

Annex 2 - Evaluation procedure

This annex describes the full evaluation process of the BlueActionAA Open Call Applications.

1. Eligibility check

ESF will check each proposal for formal requirements, eligibility criteria (as defined in the Guidelines for applications), and the completeness of the application.

2. Pre-assessment: 30/06/26 to 28/08/26

Applications that have successfully passed the eligibility check may proceed to the pre-assessment stage.

Evaluators will review each application assigned to them, answering questions and scoring them based on 3 different evaluation criteria: Excellence, Impact and Implementation.

Please refer to Annex 4 to see the Assessment Form adapted for each Call.

The evaluators will score each award criterion on a scale from 0 to 5

Score	Definition
5 - Excellent	The proposal successfully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion. Any shortcomings are minor.
4 - Very Good	The proposal addresses the criterion very well, but a small number of shortcomings are present.
3 - Good	The proposal addresses the criterion well, but a number of shortcomings are present.
2 - Fair	The proposal broadly addresses the criterion, but there are significant weaknesses.

1 - Poor	The criterion is inadequately addressed or there are serious inherent weaknesses.
0 - Cannot be assessed	Proposal fails to address the criterion or cannot be assessed due to missing or incomplete information.

TABLE 1. CRITERIA SCORE DEFINITION

Each proposal will receive a total overall score between 0 and 15 points. The total score will be calculated as a sum of the score of the three different criteria.

Each Proposal will be evaluated by two evaluators: one Lead Evaluator and one Secondary Evaluator. The assignation of the proposals to each evaluator (Lead and Secondary) will be done by ESF.

The evaluators will have no access to the evaluation made in parallel by the other evaluator, to avoid one evaluator conditioning the other until both reviews are submitted.

The evaluators will sign a declaration of confidentiality concerning the contents of the proposals they review. The assessment form carries a declaration of avoidance from conflict of interest which they agree to by signing it.

3. Review Panel: 08/09/2026 to 11/09/2026

The evaluators will meet in a remote review panel meeting to discuss the different proposals and establish a ranked list.

The review panel will be composed of the evaluators, a panel chair, and ESF staff to support the admin/technical side of the meeting.

The panel chair will be selected by ESF among the evaluators. The role of chair consists of:

- conducting the meeting, with the assistance of the ESF staff, ensuring respect of timeline and agenda;
- ensuring fair treatment of all applications in respect of the assessment criteria and process, and arbitrating sensitive discussions;
- keeping track of decisions with the assistance of the ESF staff.

All the evaluations will be made available to each evaluator a few days before the meeting in order to allow the evaluators sufficient time to review them.

Depending on the number of applications received, one or several topical panel meetings may be organised.

Evaluators are only expected to participate to one panel meeting.

During the review panel meetings, each application will be presented by their evaluators and discussed by the full panel.

The review panel will then agree on an overall mark for each application and produce a ranked list of applications.

Threshold conditions: The threshold for each criterion will be three (3). The overall score threshold, applying to the sum of the three individual scores, will be ten (10).

Only Proposals that pass the individual threshold AND the over/all threshold will be considered for funding, **within the limits of the available call budget**. Other proposals will be rejected.

In case of proposals in the same position, priority will be given to proposals that have higher score on the Excellence award criterion.

If that does not resolve the issue, the secondary priority criterion will be the score of the Impact section. If this also does not resolve the situation, the panel Chair will call for a panel vote on how to position the two applications relative to each other.

Panel Chairs meeting (if needed)

If several panel meetings for the same call are organised, a panel chair meeting will be organised. During the panel chairs meeting (teleconference), chairs of the topical panels bring results of their respective topical panels together. They agree on the overall ranking (i.e. rankings from each panel) and make final selection decisions.

4. Consensus Report: 11/09/26 to 17/09/26

The panel members will then produce a consensus report for each application, summarising the panel discussions.

Narrative comments (not scores) from the consensus reports will be communicated to the applicants.

The overall evaluation process will follow a single-blind review, meaning that applicants will not know the identities of the evaluators.



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This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon Europe Research and Innovation programme under **Grant Agreement 101215504**