

# RMIT European Doctoral Innovators (REDI) Program

## Guide for Evaluators

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## 1. About REDI

RMIT European Doctoral Innovators (REDI) is a five-year innovative research training program aimed at educating tomorrow's researchers by offering a unique international research environment in which to deepen core scientific skills and develop new ones in complementary disciplines and sectors. REDI offers industry-supported positions in 11 countries all with excellent salaries, enviable international experiences including a residential year in Melbourne and annual workshops in Barcelona, top-class research and skills training as well as networking with academic and industry leaders across 60+ partners.

REDI is co-funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation program under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement no. 101034328. REDI has also received funding from RMIT University and other 24 academic and industry partners involved in its implementation.





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## 2. Purpose of REDI Guide for Evaluators

This *REDI Guide for Evaluators* describes the general principles and procedures that will be used in the evaluation and selection process of research proposals under REDI call for fellowships. All Evaluators, before starting the evaluation processes will be required to read this *Guide for Evaluators*, *FAQ for Evaluators*, in addition to the description of REDI on the official REDI website ([rediprogramme.eu](http://rediprogramme.eu)) and the *Guide for Applicants*. Further, an information session for the Evaluators, hosted by the REDI management team, will take place prior to the commence of the evaluation processes by the Evaluators, to ensure to Evaluators are fully equipped with the correct information, and to answer any questions they may have.

## 3. Evaluation Principles

The evaluation and selection process for REDI has been designed to be **open, transparent, merit-based, impartial** and **fair**, ensuring the relevant Ph.D positions are allocated to the most talented students based on merit and capacities.

The REDI evaluation process will embody the key principles of the [Charter & Code](#), which RMIT has endorsed and aligned its own recruitment and induction policies to.

The process for the selection of the Applicants will be extensive and transparent, with the aim of attracting the most talented and motivated students from around the world. Recruitment will be carried out over two call rounds. RMIT representative of the REDI management team will oversee the evaluation processes and will participate in key selection panel sessions and also join a number of selected interviews, to ensure evaluation principles are embedded in the processes and agreed REDI processes and requirements are implemented.

## 4. Role and Appointment of Evaluators

Evaluators in the Selection Panels will be responsible for evaluating and ranking of Applicants, and for proposing the lists of approved and reserve Applicants for each position. Selection Panels will maintain their composition throughout the entire selection process unless a member is changed due to a conflict of interest arising.

In most cases, each Selection Panel will comprise 4 to 6 Evaluators and fulfil the following criteria:

- Two Internal Evaluators – one representative from RMIT and one representative from the Host Partner;
- At least two External Evaluators (i.e. not employed by RMIT or the Host Partner) – at least one from industry and one from academia;
- At least one External Evaluator member of a different nationality to that of the Host Partner;
- At least 50% female members.

Prior to commencement of the tasks, Evaluators in the Selection Panels will have signed the relevant letter of commitment, outlining themes of conflict of interest, confidentiality and other relevant factors necessary to take on the role of an Evaluator.



## 5. Overview of Selection Process

### Evaluation Timeline (Example: First round of positions)

Step	What task?	Timeframe
<b>1-Online application</b>	Applicants submit application through the online portal before the deadline.	October 1 through November 30, 2021
<b>2-Eligibility check</b>	REDI management team will check whether application meets the REDI and Host eligibility criteria and requirements.	November through December 2021
<b>3-Evaluation of eligible applications</b>	The Evaluators in the Selection Panel will assess, evaluate and rank the applications that have passed the eligibility check, according to the evaluation criteria. Evaluators will shortlist the successful applicants for an interview.	December 2021 through January 2022
<b>4-Interviews</b>	Evaluators of the Selection Panel will conduct the interview, and assess, evaluate and rank the interviews according to the interview criteria.	January through February 2022
<b>5-Final ranking and allocation of positions</b>	Evaluators of the Selection Panel, together with the REDI management team, will produce the final ranking and allocations, and communicate results to the candidate(s)	February through March 2022
<b>6-Admission at Research Hosts</b>	Candidates will go through the admissions process to be admitted as a Doctoral Candidate at the research host and RMIT. Once this step has been completed candidates will receive offer letters issued by both institutions.	March through August 2022 (may be extended depending on the position, institution/country/visa, COVID-19 restrictions, other factors)

The relevant steps for Evaluators in the Selection Panel are from Steps 3 to 5, and are covered in this *Guide for Evaluators*:

### (Step 3) Evaluation of Eligible Applications

The corresponding Selection Panel of Evaluators will assess, evaluate and rank all applications that pass the eligibility check. For details on the eligibility check, please refer to the [Guide to Applicants](#) and the templates used for the eligibility check.



Where Applicants have nominated more than one host/project combination, the application will proceed simultaneously in each of the selection processes (Evaluators will not see the order of preference of an Applicant's nominated host/project).

Members of the Selection Panel will be asked to first evaluate each application individually, following the evaluation guidelines provided to them. For a sample template, please refer to the attached template at the end of this *Guide to Evaluators*.

Evaluation Criteria	Score	Weighting (%)
Academic merit: academic transcript, publications, etc.	0–5	30
Research skills and other relevant competences	0–5	25
Research & work experience: 3i dimension, international or industry internships, conferences, etc.	0–5	15
Motivation letter	0–5	10
Recommendation by referees	0–5	10
Public awareness (dissemination and communication activities)	0–5	10
<b>Weighted Average</b>	<b>0–5</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Scoring guide:</b>		
<b>0 – Fail.</b> The application fails in these criteria or cannot be judged due to incomplete information.		
<b>1 – Poor.</b> The application has serious weaknesses or is addressed in an inadequate manner.		
<b>2 – Fair.</b> The application broadly addresses the criterion, but there are significant weaknesses.		
<b>3 – Good.</b> The application addresses the criterion well, although improvements are required.		
<b>4 – Very Good.</b> The application addresses the criterion very well, although certain improvements are still possible.		
<b>5 – Excellent.</b> The application successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion in question.		

The Evaluators' individual scores will be averaged to give an initial score for the application. A first ranking list will be produced based on the average scores. *In cases where Applicants obtain the same score, priority will be given to those who scored highest in Academic merit, followed by Research skills. These being equal, priority will be given to female Applicants.* The Selection Panel of Evaluators will then set a cut-off score for passing to the interview round, which will be no lower than 3.5 and will allow for at least the top three applicants to be invited for interview, up to a maximum of six per position.

### Summary of Evaluators' Actions in Step 3:

- Read each of the eligible application;
- Evaluate each application against the Application Criteria;
- Score each application, and provide feedback comments (e.g. strengths and weaknesses) that will be forwarded to the Applicant as Feedback;
- Once all scoring has been completed by all Evaluators, in communication with other Panel members, set the cut-off score for interviews.

### (Step 4) Interviews

Evaluators will take part in an interview for all candidates that have been evaluated and listed as top three applicants for the position, as described in Step 3.



Interviews will comprise two parts:

- **Part 1** - A question and answer session (identical for all applicants), and
- **Part 2** – A discussion session to explore the suitability to the research project (verbal, no pre-prepared material).

Evaluators will be given an *Interview Guide (Under construction)* detailing process and scoring. Note that the same *Interview Guide* will also be available to the Applicants to ensure transparency of the evaluation process.

The criteria, which are complementary to those already evaluated in step 3, will be the following. For a sample template, please refer to the attached template at the end of this *Guide to Evaluators*.

<i>Interview Criteria</i>	<i>Score</i>	<i>Weighting (%)</i>
Scientific and investigative aptitude and motivation	0–5	30
Research Project: conceptual understanding and suitability	0–5	30
Professional skills: planning, problem solving, IT, data management,	0–5	20
Interpersonal skills: communication, teamwork, initiative, English level	0–5	20
<b>Weighted Average</b>	<b>0–5</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Scoring guide:</b>		
0 – <b>Fail</b> . The application fails in these criteria or cannot be judged due to incomplete information.		
1 – <b>Poor</b> . The application has serious weaknesses or is addressed in an inadequate manner.		
2 – <b>Fair</b> . The application broadly addresses the criterion, but there are significant weaknesses.		
3 – <b>Good</b> . The application addresses the criterion well, although improvements are required.		
4 – <b>Very Good</b> . The application addresses the criterion very well, although certain improvements are still possible.		
5 – <b>Excellent</b> . The application successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion in question		

### Summary of Evaluators' Actions in Step 4:

- **Read the Interview Guide and prepare to conduct the interview;**
- **Evaluate each application against the Interview Criteria;**
- **Score each interview and provide feedback comments that will be forwarded to the Applicant as Feedback;**
- **Once all scoring has been completed by all Evaluators, in communication with other Panel members, set the cut-off score for final rankings.**

### **(Step 5) Final ranking and allocation of doctoral research positions**

The final ranking scores will be produced by combining the interview score from step 4 (60% weighting) and the evaluation of applications from step 3 (40% weighting). *The scoring of the interview criteria categories will be considered in cases where overall scores are identical, first applying Scientific and investigative aptitude, followed by Research Project. All these being equal, priority will be given to female Applicants.*

### Summary of Evaluators' Actions in Step 5:

- **Selection Panel of Evaluators, together with the REDI management team, will produce the final ranking score, according to the weighting;**



- **Provide feedback comments to the REDI management team that will be forwarded to the Applicant as Final Outcome.**

## 7. Feedback to Applicants

**Evaluators are asked to provide feedback after Step 3 (Evaluation of Eligible Applications), Step 4 (Interview) and Step 5 (Final Ranking and Allocation of Positions).**

*Note that after Step 2 (Eligibility Check), conducted by the REDI management team, Applicants who meet all the eligibility criteria will be notified by email and will be forwarded to the corresponding Selection Panel for the position(s) applied. On the other hand, Applicants who do not meet all the eligibility criteria will have their application rejected and will be immediately informed of this decision by email. The notification email will explain the grounds for rejection and detail the procedure for appeal (which will also be published on the REDI website).*

- **Feedback after Step 3 (Evaluation of Eligible Applications)**

Evaluators are required to evaluate all applicants that have met the eligibility criteria from Step 2, based on the checklist template (please refer to template attached below), produce an average score, and provide feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of the applications. Assessed applicants will then receive an email notification of the evaluation results.

- **Feedback after Step 4 (Interviews)**

Evaluators are required to evaluate all applicants during the interviews, based on the *Interview Guide* and checklist template (please refer to template attached below), produce an average score and provide feedback on the interviews. Assessed applicants will then receive an email notification of the interview results.

- **Feedback after Step 5 (Final Ranking and Allocation of Positions):**

Evaluators of the Selection Panel are required to, together with the REDI management team, to produce the final ranking, based on the checklist template (please refer to template attached below). Assessed applicants will then receive an email notification of the final results.

**Evaluators are asked to follow the following guidelines when providing feedback:**

The comments and the language used must be approached with care and respect, given that this documentation will be included anonymously but unchanged in the review feedback. Each Evaluator's identity will be protected and applicants may not request this information. RMIT Europe may modify or delete any comments it considers inappropriate or incorrect.



Comments must therefore be appropriate, considered, balanced, fair, honest and constructive, but not avoid criticism. For the applicants, this is the part of the review process that adds value, whether they are selected or not.

In your comments, you must try and avoid these common problems:

- *The comments begin with a summary of the applicant's profile: this is unnecessary and redundant.*
- *Comments which are overly generic, giving the impression that the Evaluator has not read the application.*
- *Every aspect must be reviewed, do not give the impression that any aspect has been neglected.*
- *Do not repeat the same thought in the comments on more than one criterion.*
- *Scores that do not seem to be in line with the comments.*
- *The comments refer to feelings, contain personalised summaries or use inappropriate language.*
- *It is important to add suggestions for improvement to the application.*
- *Do not be too rigid or absolute ('There is no description of...'). The quality of the assessment is of the utmost importance.*
- *Check that the comment corresponds to the score given for each section: sometimes the text is conciliatory when the score is very low or is insufficiently specific in relation to a very high score.*
- *The comments must be written with care.*

## 8. Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality

All Evaluators will have been requested to sign a commitment letter, declaring that they do not have any conflicts of interest with the position being evaluated, and should a conflict arise at any time in the process, they should immediately make such a conflict know to the REDI management team, who will arrange for a substitute evaluator to replace the conflicted member of the panel.

All Evaluators will also have been requested to sign a commitment letter, declaring that they will maintain confidentiality of all applicants' personal information and relevant information provided. All evaluators must respect the confidentiality of the information disclosed in the evaluation process, both in documentation and verbally.

## 9. Contact

RMIT Europe is serving as the main beneficiary for the REDI programme. For any inquiries or information that cannot be found in this *Guide for Evaluators*, *Guide for Applicants* or on the official REDI website (<http://www.rediprogram.edu/>) please contact:

REDI Help Desk: [redi.help@rmit.edu.au](mailto:redi.help@rmit.edu.au) / +34 935 47 77 00



## Annex. Templates (Sample) for Evaluation Processes





## Template (*Tentative Sample*) for Step 2: Eligibility Check

Eligibility criterion	Supporting document(s)	Submitted	Eligible	Comments
Be in the first four years (Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) research experience) of your research career and not yet have been awarded a doctoral degree	✓ <u>Duly filled in and signed declaration on MSCA ESR and mobility criteria.</u>	Yes / No	Yes / No	
Not have resided or carried out your main activity (work, studies, etc.) in the country of your research host for more than 12 months in the 3 years immediately before this call's deadline			Yes / No	
Hold a four-year bachelor's degree with full-time study in a discipline relevant to the research project of your choice and awarded with honours, OR a master's degree in a discipline related to the research project of your choice	✓ A scanned copy of official academic degree(s) and academic transcripts.	Yes / No	Yes / No	
English level C1 language proficiency	✓ A recognised English language certificate (IELTS, TOEFL, Pearson Test of English, Cambridge English), a Degree or Master's certificate issued in a country where English is the first language	Yes / No	Yes / No	

**Applicant submitted all required documents AND meets all the eligibility criteria?: Yes / No**

**If No, indicate what is not fulfilled:** \_\_\_\_\_



## Template (*Tentative Sample*) for Step 3: Evaluation of Eligible Applications

Criteria	Score	Weighting (%)
Academic merit: academic transcript, publications, etc.		30
Research skills and other relevant competences		25
Research & work experience: 3i dimension, international or industry internships, conferences, etc.		15
Motivation letter		10
Recommendation by referees		10
Public awareness (dissemination and communication activities)		10
<b>Weighted Average Score</b>		<b>100</b>
<b>Scoring guide:</b>		
0 – <b>Fail</b> . The application fails in these criteria or cannot be judged due to incomplete information.		
1 – <b>Poor</b> . The application has serious weaknesses or is addressed in an inadequate manner.		
2 – <b>Fair</b> . The application broadly addresses the criterion, but there are significant weaknesses.		
3 – <b>Good</b> . The application addresses the criterion well, although improvements are required.		
4 – <b>Very Good</b> . The application addresses the criterion very well, although certain improvements are still possible.		
5 – <b>Excellent</b> . The application successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion in question.		
Individual Evaluators Scores	Score	Weighting (%)
Evaluator 1		25
Evaluator 2		25
Evaluator 3		25
Evaluator 4		25
<b>Weighted Average Score</b>		<b>100</b>

**Applicant's Average Score:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Ranking of Applicant based on Average Score:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Selection Panel of Evaluators are required to produce a first ranking list based on the average scores. In cases where Applicants obtain the same score, priority will be given to those who scored highest in Academic merit, followed by Research skills. These being equal, priority will be given to female Applicants. The Selection Panel then are required to set a cut-off score for passing to the interview round, which will be no lower than 3.5 and will allow for at least the top three applicants to be invited for interview, up to a maximum of six per position.*



## Template (*Tentative Sample*) for Step 4: Interviews

Interviews will comprise two parts:

- **Part 1** - A question and answer session (identical for all applicants), and
- **Part 2** - A discussion session to explore the suitability to the research project (verbal, no pre-prepared material).

Applicants/Evaluators will be given the same *Interview Guide (under construction)* detailing process and scoring. Evaluation will be based on:

Criteria	Score	Weighting (%)
Scientific and investigative aptitude and motivation		30
Research Project: conceptual understanding and suitability		30
Professional skills: planning, problem solving, IT, data management,		20
Interpersonal skills: communication, teamwork, initiative, English level		20
<b>Weighted Average Score</b>		<b>100</b>
<b>Scoring guide:</b>		
0 – <b>Fail</b> . The application fails in these criteria or cannot be judged due to incomplete information.		
1 – <b>Poor</b> . The application has serious weaknesses or is addressed in an inadequate manner.		
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4 – <b>Very Good</b> . The application addresses the criterion very well, although certain improvements are still possible.		
5 – <b>Excellent</b> . The application successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion in question		
Individual Evaluators Scores	Score	Weighting (%)
Evaluator 1		25
Evaluator 2		25
Evaluator 3		25
Evaluator 4		25
<b>Weighted Average Score</b>		<b>100</b>

**Applicant's Average Score:** \_\_\_\_\_



## Template (*Tentative Sample*) for Step 4: Final Ranking and Allocation of Positions

Final Scores	Score	Weighting (%)
Applicant's Average Score from Step 3 (Evaluation of Eligible Application)		40
Applicant's Average Score from Step 4 (Interviews)		60
<b>Weighted Final Score</b>		<b>100</b>

**Applicant's Final Score:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Ranking of Applicant based on Final Score:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Selection Panel of Evaluators are required to produce a first ranking list based on the average scores.*

*The scoring of the interview criteria categories will be considered in cases where overall scores are identical, first applying Scientific and investigative aptitude, followed by Research Project. All these being equal, priority will be given to female Applicants.*