



EUROFLEETSPlus

Remote Transnational Access (RTA) Programme

Proposal Evaluation and Evaluation Criteria

www.eurofleets.eu

Version 11.10.2019



The EurofleetsPlus Proposal Evaluation System

The EurofleetsPlus (Eurofleets+) is based on previous EUROWLEETS (1 & 2) Evaluation Systems, and follows the best experiences and practices from different European ship-time application and evaluation procedures.

The EUROWLEETS Evaluation System was accepted by the RV operators of 22 European RVs, as members of the EUROWLEETS (1&2) projects, and tested in 8 calls for proposals (over 100 proposals evaluated) with 41 cruises successfully scheduled on board European RVs.

Proposal evaluation

The EUROWLEETS+ **Scientific Liaison Panel (SLP)** established by the EUROWLEETS+ Consortium consisting of international experts covering all fields of marine science and will judge eligible proposals based on the evaluation of each proposal by at least three independent reviewers. All reasonable measures will be taken to ensure **Objectivity, Transparency, Equality of Treatment, Impartiality, Quality and Confidentiality**.

The membership of the EUROWLEETS+ Scientific Liaison Panel is personal and public. For more details concerning the Panel's members please consult www.eurofleets.eu.

The evaluation of proposals is managed by the EUROWLEETS+ Evaluation Office. The process aims to be fair and transparent and will provide constructive feedback to applicants.

Steps involved in the proposal evaluation

1 Eligibility Check

Proposals for funding received by the notified submission date are checked for compliance with the general **Eligibility Criteria**. These criteria include:

- Was a complete application received?
- Is the proposal complying with the Eligibility criteria?

Is the PI from another country than the research vessel he/she is requesting for his data/sample gathering?

- Are all sections of the application form completed correctly and the requested proposal structure in Part B (scientific project description) followed?
- Full eligibility criteria are available at [EUROWLEETSPlus RTA Guidelines for Applicants](#).

Proposals considered to be ineligible will be returned to the applicant with a note explaining why they were considered to be not eligible. At the end of the online proposal submission process (see below) a unique project identifier will be assigned to each proposal. The unique project identifier

should be used in any subsequent correspondence or enquiry with the EUROFLEETS+ Evaluation Office. A **Proposal Summary Sheet** will be issued to the PI during the finalisation of the submission process.

2 Scientific Evaluation

a) Selection of reviewers:

A member of the Scientific Liaison Panel, expert on the respective proposal topic, is allocated to each proposal. This Scientific Liaison Panel member accompanies the proposals and he/she is responsible for throughout the different steps of the evaluation process and – if the proposal is successful – even afterwards for the cruise reporting.

The EUROFLEETS+ Call Management and Evaluation Office maintains a list of expert evaluators to assist in the evaluation of all proposals for funding. The names of the experts assigned to individual proposals are not made public. Evaluators are required to declare NO conflict of interest before reviewing their assigned EUROFLEETS+ proposals.

b) Individual assessment

Proposals meeting the eligibility criteria are evaluated based on their individual merit by as a general rule three individual evaluators. Evaluators are chosen in mutual agreement by the Scientific Liaison Panel and the Evaluation Office.

The experts examine the proposal(s) assigned to them and score and comment on each proposal under each of the **Evaluation Criteria** (see below) using an individual **Proposal Assessment Form (PT Outline Expert)**.

c) Consensus Evaluation

Once the individual experts to whom proposals have been assigned have completed their individual evaluations, a **Consensus Meeting** is convened to enable joint consideration of proposals by the EUROFLEETS+ Scientific Liaison Panel. In preparation of the Consensus Meeting one member of the EUROFLEETS+ Scientific Liaison Panel will be assigned to each proposal to act as a presenter and commentator of that proposal during the Consensus Meeting.

During the Consensus Meeting the panel members will consider each proposal and agree on a final mark for each of the evaluation criteria and an overall mark (score) for the proposal. In case of conflict of interest of any of the SLP members, either being a Principal Investigator (PI) or partner on a proposal, or belonging to an institution involved in the proposal under discussion, the SLP member is requested to leave the room during the discussion of the proposal.

Thresholds will then be set for the following categories:

- A - Recommended for scheduling
- B - Additional proposals
- C - Not recommended

Proposals recommended for scheduling will then be ranked by ship according to their overall score.

Evaluators justify their marks with constructive and informative comments. The EUROFLEETS+ Scientific Liaison Panel will agree on an overall **Consensus Evaluation Report**. All applicants, whether successful or unsuccessful, will be given feedback on the outcome of the evaluation.

d) Interranking

In a second round, the proposals are ranked and recommended for scheduling or rejected.

3 Logistic Evaluation of Proposals

After the final recommendation of the Scientific Liaison Panel, high ranked proposals will be examined by the EUROFLEETS+ **Operational Liaison Panel** to determine the logistical feasibility regarding research vessel, equipment, area of operation and timing of cruises. The EUROFLEETS+ Operational Liaison Panel will aim at optimising the use of ship time, large equipment and cruise associated costs.

The Scientific and Operational Liaison Panels could recommend grouping some of the proposals or launching additional calls to complement a successful scientific party.

4 Feedback and Negotiation of successful proposals

Successful applicants may be asked to make changes to their proposals during the funding negotiation phase to accommodate the comments of the evaluators and/or the comments of the EUROFLEETS+ Scientific and Operational Liaison Panel on cruise planning and possible integration with other projects/cruises.

Results of the evaluation process will be available on the [Project Website](#) and all applicants whether successful or not will be directly contacted. Successful applicants will be invited to enter into negotiation to conclude a contract as indicated in the chapter “Terms and Conditions”. No information on the evaluation process/outcome will be made available prior to notification and negotiation with the applicants.

Excellent science: The evaluation system of EUROFLEETS+, in which only scientifically excellent-ranked proposals are considered for the logistical evaluation, ensures that only excellent proposals are considered for funding.

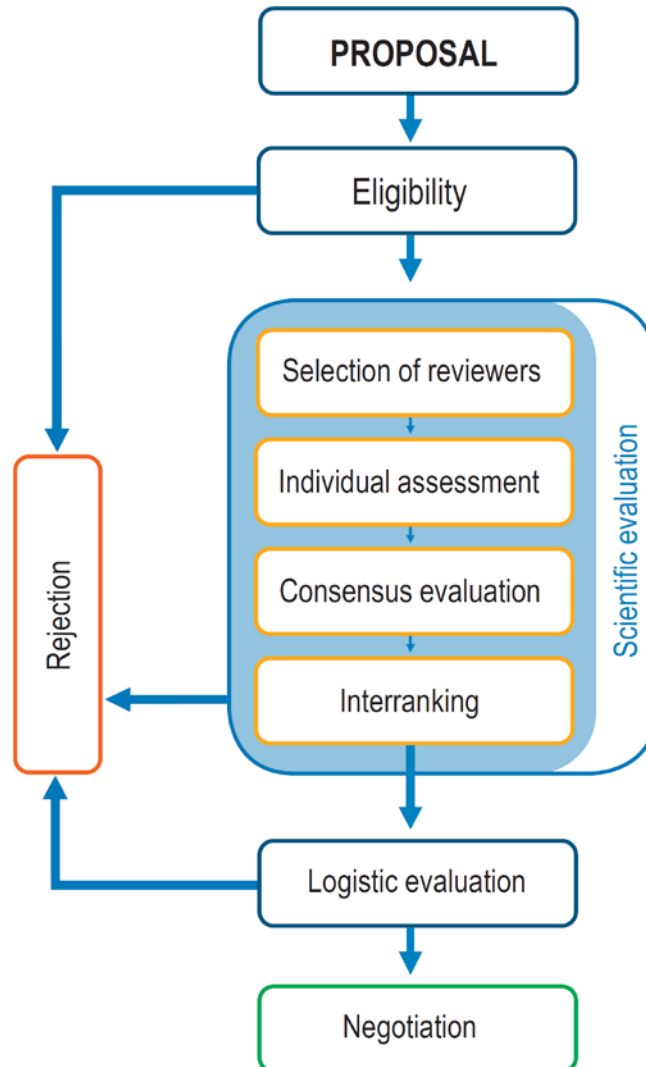


Figure 1: Work flow and different steps involved in the EUROFLEETS+ evaluation procedure.

Evaluation criteria

Access to any infrastructure in EUROLLEETS+ will be regulated according to the Excellence-driven access mode. This mode of access is dependent on the scientific excellence, originality, quality and technical and ethical feasibility of an application evaluated through peer review conducted by external experts.

The Scientific Liaison Panel will base their selection of scientifically excellent proposals on the external evaluations provided by international experts. Only scientifically excellent-ranked proposals will be considered for the logistical evaluation, ensuring that only excellent proposals are considered for funding. In case of equally ranked proposals, **priority** should be given to users who:

- have **not previously used the installation**, and
- are working in **countries where no equivalent research infrastructure** exists.

The Scientific Liaison Panel will apply the principles of transparency, fairness and impartiality. Applications from PI's or teams and institutions where no equivalent research infrastructure exist, female, young and early career scientists are strongly encouraged. International and/or industrial partners are welcome.

Eligible proposals will be evaluated using the following criteria. Criteria of lesser importance are marked *.

Criteria	Weighting
1) Scientific and technical quality of the ship-time proposal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) General scientific background <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the current state of knowledge in the research area well described? • Are cited references relevant and reflect the state-of-the-art? b) Specific aims of the access <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the proposed topic of high scientific quality? • Are the research objectives and expected outputs of the proposal clearly stated? Are they achievable? • To which extent do the expected results lead to a progress beyond the current state-of-the-art? • Does the access provide added value to an already funded/ongoing project? 	35%
2) Quality of the work programme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the work plan adequate? Is it clearly described and well defined? Is the research area, the number of planned stations and transects well justified? Can the proposed work plan be realized in the set time? • Are the scheduled tasks and methods adequate to the set objectives? Is it clearly stated which methods and equipment will be employed? 	35%
3) Scientific qualification/track record of the proposing PI and remote participants <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background/track record of the PI and remote participants (if applicable) 	10%
4) Technical capability to carry out the research cruise and data exploitation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is all necessary equipment available to carry out the proposed project? • Is a clear concept presented how the proposed access will be conducted by the crew/technicians on board the research vessel? • Is a clear concept presented how the gathered data will be shared with shore based scientists, analysed and published? • *Will data be fed into international/national data banks or models? 	20%

Applicants have to ensure that sufficient information is provided in the proposal to enable a thorough evaluation of all criteria.

Contact details

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