



Announced at OJ C342/03 of 22 November 2013

Call addressed to individuals for the establishment of a database of prospective independent experts to assist Commission services with tasks in connection with Horizon 2020 – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation

1. The Commission hereby invites applications from individuals with a view to establishing a database of independent experts who could be called on in connection with the:

- **Horizon 2020 – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation¹** (2014-2020) and its specific programme (Horizon 2020 framework programme), and
- **Research and Training Programme of the European Atomic Energy Community (2014-2018) complementing Horizon 2020 – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation** (the "Euratom Programme"),

(collectively "Horizon 2020") and

- **Research Fund for Coal and Steel (RFCS)²**

2. Subject to the applicable criteria and procedures established by the rules for the participation and dissemination of results in "Horizon 2020 – the Framework Programme for Research and Innovation (2014-2020)", the Commission and, where appropriate, funding bodies may appoint independent experts to advise on or assist with the:

- (a) evaluation of proposals;
- (b) monitoring of the implementation of actions carried out under Horizon 2020 as well as of previous Research and/or Innovation Programmes;
- (c) implementation of Union research and innovation policy or programmes including Horizon 2020, as well as the achievement and functioning of the European Research Area;
- (d) evaluation of Research and Innovation Programmes;
- (e) design of the Union's research and innovation policy including the preparation of future programmes.

3. To this end, the Commission hereby invites individuals to apply as prospective independent experts via the "Participant Portal" in order to be included in its database of experts.

¹ Not yet published in the Official Journal. This call is published before the expected adoption and entry into force of the Horizon 2020 Framework Programme. The call will, therefore, only take full effect after the Horizon 2020 Framework Programme has entered into force. It may be verified that the provisions concerning independent experts have not undergone any substantial change. The publication of the call, anticipating the adoption of the Horizon 2020 Framework Programme, shall not give rise to any claim against the Commission.

² Council Decision 2008/376/EC of 29 April 2008 on the adoption of the Research Fund of the RFCS and on the multiannual technical guidelines for this programme, OJ L 130/7, 20.5.2008, p. 7

However, the Commission or the relevant funding body is not bound to appoint only experts registered in this database. It may select in a transparent manner any individual expert with the appropriate skills not included in the database, if deemed appropriate and in duly justified cases.

The Commission or the relevant funding body may call upon the advice of advisory bodies for the appointment of independent experts. In the case of ERC frontier research grants, experts shall be appointed on the basis of a proposal from the Scientific Council of the ERC.

4. Independent experts shall be chosen on the basis of skills, experience and knowledge appropriate to carry out the tasks assigned to them.

Prospective independent experts are expected to have a high level of professional experience in one or more of the following areas:

- 'European Research Council (ERC)';
- 'Future and Emerging Technologies (FET)';
- 'Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions on skills, training and career development';
- 'Research infrastructures (including e-Infrastructures)';
- 'Leadership in enabling and industrial technologies':
 - 'Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)';
 - 'Nanotechnologies';
 - 'Advanced materials';
 - 'Biotechnology';
 - 'Advanced manufacturing and processing';
 - 'Space';
- 'Access to risk finance (debt or equity financing)';
- 'Innovation in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)';
- 'Health, demographic change and wellbeing';
- 'Food security, sustainable agriculture and forestry, marine and maritime and inland water research and the bio-economy';
- 'Secure, clean and efficient energy';
- 'Smart, green and integrated transport';
- 'Climate action, resource efficiency and raw materials';
- 'Europe in a changing world – inclusive, innovative and reflective societies';
- 'Secure societies – protecting freedom and security of Europe and its citizens';
- 'Spreading excellence and widening participation';
- 'Science with and for society'.

Expertise will also be required on cross cutting issues such as:

- International cooperation in science and technology,

- Administration, management or evaluation of research and innovation projects, programmes or policies,
- Innovation (technological as well as non-technological), including social innovation, innovation processes and management,
- Business management, with expertise in product/service management, marketing, investment and financial instruments (e.g. equity and debt financing), etc. particularly with regard to innovative SMEs,
- Use of the results of research and innovation projects, dissemination knowledge transfer and intellectual property rights,
- Socio-economic sciences and humanities, including societal and economic impact and risk assessment,
- Responsible research and innovation, including public engagement, science education,
- Gender equality and gender content of research,
- Research career development, doctoral training and enhancement of skills,
- Ethics in research (e.g. human protection, involvement of children/vulnerable populations, data protection, animal welfare, environment protection, international cooperation, misuse/malevolent use, research integrity, etc.),
- Programme monitoring and evaluation,
- Research and innovation policy
- Sustainable development
- Communication

Prospective independent experts shall also have appropriate language skills for the tasks to be carried out.

5. All exchanges with independent experts, including the conclusion of contracts for their appointment and any amendment thereto, shall be carried out through the electronic exchange systems set up in accordance with Article 287(4) of Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) No. 1268/2012³.

By submitting their application via the website address mentioned in paragraph 6, independent experts agree to accept using the electronic exchange system for interactions with the Commission or the relevant funding body. All communication made through the electronic exchange system (including signature of the contract, amendments, notifications, requests for payment, etc.) are considered equivalent to paper document, shall be admissible as evidence in legal proceedings, shall be deemed to be the original of the document and shall enjoy legal presumption of its authenticity and integrity, provided it does not contain any dynamic features capable of automatically changing it. The electronic signatures shall have the equivalent legal effect of handwritten signatures.

6. Applications may only be submitted via the online electronic exchange system available at the following website address:

<http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/experts>.

Early application is encouraged, as the Commission or relevant funding body shall make use of

³ Rules of Application of Regulation (EU, EURATOM) No. 966/2012 of the European Parliament and of the Council on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union.

the database of independent experts for its first proposal evaluation sessions under Horizon 2020, expected for the beginning of 2014.

Experts who already registered in the database of independent experts drawn up for the implementation of the Seventh Framework Programme and who wish to apply for Horizon 2020, are invited to access the following website, declare their interest in being considered for Horizon 2020 assignments, and duly update their area of expertise in line with the new set of Horizon 2020 specialist fields and pre-defined areas:

<http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/page/experts>.

In order for applications to be accessible to the relevant services for calling on the assistance of experts under Horizon 2020, all sections should be duly updated and completed. Areas of expertise and professional experience should be adequately detailed and documented. An application is considered complete once confirmed as valid in the online electronic exchange system.

The personal data collected in the context of the present call will be processed in accordance with Regulation (EC) No. 45/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2000 "on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data".

7. For reasons of transparency and in line with the objectives of the European Research Area, the Commission may authorise access to its database of prospective independent experts to public research funding bodies from the Member States and countries associated to Horizon 2020 and entities set up involving the EU in joint research programmes with Member States, on condition that the experts concerned have given their prior agreement in the online application form.

The names of experts appointed in a personal capacity, who have assisted the Commission or other funding bodies in the implementation of Horizon 2020 Framework Programme shall be published together with their area of expertise, at least once a year on the Commission's website or that of the relevant funding body. Such information shall be collected, processed and published in accordance with Regulation (EC) No. 45/2001⁴.

8. To ensure the independence of the work that they are called upon to perform in their capacity as 'independent experts', prior to the signature of their contract, they will be required to attest that they agree to abide by the terms of the code of conduct (including confidentiality aspects) in the electronic exchange system. In particular, they will be required to sign a declaration certifying that there is no conflict of interest at the time of contracting and that they undertake to inform the Commission or the relevant funding body if any conflict should arise in the course of their duties.

In cases where independent experts have to deal with classified information, the appropriate security clearance shall be required before appointment.

9. The Commission or the relevant funding body shall take appropriate measures to seek a balanced composition within the expert groups and evaluation panels in terms of various skills, experience, and knowledge, geographical diversity and gender⁵, depending on the situation in the field of the action. Where appropriate, the private-public sector balance shall also be sought.

10. The Commission or the relevant funding body will implement appropriate mechanisms to ensure a reasonable rotation of independent experts for evaluations from one year to the next.

⁴ Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2000 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data

⁵ The policy of the Commission is one of equal opportunities for women and men. In this context, the Commission has set itself a target of 40% of the under-represented sex in evaluation panels and expert groups. In order to achieve this target, it will particularly encourage applications from suitably qualified women.