



# **Clean Sky 2 Joint Undertaking**

## **Rules for submission, evaluation, selection, award and review procedures of Calls for Proposals**

*February 2018<sup>1</sup>*

*Disclaimer:*

This document may be subject to modifications, complementary section in the course of implementation of the Programme.

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<sup>1</sup> Updated version dated February 2018 (non-substantial amendment of the version 18<sup>th</sup> November 2014 adopted by the Governing Board) to ensure alignment with the CS2JU Work Plan.

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# 1. Introduction

On 6<sup>th</sup> of May 2014, the European Council adopted Council Regulation (EU) No. 558/2014 establishing the Clean Sky 2 Joint Undertaking ('CS2JU') with the objective to contribute to improving the environmental impact of aeronautical technologies and globally competitive aeronautical industry and supply chain in Europe. Clean Sky 2 will build on the achievements and benefits of the Clean Sky Programme by going a step further and addressing integrated technology demonstrations at large system level, including new configurations and new vehicle demonstrations at the integrated vehicle level.

The Clean Sky 2 Programme is structured around 3 Integrated Technology Demonstrators (ITDs) accommodating the main relevant technology streams for all air vehicle applications and 3 Innovative Aircraft Demonstrator Platforms (IADPs) involving demonstrations and simulations of several systems jointly at the full vehicle level. They will be complemented by Transverse Activities for small air transport (SAT), life-cycle assessment (ECO) and technology assessment (TE).

As a Public-Private Partnership, Clean Sky 2 Joint Undertaking is built on a membership involving the European Commission ('Commission') representing the Union, the 16 aeronautics industry Leaders<sup>2</sup> committed to achieve the full research and demonstrator activity of the Programme and Core Partners with a substantial long-term commitment towards the Programme. The activities are completed by the Partners which contribute to the implementation of the Programme by participating specific topics and projects in the scope of a well-defined limited commitment and over a defined period of time in the course of the Programme. In accordance with the CS2JU Regulation, Partners are selected by Calls for Proposals which are accounted within the 30% share of the the Union Contribution to the operational costs of allocated in the Programme (Article 16.1 of the Statutes of the CS2JU).

For more information on the role of Partners, definition of topics and technical implementation of the partners' work within the ITDs/IADPs/TAs see the CS2JU Work Plan.

## 1.1. Purpose and scope of the document

The present document is aimed at assisting applicants to the Calls for Proposals launched by the CS2JU. Its purpose is to explain the procedure to be followed for applying as Partner and how the evaluation, selection, award and review procedure will be performed by the CS2JU.

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<sup>2</sup> The 16 Leaders are listed in Annex II of Regulation n° 558/2014

## 1.2. Definitions and abbreviations

<i>CS2JU</i>	Clean Sky 2 Joint Undertaking
<i>CS2JU Regulation</i>	Council Regulation (EU) No 558/2014 establishing the Clean Sky 2 Joint Undertaking published on the OJ n° L 169/77 7.6.2014
<i>Statutes</i>	Annex I to the CS2JU Regulation
<i>IADP</i>	Innovative Aircraft Demonstrator Platform
<i>ITD</i>	Integrated Technology Demonstrator
<i>TA</i>	Transversal Activity (SAT, ECO, TE)
<i>Leaders</i>	The 16 Leaders of the CS2JU listed in Annex II of the CS2JU Regulation
<i>Core Partners</i>	A legal entity as defined in Article 1 and 3 of the Statutes participating in an ITD or IADP or in TAs that has been selected following a Call for Core Partners as set out in Article 4.2 of the Statutes and has accepted the Statutes by signing a letter of endorsement
<i>Partners</i>	A beneficiary of the Clean Sky 2 Programme selected by a Call for Proposals
<i>GAP</i>	Grant Agreement for Partners
<i>HLG</i>	High-Level Goal

## 2. Submit a proposal

### Summary

This section explains:

- how the applicant can submit a proposal

### Key points

- The CS2JU will treat all proposals **confidentially**, as well as any related information, data, and documents it receives from the applicants.

The CS2JU will ensure that the process of handling and evaluating proposals is carried out in a confidential manner.

External experts are also bound by an obligation of confidentiality.

The applicants should also avoid taking any actions that could jeopardise confidentiality. They must not attempt to discuss their proposal with persons they believe may act as expert evaluator for the CS2JU.

- Proposals are archived under **secure** conditions at all times. After the evaluation and signature of any subsequent grant agreement, all copies are destroyed except those required for archiving or auditing purposes.

Proposals should not contain any information that is 'EU classified' under the rules on security of information in the [Commission internal Rules of Procedure](#) (see also [Guide for classification](#)).

- The CS2JU will process **personal data** in accordance with [Regulation No 45/2001](#) and according to the 'notifications of the processing operations' to the Data Protection Officer (DPO) of the CS2JU (publicly accessible in the [DPO register](#)).
- Once the coordinator (or sole applicant) has submitted a proposal, he/she will not hear from the CS2JU until the proposal has been evaluated, unless:
  - the CS2JU needs to contact the applicant (usually through the coordinator if applicable) to clarify matters such as admissibility, eligibility or to request additional information;
  - the CS2JU needs more information, or supporting documents, for legal entity validation, financial viability check, ethics review or security scrutiny;
  - the applicant has made an enquiry or a complaint or
  - the evaluation process involves hearings.
- For details on the call, please see the [call topic information](#).
- There is a H2020 [help desk](#) available to deal with issues relating to the electronic submission of proposals.

For information on how to register concerns or enquiries please look on the [Participant Portal](#).

- To **contact the CS2JU** please use only the electronic exchange system (i.e. the ['My Area' section](#) of the Participant Portal).

## 2.1. Before proposal submission

### 2.1.1. Draft proposals

The coordinator (or sole applicant) can enter draft proposals in the ‘Electronic Submission Service’ of the Participant Portal (accessible via the topic page of the call), using the forms and [templates](#) provided there.

① *For tips on the ethics self-assessment, see [How to complete the ethics self-assessment](#).*

The call topics are defined in the CS2JU Work Plan and describe the capabilities and capacity required from the applicants to contribute to the implementation of the Clean Sky 2 Programme in the relevant IADP/ITD/TA area and the scope, goals and objectives of the activities of the topic.

The description of the Clean Sky 2 Programme is the “*Joint Technical Programme*”<sup>3</sup> which may be regarded by the applicants to clarify the context of the topics within the overall strategic objectives of the Programme and the relevant IADP/ITD/TA area.

Applicants shall submit separate applications for each topic of interest. In each application they shall provide a detailed description of the proposed work breakdown, financial contribution, and capabilities (both technical and managerial). Applications shall satisfy the scope and demonstrate technical and organizational compliance with the objectives of the topic.

For more details on the Calls for Proposals and the Calls management rules, please see the CS2JU Work Plan.

### 2.1.2. Applications by legal entities

Single legal entities may apply to the calls for proposals, this is a specificity of the calls for proposals launched by the Clean Sky 2 JU based on a derogation to the H2020 rules for participation<sup>4</sup>.

Legal entities may also apply jointly as Consortia to perform technical work under a topic. In this case, Consortium members will be all requested to sign individually the Grant Agreement for Partners (GAP). By so doing, they will all become beneficiaries to the GAP and be bound directly by its provisions. The beneficiaries shall conclude an internal consortium agreement regarding the internal organisation of the consortium and for the topics of the calls launched within the complementary framework of one IADP/ITD/TA they will be requested to accede to the ITD/IADP/TA consortium agreement or, where applicable, to sign a bilateral implementation agreement with the Topic Manager<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> Published on the CS2JU website [www.cleansky.eu](http://www.cleansky.eu)

The Programme is the “Joint Technical Programme” which will be implemented and updated across the duration of the CS2JU in the form of a “Development Plan”.


<sup>4</sup> COMMISSION DELEGATED REGULATION (EU) No 624/2014 of 14 February 2014 establishing a derogation from Regulation (EU) No 1290/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down the rules for participation and dissemination in ‘Horizon 2020 — the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020)’ with regard to the Clean Sky 2 Joint Undertaking (OJ 174/14 of 13 June 2014).

<sup>5</sup> ‘Topic Manager’ is the representative of the private Member of the JU (either a “Leader” or a “Core Partner”, as defined in the basic act of the JU), designated as responsible for the topic in the call for proposals under which this action was selected.



Consortia should appoint at the application stage a "coordinator" who shall be authorised to act as single point of contact vis-à-vis the CS2JU. The coordinator shall have specific responsibilities in the consortium agreement and shall perform the following tasks:

- ensure on behalf of the consortium that the work is delivered and manage all operational aspects with its members related to the implementation of the activity;
- ensure central coordination of reports and deliverables of the consortium as a whole;
- centralize and receive the payments from the CS2JU for the whole consortium;
- execute the payments to the respective members of the consortium, collect and provide any financial information.

 A Cluster can apply only if it constitutes a single legal entity. In this case, it will become a sole beneficiary<sup>6</sup> of the CS2JU and will sign the GAP. If the Cluster is not a legal entity, its members may apply jointly in the form of a Consortium. The application shall indicate the contribution of the Cluster members and the activities they will perform and provide evidence of the matching with their available skills, capabilities, resources required under the topic.

### **2.1.3. Mock evaluation**

As part of the topic information for the call, the applicant will find a link to the [evaluation forms](#) similar to those used by CS2JU experts for the evaluation of proposals.

It is strongly recommended that the applicants use these forms to assess the strengths and weaknesses of their proposals before they submit it. Ideally, the mock evaluation can be carried out by independent colleagues or advisors not directly involved in the proposal.

### **2.1.4. Checklist for submission**

Before the coordinator (or sole applicant) officially submits the proposal, he/she must check that:

- the proposal fulfils the conditions set out in the call;
- the proposal (both the administrative forms and technical annex) is complete, readable, accessible and printable;
- the requested declarations have been made;
- all consortium members have:
  - obtained access to the electronic exchange system (i.e. the [‘My Area’ section](#) of the Participant Portal) (*see section III.3*)
  - registered in the Beneficiary Register.

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<sup>6</sup> The linked third parties option under Article 14 of the model grant agreement for Partners may be used by the participant members of a cluster applying as a single legal entity/beneficiary.

## 2.2. Submitting the proposal


Proposals must be submitted by the coordinator (or sole applicant) **on-line** via the Electronic Submission Service of the Participant Portal before the call deadline.

The CS2JU will record the date and time the coordinator (or sole applicant) submits the proposal, and immediately send a confirmation e-mail to all applicants.

If the applicant has not received this e-mail, it is because the proposal has not been submitted.

If the applicant misses the call deadline, the proposal will be disregarded by the system and the CS2JU will not consider it as submitted.

The system carries out basic verification checks for completeness of the proposal, internal data consistency, virus infection file types, size limitations, etc.


 The system will check page limits in specific parts of the proposal and, if necessary, suggest that the applicant shortens it. After the deadline, unless otherwise indicated in the call, any excess pages will be overprinted with a 'watermark', indicating to evaluators that these pages must be disregarded.

Before the call deadline, the coordinator (or sole applicant) may replace the already submitted proposal with new proposals. The CS2JU will only keep for evaluation the most recent version submitted.

After the call deadline, changes or additions are no longer possible, unless the CS2JU asks the applicant to clarify any obvious clerical errors on his/her part.

After the call deadline, the system will issue an e-receipt which will be available to all applicants via the Participant Portal; it will contain:

- the full proposal including proposal title, acronym and unique proposal identifier (proposal number);
- the name of the relevant programme part and call identifier and
- the date and time of receipt (by the call deadline).


 If during the final days of the submission process there is a fault in the system, the CS2JU may decide to extend the call deadline accordingly.

## 2.3. After proposal submission

### 2.3.1. Access by the CS2JU

The CS2JU has no access to the proposal before the call deadline. However, in order to plan the evaluation process and meet the deadline for informing the applicants of the outcome, the CS2JU will access certain information before the call deadline in the interest of ensuring an efficient and effective evaluation:

- the call title and the topic for which the proposal is submitted;
- the title of the proposal, summary information, keywords;
- the identity codes of the organisation(s).

 A disclaimer will inform the applicants that the CS2JU will be accessing this information

### **2.3.2. Withdrawing a proposal**

The coordinator (or sole applicant) can subsequently withdraw the proposal – the guidance documents will explain how to do this.

### **2.3.3. Multiple proposals**

If the coordinator (or sole applicant) submits a number of similar proposals to the same topic, the CS2JU may ask to choose one or more of them to be withdrawn.

### **2.3.4. Complaints**

If the applicant believes that submission failed due to a fault in the Electronic Submission System, the coordinator (or sole applicant) should immediately file a complaint via the [IT help desk](#), explaining the circumstances and attaching a copy of the proposal.

## **2.4. Q&A after the publication of the call**

After the opening of any call, the CS2JU will manage a dedicated call mailbox where any technical and operational question related to the call may be addressed to the CS2JU by the applicants. Answers will be managed by the CS2JU in cooperation with the responsible Leaders. In order to ensure equal access to information and treatment of all applicants, the answers will be published in a publicly accessible Q&A section on the CS2JU website and shall be monitored and considered by all applicants as possible clarification of the technical description of the topics.

By the time of the launch of the call, any direct contact related to the call and the topics between the applicants and the designated topic managers or in general the private Members and vice-versa is strictly forbidden. The CS2JU reserves its right to disqualify any applicant who is not complying with this requirement.

The call mailbox will be open for questions until, at least, one month before the call deadline.

### 3. Admissibility & Eligibility check

#### Summary

This section explains how the CS2JU:

- checks admissibility of the proposal and eligibility of the applicant

#### 3.1. Admissibility & eligibility check


The CS2JU will check the applicant's proposal for admissibility (against the standard H2020 admissibility conditions set out in the General Annexes to the Horizon 2020 Work Programme and, if relevant, the specific conditions of the call on admissibility set out in the CS2JU Work Plan.

To be considered admissible, a proposal must be:

- submitted in the Electronic Submission System before the deadline given in the call conditions;
- readable, accessible and printable.

Incomplete proposals may be considered inadmissible. This includes the requested administrative data, the proposal description and any supporting documents specified in the call. The CS2JU Work Plan lists the necessary supporting documents.

In case of an 'obvious clerical error' (e.g. omission to submit evidence or information on a non-substantial element of the proposal), the CS2JU may first ask the applicant to provide the missing information or supporting documents.

 If the missing information or document would substantially change the proposal, it will not be taken into account.

The CS2JU will also check the proposal for eligibility against the eligibility conditions set out in General Annexes to the Horizon 2020 Work Programme and specific conditions of the call set out in the CS2JU Work Plan.

**Important:** *The Calls for Proposals launched by the CS2JU do not require a minimum of three independent legal entities established in different Member States or H2020 Associated Countries. As laid down in Delegated Act No. 624/2014) and in the eligibility conditions for calls for proposals set out in the CS2JU Work Plan, **single legal entities are eligible to apply to Calls for Proposals.***

**Important:** *check carefully the CS2JU Work Plan and the chapter "3.3 calls management rules" where the admissibility, eligibility and other conditions applicable to the calls for proposals are set out. In addition applicants shall check, where applicable, any special condition set out in the call.*

Proposals must also correspond to the topic description of the call.

*① For information on the participation of third country participants, see section on horizontal issues (international cooperation)<sup>7</sup>*

### **3.2. Outcome of the admissibility & eligibility check**

If the **proposal** is considered **inadmissible** or **ineligible**, the CS2JU will inform the coordinator (or sole applicant) (via a 'proposal rejection letter' sent through the electronic exchange system), together with the reasons why and how to appeal.

If the proposal is (for the moment) admissible, but the applicant is not eligible, the CS2JU will inform the coordinator (or sole applicant) via an '**applicant rejection letter**' sent through the electronic exchange system.

### **3.3. After the admissibility & eligibility check**

#### **3.3.1. Complaints**

*① For information on complaints, see section 4.6.1 below.*

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<sup>7</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/funding/reference\\_docs.html#h2020-grants-manual-hi-3cpart](http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/funding/reference_docs.html#h2020-grants-manual-hi-3cpart)

## 4. From evaluation to grant signature

### Summary

This section explains how the CS2JU:

- chooses its experts
- evaluates the operational capacity
- evaluates the proposal
- establishes its ranked list

### Key points

- The CS2JU will evaluate the proposal with the help of independent external experts.
- The CS2JU will be guided by the following:
  - **Excellence** ► Proposals must demonstrate high quality in relation to the topics and criteria set out in the calls.
  - **Transparency** ► Funding decisions must be based on clearly described rules and procedures, and applicants should receive adequate feedback on the outcome of the evaluation.
  - **Fairness and impartiality** ► All proposals submitted in response to a call are treated equally and evaluated impartially on their merits, irrespective of their origin or the identity of the applicants.
  - **Efficiency and speed** ► Evaluation, award and grant preparation should be done as quickly as possible without compromising quality or neglecting the rules.
  - **Ethics and security** ► Proposals must not contravene fundamental ethical principles or relevant security procedures.

### 4.1. Evaluation of proposals and operational capacity check

#### 4.1.1. Evaluation and operational capacity

If the proposal is admissible and the applicant is eligible (or if admissibility and/or eligibility cannot immediately be determined), it will be evaluated by independent experts.

All proposals within a call (or within a coherent part of a call) are evaluated together.

To evaluate the applicant's capability, the experts will also assess the applicant(s) on its operational capacity to implement the action.

#### 4.1.2. Evaluation by independent experts

In order to ensure that only proposals of the highest quality are selected for funding, the CS2JU relies on **independent experts** for the evaluation of proposals ('evaluators').

**How are the evaluators selected?** The CS2JU appoints independent evaluators for each call from the H2020 database of experts. When selecting evaluators, the CS2JU looks for:

- high level of skill, experience and knowledge with a majority of them having expertise in aeronautics. Other experts may be selected on the basis of their expertise in operational areas of aviation/air transport, sustainability or business and international programme expertise and other relevant or related sectors and, provided the above condition can be satisfied, a balance in terms of:
  - skills, experience and knowledge
  - geographical diversity
  - gender
  - where appropriate, the private and public sectors, and
  - an appropriate turnover from year to year.

Proposals will be examined initially by at least three experts (in many cases, five or more). Additional **ethics experts** will be appointed, when appropriate, for the ethics review.

In addition, the evaluation process may be followed by one or more **independent observers**:

- to observe the practical workings of the evaluation process
- to give independent advice on:
  - the conduct and fairness of the evaluation sessions
  - the application of the award criteria
  - ways in which the procedures could be improved

but

- not to express views on the proposals or the other experts opinions.

Experts will be requested to fill and sign a declaration of interests which is part of their expert contract and which includes also a code of conduct to respect when acting as expert.

Experts that have a **conflict or potential conflict of interests** will be excluded by the CS2JU.

The CS2JU considers that a conflict or potential conflict of interest exists, if an expert:

- was involved in the preparation of a proposal;
- benefits directly or indirectly if a proposal is accepted;
- has a close family or personal relationship with any person representing an applicant;
- is a director, trustee or partner or is in any way involved in the management of an applicant;
- is employed or contracted by one of the applicants or any named subcontractors; Such an expert may, however, exceptionally be admitted by the CS2JU to take part in the evaluation session based on the specific case and when the following apply:
  - the expert works in a different department/laboratory/institute from where the action is to be carried out;
  - the bodies operate with a high degree of autonomy and
  - such a role is justified by the requirement to appoint the best available experts and by the limited size of the pool of qualified experts (and this is documented).
- is a National Contact Point or is directly working for the Enterprise Europe Network;
- Any representative of the organization of the topic manager shall not act as expert.

The CS2JU will decide whether a conflict of interest exists taking account of the objective circumstances, available information and related risks when an expert:

- was employed by one of the applicants in the last three years;
- is involved in a contract or grant agreement, grant decision, membership of management structures (*e.g. member of management or advisory board, etc.*) or research collaboration with an applicant (or had been so in the last three years);
- is in any other situation that could cast doubt on their ability to participate in the evaluation of the proposal impartially (or that could reasonably appear to do so in the eyes of an external third party).

The experts contracted by the CS2JU are published by the European Commission via the Participant Portal in the Commission's annual list.

#### **4.1.3. Involvement of the Topic Manager and CS2JU Leaders**

For the proposals submitted in response to the calls for proposals launched within the complementary framework of one IADP/ITD/TA the evaluation process may be attended by the Topic Manager under which the topic is aligned in the CS2JU Work Plan.

The Topic Managers are designated by the time of the launch of the call, and will perform the following tasks upon the signature of a declaration of confidentiality:

*Before the evaluation they:*

- may brief the independent evaluators before the start of the evaluation on the technical goals of the topic (key needs, capabilities/skills/competences and key risks), the technical context, the level of compliance and impact requested.

*At evaluation stage:*

- may assist in any query and provide any additional technical information or clarification related to the topic upon request by evaluators or by the moderator (see below);
- may be granted access to the applications and any supporting documents subject to strict confidentiality requirements (in case this is needed to answer questions raised by the panel members; applicants will be requested in the submission forms to agree in granting access to their application to the Topic Manager under the above mentioned confidentiality requirements);
- shall not be entitled to attribute in any way scores/weighting to the applications nor take part in any discussion or determination of scores or weighting.

*At consensus meetings stage:*

- may be requested to participate in the consensus meetings and provide technical advice when appropriate.
- shall not be entitled to attribute in any way scores/weighting to applications.

## **4.2. Selection criteria**

As set out in the General Annexes to the Horizon 2020 Work Programme and, if relevant, supplemented by the specific requirements outlined in the CS2JU Work Plan, selection



criteria will make it possible to assess the applicant's capabilities, competences, track record and the ability to perform the proposed work.

To evaluate the applicant's capability, the experts will assess the applicant's operational capacity to contribute to the implementation of the Clean Sky Programme, based on the information provided in the application against the selection criteria and inputs, set out in the General Annexes to the Horizon 2020 Work Programme and in the CS2JU Work Plan.

### **4.3. Award criteria — Scoring — Thresholds**

Proposals will be evaluated against the following **award criteria** set out in the General Annexes to the Horizon 2020 Work Programme:

- excellence,
- impact and
- quality and efficiency of implementation


and according to the specific award criteria as laid down in the CS2JU Work Plan.

In order to be considered for funding, the proposal must score above a certain threshold for each criterion, and above an overall threshold.

For each criterion, proposals will be given **scores** of 0 to 5 (half marks are possible), as follows:

- 0 — The proposal fails to address the criterion or cannot be assessed due to missing or incomplete information (unless the result of an 'obvious clerical error').
- 1 — Poor: the criterion is inadequately addressed or there are serious inherent weaknesses.
- 2 — Fair: the proposal broadly addresses the criterion but there are significant weaknesses.
- 3 — Good: the proposal addresses the criterion well but with a number of shortcomings.
- 4 — Very good: the proposal addresses the criterion very well but with a small number of shortcomings.
- 5 — Excellent: the proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion; any shortcomings are minor.

#### **Exception:**

 Proposals will be evaluated on their own merit, and not on their potential should certain changes be made. Proposals with an inflated budget are likely to receive a lower score.

### **4.4. Evaluation process**


The evaluation process has **three phases**:

- Phase 1 — Individual evaluation
- Phase 2 — Consensus group

### Phase 3 — Panel review

Before starting the evaluation process, the **experts are briefed** on:

- the evaluation processes and procedures (including selection and award criteria)
- the content of the R&I topics under consideration
- the terms of their contract (*e.g. confidentiality, impartiality, conflicts of interest, completing tasks and approving reports, penalties for non-compliance*)
- disregarding excess pages
- the need to evaluate proposals as they were submitted, rather than their potential should certain changes be made.
- The role and mandate of the Topic Manager in relation to the proposals submitted in response to the topics of calls launched within the complementary framework of one IADP/ITD/TA.

 Proposals will be evaluated as they were submitted and as a whole with the budget in relationship to the proposed impacts rather than their potential should certain changes, modifications of the proposal be made. In particular, proposals with a significantly inflated budget, taking into account cost efficiency considerations as set out in the evaluation criteria, will receive a lower score and may not pass the threshold.

### Phase 1 — Individual evaluation


Each expert carries out an evaluation and prepares an ‘**individual evaluation report (IER)**’ with comments and scores for each criterion.

They also indicate if the proposal :

- falls entirely outside the scope of the topic which they are evaluating or
- involves security issues that will need further scrutiny.

### Phase 2 — Consensus group


The individual experts then form a ‘consensus group’ to come to a common view and agree on comments and scores (in a ‘**consensus report**’).

 If the applicant has submitted proposal to the Commission/CS2JU previously under Horizon 2020, and if the work programme topics and criteria were comparable, the moderator of the consensus group may give a copy of the previous Evaluation Summary Report (*see below*) to the experts.

The group has an impartial ‘moderator’ (normally a CS2JU staff member), who:

- seeks a consensus and
- ensures that proposals are evaluated fairly, in line with the criteria.

If a consensus group cannot reach a common view, the consensus report will set out both the majority view and the dissenting views.

 In some cases the CS2JU may ask additional experts to examine the proposal, to establish whether a clear majority view exists.

### Phase 3 — Panel review

Finally, a panel will review all the proposals within a call, or part of a call, to:

- make sure that the consensus groups have been consistent in their evaluations;
- if necessary, propose a new set of marks or comments and
- resolve cases where a minority view was recorded in the consensus report.

**Specific case:**

There will be no separate panel review if the same consensus group has examined all the proposals for a given topic. In this case their final review will be done together with the consensus reports. This is considered to constitute the panel review.

The panel review is guided by a ‘panel chairperson’ (normally a CS2JU staff member) who must ensure fair and equal treatment of the proposals. A rapporteur (who may also be the chair) may be appointed to draft the panel report.


As part of the panel deliberations, the CSJ2U may organise where appropriate **hearings with the applicants** to:

- clarify the proposals and help the panel establish their final assessment and scores or
- improve the experts’ understanding of the proposal.

Where necessary, invitations to hearings may be sent to the coordinators of proposals (or sole applicants) with consensus scores above the individual and overall thresholds

Hearings may not be used to modify proposals.

The applicants may only provide explanations and clarifications in response to questions submitted to them in advance.

 Applicants may choose not to attend the hearing and to reply only in writing.


The panel may invite additional experts to clarify particular issues requiring specific expertise.

These experts may not take position on the proposal as a whole.

Hearings are usually held in Brussels, but may also be conducted by a written procedure, via telephone, or by video-conference.

The ‘**panel report**’ includes the ‘**evaluation summary report (ESR)**’ for each proposal (based on the consensus report, including comments and scores, and taking into account the panel’s deliberations and any new scores or comments considered necessary), with explanations and a list of proposals passing all thresholds, along with a final score, (‘**panel ranked list**’) and, where necessary, the panel’s recommendations for a priority order for proposals in the event of equal scores, using the procedure set out in the General Annexes to the Horizon 2020 Work Programme..

For each topic the panel ranked list will show the order of scoring of the applicants as an outcome of the admissibility and eligibility check and the evaluation phases (individual evaluation, consensus group and panel review) as described above.

 Applicants will receive a copy of their evaluation summary report, when they will be informed of the outcome of the evaluation by the experts.

#### **4.5. Outcome of the evaluation: ranked list - Grant preparation stage**

The CS2JU will rank the proposals that passed the thresholds according to the results of the evaluation by the experts (the ‘ranked list’).

The list of proposals selected for funding based on the ranked list will be subject to the approval of the Governing Board of the CS2JU pursuant to Article 8.2 n) of the Statutes<sup>8</sup> and to the CS2JU available budget.

It will consist of:


- a main list (proposals proposed for funding);
- normally also a reserve list (in case proposals are withdrawn, excluded a list of proposals that cannot be funded because of insufficient budget).

In addition, the CS2JU will make a list of proposals that did not pass the thresholds or for which activities were deemed to be ineligible (*e.g. out of scope of the topic*).

If on the basis of the ranking and the available budget a proposal is on the main list, the CS2JU will **invite the applicant to the grant preparation stage** (via a ‘grant information letter’ sent through the electronic exchange system) which will deal with the technical, operational, legal and financial issues related to the preparation of the grant agreement.

In the context of the complementary grant agreements’ preparation stage, technical sessions may still be carried out with the Topic Manager under the supervision of the CS2JU with the purpose of aligning the work content and the implementation of the activities to the objectives and needs of the ITD/IADP/TA high level tasks.

In line with Article 41.4 of the model grant agreement for Partners, the beneficiary of the complementary grant agreement shall accede to the ITD/IADP/TA Consortium Agreement or (where applicable) sign a bilateral implementation agreement with the Topic Manager.

 The grant information letter is not a commitment that the CS2JU will fund the project. The applicant will receive this letter within 5 months of the call deadline.

If the proposal is put on a **reserve list**, the CS2JU will **inform** the coordinator or the sole applicant and let him/her know of any subsequent change.

If the **proposal** has **not** been **retained** for funding, the CS2JU will inform the coordinator or the sole applicant (via a ‘proposal rejection letter’ sent through the electronic exchange system), together with the reasons why and how to appeal.

If the proposal is retained for funding, but **the applicant may not participate** (*e.g. because it is found to have insufficient operational capacity or to be ineligible*), the CS2JU will inform the applicant (via an ‘applicant rejection letter’ sent through the electronic exchange system).

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<sup>8</sup> Article 8.2 n) “ approve the list of proposals and tenders selected for funding on the basis of the ranking list produced by a panel of independent experts”

## 4.6. After evaluation & ranked list

### 4.6.1. Complaints

The complaints will be handled by the CS2JU based on the same rules and guidance applicable in H2020. If the applicant considers that the CS2JU unduly rejected his/her application, he/she may file a **complaint** in the 'My Personal Area' section of the Participant Portal ('formal notifications box').

If the complaint is justified, the CS2JU will continue to evaluate the application and inform the applicant.

If the complaint is not justified, the CS2JU will inform the applicant, together with the reasons why.

For complaints concerning the **evaluation of the application**, the applicant may within **30 days** of receiving the application rejection letter file a **request for an evaluation review**, using the on-line forms referred to in the application rejection letter.

The review shall cover only the procedural aspects of the evaluation, not the merits of the application and of the proposal

If the complaint is justified, the CS2JU will arrange for a re-evaluation and inform the applicant.

If the complaint is not justified, the CS2JU will inform the applicant, together with the reasons why.

## 5. Ethics review (ethics screening and ethics assessment)

### Summary

This section explains how and why the CS2JU makes an:

- Ethics review

### Key points

- During proposal submission, the applicants are asked to fill out the ‘ethics self-assessment’ for the proposal.

This consists of:

- the ‘ethics issue table’ in Part A of the [proposal templates](#) and
  - ‘ethics self-assessment’ in Part B of the [proposal templates](#) (i.e. a description of how the identified ethics issue is addressed and how it complies with applicable laws.
- The CS2JU will check if the proposal **complies with ethical principles** (including research integrity) and **applicable international, EU and national law**.

All proposals will be screened for ethics issues (‘**ethics screening**’).

Proposals raising serious or complex ethics issues must undergo an ‘**ethics assessment**’ (*e.g. significant research integrity issues*).

- Proposals that contravene ethical principles may be excluded at any time.

### 5.1. Ethics review

In parallel to the evaluation (or soon after), the CS2JU will check, as appropriate, with the help of independent ethics experts — if the proposal complies with ethical principles and relevant legislation.

The ethics review is part of the Commission’s overall ‘H2020 ethics appraisal scheme’.

Ethics checks and audits on the recipients: The ethics checks and audits on the recipients must normally be carried out by the CS2JU.

The Commission will be informed as appropriate of any result of ethics checks and audits concerning human embryonic (hESC) or significant research integrity issues requiring an in-depth assessment by ethics experts. In this case, the Commission may undertake an in-depth examination of the case if necessary with the help of an external expert panel and address binding recommendations to the CS2JU.

Selection and briefing of the ethics experts: The list of ethics experts is drawn up annually by the DG RTD Ethics Department. If the list is adapted during the year, the update will be sent to the ethics contact point of the CS2JU.

## 5.2. Ethics issues

Although the main focus is on the ethical dimension (*e.g. data protection and privacy, environmental protection, malevolent use of research results*), the CS2JU will also look at ‘research integrity’ issues (*e.g. fabrication, falsification or plagiarism, including misrepresenting credentials and authorship improprieties*).

## 5.3. Ethics review process

The CS2JU will carry out as appropriate the ethics pre-screening and the ethics assessment of proposal. These procedures will be equivalent to those of the Commission. For proposal involving hESC, the CS2JU will request the DG RTD Ethics Department to perform the ethics assessment.

The ethics review process has **one or two stages**:

- Stage 1 — Ethics screening
- Stage 2 — Ethics assessment


All proposals will go through an ethics review process (made up of one or two consecutive steps, depending on whether or not ethics issues are confirmed, whether they are adequately addressed as well as their severity and complexity).

The CS2JU will start the **ethics screening** by flagging any ethics issues that are not already indicated in the ethics self-assessment of the proposal and then examine whether they are adequately handled.

*Example (ethics issues): processing of personal data; fabrication and falsification of data (plagiarism).*

If the proposal raises serious or complex ethics issues, it will have to also undergo an **ethics assessment** (i.e. a more in-depth analysis).

*Example (serious ethics issues that require ethics assessment): multiple and interconnected ethics issues; lack of appropriate ethics framework in the country where the research will be conducted, etc.*

 The CS2JU may contact the applicant during the ethics review, if it needs more information or supporting documents.

#### 5.4. Outcome of the ethics review: Ethics opinion

The ethics review culminates in one or more **ethics reports** (one for the ethics screening and one for the ethics assessment, if necessary) with an **ethics opinion**.


These ethics reports may:

- grant **ethics clearance** (for proposals that are ‘ethics-ready’, i.e. respect ethical principles and applicable law);
- grant **conditional ethics clearance** (for proposals where the experts make the clearance subject to conditions (i.e. ‘ethics requirements’) to be fulfilled before the signature of the grant agreement or to be included in the grant agreement);

The conditions may include:

- regular reporting
  - appointing an independent ethics advisor or board (that may notably be tasked to report to the CS2JU on the compliance with the ethics requirements)
  - an ethics check or audit
  - submission of further information/documents
  - necessary adaptation of the methodology to comply with ethical principles and relevant legislation
- recommend an **ethics assessment**, or
  - **refuse** ethics clearance.

The reports may also contain ethics recommendations.

 During an ethics assessment, the experts may request a **second ethics assessment**, if they consider that the elements submitted do not allow them to provide an opinion.

If the report is **positive** (clearance or conditional clearance) or recommends an ethics assessment, it will be sent to the coordinator or the sole applicant (via the electronic exchange system).

If the report is **negative** (no ethics clearance), the CS2JU will inform the coordinator or the sole applicant (via a ‘proposal rejection letter’ sent through the electronic exchange system), together with the reasons why and how to appeal.