

## 2016 call for proposals

### Evaluator guidelines

Document published on February 12 2016

#### 1 Introduction

The Foundation for an Industrial Safety Culture (FonCSI) is a French public-interest research foundation created in April 2005. Its objectives are to:

- ▷ support research activities that contribute to the improvement of safety in hazardous organizations (in all high-risk industrial sectors and from SMEs to large companies);
- ▷ work towards a better mutual understanding between high-risk industries and civil society, aiming for a durable compromise and an open debate that covers all the dimensions of risk;
- ▷ foster the acculturation of all stakeholders and civil society to the questions and problems related to risk and safety.

In order to meet these objectives, FonCSI brings together researchers from different disciplines and various stakeholders concerned by industrial safety: high-risk companies, local government authorities, trade unions, non-governmental organizations and associations. FonCSI sponsors interdisciplinary research and promotes interaction between researchers and practitioners from engineering, the physical sciences and social sciences. The Foundation also creates bridges between academic research and its applications for the management of technological risk.

In 2015, the FonCSI launched a research activity on “Professional training and industrial safety”, with two strands of action:

- ▷ a working group established in 2015 to prepare a state of industrial practice, problems encountered and research questions on the topic;
- ▷ a Call for Proposals published in 2016, building on the questions identified by the working group.

#### 2 Call objectives

A description of the topics of the call is available in the Call text document.

Most projects funded within this joint call will be relatively small (duration between 12 and 36 months, with budgets typically between 40 and 150 k€). The call aims to fund mainly **applied research** carried out in universities and research institutes, though proposals from industry may also be eligible if they contain a significant research component. **Interdisciplinary research** is encouraged. Cooperation and joint activities between the researchers and projects funded within the call will be encouraged.

##### General remarks

- ▷ Given the applied nature of the topics, the participation of stakeholders within the project (either as subjects of investigation, or partners contributing to the work) is encouraged.
- ▷ Proposals should contain novel, ambitious aims and ideas, combined with well-structured work plans.
- ▷ A single proposal may cover more than one of the topics listed in the thematic description.

### 3 Call management

Two boards, the Call Steering Committee and the Evaluation Panel, will manage the evaluation process of the call.

- ▷ The **Call Steering Committee** is composed of FonCSI staff and outside experts. All decisions concerning the call procedures will be made by the Call Steering Committee. It will supervise the progress of the call and the evaluation of proposals. Final decisions on funding of projects will be made by FonCSI's board, on the basis of a ranking list proposed by the Call Steering Committee. The Call Steering Committee will accompany the entire lifespan of the Call, evaluate the performance of the projects and resolve potential disagreements which may arise during the lifetime of the projects.
- ▷ The **Evaluation Panel** is composed of the members of the Call Steering Committee together with scientific experts within the disciplines identified as being relevant for the call topic. Evaluation Panel members will not submit or participate in proposals within the call, and will accept a confidentiality agreement. The work of the Evaluation Panel will be organized so as to avoid conflicts of interest.

### 4 Evaluation process

The call will use a two-stage application process. During the first stage, applicants will present a pre-proposal describing the broad outlines of their project. The pre-proposals (letters of intent) will be examined by the Call Steering Committee, and a subset of the projects will be invited to proceed to the second stage of the call. In the second stage of the call, evaluation will be performed by the Evaluation Panel.

The **evaluation criteria** (further detailed in Annex 1) are:

- ▷ Compatibility with the call topics
- ▷ Scientific or technological excellence
- ▷ Project implementation

Further comments on the evaluation process:

- ▷ Each project full proposal will be reviewed by a minimum of three evaluators.
- ▷ A review report consists of written remarks and a numerical score per review criterion.
- ▷ The names of the evaluators will not be disclosed publicly, either during or after the review process.
- ▷ Evaluators can come from any country.
- ▷ Evaluators refrain from reviewing a proposal in case of a conflict of interest that was not detected by FonCSI beforehand. Criteria for conflict of interest are listed in Annex 2.

### 5 Basic principles of evaluation

- ▷ The evaluation of a project shall be based solely upon the information contained in the full proposal and on the researchers' experience (publications, projects, ...).
- ▷ Evaluators shall evaluate proposals belonging to their broader domain of expertise.
- ▷ All proposals are assessed only on the basis of given evaluation criteria (see Annex 1).
- ▷ In case of conflict of interest (see Annex 2), the proposal will be returned to the Call Steering Committee for referral.
- ▷ Proposals and review reports are written in English or French.

For each project, the Call Steering Committee will communicate the final decision along with the comments of the anonymous reviewers and the average of their numerical scores to the project coordinator.

## A Annex 1: Evaluation criteria

Compatibility with the call topics

Scientific and/or technological excellence:

- ▷ Soundness of the concept
- ▷ Quality of the objectives
- ▷ Quality and effectiveness of the scientific methodology
- ▷ Contribution to the development of the respective research field

Value of the expected outcomes (scientific & operational):

- ▷ To what extent do you expect that the project will improve scientific knowledge, or lead to improvements in operational practice which lead to safety improvements?
- ▷ Are the dissemination activities planned suitable for their purpose?

Project implementation:

- ▷ To what extent are the project objectives feasible?
- ▷ Are the methodology, work plan and time-frame likely to lead to the expected outcomes?
- ▷ Appropriate allocation and justification of the resources to be committed (budget, staff, equipment).
- ▷ Does the research team have the necessary competencies/experience to address the issues raised (previous scientific track record, publications in scientific journals, etc.)?
- ▷ If the project would benefit from a multi- or pluri-disciplinary approach, are the relevant disciplines present in the project?
- ▷ Does the collaboration between research teams add value to the project? Is the work breakdown well balanced?

### Meaning of numerical rankings

Value	Meaning	
0	Fails	
1	Poor	The proposal shows serious weaknesses in relation to the criterion
2	Fair	The proposal generally addresses the criterion, but there are significant weaknesses that need corrections
3	Good	The proposal addresses the criterion in question well but certain improvements are necessary
4	Very good	The proposal addresses the criterion very well but small improvements are possible
5	Excellent	The proposal successfully addresses all aspects of the criterion

## B Annex 2: Conflict of interest

A conflict of interest in evaluating a proposal exists if one or more of the following criteria apply to the evaluator and at least one of the researchers involved with the proposal:

1. Relatives, personal ties or conflicts;
2. Close scientific collaboration, *e.g.* implementation of joint projects or joint publications within the past three years;
3. Direct scientific competition with personal projects or plans;
4. Close proximity, *e.g.* member of the same scientific institution or impending change of the reviewer to the institution of the applicant or *vice versa*;
5. Teacher/student relationship, unless a following independent scientific activity of more than 10 years exists;
6. Dependent relationship in employment during the past three years;
7. Participation in current or recently concluded professorial appointment proceedings;
8. Current or prior activity in advisory bodies of the applicant's institution, *e.g.* scientific advisory boards;
9. Personal economic interests in the funding decision.