

FONDAZIONE



CALL FOR RESEARCH PROJECTS - 2017

FULL EVALUATION GUIDELINES - COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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**.

APPLICATION'S SECTIONS AND EVALUATION PHASES

The Full Application comprises two parts: the Core Project and the Supplementary Contents. The Core Project is the application's part evaluated during the triage. **During the Full Evaluation, all parts of the Application** (Core Project plus Supplementary Contents) **are made available to the Committee members**. The scores and comments provided by the Committee members during the Triage are available on his/her own Telethon account. More information about the Full Application and its parts are available at the ["2017 Call For Applications"](#).

REVIEWERS' ROLE

Each application is reviewed and scored by three Committee members. The primary reviewer is responsible for the project's presentation during the plenary session. Only primary and secondary reviewers have to provide written comments.

FULL EVALUATION INSTRUCTIONS

You are requested to fill in the "Full Project Evaluation" section of the "Committee Evaluation Form" available in the Telethon website, accessible through your personal login and password.

In support of your evaluation, you will be provided with written comments by External Reviewers, who are chosen *ad hoc* for each Application by Telethon Research Program Managers.

Scores

Each project requires **two scores**:

- **Scientific Merit** (is the proposed research excellent?)
Relative weight: 90%

Score range: from **1.0 (poor)** to **5.0 (outstanding)** by 0.1 unit increments.

Full Evaluation Scoring Scale		
Score	Value	Description
4.6 - 5.0	Outstanding	No concerns
4.0 - 4.5	Excellent	No substantial issues need discussion
3.0 - 3.9	Good	Only one or a few addressable concerns
2.0 - 2.9	Average	Several concerns in one or more Aims
1.0 - 1.9	Poor	Major concerns in one or more Aims

Please use the complete scoring range to avoid clustering projects within a narrow intermediate range that would make the selection process difficult.

- **Impact on patients** (how close to therapeutic development or to any other potential impact on patients are the proposed studies?)
Relative weight: 10%

Scores and scoring criteria (on the basis of the proposed research activity):

Score=5: Clinical Trials. Therapeutic clinical trials, palliative clinical trials or clinical trials to validate diagnostic tools, natural history of disease.

Score=4: Preclinical Studies; Disease Gene Identification. Pre-clinical studies testing efficacy/safety of therapeutic strategies (in vitro and/or in animal models); discovery of new disease genes.

Score=3: Mechanisms, Structure, Function, Targets, Drug Discovery. Basic (laboratory) studies on mechanisms; functional/structural omics studies; search for new therapeutic targets.

The **overall score** will be automatically calculated by combining the two scores according to their relative weight.

Critique

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

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

Please note: **External Reviewers' written comments will also be included as such in the review report.** Therefore, please do not report External Reviewers' sentences in your written comments, as this would result in a duplicated feedback to the Applicant.

Description (max 2,000 characters including spaces)

Primary reviewers only are requested to fill in the **description** field. Summarise the specific aims of the study and the hypothesis to be tested. Concisely describe the objectives and procedures of the proposed research. **Do not make evaluation statements in this section.**

Scientific Merit (max 12,000 characters including spaces)

This section should present a comprehensive evaluation of the application. **Please do not repeat the project description; only evaluation statements should be included.**

For revised applications only, also evaluate changes and responses to the critiques from the previous review and indicate whether the application has been improved, is the same as or is worse than the previous submission. You can find the Telethon Review Report of the previously submitted application, together with the Applicant's rebuttal, in the Cover Letter section.

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/>)

Comments on Budget Allocation (max 2,000 characters)

A cap of 80,000 €/year is applied. 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. Identify any apparent scientific or budgetary overlap with active or pending support. For more detailed information, please refer to the [Guidelines Grant Proposals 2017](#).

Overall evaluation (max 2,000 characters)

Provide the **key reasons** for your overall rating indicating the relative **strengths, weaknesses** and **final considerations** in the specific fields.


FORMATTING EDITOR – EVALUATION SUBMISSION

A text-formatting editor is available only in the specific fields inside the online form where “click to edit” is shown.

The main editor's functions are the following:

- Copying and pasting text from Microsoft Word while retaining text formatting as well as tables
- Easy formatting of entered text with standard intuitive buttons
- Typing special characters including all Greek letters

The formatting editor allows the user to copy and paste text from Microsoft Word while retaining text formatting, with the following restrictions:

- You must use Microsoft **Word** to retain text formatting when copying and pasting: the use of other document editing software is not supported and could lead to errors in our online system
- In order to fully retain the original formatting in Word, use the button  [**Paste from Word**], to copy text into the online field
- Once text is pasted from Word, the default font will be automatically set to Arial with minimum size of 16 pt (corresponding to Arial 11 when printed). Please verify in the PDF output that all text is clearly readable.

Hovering the mouse over the editor buttons will display a tooltip indicating their functions.

Please note that the font Symbol (Greek characters) is not supported: you should use the “**Insert**

Special Character” button  in the formatting editor.

To verify that the correct text formatting has been applied check the PDF of the Application by clicking on the “Download PDF” button.

Once the score and the evaluation are provided, update the section clicking on the “Update Section” button. At the end of the evaluation, click on the “Send Evaluation” button to forward your score and comments to the Telethon evaluation system.