



HORIZON 2020 PROPOSAL EVALUATION

2018 SINGLE-STAGE TOPICS



Countries whose entities are eligible for funding

- **Member States of the European Union**, including their overseas departments and outermost regions.
- **Associated Countries**
Iceland, Norway, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, FYRM, Montenegro, Serbia, Turkey, Israel, Moldova, Switzerland, Faroe Islands, Ukraine, Tunisia, Georgia, Armenia
- **Third Countries eligible for funding**
see the '[Annex A - List of countries, and applicable rules for funding](#)'.
- **Exceptionally**, other countries if:
 - Bilateral agreement e.g. EU-US/NIH arrangement
 - Identified in the Work Programme
 - Deemed essential for carrying out the action.
The participation has clear benefits for the consortium, such as:
 - outstanding competence/expertise
 - access to research infrastructure
 - access to particular geographical environments
 - access to data.

Type of actions

Research and Innovation Action

- **Action primarily consisting of activities to establish new knowledge and/or explore feasibility of new or improved technology, product, process, service or solution**
 - May include basic and applied research, technology development and integration, testing and validation on small-scale prototype in laboratory or simulated environment
 - Projects may contain closely connected but limited demonstration or pilot activities to show technical feasibility in a near to operational environment

Type of actions

Innovation Action

- **Action primarily consisting of activities that aim to produce plans and arrangements or designs for new, altered or improved products, processes or services**
 - May include prototyping, testing, demonstrating, piloting, large-scale product validation and market replication
 - Aim to validate the technical and economic viability in a (near) operational environment and/or support the first application/deployment in the market of an innovation that has already been demonstrated but not yet applied/deployed in the market due to market failures/barriers to uptake
 - Projects may include limited research and development activities

Type of actions

Coordination & Support Action

- **Actions consisting primarily of accompanying measures such as**
 - standardisation, dissemination, awareness-raising and communication, networking, coordination or support services, policy dialogues and mutual learning exercises and studies, including design studies for new infrastructure, and
 - may also include complementary activities of strategic planning, networking and coordination between programmes in different countries

Focus Area 'Building a low-carbon, climate resilient future'

Covers the main actions in Work Programme 2018-2020 which can contribute to the goals of the **Paris Agreement**

- limit global temperature rise to well below 2°C, make efforts to limit this to 1.5°C;
- enhance adaptive capacity, strengthening resilience and reducing vulnerabilities;

Aims to develop ground-breaking solutions capable of achieving **carbon neutrality** and **climate resilience** of Europe and beyond in the second half of the century

Integrating **multiple angles** of society, economy, technology, industrial value chains, the energy system, environment, health, land use and governance

Total indicative budget (2018-2020):
EUR 3 343 million



Focus Area '*Building a low-carbon, climate resilient future*'

Operationalise the Paris Agreement goals
(including input to the IPCC's 6th Assessment Report)

Accelerate transformation towards carbon neutrality through **clean technologies**

Objectives

Enhance **climate resilience** in Europe and beyond

Contribute to **long-term mitigation and adaptation policy planning**

Focus Area: 'Connecting economic and environmental gains – the Circular Economy'

Covers the main actions in Work Programme 2018-2020 which will directly **support the circular economy policy**

- integrating production, consumption, waste management and raw materials
- * Ensure that growth no longer requires increasing consumption of resources, energy, water and primary raw materials
- * Minimise waste, including from plastics
- * Enhance industrial competitiveness

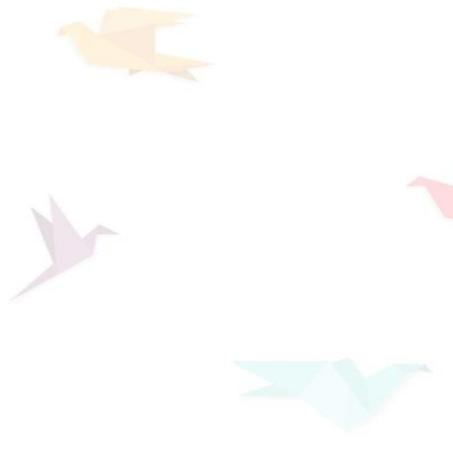
SDGs:



**Total indicative budget
(2018-2020):**

EUR 940 million

Focus Area: 'Connecting economic and environmental gains – the Circular Economy'



Focus Area : 'Digitising and transforming European industry and services'

Covers the main actions of the work programme addressing the priorities of the **Digital Single Market Strategy** of the EC and helping **seizing the opportunities offered by digital technologies**.

Aims to contribute to:

- **enabling** all sectors to adapt, transform and benefit from digitisation;
- **developing** new business models;
- **connecting** to MS and regions,
- **removing** barriers for innovation enabled by digitisation.

Integrates R&I related to major **technological** trends with **application-driven** initiatives through a **multidisciplinary** approach.

Total indicative budget (2018-2020):
EUR 1 689 million



Focus Area: 'Digitising and transforming European industry and services'

Support the implementation of the **DEI strategy**, notably through **innovation hubs, platforms** and large-scale **pilots**

Foster the **uptake of digital technologies** and innovations, as well as **synergies with other KETs**

Objectives

Leverage possibilities offered by ICT to **address major societal challenges**

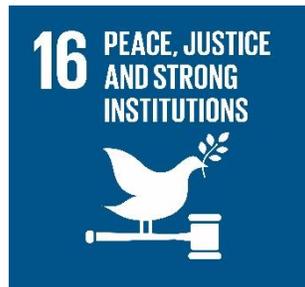
Address and prepare Europe for the **societal impact of the digital transformation**

Focus Area: 'Boosting the effectiveness of the Security Union'

Covers the main actions in Work Programme which contribute to **developing the EU as a Security Union**:

- reacting to & recovering from natural and man-made disasters
- fighting crime (including cybercrime) and terrorism
- improving border security
- protecting infrastructure and public spaces
- digital security and privacy
- better understanding of societal contexts of security challenges

SDGs:



**Total indicative budget
(2018-2020):**

EUR 1 billion

Focus Area: *'Boosting the effectiveness of the Security Union'*

New solutions and technologies for end-users (police, customs, firefighters, etc)

Involving researchers, industry and end-users in the entire research cycle

Objectives

Promoting market uptake of research results

A strong security industry underpinning EU autonomy

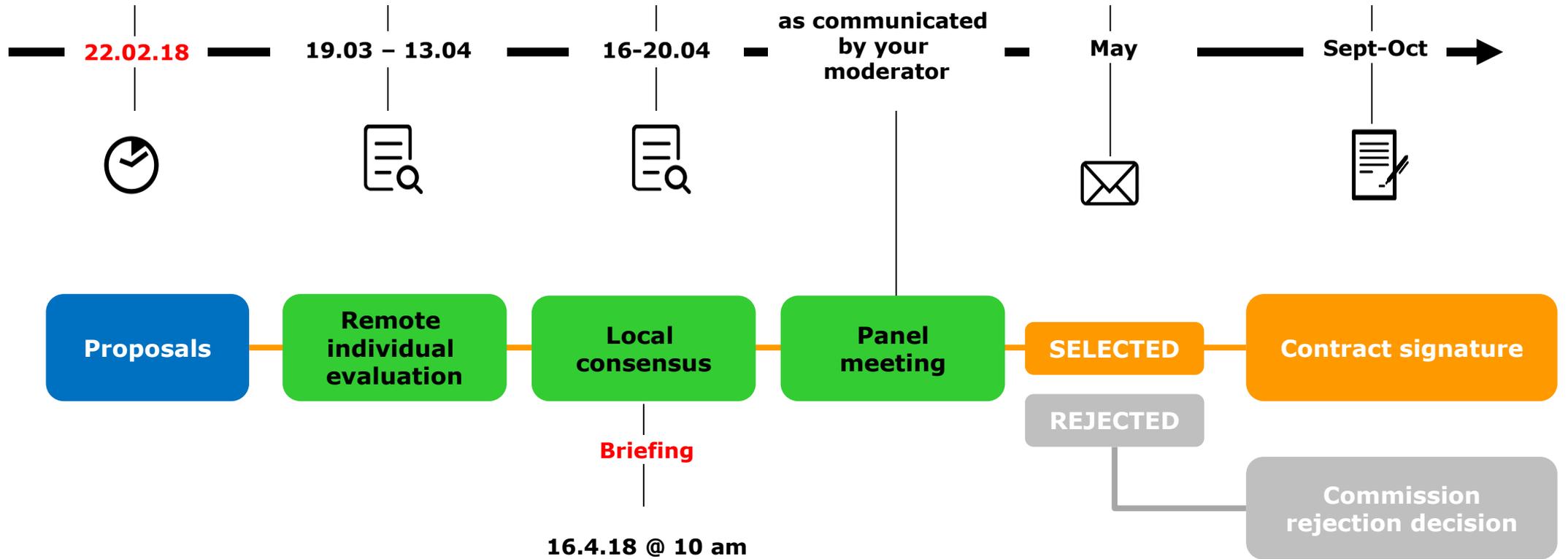


HORIZON 2020 PROPOSAL EVALUATION

THE EVALUATION PROCEDURE IN PRACTICE



Overview of the evaluation process



Admissibility, eligibility checks and additional requirements

- **Admissibility** is checked by the Commission:
 - Readable, accessible and printable
 - Completeness of proposal, presence of all requested forms
 - Inclusion of a plan for exploitation and dissemination of results (n/a first stage of two stage proposals or unless otherwise specified in the WP)
- **Eligibility** checked by the Commission, however, if you spot an issue relating to eligibility, please inform the Commission
 - Minimum number of partners as set out in the call conditions
 - Other criteria may apply on a call-by-call basis as set out in the call conditions
- **Out of scope** - content of a proposal corresponds, wholly or in part, to the description of the call or topic.
 - A proposal will only be deemed ineligible in clear-cut cases when there is no obvious link between proposal and call topic
- **Page limits:** set out in part B of the General Annexes, unless set out in the call conditions

Evaluation criteria

- **There are three evaluation criteria:**
 - Excellence (relevant to the description of the call or topic)
 - Impact
 - Quality and efficiency of the implementation

Note: the impact criterion refers to the specific expected impact statement under every topic in the work programme. You must refer to that text in the work programme when evaluating impact

You should also check requests for 'exceptional funding' from third country participants not included in the [list](#)

- **The criteria are adapted to each type of action, as specified in the WP**

Research and Innovation Actions/ Innovation Actions

EXCELLENCE	IMPACT	IMPLEMENTATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clarity and pertinence of the objectives• Soundness of the concept, and credibility of the proposed methodology• Extent that proposed work is beyond the state of the art, and demonstrates innovation potential (e.g. ground-breaking objectives, novel concepts and approaches, new products, services or business and organisational models)• Appropriate consideration of interdisciplinary approaches and , where relevant, use of stakeholder knowledge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The expected impacts listed in the work programme under the relevant topic• Any substantial impacts not mentioned in the WP, that would enhance innovation capacity; create new market opportunities, strengthen competitiveness and growth of companies, address issues related to climate change or the environment, or bring other important benefits for society• Quality of proposed measures to exploit and disseminate project results (including IPR, manage data research where relevant); communicate the project activities to different target audiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quality and effectiveness of the work plan, including extent to which resources assigned in work packages are in line with objectives/deliverables• Appropriateness of management structures and procedures, including risk and innovation management• Complementarity of the participants which the consortium as a whole brings together expertise• Appropriateness of allocation of tasks, ensuring that all participants have a valid role and adequate resources in the project to fulfil that role

Coordination & Support Actions

EXCELLENCE	IMPACT	IMPLEMENTATION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarity and pertinence of the objectives • Soundness of the concept, and credibility of the proposed methodology • Quality of the proposed coordination and/or support measures 	<p>The expected impacts listed in the work programme under the relevant topic.</p> <p>Quality of proposed measures to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exploit and disseminate project results (including IPR, manage data research where relevant); - Communicate the project activities to different target audiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality and effectiveness of the work plan, including extent to which resources assigned in work packages are in line with objectives/deliverables • Appropriateness of management structures and procedures, including risk and innovation management • Complementarity of the participants which the consortium as a whole brings together expertise • Appropriateness of allocation of tasks, ensuring that all participants have a valid role and adequate resources in the project to fulfill that role

Operational capacity

- **As part of the Individual Evaluation**, give your view on whether each applicant has the necessary basic operational capacity to carry out their proposed activities based on
 - Curriculum Vitae or description of the profile of the applicant
 - Relevant publications or achievements
 - Relevant previous projects or activities
 - Description of any significant infrastructure or any major items of technical equipment
 - description of third parties contributing to the work but not represented as project partners

In exceptional cases the concrete measures proposed to obtain operational capacity by the time of project implementation are assessed.

- **At the consensus group**, you consider whether an applicant lacks basic operational capacity.
If yes, you make comments and score the proposal without taking into account this applicant and its associated activities

Proposal scoring

- **Score between 0 and 5 to each criterion**
 - Granularity: 0.5
 - The whole range of scores should be used
 - Scores must pass *thresholds* if a proposal is to be considered for funding
- **Threshold for individual criteria**
 - 4 for Excellence (3 in case of CSAs)
 - 4 for Impact (3 in case of CSAs)
 - 3 for Implementation
- **The total score** threshold is 12 (10 in case of CSAs)
- **For Innovation actions** the criterion Impact is given a weight of 1.5 but only to determine the ranking

Interpretation of the scores

-  The proposal **fails to address the criterion** or cannot be assessed due to missing or incomplete information.
-  **Poor.** The criterion is inadequately addressed, or there are serious inherent weaknesses.
-  **Fair.** The proposal broadly addresses the criterion, but there are significant weaknesses.
-  **Good.** The proposal addresses the criterion well, but a number of shortcomings are present.
-  **Very Good.** The proposal addresses the criterion very well, but a small number of shortcomings are present.
-  **Excellent.** The proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion. Any shortcomings are minor.

Individual evaluation

Look at the substance: Some proposals might be handicapped by language difficulties, others deceptively well written

- Read the proposal and evaluate it against the evaluation criteria
 - Without discussing it with anybody else
 - As submitted - not on its potential if certain changes were to be made
 - Do not penalise applicants that did not provide detailed breakdown costs – they are not required
- Disregard excess pages
- Check to what degree the proposal is relevant to the call or topic
- Complete an Individual Evaluation Report (IER)
 - Give your view on operational capacity
 - Give comments and scores for all evaluation criteria (scores must match comments)
 - Explain shortcomings, but do not make recommendations (e.g. no additional partners, work packages, resource cuts)
- Sign and submit the form in the electronic system

If a proposal...

- Is only marginally relevant in terms of its scientific, technological or innovation content relating to the call or topic addressed, you must reflect this in a lower score for the **Excellence criterion**, No matter how excellent the science!
- Does not significantly contribute to the expected impacts as specified in the WP for that call or topic, you must reflect this in a lower score for the **Impact criterion**
- Would require substantial modifications in terms of implementation (i.e. change of partners, additional work packages, significant budget or resources cut...), you must reflect this in a lower score for the **"Quality and efficiency of the implementation" criterion**
- If cross-cutting issues are explicitly mentioned in the scope of the call or topic, and not properly addressed, you must reflect this in a lower score for the **relevant criterion**
 - A successful proposal is expected to address them, or convincingly explain why not relevant in a particular case
 - Proposals addressing cross-cutting issues which are not explicitly mentioned in the scope of the call or topic can also be evaluated positively

Impact of grant preparation on evaluation

No grant negotiation phase*

The time from submission of a proposal, evaluation and signature of the grant set to a maximum of 8 months

Evaluate each proposal as submitted not on its potential if certain changes were to be made

- If you identify shortcomings (other than minor ones and obvious clerical errors), reflect those in a lower score for the relevant criterion
- Proposals with significant weaknesses that prevent the project from achieving its objectives or with resources being seriously over-estimated must not receive above-threshold scores
- Any proposal with scores above the thresholds and where there is sufficient budget will be selected as submitted
- Successful applicants are invited to address shortcomings

***Exceptionally for CSAs some shortcoming can be addressed in the grant preparation**

Consensus

- It usually involves a **discussion on the basis of the individual evaluations** - For first stage proposals, the average is a starting point
- The aim is to find **agreement on comments and scores**
 - Agree comments before scores
 - If an applicant lacks basic operational capacity, you make comments and score the proposal without taking into account this applicant and its associated activities
- **“Outlying” opinions need to be explored**
 - They might be as valid as others – be open-minded
 - It is normal for individual views to change
- **Moderated by Commission staff (or an expert in some cases)**
 - Neutral and manages the evaluation, protects confidentiality and ensures fairness
 - Ensures objectivity and accuracy, all voices heard and points discussed
 - Helps the group keep to time and reach consensus

Consensus report (CR)

- The **rapporteur** is responsible for drafting the CR
 - Including consensus comments and scores
 - In some cases, the rapporteur does not take part in the discussion
- The **quality of the CR** is of utmost importance
 - It often remains unchanged at the panel stage
- The **aim of the CR** is to give:
 - A clear assessment of the proposal based on its merit, with justification
 - Clear feedback on the proposal's weaknesses and strengths, of an adequate length, and in an appropriate tone
 - Explain shortcomings, but not to make recommendations
- **Avoid:**
 - Comments not related to the criterion in question
 - Comments too long, or too short and inappropriate language
 - Categorical statements that have not been properly verified
 - Scores that don't match the comments
 - Marking down a proposal for the same critical aspect under two different criteria

Remember, applicants will read your comments and, based on them, can challenge the evaluation through the evaluation review procedures

The panel review

- Consists of experts from the consensus groups and/or new experts
- Ensures the consistency of comments and scores given at the consensus stage
- Resolves any cases where a minority view is recorded in the CR
- Endorses the final scores and comments for each proposal
 - Any new comments and scores (if necessary) should be carefully justified
- Recommends a list of proposals in priority order
- Prioritises proposals with identical total scores

Priority order

- **For Innovation actions**, the criterion Impact is given a weight of 1.5 to determine the ranking
- Proposals are first ranked in separate lists according to the topics against which they were submitted ('topic ranked lists').
- When comparing ex aequo proposals from different topics, proposals having a higher position in their respective 'topic ranked list' will be considered to have a higher priority in the overall ranked list.
- For all topics and types of action, the prioritisation will be done first on the basis of the score for **Impact**, and then on that for **Excellence**.

If necessary, any further prioritisation will be based on the following factors, in order:

- size of budget allocated to SMEs
- gender balance among the personnel named in the proposal

Innovation

- **Balanced approach to research and innovation**
 - not limited to the development of new products and services on basis of scientific and technological breakthroughs
 - Incorporate use of existing technologies in novel applications, and continuous improvements
- **Activities close to market emphasise the widest possible use of knowledge generated by supported activities, up to the commercial exploitation**
- **Emphasis on activities operating close to end-users and the market, e.g. demonstration, piloting or proof-of-concept**
 - include support to social innovation, and support to demand side approaches (standardisation, innovation procurement, user-centred measures ...) to help accelerate the deployment and diffusion of innovative products and services into market

The definitions of the terms used are available in the [Horizon 2020 Glossary](#) on the Participant Portal

Research data management



- Under "Measures to maximise impact", a) Dissemination and exploitation of results, applicants need to include, as relevant, information on how they will manage the research data generated and/or collected during the project, in particular addressing the following issues:
 - What types of data will the project generate/collect?
 - What standards will be used?
 - How will this data be exploited and/or shared/made accessible for verification and re-use? If data cannot be made available, explain why.
 - How will this data be curated and preserved?
 - How will the costs for data curation and preservation be covered?
- Open access to research data is one part of research data management. Please note that participation in the extended Open Research Data Pilot (ORDP) is NOT part of the evaluation. In other words, proposals will not be penalised should they choose to opt out of the ORDP.
- Further guidance is available in the H2020 Online Manual on both [research data management](#) and [open access to research data](#).



HORIZON 2020 PROPOSAL EVALUATION

ROLE OF INDEPENDENT EXPERTS



Role of independent experts (1)

- As an independent expert, **you evaluate proposals submitted in response to a given call**
- **You are responsible for carrying out the evaluation of the proposals yourself**
You are not allowed to delegate the work to another person!
- You must close reports in the electronic system within a given **deadline**
 - This is part of your contractual obligations!
 - The allowance/expenses you claim may be reduced or rejected otherwise

Role of independent experts (2)

- **Significant funding decisions** will be made on the basis of **your assessment**
- **If you suspect any form of misconduct** (e.g. plagiarism, double funding), please report this to EC/Agency staff
- **You need not comment on ethics**, as proposals that are successful in this scientific evaluation will undergo an ethics review

Guiding principles

- ***Independence***

You are evaluating in a personal capacity
You represent neither your employer, nor your country!

- ***Impartiality***

You must treat all proposals equally and evaluate them impartially on their merits, irrespective of their origin or the identity of the applicants

- ***Objectivity***

You evaluate each proposal as submitted; meaning on its own merit, not its potential if certain changes were to be made

- ***Accuracy***

You make your judgment against the official evaluation criteria and the call or topic the proposal addresses, and nothing else

- ***Consistency***

You apply the same standard of judgment to all proposals

Confidentiality

You must:

- **Not discuss evaluation matters,**
such as the content of proposals, evaluation results or opinions of fellow experts, with anyone, including:
 - Other experts or Commission/Agencies staff or any other person (e.g. colleagues, students...) not directly involved in the evaluation of the proposal
 - The sole exception: your fellow experts who are evaluating the same proposal in a consensus group or Panel review
- **Not contact partners**
in the consortium, sub-contractors or any third parties
- **Not disclose names of your fellow experts**
The Commission publishes the names of the experts annually - as a group, no link can be made between an expert and a proposal
- **Maintain confidentiality of documents,**
paper or electronic, at all times and wherever you do your evaluation work (on-site or remotely)
 - Please take nothing away from the evaluation building (be it paper or electronic)
 - Return, destroy or delete all confidential documents, paper or electronic, upon completing your work, as instructed

You have a Conflicts of interest if you

- **Are involved in a competing proposal**
- were **involved in the preparation** of the proposal (including pre-proposal checks/'mock' evaluations)
- **stand to benefit** directly/indirectly, if the proposal is successful or fails
- have a **close family/personal relationship** with any person representing an applicant legal entity
- are a director/trustee/partner of an **applicant** or involved in the management of an applicant's organisation
- are **employed or contracted by an applicant** or a named subcontractor
- are a **member of an Advisory Group or Programme Committee** in an area related to the call in question
- are a **National Contact Point** or are directly working for the **Enterprise Europe Network**

Conflicts of interest (COI)

- **You must inform the Commission as soon as you become aware of a COI**
 - Before the signature of the contract
 - Upon receipt of proposals, or
 - During the course of your work
- **If there is a COI for a certain proposal you cannot evaluate it**
 - Neither individually
 - Nor in the consensus group
 - Nor in the panel review
 - The Commission will determine if there is a COI on a case-by-case basis and decide the course of action to follow
- **If you knowingly hide a COI, you will be excluded from the evaluation and your work declared null and void**
 - The allowance/expenses you claimed may be reduced, rejected or recovered
 - Your contract may be terminated

Observers

- Appointed by the Commission may attend any meetings or monitor remote evaluation, to **ensure a high quality evaluation**
- They **check the functioning and running of the overall process**
- They advise, in their **report**, on the conduct and fairness of the evaluation sessions and, if necessary, **suggest possible improvements**
- They do not evaluate proposals and, therefore, do not express any opinion on their quality
- They may raise any questions - please give them your full support