

## ***FEDERAL RESEARCH PROGRAMME ON DRUGS***

### **CALL FOR PROPOSALS 2016**

#### ***INFORMATION FILE***

*This file contains the necessary information for applying to the call for proposals*

*Closing date: 26 September 2016 3PM*

*Proposals to be sent per email in word and PDF to:*

[drugs\\_call@belspo.be](mailto:drugs_call@belspo.be)

## 1. THE FEDERAL RESEARCH PROGRAMME ON DRUGS

On 19 January 2001, the Council of Ministers adopted the « *Federal Policy note on the problematic of drugs* ». This note contained a list of measures for federal authorities and a budget of 12.395.000BEF was made available. The ventilation of this budget per authority was finally adopted in the Council of Ministers of 5 July 2001. The Minister in charge of the federal Science Policy received an annual budget of 940.000€ to organise and manage a research programme in support of the decision making in the field of illegal drugs.

One of the most important measures of the Note was a Cooperation Agreement between the Federal, Regional and Community level for implementing a global and integrated approach on drugs. This Cooperation Agreement was finally signed by the last authority in September 2008. A few months later, the *Policy Cell Drugs* (PCD) was put in place whose first mission was to elaborate a Common Declaration on a Global and Integrated approach on Drugs for Belgium. The Inter-Ministerial Conference (including 21 ministers of all levels) adopted the text on 25 January 2010. Research is one of the priorities of the Common Declaration.

The Policy Cell Drugs (PCD) is the organ in charge of overall management of the global approach on drugs. It is composed of representatives of the ministers competent in the field at Federal, Regional and Community level. Within this cell, a sub-cell “scientific research and information” (Cell SRI) is created. It is in charge of discussing new research themes and preparing the annual working programme that is used for the call of proposals organised by BELSPO.

The Research programme supports the global and integrated approach, including topics on the demand side (health, prevention...) and the supply side (trafficking, repression, criminality...), considering illegal drugs but also alcohol, tobacco and psychotropic medication.

The themes that can be funded in the programme should comply with the following principles:

- *Scientific excellence and international integration;*
- *Concentration around key questions covering multiple competences and offering a coherent framework in which fragmentation is minimized. The themes should support the strategic orientations of the Belgian drug policy as adopted by the Inter ministerial Conferences on Drugs ;*
- *Collaboration with other entities should be fostered (authorities at the federal, regional, community, international level) and flexible funding mechanisms involving these levels should be sought;*

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## 2. THEMATIC PRIORITIES 2016

### **NPS – NEW PSYCHOACTIVE SUBSTANCES**

#### **Context**

The concept NPS should be interpreted in broad terms, using the definition given by the EMCDDA: *“A new psychoactive substance is defined as ‘a new narcotic or psychotropic drug, in pure form or in preparation, that is not controlled by the United Nations drug conventions, but which may pose a public health threat comparable to that posed by substances listed in these conventions’.”*

NPS has become a global phenomenon affecting all regions in the world and may pose health and social risks to our societies.

From a prevention and treatment perspective it is important to gather objective information.

#### **Scope**

In Belgium, there is a growing need for research on this topic in order to adequately tackle the challenges NPS provides to its users and society.

Current knowledge needs are:

- Why do people use NPS and how do they use it?
- What are the needs of users and caregivers in terms of prevention, treatment and harm reduction?
- What are the best practices of prevention, treatment and harm reduction?
- Development of treatment and harm reduction initiatives in Belgium.
- ...

The dimensions mentioned above call for different approaches and researchers are invited to combine several of them in their proposal, notwithstanding that other dimensions could be taken into account.

BELSPO considers that projects requesting a maximum indicative contribution of €280.000 would allow this topic to be addressed appropriately. Applicants are free to determine the length and manpower needed to run this project within the maximum available budget.

### **DRUG CONSUMPTION ROOMS**

#### **Context**

Drug consumption rooms have been operating (successfully) in Europe for the past three decades. These facilities, where drugs can be used under the supervision of trained staff, primarily aim to reduce health risks, prevent drug-related overdose deaths and connect high-risk drug users with addiction treatment and other health and social services.

Evidence of the effectiveness of these facilities with regards to their ability to reach and stay in contact with highly marginalized populations, self-reported reduce in high risk injecting drug use, an increased uptake of both detoxification and drug dependence treatment..., has been widely documented.

### **Scope**

Notwithstanding the implementation of a few pilot projects regarding drug consumption rooms, Belgium does not provide these facilities to its drug using population. Reflecting on these pilot projects and with the aim to implement consumption rooms in Belgium, this feasibility study should provide hands-on information on:

- What are the needs regarding these drug consumption rooms?
- What are the legal implications of these facilities (taking into account the accountability of the state and the care givers)?
- What are the basic conditions for the implementation of these drug consumption rooms?
- ...

BELSPO considers that projects requesting a maximum indicative contribution of €100.000 would allow this topic to be addressed appropriately. Applicants are free to determine the length and manpower needed to run this project within the maximum available budget.

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## 3. GUIDELINES FOR COMPLETING THE APPLICATION FORM

This section provides a step by step guidance in order to complete the APPLICATION FORM.

For the sake of simplification, the word 'he' will be used to designate both man and woman in the remainder of the text.

### PART 1 - ADMINISTRATIVE AND SCIENTIFIC INFORMATION

Proposals can be submitted by a **single promoter** or by a **network of promoters** according to the requirements of the topic in terms of multidisciplinary for which the application is submitted.

#### **An eligible promoter**

- Belongs to a not-for-profit organisation legally enrolled in Belgium and having the pursuit of scientific research clearly stated in the statutes of this organisation (e.g. university, high school, public research centre<sup>1</sup>...);
- Furthermore, he must be entitled to commit his/her organisation in contractual obligations (e.g. full professor...).

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<sup>1</sup> access the full list of not-for profit research centres recognised by the federal government on:  
[http://www.belspo.be/belspo/fisc/wi\\_list\\_fr.stm](http://www.belspo.be/belspo/fisc/wi_list_fr.stm)

A promoter can be a physical person or the appointed leader of a group of researchers from the same organisation.

A **network of promoters** is composed of two or more promoters belonging to at least two different eligible organisations.

The **coordinator** of a proposal - or Principle Investigator - must be an eligible promoter and shall be appointed by the network to coordinate its activities throughout the project. He shall also coordinate the relations with BELSPO for administrative and scientific deliverables foreseen in the research contract.

#### An **international partner**

- Belongs to an organisation enrolled outside Belgium which regularly performs scientific research;
- He must be in charge of a substantial part of the project (e.g. a work package);
- He will participate on the basis of a co-funding: at least 50% of his costs in the BELSPO project shall be covered by national funding sources, the remainder can be covered by the budget made available by BELSPO;
- this co-funding can be based on an in-kind contribution (e.g. data made available to the BELSPO-project...);

A **subcontractor** is a person or an organisation (national or foreign) which is performing either non-scientific tasks (e.g. a translation company) or which may possess specific scientific expertise punctually required by the project. The budget of the subcontractor shall not exceed 25% of the overall budget of the project. Subcontractors cannot be considered partners and shall therefore not fill out this part of the application.

In PART 1 of the SUBMISSION FORMS, the promoter(s) of a proposal shall provide a CV detailing information on their expertise in the field of the project: recently conducted projects in the same domain, affiliation to international networks in the field, recent published articles. It is useful for the reviewers of the proposal that web links are provided when possible.

## PART 2 - DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSAL

In this part of the Submission Form, the research project will be described with great care, ensuring that the following dimensions are properly addressed:

- the requirements of the call;
- the international dimension of the project, by considering at least similar scientific developments abroad and, if possible, enabling comparisons and best practices elsewhere;
- the whole Belgian territory. Unjustified discrepancies between regions/communities will not be accepted;
- the advancement of scientific knowledge and the support to policy and society

To this respect, applicants shall in particular insist on:

- Providing the state of the current scientific knowledge and develop their research objectives against this state of the art. Applicants shall clearly explain how other researchers (in Belgium or elsewhere) have contributed to the issue at hand and how the current proposal departs or builds on previous knowledge. In this respect, applicants will estimate the relative importance (in %) in terms of science, policy and society (e.g. a project whose aim is to implement existing knowledge in the Belgian context using well-proven methodologies will assign a relatively low importance to "impact on science"). This information will be used by reviewers in assessing the project ;
- developing these objectives through a methodology;
- Detailing with great the data (qualitative and/or quantitative) that will be used and/or to be collected. Provide information on population, sample, variables, access conditions.. to ensure that external reviewers are sufficiently informed to make an assessment. Access to existing data must be ensured and explained in the proposal. If it appears that the data envisaged cannot be disclosed or made available in due time, BELSPO shall see a reason to cancel the research contract;
- With respect to the objectives of the project, the chosen methodology and data to implement it, applicants will describe the tasks involved in each work package along a timetable. For each task and WP, the division of labour will be provided (effort estimated in Person/Month).

### PART 3 - IMPACT OF THE PROJECT AND ENGAGEMENT IN RESPONSIBLE RESEARCH AND INNOVATION (RRI)

In this part, applicants will provide information on 1) the potential impact of the project for science and society and 2) how the project engages in Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI). Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) implies that societal actors (researchers, citizens, policy makers, business, third sector organisations, etc.) work together during the whole research and innovation process in order to better align both the process and its outcomes with the values, needs and expectations of society<sup>2</sup>.

#### **Potential impact**

Taking into account the relative importance (in %) attributed to the impact on science/policy/society in PART 2 of the proposal, applicants will explain how the outcomes of the project can contribute to the current state of the art in research and to providing relevant information for policy-making and society.

#### **RRI**

In the proposal, applicants will take great care in describing how they

- Engage with societal actors during the research process, in the follow-up committee that is compulsory to any BELSPO-funded project and possibly through other means;

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<sup>2</sup> More information on RRI can be obtained on: <https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/en/h2020-section/responsible-research-innovation>

- develop outreach and valorisation activities at the end of the project to ensure the widest transfer and embeddedness of the produced knowledge;
- Address the gender dimension by fostering gender balance in research teams, and integrating the gender dimension in research content to improve quality and societal relevance of expected results.
- Tackle ethical issues - especially when dealing with vulnerable groups - to ensure quality and integrity of the research (e.g. by adopting existing codes of ethical conduct adopted by the university of affiliation of the research team...);

#### PART 4 - RESOURCES

The resources allocated in the call by BELSPO and, when relevant, by other authorities, will be described and justified. The following rules will be respected:

- resources can only be allocated to the activities of the project;
- the distribution of resources between promoters ensures that each receives between 15 and 60% of the total budget of the project;
- each partner shall dedicate at least 60% of his budget to personnel costs;
- eligible costs are:
  - **Staff:**
    - the promoters of a proposal are generally appointed staff on the payroll of their institution and cannot receive funding. Personnel costs eligible for reimbursement by BELSPO only concerns researchers recruited under a regular labour contract or through tax-free scholarships.
    - BELSPO endorses a full cost model: all personnel costs are eligible for funding ((gross indexed wages including taxes, social security charges...))
    - if the researcher can be identified by name in the proposal, his/her real personnel costs will be provided.
    - if the researcher has not yet been identified (e.g. would be recruited once the project is granted), the following maximum amounts shall not be exceeded in the proposal:
      - 66.000€/year for a Master degree, regardless of experience;
      - 90.000€ for a PhD, regardless of experience;
      - 50.000€ for technical staff, regardless of experience.
  - **General operating costs:** the amount of GOC is fixed at a maximum of 10% (15% for the coordinator of the project) of the Personnel Costs. It is a lump sum for which no invoices will be required. This amount covers the usual expenses of any research project, including travel to meetings, usual supplies (books, data...), organising or attending conferences, software...
  - **Specific Operation Costs:** costs that are specific to the project that do not fall under the usual GOCs. These SOC include for example the organisation of a survey, access to expensive research infrastructure, organisation of large consultations (series of focus groups, consensus meetings with the field...). Such costs will be reimbursed upon presentation of invoices;

- **Equipment:** hardware, laboratory material and other apparatus and instruments... Reimbursement by BELSPO will be based on invoices presented in the first half of the project;
- **Subcontracting:** the expenses incurred by a third party performing either non-scientific tasks (organising a large conference, a survey...) or well-limited scientific tasks requiring competences outside the network (e.g. specific statistical calculations...). The institution of the Coordinator will make a bilateral contract with the subcontractor, pre-finance his/her activity and be reimbursed by BELSPO upon presentation of a global invoice. The total budget for subcontracting shall not exceed 25% of the total budget of the Coordinator.
- **Overheads:** lump sum (no invoices required) of max 5% of (Personnel Costs + GOC + SOC) covering telephone, administration, maintenance, heating, electricity...

**International partners** are eligible to a maximum of 20% of the total budget of the proposal. This budget can only cover staff and operation costs of the foreign partner. The participation of such partners is conditional on existing national funding to 50% or more. In such a co-funding model, BELSPO can cover up to 50% of the costs of the foreign partner. The prerequisite of an existing national funding source can be replaced by an equivalent in-kind contribution of the foreign partner to the project.

An Excel table is provided in the Submission Form in which lump sums (GOCs, Overheads) are automatically generated.

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#### 4. SELECTION OF PROPOSALS

The process to evaluate and select proposals is organised as follows:

##### **Eligibility check**

Proposals are examined by BELSPO on administrative eligibility criteria (proposal submitted in due time and form, consortium composed of eligible partners, budgets comply with requirements of the programme...).

Eligible proposals are then sent to reviewers for evaluation.

##### **Evaluation of proposals by external reviewers**

Each proposal submitted in this call will be reviewed by a minimum of three external experts in a two-step procedure.

In a first step, reviewers will work remotely on the proposal(s). To this end, they will read the call text, this Information Guide, the proposal(s). They will complete an Evaluation Form. This form is provided in annex.



In a second step, evaluation forms for a given proposal will be bundled and communicated to the experts who evaluated this proposal. One rapporteur will be designated and will be in charge of drafting a consensus report with the assistance of the other evaluators. Only consensus reports will be communicated to the Programme Committee members and provided as feedback to the applicants.

### **Selection of proposals**

Based on the consensus reports, proposals for a given topic of the call will be ranked according to their scientific merits. In case of equal overall scores between two or more proposals for a given topic of the call, preference will be given by default to consortiums in which Federal Scientific Institutions<sup>3</sup> and/or teams from the North and the South of the country are represented.

The ranking list and the consensus reports will be discussed with the members of the Programme Committee. This committee, composed of the members of the Working group "Research and Scientific information" of the General Cell Drug Policy (representatives of the Ministers in charge of the Belgian Integrated and integral Drug policy), provides a motivated strategic advice.

The selection of proposals to be funded is made by the Minister in charge of the Federal Science Policy, based on the scientific evaluation by reviewers and the strategic advice of the Programme Committee.

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## 5. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

Applicants shall use the Submission Form that can be downloaded from the website of BELSPO.

Submission forms shall be introduced in English in electronic form: Word or Open Office Format **AND** in PDF. Submission Forms will respect the eligibility criteria listed in the annexe.

Deadline for submission: **26 September 2016 3PM**

Applications to be sent to: [drugs\\_call@belspo.be](mailto:drugs_call@belspo.be)

A receipt will be sent by email after reception of your proposals.

Information on this call can be obtained at:

Aziz Naji - programme manager – [Aziz.Naji@Belspo.be](mailto:Aziz.Naji@Belspo.be) - 02/238.36.46

Astrid De Schutter – [Astrid.Deschutter@belspo.be](mailto:Astrid.Deschutter@belspo.be) – 02/238.36.12

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<sup>3</sup> the list of Federal Institutions can be found on

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## 6. CALENDAR OF THE CALL

- Beginning of June: opening of the call for proposals
- 26 September: closing of the call
- 26 September – 30 September: eligibility check
- 3 October – 28 October: evaluation of proposals
- Beginning of November: advice from Programme Committee
- November: selection by Secretariat of State in charge of the federal science policy
- December: preparation of the research contracts with the selected teams
- February/March 2017: start of the projects

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## 7. COMPLAINTS

BELSPO places great importance on the quality of its service and on improving the way it operates. A special form to handle complaints has been created.

The **complaint form** is available at the following address:

[http://www.belspo.be/belspo/organisation/complaints\\_en.stm](http://www.belspo.be/belspo/organisation/complaints_en.stm)

Complaints submitted anonymously or which are offensive or not related to our organisation will not be processed.

A complaint is handled as follows:

- Once your complaint has been filed, a notification of receipt will be sent.
- The complaint will be forwarded to the relevant departments and individuals and will be processed within one month.
- An answer will be sent by e-mail or letter;
- The complaint will be treated with strict confidentiality.

If you are dissatisfied by the initial response to a complaint, you can always contact the Médiateur Fédéral/Federaal Ombudsman, rue Ducale 43, 1000 Brussels. (email [contact@mediateurfederal.be](mailto:contact@mediateurfederal.be)).

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## 8. ANNEXES

### **ANNEX 1 - ELIGIBILITY OF PROPOSALS**

*This annex enables potential applicants to check the eligibility of their proposal. BELSPO will fill out this form for each proposal and send it to the promoter/coordinator after receipt of the proposal.*

The Belgian Science Policy Office (BELSPO) ensures that proposals meet all the eligibility criteria listed below. Proposals that do not meet one or more eligibility criteria will not be evaluated. Coordinators of ineligible proposals will be informed by BELSPO.

The eligibility of each proposal is verified on the basis of information provided by the submitters in the submission file. For all proposals submitted, the following criteria are examined. Only those that meet ALL these criteria are used for evaluation.

- The submission form is complete

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- The submission form was submitted in electronic format (in Word/Open Office and pdf)

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- The submission file was submitted no later than 22 September 2015, 15:00

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- The promoter (s) is (are) employed by an eligible institution (not-for-profit organisation legally enrolled in Belgium and having the pursuit of scientific research clearly stated in the statutes of this organisation (e.g. university, high school, public research centre<sup>4</sup>...))

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- In case of a network, at least two participants are from 2 different eligible institutions

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- Budgetary aspects:
  - the budget of each financed Belgian institution is between 15% and 60% of the project budget
  - at least 60% of the project budget is spent on personnel
  - the budget for subcontracting does not exceed 25% of the total budget allocated to the concerned partner
  - the budget of the foreign partners does not exceed 20% of the total budget requested by the network

## ANNEX 2 - EVALUATION FORM

Proposal's acronym:	<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>
Expert's name:	<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>
Date:	<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>

<sup>4</sup> access the full list of not-for profit research centres recognised by the federal government on: [http://www.belspo.be/belspo/fisc/wi\\_list\\_fr.stm](http://www.belspo.be/belspo/fisc/wi_list_fr.stm)

STEP 1 - IN/OUT OF SCOPE REVIEW	IN	Partially OUT	Totally OUT
<p>In assessing the in/out of scope character of the proposal, please refer to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the description of the topic of the call</li> <li>the national coverage of the proposal (unjustified discrepancies between regions and Communities are not accepted)</li> </ul> <p><b>Only proposals fully in scope are eligible for funding and should be fully evaluated.</b></p> <p>If the proposal is <u>partially or totally out of scope</u>, step 2 of this evaluation file should not be completed.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p><b>Comments required IF the proposal is "PARTIALLY or TOTALLY OUT OF SCOPE"</b></p> <p>Click here to insert comments.</p>			

STEP 2 QUALITY OF THE PROPOSAL (ONLY FOR PROPOSALS IN SCOPE)	
<p>Use the following scale in your evaluation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6 - Excellent/outstanding</li> <li>5 - Very good</li> <li>4 - Good</li> <li>3 - Average</li> <li>2 - Poor</li> <li>1 - Very poor</li> <li>0 - Unable to assess/Fail</li> </ul>	
1. SCIENTIFIC QUALITY	Score (0-6)
<p>A single score will be used to assess:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the knowledge of the current state of the art,</li> <li>the clarity of research objectives,</li> <li>their translation into an appropriate and well-described methodology...</li> <li>... using appropriate and well-described data</li> <li>... in a well-thought work plan</li> <li>coherence between stated objectives and expected outcomes (from the methodology and data to be used or collected)</li> <li>work plan and allocation of person/month</li> </ul>	

<p><b>Comments compulsory :</b></p>	
<p>Click here to insert comments.</p>	
<p><b>2. IMPACT OF THE PROJECT AND ENGAGEMENT IN RESPONSIBLE RESEARCH AND INNOVATION</b></p>	
<p><b>2. 1. Impact on science</b></p> <p>Taking into account the relative potential impact (in %) attributed by the applicants on science/decision-making/society, assess the contribution of the project to existing knowledge and the advancement of the academic debate in the field of the project.</p>	<p><b>Score (0-6)</b></p>
<p><b>Comments compulsory:</b></p>	
<p>Click here to insert comments.</p>	
<p><b>2.2. Engagement in responsible Research and Innovation</b></p> <p>Please assess the way the applicants describe the way:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• they will engage with societal actors (decision-makers, field workers...) during the research process, in the follow-up committee (compulsory to any BELSPO-research) and possibly through other means;</li> <li>• they intend to develop outreach activities at the end of the project to ensure the widest transfer (beyond academic circles) and sustainable embeddedness of results to societal actors;</li> <li>• they will address the gender dimension by fostering if possible balance in the composition of the network and integrating gender in the research content to improve quality and societal relevance of expected results;</li> <li>• tackle ethical issues - especially when dealing with vulnerable groups - to ensure quality and integrity of the research</li> </ul>	<p><b>Score (0-6)</b></p>
<p><b>Comments required:</b></p>	

<p>Click here to insert comments.</p>	
<p><b>3. QUALITY OF THE APPLICANT(S)</b></p> <p>Please assess the quality of the applicant(s) by considering their CV, recently achieved projects in the field, international network of affiliation....</p> <p>In case of a network, consider the following additional elements in your evaluation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adequacy of the partnership : composition, task distribution, if app. : added value of international partner and/or subcontracting</li> <li>• Project management</li> <li>• Scientific expertise of each partner</li> </ul> <p><b>Comments required :</b></p> <p>Click here to insert comments.</p>	<p><b>Score (0-6)</b></p>
<p><b>4. ADEQUACY OF RESOURCES</b></p> <p>Please evaluate the resources needed and the expected value for money of the project</p> <p><b>Comments required :</b></p> <p>Click here to insert comments.</p>	<p><b>Score (0-6)</b></p>
<p><b>6. GENERAL APPRECIATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS</b></p> <p><b>Strengths and weaknesses of the project</b></p>	<p><b>Final Score (0-6)</b></p>

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Click here to enter text.</li><li>- Click here to enter text.</li><li>- Click here to enter text.</li><li>- Click here to enter text.</li><li>- Click here to enter text.</li><li>- Click here to enter text.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Click here to enter text.</li><li>- Click here to enter text.</li><li>- Click here to enter text.</li><li>- Click here to enter text.</li><li>- Click here to enter text.</li><li>- Click here to enter text.</li></ul>
<b>recommendations</b>  Click here to insert comments.	
<b>Final appreciation</b>  Click here to insert comments.	