Experts Briefing Part 2
The Evaluation Process
The Evaluation Process
Your role as independent experts
The Individual Evaluation Report
Tips & pointers to complete the IER
The Evaluation Process
Remote Evaluation

Submission of proposals

EIC Accelerator

≈ 2000 proposals per evaluation round

Your help needed to identify most promising companies!

Ranking of Proposals

Highest-scoring proposals (+/- 200) are invited to the interview

Step 1

Step 2

Interview

Grants

Grant + Equity

Evaluation processes

Grant + Equity

Grant
EIC Accelerator workflow

- **Proposals Submission**
- **Remote Evaluation**
- **Ranking of Proposals**
- **Proposal Rejection**
- **Interview**
- **Invited for Interview**
- **Not Invited for Interview**
- **Not Proposed for Funding**
- **Proposed for Funding**
- **Due Diligence**
- **GAP**
- **GRANT**

- **Responsibility**
  - Applicants
  - EC Evaluation
  - Experts
  - SPV

**New Submission Templates**
**Revised Criteria and Weightings**
**Revised Setup, Process and Criteria**
**New Model Grant Agreement**
Admissibility / Eligibility Checks

**Admissibility - proposals must be:**
- Readable, Accessible and Printable
- Complete (all requested forms)

**Eligibility:**
- Single SME
- SME status, country*
- Only one application per company allowed for all phases (no concurrent submission or implementation)

If you spot an issue relating to admissibility or eligibility, please inform EASME straight away via EASME-SME-EXPERTS@ec.europa.eu

(*EU Member States and Countries Associated to Horizon 2020)
Evaluation time line

- **Allocation of all proposals right after** the cut-off date
- **Accept/Decline** task within **24hrs** - otherwise the task will be reallocated to another expert
- **7 calendar days** to complete the evaluations
- In some cases as we reach the end of the evaluation we allocate a **shorter deadline**, please always follow the deadline in SEP
- Inform us **as early as possible** if you have difficulties with the deadline
- Completing the evaluation reports **before the deadline** is appreciated
Fee = **135€** (or 3 working units) per proposal

Payment is done *separately* for each cut-off and starts *at the end of the evaluation process* - which *may be several weeks after your work ends*

You will receive an email informing you that the payment procedure is starting

Please submit your request for payment *within the given deadline*

If you miss claiming your reimbursement within the designated period, we will be unable to do ad-hoc payments and there will be a *long delay in payment*
Your role as an independent expert
It is the responsibility of the evaluator to determine whether a conflict of interest exists.

Before accepting any evaluation:
Read all allocated proposals
Check if you are in a situation of conflict of interest
Decline all tasks if you detect a conflict of interest

Please note that EASME has the final decision on whether a conflict of interest exists.

If you have a conflict of interest in one proposal in any given cut-off, we will cancel ALL of your tasks for that cut-off pursuant to Ombudsman decision.
Check Article 2 – Annex 1 - Code of conduct of the experts' contract

A conflict of interest arises if an expert:

a) was involved in the preparation of the proposal
b) stands to benefit directly or indirectly if the proposal is accepted
c) has a close family or personal relationship with any person representing an applicant legal entity
d) is a director, trustee or partner or is in any way involved in the management of an applicant legal entity
e) is employed or contracted by one of the applicant legal entities or any named subcontractors
f) is a member of an Advisory Group set up by the Commission to advise on the preparation of EU or Euratom Horizon 2020 Work Programmes, or Work Programmes in an area related to the call for proposals in question
g) is a National Contact Point, or is directly working for the Enterprise Europe Network
h) is a member of a Programme Committee
I have been involved as a consultant/advisor/service provider/applicant preparing a proposal.

Yes, if you are evaluating proposals for the EIC Accelerator (SME Instrument). Please note that you may be required to suspend your evaluator activities during the ongoing evaluation.

I have been asked to give a presentation on the programme.

No, there is no conflict of interest if you speak in general about the Programme.

Yes, if you mention the contents/details of a proposal you have evaluated.

Can I be an evaluator and a coach (in the EIC Accelerator SME Instrument) at the same time?

No, in this combination of roles there is a potential conflict of interest.
Individual Evaluation Report (IER)
Your contribution

Companies we are looking for

- High-risk, high-growth potential
- Radical, market-creating innovations
- Ground-breaking concepts at the last stage before scale-up

Using three identification criteria

- **Implementation**: Capability and motivation to bring the innovation to the market – assessment of ability to leverage sufficient investments
- **Impact**: Solid business model and commercialisation strategy
  Sound financial planning – demonstrated ability to scale up
- **Excellence**: Potential to create new market or significantly impact existing ones
  Right timing
Impact

Threshold: 4

8 sub-criteria

- Market demand
- Customers
- Competitive advantage
- Commercialisation strategy
- Global dimension
- IP
- Scale-up potential (2) – including financing needs
Excellence

Threshold: 4

5 sub-criteria

- High-Risk/High Potential Idea and solution
- Stage of development - TRL
- Innovativeness - Broader impact - CLIMATE
- Feasibility and approach
- Risks
Implementation

Threshold: 4
4 sub-criteria

- Ability to leverage investment
- Financing needs/Need EIC support
- Team and capabilities
- Resources
- Work Packages
If you believe that an applicant does NOT have the operational capacity to carry out the proposed work, you should choose NO, justify the reason and score the "Quality and efficiency of implementation" criterion below the threshold (<4).

(See the FAQs for examples of Operational Capacity evaluation)
The TRL described in the proposal has to be assessed by replying to the following question:

"Does the work package contain activities above TRL 8?"

TRL 8 corresponds to 'system complete and qualified' (not yet proven in operational environment).

The answer is set to 'No' by default in the Individual Evaluation Report Form (IER). If your assessment reveals a TRL>8, switch the radio button to 'Yes' and provide a justification in the text box.
Eligibility criteria: Grants can only be provided for activities with TRL 6-8. Activities with a TRL above 8 will only be funded by blended finance option (equity).

Seal of Excellence: Potential national funding authorities are informed if TRL9 activities (already commercialised) are foreseen to avoid that their related costs are considered eligible for funding through other public resources.

* The Seal of Excellence is a quality label granted by the EC to proposals submitted under Horizon 2020, which succeeded an independent highly competitive evaluation at EU level but could not be funded due to insufficient call budget. The Seal allows regions, Member States or any other funding sources to easily identify these high quality proposals and possibly support them.
Regulated under Art 13 of the Mono-Beneficiary Model Grant Agreement EIC Accelerator (https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/data/ref/h2020/mga/sme/h2020-mga-eic-sme-mono_en.pdf);

Subcontracting is NOT restricted to a limited part of the action;

It is in the EIC Accelerator spirit that the applying SME has the capacity to carry out the activity; Compliance with best value-for-money is assessed during the evaluation.
The applicant has to detail each subcontractor and task subcontracted in the corresponding table of “Technical Annex Section 1-3.

Additional information can be included in Document 2, Annex 3 - Other supporting documents
For each subcontracted task, there are only two options:

- **Yes**
- **No or lack of explanation**

If "No or lack of explanation" is selected, experts need to justify and reflect this in the assessment in the Quality & efficiency of implementation criterion (score below the threshold: <4).

By default, the task is set to 'yes' even when the proposal does not include any subcontracting. If there are no subcontractors in the proposal do not change the default "yes".
You have to consider whether the contents of a proposal correspond, wholly or in part, to the description of the EIC Accelerator (SME Instrument), as outlined in the Work Programme.

Only change the radio button to ‘No’ and add comments explaining your decision to the ‘Scope of the Proposal’ box if you believe that a proposal does not fit the description.

If a proposal is of poor quality this does not necessarily mean it is outside the scope of the EIC Accelerator. In this case, you should still carry out an evaluation of the proposal with appropriate comments and scores.
IER scoring

Each evaluation sub-criterion is scored out of 10 points (one decimal may be used);
Each evaluation sub-criterion question has the same weight, except overall perception that weighs 25% of the total score of that criterion;

Please use the overall assessment box to consider the criterion as a whole, to what extent it is coherent and plausible.

The individual scores (from 0 to 10) given to each sub-criterion are used to calculate each of the three award criterion scores (Impact, Excellence and Implementation) in the scale of (0 to 5). The threshold of each criterion is 4.

The total score of the proposal is the weighted sum of these three separate scores (all criteria have the same weight: Impact, Excellence and Implementation are all given a weight of 33% each.

The total maximum score for a proposal is 15 points.

Scoring at the extremes of the scale requires clear justifying comments.
The score at the level of the three evaluation criteria is the median score of the scores given by each of the four evaluators.

The Impact, Excellence and Quality of implementation criteria have an equal weight of 33%.

The final score is the weighted sum of these three separate scores and the quality threshold is 13 out of 15.

The scale used to obtain the qualitative assessment is the following:

- Very Good to Excellent (4.5 – 5)
- Good to Very Good (3.5 – 4.49)
- Fair to Good (2.5 – 3.49)
- Insufficient to Fair (1.5 – 2.49)
- Insufficient (0–1.49)
When evaluating proposals, don't forget to verify that the participants are who they say they are – check for red flags!

Use the tools in the following slides to check.

If you spot any ‘red flags’ please alert the team by sending an email to EASME-SME-EXPERTS@ec.europa.eu
Examples of Red Flags

The entity
- Emails not in company's domain
- Bank account in different town/country than company's headquarters
- Missing essential information on website
- False address

Subcontracting
- Important parts of project subcontracted
- Repeated awards to same contractor
- Subcontracting to companies whose activities cannot be linked to the project

Budget
- Perfect correlation between budget foreseen and declared
- Repeated declaration of similar amounts in work packages
Companies - Checks

Company registers
https://www.commercial-register.sg.ch/home/worldwide.html

VAT number

Web archives
http://www.archive.org/web/web.php

Website Domains
http://whois.domaintools.com/

http://www.networksolutions.com/whois/index.jsp
Companies – Location

Google maps – Location of a large insurance company
Tips and pointers for IERs
Exercise critical judgement - assess the credibility or plausibility of very positive growth figures for instance

Reflect shortcomings in a lower score for the relevant criterion

Use the whole scale of scoring (0 to 10) – but exercise caution if scoring ‘0’ or ‘10’ as extreme scores require full justification

Provide explanation of shortcomings but do not give recommendations

*Remember if you score above threshold, the proposal has a high chance of being funded, so think like an investor and ask yourself if you would put money into this project*
How to write a quality IER

**YES**

- **Dedicated and thorough comments** for each sub-criterion
- **Consistency** between scores and comments
- **Coherence** between operational capacity/subcontracting and the score of the 'Implementation' criterion

**NO**

- Comments repeating the sub-criterion description and/or identical comments for all sub-criteria and/or blank text boxes
- High score but negative comments
- Selecting **NO** for operational capacity/subcontracting and scoring 'Implementation' above threshold (4)
Revised Work Programme updates for 2019

- Changes to the wording of some sub-criteria
- More focus on TRL – TRL 8 and above only eligible for blended finance
- Addition of sub-criteria questions on Bankability and Scalability
- Only single SMEs eligible
Further sources

Funding and Tender Opportunities website
https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/home

EASME website
https://ec.europa.eu/easme/en

Functional mail box for all your questions and comments
EASME-SME-EXPERTS@ec.europa.eu

Work Programme 2018-2020 for EIC-SME Instrument