

## Score grid for SBO projects with a societal finality – version 2022

### Scientific dimension (S)<sup>†</sup>

Scientific dimension S	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<p>S1 Innovative value of the basic research</p> <p>(criterion weight: x2)</p>	<p><b>Serious shortcomings in at least two, or critical shortcomings in at least one</b> of the three characteristics. Potential critical shortcomings may include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The proposal contains structural flaws or offers virtually <b>no added value</b> to the international <b>state-of-the-art</b>.</li> <li><b>or</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The project involves almost <b>no real scientific challenges</b> that may be expected from projects of this nature/size.</li> <li><b>or</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Reaching any of the scientific goals is evaluated as conceptually <b>unrealistic</b> within the boundaries of a single project.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Minor shortcomings in at least two, or serious shortcomings in at least one</b> of the three characteristics. Potential serious shortcomings may include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The <b>added value to the international state-of-the-art</b> and to ongoing research is <b>limited</b>.</li> <li><b>or</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The proposal shows a <b>limited level of scientific challenges</b> and its high-risk/high-gain nature is on the low side.</li> <li><b>or</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The <b>majority</b> of the scientific goals are <b>conceptually unrealistic</b> within the boundaries of a single project or are <b>not formulated clearly enough</b> to allow full assessment.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Minor shortcomings in at least two, or serious shortcomings in at least one</b> of the three characteristics. Potential serious shortcomings may include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The <b>added value to the international state-of-the-art</b> and to ongoing research is less pronounced or elaborated.</li> <li><b>or</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Part of the project is characterised by a lower level of <b>scientific challenges</b> or less inventive ideas, concepts and strategies.</li> <li><b>or</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The <b>majority</b> of the scientific goals are <b>clear and conceptually realistic</b> within the boundaries of a single project. <b>Some of the goals are less realistic, or lack clarity</b>.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Minor shortcomings in one</b> of the three characteristics. Potential minor shortcomings may include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The <b>added value to the international state-of-the-art</b> and to ongoing research is less pronounced or elaborated.</li> <li><b>or</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Part of the project is characterised by a lower level of <b>scientific challenges</b> or less inventive ideas, concepts and strategies.</li> <li><b>or</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The <b>majority</b> of the scientific goals are <b>clear and conceptually realistic</b> within the boundaries of a single project. <b>Some of the goals are less realistic, or lack clarity</b>.</li> </ul>	<p>The proposal <b>fully fits</b> the three characteristics of innovative, high-risk/high-gain basic research, i.e.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The scientific goals build upon and offer substantial <b>added value to the international state-of-the-art</b> and to ongoing research.</li> <li><b>and</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The proposal qualifies as basic research with a clear <b>high-risk/high-gain</b> profile.</li> <li><b>and</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The scientific goals are <b>clear</b> and, given the currently available background knowledge and substantiation of the project's rationale, sufficient evidence is available to believe that the <b>scientific goals are conceptually realistic</b> within the boundaries of a single project, <b>irrespective</b> of the approach, planning and track record of the applicants.</li> </ul>	<p>The proposal <b>fully fits</b> the three characteristics of innovative, high-risk/high-gain strategic basic research <b>and, in addition</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The proposal is highly innovative and unique. It distinguishes itself in an outstanding manner from ongoing strategic research efforts at the international level ("<b>pioneering project</b>").</li> <li><b>and</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The proposal, if scientifically successful, has the potential to highly <b>accelerate international research activities</b>.</li> </ul>				
<p>S2 Quality of the research approach</p> <p>(criterion weight: x2)</p>	<p><b>Serious shortcomings in at least two, or critical shortcomings in at least one</b> of the three characteristics. Potential critical shortcomings may include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The description of the research approach is <b>entirely unclear</b>, up to the point where assessment becomes impossible.</li> <li><b>or</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The <b>approach</b> is, in its entirety, <b>insufficiently substantiated</b>.</li> <li><b>or</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The <b>realisation of the scientific goals is not feasible</b> with the proposed research approach.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Minor shortcomings in at least two, or serious shortcomings in at least one</b> of the three characteristics. Potential serious shortcomings may include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Major parts</b> of the description of the research approach are <b>unclear or poorly structured</b>.</li> <li><b>or</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Major parts</b> of the research approach are <b>lacking thorough substantiation</b>.</li> <li><b>or</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Structural adjustments</b> are needed in order to reach the scientific goals.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Minor shortcomings in one</b> of the three characteristics. Potential minor shortcomings may include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Some <b>details</b> in the description and/or the structure of the research approach are <b>not entirely clear</b>.</li> <li><b>or</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Some <b>minor parts</b> of the research approach could be <b>better substantiated</b>.</li> <li><b>or</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The approach contains some <b>gaps or superfluous activities</b> in attainment of the scientific goals.</li> </ul>	<p>The proposal <b>fully fits</b> the three characteristics of a good research approach, i.e.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The research approach is <b>clearly described</b> for all scientific goals.</li> <li><b>and</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> A <b>thorough substantiation</b> of the research approach is provided (i.e. how it will lead to reaching the scientific goals in the best possible way)</li> <li><b>and</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The research approach shows <b>no important gaps or shortcomings</b> (i.e., the best possible research approach was chosen).</li> </ul>	<p>The proposal <b>fully fits</b> the three characteristics of a good research approach <b>and, in addition</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The approach includes a full <b>identification</b> of research <b>risks</b> and a well-designed prioritisation of "<b>fall back</b>" research <b>options</b>.</li> </ul>					

Scientific dimension S	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
S3 Project planning & resources	<p><b>Serious shortcomings in at least two, or critical shortcomings in at least one</b> of the three characteristics. Potential critical shortcomings may include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> There is a substantial <b>mismatch in either direction</b> between the <b>research workload</b> and the <b>requested level of person power and resources</b>, amounting to <b>more than 33 %</b> of the requested budget.</li> <li><b>or</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The project, in its entirety, is <b>not feasible</b> within the requested <b>time frame</b> and/or with the requested <b>resources</b> / the required <b>staffing</b>.</li> <li><b>or</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The project <b>planning</b> is <b>unrealistic</b>, not substantiated or virtually absent.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Minor shortcomings in at least two, or serious shortcomings in at least one</b> of the three characteristics. Potential serious shortcomings may include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Allocation</b> of the research tasks within research groups or between consortium partners is seriously <b>flawed</b>.</li> <li><b>or</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Consortium partners either work in <b>relative separation</b> from each other, or the research tasks have an <b>excessive overlap</b>.</li> <li><b>or</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> There is a <b>considerable mismatch in either direction</b> between the <b>research workload</b> and the <b>requested level of person power and resources</b>, amounting to <b>more than 20 %</b> and <b>less than 33 %</b> of the requested budget.</li> <li><b>or</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The project <b>planning</b> is <b>flawed</b> and needs structural adjustments.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Minor shortcomings in one</b> of the three characteristics. Potential minor shortcomings may include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> There is some <b>mismatch</b>, overlap or vagueness in the <b>allocation of research tasks</b> within the individual research groups and/or between the consortium partners.</li> <li><b>or</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> There is a slight <b>mismatch in either direction</b> between the <b>research workload</b> and the <b>requested level of person power and resources</b>, amounting to <b>less than 20 %</b> of the requested budget.</li> <li><b>or</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The project <b>planning</b> contains <b>minor inconsistencies</b> or is in need of small adjustments or specification.</li> </ul>	<p>The proposal <b>fully fits</b> the three characteristics of a good project planning, i.e.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The <b>allocation of research tasks</b> within the individual research groups and/or among the consortium partners are <b>clear and appropriate</b>, with sufficient mutual interaction.</li> <li><b>and</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> All <b>resources</b> are properly <b>justified</b>. The <b>workload</b> and the requested level of <b>staffing and resources</b> (including consumables, heavy research equipment and/or major subcontracting, if applicable) are <b>appropriate</b> and <b>fully in line with the objectives</b> of the project's tasks.</li> <li><b>and</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The project <b>planning</b> is <b>suitable</b>, with clear and realistic objectives, performance measures, milestones and deliverables.</li> </ul>	<p>The proposal <b>fully fits</b> the characteristics of a good project planning <b>and, in addition</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The research plan is focused on reaching a high level of <b>integration and synergy</b> amongst consortium partners during execution.</li> <li><b>and</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Adequate progress <b>monitoring mechanisms</b> are foreseen, allowing timely (re)scheduling. Also, alignment of interdependent activities, time monitoring, etc. are included.</li> </ul>					

## Utilisation dimension (U)

Utilisation dimension U	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<p>U1 Relevance/Strategic importance and applicability amongst which in Flanders</p> <p>(criterion weight: x2)</p>	<p><b>Serious shortcomings in at least two, or critical shortcomings in at least one</b> of the three characteristics. Potential critical shortcomings include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The proposed research approach is focused only on <b>knowledge creation</b>.</li> <li><b>or</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The <b>scientific goals and/or the research approach</b> are <b>unlikely</b> to result in <b>utilisation</b> in the foreseeable future.</li> <li><b>or</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The application potential is lacking, unclear, insufficiently elaborated, of very <b>little societal relevance</b>.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Minor shortcomings in at least two, or serious shortcomings in at least one</b> of the three characteristics. Potential serious shortcomings include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> There is a <b>mismatch</b> between the <b>scientific part</b> of the project or its quality and the <b>utilisation objectives</b>.</li> <li><b>or</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The application potential is real, but with <b>limited societal value</b>.</li> <li><b>or</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The application potential is real, but utilisation will <b>unlikely</b> take place in <b>Flanders</b>.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Minor shortcomings in one</b> of the three characteristics. Potential minor shortcomings include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> A number of <b>research objectives</b> may <b>not really</b> be required for the intended application, but their number is limited.</li> <li><b>or</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> While a sizable utilisation potential is to be expected, the <b>description</b> is rather <b>generic</b> with limited substantiation.</li> <li><b>or</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> There is utilisation potential in Flanders, but <b>major or key parts</b> of the expected <b>utilisation</b> are located <b>outside of Flanders</b>.</li> </ul>	<p>The proposal <b>fully fits</b> the three characteristics of large-scale societal utilisation potential, i.e.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The <b>research approach</b> is <b>fully aligned with</b> the intended <b>utilisation</b> and contains no superfluous sub-aspects.</li> <li><b>and</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The project has <b>high utilisation potential</b>. A major stride forwards and well-substantiated <b>added value</b> is to be expected with the target societal stakeholders.</li> <li><b>and</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> A predominant part of the expected <b>utilisation value chain</b> is located in <b>Flanders</b>.</li> </ul>	<p>The proposal <b>fully fits</b> the three characteristics of large-scale utilisation potential <b>and, in addition</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The <b>utilisation</b> is the <b>driving force</b> behind the research approach.</li> <li><b>and</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The project offers a <b>breakthrough value of a disruptive nature</b> for a large group of societal stakeholders or across societal stakeholders with different activities.</li> </ul>					
<p>U2 Utilisation approach and knowledge transfer</p> <p>(criterion weight: x2)</p>	<p><b>Serious shortcomings in at least two, or critical shortcomings in at least one</b> of the three characteristics. Potential critical shortcomings include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> There is a clear <b>mismatch</b> between the profiles of the <b>users (*)</b> and the envisaged project <b>results</b>.</li> <li><b>or</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The project seems purely <b>supply driven</b> with little to no demand from the field.</li> <li><b>or</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>No efforts</b> are demonstrated to <b>interact</b> with potential users (*).</li> <li><b>or</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The <b>utilisation plan</b> is <b>unrealistic</b>, not substantiated or absent.</li> <li><b>or</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Results can be <b>immediately applied</b>.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Minor shortcomings in at least two, or serious shortcomings in at least one</b> of the three characteristics. Potential serious shortcomings include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Preliminary interactions</b> with relevant <b>users (*)</b> have remained <b>limited</b>, with virtually <b>no impact</b> from these users on the project design.</li> <li><b>or</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Structural adjustments</b> are needed to the <b>utilisation plan</b> and/or to the composition of or interactions with the <b>users (*)</b> in order to reach the utilisation goals.</li> <li><b>or</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> There are <b>gaps or weaknesses</b> in the description of the <b>follow-up path</b>.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Minor shortcomings in one</b> of the three characteristics. Potential minor shortcomings include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Pre-project interactions</b> with <b>users (*)</b> and their <b>impact</b> on the project design are only demonstrated to a <b>limited</b> extent.</li> <li><b>or</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> A <b>limited number of aspects in the utilisation plan</b> are insufficiently substantiated, or the <b>composition of the users (*)</b> could be improved (stakeholders are either missing or redundant).</li> <li><b>or</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> There is good potential for follow-up R&amp;D&amp;I, but either the <b>user (*)</b> <b>commitment</b> or the concreteness of the <b>follow-up trajectory</b> is <b>less clear</b>.</li> </ul>	<p>The proposal <b>fully fits</b> the three characteristics of a good approach to knowledge transfer, i.e.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The project is <b>relevant to all users (*)</b> and vice versa. <b>No important users are missing</b>. The <b>impact of early two-way interactions</b> with these users on the project design is fully substantiated.</li> <li><b>and</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The <b>utilisation plan</b> is thorough, including evidence for intensive <b>involvement of the users (*)</b> during the project and plans to assess and validate the effectiveness of the project's outcomes.</li> <li><b>and</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> In the letters of intent, there is clear self-reported commitment of the users (*) to engage in <b>concrete follow-up R&amp;D&amp;I</b>.</li> </ul>	<p>The proposal <b>fully fits</b> the three characteristics of a good approach to knowledge transfer <b>and, in addition</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The project foresees a <b>meaningful cooperation with relevant users (*) in application oriented activities from the third project year onwards</b>, in order to bridge the gap between the SBO results and their practical applications. These activities are <b>led by the users</b> and have <b>no part in the project budget</b>.</li> <li><b>and</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The <b>need</b> for the proposed solution within the application field is apparent from the letters of intent.</li> <li><b>and</b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> All foreseeable <b>bottlenecks</b> and obstacles for utilisation have been discussed, as well as clear <b>mitigation strategies</b> (e.g., fall back scenarios).</li> </ul>					

Utilisation dimension U	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
U3 Added value of the project in terms of Sustainable Development Goals	<input type="checkbox"/> Unacceptable <b>adverse effects</b> for achieving one or more of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).		<input type="checkbox"/> Possible <b>negative points or points of concern</b> with regard to one of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).  <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Incompatibility with</b> current or announced <b>legislation</b> .		<input type="checkbox"/> Significant <b>(potential) contributions</b> to reaching one or more of the eligible Sustainable Development Goal Indicators are present, but remain almost <b>unrecognised</b> in the proposal.		<input type="checkbox"/> Sustainable Development Goals are <b>not applicable</b> for this proposal and are awarded a <b>baseline score of “7”</b> .  <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Positive</b> and thoroughly substantiated <b>contribution</b> to any of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).		<input type="checkbox"/> The <b>project and the anticipated follow-up R&amp;D&amp;I</b> activities in the post-project phase show a high level of ambition to <b>improve the integration of eligible Sustainable Development Goal indicators</b> into government's policy, with socio-economic organisations <b>and/or</b> to <b>achieve a sustainability oriented system innovation or transition</b> in society. This is thoroughly elaborated and <b>substantiated</b> in the project application.	

\* Members of the advisory board, i.e. mainly societal stakeholders, including social profit organisations, professional groups as well as government departments/entities, etc.who will take the initiative after the project has ended and/or (optionally) during the end phase of the project (see below) to realise the intended practical applications in case the project is scientifically successful.

## R&D capacity, competence and infrastructure (C)

Capacity dimension C	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
C1 R&D capacity and competence; infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Essential <b>research expertise</b> or <b>infrastructure</b> is <b>lacking</b>.</li> <li>or</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> There is a high level of <b>redundancy</b> in the expertise of the consortium partners or their complementarity has not properly been substantiated.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Important <b>modifications</b> are <b>needed</b> to the composition of the <b>consortium</b> and/or to the <b>research infrastructure</b> in order to appropriately carry out the research project.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The overall <b>expertise</b> or <b>infrastructure</b> of the consortium is reasonable but there are some particular concerns or <b>shortcomings</b> to <b>allow the optimal execution</b> of the project. The available integration of the research expertise in the consortium leaves some room for improvement.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The available research <b>competences and infrastructure</b> are <b>very good</b> and the <b>complementarity and synergy</b> within the consortium is <b>sufficient</b>.</li> <li>or</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The available research <b>competences and infrastructure</b> are <b>sufficient</b> and the <b>complementarity and synergy</b> within the consortium is <b>well pronounced</b>.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The available research competences and infrastructure are very good. <b>Key partners</b> of the consortium are <b>"top level"</b> research performers in the <b>international</b> context (at least recognised as "leaders" at the European level),</li> <li>and</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The complementarity and synergy between the consortium partners is also very pronounced. The proposal involves a meaningful and needed research <b>cooperation</b> which, in addition, <b>exceeds</b> the boundaries of a <b>single university or research institution</b>.</li> </ul>					
C2 Competence and track record with regard to transfer and utilisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>No utilisation competences</b> are present or demonstrated.</li> <li>or</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The intentions for <b>cooperation</b> with potential users in previous project applications were <b>artificial</b> and/or were not put in practice.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The <b>utilisation and transfer competences</b> are very <b>limited</b> or virtually <b>no evidence</b> is given in the proposal. No effort is demonstrated to include a partner with transfer expertise in the project consortium.</li> <li>or</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The <b>interaction with users</b> and the demonstrated efforts to transfer valorisable results during <b>previous or ongoing</b> strategic research projects was <b>insufficient</b>.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The <b>competence and track record</b> of the applicants in <b>transfer</b> of research results exhibits certain <b>deficiencies</b>.</li> <li>or</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The <b>track record</b> with regard to the <b>effective transfer</b> of valorisable results or the <b>interaction</b> with potential users during <b>previous or ongoing</b> research projects has remained <b>limited</b>.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The partners of the consortium have a <b>good track record</b> with regard to the <b>societal transfer</b> of research results.</li> <li>or</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The project is carried out by <b>young start-up research teams</b> with clear utilisation intentions. Any shortcomings are compensated by the <b>active support from utilisation experts</b>.</li> <li>or</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Previous or current</b> research projects have not yet led to a significant transfer and/or actual utilisation, but are characterised by <b>intensive cooperation with users</b> and a utilisation-oriented focus.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The <b>key partners</b> in the consortium hold an <b>undisputed leadership</b> position in the <b>transfer</b> of research results to users in Flanders or beyond.</li> <li>or</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The project is implemented by <b>young start-up research teams</b> who have <b>already</b> achieved a <b>significant transfer</b> in the recent past.</li> <li>or</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b>Previous and/or ongoing</b> projects have led to a <b>significant transfer</b> and/or actual or <b>follow-up R&amp;D</b> projects funded by government entities or societal stakeholders..</li> </ul>					

† In determining the total score, the weight of each of the first two subcriteria on the S(cientific) and U(tilisation)-axis (i.e., S1, S2, U1 and U2) is double the weight of the other criteria.