

RESEARCH Evaluation System

Start Tech Vienna 2016 Call

"This directive has been translated from German into English. Please be aware that only the German language version of the directive is legally binding."

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1. Evaluation Criteria

No	Criteria	Type	Max. points	KO
1	Conformity with the call for proposals	Y/N	0	Yes
2	Research and innovation potential of the company	0/5	15	No
3	Research and development according to the state-aid law definition	Y/N	0	Yes
4	Scientific level of the project	0/5	13	Yes
5	Subjective research-strategic importance and additionality of the project for the company	0/5	13	Yes
6	Economic evaluation (objective, absolute)	0/5	13	Yes
7	Subjective strategic significance of the project for the company in regards to business and innovation	0/5	13	Yes
8	Impact on employment in the company	0/5	8	No
9	Regional importance of the project	0/5	9	No
10	Ecological effects	0/5	5	Yes
11	Equal opportunity and diversity			
11a	Equal opportunity – project management	Y/N	2	No
11b	Equal opportunity – proportion of women in the project	Y/N	2	No
11c	Diversity	Y/N	2	No
12	Project planning	0/5	5	Yes
13	Adequacy and availability of resources	Y/N	0	Yes

2. The Criteria in Detail

Criteria 1	Conformity with the call for proposals	Type	Max. points	KO
Motive	The call establishes which projects can be funded in the context of this call for proposals. In this evaluation, the conformity with the call is to be evaluated.			
Question 1	Does the present application conform to the specific focus, objectives and conditions of the call in accordance with point 4 (specific requirements for the call) and point 6 (general requirements for the call)?	Y/N	0	Y
Criteria 2	Research and innovation potential of the company	Type	Max. points	KO
Motive	The degree of the potential of the company to lead research, development, and innovation (RDI) through positive development is to be assessed here. The view here should be directed toward the research and innovation strategy of the <u>entire</u> company, which should help supplement the more closely focused assessment of the project through an assessment of its environment. Here, not only is the status quo taken into account, but the future possibilities of the company are taken into account insofar as the company is able to present a plausible and comprehensible research strategy for the future. Among other things, the growth-oriented business model of the start-up should be evaluated here.			
Question 2	How high is the research and innovation potential of the company taking into account the research and innovation strategy and the environment in which the company operates? <i>[Key ideas: research programmes and objectives, innovations, fundamental strategic orientation of the company toward RDI, structural and organisational measures favourable to RDI, core expertise, RDI management, market and competitive situation, resources]</i>	0/5	15	N
Criteria 3	Research and development according to the state-aid law definition	Type	Max. points	KO
Motive	For reasons related to state-aid law, the proposed project must, with regard to the R&D part, conform to the terms of the definition of research and development in state-aid law. Only such projects (and costs) can be funded that correspond to the definitions of fundamental research, industrial research, or experimental development. ¹			
Question 3	Does the project correspond to the state-aid law definitions for research and development?	Y/N	0	Y

¹ Definitions in accordance with the General Block Exemption Regulation, section 7. See also point 4 of this document.

Criteria 4	Scientific level of the project	Type	Max. points	KO
Motive	The expected increase in knowledge through the realisation of the project is to be estimated here. Can significant new (scientific) results be expected? What is the qualitative and quantitative level of the R&D project on an objective scale (in the sense of a comparison with the best and also thereby in relation to the “borderless” international research scene).			
Question 4	How high objectively is the (scientific) level of the research and development project? <i>[Key ideas: what are the risks and difficulties of the project? How demanding is the (technical) problem, for example: number and complexity of the technical issues still to be clarified. A prerequisite for a positive assessment is of course that the theoretical (scientific) access and the proposed scientific methodology (“research concept”) appear suitable to achieve the objectives of the proposed research.^{2]}</i>	0/5	13	Y
Criteria 5	Subjective research-strategic importance and additionality of the project for the company	Type	Max. points	KO
Motive	The aim of the funding programme is, among other things, primarily to support businesses that plan R&D activities that quantitatively or qualitatively go beyond their current level of research. This means that a project should be evaluated here very differently depending on whether, for example, it is being carried out by a large company that has been active for a long time in research or by a small company that has not yet undertaken research activities or has only done so in a limited way.			
Question 5	How great is the subjective significance of the project for the company in terms of research strategy as well as the potential of the project for additional effects in research and development in the company? <i><u>Attention:</u> Large companies must be able to demonstrate additionality for their project. Would the project be less ambitious or would it not be able to take place in the same time frame without assistance? Does the project show additional costs due to international cooperation? Is there market failure for the proposed project?</i>	0/5	13	Y
Criteria 6	Economic evaluation (objective, absolute)	Type	Max. points	KO
Motive	It is a necessary condition in this programme that the established insights are transformed into a saleable service or a process to which economic expectations are connected and that this service is subject to an application or implementation and marketing strategy from which corresponding market opportunities (or for processes, other economic benefits) and profitability for the project can be derived. We suggest the anticipated revenue (or for processes, cost savings or indirect revenue effects) over time be taken as the value that is representative for the assessment of the market opportunities. The assessment is to be made independent of the previous revenue etc. of the company.			

² The grade of 0 is given to eliminate projects that in the opinion of the jury lead to no increase of knowledge through research and development, which would justify funding in the framework of this programme. In addition, projects that pursue objectively unrealistic goals or are contradictory (“perpetuum mobile”) are given the grade (0). Projects whose methodology is inadequate can be declined under the “project planning” criterion.

Question 6	How high are the economic benefits for the company, which should arise from the implementation of findings from the research and development project in a product, service or process? <i>[Key ideas: size of the potential market, accessible market share, persistence of sales, superiority of the product with regard to technology, use and function].</i>	0/5	13	Y
Criteria 7	Subjective strategic significance of the project for the company in regards to business and innovation	Type	Max. points	KO
Motive	In the area of business, among other things, it is a goal of the support programme to fund those companies in particular that plan projects that demonstrate a high economic potential for the company and that can contribute to raising the innovation potential of the company. This means that a project should be evaluated differently according to whether the product is supposed to generate only a small part of total revenue (processes: costs, indirect revenue) or whether the project is of foundational economic significance for the company, whereby it should also be taken into account whether indirect effects for innovation (subsequent project, image) can be achieved.			
Question 7	How high is the economic significance of the project for the company, taking into account the expected revenue in comparison with current revenue but also taking into account additional effects for the innovative direction of the company? <i>[Key ideas: expected revenues from the project in comparison with the previous total revenue of the company, new product in addition to the existing offerings, construction/expansion of manufacturing and/or sales, potential for spin-off products or variants, external perception is raised with regard to technical or content-related expertise (image enhancement and technology leadership), new markets will be addressed (geographically or thematically), activity area of the company is sustainably expanded, increases export quota, continuing changes in behaviour in innovation management and innovation strategy]</i>	0/5	13	Y
Criteria 8	Impact on employment in the company	Type	Max. points	KO
Motive	Here it should be estimated what effects on employment in the company seem plausible through the implementation of the project. These are usually not independent of the economic potential but can also differ significantly from the effects on growth (keyword: jobless growth).			
Question 8	To what extent is it to be expected that positive effects on employment will accompany the economic effects? <i>[Key ideas: direct employment effects in R&D project, construction or expansion of development structures, for additionality regarding the existing offerings: after effects in manufacturing or sales, new markets with additional qualification requirements, set-up or expansion of (associated) employee-intensive services. Downgrade: no independent (self-owned) production, high degree of automation, pure licensing strategy]</i>	0/5	8	N

Criteria 9	Regional importance of the project	Type	Max. points	KO
Motive	This criterion assesses the expectation of potential effects of the project in relation to their significance for the region. Not only should overall economic considerations and technology policy considerations be taken into account here, but questions relating to the direct or indirect benefit of the project to the company should also be considered.			
Question 9	How high is the regional impact of the project in general economic, technological (scientific) and broader social terms? <i>[Key ideas: scope of the project ("leading project"), exceptional technological added value, international visibility. Positive impact of the project³ on other companies: innovation or technology effects for users or other manufacturers, complementary services, ancillary industries. Solutions to objectively difficult problems or satisfaction of basic needs of society.⁴ Facilitation of local tasks through the use of new technology/innovation.</i>	0/5	9	N
Criteria 10 ⁵	Ecological effects	Type	Max. points	KO
Motive	This criterion aims to incorporate any environmental effects of the project, which may occur on different levels, into the project evaluation; effects are to be evaluated in accordance with their conformity to the city of Vienna's environmental objectives.			
Question 10	To what extent are positive environmental effects to be expected from the present innovation project? <i>[Key ideas: effects are possible on multiple levels: in the course of ecologically oriented planning, in the production process⁶ or for users in the sense of widespread effects;⁷ possibly also ecological content at the level of information/awareness-raising; effects vary in terms of diversification, sustainability and intensity; optimal: effects at more than one level]</i> <i><u>Attention:</u> If negative effects are to be expected, which blatantly contradict the environmental objectives of the city of Vienna, in addition to the assignment of the grade of zero, a corresponding short annotation should be provided, which recommends rejection on the basis of ecological issues. A valuation of zero with no corresponding annotation simply means that no positive environmental effects are expected (environmentally neutral).</i>	0/5	5	Y
Criteria 11	Equal opportunity and diversity	Type	Max. points	KO
Motive	This criterion firstly aims at the problem that at around 16% (She Figures 2012: S33) women are			

³ For example, by opening a new field of research and development or a new market derived from this.

⁴ For example, in the area of medicine or security.

⁵ This criterion is assessed by Municipal Department 22 of the City of Vienna.

⁶ Examples: energy efficiency, emissions, eco-design, selection of raw materials,...

⁷ Examples: catalysts, green technologies that replace polluting technologies.

	dramatically under-represented in business-related research in Vienna. Secondly, it aims at the problem that in projects where there is a gender-specific usage pattern for the product at the end of the process ⁸ often too little attention is paid to precisely this aspect in the research concept. It is important to plan strengthened market segmentation strategies that take into account the language and culture of ethnic identity groups. It is also important to better integrate the needs of markets that are becoming more heterogeneous (for example, seniors) into innovation considerations.			
Question 11a	Does a demonstrably qualified woman lead the project scientifically or substantively? ⁹ <i>[“Demonstrably” means that the project director is named and the usual information about the qualification profile are provided.]</i>	Y/N	2	N
Question 11b ¹⁰	Do women perform more than 50% of the <u>eligible</u> working hours (more than 33% for small businesses)? <i>[This classification is made on the basis of the hours worked by <u>named</u> women. The percentage is calculated in relation to the total number of hours in the project. Working hours that are still not associated with specific employees at the time of filing (“NN”) will therefore be attributed to male researchers.]</i>	Y/N	2	N
Question 11c	Are differences in the use of innovation by different groups of people possible, and are these and other aspects of diversity explicitly taken into account in the project? Diversity can involve, for example, the age of persons, people with disabilities, ethnic identity groups, but also gender-based distinctions. <i>[Key ideas: Are women taken account of in the context of the project as a customer or target group? Is market potential better exploited by taking into account the gender dimension (market segmentation)? Does this give rise to new products or services or are undesirable developments and/or investments thereby avoided? Regarding ethnic groups: knowledge of the language or taking into account their culture, employees from ethnic identity groups]</i>	Y/N	2	N

⁸ An example of this can be found in medical research where it has been proven that men and women respond to certain ingredients in different ways.

⁹ In this case, the activities must at any rate go beyond purely administrative or organisational work.

¹⁰ This criterion is assessed by the Vienna Business Agency.

Criteria 12	Project planning	Type	Max. points	KO
Motive	<p>The criterion applies for three possible “scenarios”:</p> <p>(1) If it is determined for a certain criterion that planning or presentation defects prevent an assessment of the respective criterion, the assessment will be broken off at this point, and the application will be rejected with an evaluation of zero for the present criterion.</p> <p>(2) The project was not already rejected for one of the individual Criteria due to bad planning in points or presentation defects, but in an overall view the overall design and presentation of the project stands in a significant imbalance to the scope, content and complexity of the project. In this case as well: rejection by assigning a zero for the present criterion.</p> <p>(3) Conversely, for positive projects that show planning in the application project that goes beyond a “minimum standard”, this criterion is used to raise the valuation of the project. This upward valuation is based primarily on the assumption that the quality of the project planning often has an immediate effect on the quality of the project and the likelihood of the successful implementation of the project.</p>			
Question 12	Does the presentation of the project in the application provide sufficient evidence for the assessment? Are the ideas, concepts or methods presented in the application coherent, comprehensible in their structure (work packages), consistent, sufficiently documented or argued, and suitable to achieve the intended technical/substantive or economic goals of the project? If no: grade of zero and KO (knock-out). If yes, is the planning of the project in relation to the scope, content and complexity of the project at least sufficient (grade 1) for anticipating the successful implementation of the project, or can planning be classified qualitatively as going beyond this minimum standard (grades 2-5)?	0/5	5	Y
Criteria 13	Adequacy and availability of resources	Type	Max. points	KO
Motive	<p>The quantitative assessment of human resources, the assessment of the technical, financial and infrastructural facilities, as well as the organisational arrangements are the focus here. If applicable, the resources of partners are included here and taken into account. It should also be taken into account, especially for high-risk projects, whether setbacks in the course of the project (technical or in implementation or marketing) can be coped with (“taking a deep breath”).</p>			
Question 13	Are the resources presented in the application adequate to the scope, content and complexity of the project, and is the company able plausibly to demonstrate that these resources are available to them?	Y/N	0	Y

3. Further clarifications

3.1. Focus of the Programme

Research and development (R&D), the conversion of knowledge into innovation and the dissemination of technologies and knowledge in an advanced economy are the main engines for growth, prosperity and employment.

Therefore, in the framework of this programme, business-related R&D projects in Vienna that meet the substantive definitions of “industrial research” or “experimental development” may be supported insofar as these projects lead to mediate and immediate innovations for which a basic business implementation strategy can already be presented and from which an economic value can be expected for Vienna. The projects can equally involve product innovations, solutions to technical problems in the practical implementation of technology, or innovations in processes and procedures.

There is decidedly no restriction here to technological research and development. The support should create incentives for a company to carry out an R&D project in the first place or least do so faster or more ambitiously than would have been possible without support. The restriction to business-oriented projects indicates that this is a programme within the framework of economic development, which differs in this regard from pure support for the sciences.

In the framework of this programme, calls are made regarding different topics with special focus on local and regional circumstances.

3.2. Purpose and Goal of the Evaluation System

Even if this programme at its core aims at the strengthening of business-related R&D, the “scientific quality” of a project is an important but not sole aspect, which should be considered in the overall evaluation of the application. The supported projects should in any case contribute in such a way that knowledge created in the research is incorporated into innovative products, processes or services, which strengthen the market position of the applicant company. Furthermore, it is desirable that additional long-term effects arise for the company in its culture of innovation and its research and innovation structures and that the project directly or indirectly impact employment in the company in a positive way.

Because in public support effects are also aimed at which go beyond the effects aimed at by the company and thereby have positive effects on the region, the regional significance of the project and the potential for possible positive transverse effects on the environment and on the equality of men and women are also to be taken into account as an additional dimension.

The evaluation process provides a tool that helps to achieve a comprehensive and stable assessment across all submitted projects and to achieve a uniform assessment against the background of these varied, multidimensional goals and their weighting, and to rank the projects in terms of this overall understanding. This ranking especially facilitates the assessment of which projects can be supported or not within the given budget constraints. It also provides insight into which projects should be specially honoured with prize money for the best submitted project in addition to the provided support.

It is also necessary in this regard that that we make our substantive understanding of the individual evaluation points available to all participating persons. This need is reinforced by the fact that we place great value, in regards to diversity, on the projects being assessed by judges with different individual backgrounds and approaches. Therefore, all members of the jury are invited to look over these descriptions before the first evaluation in order to avoid misunderstandings.

3.3. Types of Questions in the Evaluation System

One type of question is about the fundamental applicability of an aspect of the evaluation. Such questions are answered with a “yes” or “no” and are generally used where the non-applicability of an aspect will lead to immediate rejection of the application (knock-out criterion (KO)) or only these two possibilities exist. Another type of question involves a scale that makes a scalar assessment possible regarding the degree of applicability of a criterion, which yields the evaluation points. These are to be evaluated only according to a six-point scale (values between zero and five) where zero is always the worst and five always the best value.

A value of 0 means in any case that the corresponding assessment criterion is not met. An average good degree of fulfilment would be assessed with “3”, and a “5” is to be given only if the criterion is fulfilled to an extraordinary degree – this applies to all scaled assessments.

In some cases (these are marked accordingly), the assessment with zero is simultaneously an exclusion criterion (essential requirements); otherwise, zero means only that a certain aspect that could justify an appreciation of the value of the application is not present (not necessary requirements). The rating system does not provide for negative assessments; however, for example, negative environmental effects can be noted in the report, and it can be recommended that the application be rejected for this reason.

In the Online Jury Tool, there is space after each criterion assessment for a verbal explanation of the valuation, which has to be filled in at any rate for a KO valuation. The Vienna Business Agency will communicate this explanation to the applicant company upon request without, however, naming the evaluator.

The maximum evaluation rating that a project can receive is 100 points. Experience has shown that the best-ranked projects will receive 80 to 90 points. A project must receive at least 25% of the possible evaluation points, i.e. 25 points, to achieve basic eligibility.

3.4. Evaluation of the Submitted Costs

An essential task of the jury in addition to the ranking evaluation is to evaluate the costs specified by the applicant company for plausibility and to check if costs can be cut. This is done in the course of the jury meeting.

Personnel costs, which are directly related to research or development work, costs for external services (restricted to costs of services for third parties entrusted with research or development work), or – only for SMEs – costs that stand in connection with the protection of the company's own research or development results, are eligible.

3.5. Additionality for Large Companies

(Regarding participation of a large company, start-ups may count as a large company – the classification is made by the Vienna Business Agency)

A special feature integrated in the assessment for question 5 is whether the project may have additional effects for the applicant company. The European Commission emphasises that only such projects that meet this requirement be supported, but it assumes that a minimum degree of additionality will be generated for small and medium-sized companies through R&D projects. For large companies, however, additionality is to be considered in individual cases.

A project exhibits additionality when it contributes to the company engaging in additional and more valuable R&D activities compared with the past. Consequently, the company should be permanently raised to a higher level in the field of corporate R&D compared with the previous status or previous activities. This can be reflected in the development of resources and structures at the scientific level of research or in certain behaviours (risk-taking, research as strategy).

The following are possibilities for additionality effects:

- Does the present research or development project positively differ at the “scientific” level from the previous behaviour of the company?
- Does the project open a new research area (a new category) for the company?
- Does the scope (cost) of the project differ significantly from the scope of previous R&D projects by the company?
- Is the project a (first) step towards taking on comparatively more development risks?
- Can it be expected that through the project itself or its consequences research and development in the company will have a stronger (and sustainable) anchoring or strategic significance in the company?
- Are new structures being created? An example of this would be the establishment of its own research and development department.
- How do the research expenditures of the company develop? In absolute terms: will the project contribute to an increase in the total research expenditures of the company? In relative terms: will the project contribute to an increase in research expenditures of the company in relation to revenue or overall spending?
- Is there an increase in the number of persons engaged in research in the company?
- Can the company show that the project would be less ambitious or would not happen or would not be able to happen during the same time frame without the funding?
- Does the project show additional costs due to international cooperation?

- Is there market failure for the proposed project? The most important arguments for this can be found in the ideas of positive external effects, public goods, incomplete/asymmetrical information and failures of coordination and networking.

3.6. Criteria Not Evaluated by the Jury

Not all Criteria are to be evaluated by a (external) jury. The criterion (Criteria 10) describing environmental effects will be evaluated by Municipal Department 22 of the City of Vienna; those criteria regarding classification of the company (e.g. size) and some aspects of the project with regard to the effects on equality between men and women (Criteria 11b) are evaluated by the Vienna Business Agency.

3.7. Principles and Instructions on Work

- For reasons of objectivity and equal treatment, the jury should evaluate only those facts described by the company. Even if there are other close or better possibilities for the realisation of positive effects in the project from the perspective of the jury, these cannot be taken into account, if it has not been ruled out that the company might possibly make use of these possibilities without, however, having included these in the application.
- The case is different if the company (on the basis of certain imponderables such as pending negotiations with venture financiers) presents numerous scenarios/options. Assuming a sufficiently reasoned presentation by the company, the jury can use the implementation scenario that in their view is most likely for the basis of the evaluation.
- Regarding subjective estimations (including additionalities), as a rule the reference point is the Vienna location(s) of the company for companies that have locations in many regions or countries.
- There is always an explanation for individual Criteria with which the project or the effects of the company should be compared. This can be a comparison with the industry or the relevant market (objective classification), but it can also be a comparison over time related purely to the company (in comparison with the previous behaviour or the past performance of the company: additionality) or related to the overall services provided by the company (relative significance).
- The “project planning” criterion is placed at the end of the evaluation system because we assume that the quality of planning can ultimately be recognized only after reviewing all other aspects of the assessment. However, it is possible at any time to move immediately to this criterion if the point being evaluated shows that the planning is not adequate for an assessment or is not adequate for the project.
- For the same reasons, the “adequacy and availability of resources” criterion is at the end of the evaluation process. If for any criterion the jury determines that either the presented resources are not adequate for the planned activities or that the resources would be adequate for the planned activities but are not available to the company and cannot be financed, the resources criterion can be applied immediately and the project rejected on these grounds.
- In the extreme negative case, the jury can recognize, without having concretely evaluated a single criterion, that there is evidence of serious planning or presentation defects, or there is a totally unrealistic relation between the required and existing resources at the company (“castles in the air”). In such a case, one of the two Criteria can of course be appealed to immediately.

4. Definitions: fundamental research, industrial research, experimental development

Fundamental research: means experimental or theoretical work, which primarily serves for the acquisition of basic knowledge without apparent direct practical applications.

Industrial research: refers to planned research or critical research for gaining new knowledge and skills with the aim of developing new products, processes or services, or of being useful for achieving substantial improvements in existing products, processes or services. This includes the development of parts of complex systems, which are necessary for industrial research and in particular for the validation of technological principles, with the exception of prototypes.

Experimental development: refers to the acquisition, combination, design and use of existing scientific, technical, economic and other relevant knowledge and skills for the development of plans and schemes, or designs for new, modified or improved products, processes or services. This includes, for example, activities in regard to the conception, planning and documentation of

new products, processes and services. These activities may include the creation of designs, drawings, plans and other documentation material insofar as they are not intended for commercial purposes. The development of commercially usable prototypes and pilot projects is also included if the prototype is necessarily the final commercial product, and its production would be too expensive solely for demonstration and evaluation purposes. In subsequent commercial use of demonstration or pilot projects, the revenue generated will be deducted from the costs eligible for support. The experimental production and testing of products, processes and services is also eligible for support, insofar as it can be used in industrial applications or used commercially or can be converted for such purposes. Experimental development does not include routine or regular changes to products, production lines, production processes, existing services or other operational processes even if those changes should represent improvements.

5. Funding Rates

Funding rates based on the assessment basis for ¹¹	Small companies	Medium-sized companies	Large companies
Experimental development (ED)	45%	35%	25%
ED with supplement for cooperation	60%	50%	40%
Industrial research (IR)	70%	60%	50%
IR with supplement for cooperation or wide dissemination of results	80%	75%	65%
Obtaining, validation, or defence of patents and other intangible assets	50%	50%	
Prize money	In addition to the funding – calculated according to the rubric described above – prize money can be awarded to the three projects selected by an expert jury as the projects that best meet the objectives of the call.		
Bonus for projects directed by women	If a demonstrably qualified woman directs the project, the funding will be supplemented by EUR 10,000.		

Classification with regard to the two types of research mentioned (ED, IR) takes place at the level of work packages. Different work packages within a project can have different assignments. The base rate for the entire project is therefore the weighted mean value.

Supplements for cooperative projects or for projects whose results will be widely disseminated:

- A supplement of 15 percentage points is permitted, up to a ceiling of 80%, if the project is carried out through cooperation of at least two independent companies or through cooperation between a company and a research institution or if the results of the research project are widely disseminated.
- For cooperation involving at least two companies, no single company may defray more than 70% of the eligible costs.
- In addition, the project must involve the cooperation of at least one SME or cross borders.
- For cooperation between a company and a research facility, the research facility must bear at least 10% of the costs eligible for funding, and it must have the right to publish the results of the work insofar as the institution conducts the work.
- If the supplement is justified by the wide dissemination of the research results, it firstly must be an industrial research project, and the results of the project must be widely disseminated at technical or scientific conferences. Or it must be published in scientific or technical journals or be accessible in information sources (data bases, which are open to the public) or in free or open-source software.

¹¹ On small, medium and large companies, see point 2.1.1. For more detailed provisions on the handling of supplements, see point 2.2.4. FIT 15 Plus Directive. The allocation to the categories of research or funding rates is made per work package!