

Instructions for reviewing research infrastructure roadmap applications FIRI 2020 panel

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1 Schedule

- 5 August: deadline for online submission of draft reviews. NB! All drafts needed before the combined drafts can be made available to you.
- 15 August: all drafts available to panellists
- 31 August: arrival in Helsinki
- 1–2 September: panel meeting in Helsinki

2 Role of experts and the Academy of Finland

The [Academy of Finland](#) promotes scientific research of a high standard through long-term, quality-based research funding.

The [Finnish Research Infrastructure \(FIRI\) Committee](#) at the Academy of Finland monitors and develops Finnish and international research infrastructure activity and provides funding to infrastructures at universities and research institutes.

In the [Strategy for National Research Infrastructures in Finland 2020–2030](#), the FIRI Committee defines the long-term development directions of Finnish RI policy. Based on the Strategy, the Committee has launched a call for research infrastructures to be included in the FIRI roadmap 2021–2024.

The roadmap call is based on open competition and independent peer review. Experts are invited to review the submitted applications. The applications cover all scientific disciplines. Panelists are therefore also asked to read and give a draft review regarding some applications that do not represent the field of their own specific area of expertise.

The FIRI Committee will make the final funding decisions after receiving the panel review reports. The decisions are based on the panel review, but factors related to science policy may also influence the decisions. An example of such a factor is the national importance of the infrastructure.

3 Expert panel meeting

Before the meeting takes place, each application is assigned to at least two panel members who then prepare draft reviews. All draft review reports will be made available to the panel members before the meeting.

The panel consists of esteemed, international researchers. At the meeting, the panel will review all applications assigned to it. The panel prepares one joint panel review report on each application based on the discussions and the draft reviews. The reviews are finalised at the panel meeting and Academy staff will assist the panel in preparing the panel review reports. Panel members have access to all applications assigned to the panel, barring conflicts of interest (see below).

4 Review

Reviewing applications

Written reviews: Evaluative comments are particularly valuable to the FIRI Committee. After the decisions have been made, the applicants get access to the panel review report on their own application. The review also provides applicants with important feedback. Reviewers should therefore:

- write evaluative rather than descriptive comments (avoid copying text from the application directly)
- write comments under each sub-item
- write coherent comments in the passive voice that can be used, if agreed, as such in the panel review report.

Numerical evaluations: The consistency between the numerical rating and the written comments is particularly important. The numerical evaluation of the sub-items and final rating is made with a rating scale ranging from 1 (poor) to 6 (outstanding).

6 (outstanding)	Demonstrates exceptional novelty and innovation. Has potential to substantially advance science at global level.
5 (excellent)	Is extremely good in international comparison – contains no significant elements to be improved.
4 (very good)	Is in general sound but contains a few elements that could be improved.
3 (good)	Is in general sound but contains important elements that should be improved.
2 (fair)	Contains flaws. Is in need of substantial modification or improvement.
1 (poor)	Contains severe flaws that are intrinsic to the proposed project or the application.

Review criteria

The main criteria in the review are:

1. national and international relevance
2. wide and versatile impact
3. ownership, know-how and organisational structure
4. operation
5. digital platforms and data
6. risk management.

The detailed review criteria are presented in Appendix 1. The same instructions can also be found in the Academy's online services.

How to review applications in the Academy's online services

Please use the Academy of Finland's online services to review applications. Both draft reviews and panel review reports are completed in the online services. You can access the items of the research plan directly from the corresponding review form questions. However, you are expected to read the full application. You can find the [review instructions](#) and [all our review forms](#) on our website.

5 Confidentiality and ethics

According to the Finnish Act on the Openness of Government Activities, research plans, abstracts, progress reports and reviews are confidential documents. Application documents should therefore be handled and stored with due care and confidentiality.

The Academy of Finland is committed to following the guidelines of the Finnish Advisory Board on Research Integrity for responsible conduct of research. The guidelines also apply to reviewing funding applications, research programmes and scientific disciplines. All reviews must be handled confidentially, competently and impartially, based on the criteria set for the review process. Care must be taken to ensure that the review complies with general stipulations about conflicts of interest. Prior notice must be given if a reviewer has economic or other affiliations or significantly different schools of thought in relation to the applicant under review. This is a way to avoid conflicts of interest.

As a reviewer, you are not allowed to disclose any information concerning application documents or reviews to outsiders, nor are you allowed to use this confidential information to your own benefit or anyone else's benefit or disadvantage. You may not reveal to outsiders that you are assessing the research plan of a particular researcher. If you are contacted by anyone, including the applicant, who has questions about the application or reviews, please advise them to contact the Academy of Finland.

Reviewers are guilty of research misconduct if they misappropriate research ideas from applications. The quality of the review is not a research-ethical issue unless the review has been conducted carelessly, which may give an appearance of a review that deliberately either underrates or overrates the applicants under review.

Disclosing the contents of research plans to third parties or contacting applicants personally without explicit agreement to do so are also regarded as instances of inappropriate behaviour on the part of reviewers.

Once the review has been completed, you are required to destroy all application documents and any copies made of them, or to return them to the Academy. Confidentiality must also be maintained after

the review process has been completed. Reviews are confidential documents, but applicants will have access to the panel review reports on their own application after the funding decisions have been made. The draft reviews and external draft reviews are also confidential documents unless otherwise stated in the applicable legislation or required by court order.

After the funding decisions have been made, the Academy will publish a list of names, current positions and institutions of all individual reviewers and panel members used in the call. In addition, the applicants will see the names of all panel members in the panel review report. If requested, the names of reviewers that have supplied the draft reviews will also be disclosed to the applicant (under the Finnish Act on the Openness of Government Activities).

6 Conflicts of interest

As a reviewer you are required to declare any personal interests according to the criteria below. You must disqualify yourself if you can in any way benefit from the approval or rejection of the application. You must also disqualify yourself in the following circumstances:

- You have collaborated with the applicant (e.g. you have co-authored and published an article or manuscript with the applicant in the past three years, been involved in the preparation of the application, or are involved in the publication or application of the results).
- You have been a superior, subordinate or instructor of the applicant in the past three years.
- You are applying for the same post as the applicant.
- You are applying for funding from the Academy from the same funding instrument.
- The applicant is a close person to you. A close person is:
 - a) your spouse (also de facto), child, grandchild, sibling, parent, grandparent or a person otherwise close to you (e.g. fiancé/e or a close friend), as well as their spouses (also de facto)
 - b) a sibling of your parent or his/her spouse (also de facto), a child of your sibling, or your previous spouse (also de facto)
 - c) a child, grandchild, sibling, parent or grandparent of your spouse as well as their spouses (also de facto), or a child of a sibling of your spouse
 - d) or a half-relative comparable to the above-mentioned persons.

You are also disqualified if your impartiality may be endangered in any other way, or if you feel that you have a conflict of interest and are therefore disqualified to review the application.

If you identify any conflicts of interest, please notify us as soon as possible.

7 Reviewer's declaration

Please acknowledge that by accepting the task of a reviewer you guarantee not to disclose the information you receive and not to use it for anybody's benefit or disadvantage as stated in section 4 above (Confidentiality and ethics). Further, you affirm that you will immediately notify the Academy if you have a conflict of interest in one or more applications.

8 Fee

The Academy will cover your travel expenses, flights in economy class and accommodation during the panel meeting. We will also pay a modest compensation of 360 euros per panel day, minus applicable taxes and pension premium (approx.. 40% in total). In addition, a fee will be paid for each draft review submitted to the Academy: 50 euros for a single PI application and 75 euros for a consortium application (no deductions).

Appendix

Review form – FIRI Roadmap Call 2020

