**Annex 7**

*National research programmes*

*"High-energy physics and accelerator technologies"*

*the rules for the open call for proposals*

**Methodology for carrying out the expertise**

**for the project application, the project mid-term/final scientific report**

**Contents**

[Introduction 1](#_Toc113031484)

[1. Terms used 2](#_Toc113031485)

[2. Scientific expertise of the project application 3](#_Toc113031486)

[2.1 Individual evaluation of the project application 4](#_Toc113031487)

[2.2 Consolidated evaluation of the project application 8](#_Toc113031488)

[3. Scientific expertise for the mid-term and final scientific report of the project 9](#_Toc113031489)

[3.1 Individual evaluation of the mid-term and final scientific report 9](#_Toc113031490)

[3.2 Consolidated evaluation of the mid-term and final scientific report 11](#_Toc113031491)

[3.3 Assessment of the objective of the final scientific report 11](#_Toc113031492)

# Introduction

The methodology for carrying out the expertise for the project application and the mid-term/closing scientific report (hereinafter to as the "methodology") has been developed in accordance with the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation from 4 September 2018 No. 560 "Procedure for the Implementation of Projects of the National Research Programmes" (hereinafter referred to as the "Cabinet Regulation") and in compliance with the National Research Programme "High-energy Physics and Accelerator Technologies", as approved on 18 August 2022 by the Implementation and Monitoring Commission of the National Research Programme "High-energy Physics and Accelerator Technologies" of the Rules (hereinafter referred to as the "Rules") for the open call for proposals (hereinafter referred to as the "Proposal").

The methodology is designed for independent scientific experts from abroad (hereinafter referred to as the "expert") who carry out the evaluation of the project application, the mid-term scientific report and the final scientific report of the project by preparing an individual expert evaluation of the project application/mid-term scientific report/final scientific report of the project and a consolidated expert evaluation of the project application/mid-term scientific report/final scientific report of the project.

According to Article 35(1) of the Law on Scientific Activity, a national research programme is a state commission to carry out scientific research in a specific economic, educational, cultural or other sector of national priority, with the objective of promoting the development of that sector.

As a government order, the Programme is a policy implementation mechanism that identifies and researches issues of importance for Latvia's sustainability and development, which need to be the focus of the work of Latvian scientific institutions, and identifies relevant scientific research tasks to address them. In the light of the above, the Programme creates favourable conditions for achieving Latvia's sustainable development goals. The Programme will involve the strongest scientific teams, bringing together the best scientists from the Life Sciences and Engineering and Technology sectors to work together to achieve the project's goal. The Programme was set up and is funded by the Ministry of Education and Science. The Programme has been allocated a total of EUR 1,500,000 from the government budget. The Programme to be funded under the programme is EUR 1,395,000. The main objective of the Programme is to strengthen the development of the Latvian scientific community in the field of high-energy physics and accelerator technology in cooperation with the European Organisation for Nuclear Research (hereinafter referred to as "EONR"). To expand its cooperation with EONR and become an Associate Member, Latvia needs to demonstrate adequate scientific capacity. It is therefore necessary to develop an interdisciplinary high energy physics and accelerator technologies, including by strengthening the collaboration with EONR scientific staff and the use of EONR infrastructure, the objective of the Programme is to carry out research in the natural sciences and engineering in the field of high energy physics and accelerator technologies in order to develop world-class knowledge, human capital and technologies and to create products and services based on them, involving scientific and academic staff as well as students, PhD candidates and young scientists.

In line with the Programme's implementation objective, the Programme has three following objectives:

1. to develop collaborations with EONR in the framework of one or more of EONR's scientific experiments, such as the Compact Muon Solenoid (hereafter referred to as "CMS") experiment;

2. to encourage the development of Masters and PhD programmes in high-energy physics and accelerator technologies;

3. to develop fundamental research in high-energy physics and accelerator technologies. The project must carry out all the tasks set out in the call for proposals, as well as the horizontal tasks.

The implementation of the project must fulfil the thematic objective set out in the call for proposals, as well as ensure that all the horizontal objectives listed in Paragraph 7 of the MoC Order are met and that all the results listed in Paragrpah 8 of the MoC Order are achieved.

*In order to ensure the execution of the state order for the tasks set out in paragraph 6 of the Cabinet Order, a call for tenders has been launched within the framework of which it is planned to finance one project for the execution of all the tasks set out in paragraph 6 of the Cabinet Order (hereinafter referred to as "project"), with a maximum project funding of - EUR 1,395,000*. *The project implementation period is 48 months from the date of entry into force of the project implementation agreement.*

# 1. Terms used

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **No.** | **Term** | **Explanation** |
| **1.** | **Scientific Group** | scientific staff and scientific technical staff (persons who have the necessary technical knowledge and experience in one or more fields and who, under the supervision of scientists, participate in scientific activities by carrying out technical tasks. Scientific technical staff includes engineers, technicians, laboratory technicians, technologists, operators) involved in the implementation of the project. The scientific team shall be composed of the project leader, the main executors of the project (if required) and the project executors |
| **2.** | **Scientific staff** | principal investigators, researchers, research assistants, academic staff and students (including researchers, students, PhD candidates and young scientists from abroad and the diaspora). |
| **3.** | **Project Applicant** | the applicant is a scientific institution (hereinafter referred to as "scientific institution") registered in the Register of Scientific Institutions of the Republic of Latvia (public law entity or private law entity) or a higher education institution and meets the definition of a research and knowledge dissemination organisation. The applicant is responsible for the implementation of the project and the achievement of the overall project results |
| **4.** | **Project partner - scientific institution** | the project cooperation partner is a scientific institution registered in the Register of Scientific Institutions of the Republic of Latvia and meeting the definition of a research and knowledge dissemination organisation, participating in the project with its own staff or research infrastructure |
| **5.** | **Project cooperation partner - public institution** | a public body which is required to carry out scientific activities by an external legal act, its statutes or its articles of association engages in the implementation of the project with property, intellectual property, funding or human resources in its possession or ownership |
| **6.** | **Project Manager** | the scientist who manages the project and ensures its implementation - plans and supervises the execution of the project tasks, is responsible for his/her own and other persons involved in the project activities in accordance with the tasks set out in the project, scientific ethical norms, timely preparation and submission of documentation describing the scientific progress of the project in accordance with the procedure provided for in the CoM Regulations |
| **7.** | **The main executor of the Project** | the scientist implementing the project or sub-project and responsible for the execution of its parts |
| **8.** | **Project Executor** | a member of the scientific team who carries out individual scientific tasks in the implementation of the project and is responsible for carrying out the relevant parts of it |
| **9.** | **Student studying at University** | a student involved in the project research group is a bachelor student, a professional student, a master student (masters), a medical resident and a PhD student. Students at the University, as well as PhD candidates, must be involved in the project in accordance with the provisions of Paragraphs 21, 22, 23 and 24 of the Statutes |
| **10.** | **The responsible contact person of the applicant in the project (hereinafter referred to as the project contact person)** | a natural person registered in the National Scientific Activity Information System (hereinafter referred to as the "Information System"), completes the information on the project application, uploads its annexes, and, if necessary, maintains contact with the staff of the Latvian Council for Science (the project contact person may also be the project leader) during the project submission. The project applicant shall indicate the project contact person in Chapter 1 'General information' of Part A of the project application. If the project has cooperation partners, their contact persons shall also be indicated. |
| **11.** | **Expert** | a scientist who independently evaluates the project application, the mid-term scientific report and the final scientific report and whose scientific qualifications, evaluation expertise and work experience are relevant to the scientific discipline and subject matter of the project application, mid-term/final scientific report. |
| **12.** | **Project results** | The scientific results of the project according to Paragraph 12 of the CoM Regulations and the deliverables according to Paragraph 8 of the CoM Order. |

# 2. Scientific expertise of the project application

1. The scientific evaluation process of all project applications submitted under the call for proposals is organised by the Latvian Science Council (hereinafter referred to as the "Council").

2. If the project application fulfils the criteria for administrative evaluation, the Board shall, on the basis of Paragraph 35 of the Statutes, call upon two or more suitably qualified experts to carry out the scientific examination of the project application.

3. Before accessing the project application in the information system, the expert:

3.1 declares that he/she has no conflict of interest and undertakes to respect the requirements of confidentiality by signing and sending to the Board, by electronic mail, Annex 5 "Declaration of no conflict of interest and respect of confidentiality" (hereinafter referred to as the "Declaration of the expert");

3.2 enters into a contract with the Council - Annex 6 "Contract for the Examination" (hereinafter referred to as the "Examination Contract").

4. The Council shall, upon receipt of the expert's certificate and the conclusion of the expert agreement, give the expert access to the project application and to all the necessary information in the information system to carry out an appropriate assessment of the project application.

5. The expert shall evaluate the project application by applying his/her professional qualifications and experience in the relevant scientific field and by justifying his/her assessment with scientific evidence.

6. The expert shall cooperate with the Board during the examination and shall comply with the instructions given by the Board in relation to the performance of the examination in accordance with the Regulations and the examination contract.

7. According to Paragraph 43 of the Statutes, the expert is only allowed to assess a project application of 15 pages, with up to three additional pages if there are supporting documents from the social partners, letters of recommendation on cooperation, etc.

## 2.1 Individual evaluation of the project application

8. The individual evaluation of the project application (hereinafter referred to as the individual evaluation), drawn up in accordance with Annex 8 "Individual/Consolidated Evaluation Form for the Examination of the Project Application" of the Statutes, shall be completed and approved by the expert in the information system within two calendar weeks from the date of conclusion of the examination agreement and receipt of access to the project application and all necessary information, unless a different deadline is specified in the expert agreement.

9. In the individual assessment, the expert shall evaluate each criterion and provide a score taking into account the considerations set out in Paragraph 13 of the methodology.

10. The expert evaluates the criteria and assigns a score from 1 to 5 for each criterion, where:

10.1 With distinction - 5 points (excellent project proposal, meets or exceeds the highest standards in the relevant scientific field, any shortcomings in the project proposal are minor);

10.2 Good - 4 points (good project proposal, fulfils the requirements of the criterion in the relevant scientific field, but there are some shortcomings);

10.3 Satisfactory - 3 points (satisfactory project application, generally fulfils the requirements of the criterion in the relevant scientific field, with some shortcomings that will make it difficult to implement the project and achieve high results);

10.4 Weak - 2 points (weak project proposal, partial or only general compliance with the requirements of the criterion in the relevant scientific field, identifiable shortcomings that make it difficult to successfully implement the project and achieve its objectives);

10.5 Unsatisfactory - 1 point (unsatisfactory project application, does not meet the requirements of the relevant scientific field in the criterion, and the information provided is insufficient for the assessment in the criterion, and there are significant shortcomings that make the implementation of the project and the achievement of the objectives questionable);

10.6 if the project application's score in a given criterion exceeds the requirements of the previous lowest score but does not fully meet the requirements of the next highest score, the score may also be expressed as a half point, i.e., 0.5.

11. The expert shall provide a reasoned justification for the scoring of each scientific criterion. The expert shall explain in the justification the score awarded, using his/her professional qualifications and experience in the relevant scientific field.

12. Within three calendar days from the date of receipt of the individual assessment, the Board shall assess the compliance of the individual assessment with the considerations referred to in Paragraphs 27, 28 and 29 of the CoM Regulations, as well as with the methodology, returning the individual assessment to the expert for clarification/revision/improvement, if necessary, justifying the reasons for the return. In the event of a return, the expert shall update, revise and validate the individual evaluation in the information system within three calendar days of the date of receipt of the notification by the Board, sent by electronic mail, of the return of the individual evaluation of the expert.

13. The expert shall complete the individual evaluation in the information system (see Annex 8 "Individual/consolidated evaluation form for the examination of the project application" to the Regulations) according to the following criteria and considerations:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Individual/consolidated assessment of the project application** | | |
| Project title:  Expert(s): | | |
| **1.** | **Criterion: Scientific quality of the project** | Maximum 5 points |
| **1.1** | Consideration: scientific quality, reliability and novelty of the study | *The expert shall justify the score given by taking into account the fulfilment of the criterion as a whole and of each criterion consideration.*  *1. Specific information for the criterion is given in Chapter 1 'Scientific excellence' of the project application, as well as in subsections 2.4 'Scientific results of the project and ensuring their availability' and 3.1 'Proposer and scientific team', but it is the* ***project application as a whole that should be taken into account*** *when assessing the criterion.*  *2. The scientific excellence of the project, including the chosen research strategy and methodological solutions, the ability to generate new knowledge or technological insights, as well as the ability to build and develop an interdisciplinary and inclusive team of internationally competitive scientists using research methods and technologies that are recognised among scientists worldwide, shall be assessed according to the specificities of the relevant scientific field or fields and the project, as well as the specificities of the institutions of the project applicant and the project's cooperation partners (if any).*  *3. The evaluation shall take into account the thematic objective of the call for proposals (in accordance with point 6 of the CoM Order) and the horizontal objectives of the programme, the results (in accordance with Paragraphs 7 and 8 of the CoM Order) and their feasibility, and shall assess whether the project application is adequate to achieve the overarching objective and objectives of the programme in accordance with the thematic area of the project and the envisaged timeframe for implementation.*  *4.* *Assess the overall potential of the project* *develop the knowledge base in the social sciences and humanities to develop national research and innovation systems that address societal challenges.* |
| **1.2** | Consideration: scientific quality of the chosen research strategy and methodological approaches, and relevance to the objectives |
| **1.3** | Consideration: ability of the project to generate new knowledge or technological insights |
| **1.4** | Consideration: contribution of the cooperation partners (if any), their scientific capacity, the quality of the cooperation envisaged |
| **2.** | **Criterion: Impact of project results** | Maximum 5 points |
| **2.1** | Consideration: impact of the project and its results on the development of the field of high-energy physics and accelerator technologies and its research community in Latvia. | *The expert shall justify the score given by taking into account the fulfilment of the criterion as a whole and the fulfilment of each criterion consideration.*  *1.Specific information on the criterion is given in Chapter 2 "Impact" of the project application, but the assessment of the criterion must take* ***into account the project application as a whole.***  *2. The results and their expected impact, including the planned transfer of results into further activities and scientific capacity development, the possibilities for further development of research shall be assessed according to the specificities of the scientific field or fields concerned and of the project, as well as the specificities of the institutions of the applicant institution and of the project partners (if any), and the specific objectives of the programme.*  *3. The expert assesses the impact of the project on the research community by developing the necessary research resources,* *identifying previous research, tools and databases from other institutions and other countries, and involving young researchers in the research. Assess how effectively the project engages students and young scientists in relation to the overall workload of the research team, including a plan for engaging students and building the capacity of the research team within the project. Information on the workload of the project research team, including students, can be found in Chapter 3 "Project budget" of Part A "General information" of the project application and in Subsection 2.1 of the project application description.*  *4. The sustainability of the project results is assessed in relation to the expected scientific publications and the dissemination of the project results to the scientific community. Information on the dissemination of the project results can be found in the project application description, Subsection 2.4 "Scientific results of the project and making them accessible". Particular attention should be paid to ensuring the sustainability of results by making research results publicly available, including by providing free access to scientific publications and depositing newly generated research data in research data repositories in line with the FAIR principles of findable, accessible, interoperable and reusable.*  *The expert shall also assess the feasibility of the results to be achieved by the project in accordance with Paragraph 10 of the Terms of Reference, the results of point 8 of the CoM Order are as follows:*  *8.1 publication of original scientific papers in journals or conference proceedings listed in the Web of Science or SCOPUS databases or in proceedings recognised by the high-energy physics community, e.g., publications from The Compact Muon Solenoid experiment;*  *8.2* *presentation of research results at international scientific conferences, e.g., oral or digital poster presentations;*  *8.3 an application for external funding for at least one high-level research project with a threshold score in international research programmes, such as the European Union's Horizon Europe research and innovation programme;*  *8.4 the involvement of PhD students, PhD candidates and young researchers in the activities of the programme;*  *8.5 communication activities to ensure the visibility of the programme and the dissemination of results.* |
| **2.2** | Consideration: the impact of the project and its results on students in the education process, through internships and work placements, the use of the platform and the project's scientific results in higher education teaching, and capacity building for students and the research team. |
| **2.3** | Consideration: impact of the project and its results on society at large, through knowledge transfer and raising awareness of the role and contribution of research to society, as well as through the development of societal resources. |
| **2.4** | Consideration: scientific results of the project and making them accessible |
|  |  |
| **3.** | **Criterion: Project feasibility and security** | Maximum 5 points |
| **3.1** | Consideration: quality of the study work plan and its relevance to the objective. The resources provided are adequate and sufficient to achieve the objective. The study aims to ensure efficient use of resources. The planned work steps and tasks are clearly defined, relevant and reliable | *The expert shall justify the score given by taking into account the fulfilment of the criterion as a whole and of each criterion consideration.*  *1. Specific information for the criterion is given in Chapter 3 'Implementation' of the project application and in Part C 'Curriculum Vitae' of the project application, but the evaluation of the criterion must take into account the project application as a whole.*  *2. The feasibility of the project, including the research work plan prepared, the envisaged management and quality control of the research, the resources envisaged, the infrastructure available, shall be assessed according to the specificities of the scientific discipline or disciplines concerned and of the project, as well as the specificities of the applicant and the collaborating partners (if any).*  *3. The expert will assess the relevance of the scientific qualifications and experience of the project leader and the main contractors to the achievement of the project objectives and the performance of the tasks envisaged on the basis of the curriculum vitae submitted in Part C 'Curriculum Vitae' of the project application (only the project leader and the main contractors may submit them).*  *The planned implementation of the project is assessed in relation to the completed project application in Part A "General information", Section 3 "Project budget", which foresees the costs of the project team's salary, material and technical support, travel and publication costs.*  *Note that the project has a 48-month implementation period.* *and one project financing period of at least 12 months.* |
| **3.2** | Consideration: scientific qualifications of the project leader and of the main contractors, based on the curricula vitae submitted |
| **3.3** | Consideration: project quality management is foreseen. The management organisation allows you to follow the progress of the study. Potential risks have been assessed and a plan developed to avoid or mitigate them |
| **3.4** | Consideration: existence of the research infrastructure needed to carry out the study and access to other research infrastructure of the collaborating partners (if applicable) |
| **3.5** | Consideration: the institution carrying out the research and its collaborating partners (if applicable) have the necessary experience to implement the project |

**2.1 Expert panel discussions**

14. After the receipt of the individual evaluations of all project applications in the information system, the experts responsible for the preparation of the consolidated expert evaluation shall, within five calendar days, participate in a panel discussion on the task set out in Paragraph 6 of the CoM Order (hereinafter referred to as the "expert panel discussion"), in accordance with Paragraph 41 of the Rules of Procedure.

15. Before organising an expert panel discussion, the Board shall re-verify that each expert on the panel has no conflict of interest with the project applicants, project leaders and main contractors of the project proposals to be considered in the expert panel discussion.

16. In order to ensure the success of the panel discussion, the Board shall designate one expert to chair the panel discussion. It shall be determined on the basis of his/her scientific qualifications, professional and managerial experience to organise the panel and to lead a reasoned discussion among the experts, which shall be advisory in nature, with the aim of providing the experts with a comprehensive view of the situation of the project proposals under consideration by the panel, including the capacity of the proposer and the scientific team.

17. The expert panel discussion is held online via video conferencing (real-time video and sound). The panel discussion shall be video-recorded and minuted by a person designated by the Board.

## 2.2 Consolidated evaluation of the project application

18. After the expert panel discussion, the expert responsible for consolidating the individual assessments of all the experts on the project application concerned, by preparing the consolidated assessment of the experts in accordance with Annex 8 "Individual/consolidated assessment form for the examination of the project application" to the Rules of Procedure and in compliance with the conditions and individual assessments referred to in Paragraph 8 to 14 of the Methodology, shall, within three calendar days of the date of the expert panel discussion concerned, draw up and submit to the information system the consolidated assessment agreed in accordance with Paragraph 19 of the Methodology.

19. All the experts of the project application concerned shall agree on the consolidated assessment referred to in Paragraph 18 of the Methodology in the information system within three calendar days of the submission to the information system by the expert responsible for consolidating the individual assessments of all the experts.

20. The consolidated expert evaluation of a project application is an agreement between all the experts on the final evaluation of the project application, so the expert who drafts the consolidated evaluation of a project application consults the other experts on:

20.1 a score for each criterion;

20.2 a justification for the scores for each criterion, compiled from the justifications provided by all the experts in their individual evaluations.

21. The Board shall, within three working days, assess the conformity of the consolidated assessment with the methodology and validate it in the information system. If the consolidated evaluation is not in line with the methodology or does not provide a fully reasoned justification for the evaluation given in relation to the weaknesses and shortcomings identified in the project application, it shall be returned to the expert responsible for consolidating all individual evaluations for clarification/improvement.

22. The expert responsible for consolidating all individual evaluations shall, in the event of a return of the consolidated evaluation of the project application, update/refine the consolidated evaluation of the project application in the information system within three working days of the date of receipt of the return notification by e-mail and submit it to the Board for approval in the information system, after prior agreement with the other experts in accordance with Paragraph 19 of the Methodology. If the experts are unable to agree on a consolidated assessment due to a difference of opinion, the experts shall inform the Board and the Board shall engage another expert in accordance with Paragraph 42 of the Statutes.

# 3. Scientific expertise for the mid-term and final scientific report of the project

23. Within one month of the mid-term of the project, i.e., 24 months from the start date of the project, the applicant must complete and submit a mid-term scientific report (hereinafter referred to as "mid-term report"), and within one month of the end of the project, the applicant must complete and submit a final scientific report (hereinafter referred to as "final report"). For the mid-term and final reports (hereinafter together referred to as the "mid-term and/or final report"), the Board shall provide scientific expertise by at least two experts.

24. The Council shall give each expert access to the mid-term or final report of the project concerned and to the application for the same project. In addition, where a final report is being assessed, the Board shall give the expert access to the mid-term report of the same project. Before being granted access to the reports in the information system, the expert shall declare that he/she has no conflict of interest and shall undertake to respect the requirements of confidentiality by signing and emailing the expert declaration to the Board.

## 3.1 Individual evaluation of the mid-term and final scientific report

25. Within two weeks from the date of conclusion of the expertise agreement with the Board, the expert shall carry out an individual evaluation of the mid-term scientific report or the final scientific report (hereinafter together referred to as the "mid-term/final scientific report") by completing and validating Annex 10 "Individual/consolidated evaluation form for the mid-term/final scientific report" of the Statutes in the information system.

26. The expert gives one of two scores to the project's mid-term scientific report:

26.1 to continue the project;

26.2 not to proceed with the project.

27. The expert gives the final scientific report one of two scores:

27.1 the project has achieved its objective;

27.2 the project has not achieved its objective.

28. The expert assesses the project's mid-term/final scientific report against the following criteria:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Project mid-term/individual/consolidated evaluation of the final scientific report** | |
| Project title:  Expert(s): | |
| **1.** | **Criterion: Scientific quality of the project** |
| *The expert assesses how the project team has achieved the objectives of the project application by mid-term/the end of the project. Basically, takes into account mid-term/Chapter 1 "Scientific excellence" of the final scientific report, while linking it to the mid-term/the scientific report as a whole and the project application. Here, the expert provides comments and suggestions to fully achieve the project's objective and perform the tasks to the highest scientific quality, or on research opportunities after the end of the project in order to achieve scientific excellence. The comments shall take into account the Programme's mission, horizontal objectives and results, and assess whether the project is progressing towards the Programme's headline target and objectives.*  *The evaluator assesses whether the results of the project team over the period demonstrate its high research capacity and whether the results described adequately develop the knowledge base in the social sciences and humanities to address societal challenges.* |
| **2.** | **Criterion: Impact of project results** |
| *The expert assesses how the project team has achieved the objectives of the project application by mid-term/the end of the project. Basically, takes into account mid-term/Chapter 2 'Impact' of the scientific report at the end of the project, while linking it to the mid-term/the scientific report as a whole and the project application. In this section, the expert provides comments and suggestions to better achieve the intended impact and ensure the dissemination of the knowledge gained to the scientific community and communication to the public at large, or for post-project activities.*  *The expert assesses whether the project application's plans for the transfer of results into further activities and the development of scientific capacity and opportunities for further research development have been implemented (consortia established, involvement in international networks and consortia, project applications to the European Union and other international programmes) and are in line with the objectives and targets of the Programme. The expert assesses whether the project's research team has remained more internationally competitive and whether its capacity has been built.*  *The expert also assesses cooperation with public authorities and other partners (e.g. making recommendations, participating in policy planning, etc.).*  *The expert assesses the impact on the research community of the project proposal through the development of research resources,* *identifying previous research, tools and databases from other institutions and other countries, and involving young researchers in research*  *The expert assesses and comments on the implementation of the plan to ensure the sustainability of results by making research results publicly available, including free access to scientific publications and depositing newly generated research data in research data repositories in accordance with the FAIR principles of findable, accessible, interoperable and reusable.*  *The expert also assesses the project promoter's efforts to build the capacity of students and young researchers, including the impact of the project results on learners in the educational process, through the development of digital learning content and innovative pedagogies and by providing the project’s scientific results in general and higher education teaching processes, as well as the implementation or progress of the project's student engagement plan.*  *The expert assesses and comments on the impact of the project application on economic sectors relevant to the project's objective (including the publishing, media and ICT sectors), in cooperation with organisations and experts in the relevant economic sectors,* *has been achieved (or is being worked on) or make recommendations on how to achieve it more effectively.*  *The expert assesses and makes recommendations on the public outreach activities planned in the project application, their implementation, and assesses the project's performance in raising awareness of the role and contribution of research to society, promoting engagement in the research process (e.g., through public science initiatives), and creating and disseminating useful resources for the public, including popular science articles on the research conducted* |
| **3.** | **Criterion: Project feasibility and security** |
| *The expert assesses how the project team has achieved the objectives of the project application by mid-term/the end of the project. Basically, take into account mid-term/the scientific report of the mid-term and final stages, Chapter 3 "Implementation", while linking it to the project mid-term/the mid-term and final scientific report and the project application as a whole. In this section, the expert provides comments and suggestions for adjustments to the work plan or research opportunities after the end of the project.*  *The expert assesses whether the management of the project has been effective, including taking into account the overall progress of the project. Whether the risk plan planned in the Project Description, sub-chapter 3.3 "Project Management and Risk Plan", has been implemented where risks materialised and whether their solutions are credible.*  *In addition, the expert assesses and indicates whether the project has sufficiently involved students and PhD candidates by the specified stage, and assess the involvement of Latvian diaspora researchers and university students in the project.* |

## 3.2 Consolidated evaluation of the mid-term and final scientific report

29. Once all the experts carrying out the scientific peer review of the mid-term/final scientific report have completed and validated each of their individual assessments of the mid-term/final scientific report in the information system, the Board shall give all the experts access to the individual assessment completed by the other experts and shall disclose to each expert the identity of the other experts.

30. One of the experts shall complete the consolidated mid-term/closing scientific report evaluation in the information system in accordance with Annex 10 to the Statutes "Individual/consolidated mid-term/closing scientific report evaluation form" under the conditions set out in Paragraphs 25 to 28 of the Methodology, all the experts shall, by mutual agreement, validate the draft consolidated mid-term/closing scientific report evaluation in the information system within one calendar week of the submission of the consolidated mid-term/closing scientific report evaluation by one expert to the other experts in the information system.

31. In the consolidated evaluation of the mid-term/final report, the experts agree on a single score for the mid-term/final scientific report in accordance with Paragraphs 26 and 27 of the Methodology, summarising the comments made in the individual evaluations of the mid-term/final report.

## 3.3 Assessment of the objective of the final scientific report

32. In the consolidated valuation in the Final Report, the two experts agree on a consolidated percentage valuation, which has the following meaning:

Pass - overall percentage score is 85% - 100% and above. The assessment is given if the project has been carried out with good or excellent scientific quality and has met or exceeded the expected objectives and scientific results. Where there are non-achievement or other minor shortcomings, but the existing scientific results are of good scientific quality, e.g., the scientific articles are published in high quality journals, so that these shortcomings have not affected the achievement of the objective. If the mid-term scientific quality assessment of the project makes recommendations for further implementation, these are taken into account or a reasoned justification is given for not taking them into account.

Partially pass - overall percentage score is 25% - 84%. The assessment is awarded if the project has been carried out with sufficient scientific merit, the planned results of the project have been partially achieved, which has affected the overall achievement of the project objectives. Where the mid-term scientific quality assessment of the project makes recommendations for the further implementation of the project, these have been taken into account partially or not at all, and the reasons for not taking them into account are not sufficiently substantiated.

Non-pass - the overall percentage score is 0% - 24%. A mark is awarded if the project has been carried out with insufficient scientific quality, the planned results have been almost completely or not completely achieved, and the overall objective of the project has therefore not been achieved or has been achieved to an insufficient extent. If the mid-term scientific quality assessment makes recommendations for further implementation of the project, these are not taken into account and no reasoned justification is given.

33. Taking into account Paragraph 27 of the Methodology, the Council shall calculate the reimbursable part of the funding as follows:

33.1 if the percentage of the Experts' target score referred to in subparagraph 2.20 of the assessment is 60% to 65%, a flat rate of 5% shall apply;

33.2 if the percentage of the Experts' target score referred to in subparagraph 2.20 of the assessment is between 50% and 59%, a flat rate of 10% shall apply;

33.3 if the percentage of the Experts' target score referred to in subparagraph 2.20 of the assessment is below 50%, a flat rate of 25% shall apply.