

ENDORSED

by the decision of the Supervisory Board  
of the National Research Foundation of Ukraine of 21.11.2025  
(minutes of the meeting № 8)

APPROVED

by the decision of the Scientific Council  
of the National Research Foundation of Ukraine of 30.10.2025  
(minutes of the meeting № 30)

**The Procedure for Conducting Scientific and Scientific-Technical Reviewing of Projects and Consideration of Applications for Grant Support  
Submitted to the National Research Foundation of Ukraine**

## General terms

1. The Procedure for Conducting Scientific and Scientific-Technical Reviewing of Projects and Consideration of Applications for Grant Support Submitted to the National Research Foundation of Ukraine (hereinafter - the Procedure) was developed in accordance with the Law of Ukraine "On Scientific and Scientific and Technical Activity", the Law of Ukraine "On Scientific and scientific and technical review", Decree of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine dated February 5, 2019 № 2675-VIII "On the Verkovna Rada Award for Early-Career Researchers", Regulations on Annual Grants of the President of Ukraine to Doctors of Sciences for Scientific Research and Developments, approved by the Decree of the President of Ukraine dated June 17, 2009 № 446/2009, Regulations on the Procedure for Awarding Grants of the President of Ukraine to Support Scientific Research and Developments by Early-Career Researchers, approved by the Decree of the President of Ukraine dated December 24, 2002 № 1210/2002, Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine dated July 4, 2018 No. 528 "On the National Research Foundation of Ukraine" (with amendments) and Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine dated December 27, 2019 No. 1170 "On approval of the Procedure for competitive selection and financing of projects by the National Research Foundation of Ukraine" (*as amended by the Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine dated July 4, 2023 No. 742*) (hereinafter referred to as the Procedure for Competitive Selection).
2. This Procedure defines the procedure for scientific and scientific-technical reviewing (hereinafter - reviewing) of projects and consideration of applications for grant support (hereinafter - application) submitted to the National Research Foundation of Ukraine (hereinafter - the Foundation) for participation in calls of the National Research Foundation of Ukraine (hereinafter – the/a call), and also determines the procedure for joint selection of projects with a foreign and/or international foundation, society, institution, organization, association which will be performed jointly by Ukrainian and foreign legal entities, foreign (international) scientific societies, by institutions, organizations, associations within the framework of international bilateral and/or multilateral scientific and scientific-technical cooperation (hereinafter - joint competitive selection of projects).

The basis for joint competitive selection of projects is an agreement between the Foundation and a foreign foundation, society, institution, organization, association on a joint call and project financing.

The provisions of this Procedure apply to the joint competitive selection of projects, unless the agreement between the Foundation and a foreign foundation, society, institution, organization, association on a joint call and project financing sets out other rules for competitive selection.

The joint terms and conditions for a joint call for projects are defined in the agreement between the Foundation and a foreign foundation, society, institution, organization, association on the joint call and project financing.

The decision to conduct a joint call for projects is made by the Scientific Council of the Foundation.

The provisions of this Procedure apply to calls for annual grants of the President of Ukraine to early-career researchers and Doctors of Sciences, awards of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine for early-career researchers, as well as other calls for proposals held by the Foundation in accordance with the legislation, unless otherwise provided by the legislation of Ukraine in force at the time of the respective call, which regulates the procedure for awarding annual grants of the President of Ukraine for early-career researchers, as well as other grants and awards, the conduct of which is entrusted by legislation to the Foundation.

3. The main principles of project reviewing and consideration of applications are the following:

- maximum openness and transparency;
- independence and objectivity of scientific and scientific and technical reviewing of projects in the areas of grant support of the Foundation (hereinafter – the/a project);
- competence and objectivity of the persons conducting the reviewing;
- taking into account the world level of scientific and technical progress;
- responsibility for the reliability and completeness of the analysis, the validity of the reviewer's recommendations;
- respect for copyright and related rights, as well as compliance with the principles of research ethics;
- compliance with the principles of fair call;
- prevention of conflict of interests during the consideration and reviewing of projects;
- inclusiveness and equal opportunities;
- innovativeness and social significance.

4. In this Procedure, concepts have the following meanings:

*Registration number* – a numeric identifier assigned to the application during the competitive selection for awarding grant support at the expense of the state budget. It remains unchanged for the application during the competitive selection;

*Thematic Panel (Panel)* – a group of members of the Call Commission, formed according to the thematic areas of a specific call, consisting of at least five persons: it ensures the process of consideration and reviewing of projects of the relevant thematic direction;

*Curator* – a member of the Call Commission, authorized by the decision of the Call Commission to provide constant support for the identified projects (from the selection of reviewers to the determination of the results of the call);

*The Author of the project* – a researcher from the side of the applicant (call participant) and a researcher from the partner side (if involved) mentioned in the application;

*Referent* – an employee of the Directorate of the Foundation, designated by the Directorate for organizational and technical support of the application submitted for the call, from the moment of its receipt until the completion of the work of the Call Commission;

*Arbitrator* – a member of the Scientific Council of the Foundation, elected by the Scientific Council of the relevant section and approved by a decision of the Scientific Council of the Foundation, for communication between the Call Commission and the Scientific Council of the section at all stages of consideration and reviewing of projects, supervision of compliance with the terms and conditions of the call and the requirements for the procedures specified in this Procedure. The Arbitrator has the right to participate in meetings of the Call Commission and Panels (without voting rights);

*Observer* – a member of the Scientific Council of the Foundation, elected by the Scientific Council of the relevant section and approved by a decision of the Scientific Council of the Foundation for ongoing monitoring of the process of consideration and reviewing of applications for compliance with established requirements, rules and procedures and immediate notification of the Arbitrator about their violation. The Observer does not directly interact with the members of the Call Commission and does not participate in the meetings of the Call Commission and Panels;

*Reviewer* – a recognized Ukrainian or foreign researcher in the relevant field of science who has a research degree, scientific publications, research experience in an area that is substantively close to the subject of the project in the area of grant support provided by the Foundation, to whose scientific and scientific-technical reviewing they are involved, and bears personal responsibility for the accuracy and completeness of the analysis results, the validity of recommendations in accordance with the requirements of the review task (as amended by the Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine dated December 27, 2019 No. 1170 "On approval of the Procedure for competitive selection and financing of projects by the National Research Foundation of Ukraine). A researcher who does not meet the requirements or violates the requirements of the Regulations on Compliance with the Principles of Scientific Ethics and Prevention of Conflicts of Interest during Competitive Selection, Scientific and Scientific-Technical Reviewing of

Projects, and Consideration of Applications for Grant Support Submitted to the National Research Foundation of Ukraine (hereinafter – Ethical Principles) approved by the Scientific Council of the Foundation cannot be a reviewer;

*Ukrainian reviewer* – a researcher who is or was affiliated to a Ukrainian institution/organization, has a research degree (obrained or recognized in Ukraine) and has the relevant qualifications and experience (as required by the Scientific Councils of the Sections of the Foundation), is registered in the Automated System “NRFU Call for Projects” (hereinafter - AS) and is recommended by the Scientific Council of the Foundation for inclusion in the Database of NRFU reviewers;

*Foreign reviewer* – a researcher who is or was affiliated to exclusively to a foreign institution/organization, has a research degree and has the relevant qualifications and experience (as required by the Scientific Councils of the Sections of the Foundation), is registered in the AS “NRFU Call for Projects” and is recommended by the Scientific Council of the Foundation for inclusion in the Database of NRFU reviewers;

*Database of NRFU reviewers* – a module of the AS “NRFU Call for Projects” that contains structured and organized information about researchers who have undergone the registration, identification and verification procedure by the Scientific Council of the Section of the Foundation for inclusion in the Database of NRFU reviewers and may be involved in conducting scientific and scientific-technical reviewing of proposals and consideration of applications for grant support submitted to the National Research Foundation of Ukraine. The Database of reviewers is a component of the AS “NRFU Call for Projects” and is administrated according with the Regulations on the AS “NRFU Call for Projects”;

*Sending the project to a reviewer for conducting scientific and scientific and technical reviewing (hereinafter - reviewing)* - an official request sent through the electronic information system of the Foundation for the submission and processing of projects (hereinafter referred to as the electronic system of the Foundation) or by e-mail to a potential reviewer with a proposal to review the project, indicating the name, abstract and list of authors of the project, and the term during which the reviewer is proposed to give consent for the reviewing;

*The reviewer's consent to the reviewing* – confirmation of acceptance by a potential reviewer of the proposal to conduct a scientific and scientific and technical reviewing of the project in accordance with the requirements of this Procedure, sent by e-mail or through the electronic system of the Foundation;

*Reviewer's report* – a summarized result of the scientific and scientific and technical reviewing of the project compiled according to the form established by the Foundation which contains numerical evaluations (score) according to all the established terms and conditions of the call, evaluation criteria and textual justification of these evaluations, and meets the requirements for completeness, reasonableness and reliability;

*Confidential call information* – information contained in the call selection materials and in the Foundation's electronic system, as well as information regarding the details of project discussions at the meetings of the Call Commission or Panels, with the exception of:

- information that is publicly available;

- titles, annotations and lists of project authors.

Other terms are used in the sense they are used in the Law of Ukraine ‘On Scientific and Scientific-Technical Activities’ and in the Procedure for Competitive Selection.

## Registration of reviewers in the Database of NRFU reviewers

5. Registration of a Ukrainian reviewer in the Database of NRFU reviewers is carried out by the researcher filling out their personal profile in the AS “NRFU Call for Projects” and identifying the researcher by applying a Qualified Electronic Signature.

Registration of a foreign reviewer in the Database of NRFU reviewers is carried out by the researcher filling out their personal profile in the AS “NRFU Call for Projects”.

After filling out their personal profiles, Ukrainian and foreign reviewers undergo a verification procedure conducted by the Scientific Council of the respective Section of the Foundation. Based on the results of the verification, the Scientific Council of the Foundation considers the reviewer’s candidacy and decides whether to recommend them for the inclusion in the Database of NRFU reviewers.

The Call Administrator of the AS “NRFU Call for Projects” carries out the relevant registration actions based on the decision of the Scientific Council of the Foundation no later than the fifth working day after receiving the information to be entered into the Database of NRFU reviewers.

If a reviewer discovers errors in the information concerning them that is contained in the Database of NRFU reviewers, or if it is necessary to update their data, the reviewer independently corrects such errors and/or updates the data, simultaneously notifying the administrator of the AS “NRFU Call for Projects” by email (using the “Feedback” option).

The responsibility for the completeness, accuracy, and correctness of the information entered into the reviewer’s personal profile lies with the researcher who enters the respective information.

Upon the recommendations of the Call Commission, the Scientific Council of the Foundations may impose restrictions on reviewers who have violated the Procedure and Ethical Principles.

The reasons for excluding a reviewer from the Database of NRFU reviewers are:

- providing false information;

- concealment of an actual or potential conflict of interest during the conduct of scientific and/or scientific-technical reviewing;
- the fact of demanding and/or receiving unlawful benefits in any form for scientific and/or scientific-technical reviewing;
- submission of an unreliable (deliberately distorted) reviewer's report, improper performance of duties;
- establishment of a violation of the Ethical Principles;
- at the reviewer's own request.

## Submission and registration of applications

6. Applications are submitted and registered in accordance with clauses 10-18 of the Procedure for Competitive Selection and this Procedure, unless otherwise stipulated by an agreement between the Foundation and a foreign Foundation, company, institution, organization, association on a joint call and project financing.
7. Applications and documents for participation in the call are submitted in electronic form in Ukrainian or in Ukrainian and English depending on the requirements stipulated by the terms and conditions of the call, with a mandatory note about the consent of the authors of the project to its implementation.
8. Substitution or addition of clarifications to submitted documents by the applicant after the deadline specified in the announcement of the call is not allowed, except in the case specified in paragraph 16 of this Procedure.
9. Requirements for the content and form of documents, including their scanned copies, and the method of their submission to the AS "NRFU Call for Projects" are determined by the terms and conditions of the call. Applications for grant support are submitted in electronic form, unless otherwise provided by special regulatory acts.
10. Only those applications that are submitted for the call within the period specified in the call announcement are subject to registration.
11. Registration of the application is carried out automatically in the AS "NRFU Call for Projects".
12. During registration, each application is assigned a corresponding registration number.
13. The Principal investigator (PI) of the project receives a notification about the registration of the application in the AS "NRFU Call for Projects".

## Consideration and reviewing of applications

14. The consideration and reviewing of applications is carried out in accordance with clauses 19–26 of the Procedure for competitive selection, this Procedure, taking into account the requirements of the Ethical Principles, as well as in accordance with the Regulations on the Call Commission (Appendix 1 to this Procedure), unless otherwise stipulated by an agreement between the Foundation and a foreign Foundation, company, institution,

organization, association on conducting a joint call and financing projects, and the terms and conditions of such a call, as determined by the Scientific Council of the Foundation in the decision on launching the call.

15. The Scientific Council of the Foundation does not interfere in the work of the Call Commission and does not take direct part in the process of consideration and reviewing of projects. In accordance with subparagraph 5 of paragraph 19 of the Regulation on the National Research Foundation of Ukraine, the Scientific Council of the Foundation exercises control over the implementation of its decisions.

In order to control compliance with the requirements of this Procedure and the Ethical Principles, the Scientific Council of the Foundation shall no later than two working days before the deadline for accepting applications, select one Arbitrator and two Observers for each Panel from among its members. Arbitrators and Observers (through the Arbitrator) must immediately notify the Head of the Scientific Council, the Head of the Call Commission, and the Head of the respective Panel in writing if a conflict of interest with the authors of applications is identified.

Arbitrators and Observers carry out their functions in accordance with the Ethical Principles.

Observers through the AS "NRFU Call for Projects" are authorized to carry out regular monitoring of the course of the call at all stages of consideration and reviewing of projects in order to prevent and promptly eliminate possible violations. If violations are detected, the Observers shall immediately inform the Arbitrator and, if necessary, the Head of the Foundation. At the same time, Observers do not directly interact with the members of the Call Commission and do not participate in the meetings of the Call Commission.

Arbitrators are authorized to supervise the Commission's compliance with the requirements of this Procedure, as well as the Ethical Principles.

Arbitrators and Observers are prohibited to unreasonably interfere in the work of the Call Commission and influencing the results of the Call Commission's activities in any way, including by giving instructions on making a specific decision, except for the Observer and/or Arbitrator responding to violations identified in the cases and manner specified in this Procedure, as well as except for the Arbitrator providing recommendations to members of the Call Commission on compliance with the conditions of the call and the requirements and procedures specified in this Procedure and the Ethical Principles.

Any attempts by Observers, Arbitrators, or other persons to exert pressure or interfere in the work of the members of the Call Commission must be reported immediately in writing, in particular by e-mail, to the Head of the Foundation.

Since access to the electronic system of the Foundation is provided exclusively on the basis of confidentiality, the members of the Call Commission within five working days from the moment of their election sign and submit to the Directorate of the Foundation a corresponding commitment not to disclose confidential information (including confidential call information).

Upon a reasonable request from the Arbitrator, the Head of the Scientific Council of the Foundation or the person replacing them sends an email to the Head of the Call Commission regarding the response to cases of possible violations identified during the review and evaluation of projects. The Call

Commission considers such a request, after which the Head of the Call Commission informs the Head of the Foundation and the Arbitrator in writing (by email) of the decision taken.

During the competitive selection process, the Arbitrators and Observers inform the Scientific Council of the Foundation at least once a month about the status and results of the work of the Call Commission for the respective Panel.

Arbitrators and Observers are obliged to maintain the confidentiality of information that has become known to them in the course of their duties and not to disclose it to anyone, unless otherwise provided by law.

Arbitrators and Observers sign a corresponding commitment to non-disclosure of confidential information after their election to the scientific councils of the Foundation's sections.

If alleged violations are detected (both independently and at the request of the Observers or members of the Call Commission), the Arbitrator is obliged to contact the Head of the respective Panel in writing (by e-mail) regarding consideration and response to the violation.

The Panel considers such proposals and/or comments and informs the Arbitrator and the Head of the Call Commission in writing (by email) of the decision taken by the Panel.

If, within three working days of the Arbitrator sending the relevant request to the Head of the Panel, there is no response from the Panel regarding the alleged violations or of a respective decision made by the Panel with which the Arbitrator disagrees, the Arbitrator submits a relevant appeal to the Head of the Foundation to respond to the alleged violation(s). If necessary, the Head of the Foundation decides to convene a meeting of the Scientific Council of the Foundation, with a personal invitation to such a meeting to the Heads of the Panels, the Deputy Head, and/or the Head of the Call Commission.

If the Arbitrator fails to respond to the Observer's request, the latter has the right to apply in writing (by email) to the Head of the Foundation.

If violations of the Procedure on the side of the Call Commission are detected, the Scientific Council of the Foundation has the right to:

- address the Call Commission with reservations and proposals for their subsequent consideration and elimination. If the Call Commission adopts a new decision, the previous decision adopted by the Call Commission on the same issue becomes invalid.
- create a commission from among the members of the Scientific Council of the Foundation to clarify the circumstances and prepare proposals for the organization of the work of the Call Commission simultaneously suspending the work of the Call Commission until the Scientific Council of Foundation makes a decision;
- introduce changes to the composition of the Call Commission;
- terminate the work of the Call Commission.

If necessary, the Scientific Council of the Foundation decides on the replacement of the Arbitrator and Observers.

The work of the Call Commission may also be suspended by decision of the Scientific Council of the Foundation in cases where the competitive selection has become impossible due to objective circumstances of force majeure beyond the control of the Foundation.

16. The Directorate of the Foundation, within the framework of providing organizational support for conducting and organizing calls by the Foundation, on the next working day after the date of the end of the application submission period, starts checking applications for compliance with formal requirements (performs the eligibility check).

This check is carried out in two stages: preliminary and final. The preliminary check is carried out within 10 working days from the deadline for application submission.

If the preliminary check reveals that the documents submitted by the applicant do not contain the information required in the call text, the Directorate of the Foundation notifies the applicant by electronic means of communication of the need to submit the clarified information within three working days from the date of notification.

After the deadline for submitting the updated information, the Directorate of the Foundation, within 10 working days, conducts a final check of the documents submitted by the participant for compliance with the formal requirements taking into account this information.

The Foundation's directorate informs the respective applicant about the rejection of applications on formal grounds in electronic form within three working days after the deadline for checking applications for compliance with formal grounds.

Within 10 working days from the date of completion of the Directorate's final eligibility check of applications for compliance with formal grounds, the Call Commission conducts their preliminary review regarding compliance with the conditions of the call, in particular, the criteria determined by the Scientific Council of the Foundation, detection of false information in the documents submitted by the applicant.

The non-compliance of the documents submitted by the applicant with the terms and conditions of the call, in particular with the criteria for the selection of projects determined by the Scientific Council of the Foundation, the discovery of false information in the documents submitted by the applicant are the basis for withdrawing the application from consideration based on the results of its preliminary review.

Detection of false information in the documents submitted by the applicant is grounds for withdrawing the application from consideration during the entire period of competitive selection.

Based on the results of the preliminary review of applications for compliance with the conditions of the call, in particular the criteria determined by the Scientific Council of the Foundation, in the event that false information is found in the documents submitted by the applicant, the Call Commission approves the list of applications that are withdrawn from consideration. The directorate of the Foundation notifies the respective applicant in electronic

form no later than three working days after the adoption of the decision of the Call Commission to withdraw the application from consideration on the basis of non-compliance with the conditions of the call, in particular the criteria by which projects are selected, determined by the Scientific Council of the Foundation, the discovery of false information in the documents submitted by the applicant.

17. For each application recognized as meeting the requirements, the Call Commission, within no more than two working days from the date of completion of their preliminary review, on the proposal of the Panel, determines two Curators who will be responsible for accompanying the application throughout the entire competitive selection.

Each Curator informs in writing about the absence of a conflict of interests with the authors of the corresponding project by submitting a statement according to the established template.

Curators search for potential reviewers for the projects assigned to them using reviewer search systems the use of which is approved by the Scientific Council of the Foundation (the relevant decision must be made by the Scientific Council of the Foundation before the announcement of the call). The primary criteria for the selection and rating of potential reviewers (formation of the rating list of potential reviewers) are the correspondence of their area of expertise to the subject of the project and the general scientific level, confirmed by research degrees and relevant scientific publications.

At the proposal of the Curators, the Call Commission, within eight working days from the date of selection of the Curators, forms and approves a rating list of potential reviewers for each application. The list is to contain at least five potential reviewers, taking into account the subject of the project, the terms and conditions of the call, and the requirements of the Ethical Principles.

If the terms and conditions of the call provide for the mandatory involvement of foreign reviewers to conduct the reviewing, then there must be at least one foreign reviewer in the top three of the rating list of potential reviewers.

Requests for reviewing are sent by the Referent to potential reviewers in such a sequence as to satisfy the conditions of the call in terms of the involvement of Ukrainian and foreign reviewers.

Members of the Call Commission do not have the right to review the projects submitted for participation in the respective call.

Members of the Foundation's management bodies, as well as authors of projects submitted for participation in the call do not have the right to review the projects under the respective call.

The Call Commission, with the technical and organizational support of the Referent, no later than within five working days from the date of approval by the Call Commission of the rating lists of potential reviewers, drawn up taking into account the terms and conditions of the call regarding the involvement of foreign reviewers (if this is provided for by the terms and conditions of the call), sends the project for reviewing (sends a request for reviewing) to the first three potential reviewers on the rating list.

Simultaneously with sending a request for reviewing in the electronic system of the Foundation, the Referents communicate with potential reviewers using the means of communication specified in the reviewer's personal profile by sending text messages.

In the event that the potential reviewer to whom the request for reviewing was sent did not respond, then on the third working day the Referent, using the means of communication indicated in the personal profile of the reviewer (by sending text messages), communicates with the potential reviewer again with a request to respond within two working days.

If, after sending requests for reviewing to the first three potential reviewers the required number of reviewers are not recruited, a request for a reviewing is sent to the respective number of reviewers so that the number is enough for reviewing of the project (according to the terms and conditions of the call).

The reviewers' consents to the reviewing are registered by the Referents, after which the Curators form a group of reviewers (in the number and composition stipulated by the terms and conditions of the call) who will conduct the project reviewing.

If the ranking list of potential reviewers approved by the Call Commission for a certain application is exhausted before three reviewers have given their consent, the Call Commission forms and approves an additional ranking list of potential reviewers, containing at least three potential reviewers (depending on the conditions of the call), no later than within three working days.

The maximum number of applications that can be evaluated by one reviewer is determined by the Call Commission, but cannot exceed 6 applications within one call and 15 applications within all calls held by the Foundation in a calendar year. All cases of exceeding the level of 6 applications for one reviewer within one call require the approval of the Arbitrator and the Head of the relevant section of the Scientific Council of the Foundation or the Head of the NRFU

18. Ukrainian reviewer when giving consent to do the reviewing provides the following documents and information in the electronic system of the Foundation:

- 1) a document certifying the award of a research degree (a scanned copy);
- 2) a statement on the absence of a conflict of interest for each project separately (a scanned copy following the established template);
- 3) consent to sign a civil-law contract for conducting scientific and scientific-technical review on a paid or unpaid basis (confirmation via checkbox in the Foundation's electronic system);
- 4) obligations regarding confidentiality (confirmation via checkbox in the electronic system of the Foundation);
- 5) a statement on compliance with the Ethical Principles (confirmation via checkbox in the Foundation's electronic system);
- 6) statement on familiarization with the requirements of this Procedure (confirmation via checkbox in the electronic system of the Foundation).

If the reviewing is carried out on a paid basis, the reviewer provides:

- a paper copy certified by hand of a civil-law contract for conducting scientific and scientific-technical review signed on his/her side or an electronic version of a civil-law contract for conducting scientific and scientific-technical review signed on his/her side with an electronic signature (hereinafter - ES);
- self-certified paper or ES-certified electronic copy of the document certifying the award of a research degree;
- a statement on the absence of a conflict of interest (a paper version signed by hand or ES-signed electronic version);
- a paper copy certified by hand or ES-certified electronic copy of the passport of a citizen of Ukraine;
- a paper copy certified by hand or ES-certified electronic copy of the taxpayer's identification card;
- a paper copy certified by hand or ES-certified electronic copy of a certificate from a Ukrainian bank (with current account details in UAH).

A civil-law contract for conducting scientific and scientific-technical reviewing may be concluded in electronic or paper form, at the discretion of the reviewer.

If the reviewing is carried out on unpaid basis, the reviewer provides:

- a paper version of a civil-law contract for scientific and scientific-technical reviewing signed by hand on his/her side or an electronic version of a civil-law contract for scientific and scientific-technical reviewing signed with the ES;
- a paper copy certified by hand or ES-certified electronic copy of the document certifying the award of a research degree;
- a statement on the absence of conflict of interest (following the established template);
- a paper copy certified by hand or ES-certified electronic copy of the passport of a citizen of Ukraine;

A foreign reviewer, when giving consent to do the reviewing under the conditions specified in the accession agreement in the electronic system of the Foundation, informs the Call Commission about the absence of conflict of interests with the authors of the project, and also confirms the correspondence of his/her field of expertise to the thematic field of the project and the fact that he/she is familiar with the requirements of this Procedure, the requirements of the Ethical Principles and provides a scan a copy of the document certifying the award of a research degree, or via checkbox confirmation in the electronic system of the Foundation. If a foreign reviewer is a citizen of Ukraine, he/she can do the reviewing on a paid basis, provided that he/she provides the same list of documents as defined above in the same paragraph for Ukrainian reviewers.

**Note.**

*Paragraph 6 of clause 18 of this Procedure shall be enforced from the date of entry into force of the regulatory act regulating the involvement of foreign reviewers in the conduct of scientific and scientific and technical review at the expense of the state budget.*

A foreign reviewer is allowed to conduct scientific and scientific-technical reviewing provided that an agreement for its conduct is signed (the accession agreement is concluded with a foreign reviewer by the reviewer via checkbox confirmation in the electronic system of the Foundation).

The Curator provides the project, as well as all the necessary documents and information, for reviewing through the electronic system of the Foundation no later than within two working days to the reviewer who has given consent to the reviewing.

If the reviewer is not yet registered as a user in the electronic system of the Foundation, the Referent instructs and advises the reviewer on the actions necessary for such registration.

In addition to access to the project materials, the reviewer is provided with methodological recommendations for preparing the reviewer's report, as well as the official e-mail address of the Foundation and the e-mail address of the Head of the Foundation.

If the Reviewer at any stage of the reviewing believes that he/she is being pressured or interfered with his/her work by the members of the Call Commission or other persons, he/she must immediately notify the Head of the Foundation in writing, in particular by e-mail.

19. The purpose of the application reviewing is for the reviewer to prepare a well-grounded report regarding the quality of the project and the applicant's ability to perform it at the appropriate level, in accordance with the criteria and scoring system approved by the Scientific Council of the Foundation.

Such criteria and the evaluation system are developed by the Scientific Council of the Foundation independently for each call. When developing the terms and conditions of a call, the Scientific Council shall be guided by the Methodological Recommendations for the Development of Criteria and Project Assessment System for Projects for Scientific and Scientific-Technical Reviewing within the Framework of Competitive Selection of the National Research Foundation of Ukraine (Appendix 2 to this Procedure).

Reviewing and competitive selection of projects is carried out by the Foundation taking into account the Ethical Principles and this Procedure.

20. The project reviewing is carried out by reviewers within twenty-one calendar days from the date they receive access to the project materials. Based on the results of the reviewing, the reviewer prepares a reviewer's report which is submitted through the electronic system of the Foundation.

If in the course of the reviewing the Call Commission discovers signs of a conflict of interest between the reviewer and the authors of the project or other previously appointed reviewers on the project, the Call Commission may remove the expert from the assigned application before forming a rating list of projects with information on their numerical evaluation and immediately propose a new potential reviewer to conduct the reviewing. In this case, a civil law contract with the reviewer whose candidacy was removed from the assigned application shall not be concluded.

Curators shall check the reviewer's report for completeness, reliability, and reasonableness no later than within two working days from the time the reviewer's report is submitted to the electronic system of the Foundation. The reviewer's report is considered accepted for consideration by the Call Commission, subject to the consensus of both Curators regarding its compliance with the established requirements for completeness, reliability and reasonableness.

In the event that the Curators identify deficiencies, the reviewer's report is returned for refining (with a mandatory indication of the identified deficiencies) which the reviewer is to carry out no later than within three working days. If, after finalization, the reviewer's report, in the opinion of the Curators, still does not meet the requirements of completeness, reliability and reasonableness, then the matter is referred to the Panel for consideration. Within three working days, the panel makes a decision to accept or reject the reviewer's report for consideration.

If the Panel decided that the reviewer's report cannot be accepted for consideration (does not meet the requirements of completeness, reliability and reasonableness), such a decision is referred to the Call Commission, which makes a final decision within no more than five working days.

If the Call Commission does not accept the reviewer's report for consideration, due to the fact that it does not meet the requirements of completeness, reliability and reasonableness, such a report shall be automatically canceled. In this case, a civil law contract with the reviewer who has been withdrawn from the assigned application shall not be concluded. The Call Commission shall immediately appoint a new reviewer to replace the one whose report has not been accepted. The new reviewer gives consent to the reviewing within three working days. If such consent is received, he/she is given twenty-one calendar days to carry out the project reviewing.

In communication with reviewers (exclusively through the electronic system of the Foundation), Curators and other members of the Call Commission do not have the right to express their own evaluative judgments about the project but can only indicate specific flaws in the reviewer's report (internal contradictions, missing or incomplete justifications, factual errors, etc.) and demand their elimination.

Any communication between Curators and reviewers outside the electronic system of the Foundation is prohibited

21. The Curators analyze the totality of the received reports of the reviewers on the project and report on the results at the Panel meeting. If the rate of discrepancy  $R$  calculated according to the procedure determined by the terms and conditions of the call does not exceed the critical value established by the terms and conditions of the call, the final numerical evaluation of the application is considered to be the arithmetic average of the scores in the reviewers' reports. If the rate of discrepancy  $R$  exceeds the critical value established by the terms and conditions of the call, based on the consideration of the project, taking into account the results of the scientific and scientific-technical reviewing and the justified proposals of the Curators, the Panel makes a decision of the final numerical evaluation, the procedure for determining which is established by the terms and conditions of the call.

22. After receiving all reviewers' reports and making decisions regarding their acceptance for consideration, the Call Commission no later than within ten working days:

- 1) analyzes the results of the project reviewing;
- 2) approves of the recommended amount of project funding before forming the list of successful proposals;
- 3) on the basis of proposals from the Panel, it forms a ranking list of projects with information on their numerical scoring (from the largest value to the smallest) and a list of successful proposals with an indication of the recommended amount of project funding and its distribution by year within the limits of the Foundation's grant budgets.

If the Call Commission reasonably disagrees with the Panel's proposal regarding the final numerical score of a particular project, it returns the relevant project to the Panel for immediate reconsideration.

After the Panel's reconsideration, the Call Commission makes a final decision on the numerical score of this project, taking into account the Panel's proposal.

During the formation of the rating list of projects, the report of the reviewer is not taken into account in the event that a conflict of interest not declared by the reviewer is detected after the completion of the reviewing.

Within no more than five working days after the Call Commission finalizes the formation of a rating list of projects, the Secretary of the Call Commission draws up a protocol in which he/she notes the results of the reviewing of projects and proposals regarding the rating list of projects and their numerical scoring.

Attached to the protocol is also a list of projects recommended for implementation at the expense of the Foundation's grant support, and a list of successful applicants with the indication of the recommended amount of project financing and its distribution by year within the limits of the Foundation's grant budget.

The Call Commission may propose adjustments to the estimated cost of projects (exclusively downward), including on the basis of recommendations of reviewers and conditions of the call, before forming the final list of successful proposals with an indication of the recommended amount of funding.

If, during the formation of the list of winners of the call, the Call Commission identifies identical rating scores of two or more proposals, which makes it impossible to select a successful one from among them according to the general rules established by the terms and conditions of the call, preference is given to that applicant who meets (has greater compliance with) the criteria defined by the terms and conditions of this call for such a case.

23. The results of the call are approved by the Scientific Council of the Foundation. If the Scientific Council of the Foundation believes that the determination of the final numerical score of certain projects was made in violation of the procedures specified in this document, it returns the respective projects to the Call Commission for immediate reconsideration. The period for such reconsideration may not exceed 10 working days.

24. The decision to approve the results of the call, the list of projects recommended for implementation with grant support from the Foundation, the amount of their funding, and the rating list of projects indicating the scores of each project are published by the Foundation's directorate on the Foundation's official website no later than within five working days after making such a decision. For projects that are recommended for implementation at the expense of the Foundation's grant support, the full name of the project PI is also made public.

By decision of the Scientific Council of the Foundation, access to information contained in the list of projects recommended for implementation with grant support from the Foundation, the amounts of their funding, and the ranking list of projects indicating the scores received by each project may be restricted in accordance with the legislation (including in the interests of national security).

25. Text justification of the scores of the project based on the results of the reviewing is automatically sent by the electronic system of the Foundation to the project PI in their electronic account no later than within ten working days from the date of approval of the results of the call by the Scientific Council of the Foundation.

to the Procedure for Conducting Scientific and Scientific - Technical Reviewing  
of Projects and Consideration of Applications for Grant Support Submitted to  
the National Research Foundation of Ukraine

**Regulations on the Call Commission of the National Research Foundation of Ukraine**

## **I. General provisions**

1. The Call Commission of the National Research Foundation of Ukraine (hereinafter referred to as the Call Commission) is created to carry out the competitive selection and organization of evaluation of projects to be financed by the grant support of the National Research Foundation of Ukraine (hereinafter referred to as the Foundation).
2. In its activity, the Call Commission is governed by the Constitution and Laws of Ukraine, acts of the President of Ukraine and of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, the Procedure for the competitive selection and financing of projects by the National Research Foundation of Ukraine, approved by the Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine dated December 27, 2019 No. 1170 (hereinafter referred to as the Procedure), the terms and conditions of a specific call, the Procedure for conducting scientific and scientific - technical reviewing of projects and consideration of applications for grant support submitted to the National Research Foundation of Ukraine, Regulations on compliance with the principles of research ethics and conflicts of interests prevention during competitive selections, scientific and scientific-technical reviewing of projects and consideration of applications for grant support submitted to the National Research Foundation of Ukraine (hereinafter referred to as the Ethical Principles), other normative legal acts of Ukraine, other regulatory acts of Ukraine governing the procedures for conducting competitive selection by the Foundation (including Decree of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine dated February 5, 2019 № 2675-VIII "On the Verkovna Rada Award for Early-Career Researchers", Regulations on Annual Grants of the President of Ukraine to Doctors of Science for Scientific Research and Developments, approved by Decree of the President of Ukraine dated June 17, 2009 № 446/2009, Regulations on the Procedure for Awarding Grants of the President of Ukraine to Support Scientific Research and Developments by Early-Career Researchers, approved by the Decree of the President of Ukraine dated December 24, 2002 № 1210/2002, etc.) and these Regulations.

3. The Call Commission ensures a transparent and impartial selection of reviewers who will be involved in the reviewing of the projects, carries out an objective review of the reviewers' reports, and also ensures the preparation of proposals to the Scientific Council of the Foundation regarding the rating list of projects, providing information on their numerical scoring (from the highest value to the lowest) and a list of successful applications, indicating the recommended amount of project funding and its distribution by year within the Foundation's expenditures allocated for the respective purposes.

4. The powers of the Call Commission of the call commence upon its election by the Scientific Council of the Foundation and continue until the completion of the process of concluding grant agreements with the successful applicants.

If, before the conclusion of the process of concluding grant agreements with the successful applicants, the Foundation receives a request from one or more successful applicants stating that they are unable to start implementing the project, the Scientific Council of the Foundation shall refer the matter to the Call Commission for introducing changes to the list of projects recommended for implementation at the expense of grant support from the Foundation and the list of successful applications with an indication of the recommended amount of project funding and its distribution by year within the limits of the Foundation's grant budget. In this case, the following changes may be made to the above-mentioned lists by the Call Commission: the exclusion of projects for which the respective appeal was received, and the inclusion, accordingly, of projects that follow the last successful application of the call on the general rating list of projects, taking into account the remaining amount of funding for the call after excluding projects that cannot be implemented.

*(as amended in accordance with the decision of the Scientific Council of the NRFU dated 10/26/2023, minutes No. 28).*

5. For the competitive selection of projects to be implemented jointly by Ukrainian and foreign legal entities, foreign (international) scientific societies, institutions, organizations, associations within the framework of international bilateral and/or multilateral scientific and scientific-technical cooperation on the basis of an agreement between the Foundation and a foreign foundation, society, institution, organization, association for holding a joint call and project financing, the numerical composition, selection procedure and rules of operation for the Call Commission are determined in accordance with such an agreement and this Procedure.

The Call Commission acts in accordance with this Procedure, taking into account the Ethical Principles, as well as in accordance with the joint terms and conditions for conducting a joint competitive selection of projects, as defined in an agreement between the Foundation and a foreign foundation, company, institution, organization, or association on conducting a joint call and financing projects.

## II. The order of formation, structure and composition of the Call Commission

1. Within ten working days from the date of posting on the official website of the Foundation the announcement of the call, the Scientific Council of the section of the Foundation elects at its meeting by open voting the Call Commission from among recognized researchers in the field (with their consent) consisting of at least seven persons. In case of announcing a call common to different sections of the Foundation, the composition of the Call Commission is approved by a jointly agreed proposal of the Scientific Councils of the sections of the Foundation.

Structurally, the Call Commission consists of Thematic Panels (hereinafter referred to as Panels or Call Panels). Panels consisting of at least five persons are formed by the Call Commission from among its members.

The number of Panels is determined by the terms and conditions of the call. If, after the deadline for application submission, the Call Commission finds that no applications have been received for a particular thematic area, the Head of the Call Commission has the right to refer the matter to the Scientific Council of the Foundation for consideration of reducing the number of Panels in the call. If there are reasonable grounds to believe that a particular Panel will not be able to perform its functions due to the lack of applications in a particular thematic area, the Scientific Council of the Foundation may decide to reduce the number of Panels and terminate the powers of the relevant members of the Call Commission or include them in another Panel, if such a person has the appropriate qualifications.

The announcement on the election of the Call Commission is published on the official website of the Foundation together with the announcement of the call.

The members of the Call Commission are elected from among recognized researchers in the relevant field (with their consent) taking into account the following main criteria:

- possession of a research degree;
- wide citation of research publications in the relevant field of science;
- high qualification and experience, including experience of carrying out scientific and scientific technical reviewing;
- impeccable professional reputation and academic integrity (in particular, if at least two members of the Scientific Council of the section of the Foundation have objections to a certain candidate due to reasonable doubts about his/her reputation and/or academic integrity, such a candidate is excluded from consideration).

The Scientific Council of the section of the Foundation may apply additional criteria that cannot conflict the main selection criteria listed above to the members of the Call Commission in order to select the most qualified and experienced candidates.

In order to elect a person to the Call Commission, the respective candidate is to be supported by more than half of the votes of the Scientific Council of the section of the Foundation.

The following persons cannot become Members of the Call Commission:

- members of the Foundation's governing bodies;
- authors of the projects of the corresponding call.

All members of the Call Commission confirm in writing that they are familiar with the requirements of this Procedure, the requirements of the Ethical Principles, and shall sign a non-disclosure agreement (including confidential call information).

A member of the Call Commission shall inform the Head of the Panel and/or the Head of the Call Commission in writing of any conflict of interest with the applicants and shall not participate in the voting when considering the relevant application for grant support.

2. Members of the Call Commission at its first meeting which is held no later than five working days before the deadline for submitting applications elect the Head and Deputy Head of the Call Commission from among their members. The decision is made by open vote by a majority vote of the total membership of the Call Commission. The re-election of the Head and/or Deputy Head of the Call Commission can be carried out by open vote based on the decision of the majority of the members of the Call Commission at any stage of the call. The election and re-election of the Head and Deputy Head of the Call Commission can be carried out by holding a meeting online in video conference mode.

3. Members of the Panels at the first meeting of each Panel which is held no later than five working days before the deadline for submitting applications elect the Head and Deputy Head of the Panel from among their members by open vote. Re-election of the Head and/or Deputy Head of the Panel can be carried out by open vote by decision of the majority of the members of the Panel at any stage of the call. The election and re-election of the Head and/or Deputy Head of the Panel can be carried out by conducting the meeting online in video conference mode (*as amended in accordance with the decision of the Scientific Council of the NRFU dated 10/26/2023, minutes No. 28*).

4. In case of objective necessity, the number of members of the Call Commission and, accordingly, members of the Panels may be increased by no more than a half of the initial composition.

In order to increase the number of members of the Call Commission, the Head of the Call Commission shall submit a request to the Scientific Council of the Foundation. If there are reasonable grounds for increasing the number of members of the Call Commission, the Scientific Council of the Foundation shall instruct the respective Scientific Council of the section of the Foundation to select the necessary number of members of the Call Commission in accordance with the procedure established in paragraph 1 of Section II of this Procedure. The list of members of the Call Commission, increased in this manner, shall be approved by a relevant decision of the Scientific Council of the Foundation.

Such a decision of the Scientific Council of the Foundation shall be made before the Call Commission appoints two Curators who will be responsible for supporting the application throughout the competition selection process.

5. The functions of the secretary of the Call Commission and the secretary of the Panel are performed by designated employees of the Directorate of the Foundation.

### III. Powers of the Call Commission

1. The Call Commission:

1) carries out a preliminary review of applications regarding compliance with the terms and conditions of the call, in particular with the criteria determined by the Scientific Council of the Foundation, detection of false information in the documents submitted by the applicant. Preliminary consideration of applications by the Call Commission takes place within 10 working days from the date of completion of the final check for compliance with the formal requirements by the Directorate of the Foundation.

The non-compliance of the documents submitted by the applicant with the terms and conditions of the call, in particular with the criteria for the selection of projects determined by the Scientific Council of the Foundation, the discovery of false information in the documents submitted by the applicant are the basis for withdrawing the application from consideration based on the results of its preliminary review.

Detection of false information in the documents submitted by the applicant is grounds for withdrawing the application from consideration during the entire period of competitive selection.

Based on the results of the preliminary review of applications for compliance with the terms and conditions of the call, in particular with the criteria determined by the Scientific Council of the Foundation, in the event that false information is detected in the documents submitted by the applicant, the Call Commission approves the list of applications that are withdrawn from consideration. The Directorate of the Foundation notifies the respective applicant of the decision of the Call Commission to withdraw the application from consideration on the basis of non-compliance with the terms and conditions of the call, in particular with the criteria by which projects are selected as determined by the Scientific Council of the Foundation, and the discovery of fasle information in the documents submitted by the applicants. The Directorate of the Foundation notifies the applicant in electronic form no later than three working days after the adoption of such a decision;

2) based on the results of preliminary review, approves the list of projects admitted to the scientific and scientific and technical reviewing and distributes these projects among the Panels in accordance with the field of science specified in the application;

- 3) if a project is submitted or determined by the decision of the Call Commission as interdisciplinary, the Panel whose thematic area belongs to the field of knowledge indicated in the application first is responsible for its consideration;
- 4) based on the proposals of the relevant Panel, determines from among its members two Application Curators;
- 5) forms and approves lists of potential reviewers for each project at the request of the Curators;
- 6) checks candidates for reviewers for membership in the Foundation's governing bodies, as well as their submission of applications to participate in the respective call as part of teams of project authors;
- 7) instructs Referees to communicate with potential reviewers to form the final list of three reviewers for each project (based on their consent), as well as to send projects (sending requests for review) to reviewers for scientific and scientific and technical reviewing;
- 8) suspends reviewers from the reviewing of projects in the event that an undeclared conflict of interest is detected during the reviewing and annuls the reviewer's report in the event that an undeclared conflict of interest and/or violation of the Ethical Principles is detected during or after the completion of the reviewing;
- 9) manages the work of groups of reviewers (consulting on individual issues of the review, proper preparation by the reviewer of the results of the project review in the form of a report during its preparation);
- 10) accepts or rejects the reviewer's report based on its compliance/non-compliance with the requirements for completeness, reliability and reasonableness established by the call conditions;
- 11) based on the results of the reviewing, forms a rating list of projects with information on their numerical evaluation (from the highest score to the lowest);
- 12) compiles a list of projects recommended for implementation at the expense of the Foundation's grant support, and a list of successful applications, with an indication of the recommended amount of project financing and their distribution by year within the limits of the Foundation's expenditures allocated, provided for the respective purposes;
- 13) submits the results of the call for approval by the Scientific Council of the Foundation;
- 14) performs other functions related to the conduct of calls, determined by the Procedure for Competitive Selection, the Procedure and these Regulations.

2. Panels propose Curators of applications, proposals for the list of applications to be withdrawn from consideration on the basis of non-compliance with the criteria by which projects are selected as determined by the terms and conditions of the call, proposals for rating lists of potential reviewers, proposals for accepting the conclusions of reviewers for consideration and proposals for the final numerical scores for projects.

3. Head of the Call Commission:
  - 1) chairs the meetings of the Call Commission;
  - 2) organizes the work of the Call Commission, convenes meetings of the Call Commission, submits a draft agenda;
  - 3) signs the minutes of the meetings of the Call Commission;
  - 4) carries out general management of the work of the Call Commission;
  - 5) supervises the appropriate and timely response of the Head of the Panel to the appeal of an Arbitrator;
  - 6) presents the results of the work of the Call Commission at a meeting of the Scientific Council of the Foundation;
  - 7) organizes the review of inquiries from applicants and other interested parties and ensures that the responses to them are prepared;
  - 8) refers to the Scientific Council and the Derictorate of the Foundation in cases specified by this Procedure and legislation;
  - 9) exercises other functions specified by these Regulations.
4. In the absence of the Head of the Call Commission, his functions are performed by the Deputy Head.
5. Members of the Call Commission have the right to:
  - 1) make suggestions to the agenda of the meeting of the Call Commission and the meetings of the Panels to which they belong;
  - 2) get access to the documents considered at the meeting of the Call Commission, to participate in their preparation and consideration in the time between meetings;
  - 3) in agreement with the Head of the Call Commission, to prepare for consideration at the meeting of the Call Commission certain issues necessary for the implementation of its activities, the conduct of the Call, etc.;
  - 4) express their opinions and reasoning, as well as provide additional documents and explanations on the issues under consideration;
  - 5) sign the minutes of the meeting of the Call Commission and of the relevant Panels on the results of the call selection;
  - 6) report at the meeting of the Call Commission on the agenda, make suggestions, prepare draft decisions of the Call Commission;
  - 7) vote on any decision of the Call Commission, except for cases where the Call Commission has decided to exempt its member from voting due to a conflict of interest or other circumstances that affect his/her impartiality;

- 8) express a personal opinion regarding the decisions of the Call Commission;
- 9) recuse himself/herself or refuse to participate in the vote due to a conflict of interest or other circumstances that affect his/her impartiality;
- 10) exercise other functions specified by the Procedure for competitive selection and this Procedure.

6. Secretary of the Call Commission:

- 1) prepares, in agreement with the Head of the Call Commission, drafts of the agenda for meetings of the Call Commission;
- 2) makes arrangements for meetings of the Call Commission, informs the members of the Call Commission about the time, place, mode (online or offline) of the meeting of the Call Commission, carries out other assignments of the Head of the Call Commission related to the organization of the meetings of the Call Commission;
- 3) prepares draft minutes of the Call Commission meetings.

7. Secretary of the Panel:

- 1) prepares, in agreement with the Head of the Panel, drafts of the agenda of the Panel meetings;
- 2) makes arrangements for Panel meetings, informs Panel members about the time, place, mode (online or offline) of the meeting, performs other tasks of the Head of the Panel related to the organization of Panel meetings;
- 3) prepares draft minutes of Panel meetings.

## IV. Support for the Call Commission's activities

Organizational and technical support for the activities of the Call Commission is provided by the Directorate of the Foundation.

## V. Organizational and operating procedures (holding of meetings) of the Call Commission

1. In order to ensure the transparency of the decision-making process and to prevent conflict of interest during the reviewing and competitive selection of projects, the members of the Call Commission, after reviewing the list of projects and the list of potential reviewers, must sign a statement claiming they have no conflict of interest.

Each member of the Call Commission who participates in its meeting and has information about any conflict of interest must immediately report it.

In the event of a conflict of interest is detected after a decision of the Call Commission is made, it must meet again to consider the detected conflict. If there is a conflict of interest, members of the Call Commission determine whether the decision of a member of the Call Commission in relation to whom such a conflict was detected could have affected the voting results of each of them. If not, the original decision remains in effect. If at least one of the members of the Call Commission thinks that the result of his/her vote could have been influenced by such a conflict, a second vote is held.

The vote of the member of the Call Commission in relation to whom an undeclared conflict of interest was detected is not taken into account during the second vote. The Scientific Council of the Foundation considers the issue of removing such a member of the Call Commission from further participation in the competitive selection procedure.

2. Documents related to the call should be considered documents containing confidential call information.

Referents, members of the Call Commission, members of the Scientific Council of the Foundation (including Arbitrators and Observers) must not disclose confidential call information known to them, as well as information about the personal composition of the Commission call and Panels (except when the Scientific Council of the Foundation decided to make such information publicly available) to persons who are not members of the Call Commission or members of the Scientific Council of the Foundation.

3. The organizational form of the work of the Call Commission/Panel is meetings convened by the Head of the Call Commission/Panel or at the initiative of at least three members of the Call Commission/Panel. Meetings of the Call Commission/Panel can be held online using audio and video communication; in this case, an audio/video recording of the meeting is made. The recording is kept until the results of the call are made public by the Scientific Council of the Foundation and is also considered confidential call information. The meeting of the Call Commission/Panel is valid if at least two-thirds of its members took part in it.

4. In the absence of provisions in this Procedure that determine the procedure for holding a meeting or consideration of any of the procedural issues, the Call Commission must make a decision that ensures objectivity, impartiality and timeliness of the competitive selection and other principles of the competitive selection in accordance with the Procedure. Such a decision must be documented in writing with an indication of the procedure used by the Call Commission.

5. Not later than two working days before the start of the meeting, the secretary of the Call Commission/Panel sends an invitation by e-mail to all members of the Call Commission/Panel.

In the event that no response is received to the invitation, the members of the Call Commission from whom no response was received are notified by phone about the time and place of the meeting of the Call Commission or about the time of the meeting in online mode or audio/video conference.

6. At each meeting of the Call Commission/Panel, minutes are kept indicating the voting results. Members of the Call Commission/Panel may have a special opinion regarding the subject of the vote and have the right to express such opinion by recording it in the minutes. The minutes are signed by the Head and secretary of the Call Commission/Panel. In the case of participation of all or part of the members of the Call Commission/Panel in the meeting in the mode of audio/video conferencing or online voting, the secretary of the Call Commission/Panel certifies the correctness of the data reflected in the minutes regarding the physically absent members of the Call Commission/Panel with his/her signature in the minutes. A copy of the minutes of each meeting is sent by the secretary to all members of the Call Commission/Panel by e-mail no later than three working days after the end of the meeting. The minutes are considered to be approved by the members of the Call Commission/Panel if they have not commented on them in writing within seven working days from the day of the end of the meeting sent by e-mail to the Head and secretary of the Call Commission/Panel.

Summarizing the results of the call is carried out at the meeting of the Call Commission. The minutes of the meeting of the Call Commission as of the summary of the results of the call are signed by all members of the Call Commission present at the meeting. In the case of force majeure circumstances, summarizing the results of the call can be carried out by conducting a meeting of the Call Commission in online mode or audio/video conference; in this case, the minutes are signed by the Head and the secretary of the Call Commission, and each member of the Call Commission sends a paper copy of the minutes signed by him/her to the secretary by mail within two days.

All minutes of the Call Commission/Panel meetings, including audio/video recordings of the meetings, are kept by the Directorate of the Foundation in accordance with current legislation; audio/video recordings of the meetings are kept until the mandate of the Call Commission has expired.

7. About all detected cases of possible violation by reviewers or members of the Call Commission of the requirements of the Ethical Principles, the Head of the Call Commission is obliged to notify the Head of the Foundation within no more than three working days from the moment the Call Commission establishes the fact of the violation. The notification is aimed at making decisions by the Scientific Council of the section of the Foundation to prevent these persons from further participation in scientific and scientific-technical reviewing procedures and/ or competitive selection of projects submitted to the National Research Foundation of Ukraine; such decisions are referred for consideration to the Scientific Council of the Foundation.

8. The Call Commission/Panel makes decisions by simple majority of its members through open voting, including cases when the Call Commission/Panel decides to exempt its member from the voting due to a conflict of interest or other circumstances affecting his/her impartiality

In the event that all or part of the members of the Call Commission/Panel participate in the meeting in the mode of audio/video conferencing or online voting, the secretary of the Call Commission/Panel is personally responsible for ensuring the documentary recording of the authenticity of the voting results, by means of video or audio recording, etc.

The secretary of the Call Commission/Panel counts the votes. If according to the results of voting for different proposals, an equal number of votes is received, the Head of the Call Commission/Panel puts the question to a second vote after additional discussion. In case of repeated equal distribution of votes, the vote of the Head of the Call Commission/Panel is decisive.

Voting by proxy or transfer of vote to another member of the Call Commission/Panel is not permitted.

9. According to the results of the consideration of the projects, within five working days after the Call Commission makes the decision, minutes are drawn up with an indication of the results of the reviewing expressed in numerical scores and proposals regarding the rating list of the projects and their numerical score.

Attached to the protocol is a list of projects recommended for implementation at the expense of the Foundation's grant support, as well as a list of successful projects with an indication of the recommended amount of project financing and its distribution by year within the limits of the Foundation's budget, provided for the respective purposes.

The materials mentioned above are submitted to the Scientific Council of the Foundation for approval of the results of the call.

10. The remuneration of the members of the Call Commission is carried out taking into account the Procedure for the use of funds by the National Research Foundation of Ukraine and the Norms of remuneration of reviewers who are involved in conducting state scientific and scientific and technical reviewing which is carried out at the expense of the state budget.

Appendix 2  
to the Procedure for conducting scientific and scientific-technical reviewing  
of projects and consideration of applications for grant support submitted to the  
National Research Foundation of Ukraine

**Methodological recommendations for the development of criteria and a project assessment system for scientific and scientific-technical  
reviewing within the framework of competitive selection by the National Research Foundation of Ukraine**

These Methodological recommendations for the development of criteria and a project assessment system for scientific and scientific-technical reviewing within the framework of competitive selection by the National Research Foundation of Ukraine, as defined by law (hereinafter - projects), have been developed by the National Research Foundation of Ukraine (hereinafter - Foundation) for the purpose of providing methodological support for the reviewing process and are to be applied when the Scientific Council of the Foundation develops the terms and conditions of calls for proposals. These Methodological recommendations shall apply to the joint competitive selection of projects, unless the agreement between the Foundation and a foreign foundation, society, institution, organization, association on the conduct of a joint competition and the financing of projects establishes other competitive selection rules.

When carrying out competitive selection, the Foundation as a responsible provider of funding pursues the goal of providing grant support to the highest quality projects, which are considered to be those that combine high quality with significant scientific, social, technological or economic impact. Quality means encouraging authenticity, professionalism, openness, reproducibility, and accountability, while impact encompasses short-, medium-, and long-term results for science and society.

The project assessment system used for the Foundation's calls for proposals is based on determining project quality as the key selection criterion. It involves the use of a clear and transparent methodology that combines expert (qualitative) assessment with the responsible use of quantitative indicators, ensuring objectivity, validity and comparability of results.

**The quality of a project** is defined as a set of characteristics that reflect the scientific validity, transparency, openness and ethical implementation of a research idea that is relevant, unique, socially and economically significant. Quality involves the use of scientifically sound, open and reproducible methods; ensuring the transparency of research processes; meeting social needs, strategic scientific priorities and science and innovation development policies; proper resource management and systematic use of previous results. Quality assessment covers analysis of the content and ambition of the research idea, methodological clarity, level of scientific integrity, and the ability of the implementers to ensure effective project implementation. The above list of characteristics, which are fundamental to the assessment system for projects submitted to each specific call for proposals, is not exhaustive or mandatory. It is not a single set of indicators, but a multidimensional concept that needs to be adapted to the disciplinary and thematic focus of the call for proposals and the area of grant support.

At the same time, the Foundation recognises that high quality should be assessed based on the project idea (originality, scientific ambition, novelty), the applicant's potential (achievements, creativity, ability to perform the work) and its scientific, social, technological and/or economic impact.

Since 2022, the Foundation has been a signatory to the Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment (hereinafter - Agreement) which serves as the basis for reform and its implementation by members of the Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment (CoARA, Coalition). The Agreement defines a shared vision for reforming the assessment of scientific activity, researchers and research organisations with the overall goal of improving the quality and impact of research. It provides for the use of assessment approaches that recognise the diversity of research outcomes, methods, activities and career paths. This involves a focus on qualitative judgement, where **peer reviewing** plays a key role, complemented by the responsible use of quantitative indicators, promoting equality of opportunity and rewarding quality rather than quantity. The guiding principles of the Agreement form the basis for reforming the research assessment system. Their aim is to create more equitable, transparent and inclusive assessment methods that take into account the diversity of scientific achievements and aim to reduce dependence on quantitative indicators and increase the importance of qualitative aspects. They are formulated in such a way as to ensure effective transformation of assessment, in particular to support open science and inclusive career paths.

Since the Foundation joined the Coalition and signed the Agreement, the assessment system for projects submitted to the Foundation's competitive selections takes into account and is guided by the fundamental provisions of the Agreement. Therefore, the criteria and project assessment system which are defined by the terms and conditions of respective calls for proposals, are formed on the basis of a more fair, transparent, and accountable system for assessing scientific research which aims to provide grant support to projects of the highest quality. Even if the provisions of the Agreement undergo changes or clarifications in the future, the Foundation will continue to develop its own criteria and project assessment system relying on the basic principles of ethics, research integrity, academic freedom, transparency, and independence. The evolution of the Agreement is an independent process at the level of the international community, whereas the Foundation applies its provisions as a conceptual foundation for forming its own assessment policies, their further improvement, support, and practical implementation.

To ensure a comprehensive and balanced approach to assessing the quality and impact of projects, the Foundation identifies the following **areas** and **elements of assessment** that reflect various aspects of research performance and professional development of implementers:

1. **Scientific impact** – creation of new high-quality knowledge; dissemination of research results; use of results for academic purposes; implementation of Open Science practices.
2. **Societal impact** – contribution to social transformation; development of education; raising public awareness of research results; participation in the formation of public policies.

3. **Technological and Economic impact** – creation of new products and services or improvement of the existing ones; transfer of knowledge and results; IP management; dissemination of information among industry, the innovation sector and end users.
4. **Talent and leadership** – staffing development; staff retention and acquisition; acquisition of awards and grantscontribution to peer-reviewing, professional associations and unions.
5. **Partnership** – development of national and international partnerships; interdisciplinary and intersectoral cooperation; attraction of alternative sources of funding.

Altogether, these areas and elements form the basis for a **comprehensive project assessment** that combines the assessment of their quality and impact and provides a holistic view of the project's potential.

### **Criteria and project assessment system**

Based on the identified areas and elements, the Foundation develops a system of assessment criteria. The application of these criteria allows the general principles of assessment to be converted into the practical plane of competitive selection, ensuring uniformity of approaches and transparency of peer review decisions.

1. Assessment of projects is carried out by independent reviewers according to the system and criteria set in terms and conditions of calls for proposals and approved by the Scientific Council of the Foundation.
2. Each project is assessed according to the criteria specified in the terms and conditions of a call for proposals, with corresponding weighting coefficients, which may among others include the following ones:
  - the quality of the planned research and its thematic relevance to the call for proposals;
  - the significance of the project for the further development of science/engineering/technology/society (depending on the focus of the project);
  - the quality and realism of the proposed project implementation plan;
  - research track record of project implementers.
3. Each criterion contains several sub-criteria for assessment, each with its own weighting coefficient.

4. Each criterion and sub-criterion is assessed by an expert on a 5-point scale, with the obligatory provision of appropriate justification.
5. The number of points for a criterion is calculated as the weighted arithmetic mean of the points for the assessment sub-criteria for that criterion.
6. The total number of points for a project is calculated as the weighted arithmetic mean of the points for the criteria multiplied by 20.
7. When assessing a project, a 5-point scale is used for each criterion with the following point values:

<b>0</b>	The project does not meet the criterion or cannot be assessed due to the absence or incompleteness of the information provided for by this criterion.
<b>1 – Unsatisfactory</b>	Information as of assessed criterion is inadequately presented or has critical deficiencies.
<b>2 – Satisfactory</b>	In general, the project meets the criterion, but at the same time there are significant shortcomings.
<b>3 – Good</b>	The project meets the criterion, but there are some shortcomings.
<b>4 – Very good</b>	The project meets the criterion very well, yet improvement is possible.
<b>5 – Excellent</b>	The indicator fully meets the criterion.

The above scale is a general framework for numerical assessment. To ensure the objectivity of the assessment, criteria and sub-criteria are elaborated and defined for each call for proposals, according to which points (from 0 to 5) are awarded, with a mandatory textual description of each assessment level.

The following system is used to assess the project:

1. Assessment of projects is carried out by independent reviewers according to the system and criteria set in terms and conditions of calls for proposals and approved by the Scientific Council of the Foundation..

2. . Each project is assessed according to the criteria specified in the terms and conditions of a call for proposals with corresponding weighting coefficients which may include among others the following ones:

- the quality of the planned research and its thematic relevance to the call for proposals;
- the significance of the project for the further development of science/engineering/technology/society (depending on the focus of the project);
- the quality and realism of the proposed project implementation plan;
- research track record of project implementers..

3. Each criterion contains several sub-criteria for assessment, each with its own weighting coefficient.

4. Each criterion and sub-criterion is assessed by an expert on a 5-point scale, with the obligatory provision of appropriate justification.

5. The number of points for a criterion is calculated as the weighted arithmetic mean of the points for the assessment sub-criteria for that criterion..

6. The total number of points for a project is calculated as the weighted arithmetic mean of the points for the criteria multiplied by 20.

7. When assessing a project, a 5-point scale is used for each criterion with the following point values:

<b>0</b>	The project does not meet the criterion or cannot be assessed due to the absence or incompleteness of the information provided for by this criterion.
<b>1 – Unsatisfactory</b>	Information as of assessed criterion is inadequately presented or has critical deficiencies.
<b>2 – Satisfactory</b>	In general, the project meets the criterion, but at the same time there are significant shortcomings.
<b>3 – Good</b>	The project meets the criterion, but there are some shortcomings.
<b>4 – Very good</b>	The project meets the criterion very well, yet improvement is possible.
<b>5 – Excellent</b>	The indicator fully meets the criterion.

At least four criteria are used to assess collective projects and at least three criteria for individual projects, each of which contains at least three sub-criteria and weighting coefficients for the criteria and sub-criteria (the weighting coefficient is given to one decimal place, the sum of the weighting coefficients for all criteria equals 1.0, the sum of the weighting coefficients of the sub-criteria for each criterion equals to 1.0), presented in the following form:

<b>Assessment criteria</b>	<b>Rating scale</b>	<b>Weighting coefficient</b> <b>(The sum of the weighting coefficients for all criteria equals 1.0)</b>
<p><b>1. Criterion 1</b></p> <p>This field shall contain the description of the assessment criterion in line with the logic, structure and objectives of the call for proposals. The description should be clear, unambiguous and suitable for objective assessment of applications.</p> <p>A brief description of the content of the criterion is provided: what exactly should be assessed within its scope to ensure a common understanding of the criterion by reviewers and call participants.</p>	<p><b>From 0 to 5</b></p> <p>The number of points per aspect is calculated as an arithmetic mean weighted points according to the criteria</p>	<p><b>The weighting coefficient of the criterion is determined by the terms and conditions of the call for proposals.</b></p>
<p><b>1.1. Sub-criterion 1.1:</b></p> <p>This field should contain the wording of the sub-criterion in the form of a question or a clear requirement that details a specific aspect of the main criterion. The sub-criterion should narrow the focus of the assessment, making it more specific.</p>	<p>0-5</p>	<p>The weighting coefficient of the sub-criterion is determined by the terms and conditions of the call for proposals</p>

<p>The explanation of the sub-criterion describes what information the participant in the call for proposals should provide, or how the reviewer should interpret this point to ensure a consistent assessment logic.</p>		
<p><i>Comments: This field contains clear criteria and explanations for scoring the sub-criterion (from 0 to 5), with a qualitative description of each score.</i></p> <p><i>If necessary, additional recommendations and comments may be provided to facilitate objective and consistent assessment.</i></p>		
<p><b>1.2.</b> Sub-criterion 1.2:</p> <p>...</p>	0-5	The weighting coefficient of the sub-criterion is determined by the terms and conditions of the call for proposals
<p><i>Comments:...</i></p>		
<p><b>1.3.</b> Sub-criterion 1.3:</p> <p>...</p>	0-5	The weighting coefficient of the sub-criterion is determined by the terms and conditions of the call for proposals

<i>Comments:</i> ...		
...		
	<b>Weighted average score</b>	The sum of the weight coefficients of all sub-criteria of this criterion is equal to 1.0.
<b>2. Criterion 2</b> ...	<b>From 0 to 5</b> The number of points per aspect is calculated as an arithmetic mean weighted points according to the criteria	<b>The weighting coefficient of the criterion is determined by the terms and conditions of the call for proposals</b>
<b>2.1. Sub-criterion 2.1:</b> ...	0-5	The weighting coefficient of the sub-criterion is determined by the terms and conditions of the call for proposals
<i>Comments:</i> ...		

<p><b>2.2.</b> Sub-criterion 2.2:</p> <p>...</p>	0-5	The weighting coefficient of the sub-criterion is determined by the terms and conditions of the call for proposals
<p><i>Comments:</i></p> <p>...</p>		
<p><b>2.3.</b> Sub-criterion 2.3:</p> <p>...</p>	0-5	The weighting coefficient of the sub-criterion is determined by the terms and conditions of the call for proposals
<p><i>Comments:</i></p> <p>...</p>		
<p>...</p>		
	<p><b>Weighted average score</b></p>	The sum of the weight coefficients of all sub-criteria of this equals to 1.0.

<b>3. Criterion 3</b> ...	<b>From 0 to 5</b> The number of points per aspect is calculated as an arithmetic mean weighted points according to the criteria	<b>The weighting coefficient of the criterion is determined by the terms and conditions of the call for proposals</b>
<b>3.1. Sub-criterion 3.1:</b> ....	0-5	The weighting coefficient of the sub-criterion is determined by the terms and conditions of the call for proposals
<i>Comments:</i> ...		
<b>3.2. Sub-criterion 3.2:</b> ...	0-5	The weighting coefficient of the sub-criterion is determined by the terms and conditions of the call for proposals
<i>Comments:</i> ...		

<p><b>3.3. Sub-criterion 3.3:</b></p> <p>...</p>	<p>0-5</p>	<p>The weighting coefficient of the sub-criterion is determined by the terms and conditions of the call for proposals</p>
<p><i>Comments:</i></p> <p>...</p>		
<p>...</p>		
	<p><b>Weighted average score</b></p>	<p>The sum of the weight coefficients of all sub-criteria of this criterion equals to 1.0.</p>
<p><b>4. Criterion 4</b></p> <p>...</p>	<p><b>From 0 to 5</b></p> <p>The number of points per aspect is calculated as an arithmetic mean weighted points according to the criteria</p>	<p><b>The weighting coefficient of the criterion is determined by the terms and conditions of the call for proposals</b></p>

<b>4.1.</b> Sub-criterion 4.1: ...	0-5	The weighting coefficient of the sub-criterion is determined by the terms of the call for proposals
<i>Comments:</i> ...		
<b>4.2.</b> Sub-criterion 4.2: ...	0-5	The weighting coefficient of the sub-criterion is determined by the terms and conditions of the call for proposals
<i>Comments:</i> ...		
<b>4.3.</b> Sub-criterion 4.3: ...	0-5	The weighting coefficient of the sub-criterion is determined by the terms and conditions of the call for proposals
<i>Comments:</i> ...		

...		
	<b>Weighted average score</b>	The sum of the weight coefficients of all sub-criteria of this criterion equals to 1.0.
...		
	<b>Overall project score: weighted arithmetic mean of scores for each aspect, multiplied by 20</b>	