

FONDAZIONE



CALL FOR RESEARCH PROJECTS - 2019

FULL EVALUATION GUIDELINES - EXTERNAL REVIEWERS

According to the Telethon mission, this call is in support of research projects focusing on **diseases of proven genetic origin**, either monogenic or polygenic forms.

For **multifactorial diseases** the following applies:

- Studies focused on **monogenic or polygenic forms** of multifactorial diseases are **ELIGIBLE**
- Studies focused on the **identification of genetic risk factors** (e.g. SNPs or other predisposing variants) for multifactorial diseases are **NOT ELIGIBLE**.

EXTERNAL REVIEWER'S ROLE

External reviews will be made available to the Telethon Scientific Committee members, to support them in the evaluation process.

Written comments are an essential part of the review and are critical in developing summary statements for the applicants.

Individual criticisms will be anonymously incorporated into a summary statement that will be fed back to the applicant. It is therefore important that the written material is accurate, clearly written, and does not include derogatory language.

FULL EVALUATION INSTRUCTIONS

External Reviewers are requested to fill in the "External Reviewers Evaluation Form" available in *TETRA* - *Telethon Projects Managements system portal* at <https://projects.telethon.it> accessible through personal login and password.

Written Comments

Written comments are an essential part of the review and are critical in developing summary statements for the Applicants.

The individual written comment will be anonymously incorporated into a complete review report that will be fed back to the Applicant. It is therefore important that the written material is accurate, clearly written, and does not include derogatory language.

Description (max 2,000 characters including spaces)

This summarises the objectives of the study and the hypothesis to be tested, it also concisely describes the specific aims and procedures of the proposed research.

Scientific Merit (max 12,000 characters including spaces)

This section should present a comprehensive evaluation of the application.

For revised applications only, the Reviewers will provide their evaluation of the changes and responses to the critiques from the previous review, with the indication of whether the Application has been improved comparing to the previous submission. The Telethon Review Report of the previously submitted application together with the Applicant's rebuttal are available within the Application (*Cover Letter* section).

The Reviewers evaluate the overall scientific merit of the proposal by providing an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses on the basis of the following parameters:

- *Link to genetic diseases*: is the proposal addressing a genetic disease? Does the proposal bear the potential to advance knowledge on the disease(s) of interest?
- *Significance*: Does this study address an important problem? If the aims of the application are achieved, how will scientific knowledge be advanced? What will the effect of these studies be on the concepts or methods that drive this field?
- *Originality of science*: Does the project employ novel concepts, approaches or methods? Are the aims original and innovative? Does the project challenge existing paradigms or develop new methodologies or technologies?
- *Appropriateness of design and methods*: Are the conceptual framework, design, methods, and analyses adequately developed, well-integrated, and appropriate to the aims of the project?
- *Preliminary results*: Are proof-of-principle experiments provided, adequately supporting new principles to be tested in the grant? Are novel tools or reagents well-characterized?
- *Feasibility*: Does the applicant acknowledge potential problem areas and consider alternative tactics?
- *Safety*: Please evaluate the adequacy of the proposed protection for humans, animals or the environment, to the extent they may be adversely affected by the project proposed in the application (if any).
- *Previous achievements* (dedicated section for former grantees only): did the previous Telethon grant produce relevant results relative to the stated aims?

Note: thanks to the agreement between Fondazione Telethon and CINECA (a non-profit Consortium made up of Italian universities, research institutions and the Ministry of Education, University and Research; <http://www.cineca.it/en>), successful applications entailing next generation sequencing experiments or high performance computing will gain access to CINECA's bioinformatics services. For this reason, applications include a dedicated section that will allow CINECA's technical team to assess and validate the requests, where applicable.

Impact on patients (max 2,000 characters including spaces)

What is the potential of the proposed project to make progress towards therapy or to provide any other impact on patients' clinical management and/or quality of life? How close in time is such a development envisaged?

Comments on Applicant (max 2,000 characters including spaces)

Is the investigator appropriately trained and well-suited to carry out this work? Is the work proposed proportionate to the level of experience of the **principal investigator and key personnel**? Is the Applicant a significant player in the field of the submitted research project?

Please note that Fondazione Telethon does not apply assessment of Candidate's CV based on journal-based metrics, such as Journal Impact Factor. The Fondazione signed and endorses the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA, <http://www.ascb.org/dora/>).

Key Personnel - Please note that Italian public bodies, such as universities, are obliged, in compliance with the national legislation in force, to recruit personnel through public competition announcements containing all the selection and appointment criteria. Consequently, in the proposal only the skills/profile needed can be outlined and the names of the personnel to be enrolled will become known only after the public selections procedures have been carried out.

Comments on Budget Allocation (max 2,000 characters)

For single-center Applications a maximum of 100,000 €/year is allowed.

For two-center Applications a total budget of 160,000 €/year is allowed; the Coordinator may ask for a maximum of 100,000 €/year.

Reviewers evaluate the appropriateness of the budget in relation to the proposed research and whether all items are considered realistic and justified. Reasons for each recommended modification in amount or duration of support must be presented. Reviewers are asked to identify any apparent scientific or budgetary overlap with active or pending support.

Overall evaluation (max 2,000 characters)

This section is for the Reviewers to summarize the **key reasons** for their overall rating, indicating the relative **strengths, weaknesses** and overall **final considerations**.

Overall recommendation

On the basis of the specific points raised in the written critique, the External Reviewers are asked to choose their recommendation as follows:

- A** - Strongly recommended; no substantial points need discussion.
- B** - Recommended; minor points need discussion.
- C** - Revision recommended; a small number of specific major points need to be addressed.
- D** - Major revision necessary; multiple or fundamental problems can be addressed in a major revision.
- E** - Revision not recommended; multiple or fundamental problems that will be difficult to address in a revision.