RMIT European Doctoral Innovators (REDI) Program

Guide for Evaluators

April 2022

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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 10+ 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 academic and industry partners involved in its implementation.

What's next...

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*, in addition to the description of REDI on the official REDI website (rediprogramme.eu) and the *Guide for Applicants*. Further, a briefing 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. RMIT representatives of the REDI management team will oversee the evaluation processes and will participate in key selection panel consensus meetings when evaluating and deciding on finalists, 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 preferred 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 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.

In special cases where the Selection Panel will be composed of more than 4 Evaluators, all of the above criteria would still need to be met, from the overall composition of the Panel.

Prior to commencement of the tasks, Evaluators in the Selection Panels will have signed a letter of commitment, declaring possible conflict of interest, agreeing to confidentiality and other important points necessary to take on the role of an Evaluator.

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5. Overview of Selection Process

Tentative Evaluation Timeline (Example: Second round of positions)

Step	What task?	Timeframe
1-Online application	Applicants submit application through the online portal before the deadline.	March 1 through April 30, 2022
2-Eligibility check	REDI management team conducts the initial eligibility check to ensure application meets the REDI and MSCA requirements.	April through May 2022
3-Evaluation of eligible applications	The Evaluators in the Selection Panel will assess, evaluate and rank the applications that have passed the eligibility check, according to the six evaluation criteria outlined below. Evaluators will shortlist the successful applicants for an interview.	May 2022
4-Interviews	Evaluators of the Selection Panel will conduct the interview, and assess, evaluate and rank the interviews according to the interview criteria.	June 2022
5-Final ranking and allocation of positions	Evaluators of the Selection Panel, together with the REDI management team, will produce the final ranking and allocations. The REDI management team will then communicate results to the candidate(s)	June to early July 2022
6-Admission at Research Hosts	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.	September 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 Selection Panel of Evaluators will assess, evaluate and rank all applications that pass the eligibility check. For details on the eligibility criteria of the applicants, please refer to the *Guide to Applicants*.

When Applicants have been assessed as eligible for more than one position, 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).*

Evaluators will be asked to first evaluate each application individually, directly on the designated application platform (Slideroom).

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
Weighted Average	**0–5**	**100**
Scoring guide: **0 – Fail.** The application fails in these criteria or cannot be judged due to incomplete information. **1 – Poor**. The application has serious weaknesses or is addressed in an inadequate manner. **2 – Fair**. The application broadly addresses the criterion, but there are significant weaknesses. **3 – Good**. The application addresses the criterion well, although improvements are required. **4 – Very Good**. The application addresses the criterion very well, although certain improvements are still possible. **5 – Excellent**. The application successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion in question.		

After all evaluations have been completed by all evaluators, a first ranking list will be produced based on the average scores of all evaluators. 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 (3,5 out of 5 as a standard) and will allow for at least the top three applicants to be invited for interview, up to a maximum of six per position. Exceptions on the cut-off score may be discussed, if at least three applicants are not selected or if the Panel decides to ensure the position will be filled.

Summary of Evaluators' Actions in Step 3:

- Review and evaluate each application against the 6 Evaluation Criteria;
- Score each application, and provide feedback comments;
- Once all scoring has been completed by all Evaluators, the REDI team will produce final rankings so the evaluators can decide on the shortlist of candidates to be interviewed.

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(Step 4) Interviews

Evaluators will take part in interviews for all candidates that have been evaluated and listed as top three applicants for the position, as descripted 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).

Prior to interviews, evaluators will be given an *Interview Guide* 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 Annex at the end of this *Guide to Evaluators.*

Interview Criteria	Score	Weighting (%)
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
Weighted Average	**0–5**	**100**

Scoring guide:
0 – Fail. The application fails in these criteria or cannot be judged due to incomplete information.
1 – Poor. The application has serious weaknesses or is addressed in an inadequate manner.
2 – Fair. The application broadly addresses the criterion, but there are significant weaknesses.
3 – Good. The application addresses the criterion well, although improvements are required.
4 – Very Good. The application addresses the criterion very well, although certain improvements are still possible.
5 – Excellent. 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 for the interviews;
- Discuss amongst Panel evaluators to decide on questions;
- During the interview, evaluate each candidate against the 4 Interview Criteria;
- Score each criteria and provide feedback comments.

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(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).

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:

- Based on the interview scores and evaluation scores, the REDI management team will produce the final ranking score, according to the weighting and average score of all evaluators;
- Selection Panel of Evaluator will then decide on the allocation of candidates during the consensus meeting based on the final scores and rankings, where a member of the REDI management team will attend;
- REDI will then contact the preferred candidate to make the conditional offer; In case the preferred candidate does not accept the position, the reserve candidate will then be given the conditional offer.

7. Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality

All Evaluators must have signed the 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.

The signed commitment letter, also declare 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.

8. 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 Program Team: rediprogram@rmit.edu.au

Annex. Tentative Templates for Evaluation Processes

Template 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
Weighted Average Score		**100**

Scoring guide:
0 – Fail. The application fails in these criteria or cannot be judged due to incomplete information.
1 – Poor. The application has serious weaknesses or is addressed in an inadequate manner.
2 – Fair. The application broadly addresses the criterion, but there are significant weaknesses.
3 – Good. The application addresses the criterion well, although improvements are required.
4 – Very Good. The application addresses the criterion very well, although certain improvements are still possible.
5 – Excellent. 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
Weighted Average Score		**100**

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 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
Weighted Average Score		**100**
Scoring guide: **0 – Fail.** The application fails in these criteria or cannot be judged due to incomplete information. **1 – Poor**. The application has serious weaknesses or is addressed in an inadequate manner. **2 – Fair**. The application broadly addresses the criterion, but there are significant weaknesses. **3 – Good**. The application addresses the criterion well, although improvements are required. **4 – Very Good**. The application addresses the criterion very well, although certain improvements are still possible. **5 – Excellent**. 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
Weighted Average Score		**100**

Applicant's Average Score:_____

Template for Step 5: 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
Weighted Final Score		**100**

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.