Research Council of Finland

Application review form

2026 Shared-use research infrastructures: National research infrastructures fostering innovation and ambitious R&D

Spring call 2026

Panel/Name of reviewer: Application number:
Name of applicant:
Title of proposed project:

How to review applications for funding from the call *2026 Shared-use research infrastructures: National research infrastructures fostering innovation and ambitious R&D*

The overall aim of the call is to promote new innovations and ambitious research and development activities by directing funding to research organisations that conduct high-level research and host research infrastructures for shared use. The funding is targeted at the construction, upgrading and increased shared use of internationally high-quality research infrastructures, including their test beds, that are utilised by different user groups within the RDI ecosystem.

The main focus of the review should be on the call objectives:
The aim of the call is to increase the shared use of the research infrastructure, cooperation between research and development (R&D) actors, and the significance of the research infrastructure for national or international research, development and innovation (RDI) ecosystems. By the end of the development project, objective is for the research infrastructure to have at least one new service implemented, including a plan how to maintain the new service(s). Funded research infrastructures must be relevant to the functioning of national or international RDI ecosystems. They must have operating principles that enable their services to be widely utilised by user groups of the RDI system.

Other important review items are the quality of R&D activities facilitated by the research infrastructure, the implementation of the development project as well as the operational aspects of the research infrastructure.

Provide both a written review and numerical ratings in section 1 (Wide and versatile impact and project's relevance to call**), section 2 (**Quality of R&D activities**) section 3 (**Implementation of development project**), and section 4 (**Operation of research infrastructure**) and give an overall rating in section 6. Write evaluative comments rather than descriptive ones. Please note that section 5 (**Review panel's summary assessment**) is written by the panel only during the panel meeting.**

Use a rating scale ranging from 6 (outstanding) to 1 (insufficient). The consistency between the numerical rating and the written comments is particularly important.

Rating scale	Description

Research Council of Finland

6 (outstanding)	Has high potential to successfully deliver (a) new service(s) to (a) new user group(s); is crucial to the function of the national or international innovation and RDI ecosystems; enables cooperation between R&D actors with exceptionally high quality, ambition and innovation as well as impact with crucial relevance; presents a very high-quality plan that may include risks; operational aspects are well aligned to reach the objectives of the research infrastructure
5 (excellent)	Has potential to successfully deliver (a) new service(s) to (a) new user group(s); is significant to the function of the national or international innovation and RDI ecosystems; enables cooperation between R&D actors with high quality, ambition and innovation as well as impact with significant relevance; presents a high-quality plan that may include risks; operational aspects are suitable to reach the objectives of the research infrastructure
4 (good)*	Has potential to deliver (a) new service(s) to (a) new user group(s); is significant to the function of the national or international innovation and RDI ecosystems; enables cooperation between R&D actors with good quality as well as impact with relevance; is in general sound but contains some elements that could be improved; operational aspects are mostly suitable to reach the objectives of the research infrastructure
3 (fair)*	Has some potential to deliver (a) new service(s) to (a) new user group(s); has some significance to the function of the national or international innovation and RDI ecosystems or cooperation between R&D actors as well as makes cooperation between R&D actors likely; is in general sound but contains important elements that should be improved; operational aspects have several limitations to reach the objectives of the research infrastructure
2 (poor)*	Has low potential to deliver (a) new service(s) to (a) new user group(s); has low significance to the function of the national or international innovation and RDI ecosystems or cooperation between R&D actors; contains flaws and needs substantial modification or improvement
1 (insufficient)*	Contains severe flaws that are intrinsic to the proposed project or the application

* Below threshold for panel discussion if all individual overall ratings are below 5.

Research Council of Finland

1 Wide and versatile impact and project's relevance to call

1.1 In this section, please evaluate the relevance of the described development activities and project to the objectives of the call.

Subrating (1–6)

Please review:
- potential to increase and broaden the user communities
- potential to successfully deliver (a) new service(s) to (a) new user group(s) of RDI actors beyond academia; the objective is for the research infrastructure to have at least one new service implemented by the end of the project
- clarity of the plan how to maintain the new services
- significance of research infrastructure to national or international RDI (research, development and innovation) ecosystems
- strengthening cooperation between RDI actors for innovation potential and/or other wide and versatile impact in society at large
- relevance of the services that are planned to be developed for the researcher communities, if any

  - See **action plan**, especially section 2 'Impact' and 3 'Implementation'.
  - See **letter(s) of collaboration.**
  - The objectives of the call are described in more detail in the **call text**.

2 Quality of R&D activities

2.1 In this section, please evaluate the scientific significance of the research infrastructure.

Subrating (1–6)

Please review:
- research infrastructure's significance to enabling and supporting high-quality, innovative and ambitious R&D activities and promoting scientific renewal nationally and internationally
- scientific impact of research infrastructure
- potential to generate new knowledge, new methods, new technology or new practices

  - See **action plan**, especially section 1 'Background and significance'.
  - See the **most relevant publications and other key outputs** in the application form.

Research Council of Finland

3 Implementation of development project

3.1. In this section, please evaluate the feasibility of the development project.

Subrating (1–6)

Please review:
- clarity and credibility of development project's implementation plan, including attainment of goals to increase shared use and collaboration within funding period (5 years for roadmap research infrastructures, 3 years for non-roadmap research infrastructures)
- identification of relevant risks in development project, appropriateness of mitigation measures
- appropriateness and sufficiency of personnel directly working for development project
- added value of RDI ecosystem collaboration activities in development project for attainment of project goals

- Six **lighthouse research infrastructures** are allowed to apply for funding for an industrial liaison officer or a knowledge broker, and staff and data scientists.

    o please review appropriateness of hiring an industrial liaison officer or a knowledge broker to promote cooperation between RDI actors to achieve project objectives. Does the individual carry out development work that can create new or improve old services or methods in collaboration with the partners?
    o please review expertise, appropriateness and career development opportunities of staff scientist(s) or data scientist(s) hired to participate in R&D activity aimed at achieving project objectives. Does the work enable their expertise to develop purposefully during the course of the project?

    o See **action plan**, especially section 3 'Implementation'.

4 Operation of research infrastructure

4.1. In this section, please evaluate the quality of the research infrastructure organisation in relation to its lifecycle stage.

Subrating (1–6)

Please review ownership:
- clarity of description of research infrastructure and whether activities are aligned with lifecycle stage
- clarity of ownership, organisational structure and governance of research infrastructure
- relevance of expertise of staff in terms of research infrastructure activities, and appropriateness of career path development opportunities
- risk management plan of research infrastructure
- sustainability of research infrastructure's long-term financial plan

Please review users and services:
- clarity of services provided by research infrastructure
- user base and utilisation rate of services provided

Research Council of Finland

- concreteness of plans to develop and expand use and user base of research infrastructure
- open and transparent access policies for multiple user groups (access may require approval of a research plan and/or reasonable user fees)

Please review digital transition and data management policy:
- consideration of necessary steps related to increase in digitalisation and data intensity
- consideration of good data management policy of research infrastructure, and adequacy of data management policy in terms of responsible and secure data processing

Please review responsible science, that is, whether the research infrastructure considers the following aspects appropriately in its activities:
- promotion of gender equality and nondiscrimination
- research ethics and good scientific practice
- open science
- green transition and sustainable development goals

    o See **action plan**, especially section 4 'Operational activities' and **lifecycle stage** document.
    o See **action plan**, especially section 'Responsible science'.
    o See **long-term financial plan** appendix.
    o See **data management policy** appendix.

Please note that the research security appendix is not part of the review.

---

5 Review panel's summary assessment

5.1 Main strengths and weaknesses and their justifications; possible other remarks

TO BE COMPLETED ONLY AT PANEL MEETING

5.1.1 Main strengths and their justifications   **(no numerical rating)**
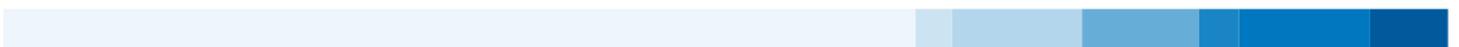
- Summary assessment of application's main strengths with justifications

    o Refer to the review criteria in sections 1–4.
    o To be completed only at the panel meeting

5.1.2 Main weaknesses and their justifications   **(no numerical rating)**

- Summary assessment of application's main weaknesses with justifications

    o Refer to the review criteria in sections 1–4.
    o To be completed only at the panel meeting

5.1.3 Other remarks (if any):

Research Council of Finland

6 Overall rating	Rating (1–6)

- Please note that the final rating should not be a mathematical average of the subratings. For example, the application should not be penalised if it has a slight weakness in one evaluation item that is later strengthened in another item.

Ranking based on panel discussion (ranking is made during the panel meeting)

Your application was placed in the ranking group [number] of all [number] applications reviewed in this panel. Only applications with a final rating of 5 or 6 were placed in ranking groups. No separate ranking of the applications was done within the groups.