RMIT European Doctoral Innovators (REDI) Program

Guide for Evaluators

June 2023

Contents

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No 101034328.

REDI_Guide for Evaluators_Extraordinary call

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.

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.*

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 LUT University;

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No 101034328.

REDI_Guide for Evaluators_Extraordinary call

- At least two external evaluators (i.e. not employed by RMIT nor LUT University) – at least one from industry and one from academia;
- At least one external evaluator member of a different nationality to that of LUT University;
- Gender diversity will be ensured.

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 Selection 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.

5. Overview of Selection Process

Evaluation Timeline

Step	What task?	Timeframe
1-Online application	Applicants submit their application through the online portal before the deadline.	22 June 2023 – 19 July 2023
2-Eligibility check	REDI management team conducts the initial eligibility check to ensure application meets the REDI and MSCA requirements.	27 July 2023
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.	7 August 2023
4-Interviews	Evaluators of the selection panel will conduct the interview, and assess, evaluate and rank the interviews according to the interview criteria.	Notification to short-listed applicants: week starting on 7 August 2023

Interviews: 22 to 24 August 2023 |
| **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 applicants. | End of August 2023 |

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No 101034328.

REDI_Guide for Evaluators_Extraordinary call

6-Admission at LUT University and RMIT University	The selected applicant will go through the admissions process to be admitted as a Doctoral Candidate at LUT University and RMIT University. Once this step has been the selected applicant will receive offer letters issued by both institutions.	November 2023

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 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 for Applicants*.

Evaluators will be asked to first evaluate each application individually, directly on the designated application platform (Slideroom) according to the following evaluation criteria:

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 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 selection panel decides to ensure the position will be filled.

Summary of evaluators' actions in Step 3:

- Review and evaluate each application against the 5 evaluation criteria.
- Score each application and provide feedback comments.

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No 101034328.

REDI_Guide for Evaluators_Extraordinary call

- Once all scorings have been completed by all evaluators, the REDI management team will produce final rankings so the evaluators can decide on the shortlist of applicants to be interviewed.

(Step 4) Interviews

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

Interviews will be organised in the following way:

- o 10 minutes presentation of applicant's CV and a research project in which the applicant participated during their Bachelor's and/or Master's degree.
- o Round of questions by the Selection Panel members.

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 for 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 Selection Panel evaluators to decide on questions.
- During the interview, evaluate each applicant against all four Interview Criteria.
- Score each criterion and provide feedback comments.

(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.

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No 101034328.

REDI_Guide for Evaluators_Extraordinary call

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.

- The selection panel will then decide on the allocation of applicants during the consensus meeting based on the final scores and rankings, where a member of the REDI management team will attend.

- The REDI management team will then contact the preferred applicant to make the conditional offer; In case the preferred applicant does not accept the position, the reserve applicant will then be given the conditional offer.

6. 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 known to the REDI management team, who will arrange for a substitute evaluator to replace the conflicted member of the selection panel.

The signed commitment letter also declares 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.

7. Contact

RMIT Europe is coordinating the REDI programme. For any inquiries or information that cannot be found in this *Guide for Evaluators, Guide for Applicants, Interview Guide* or on the official REDI website (http://www.rediprogram.edu/), contact the REDI Program Management Team.