission of the current application for grant	Application Form: "Activities and schedule"	Yes/No

	TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL ASSESSMENT	DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE	APPRAISAL METHOD
1	Relevance - The extent to which the project meets the Programme specific expected outcome and the eligible activities set out in the Call for Project Proposals.	Application Form: "Project Information", "Outcomes", Attachments: Expected outcomes and outputs Project Implementation Plan Business plan or Project Document	Scoring 0-6
2	Overall objectives - The extent to which the Project contributes to the overall objectives of EEA and Norway Grants 2014-2021 (reduction of economic and social disparities in the EEA Area and strengthening the bilateral relations between the Beneficiary State and Donor State(s).	Application Form: "Project Information", "Outcomes", Attachments: Partnership Agreement	Scoring 0-6

3	Cross-cutting issues - The extent to which the project complies with relevant cross-cutting issues identified in the Application Form: good governance and good business practice, sustainable development and gender equality	Application Form: “Cross-cutting issues”	Scoring 0-6
4	Internal factors - The extent to which the Applicant (and Partner(s)) have the necessary resources to implement the project; internal factors are the factors over which the Applicant may influence with strategic choices (key resources, core activities, production)	Application Form: “Internal factors” Attachment: Business plan or Project Document, CVs of the project team	Scoring 0-6
5	Technical viability and feasibility -The extent to which the project is mature, i.e. technically viable and feasible in terms of technical solution meets the project objectives and specific outcomes, the Applicant has the technical/technological capacity to implement the project, time schedule.	Application Form: “Project Information”, “Outcomes” Attachments: Business plan or Project Document, Procurement plan	Scoring 0-6
6	Good business practice - The extent to which the Applicant (and possible Partners) adhere to Good business practice, including zero-tolerance towards corruption	Application Form: “Activity of the Applicant”, “Project Information”, “Cross cutting issues”	Scoring 0-6
7	Bilateral partnership – The extent to which the Partnership Agreement include clear division of roles, responsibilities and cash flow have been agreed upon; assessment of Partner’s involvement in the preparation, implementation and sharing the project results	Application Form: “Partnership” Attachment: Partnership Agreement	Scoring 0-6
8	Financial capacity and operating risk - The extent to which the Applicant (and possible Partners) have the necessary co-financing and financial capacity to implement the project and support its costs Operating risk – the assessment of Applicant’s financial situation and debt service capabilities	Application Form: “Expense Budget”, “Financing Plan”, “Financial Statement” Attachment: Applicant’s Certified Accounts, Letter of Commitment Credit reports	Scoring 0-6
9	Project risks - The extent to which the project is adequately supported by a risk management plan	Application Form: “Project value creation and risk”,	Scoring 0-6

		Attachment: Business plan or Project Document	
10	Costs estimates and funding - The extent to which the project have clear and well documented cost estimates and a financing plan. The budget is correctly elaborated and correlated with project activities, allocated and estimated resources.	Application Form: "Financial Plan", "Expense Budget" Attachments: Business Plan or Project Document, Project Budget Activity Based, Project Implementation Plan, Procurement Plan	Scoring 0-6