EVALUATION PROCESS

Annex No. 2 to the Call documentation
for the 4th call under the DELTA 2 programme

Ref. No.: TACR/8-6/2022

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Introductory information

This annex to the call documentation contains all information that you will need for the evaluation of project proposals submitted to this call. All documents related to the launch of this call, information on the Technology Agency of the Czech Republic (hereinafter referred to as "TA CR"), applicable legislation and on the terminology used can be found on the TA CR website or directly in the ISTA information system.

The conditions of the 4th call under the DELTA 2 programme, are given in the call documentation or in other documents published on the day of the launch of the call.

In case of divergence between the Czech version and the English translation of this document, the Czech version shall prevail.

Please note that after the evaluation process, all evaluation reports will be made available in an anonymous version to the applicants of the relevant project proposals.

Evaluation process

Each project proposal must be evaluated as follows:

1. **Committee for admission of project proposals** – will check the formalities of the project proposal and the eligibility of all applicants. Project proposals that have met all the conditions of the call will be evaluated in the following evaluation stages.
2. **Experts** – each project proposal is evaluated independently by three experts according to the evaluation criteria. Each expert will study the project proposal and draw up an evaluation report.
3. **Rapporteur** – will study the project proposal, the evaluation reports of individual experts and will draw up an evaluation summary report (hereinafter referred to as the "ESR"). In conclusion, they will propose an opinion on behalf of the Expert Advisory Body.
4. **Expert Advisory Body** – will prepare a final opinion on each project proposal and propose a preliminary ranking of project proposals for the TA CR Board.
5. **TA CR Board** – will use as a basis the opinion and ranking proposed by the Expert Advisory Body and will decide on the granting of funding to selected project proposals.

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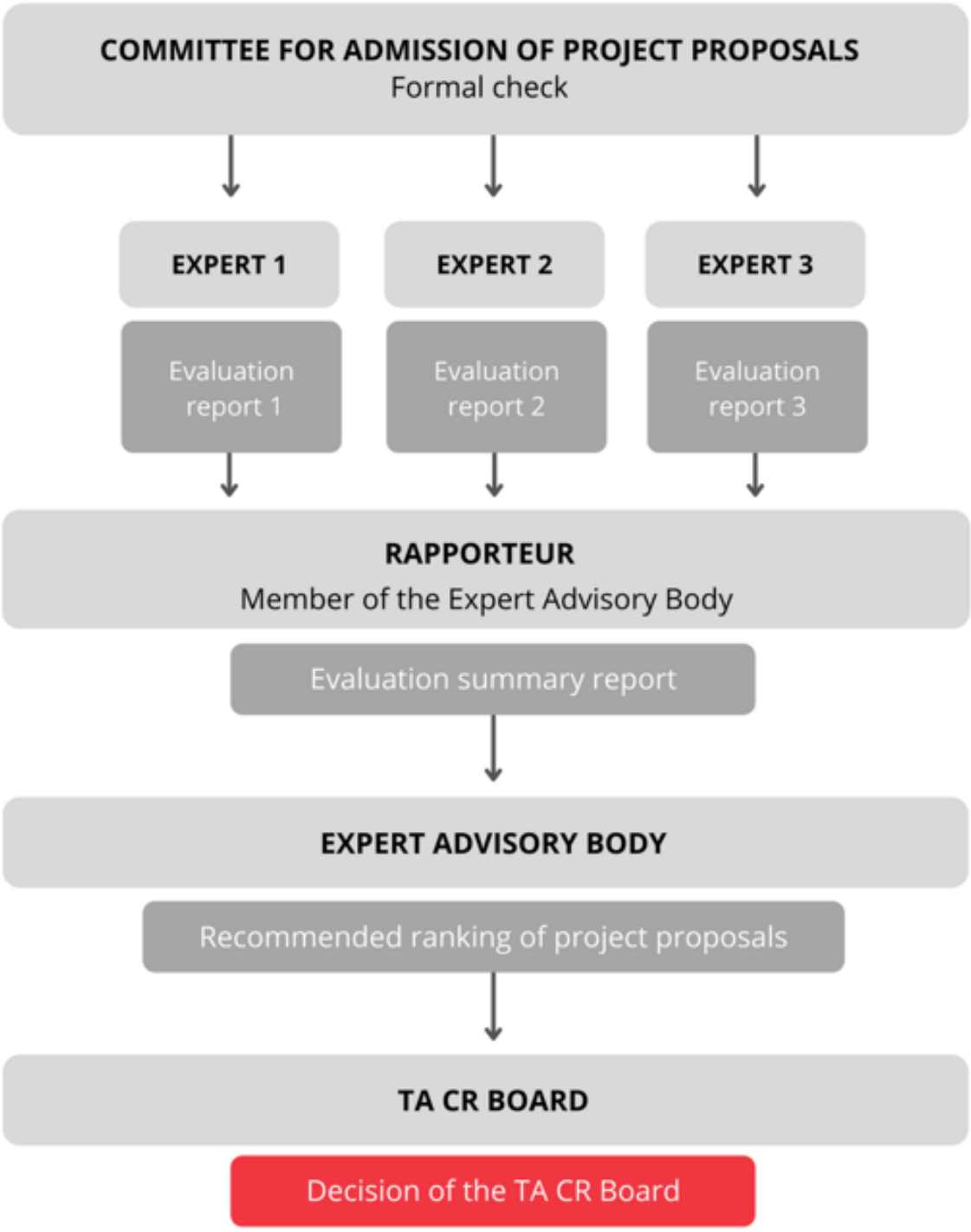

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1. Experts

For each project proposal, the expert:

- evaluate the **factual part** (according to set evaluation criteria). Each criterion is evaluated using a score and the awarded score is accompanied by a written justification;
- summarise **the positives and the negatives** in conclusion of their evaluation report (a system of bullet points is suitable for better clarity and orientation in the text);
- draw up a **final evaluation** of the project proposal with a final opinion to recommend it for funding or not.

The maximum number of points that can be awarded by one expert is **93**. The project proposal can get from all experts a total of **279 points**.

The expert **cannot** recommend a project proposal for funding if they assign **0** points to any of the scored criteria. The expert also cannot recommend for funding a project proposal, to which they awarded less than **45 points** in total.

Comments on individual scored criteria must clearly correspond to the awarded score. The experts must ensure that the **awarded points and the written comments are consistent** (coherence of the evaluation). If the expert awards the **full number of points**, then the comments should contain the positives of the project proposal. If the evaluator reduces the number of points, he must state the specific negatives so that the list of shortcomings corresponds to the reduced score.

In the justification of their opinion, experts will clearly summarise their views on the project proposal. In the event of a **positive opinion**, they will state the main positives of the project proposal and other reasons relevant for its funding. Even a positive opinion can contain negatives, which should, however, be reflected in the awarded score. On the other hand, in the case of a **negative opinion**, they will state all the arguments why the project proposal should not be recommended for funding.

The experts have 3 days to accept a project proposal for evaluation and 21 calendar days to draw up the evaluation report, starting from confirmed acceptance of the project proposal for evaluation.

2. Rapporteur

The rapporteur will draw up the **evaluation summary report** in which they will express opinion on the evaluation of individual experts, will summarise the positives and negatives of the project proposal and will state whether they recommend the project proposal for funding or not.

The rapporteur, who prepared the ESR for a project proposal that is subsequently funded, automatically becomes the rapporteur for this project during its realization. Once a year, the rapporteur prepares an opinion on the project interim report, will express their views on possible changes and may be asked to cooperate in a check, monitoring visit or an evaluation of the given project.

Comments on differences in evaluation by individual experts

In this box, the rapporteur will comment on differences in the evaluation of individual criteria by individual experts. Comments need to be provided in every case when the experts differ by two and more points of the available scale. Rapporteur also comments on any discrepancy in the final

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opinions of individual experts and the total awarded score. However, at their discretion, the rapporteur may also mention any other discrepancies considered significant for the overall evaluation (the experts , for example, may have awarded very similar scores, while having major differences in the related comments and arguments).

Positives and negatives of the project proposal

In this part of the ESR, the rapporteur summarizes positives and negatives of the project proposal. For this summary, they can use the arguments given in the evaluations of individual experts. Positives and negatives of a project proposal should clearly reflect the project proposal relative to the evaluation criteria.

Opinion on the provision of funding

In this box, the rapporteur will state whether they recommend the project proposal for funding or not.

If the rapporteur is not in agreement with the views of individual experts, this opinion should be thoroughly supported by arguments in the box ***Justification of the rapporteur's opinion on the provision of funding***. In case the rapporteur takes an opinion opposite to that of all experts, they must additionally fill in the box ***Justification of the rapporteur's negative opinion in the event that all experts have recommended the project for funding.***

Final justification of project proposal evaluation

This is a draft of the final opinion serving as a basis for deliberations of the Expert Advisory Body. The rapporteur writes this justification on behalf of the Expert Advisory Body, in the third person singular, starting with the following sentence: The Expert Advisory Body recommends/does not recommend the project proposal for funding under the DELTA 2 programme.

Subsequently, the rapporteur will state the main positives and negatives of the project proposal from which it must be clear why the project proposal is or is not recommended for funding.

At the end of this justification, the rapporteur may propose a reduction in costs, change of ratio of industrial research and experimental development or an adjustment of the score according to the conditions set for the Expert Advisory Body. Any proposed changes must be clearly described and carefully justified.

Evaluation of the quality of experts' reports

The rapporteur further makes an assessment of the quality of individual evaluation reports prepared for the given project proposal using two grades:

- for coherence – consistency of scoring and written comments;
- for credibility – the expertise and quality of the evaluation.

These grades (and their justification) serve as a feedback for the experts and at the same time provide a basis for the assessment of the experts' work by TA CR. Therefore, this part of the evaluation summary report (ESR) should also be given due attention. The rapporteur rates on a scale of 1 to 4, with 1 being the best grade. If the rapporteur could not rely on some individual evaluation report, such evaluation report should be graded 3 or 4.

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3. Expert Advisory Body

When evaluating a project proposal, the Expert Advisory Body uses as a basis the individual evaluation reports and the ESR.

In its opinion, the Expert Advisory Body may propose:

- **change of score** awarded to the project proposal by a maximum of **30 points**. The score awarded by the Expert Advisory Body may not exceed the maximum possible score of **279 points**;

  Any change in score must be **duly justified** (by mentioning a particular criterion, evaluation report, number of points and arguments why in the view of the Expert Advisory Body a score was incorrectly awarded);
- **reduction of the costs** of the whole project proposal (only total costs of the main applicant may be reduced, but not individual cost categories).

  It is not possible, for instance, to propose a reduction of costs for a **single cost category** (e.g. personnel costs by 20%). It is only possible to propose a reduction of the total costs of the project proposal. The proposal to reduce costs must be duly justified, for example by overestimated personnel costs, and by providing specific reasons why and where they are overestimated.
- change of ratio of industrial research and experimental development for individual applicants.

In its opinion, the Expert Advisory Body may diverge from the rapporteur's opinion. In such a case, the divergence must be duly justified.

In the event that a member of the Expert Advisory Body suspects duplication with another project proposal according to the conditions set out in the call documentation, they will inform the administrator of collective bodies who will ensure verification before the meeting of the TA CR Board.

The output from the meeting of the Expert Advisory Body is a ranking list of all evaluated project proposals.

4. TA CR Board

Based on the recommendation of the Expert Advisory Body, the TA CR Board will decide which project proposals will be funded and which will not.

The output from the meeting of the TA CR Board is a ranking list of all evaluated project proposals.

5. Evaluation criteria

The evaluation under the call shall use **10 scored criteria** (no binary or bonus points criteria).

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Scored criteria

A four-point scale with a corresponding verbal description is determined for the evaluation of each scoring criterion. The score differs according to the weight of the given sub-criterion according to the table below.

SCORING SCALE				CORRESPONDING VERBAL DESCRIPTION
12	**9**	**6**	**3**	met without reservations
8	**6**	**4**	**2**	met with minor reservations
4	**3**	**2**	**1**	met with major reservations
0	**0**	**0**	**0**	not met

1. Compliance of the project proposal with the objectives and focus of the programme and national priorities
(0; 4; 8; 12 points)

Evaluate to what extent the following applies: The objectives of the project are clearly formulated, comprehensible and reflect the substance of the project focus. The project proposal is coherent and in line with the focus and objectives of the programme. The project proposal is consistent with the areas and sub-areas of the National Priorities for Oriented Research (NPOR) pursued by the DELTA 2 programme.

Hints for evaluation: The main objective(s) of the project proposal should be clearly and comprehensibly defined, specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and traceable in time. The objectives of the project proposal must be in line with the objectives of the programme and the selected NPOR. In case you identify a major inconsistency with the programme objectives or the NPOR, the criterion should be rated as not met, i.e. 0 points, and the project proposal should not be recommended for funding.

Relevant parts of the project proposal:

3. PROJECT INTRODUCTION-> Factual focus of the project proposal-> Objectives of the project and relevance to the programme -> Project objectives in Czech language, Project objectives in English language, Fulfillment of the objectives of the programme and of the call for proposals;

3. PROJECT INTRODUCTION-> Project definition -> National Priorities for Oriented Research.

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2. R&D&I project and suitability of the methods used
(0; 3; 6; 9 points)

Evaluate to what extent the following applies: The submitted project proposal is a project of applied research (industrial research, experimental development and innovation) according to the Frascati Manual and Act 130/2002 Coll. The proposed activities, methods and procedures are clearly described, lead to the achievement of the planned project results and their link to the project objectives is obvious.

Hints for evaluation: Evaluate the project proposal and the planned outputs/results as a whole in terms of meeting the five principles of an R&D&I project according to the Frascati Manual. The project proposal must have elements of novelty, creativity, research uncertainty, systematicity and reproducibility of outputs/results. Assess the appropriateness of the described methods and key activities in terms of relevance to achieving the outputs/results of the project proposal. If, in your opinion, the ratio of industrial research and experimental development (IR/ED ratio) is not correctly set in the project proposal, please comment on an adequate ratio, and justify your recommendation. If the project proposal does not meet the elements of applied research, this criterion should be assessed as not fulfilled and the project proposal should not be recommended for funding.

Relevant parts of the project proposal:

3. PROJECT INTRODUCTION-> Factual focus of the project proposal -> Project content-> The essence and the timetable of the project proposal, Technical provision, initial know-how, applicants' dispositions, Current state of knowledge, novelty and research uncertainty ;

5. OUTPUTS/RESULTS;

6. FINANCIAL PLAN -> Shares of the categories of IR/ED.

3. Knowledge of state-of-the-art
(0; 3; 6; 9 points)

Evaluate to what extent the following applies: Applicants have demonstrated knowledge of the subject and of the state-of-the-art in the Czech Republic and abroad, they have knowledge of the causes of the problem and previous solutions and related projects.

Hints for evaluation: Evaluate whether the applicants have indicated the projects on the outputs/results of which the project proposal builds and to which it is a follow-up and whether they have differentiated themselves from current or completed projects, indicating the differences and links. Assess whether applicants have sufficiently described the novelty of the proposed solution and the research uncertainty that is a main feature of a research project.

If the applicants do not indicate relevant similar or related own projects or research plans at the Czech and international level according to the conditions set out in the Call Documentation, chapter 3.3 Differentiation from own similar projects in which the applicant is or was an investigator, this will be considered within the evaluation as a reason for not recommending the project proposal for funding. Therefore, if this is found, the criterion is to be rated as not met (0 points).

To search for related projects, TA CR recommends using the STARFOS tool for finding funded projects or the Information System for Research, Experimental Development and Innovation (R&D IS).

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Relevant parts of the project proposal:

3. PROJECT INTRODUCTION -> Factual focus of the project proposal -> Project content -> Technical provision, initial know-how, applicants´ dispositions, Current state of knowledge, novelty and research uncertainty, Delimitation with respect to similar projects and solutions;

8. ANNEXES -> Annexes.

4. Relevance of project results
(0; 2; 4; 6 points)

Evaluate to what extent the following applies: The results are described with sufficient specificity and are relevant relative to the project objectives, activities, financial plan and staffing. Assess whether the proposed distribution of the applicants' rights to the outputs/results is adequate relative to the distribution of project activities, i.e. whether it corresponds to the degree of involvement of individual participants in the activities leading to the production of these outputs/results.

Hints for evaluation: Evaluate on the basis of the description and type of individual planned results, whether they are likely to achieve the stated objective of the project proposal. The proposed distribution of rights to the results should be adequate to the involvement of the researchers.

Relevant parts of the project proposal:

5. OUTPUTS/RESULTS;

3. PROJECT INTRODUCTION -> Factual focus of the project proposal -> Applicability of outputs/results;

8. ANNEXES -> Annexes.

5. Applicability, project's benefits, and the applicant's ability to introduce the results into practice
(0; 4; 8; 12 points)

Evaluate to what extent the following applies: The project proposal contributes to the development of Czech society in the context of European integration and globalization. The outputs/results of the project proposal have an application or market potential, and the applicant has sufficiently described the way in which to apply the outputs/results of the project in practice and its capacity in this respect.

Hints for evaluation: Relevant markets exist and the solutions developed in the project have the potential to successfully penetrate these markets (they have advantages over existing solutions, i.e. the project proposal demonstrates the comparative advantage of the solution being developed compared to the existing offer in the relevant market or to the offer expected at the time of completion of the development). The applicants have substantiated their commercial assumptions through market research or other credible means and have indicated also the expected economic benefits.

Applicants have demonstrated that they are able to ensure the aforementioned application of the results or have documented cooperation with entities that are able to ensure the application of the project results, at least one of which must be introduced to the market no later than three years after the end of the project.

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Relevant parts of the project proposal:

3. PROJECT INTRODUCTION -> Factual focus of the project proposal -> Applicability of outputs/results -> Applicability of outputs/results in practise, the benefits of the project, The ability to introduce the results into practice;

5. OUTPUTS/RESULTS;

8. ANNEXES -> Mandatory annexes.

6. Economic and time efficiency of the project proposal
(0; 3; 6; 9 points)

Evaluate to what extent the following applies: The amount of planned costs is adequate for the planned activities and outputs. The time planned for the project is realistic. The return on the invested funds is expected within five years of project completion.

Hints for evaluation: Evaluate the amount (adequacy) of the planned funding by individual cost items. Evaluate the planned costs in terms of economy, efficiency, and effectiveness of their use. Pay attention also to the time planned for the project, which should be adequate for the planned outputs/results. The level of expected revenue/economic benefit should be assessed in relation to the project costs. Other circumstances may also be taken into account, e.g. sector specifics, or the fact that the results of the project will be reflected in cost savings, specific social or other benefits rather than in increased revenues.

Relevant parts of the project proposal:

3. PROJECT INTRODUCTION -> Factual focus of the project proposal -> Project content -> The essence and the timetable of the project proposal;

6. FINANCIAL PLAN -> Costs, Justification of cost items.

7. Project organisation and technical facilities, risk analysis
(0; 4; 8; 12 points)

Evaluate to what extent the following applies: The project management and the cooperation of the applicants is meaningfully described. The applicant has appropriate technical facilities at its disposal. The applicants have detailed in the project proposal the critical assumptions for achieving the objectives, have sufficiently identified the possible risks associated with the implementation of the project and have assessed the likelihood of their occurrence.

Hints for evaluation: Evaluate the described project management, i.e. whether the project management and the roles and responsibilities of the project investigators are sufficiently described. The principal investigator must be able to ensure and coordinate cooperation between all participants in the project.

Evaluate whether the applicant's technical facilities and equipment, the pre-existent know-how and other key competencies of the participants are adequate to achieve the planned outputs/results. It should be clear from the project proposal that adequate technical capability will be ensured throughout the duration of the project (technical equipment, material, personnel, laboratory capacity, etc.). If, for example, the applicant does not possess relevant experience with the planned R&D activities in the given field, or does not have the equipment or relevant permits, accreditation for the specific activities planned in the project, it should demonstrate in an appropriate way how

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the technical aspects and expertise necessary for the project will be ensured. Specifically, whether the services of subcontractors who own the necessary equipment or permits will be used. Evaluate whether the applicants have stated in the project proposal the critical prerequisites for achieving the objectives, sufficiently identified the possible risks, assessed the likelihood of their occurrence, proposed a way to address them, estimated their severity and described the preventive steps to eliminate or reduce the risks (a prevention plan).

The mere identification of risks (i.e. the fact that some risks exist in relation to the project proposal) should not be negatively assessed in the evaluation. On the contrary, if the applicants have described in a meaningful way how they have identified these risks, how they intend to prevent them and, where appropriate, how they intend to deal with situations in which they may arise, this is evidence that they have seriously considered these issues when elaborating the project proposal. This needs to be evaluated positively.

Relevant parts of the project proposal:

3. PROJECT INTRODUCTION -> Factual focus of the project proposal -> Project content-> Project management, Technical provision, initial know-how, applicants' dispositions;

3. PROJECT INTRODUCTION -> Factual focus of the project proposal -> Analysis of risks;

4. PROJECT TEAM

8. ANNEXES *(Common Proposal).*

8. Project team
(0; 3; 6; 9 points)

Evaluate to what extent the following applies: The members of the project team have the necessary experience in dealing with R&D projects and the expertise for achieving the planned results.

Hints for evaluation: Evaluate the expertise of the members of the research team and their previous experience in R&D projects. The experience of the team members matches with their roles in the team and the planned activities. For multidisciplinary projects, it should be the case that the project team includes experts in all disciplines on which the project is based, or the project proposal clearly indicates how the applicants will provide the missing expertise.

Relevant parts of the project proposal:

4. PROJECT TEAM;

8. ANNEXES *(CV)*.

9. International cooperation and consortium composition
(0; 4; 8; 12 points)

Evaluate to what extent the following applies: The project consortium is appropriately composed either on the basis of previous mutual cooperation or on the basis of experience with R&D&I projects in the same field and the composition of the consortium is meaningful in relation to the subject and the objectives of the project proposal. International cooperation in the consortium brings desirable effects such as transfer of know-how, access to foreign research capacities and new markets, etc. The project and the application of its results will generate adequate benefits for all participating entities.

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Hints for evaluation: Evaluate the potential contribution of international cooperation and foreign partner(s) to the project. To what extent do the Czech and foreign participants plan to actually collaborate also with regard to balanced participation and what outputs/results do they expect, both hard (acquisition of new knowledge and skills for the development of new or substantially improved products, processes or services leading to a new product, process or service) and soft (access of Czech teams to international knowledge and know-how, foreign research capacities or facilitation of entry to foreign markets). Evaluate the necessity of the foreign partner's participation. If you have doubts about the relevance of the foreign partner's participation in the project, express these doubts in your score. Assess whether/how the composition of the consortia on the Czech and foreign side is adequate in relation to the subject matter and objectives of the project proposal.

Relevant parts of the project proposal:

3. PROJECT INTRODUCTION-> Factual focus of the project proposal -> International cooperation-> Benefits of international cooperation, Justification of the need for international cooperation with the donor partner(s);

8. ANNEXES (*Common Proposal*).

10. Incentive effect of funding
(0; 1; 2; 3 points)

Evaluate to what extent the following applies: The award of funding has a positive effect on the efficiency and quality of the solution compared to the zero option (i.e. no award of funding) in terms of the scope of the project, its objectives or speed of implementation. The funding granted does not serve to finance activities that are required by legislation or other regulations and that would have to be implemented by the beneficiary in any case (i.e. even without the funding).

Hints for evaluation: The awarded funding will motivate the proposer to R&D activities and the award of the funding is necessary in terms of achieving the outputs/results (shortening the time for R&D work, increasing the volume of R&D work, etc.). The incentive effect is sufficiently described and justified. It is clear that the project proposal would not have been carried out without the state aid, or only to a limited extent. The state aid will provide an appropriate incentive for the beneficiaries. In order to demonstrate the incentive effect, at least of the following needs to be met:

a) a material increase in the scope of the project or activity due to the aid;

b) a material increase in the total amount spent by the beneficiary on the project or activity due to the aid;

c) a material increase in the speed of completion of the project or activity concerned;

d) submission of application for the aid before work on the project or activity starts.

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Furthermore, the criterion can only be considered to be fulfilled if the enterprise does not intend to implement measures under the project which are an obligation for it under the legislation, i.e. which it would otherwise have to implement if its activities in the area covered by the project proposal were not to be terminated.

Relevant parts of the project proposal:

3. PROJECT INTRODUCTION -> Factual focus of the project proposal -> Objectives of the project and relevance to the programme -> The zero variant and the incentive effect.

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