Guide for Evaluators

Version 13 June 2018

1. About MoRE2020

MoRE2020 is a mobility programme for experienced researchers. The programme is run by Region Västra Götaland and co-financed by the EU within the framework of the Horizon 2020 Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA). MoRE2020 is a means of strengthening research-driven clusters, increasing transnational mobility and improving the career development of individual researchers. The overall programme objectives are:

- Attract internationally experienced researchers to Västra Götaland and increase international exchanges.
- Promote researcher mobility and career development for researchers.
- Position internationally competitive research and innovation milieus.
- Stimulate international research and innovation alliances and collaboration.
- Strengthen research-driven clusters within prioritised areas.

MoRE2020 will run for five years, starting in May 2017. The programme will provide mobility opportunities for 20 experienced researchers. MoRE2020 supports both incoming mobility to research and innovation milieus in Västra Götaland, and outgoing mobility to research and innovation milieus abroad.

2. General information

2.1 Request for evaluation

Within 20 days of the call deadline, experts will be contacted by e-mail and asked to agree to review one or more applications. Together with the request, the expert will receive a popular science summary of each application that she/he is being asked to review. Experts are asked to respond within five working days and to return the letter of appointment along with their bank details for payment.

2.2 Letter of appointment

Before proceeding with evaluations, experts must sign a letter of appointment, which includes a confidentiality agreement and a note on conflicts of interest. Confidentiality rules apply at all times before, during and after the evaluation period. Only after the signed letter of appointment and the declaration of confidentiality and conflicts of interest have been returned to the MoRE2020 Programme Manager will the experts receive all the relevant application documents.

2.3 Conflicts of interest

Under the terms of the letter of appointment, experts must declare beforehand any known conflicts of interest with regards to the applying researcher, the host organisation or the planned scientific work. The expert must have no personal connections or any professional interest in the applying researcher, e.g., the expert must not have been the applicant's supervisor or employer nor have or have had any family link to the applying researcher.

The expert must inform the Programme Manager immediately if a conflict of interest arises during the course of the evaluation. The Programme Manager will then take whatever action is necessary to avoid the conflict of interest situation.

2.4 Useful documents

Before proceeding to the evaluation, the experts should consult the following documents:
- Programme Description
- Call for Proposals
- Guide for Applicants

The documents can be downloaded from the programme website www.vgregion.se/more.

2.5 Deadline

The deadline for the evaluations is 1.5 months after the call deadline. The Programme Manager will notify the experts with the exact date together with the "Request for evaluation".

2.6 Remuneration

Experts are remunerated with a fixed amount of 1 500 SEK per reviewed application. Payment will only be made for evaluations that are delivered on time. Payment will be made after the Evaluation Reports have been delivered.

3. How are the applications evaluated?

3.1 Applicant

The MoRE2020 applicant is a research and innovation milieu in Västra Götaland[1] together with an experienced researcher.

3.2 Application

The evaluation of the applications concerns the following submitted documents:

- Project description
- Career plan
- CV
- Supporting letter from a collaborating end-user

3.3 Eligibility

The eligibility criteria for MoRE2020 are outlined in the Call for Proposals. The Programme Manager conducts an eligibility check before allocating applications to experts. The evaluators should thus assume that all applications are eligible and must be evaluated. Even if the expert suspects there is an eligibility issue with a specific application, she/he should nevertheless proceed with the evaluation without allowing it to affect the scoring.

3.4 Evaluation process

Region Västra Götaland uses senior Swedish and international experts. The experts are drawn from the public, private and academic sectors and within different scientific and professional fields. Each application is evaluated remotely by four experts, of whom at least two are from outside of Västra Götaland, who each submit an Evaluation Report. The Evaluation Reports are summarised and prioritised by the Programme Board, which is responsible for the final ranking of the applications. The Regional Development Committee of Västra Götaland makes the final,

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[1]Definition of a research and innovation milieu: universities, science parks, research institutes and university hospitals.

formal decision regarding awarded grants and the MoRE2020 Programme Management Team notifies all applicants with the results.

3.5 Role of the Programme Board

The Programme Board ranks all proposals based on the Evaluation Reports submitted by the experts and according to defined selection criteria. The Programme Board will then draft a Common Evaluation Report for each application which is based on the experts' Evaluation Reports. Following this, the Programme Board will produce a ranked list of all the applications.

4. Advice to the experts

4.1 Evaluation Reports

This section of the Guide for Evaluators focuses on your individual evaluations as a MoRE2020 expert evaluator.

Form an opinion based on your own expertise. Do not consult with other experts and do not, under any circumstances, contact the applicant.

If you are asked to evaluate more than one application, it is advisable that you evaluate all applications first before finalising your scores and specific comments. This will enable you to see the full spectrum of applications allocated to you.

The exact meaning of the scoring system (excellent, very good, good, fair, poor, fail) is described in Section 4.2. The question therefore is which of these scores best describes the application. Remember, however, that the score is not sufficient for your evaluation to be fully understood. Do not be afraid to give your frank opinion and support it with an appropriate score. Your specific comments are invaluable.

4.1.1 "Do's and Don'ts"
- Write your comments using full and clear sentences for each criterion.
- Avoid summarising the application. The applicant and the Programme Board already know what the application is about.
- Point out strong and weak points based on the given sub-criterion; everything that is included in your Evaluation Report must be briefly justified. You may not use general statements such as: "*The research could have been described better*".
- Avoid generalisations such as "C*ountry X is weak in this area!*" If it is necessary to make this type of comment you should say instead, for example: "*The application does not demonstrate that the host has the capacity to run this project*".
- Do not assume or anticipate the quality of an institution (even prestigious institutions), this must be clearly detailed and demonstrated in the application.
- Career breaks (due to parental leave, extended sick leave, etc.) should not be viewed negatively nor have any bearing on the overall evaluation of the merits of the applying researcher.
- Avoid statements such as "*the candidate has few publications for his/her age*". Publication rates vary widely across disciplines and age is not a criterion. If you believe the track record of any participant is inadequate, then use a phrase such as "*The application has not demonstrated that the proposed researcher has a track record strong enough to carry out this project*". Please take into consideration the possibility

that the applicant has resumed a research career and assess the total time spent in research.

- Ethical issues are of considerable importance and you should make a note of those raised by the proposed project. Ethical issues should not affect your evaluation but will need to be addressed by the Programme Management Team and the appointed Ethics Board.
- In the case of a proposal using human embryonic stem cells (hESC), you **must** mention if the use of hESC is justified and necessary for the success of the project in your evaluation report.
- Check the consistency of scores and comments (see table below).
- Consider only the material included in the application and appendices.
- Above all, avoid writing personal comments and insults.

4.1.2 Feedback to applicants

The formal decision (rejection/approval) will be sent to all the applicants in the form of a written letter, sent digitally by e-mail and by mail. The letter will highlight the strengths and weaknesses of the application, as well as the reasons for approval or rejection. This feedback will be formulated from the summarised expert comments which will remain anonymous.

5. Evaluation criteria

The evaluation criteria are based on the Horizon 2020 criteria of Excellence, Impact and Implementation and take into account MoRE2020's focus on innovation and utilisation of research results.

5.1 Scoring

0. **Fail**. The proposal fails to address the criterion or cannot be assessed due to missing or incomplete information.

1. **Poor**. The criterion is inadequately addressed, or there are serious inherent weaknesses.

2. **Fair**. The proposal broadly addresses the criterion, but there are significant weaknesses.

3. **Good**. The proposal addresses the criterion well, but a number of shortcomings are present.

4. **Very good**. The proposal addresses the criterion very well, but a small number of shortcomings are present.

5. **Excellent**. The proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion. Any shortcomings are minor.

The maximum score for an application is 200 points. A minimum of 120 points is required to pass the evaluation, which is an average of three points per criterion. The sub-criteria for MoRE2020 are illustrated in the table below.

MoRE2020 evaluation criteria

A. Excellence

A1. Research, development and innovation quality of the proposed project/collaboration

a) quality of the research, including research methodology and method, inter- and multidisciplinary aspects

b) originality and innovative nature of the research, with reference to the state of the art in the research field

c) contribution to strengthening excellence in the specific research field

d) strategic importance of the research field considering, e.g. future economic growth in the area and potential to excel internationally

A.2 Merits of the researcher

a) academic merits in relation to stage of career (considering career breaks), research experience and level of independence (including publication track record)

b) demonstrated expertise in the research field of the proposed project

c) researcher's scientific network, including non-academic network as well as knowledge transfer activities

d) teaching, supervision, and management experience

e) experience in the development and/or management of research-driven clusters, and experience with transnational and intersectoral collaborations

A.3 Quality of the participating milieus

a) position of the participating milieus within the research field and in an international comparison

b) position of the participating milieus in an integrated academic-industry-public sector context

B. Impact

B.1 Relevance of the research/the collaboration to industry and/or society and to the research and innovation (R&I) milieu

a) contribution to the strengthening of the R&I milieu in Västra Götaland

b) contribution to the strengthening of competitiveness of the participating stakeholders (industry/public sector)

c) contribution towards strategic alliances across borders (geographical, sectoral, etc)

d) focus on societal challenges and focus on user- or needs-driven (applied) research and innovation

B.2 The capacity to convert the collaboration into benefits, including exploitability and utilisation

a) benefit to the participating milieus, and associated stakeholders (companies and/or public sector)

b) benefits to society and/or commercial exploitability

c) genuine plan for knowledge transfer and/or research utilisation

d) benefit to the researcher in terms of new knowledge and skills

C. Implementation

C.1 Implementation: i.e. capacity and credibility concerning the feasibility and implementation of the proposed project/collaboration

a) realistic project timeline and outcome of the research/the collaboration. Practical arrangements including administrative support for the researcher

b) capacity of the participating milieus to support the research project: including quality of infrastructure/facilities as well as researcher's career plan

c) capacity of the participating milieus to establish and maintain long term collaboration and to establish long term links with industry and/or the public sector

d) capacity for implementing the utilisation plan including outreach