

Strategy Report on Research Infrastructures

ROADMAP 2021

Implementation Group and Strategy Working Groups Manual

In complement to the Roadmap 2021 Public Guide

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ROLE OF IG IN THE 2021 ROADMAP PROCESS

The Implementation Group (IG) is a permanent working group set up by ESFRI with the aim to support the Forum in its regular activities, contribute to fulfilling the Forum's mission and vision, and to respond to EU Council mandates and requests in their respective roles.

The IG supports the ESFRI Forum to analyse the implementation aspects of Research Infrastructures.

With the view to implementing their mandate, the IG has the following tasks:

- Assess the maturity regarding the **IMPLEMENTATION CASE** of the *New Proposals* for the ESFRI Roadmap update following the procedure described in the *ESFRI Roadmap 2021 Public Guide*.
- Contribute to the monitoring of *ESFRI Projects* and periodic review of *ESFRI Landmarks* following the procedure described in the *ESFRI Roadmap 2021 Public Guide*.
- Propose recommendations on the status of proposals, *ESFRI Projects* and *ESFRI Landmarks* to the Executive Board and the Forum.
- Provide targeted and specific support to *ESFRI Projects* to move towards implementation and to *ESFRI Landmarks* in specific cases identified by the Forum.
- Contribute to the further development of the methodology for ESFRI roadmap updates.
- Collaborate closely with the SWGs on all aspects, particularly on evaluation and monitoring procedures.

Please refer to the Terms of Reference of the Implementation Group 2019-2021 for more details.

ROLE OF SWGS IN THE 2021 ROADMAP PROCESS

The Strategy Working Groups (SWGs) are permanent working groups set up by ESFRI with the aim to support the Forum in its regular activities, contribute to fulfilling the Forum's mission and vision, and to respond to EU Council mandates and requests in their respective roles.

SWGs are the instrument of the ESFRI Forum to analyse the scientific aspects of Research Infrastructures in a given field of research.

With the view to implementing their mandate, the SWGs have the following tasks:

- Perform the evaluation the **SCIENTIFIC CASE** of *New Proposals* to the ESFRI Roadmap update following the procedure described in the *ESFRI Roadmap 2021 Public Guide*.
- Contribute to the monitoring of *ESFRI Projects* and periodic review of *ESFRI Landmarks* following procedure described in the *ESFRI Roadmap 2021 Public Guide*.
- Propose recommendations on the status of *New Proposals*, *ESFRI Projects* and *ESFRI Landmarks* to the Executive Board and the Forum.
- Monitor the scientific developments and emerging research challenges in their domains of competence, taking innovation into account, and addressing the issue of socio-economic impact. On this basis, contribute to the development and regular update of the *Landscape Analysis* of Research Infrastructures, fostering identification of existing gaps without aiming at the generation

of projects. The SWGs will identify a well-balanced Drafting Group for the Landscape Analysis from amongst its members covering all areas within the SWG. ESFRI takes note of the Drafting Groups composition.

- Provide targeted and specific support to ESFRI Projects to move towards implementation and to *ESFRI Landmarks* in specific cases identified by the Forum.
- Contribute to the further development of the ESFRI Roadmap methodology.
- Collaborate closely with the Implementation Group, particularly on evaluation and monitoring procedures.
- Contribute to the objectives of the ESFRI Strategy report, the dissemination and sharing of best practices.

Please refer to the Terms of Reference of the Strategy Working Groups 2019-2021 for more details.

MONITORING OF PROJECTS 2016

The specific goals of the monitoring of the *Projects 2016* are to:

- check the overall progress towards implementation, i.e. to what degree they fulfil the minimal key requirements for the phases of lifecycle and what the plans are for reaching full implementation;
- check and report on whether and how the Projects have addressed the conclusions and followed up on the recommendations from the proposal evaluations from the ESFRI Roadmap 2016;
- propose a status, conclusions and recommendations on the Projects to the Plenary Forum, including the possible transition from Project to Landmark;
- update all public information on the Projects for the Roadmap 2021.

For the Roadmap 2021, ESFRI will monitor the *Projects 2016* along the following considerations:

- The monitoring involves an evaluation of the [SCIENTIFIC CASE](#) and [IMPLEMENTATION CASE](#) of each Project in order to assess the overall progress towards implementation and following up on conclusions and recommendations provided in the Evaluation Report for the ESFRI Roadmap 2016. SWG and IG together draft a specific questionnaire per Project addressing generic and specific aspects of the [SCIENTIFIC CASE](#) and [IMPLEMENTATION CASE](#). In order to prepare the specific questionnaire, the SWG and IG can use the previous evaluation report (from the Roadmap 2016) and the information from the monitoring reports available from the HORIZON 2020 Preparatory Phase projects (provided by EC). It is recommended to use the project monitoring questionnaire as the reference and customize the questions in view of the essential elements which are considered the most critical for each project. If necessary, additional questions can be asked (not more than 3 per project).
- Since the monitoring of the six *Projects 2016* – ACTRIS, DANUBIUS-RI, EMPHASIS, E-RIHS, EST, and KM3NeT 2.0 – is performed in order to assess their progress towards implementation, with no negative impact on their presence in the Roadmap as Projects (not yet reached the 10-year limit), no external independent reviewers will be involved for the monitoring of the six *Projects 2016*. If a project does not undergo the monitoring process, it will be removed from the Roadmap. If the

preliminary findings of the SWG and IG indicate that a project is meeting the minimal key requirements for the *Implementation Phase*, the project will be proposed to undergo the monitoring procedure as foreseen for the *Projects 2010* – i.e. with external reviewers and a hearing, in order to be considered as a potential ESFRI Landmark.

- Site visits are not foreseen for the monitoring of the six *Projects 2016*.
- The MOS+ system will be used for offering and completing the monitoring questionnaires.
- The SWG & IG Recommendations per Project, including the possibility for the project to undergo the monitoring procedure as foreseen for the *Projects 2010*, are presented to the EB and to the Plenary Forum for discussion and adoption.

Each project will be monitored by the relevant SWGs – i.e. the main SWG –, by a second SWG (if requested by the Project and/or considered necessary by the main SWG) and by the DIGIT SWG (for the section on e-needs) for the [SCIENTIFIC CASE](#) as well as by the IG for the [IMPLEMENTATION CASE](#). The Chairs of the main SWG, of DIGIT SWG and IG involved in each project are responsible for establishing the connection in between the different working groups for the whole evaluation process (from the preparation of the customized questionnaire until the finalisation of the recommendations). It is recommended to foresee physical meetings or teleconferences between the different working groups throughout the evaluation process. The Chairs or Vice-Chairs and the rapporteur of each project should participate in these meetings or teleconference. As far as possible, the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the Working Groups should not act as a rapporteur, deputy rapporteur or reader.

1. The SWG Chair composes one evaluation panel for each Project. Each panel comprises one Rapporteur, one Deputy Rapporteur and at least one and maximum two more Members of the SWG with the role of Readers. Each panel is assessed for absence of Conflict of Interest (CoI) with respect to the Project. The evaluation panels should be communicated to the ESFRI EB for approval.
2. The DIGIT SWG composes one evaluation panel for each Project to evaluate the section on e-needs. Each panel comprises one Rapporteur and one Deputy Rapporteur. Each panel is assessed for absence of Conflict of Interest (CoI) with respect to the Project. The DIGIT Chair and the rapporteur for each project should interact directly with the respective SWG. The evaluation panels should be communicated to the ESFRI EB for approval.
3. The main SWG Rapporteur drafts the SWG Recommendation including the contributions of the SWG Readers and DIGIT SWG report, and sends it to his/her respective SWG Chair.
4. Each SWG Chair assures coherence and consistency among all draft SWG Recommendations through internal harmonization meetings. Each SWG chair assures that all reports are harmonised with those arising from the Implementation Group.
5. The IG composes one evaluation panel for each Project. Each panel comprises one Rapporteur and one Deputy Rapporteur. Each panel is assessed for absence of Conflict of Interest (CoI) with respect to the Project. The evaluation panels should be communicated to the ESFRI EB for approval.

6. The Rapporteur drafts the IG Recommendation, including the contributions of the IG Deputy Rapporteur, and sends it to the IG Chair and Vice-Chair.
7. SWG and IG will foresee harmonization throughout the different steps: preparing the specific questions, drafting the monitoring reports, and finalizing the recommendations to be sent to the ESFRI EB.
8. EB and the SWG and IG Chairs will meet in order to finalize the customized questionnaires.
9. EB and the SWG and IG Chairs will meet to finalize the monitoring reports and recommendations.
10. Once the decision is taken by the Forum, the SWG and IG Chairs will communicate it to the members of their respective WG.

All communication with the Projects will be done by the ESFRI Secretariat.

SCORING (SEE PUBLIC GUIDE)

For the scoring, please refer to the public guide p.13.

It is necessary to meet the minimal key requirements for each of the five dimensions of the **SCIENTIFIC CASE** and of the **IMPLEMENTATION CASE**. This does not imply that each single minimal key requirement has to be met as far as the ensemble of minimal key requirements for each dimension is satisfactory.

For the *Projects 2016*, the scoring values – very high, high, medium, low – will be attributed for each of the five dimensions of the **SCIENTIFIC CASE** and of the **IMPLEMENTATION CASE** in respect to what degree they fulfil the minimal key requirements for the *Implementation Phase* and what are the plans/feasibility for reaching full implementation within the 10-year term.

The harmonization between the SWGs and IG should guarantee that the specificities of the scientific domains are taken into account.

PRINCIPLES, CONFLICT OF INTEREST (COI) AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Principles, as reported in the *ESFRI Roadmap 2021 Public Guide* should be applied.

Please refer to the Public Guide also for Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality.

In particular, for what concerns COI, this may arise, in particular, due to science competition, scientific and economic interests, political or national affinities, family or emotional, or any other relevant connection or shared interest. SWG and IG Members may not be Rapporteurs for Projects that are proposed or hosted by their MS or AC, nor in which they are directly involved. It is recommended that SWG and IG Members are not involved in the evaluation and assessment of Projects in which their home country is a formal partner – i.e. expression of Political Support, signature of a Letter of Intent or Memorandum of Understanding, submission of ERIC statutes. Taking these here above criteria, in case of Projects with many participating countries and consequent impossibility to find members of the SWGs and IG fitting these requirements, a rapporteur from a participating country (not leading country) could exceptionally be accepted. The Chair of the SWGs and the IG should organise an inventory of the potential COIs for all the members of their respective group and regularly update it. This inventory should be communicated to the

ESFRI EB. They should inform the EB about any situations constituting conflict of interest or potentially giving rise to conflict of interest in the future. The SWGs and IG Chairs are responsible for collecting the “Declarations of Non-conflict of Interest and of Confidentiality” signed by all the members involved in the Projects monitoring and send these to StR-ESFRI.

During the meetings of the SWG or IG, a member (including the Chair of the WG) with a Col concerning a project being monitored will be asked not to take part to the discussions.

Strict rules for confidentiality apply: the SWG and IG reports are for internal use only amongst the Working Groups involved. The SWG & IG Recommendations are for the EB, the Plenary Forum and the Projects concerned and may not be further distributed.

Anyone directly and indirectly involved in the evaluations and assessments shall:

- not discuss evaluation and assessment matters, such as the content, the results or the opinions of fellow experts with anyone;
- not contact partners in the consortium, sub-contractors or any third parties;
- maintain the confidentiality of documents – paper or electronic – at all times and wherever the evaluation work is executed.

For each evaluation and assessment, only the relevant persons will have access to a repository of all confidential documents such as draft versions of evaluation reports and draft versions of the recommendations.

TIMELINE

STEPS	DATE (RANGE)
INFODAY	25 September 2019
CUSTOMIZED QUESTIONNAIRE SENT TO THE PROJECTS	November 2019
SUBMISSION OF QUESTIONNAIRE	February 2020
ESFRI FORUM DECISION	June 2020
ESFRI ROADMAP Launch	October-December 2021

MONITORING OF PROJECTS 2010

The specific goals of the monitoring of the *Projects 2010* are to:

- check the overall progress towards implementation, i.e. to what degree they fulfil the minimal key requirements for reaching full implementation;
- check and report on whether and how the Projects have addressed the conclusions and followed up on the recommendations from the project evaluations from the 2018 ESFRI roadmap;
- propose a status, conclusions and recommendations on the Projects to the Plenary Forum, on their possible transition from Project to Landmark;
- update all public information on the Projects for the Roadmap 2021.

For the Roadmap 2021, ESFRI will monitor the *Projects 2010* along the following considerations:

- The monitoring involves an evaluation of the [SCIENTIFIC CASE](#) and [IMPLEMENTATION CASE](#) of each Project in order to assess the overall progress towards implementation and following up on conclusions and recommendations provided in the Evaluation Report for the ESFRI Roadmap 2018. SWG and IG together draft a specific questionnaire per Project addressing generic and specific aspects of the [SCIENTIFIC CASE](#) and [IMPLEMENTATION CASE](#). In order to prepare the specific questionnaire, the SWG and IG can use the previous evaluation report (from the Roadmap 2018) and the information from the monitoring reports available from the HORIZON 2020 Preparatory Phase projects and implementation projects (provided by EC). It is recommended to use the project monitoring questionnaire as the reference and customize the questions in view of the essential elements which are considered the most critical for each project. If necessary, additional questions can be asked (not more than 5 per project).
- From the six *Projects 2010* which have reached the 10-year limit, ISBE and WindScanner have officially renounced to undergo the monitoring process and will be withdrawn from the ESFRI Roadmap. For the four other projects – AnaEE, EU-SOLARIS, MIRRI, MYRRHA –, the monitoring is crucial and will determine whether they can stay on the ESFRI Roadmap as a Landmark. The monitoring procedure will involve external experts as independent reviewers for the evaluation of both the [SCIENTIFIC CASE](#) and [IMPLEMENTATION CASE](#) and the organisation of a hearing with the Project.
- Site visits are not foreseen for the monitoring of the four *Projects 2010*.
- The MOS+ system will be used for offering and completing the monitoring questionnaires.
- The SWG & IG Recommendations per Project – i.e. whether the Project will become a Landmark or be withdrawn from the Roadmap – are presented to the EB and to the Plenary Forum for discussion and adoption.

Each project will be monitored by the relevant SWGs – i.e. the main SWG –, by a second SWG (if requested by the Project and/or considered necessary by the main SWG) and by the DIGIT SWG (for the section on e-needs) for the [SCIENTIFIC CASE](#) as well as by the IG for the [IMPLEMENTATION CASE](#). The Chairs of the main SWG, of DIGIT SWG and IG involved in each project are responsible for establishing the connection in between the different working groups for the whole evaluation process (from the preparation of the customized questionnaire until the finalisation of the recommendations). It is recommended to foresee physical meetings or teleconferences between the different working groups throughout the evaluation process. The Chairs or Vice-Chairs and the rapporteur of each project should participate in these meetings or teleconference. As far as possible, the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the working groups should not act as a rapporteur, deputy rapporteur or reader.

1. The SWG Chair composes one evaluation panel for each Project. Each panel comprises one Rapporteur, one Deputy Rapporteur and at least one and maximum two more Members of the SWG with the role of Readers. Each panel is assessed for absence of Conflict of Interest (CoI) with respect to the Project. The evaluation panels should be communicated to the ESFRI EB for approval.

2. The DIGIT SWG composes one evaluation panel for each Project to evaluate the section on e-needs. Each panel comprises one Rapporteur and one Deputy Rapporteur. Each panel is assessed for absence of Conflict of Interest (CoI) with respect to the Project. The DIGIT Chair and the rapporteur for each project should interact directly with the respective SWG. The evaluation panels should be communicated to the ESFRI EB for approval.
3. The main SWG Chair and the DIGIT Chair (and when relevant the secondary SWG Chair) will compose a list of high profile international experts to act as reviewers for the evaluation of the [SCIENTIFIC CASE](#) for each specific project. Three external reviewers per project should be considered for the [SCIENTIFIC CASE](#).
4. The external reviewers must accept the task upon signing the declaration of non-conflict of interest and confidentiality. Only after acceptance, they receive access to the complete documentation and to the template for the evaluation of the [SCIENTIFIC CASE](#) of the project (Evaluation Form). In presence of CoI, another external expert shall be sought.
5. The external reviewers evaluate remotely the project. They are not part of a panel and do not liaise with each other. They draft their report, following the suggested `Evaluation Scientific Case` form. No consensus report is requested.
6. The main SWG Rapporteur drafts the SWG Recommendation integrating the contributions of the SWG Readers, DIGIT SWG and external reviewers' reports , and sends it to his/her respective SWG Chair.
7. Each SWG Chair assures coherence and consistency among all draft SWG Recommendations through internal harmonization meetings. Each SWG chair assures that all reports are harmonised with those arising from the Implementation Group.
8. The IG composes one evaluation panel for each Project. Each panel comprises one Rapporteur and one Deputy Rapporteur. Each panel is assessed for absence of Conflict of Interest (CoI) with respect to the Project. The evaluation panels should be communicated to the ESFRI EB for approval.
9. The IG Chair (and Vice-Chair) will prepare a list of high profile international experts to act as reviewers for the evaluation of the [IMPLEMENTATION CASE](#) for each project. Three external reviewers per project should be considered for the [IMPLEMENTATION CASE](#).
10. The external reviewers must accept the task upon signing the declaration of non-conflict of interest and confidentiality. Only after acceptance, they receive access to the complete documentation and to the template for the evaluation of the [IMPLEMENTATION CASE](#) of the project (Evaluation Form). In presence of CoI, another external expert shall be sought. The external experts are not part of the panel and do not liaise with each other.
11. The external Reviewers evaluate remotely the project. They are not part of a panel and do not liaise with each other. They draft their report, following the suggested `Evaluation Implementation Case` form. No consensus report is requested.
12. The Rapporteur drafts the IG Recommendation, integrating the contributions of the IG deputy rapporteur and the external reviewers' reports and sends it to the IG Chair and Vice-Chair.

13. The IG Chair and Vice-Chair assure coherence and consistency among all draft IG Recommendations. They also assure that all reports are harmonised with those arising from the Strategy Working Groups.
14. Based on this first step on the evaluation, the SWGs and IG should prepare the specific questions for the hearings.
15. SWGs and IG will foresee harmonization throughout the different steps: preparing the customized questionnaires, drafting the specific questions for the hearings, drafting the monitoring reports, and finalizing the recommendations to be sent to the ESFRI EB.
16. EB and the SWG and IG Chairs will meet in order to finalize the customized questionnaires and the specific questions for the hearings.
17. EB and the SWG and IG Chairs will meet to finalize the monitoring reports and recommendations.
18. Once the decision is taken by the Forum, the SWG and IG Chairs will communicate it to the members of their respective WG.

EXTERNAL EXPERTS

External experts to act as reviewers for the evaluation of the [SCIENTIFIC CASE](#) or [IMPLEMENTATION CASE](#) will be selected from a list of high profile international experts. Those external reviewers should not be members of the ESFRI delegations or affiliated to the same institutions.

For the evaluation of the [SCIENTIFIC CASE](#), these should be high level international scientist in the specific field. For the evaluation of the [IMPLEMENTATION CASE](#), these should be high level international people with expertise in RI policy, RI management, etc.

To act as reviewers for a specific project, the external experts have to sign the declaration of non-conflict of interest and confidentiality.

These external experts will be remunerated by StR-ESFRI unless they decline to receive remuneration.

Each external expert should be given 1 week to accept or decline the proposal.

Only after the signature of the declaration of non-conflict of interest and confidentiality, they will get access to the questionnaire that they have to evaluate. They will receive the whole questionnaire but will evaluate only the [SCIENTIFIC CASE](#) or the [IMPLEMENTATION CASE](#) depending if they are experts for the SWGs or the IG.

When they receive the questionnaire, they have minimum one month and maximum 45 days to provide the evaluation report. A deadline for all submissions of external evaluations shall be set.

External experts will work remotely. They are not part of a panel and do not liaise with each other. No consensus report is requested. No physical meetings are foreseen.

The SWG and IG will identify the experts, contact them and collect the declarations of non-conflict of interest and confidentiality with the technical support from the ESFRI Secretariat/StR-ESFRI. StR-ESFRI will take care of the administrative and financial aspects, such as the payment of the experts.

HEARINGS

The overall scope of the hearings is to get answers on all critical questions and effectively obtain any missing information to allow the evaluation of the [SCIENTIFIC CASE](#) and the [IMPLEMENTATION CASE](#). The hearings are a determinant step in the preparation of the final conclusions and recommendations of SWGs and IG and hence of the final consolidated report. Preliminary conclusions or recommendations are not to be discussed with the Project.

One hearing per project is foreseen in order to clarify specific aspects.

After the evaluation based on the customized questionnaire, the SWG and IG will list a series of max. 10 critical questions to be asked to the project.

At least 6 weeks before the hearings, the ESFRI Secretariat shall finalise the schedule of hearings and send the invitation to the Projects, together with critical questions to be answered during the hearing.

At least one month before the hearings, the ESFRI Secretariat will assure that all ESFRI participants to the hearings have access to the final version of the relevant documents (proposal, previous monitoring reports, draft conclusions from SWG and IG, list of critical questions, etc.). Maximum three people per project are invited to the hearing.

The hearing will be chaired by a EB member. The panel for the hearing is composed by maximum 5 persons: the main SWG Chair + Rapporteur (or Deputy Rapporteur), by the IG Chair (or Vice-Chair) + Rapporteur (or Deputy Rapporteur) and by one member from DIGIT. In addition to that, a representative of the EC will attend the meeting as an observer. A representative of StR-ESFRI will also be present as an observer to prepare a short report of the meeting. Depending on the subject of the project and critical questions, the Chair of the main SWG may ask the rapporteur from the secondary SWG to take part in the hearing.

Questions will be asked only by the SWG and IG rapporteurs or from the DIGIT member (in case of specific questions on the e-needs).

The EB member should act as chair and moderate the hearing without asking specific questions to the Project. The EB member should also sign the declaration of non-conflict of interest and confidentiality for the specific project.

Each hearing will last 2 hours, of which 1 hour 20 minutes with the project:

- 15 minutes WITHOUT the project: for the EB member and the panel to briefly prepare the hearing, i.e. to recall the proceedings for the hearing and go through the criticalities of the Project.
- 40 minutes for the Project to give a presentation of its answers to the critical questions by the Project.
- 40 minutes for a discussion between the Project and the SWG and IG representatives in order to discuss the answers to the critical questions and to clarify any remaining question.
- 25 minutes WITHOUT the Project for the EB member (as observer) and the panel to discuss first impressions as a first step of the preparation of the final evaluation reports.

The presentations given by the Project during the hearing should be collected by the ESFRI Secretariat and joined to the report of the hearing.

After the hearing, the SWG and the IG will adapt their respective evaluation reports for the [SCIENTIFIC CASE](#) or [IMPLEMENTATION CASE](#). Afterwards, they should meet for a harmonization meeting (or for more than one meeting if needed) in order to finalize the consolidated evaluation form to be sent to the ESFRI EB.

All communication with the Projects will be done by the ESFRI Secretariat.

SCORING (SEE PUBLIC GUIDE)

For the scoring, please refer to the Public Guide p.13.

It is necessary to meet the minimal key requirements for each of the five dimensions of the [SCIENTIFIC CASE](#) and of the [IMPLEMENTATION CASE](#). This does not imply that each single minimal key requirement has to be met as far as the ensemble of minimal key requirements for each dimension is satisfactory.

For the *Projects 2010*, the scoring values – very high, high, medium, low – will be attributed for each of the five dimensions of the [SCIENTIFIC CASE](#) and of the [IMPLEMENTATION CASE](#) in respect to what degree they fulfil the minimal key requirements for the *Implementation Phase*.

The harmonization between the SWGs and IG should guarantee that the specificities of the scientific domains are taken into account.

PRINCIPLES, CONFLICT OF INTEREST (COI) AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Principles, as reported in the *ESFRI Roadmap 2021 Public Guide* should be applied.

Please refer to the Public Guide also for Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality.

In particular, for what concerns CoI, this may arise, in particular, due to science competition, scientific and economic interests, political or national affinities, family or emotional, or any other relevant connection or shared interest. SWG and IG Members may not be Rapporteurs for Projects that are proposed or hosted by their MS or AC, nor in which they are directly involved. It is recommended that SWG and IG Members are not involved in the evaluation and assessment of Projects in which their home country is a formal partner – i.e. expression of Political Support, signature of a Letter of Intent or Memorandum of Understanding, submission of ERIC statutes. Taking these here above criteria, in case of Projects with many participating countries and consequent impossibility to find members of the SWGs and IG fitting these requirements, a rapporteur from a participating country (not leading country) could exceptionally be accepted. The Chair of the SWGs and the IG should organise an inventory of the potential CoIs for all the members of their group and regularly update it. This inventory should be communicated to the ESFRI EB. They should inform the EB about any situations constituting conflict of interest or potentially giving rise to conflict of interest in the future. The SWGs and IG Chairs are responsible for collecting the “Declarations of Non-conflict of Interest and of Confidentiality” signed by all the members involved in the Projects monitoring and send these to StR-ESFRI.

During the meetings of the SWG or IG, a member (including the Chair of the WG) with a Col concerning a project being monitored will be asked not to take part to the discussions.

External experts acting as reviewers should sign the declaration of non-conflict of interest and confidentiality.

The EB members participating in the hearings should also sign the declaration of non-conflict of interest and confidentiality for the specific projects.

Strict rules for confidentiality apply: the reports from external Reviewers are exclusively for internal use within the respective SWG or IG and will not be revealed to neither the Working Groups nor to the Plenary Forum. The SWG and IG reports are for internal use only amongst the Working Groups involved. The SWG & IG Recommendations are for the EB, the Plenary Forum and the Projects concerned and may not be further distributed.

Anyone directly and indirectly involved in the evaluations and assessments shall:

- not discuss evaluation and assessment matters, such as the content, the results or the opinions of fellow experts with anyone;
- not contact partners in the consortium, sub-contractors or any third parties;
- maintain the confidentiality of documents - paper or electronic - at all times and wherever the evaluation work is executed.

ESFRI keeps the names of external Reviewers confidential and will not disclose them to the public. The Plenary Forum may see the overall list of Reviewers. For each evaluation and assessment, only the relevant persons will have access to a repository of all confidential documents such as external evaluation reports, draft versions of the evaluation reports and draft versions of the recommendations.

TIMELINE

STEPS	DATE (RANGE)
INFODAY	25 September 2019
CUSTOMIZED QUESTIONNAIRE SENT TO THE PROJECTS	January 2020
SUBMISSION OF QUESTIONNAIRE	June 2020
FINALISATION OF CRITICAL QUESTIONS AND INVITATION TO THE HEARINGS	January 2021
HEARINGS	February-March 2021
ESFRI FORUM DECISION	June 2021
ESFRI ROADMAP Launch	October –December 2021

EVALUATION OF NEW PROPOSALS

The specific goals of the evaluation of the *New Proposals* for the ESFRI roadmap 2021 are to:

- evaluate the [SCIENTIFIC CASE](#) and [IMPLEMENTATION CASE](#), i.e. to what degree they fulfil the minimal key requirements of the *Preparation Phase*;
- assess the strategic value of the proposals within the broader RI ecosystem and identify links and complementarities among RIs and the potential of integration;
- evaluate the potential of the proposals for further internationalisation and globalization;
- assess the potential capacity of the proposals to move towards full implementation within the ten-year rule;
- propose a status, conclusions and recommendations on the possible inclusion in the Roadmap 2021 to the Plenary Forum;
- update the public information on the new projects for the Roadmap 2021.

For the Roadmap 2021, ESFRI will evaluate the *New Proposals* along the following considerations:

- The exercise involves an evaluation of the [SCIENTIFIC CASE](#) and [IMPLEMENTATION CASE](#) of each proposal in order to assess their readiness to be considered as an ESFRI project.
- Site visits are not foreseen for the evaluation of the new proposals.
- The MOS+ system will be used for completing the questionnaire.
- The SWG & IG recommendations per proposal are presented to the EB.
- The ESFRI EB will prepare the final recommendations to be presented to the Plenary Forum for discussion and adoption.

After having checked their eligibility, the EB proposes to the Forum a list of eligible proposals and their assignment to the relevant SWGs. Each proposal will be evaluated by the relevant SWGs – i.e. the main SWG –, by a second SWG (if requested by the proposer and/or considered necessary by the main SWG) and by the DIGIT SWG (for the section on e-needs) for the [SCIENTIFIC CASE](#) as well as by the IG for the Implementation Case. The Chairs of the main SWG, of DIGIT SWG and IG involved in each proposal are responsible for establishing the connection in between the different working groups for the whole evaluation process. It is recommended to foresee physical meetings or teleconferences between the different working groups throughout the evaluation process. The Chairs or Vice-Chairs and the rapporteur of each proposal should participate in these meetings or teleconference. As far as possible, the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the working groups should not act as a rapporteur, deputy rapporteur or reader.

1. The SWG Chair composes one evaluation panel for each proposal. Each panel comprises one Rapporteur, one Deputy Rapporteur and at least one and maximum two more Members of the SWG with the role of Readers. Each panel is assessed for absence of Conflict of Interest (CoI) with respect to the proposal. The evaluation panels should be communicated to the ESFRI EB for approval.
2. The DIGIT SWG composes one evaluation panel for each proposal to evaluate the section on e-needs. Each panel comprises one Rapporteur and one Deputy Rapporteur. Each panel is assessed

for absence of Conflict of Interest (Col) with respect to the Project. The DIGIT Chair and the rapporteur for each proposal should interact directly with the respective SWG. The evaluation panels should be communicated to the ESFRI EB for approval.

3. The main SWG Chair and the DIGIT Chair (and when relevant the secondary SWG Chair) will compose a list of high profile international experts to act as reviewers for the evaluation of the [SCIENTIFIC CASE](#) for each specific proposal. Three external reviewers per proposal should be considered for the [SCIENTIFIC CASE](#).
4. The external reviewers must accept the task upon signing the declaration of non-conflict of interest and confidentiality. Only after acceptance, they receive access to the complete documentation and to the template for the evaluation of the [SCIENTIFIC CASE](#) of the proposal (Evaluation Form). In presence of Col, another external expert shall be sought.
5. The external reviewers evaluate remotely the proposal. They are not part of a panel and do not liaise with each other. They draft their report, following the suggested `Evaluation Scientific Case` form. No consensus report is requested.
6. The main SWG Rapporteur drafts the SWG Recommendation integrating the contributions of the SWG Readers, DIGIT SWG and external reviewers' reports, and sends it to his/her respective SWG Chair.
7. Each SWG Chair assures coherence and consistency among all draft SWG Recommendations through internal harmonization meetings. Each SWG Chair assures that all reports are harmonised with those arising from the Implementation Group.
8. The IG composes one evaluation panel for each proposal. Each panel comprises one Rapporteur and one Deputy Rapporteur. Each panel is assessed for absence of Conflict of Interest (Col) with respect to the proposal. The evaluation panels should be communicated to the ESFRI EB for approval.
9. The IG Chair (and Vice-Chair) will prepare a list of high profile international experts to act as reviewers for the evaluation of the [IMPLEMENTATION CASE](#) for each proposal. Three external reviewers per proposal should be considered for the [IMPLEMENTATION CASE](#).
10. The external reviewers must accept the task upon signing the declaration of non-conflict of interest and confidentiality. Only after acceptance, they receive access to the complete documentation and to the template for the evaluation of the [IMPLEMENTATION CASE](#) of the proposal (Evaluation Form). In presence of Col, another external expert shall be sought. The external experts are not part of the panel and do not liaise with each other.
11. The external Reviewers evaluate remotely the proposal. They are not part of a panel and do not liaise with each other. They draft their report, following the suggested `Evaluation Implementation Case` form. No consensus report is requested.
12. The Rapporteur drafts the IG Recommendation, integrating the contributions of the IG deputy rapporteur and the external reviewers' reports and sends it to the IG Chair and Vice-Chair.
13. The IG Chair and Vice-Chair assure coherence and consistency among all draft IG Recommendations. They also assure that all reports are harmonised with those arising from the Strategy Working Groups.

14. Based on this first step on the evaluation, the SWGs and IG should prepare the specific questions for the hearings. In case a proposal is considered uncompetitive, it will not be invited for a hearing and thus no longer be considered as a possible Project.
15. SWGs and IG will foresee harmonization throughout the different steps: evaluating the submitted proposals, drafting the specific questions for the hearings, drafting the evaluation reports, and finalizing the recommendations to be sent to the ESFRI EB.
16. EB and the SWG and IG Chairs will meet in order to finalize the specific questions for the hearings based on the evaluation of the submitted questionnaires.
17. EB and the SWG and IG Chairs will meet to finalize the evaluation reports and recommendations.
18. Once the decision is taken by the Forum, the SWG and IG Chairs will communicate it to the members of their respective WG.

EXTERNAL EXPERTS

External experts to act as reviewers for the evaluation of the [SCIENTIFIC CASE](#) or [IMPLEMENTATION CASE](#) will be selected from a list of high profile international experts. Those external reviewers should not be members of the ESFRI delegations or affiliated to the same institutions.

For the evaluation of the [SCIENTIFIC CASE](#), these should be high level international scientist in the specific field. For the evaluation of the [IMPLEMENTATION CASE](#), these should be high level international people with expertise in RI policy, RI management, etc.

To act as reviewers for a specific proposal, the external experts have to sign the declaration of non-conflict of interest and confidentiality.

These external experts will be remunerated by StR-ESFRI unless they decline to receive remuneration.

Each external expert should be given 1 week to accept or decline the proposal.

Only after the signature of the declaration of non-conflict of interest and confidentiality, they will get access to the questionnaire that they have to evaluate. They will receive the whole questionnaire but will evaluate only the [SCIENTIFIC CASE](#) or the [IMPLEMENTATION CASE](#) depending if they are experts for the SWGs or the IG.

When they receive the questionnaire, they have minimum one month and maximum 45 days to provide the evaluation report. A deadline for all submissions of external evaluations shall be set.

External experts will work remotely. They are not part of a panel and do not liaise with each other. No consensus report is requested. No physical meetings are foreseen.

The SWG and IG will identify the experts, contact them and collect the declarations of non-conflict of interest and confidentiality with the technical support from the ESFRI Secretariat/StR-ESFRI. StR-ESFRI will take care of the administrative and financial aspects, such as the payment of the experts.

HEARINGS

The overall scope of the hearings is to get answers on all critical questions and effectively obtain any missing information to allow the evaluation of the [SCIENTIFIC CASE](#) and the [IMPLEMENTATION CASE](#). The hearings are a determinant step in the preparation of the final conclusions and recommendations of SWGs and IG and hence of the final consolidated report. Preliminary conclusions or recommendations are not to be discussed with the proposers.

One hearing per proposal is foreseen in order to clarify specific aspects.

After the evaluation based on the submitted questionnaire, the SWG and IG will list a series of max. 10 critical questions to be asked to the proposal.

At least 6 weeks before the hearings, the ESFRI Secretariat shall finalise the schedule of hearings and send the invitation to the proposals, together with critical questions to be answered during the hearing.

At least one month before the hearings, the ESFRI Secretariat will assure that all ESFRI participants to the hearings have access to the final version of the relevant documents (proposal, draft conclusions from SWG and IG, list of critical questions, etc.). Maximum three people per proposal are invited to the hearing.

The hearing will be chaired by a EB member. The panel for the hearing is composed by maximum 5 persons: the main SWG Chair + Rapporteur (or Deputy Rapporteur), by the IG Chair (or Vice-Chair) + Rapporteur (or Deputy Rapporteur) and by one member from DIGIT. In addition to that, a representative of the EC will attend the meeting as an observer. A representative of StR-ESFRI will also be present as observer to prepare a short report of the meeting. Depending on the subject of the project and critical questions, the Chair of the main SWG may ask the rapporteur from the secondary SWG to take part in the hearing.

Questions will be asked only by the SWG and IG Rapporteurs or from the DIGIT member (in case of specific questions on the e-needs).

The EB member should act as chair and moderate the hearing without asking specific questions to the proposer. The EB member should also sign the declaration of non-conflict of interest and confidentiality for the specific proposal.

Each hearing will last 2 hours, of which 1 hour 20 minutes with the proposer:

- 15 minutes WITHOUT the proposer: for the EB member and the panel to briefly prepare the hearing, i.e. to recall the proceedings for the hearing and go through the criticalities of the proposal;
- 40 minutes for the proposer to give a presentation of its answers to the critical questions;
- 40 minutes for a discussion between the proposer and the SWG and IG representatives in order to discuss the answers to the critical questions and to clarify any remaining question;
- 25 minutes WITHOUT the proposer for the EB member (as observer) and the panel to discuss first impressions as a first step of the preparation of the final evaluation reports.

The presentations given by the proposer during the hearing should be collected by the ESFRI Secretariat and joined to the report of the hearing.

After the hearing, the SWG and the IG will adapt their respective evaluation reports for the [SCIENTIFIC CASE](#) or [IMPLEMENTATION CASE](#). Afterwards, they should meet for a harmonization meeting (or for more than one meeting if needed) in order to finalize the consolidated evaluation form to be sent to the ESFRI EB.

All communication with the proposers will be done by the ESFRI Secretariat.

SCORING (SEE PUBLIC GUIDE)

For the scoring, please refer to the public guide p.13.

It is necessary to meet the minimal key requirements for each of the five dimensions of the [SCIENTIFIC CASE](#) and of the [IMPLEMENTATION CASE](#). This does not imply that each single minimal key requirement has to be met as far as the ensemble of minimal key requirements for each dimension is satisfactory.

For the *New Proposals*, the scoring values – very high, high, medium, low – will be attributed for each of the five dimensions of the [SCIENTIFIC CASE](#) and of the [IMPLEMENTATION CASE](#) in respect to what degree they fulfil the minimal key requirements for the *Preparation Phase* and what are the plans/feasibility for reaching full implementation within the 10-year term.

The harmonization between the SWGs and IG should guarantee that the specificities of the scientific domains are taken into account.

PRINCIPLES, CONFLICT OF INTEREST (COI) AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Principles, as reported in the *ESFRI Roadmap 2021 Public Guide* should be applied.

Please refer to the Public Guide also for Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality.

In particular, for what concerns COI, this may arise, in particular, due to science competition, scientific and economic interests, political or national affinities, family or emotional, or any other relevant connection or shared interest. SWG and IG Members may not be Rapporteurs for Proposals that are proposed by their MS or AC, nor in which they are directly involved. It is recommended that SWG and IG Members are not involved in the evaluation and assessment of proposals in which their home country is a formal partner (expression of Political Support). Taking these hereabove criteria, in case of proposals with many participating countries and consequent impossibility to find members of the SWGs and IG fitting these requirements, a rapporteur from a participating country (not leading country, and not main contributor) could exceptionally be accepted. The Chair of the SWGs and the IG should organise an inventory of the potential COIs for all the members of their group and regularly update it. This inventory should be communicated to the ESFRI EB. They should inform the EB about any situations constituting conflict of interest or potentially giving rise to conflict of interest in the future. The SWGs and IG Chairs are responsible for collecting the “Declarations of Non-conflict of Interest and of Confidentiality” signed by all the members involved in the proposals evaluation and send these to StR-ESFRI.

During the meetings of the SWG or IG, a member (including the Chair of the WG) with a Col concerning a proposal being evaluated will be asked not to take part to the discussions.

External experts acting as reviewers should sign the declaration of non-conflict of interest and confidentiality.

The EB members participating in the hearings should also sign the declaration of non-conflict of interest and confidentiality for the specific proposals.

Strict rules for confidentiality apply: the reports from external Reviewers are exclusively for internal use within the respective SWG or IG and will not be revealed to neither the Working Groups nor to the Plenary Forum. The SWG and IG reports are for internal use only amongst the Working Groups involved. The SWG & IG Recommendations are for the EB, the Plenary Forum and the proposals concerned and may not be further distributed.

Anyone directly and indirectly involved in the evaluations and assessments shall:

- not discuss evaluation and assessment matters, such as the content, the results or the opinions of fellow experts with anyone;
- not contact partners in the consortium, sub-contractors or any third parties;
- maintain the confidentiality of documents - paper or electronic - at all times and wherever the evaluation work is executed.

ESFRI keeps the names of external Reviewers confidential and will not disclose them to the public. The Plenary Forum may see the overall list of Reviewers. For each evaluation and assessment, only the relevant persons will have access to a repository of all confidential documents such as external evaluation reports, draft versions of the evaluation reports and draft versions of the recommendations.

TIMELINE

STEPS	NEW DATE (RANGE)	EB + Forum
INFODAY	25 September 2019	
SUBMISSION OF QUESTIONNAIRE	9 September 2020	
FINALISATION OF CRITICAL QUESTIONS	February – March 2021	EB + Chairs meeting (1 full day meeting) for critical questions and low profile proposals not invited to the hearings
HEARINGS	April - May 2021	
ESFRI FORUM DECISION	June – September 2021	Two opportunities Forum meeting in June and second Forum in mid September (as backup)
ESFRI ROADMAP Launch	October – December 2021	