

Guidelines for the assessment of postdoctoral grant application

The aim of these guidelines is to ensure that the experts, the expert committee and the evaluation committee adopt a similar approach to the application evaluation process.

All the criteria are evaluated with the following **rating scale**:

1 – unsatisfactory; 2 – satisfactory; 3 – good; 4 – very good; 5 – outstanding. It is also allowed to use the ratings 1.5; 2.5; 3.5 and 4.5.

We ask the evaluators to bear in mind that ideally, no more than 10% of all proposals should be rated as “outstanding”, and no more than 25% as “very good”. As general practice, the proposals with the average overall rating 3.5 and below will not receive financing.

The evaluation criteria are divided into following sub-criteria.

1. Scientific quality and justification of the proposed research project

1.1. General theoretical background, relevance and novelty of the project. The application is evaluated for its general (international) level, interest to science as well as its potential for the creation of new knowledge taking into account the specifics of the research field.

1.2. Main objectives, hypotheses, methods, the degree of elaboration of the project plan and its time frame. The application is evaluated for its level of elaboration (comprehensiveness, versatility, etc); the validity of the planned methodology and its appropriateness for implementing the project; if the planned activities and timeline of attaining the objectives are realistic; the quality of the infrastructure and research environment available for carrying out the postdoctoral project at the host institution or collaborating institution.

1.3. Expected results, their potential applicability, and possible future directions of research.

The application is evaluated for the degree to which the prospective results will make a substantial contribution to the development of science, technology, and/or society as well as for the feasibility of exploitation.

2. Track record of the applicant

The quality and results of the applicant’s previous research activities, his/her capacity to carry out the proposed project, and experience in (international) research-related cooperation. The quality and capacity to carry out his/her work is evaluated in the light of the applicant’s previous research and results (on international level), the number and quality of publications, etc. The applicant’s experience is evaluated by the scope of participation in research projects (home and abroad), participation in conferences, skills obtained, and other research-related activities.

3. Track record of the supervisor(s)

The quality and capacity of the supervisor to carry out this project is evaluated in the light of the supervisor’s previous research and results (on international level), the number and quality of publications, number of citations, h-index, number of successfully supervised PhD dissertations, the scope of managing and/or participating in domestic and/or International R&D projects, and other research-related activities.

4. The need for and benefits of the postdoctoral project for the development of Estonian society and economy.

This section will be evaluated only by the expert panel and the Evaluation Committee not by external reviewers.

The need for and benefits of the postdoctoral project for the development of Estonian society and economy are evaluated in the context of the potential of the research to provide additional specific scientific knowledge to solve societal and economic challenges.

5. Overall score for the application

The overall score for the application is not the mathematical average of your scores for sections 1-4 but your overall assessment of the application. Please point out the main arguments underlying your assessment.