

# Internal Evaluation Reports (IER)

PhD Fellowships

**FWO Instruction Clip**

# Internal evaluation reports

## ▶ **Respect the deadline**

→ Concrete deadline: see assignment email (automatic reminder sent)

## ▶ **Two types of applications**

- PhD fellowships fundamental research
- PhD fellowships strategic basic research
- × Additional criterion: application potential

# Evaluation criteria: **candidate**, **project & application potential**

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Unacceptable	Weak	Fair/Reasonable		Good/Very good		Excellent/Outstanding	

## PhD phase 1: **preselection**

### Study results (academic education)

- ▶ Evidence of standing out
- ▶ Position in study group (percentile)



### Motivation & relevant competences

- ▶ Motivation/research interest
- ▶ Activities, skills, experiences
- ▶ Scientific background/competences

### Scientific quality, relevance and challenge, originality

- ▶ Originality / contribution state of the art
- ▶ Risks and challenges



### Quality research approach, feasibility

- ▶ Methodology
- ▶ Feasibility, risk mitigation

Strategic importance research approach (relevance)

Strategic importance for possible users (impact)



Only SB



Total score:



# Evaluation criteria: **candidate**, project & application potential

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# Criterion candidate: study results

## ► Positioning of study results: **study results narrative**

- Evidence of **standing out** during studies
  - × E.G. master thesis, grades for specific courses, additional achievements
- Other studies (advanced master (ManaMa), specific courses,...)

## ► **Percentile** (or rank in study group)

- Position relevant master study result (global percentage)
  - × In final master year: refer to bachelor diploma
- Based on percentile scores tables Flemish universities
- Non-Flemish diploma → mainly narrative

PHD FELLOWSHIP: SCORING DESCRIPTORS CRITERION "CANDIDATE" (PRESELECTION)

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Unacceptable	Weak	Fair/Reasonable		Good/Very good		Excellent/Outstanding	
<b>1.a. Study results (academic education)</b>							
No scoring possibility	The academic trajectory and study results do not stand out (maybe at the head of the pack within study group, but below average in the applicant population).	Rather good academic trajectory and study results, situated well above average and at the subtop in the study group, as evidenced by the study narrative <u>and</u> by specific grades, percentiles or ranking.	(Good to very good) academic trajectory and study results situated in the (broad) top of the study group, as evidenced by the study narrative <u>and</u> by specific grades, percentiles or ranking.	Top student with an excellent/outstanding academic trajectory and study results, as evidenced by the study narrative <u>and</u> by specific grades, percentiles or ranking.			



# Criterion candidate: motivation & competences

## ▶ Motivation statement

- Personal motivation, research interests
- Scientific background and competences to start PhD research
- Skills built up & to be (further) acquired
  - × E.g. experimental skills, presentation or writing skills, commitment/perseverance,...

## ▶ Scientific activities, experiences and achievements

- First steps as (potential) scientist (past/**planned**)
  - × Master thesis, start as (PhD) researcher,... → describe goal, activities (intermediate) results,...
- (if applicable) publications/other output (data, software, prototypes,...), awards,...
- Past/planned experiences, e.g. training, internships, presentations, collaborations,...

## ▶ Mobility

- Research stays in another organisation
- (inter)national mobility, intersectoral mobility,...



# Criterion candidate: specific concerns

## ▶ Attention to **various researcher profiles and research results**

- International trend
  - × Away from one-sided focus on classical output criteria (publications, bibliometrics,...)
  - × Towards broader view on scientific accomplishments
- Opportunity to demonstrate versatility in building up research career
  - × **Range of scientifically relevant activities, skills, experiences and achievements**
- Adapted application form and evaluation criteria

## ▶ Take into account **scientific seniority** (raise/lower the bar)

- Last year master student vs. started PhD candidate



# Preparing internal evaluation reports

## ► Your report: be concise and add value!

- Don't copy/paste parts of the proposal
- **Substantiate** appreciation and scores (strengths/weaknesses/conclusions and suggestions for improvement)
- Properly use the score grid

## ► 2+2 text and scoring fields (sub criteria)



1a/ Scientific contribution  
1b/ Motivation & competences



2a/ Scientific quality  
2b/ Approach & feasibility



3a/ Strategic relevance  
3b/ Strategic impact

## ► Per sub criterion text field

- Strengths
- Weaknesses
- Conclusions and suggestions for improvement

## ► Scoring

- Pick list 7, 6, ..., 0

<b>Candidate</b>
Scientific contribution
Evaluator's Rating <input type="text"/>
Evaluator's comments: <input type="text"/>
Motivation & competences
Evaluator's Rating <input type="text"/>
Evaluator's comments: <input type="text"/>
<b>Project</b>
Scientific quality
Evaluator's Rating <input type="text"/>
Evaluator's comments: <input type="text"/>
Approach & feasibility
Evaluator's Rating <input type="text"/>
Evaluator's comments: <input type="text"/>

# Using the score grids

## PHD FELLOWSHIP: SCORING DESCRIPTORS CRITERION "PROJECT" (PRESELECTION + INTERVIEW)

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Unacceptable	Weak	Fair/Reasonable		Good/very good		Excellent/outstanding	
<b>2.a Scientific quality, relevance and challenge, originality</b> A PhD project is scientifically challenging and relies on a proper and focused research question. It should significantly contribute to the current international state-of-the-art. To what extent is the proposal original and will it generate knowledge that goes beyond the state-of-the-art (e.g., novel theories, concepts or approaches, new methods, ...)?							
<b>One or more of the following items apply:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> The project is <b>out of scope</b> : it does not comply with the scope of the panel it was submitted to. ( <b>preselection only</b> ). <input type="checkbox"/> Project lacks an intellectual (PhD-worthy) challenge: an in-depth research question is missing	<b>One or more of the following items apply:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Research question and challenge limited or less relevant; <input type="checkbox"/> the research <u>objectives lack</u> focus. PhD worthiness is on the low side; <input type="checkbox"/> the project is rather a catch-up effort relative to the state-of-the-art.	<b>One or more of the following items apply:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Scientifically relevant project, rather high quality, and sufficiently challenging as PhD-research. The research is less well focused; <input type="checkbox"/> the project brings less pronounced added value to international state-of-the-art.	<b>ALL of the following items apply:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original and significant contribution to the international state of the art; <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> high-quality basic research, with significant scientific challenges (doctoral level).	<b>ALL of the following items apply:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Highly ambitious and original project of potentially groundbreaking nature and large scientific impact; <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> very high level of scientific risks. Clear inventive and challenging ideas, novel concepts and strategies.			

All apply?

**How to assign scores (per sub criterion)**  
 Start checking **4/5 (very) good** box items  
 $\geq 4$  threshold 'worth funding'

**NO**  
 $\leq 3$

**YES**  
 $\geq 4$

very good? **5**

All apply? **YES**  
 $\geq 6$   $\rightarrow$  **7**

# Confidentiality



## ▶ Review process subject to strict confidentiality

- Do not share information from the applications or related to the review process with third parties outside the panel
- This includes the use of search engines, online translators or AI-based apps, which is not allowed in the context of reviewing for the FWO

## ▶ See also FWO's panel member Code of Conduct

# Further reading and contact

## ▶ More information about:

- [FWO](#)
- [Our expert panels](#)
- [Our funding programmes](#)

## ▶ Contact:

- [Your account administrator](#)
- [expert@fwo.be](mailto:expert@fwo.be)
- [Management and staff](#)