

Open Public Reviews - background information on a possible pilot

Currently, research project reviews are carried out by Commission staff with the assistance of experts – typically, 1 to 3 experts per project. The idea under consideration would be to open this up to others.

Given the [current rules](#) on the use of experts in Horizon 2020 a full open public review is not possible. What is being considered is a hybrid approach to test some of the principles through a pilot action, as follows:

1. The deliverables and results of the set of projects participating in the pilot could be posted online some time before the review/project check.
2. Comments will be invited. Those posting comments must identify themselves by name or using a system such as ORCID.
3. The project participants, or indeed anyone, can respond to the comments, also openly.
4. The discussion is to be considered by the expert reviewers in the review itself.

This collaborative and open approach should allow interested outsiders to contribute to the project with new input, and also allow problems to be identified. This would not be a fully open review as the expert reviewers would have the last say, but it would be a stepping stone towards it, to gauge the interest and identify potential benefits and problems. It would avoid any legalistic problems as it doesn't conflict with the Horizon 2020 Rules for Participation, and so allows to "test the water" and see if people are interested/would respond/would accept the idea, if the input is in any way useful, and also see if only critics or disgruntled rivals would respond.

A variant on this, regardless of open reviews, would be to encourage projects to crowdsource for input and comments by posting material (reports and deliverables etc) online. This would also be more transparent and serve as a source for innovation and collaboration.

Another idea is endorsement: the researchers could openly suggest a list of peers best qualified to review their work.

One point to consider is whether all deliverables should be posted/shared, or only specific ones like the "publishable" final report.

The final form of the pilot as outlined above will be adapted to take account of any comments coming from the consultation.