**Annex 7**

to *National research programme "Digital Humanities"*

*rules for the open call for proposals*

**Methodology for carrying out the expert assessment**

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

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# Introduction

The methodology for carrying out an expert assessment of the project application and the mid-term/final scientific report (hereinafter - the Methodology) has been developed in accordance with Cabinet Regulation No 560 of 4 September 2018 "Procedure for the Implementation of Projects of the National Research Programmes" (hereinafter - the Cabinet Regulations) and in compliance with the National Research Programme "Digital Humanities" Implementation and Monitoring Commission approval dated 22August2022 of the Rules of Procedure (hereinafter - the 'Rules') for the open call for proposals for the “Digital Humanities" national research programme (hereinafter - the 'Programme') .

The Methodology is designed for independent scientific experts from abroad (hereinafter - 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 aim of promoting the development of that sector.

As a public service, the programme is a policy implementation mechanism that identifies and researches issues of importance for Latvia's sustainability and development, which require the strengthening of scientific capacity (including the involvement of young scientists and students) and knowledge base development facilitation by focusing the work of Latvian scientific institutions. In light of the above, the programme creates favourable conditions for achieving Latvia's sustainable development goals.

The programme will bring together the strongest research teams, involving the best researchers from the social sciences, humanities and other disciplines to achieve the project's goal.

The programme was set up and is funded by the Ministry of Education and Science. The total amount of State budget funding available for the call for proposals under the Programme is *EUR* 1 309 380 (one million, three hundred and nine thousand, three hundred and eighty *euros*).

The overarching goal of the programme is to develop digital resources for the humanities, reduce the fragmentation of the resource ecosystem and enhance the global competitiveness of resources. The programme aims to consolidate, develop and link (integrate, create synergies among) existing digital resources in the humanities, to create specialised digital solutions for end-users, including the development of digital solutions in the humanities, including the development of digital resources in the humanities to meet the needs of fundamental research.

The programme is needed to develop digital resources for the humanities, reduce the fragmentation of the resource ecosystem and promote the global competitiveness of resources.

The Programme has been developed in line with objectives 140 and 409 of the Latvian National Development Plan 2021-2027, line of action "Science for Societal Development, Agricultural Growth and Security" and to support the medium-term policy planning document "Digital Transformation Guidelines 2021 - 2027", as well as for the implementation of Cabinet of Ministers Order No 246 of 14 April 2021 "On the Guidelines for Science, Technology Development and Innovation 2021 - 2027", and in order to ensure the implementation of the task "to support a single service centre for research data repositories, authorisation, computing and storage, management and other digital services and tools, driven by scientific institutions", and to ensure the implementation of the Science, Technology Development and Innovation Guidelines 2021 2027 vis-a-vis the priorities defined therein and to find science-based solutions to current development challenges in Latvia.

Digital sciences affect all sectors of the economy and people's daily lives, work and communication. The digital shift is a pervasive element for all sectors. The programme will identify and explore issues of importance to Latvia's sustainability and development, which require a focus of Latvian scientific institutions and scientific tasks in order to create favourable conditions for achieving Latvia's sustainable development goals and stimulating economic growth. The programme will generate knowledge of relevance to the economy,

*In order to ensure the fulfilment of the tasks set out in Paragraph 6 of the Cabinet of Ministers' Order No 511 of 14 July 2022 "On the National Research Programme "Digital Humanities"" (hereinafter - the Cabinet Order), a call for proposals has been announced within the framework of which it is planned to finance projects for the fulfilment of the tasks set out in point 6 of the Cabinet Order (hereinafter - the project), setting the maximum project funding at EUR 1 217 724. The project implementation period is 36 months from the date of entry into force of a project implementation agreement.*

# 1. Terms and definitions

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| **No.** | **Term** | **Definition** |
| **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 (engineers, technicians, laboratory technicians, technologists, operators) involved in the implementation of the project. The scientific group shall be composed of the project manager, the project PIs (if required) and the project promoters |
| **2.** | **Scientific staff** | principal investigators, researchers, research assistants, academic staff[[1]](#footnote-1) and students (including researchers, students, PhD candidates and young scientists from abroad and the diaspora). |
| **3.** | **Applicant** | the applicant is a scientific institution (hereinafter - the 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[[2]](#footnote-2). 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 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 partner - public institution** | a public body which is required to carry out scientific activities by an external legal enactment, its bylaws or its articles of association, and is engaged 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 the activities of his/her own and those of other persons involved in the project 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 Cabinet Regulation |
| **7.** | **Principal investigator** | the scientist implementing the project or sub-project and responsible for the execution of its parts |
| **8.** | **Project promoter** | a member of the scientific group who carries out individual scientific tasks in the implementation of the project and is responsible for carrying out the relevant parts of it |
| **9.** | **University student** | a student involved in the project scientific group is a bachelor student, a professional student, a master student (masters), a medical resident and a PhD student[[3]](#footnote-3). University students, as well as PhD candidates, must be involved in the project in accordance with the provisions of points 21, 22, 23 and 24 of the Rules |
| **10.** | **The responsible contact person of the applicant in the project (hereinafter - the project contact person)** | a natural person registered in the National Scientific Activity Information System (hereinafter - 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 manager) 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 collaborating 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 Cabinet Regulation and the deliverables according to point 8 of the Cabinet Order. |

# 2. Scientific examination 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 - the Council).

2. If the project application fulfils the criteria for administrative evaluation, the Council shall, on the basis of point 35 of the Rules, 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. shall declare that he/she has no conflict of interest and undertakes to respect the requirements of confidentiality by signing and sending to the Council, by electronic mail, Annex 5 to the Rules, "Declaration of absence of conflict of interest and respect of confidentiality" (hereinafter - the "Declaration of the expert");

3.2. shall enter into a contract with the Council - Annex 6 to the Rules, "Contract for the Examination" (hereinafter - 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 Council during the examination and shall comply with the instructions given by the Council pertaining to the performance of the examination in accordance with the Rules and the examination contract.

7. According to point 43 of the Rules, 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 - the individual evaluation), drawn up in accordance with Annex 8 "Individual/Consolidated Evaluation Form for the Examination of the Project Application" to the Rules, 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 point 13 of the Methodology.

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

10.1. Outstanding - 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 performance);

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 for 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 supplemented by 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 Council shall assess the compliance of the individual assessment with the considerations referred to in Paragraphs 27, 28 and 29 of the Cabinet 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 such 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 Council, 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 Rules) according to the following criteria and considerations:

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| **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 subsection 2.6 'Scientific results of the project and ensuring their availability' and 3.1 'Project applicant and scientific group', but the evaluation of the criterion* ***must take into account the project application as a whole.***  *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 applicant and the project's collaborating 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 Cabinet Order) and the horizontal objectives of the programme, the results (in accordance with points 7 and 8 of the Cabinet Order) and their feasibility, and shall assess whether the project application is adequate in order 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* *to 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: capacity of the project to generate new knowledge or technological insights |
| **1.4.** | Consideration: contribution of the collaborating partners (if any), their scientific capacity, the quality of the cooperation envisaged |
| **2.** | **Criterion: Impact of project results** | Maximum 5 points |
| **2.1.** | Consideration: expected transfer of acquired knowledge and skills to further activities and scientific capacity development | *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 institution of the applicant, or the institutions 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 through development of the necessary research resources,* *identifying previous research, tools and databases from other institutions and other countries, and involving young scientists in the research. Assess how effectively the project engages students and young scientists in relation to the overall workload of the scientific group, including a plan for engaging students and building the capacity of the scientific group within the project. Information on the workload of the project scientific group, 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. Evaluate how effectively the project involves Latvian diaspora researchers and university students.*  *4. Assess the impact of the project on learners at all levels of education (how and if digital learning content and innovative pedagogic methods are to be developed, providing internship and work placement opportunities, as well as the use of the project's scientific results in general education and higher education teaching processes). Information on this criterion can be found in subsection 2.3 of the project application.*  *5. 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 2.6 "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 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.*  *6. Assess the plans described in the project application for identifying stakeholders, applying forms of cooperation and transferring knowledge gained from the project, in particular by working with sectoral policy makers and implementers, proactively promoting policy change). Information on this criterion can be found in subsection 2.4 of the project application.*  *7. Assess the impact of the project on economic sectors relevant to the project objective (including publishing, media and ICT sectors), in cooperation with organisations and experts in the relevant economic sectors.* *Information on this criterion can be found in subsection 2.2 of the project application.*  *8. The potential of the project to inform the public about the project results and to ensure knowledge transfer and raise awareness of the role and contribution of research to society, by promoting involvement in the research process (e.g. through public science initiatives) and by producing and disseminating useful resources for the public, including informative popular science articles on the research carried out, its results and societal benefits, should be considered (see sub-section 2.5 of the project application description).*  *The expert shall also assess the feasibility of the results to be achieved by the project in accordance with point 10 of the Rules; the results according to point 8 of the Cabinet Order are as follows:*  *8.1. innovative tools and solutions developed or adapted to meet the needs of end-user target groups;*  *8.2. promoting policy change (e.g., by advising sectoral policy-makers, preparing recommendations and guidelines);*  *8.3. establishment of interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary consortia (with partners outside academia), involvement in international networks and consortia, project applications to the European Union and other international programmes;*  *8.4. development of human capital by involving young and diaspora researchers in research, providing internships and work placements for students and PhD candidates, and developing Masters and PhD modules linked to the programme;*  *8.5. scientific monographs and original research articles in journals or conference proceedings listed in the Web of Science or SCOPUS databases;*  *8.6. publication of informative popular science articles on the research performed, its results and benefits to society.* |
| **2.2.** | Consideration: opportunities for research development, including contributions to the preparation of new projects for submission to calls for proposals under the European Union's Framework Programmes for Research and Innovation and other research and innovation support programmes and technology initiatives |
| **2.3.** | Consideration: the research will lead to knowledge or policy recommendations and solutions relevant to the objectives of the Programme, the sector concerned, the economy and society |
| **2.4.** | Consideration: sustainability of the knowledge generated and a qualitative dissemination plan, including scientific publications and public outreach |
| **2.5.** | Comments: The implementation of the study contributes to strengthening the scientific capacities of the research staff, including students |
| **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 assessment 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 manager and the principal investigators 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 manager and the principal investigators may submit these).*  *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.*  *Please note that the project has a 36-month implementation period.* *and one project’s financing period is at least 10 months.* |
| **3.2.** | Consideration: scientific qualification of the project manager and the project's main executors, based on the curricula vitae submitted |
| **3.3.** | Comments: Project quality management is planned. The management organisation allows one to follow the progress of the study. Potential risks have been assessed and a plan developed to avoid or mitigate them |
| **3.4.** | Comments: 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 the 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 tasks set out in point 6 of the Cabinet Order (hereinafter - the expert panel discussion), in accordance with point 41 of the Rules.

15. Before organising an expert panel discussion, the Council shall re-verify that each expert on the panel has no conflict of interest with the project applicants, project managers and principal investigators of the project proposals to be considered in the expert panel discussion.

16. In order to ensure the success of the panel, the Council shall designate one expert to chair the panel. This 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 applicant and the scientific group.

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

## 2.2. Consolidated evaluation of the project application

18. Following 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 points 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 point 19 of the Methodology.

19. All the experts of the project application concerned shall agree on the consolidated assessment referred to in point 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 shall consults with the other experts on:

20.1. the score for each criterion;

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

21. The Council 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 Council for approval in the information system, following coordination with the other experts in accordance with point 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 Council and the Council shall engage another expert in accordance with point 42 of the Rules.

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

23. Within one month of the mid-term of the project, i.e., 18 months from the start date of the project, the applicant must complete and submit a mid-term scientific report (hereinafter 'mid-term report'), and within one month of the end of the project, the applicant must complete and submit a final scientific report (hereinafter 'final report'). For the mid-term and final reports (hereinafter together referred to as the mid-term and/or final report), the Council shall provide a scientific expert assessment 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 Council 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 Council.

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

25. Within two weeks from the date of conclusion of the expert assessment agreement with the Council, 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 to the Rules, “Individual/consolidated evaluation form for the mid-term/final scientific report" in the information system.

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

26.1. to proceed with 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:

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| **Project mid-term/individual/consolidated evaluation of the final scientific report** | |
| Project title:  Expert(s): | |
| **1.** | **Criterion: Scientific quality of the project** |
| *The evaluator 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/final scientific report chapter 1 "Scientific excellence", while linking it to the mid-term/final scientific report as a whole and to 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 expert assesses whether the performance of the project team over the period demonstrates 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 evaluator 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/final scientific report chapter 2 "Scientific excellence", while linking it to the mid-term/final scientific report as a whole and to 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 scientific group 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 scientists in the research*  *The expert shall assess and comment 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 shall also assess 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 pedagogical methods and the use of the project's scientific results in general and higher education teaching processes, as well as the implementation of or progress with the project's student engagement plan.*  *The expert shall assess and comment on whether 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 evaluator 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/final scientific report Chapter 3 "Implementation", while linking it to the project mid-term/final scientific report and to 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 stated in the Project Description, sub-chapter 3.3 "Project Management and Risk Plan", has been implemented where risks materialised, and whether the solutions are credible.*  *In addition, the expert shall assess and indicate 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 assessment 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 Council shall give all the experts access to the individual assessments filed 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 Rules “Individual/consolidated mid-term/closing scientific report evaluation form” under the conditions set out in points 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 points 26 and 27 of the Methodology, summarising the comments made in the individual evaluations of the mid-term/final report.

## 3.3. Evaluation 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:

Compliant - overall percentage score is 85% - 100% or higher. The award 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 is non-performance 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 disregarding them.

Partially compliant - overall percentage score is 25% - 84%. The mark 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.

Not compliant - 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 entirely or almost entirely not 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 refundable part of the funding as follows:

33.1. if the percentage of the Experts' target score referred to in sub-paragraph 2.20 of the Agreement is 60% to 65%, a flat rate of 5% shall apply;

33.2. if the percentage of the Experts' target score referred to in sub-paragraph 2.20 of the Agreement 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 sub-paragraph 2.20 of the Agreement is below 50%, a flat rate of 25% shall apply.

1. Higher Education Law, Section 27, Paragraph 1 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Article 2(83) of European Commission Regulation (EU) No 651/2014 of 17 June 2014 declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the internal market in application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty (Official Journal of the European Union, 26 June 2014, No L 187/1) (<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2014/651/oj/?locale=LV>) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Higher Education Law, Section 44, Paragraph 1 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)