

BRAIN-be 2.0

BELGIAN RESEARCH ACTION THROUGH INTERDISCIPLINARY NETWORKS

PHASE 2 - 2018-2023



Call for proposals 2020-2021

Pillar 1: Challenges and knowledge of the living and non-living world

Pillar 2: Heritage science

Pillar 3: Federal societal challenges

Submission and Evaluation Guidelines

For Applicants and Evaluators

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FOREWORD

This guide is intended both for BRAIN-be 2.0 Applicants and Evaluators.

TRANSPARENCY is the principle and philosophy behind these new guidelines. It arises from the feedback received from applicants and evaluators on Call 2019 expressing the need to have more coherent, easily accessible and simple information for all parties.

Please note that all project proposals, including Expressions of Interest, **MUST be submitted** via the online **SUBMISSION platform** using the templates provided within it.

In the same way, all project proposals **MUST be evaluated** via the **EVALUATION platform**.

No proposal or evaluation will be accepted if sent by other means (email, postal service, in hand...).

Access to the online submission and evaluation platform via the link:

<https://brain-be.belspo.be>

Detailed guidelines explaining the technical issues related to the online submission and evaluation procedure can be found on the **BRAIN-be website** via the link:

https://www.belspo.be/belspo/brain2-be/index_en.stm

AVAILABLE DOCUMENTS

BRAIN-be 2.0 WEBSITE

The following documents are available on the **BRAIN-be 2.0 website**:

https://www.belspo.be/belspo/brain2-be/call_open_en.stm

- Information file: general information on the programme and the Call
- Evaluators eligibility: eligibility rules of proposed experts for the evaluation of the proposal
- Submission and evaluation guidelines (the present document): overview proposal content and corresponding evaluation criteria for the promoters and evaluators
- Evaluation matrix: overview detailed evaluation ratings
- Gender checklist
- Budget rules: overview proposal's budget rules for different project partners
- Platform submission guidelines: information on the use of the platform for submission
- Institution Request Form
- Platform evaluation guidelines: information on the use of the platform for evaluation
- Strategic Committee members: Pillars 1, 2 and 3
- FAQ

BRAIN-be 2.0 SUBMISSION PLATFORM

The following documents are available within the **BRAIN-be 2.0 online SUBMISSION platform**:

<https://brain-be.belspo.be/home/brain-be.asp>

Applicants must Log In to the platform in order to access them. These documents (templates) must be used compulsorily unless otherwise stated:

- Proposal description (Word file)
- Gantt chart (Excel file)
- Ethics form (Word file)
- Antarctica campaign form – only if applicable (Word file)
- Cash or in-kind commitment letter (from institutions/organisations which are not partners of the project) – non mandatory, only if applicable (Word file)
- Data management plan form (Word file)
- Follow-up committee letter of intent – non mandatory (Word file)

PART I: PROCEDURE

SUBMISSION PROCEDURE

PHASE 1 – EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

An **Expression of Interest** needs to be submitted **for the 3 Pillars**.

Prior to submitting a proposal **for the 3 Pillars**, thematic as well as non-thematic proposals, applicants **must first submit an Expression of Interest (Eoi) via the online BRAIN-be 2.0 SUBMISSION Platform**. If the Eoi has not been submitted in time, it will be impossible to submit a full proposal. Eois do not constitute a step in the evaluation process; they will be used by BELSPO to seek foreign experts for the evaluation of the research proposals.

The Eoi will contain:

- The title and acronym of the project
- A brief description of the intended project
- The name and contact details of the foreseen partner(s)
- The name and contact details of 4-6 scientific experts capable of assessing the proposal. See also document 'Evaluators eligibility'.
- The name and contact details of 2 non-grata scientific experts that will be excluded from the evaluation of the proposal (optional).
- 6 keywords

The description of the project is understood as an early stage of reflexion. The content of the description in the full proposal may vary from that of the Eoi to some extent. However, it cannot diverge to the point that the expertise mobilised for the evaluation of the proposal will become irrelevant. Changes concerning the partners (including the coordinator) are accepted. Acronym and keywords must remain the same.

Deadline for the Expression of Interest:
PILLAR 2: Tuesday 19th May 2020 @ 14h00
PILLAR 1 & 3: Tuesday 30th June 2020 @ 14h00

Submitting an Eoi before the deadline is a mandatory condition to submit a full proposal.

PHASE 2 – FULL PROPOSAL

Both for thematic and non-thematic proposals, applicants **must submit the Full Proposal via the online BRAIN-be 2.0 SUBMISSION Platform**. If the Full Proposal does not comply with the submission rules or has not been submitted in time, it will not be taken into account for evaluation.

The proposal will contain ([see section Available Documents](#)):

- The title, acronym and summary of the project
- The name and contact details of the project partner(s)
- The proposal description
- GANTT chart
- Budget table
- Antarctica campaign form – only if applicable
- Data management plan form
- Ethics form
- Contribution commitment letter – optional
- Follow-up committee letter of intent – optional

Deadline for Full proposals:
PILLAR 2: Tuesday 30th June 2020 @ 14h00
PILLAR 1&3: Tuesday 8th September 2020 @14h00

EVALUATION AND SELECTION PROCEDURE

The selection of proposals is based on an international peer-review evaluation that guarantees scientific excellence and the alignment of the projects with federal priorities, including the research strategies of one or more FSIs. The evaluation runs in two phases:

PHASE 1 – SCIENTIFIC PEER REVIEW EVALUATION

BELSPO organises and coordinates a scientific peer review evaluation of each proposal. The principles of this evaluation are the same for each of the 3 Pillars, for which the evaluation takes place in two steps:

- An individual remote written evaluation
- A physical Panel meeting

WRITTEN EVALUATION

For each proposal, an individual written evaluation is performed by a set of 4 international independent experts having an adequate combined expertise to evaluate the research proposal. BELSPO is

responsible for composing this remote 'written evaluation team' with experts from BELSPO's own database and experts suggested by the applicants.

The written evaluation takes place remotely, via the **online BRAIN-be 2.0 EVALUATION Platform**, based on an evaluation form. During this assessment, the experts will only have access to the proposals they will evaluate. They will not know who the other 3 reviewers are for that proposal, nor will they have access to each other's evaluations.

Each reviewer will assess the proposal and provide comments taking into account a variety of (sub)criteria, namely in the following categories:

- In/out of scope
- Scientific quality
- Quality and efficiency of the implementation
- Impact

Information regarding the **written evaluation criteria** is given within this document:
[Section: Submission content for applicants vs. evaluation criteria for remote evaluators.](#)
Information regarding the scale used to assess the criteria is given in document **Evaluation Matrix** (within the **BRAIN-be 2.0 website**):
https://www.belspo.be/belspo/brain2-be/call_open_en.stm.

Once all written evaluations have been introduced, those 4 experts will have access to the written evaluations of their co-peers. Together, they will discuss these evaluations and, based on them, they will reach an agreement and produce a **Consensus Report**. The report will consist of appreciations and comments for the different (sub)criteria. This will too be done remotely, using the **online BRAIN-be 2.0 EVALUATION Platform**.

At this stage, the Consensus Reports are definitive. They will not be modified in the subsequent steps of the evaluation.



The individual evaluations are **neither communicated to the Advisory Committees** of the programme, **nor to the applicants**.

For the sake of transparency and to provide the opportunity to improve their proposal(s) in the future, **applicants will receive an anonymised version of their corresponding Consensus Report(s)**

PREPARATION OF THE PANEL EVALUATION

BELSPO will translate the outcome of each proposal's evaluation into numeric scores. In practice, this will be done as follows:

1. Translating the appreciations given to each sub-criterion into scores;
2. Adding the scores of the sub-criteria to obtain a total for each criterion;
3. Performing a weighted sum of the criteria in the following way:

WEIGHT OF THE DIFFERENT CRITERIA ¹	THEMATIC PROPOSALS	BOTTOM-UP PROPOSALS
Scientific quality	50%	50%
Quality and efficiency of the implementation	20%	25%
Impact	30%	25%

According to the scores obtained, the proposals will be ranked in a list (**Proposal Ranking**). There will be two lists; one for Thematic proposals, and another for Bottom-up proposals. These lists will serve as a base for the Panel discussion.

PANEL EVALUATION

For each Pillar, a **physical Panel meeting** will be organised at BELSPO. Each Panel will receive the corresponding **Proposal Rankings**, and will have access, via the **online BRAIN-be 2.0 EVALUATION Platform**, to the proposals as well as the **anonymised Consensus Reports**. The **Consensus Reports** shall not be modified by the Panel.

The Panel will be composed of experts having the broadest possible expertise on the subjects addressed in the Call within the dedicated Pillar. These will have not participated to the remote evaluation in the Call². The number of experts in the Panel will depend on the topics and expertise that need to be covered.

Each Panel will classify the Thematic and/or Bottom-up proposals into (a) **Panel Funding Scenario(s)** according to specific criteria:

- Budget availability
- Complementarities and/or overlaps between proposals
- The coverage of the thematic priorities of the Call (for Thematic proposals)
- The coherence of the proposals with the strategic objectives (scope) of the Pillars

¹ In/out of scope serves only to discard proposals that are not within the scope of the Call, and will not be counted as criterion for the 'scientific ranking'.

² In case of need and as a last resource BELSPO may call upon Panel members to perform remote evaluations, in the same way that if some Panel member finds him/herself unable to attend, we may invite a remote expert to the Panel.

- The coherence of the proposals with the philosophy of the different project types (Thematic and Bottom-up)
- The coverage in terms of participating research institutions³
- Critical mass

Further information regarding the Panel's criteria is given within this document:

[Section: Evaluation Criteria for Panel evaluators](#)

The **Panel Funding Scenario(s)** will classify all proposals in:

- Highly recommended for funding
- Recommended for funding
- Not recommended for funding

The Panel may list the proposals within each category by order of preference for funding, or put them in alphabetic order within each category.

PHASE 2 – SELECTION PROPOSAL FORMULATED BY THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The **Advisory Committees** (one per Pillar) are composed of foreign and national experts. A balance is sought between the national experts of the FSIs, of Belgian universities/research institutes, and for Pillars 1 and 3, of Federal departments.

Each **Advisory Committee** will receive the following documents:

- Panel Funding Scenarios(s) of the corresponding Pillar – via email
- Document explaining the Panel Funding Scenario(s) of the corresponding Pillar – via email
- Consensus Report of each proposal – via the **online BRAIN-be 2.0 EVALUATION platform**

Based on these documents, each Advisory Committee will perform a strategic selection of the proposals based on the criteria and rules explained hereunder, delivering an **Advisory Committee Funding Scenario**.

The following aspects will be taken into account, in relation to the federal priorities and/or FSIs' competences and domains of expertise, when formulating an **Advisory Committee Funding Scenario** to be transmitted to the **Minister**:

- Alignment of the proposal
- Added value of the proposal
- Contribution of the proposal to creating a critical mass
- Coverage in terms of participating research institutions³

³ Priority will be given to proposals in which one or more FSIs are involved. In addition, preference will be given to proposals composed of partners from different communities and/or that cover the Belgian territory.

The Advisory Committee will formulate an **Advisory Committee Funding Scenario** taking into account the following rules:

- In NO case will proposals deemed 'out of scope' be considered
- In NO case will proposals deemed 'not recommended for funding' be considered
- In NO case will proposals deemed 'highly recommended for funding' be put aside (unless the Advisory Committee believes the proposal falls outside federal competences / FSIs' expertise)

PHASE 3 – FINAL SELECTION OF PROPOSALS BY THE MINISTER

The final selection decision of proposals to be funded is made by the **Belgian Minister** in charge of the **Federal Science Policy** on the basis of the **Advisory Committee Funding Scenario**.

PART II: CRITERIA

EVALUATION CRITERIA – MAIN CONSIDERATIONS

The **Information File** serves too as the basis for evaluating and selecting the proposals. It is available on the **BRAIN-be 2.0 website**: https://www.belspo.be/belspo/brain2-be/call_open_en.stm

The following aspects need to be taken into consideration by applicants and evaluators:

- The projects need to align with the research priorities of the Call and/or scope of the chosen Pillar providing FSIs or federal administrations with valuable results or scientific developments.
- Projects can range from innovative in terms of topics (filling a gap in current knowledge) or in design (using novel techniques/methods) to projects that fill a research gap at Belgian level (catching up on the international state of the art) using well-established methods (reproducing results obtained elsewhere).
- The thematic projects are introduced by interdisciplinary networks who:
 - Seek to integrate disciplines and approaches, covering the Belgian territory, its population and institutions when relevant,
 - Develop new expertise and competences in Belgium or within Belgian scientific institutions, seeking international relevance when appropriate.
- Bottom-up projects are small sized, introduced by a FSI alone or in partnership with one or more research institutions to support the scientific potential of FSI in their specific areas of expertise and/or missions.
- Projects need to put emphasis on the sharing and impact of results, inside and outside academic fora, engaging with non-academic stakeholders at all stages of the project when pertinent.
- Projects must be embedded in institutional strategies to ensure their maintenance / follow-up after the end of the project term.
- Gender should be seriously considered as a transversal dimension throughout the project, from the sex balance in networks to the inclusion of gender in the content of the project and dissemination of results when appropriate. A gender check list is available for applicants and evaluators to keep track of this dimension throughout the entire proposal.
- Ethical issues should be taken into account if applicable, including ways to deal with these using appropriate channels. A specific ethics form must be completed by the applicants.

SUBMISSION CONTENT FOR APPLICANTS VERSUS EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR REMOTE EVALUATORS

These guidelines consist of two columns, describing the required submission content and the criteria for the evaluation of project proposals.

- If you are an **APPLICANT**, you will find the submission content guidelines on the **LEFT**
- If you are an **EVALUATOR**, you will find the evaluation criteria guidelines on the **RIGHT**

SUBMISSION CONTENT GUIDELINES FOR THE APPLICANTS 	EVALUATION CRITERIA GUIDELINES FOR THE EVALUATORS
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- Applicants are required to fill in the corresponding sections of the proposal
- The different sections can be found as online fields and downloadable templates within the online Submission Platform
- Texts have to be comprehensive, to the point, and focused on the specific criteria

- Evaluators are required to mark the specified criteria
- Specific comments must be provided for each selection criteria
- The comments have to be comprehensive, to the point and focused on specific positive and/or negative aspects explaining/justifying the attributed appreciation
- The comments must avoid summarising the research proposal content

[Gender checklist](#)

[BRAIN-be 2.0 website > Gender checklist](#)

- Gender should be seriously considered as a transversal dimension throughout the project, from the sex balance in networks to the inclusion of gender in the content of the project and dissemination of results when appropriate
- A specific gender checklist is available for applicants and evaluators

- Gender should be evaluated as a transversal dimension throughout the project from the sex balance in networks to the inclusion of gender in the content of the project and dissemination of results when appropriate
- A specific gender checklist is available for applicants and evaluators

Information detail

<p style="text-align: right;"> To be filled in on line</p> <p>Title of the proposal (ONLINE) Acronym of the proposal (ONLINE) Proposal summary (ONLINE) Briefly describe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The context and motivation of the project - Expected results and how these will impact science, economy, civil society, culture/heritage, public policy or services, environment and/or on quality of life - Brief explanation of how the project will be carried out <p>Keywords (ONLINE)</p>	<p>Note: This section does not require an evaluation.</p>
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<p>0. Scope (max 0.5 pages)</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Proposal description</p> <p>i. Compliance with the scope of the Call</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For Thematic proposals, explain how the project: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Answers to one or more research priorities of the Call Incorporates interdisciplinary For Bottom-Up proposals, explain how the project aligns with the scope of the Pillar. <p>Note: Interdisciplinarity can be at the level of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mobilised scientific disciplines And / or the integration of methodological approaches And / or the various ways to apprehend the research questions 	<p>0. Scope</p> <p style="text-align: right;">BRAIN-be 2.0 online Platform > Research Proposal > Documents > Proposal description</p> <p>a. IN / OUT of scope evaluation</p> <p>Please indicate whether the project proposal is in scope, partially out of scope or totally out of scope:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For Thematic proposals: Compliance with the research priorities of the Call For Bottom-up proposals: Compliance with the scope of the Pillar <p>Note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you consider the proposal as ‘OUT of scope’, your evaluation ends here. If you consider the proposal ‘IN scope’ OR ‘partially OUT of scope’, you must complete the rest of the evaluation. Proposals ‘partially OUT of scope’ may only be financed based upon the agreement of the Panel, who may impose adequate adjustments for it to be ‘IN scope’. 									
<p>1. Impact overview</p> <p>1.1 Position of the project in terms of impact</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Proposal description</p> <p>Your proposal will be evaluated in accordance to how you position your project in terms of impact. This will allow showing the difference between Thematic and Bottom-up projects, and their position regarding the state of the art, so that evaluators will take it into account. Locate your project in the following 2 tables:</p> <p>i. TABLE I: Position of the project regarding the state of the art (linked to Point 2.1.i)</p> <p>Please put ‘x’ in the cells which are relevant to your project; filling out multiple lines is allowed. The meaning of the ‘x’ is explained within the table.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="174 1102 1021 1316"> <thead> <tr> <th>Positioning of the project regarding the state of the art...</th> <th>Within</th> <th>Beyond / Innovative</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>...in terms of topic</td> <td><i>Catching up (in Belgium) on an existing body of international evidence</i></td> <td><i>Exploring a gap in international research</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td>...in terms of methodology</td> <td><i>Reproducing an existing methodology</i></td> <td><i>Exploring new methodology</i></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><i>[→ Continues next page]</i></p>	Positioning of the project regarding the state of the art...	Within	Beyond / Innovative	...in terms of topic	<i>Catching up (in Belgium) on an existing body of international evidence</i>	<i>Exploring a gap in international research</i>	...in terms of methodology	<i>Reproducing an existing methodology</i>	<i>Exploring new methodology</i>	<p>1. Impact overview</p> <p style="text-align: right;">BRAIN-be 2.0 online Platform > Research Proposal > Documents > Proposal description</p> <p>This section does not require an evaluation here. It is a visual explanation of how applicants locate their project in terms of impact (Point 1.1), followed by a brief explanation (Point 1.2). Note that BRAIN-be 2.0 projects do not necessarily seek innovation. Please take this into account while assessing the proposal.</p> <p>TABLE I: Position of the project regarding the state of the art (linked to Point 2.1.i)</p> <p>Applicants must put ‘x’ in the cells relevant to their project; the meaning of the ‘x’ is explained within the table. Note that projects including FSI(s) must also complete the table underneath.</p> <p>TABLE II: Position of the project in terms of the foreseen impact of the project (linked to Point 4.1.i)</p> <p>Applicants must put ‘x’ in the cells relevant to their project; the meaning of the ‘x’ is explained within the table. They may fill out multiple lines.</p> <p>Note: Impact in Table II is to be understood in terms of the ‘accent’ of the project, methodology and output, and the target public of the project.</p>
Positioning of the project regarding the state of the art...	Within	Beyond / Innovative								
...in terms of topic	<i>Catching up (in Belgium) on an existing body of international evidence</i>	<i>Exploring a gap in international research</i>								
...in terms of methodology	<i>Reproducing an existing methodology</i>	<i>Exploring new methodology</i>								

Projects including FSI(s) must also complete the following table:

Position of the project regarding...	Within	Beyond / Innovative
strategic scientific objectives of the FSI(s)	<i>Filling a gap in knowledge regarding the priorities of the FSI</i>	<i>Beyond the current priorities of the FSI, in preparation for future priorities</i>

ii. TABLE II: Position of the project in terms of its foreseen impact (linked to Point 4.1.i)

Please put "x" in the cells which are relevant to your project; filling out multiple lines is allowed.

Targeted impact in the domain(s) of...	Not relevant	Minor	Moderate	Strong	Major
Scientific knowledge, future capacities and skills					
Economy					
Civil society					
Culture and Heritage					
Policy and public services					
Environment, Health and quality of life					
Collection management and conservation					

1.2 Motivation of the project position with respect to its impact (max. 0.5 pages)

[Proposal description](#)

Briefly state the position of your project with respect to **Point 1.1, Table I and Table II.**

- E.g. "our project aims at implementing results already produced elsewhere than Belgium (hence we are "within the state of the art in terms of topic"). This will imply some level of innovation in producing new data for Belgian (hence "beyond the state of the art in terms of approach"). The core impact of the project is to provide decision-makers with a well-founded set of results that can be compared with experiences in Europe. We plan additional feedback to other societal actors (NGOs, etc.).
- E.g. "our project aims at pursuing strategic scientific objectives of our FSI to open new scientific collections to users in the most suited forms. This might imply some level of innovation, at a small scale; due to the complexity of this collection. The impact of the project is mainly in terms of heritage and culture, while we will also focus on environmental aspect attached to the content of this collection"

2. Research description	2. Scientific quality
<p>2.1 Objectives and state of the art (max. 3 pages without references)</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Proposal description</p> <p>i. Research objectives and state of the art</p> <p>Explain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The aim of the project and break it down in research objectives - The state of current knowledge at national and international level on your topic - The position of the project within the state of the art and, if applicable, the strategic scientific objectives of the FSI (Point 1.1.i, Table I) - Describe the opportunities for (new) national and/or international collaborations - Include relevant publications (A reference section must be provided!) 	<p>2.1 Objectives and state of the art</p> <p style="text-align: right;">BRAIN-be 2.0 online Platform > Research Proposal > Documents > Proposal description</p> <p>a. Research objectives</p> <p>Are the research objectives clear and coherent?</p> <hr/> <p>b. Knowledge of the state of the art</p> <p>Does the proposal provide an accurate overview of the state of the art?</p> <hr/> <p>c. Position of the project with respect to the state of the art</p> <p>How is the project positioned in relation to the state of the art (Point 1.1.i, Table I)?</p>
<p>ii. Scientific risk of the project in relation to its objectives</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Proposal description</p> <p>State the possible major risks that the ideas on which your project is based might not be verified (excluding caveats in implementation; this will be treated in Point 3.2.iii)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - List and argument the risk(s) or lack thereof (Point 1.1.i, Table I) - Provide some ‘fall-back’ options, or explain the absence thereof 	<p style="text-align: right;">BRAIN-be 2.0 online Platform > Research Proposal > Documents > Proposal description</p> <p>d. Scientific risk of the project in relation to its objectives</p> <p>How well are the scientific risks evaluated by the applicants? Do they provide an adequate ‘fall-back’ plan, if needed?</p>
<p>2.2 Translation of the research objectives into appropriate and well-described methodology (max. 10 pages)</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Proposal description Gender checklist Ethics form</p> <p>i. Methodological approach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Describe the overall methodological approach of your project (Point 1.1.i, Table I) - Explain why your proposal is original and innovative in terms of methodology OR why you are not seeking originality and innovation methodology - Include gender aspects and ethical issues (see Gender checklist and complete Ethics form) 	<p>2.2 Coherence between research objectives and methodology</p> <p style="text-align: right;">BRAIN-be 2.0 online Platform > Research Proposal > Documents > Proposal description & Ethics form BRAIN-be 2.0 Website > Gender checklist</p> <p>a. Methodological approach</p> <p>Evaluate the approach undertaken, including gender aspects and/or issues (Gender checklist). Assess the awareness of ethical issues of the project and ways to deal with these using appropriate channels (Ethics form). Not all projects need to be original or innovative, but the approach undertaken must be adequately explained (Point 1.1.i, Table I)</p> <p>→ <i>E.g. A non-original project can be deemed ‘excellent’ even if it is not innovative, provided there is adequate argumentation.</i></p>

[Proposal description](#)

[Gender checklist](#)

[Ethics form](#)

[BRAIN-be 2.0 online Platform > Research Proposal > Documents >](#)

[> Proposal description & Ethics form](#)

[BRAIN-be 2.0 Website > Gender checklist](#)

ii. Methodology

- Translate your research objectives into a methodology (used methods, techniques, systems and/or way of working) in order to achieve the results, taking into account the different disciplines mobilized regarding the project approach as described above (**point 2.2.i**)
- Describe the kind, scope, availability and possible cost of the data-sets needed for the project. In case new data needs to be gathered, describe and justify its necessity, added value and methodology*
- Detail the results your approach will enable to gather (expected outcomes)
- Include gender aspects and ethical issues (**see Gender checklist and complete Ethics form**)

Data: Concerning the use of existing data/samples or the collection of new data/samples, proposal submitters should take the following guidelines into account:

- Whenever possible, the partners should make use of existing data(bases)/collections/samples to meet the needs of their research. For this, they must check beforehand whether these are accessible, at what cost, and how much time it will take to acquire, merge, use... them.
- If the proposal requires collecting new data/samples (e.g. via a survey), the team must justify and argument why this particular form of data/sample collection is required and preferable to existing databases/collections. The partners must estimate the budget required for this data/sample collection, as well as possible delays in their acquisition.
- If the project needs earth observation data, please contact the STEREO team (Pieter ROTTIERS, Tel.: +32 (0)2 238 35 83, pieter.rottiers@belspo.be). Some of these images can be downloaded free of charge and there's even the possibility to purchase new acquisitions at bottom prices. A justified request must however be submitted. Instructions for image acquisition and the form to be completed can be found at <https://eo.belspo.be/en/stereo-iii-project-management> - under data acquisition.

Note: If, after the start of the research, it appears that due to partner negligence or insufficient knowledge of the field, the data(bases)/collections/samples will not be available in time, this may constitute a reason for BELSPO to cancel the contract. It is recommended the submitters line-up alternatives in order to carry out the project in case the foreseen data/samples are not available.

Ethics: Fill in the ethical issues checklist and complete if necessary the required documents, including the approval of the ethics committee of reference for the researchers responsible for this collection is requested (institutions, universities...).

OR

Explain the absence of ethical issues within the proposal.

b. Methodology

Assess the chosen methodology, including gender aspects and/or issues (taking into account the different disciplines mobilized) and the articulation of the objectives-methodology-expected outcomes. Assess the awareness of ethical issues of the project and ways to deal with these using appropriate channels (Ethics form).

3. Implementation	3. Quality and efficiency of the implementation
<p>3.1 Network</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Proposal description</p> <p>i. Individual quality of the partners (max. 3 pages / partner) Provide a short description of expertise and skills for each partner:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Their professional background - Maximum 5 top publications relevant for the proposal (indicate clearly the international peer reviewed publications) - A list of the research projects carried out over the past five years in the field under consideration or related areas (specify the duration of the work and funding source). - A list of their (inter)national contacts and the (inter)national networks to which they belong within the context of the proposal. - The scientific quality, management, synthesis and communication skills of the coordinator. - If possible, include web links for all the information above. 	<p>3.1 Quality of the network</p> <p style="text-align: right;">BRAIN-be 2.0 online Platform > Research Proposal > Documents > Proposal description</p> <p>a. Individual quality of the partners Assess the scientific quality and expertise of the individual partners within the frame of the project. Competence regarding project management and coordination of work packages should be taken into account, including management, synthesis and communication skills of the coordinator.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Proposal description Gender checklist</p> <p>ii. Adequacy and added value of the partnership in addressing the topic – only if applicable* (max. 1.5 pages) Argument the motivation of choosing this network in addressing the topic of the proposal. The different dimensions of the added value in a partnership can be seen as (non-exhaustive list):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complementarity of expertise among partners - Complementarity of disciplines and way of working (multi, inter) to properly cover the project objectives - Coverage of the Belgian territory, its population and institutions (whenever relevant) - Development of new expertise and competences (new techniques, knowledge, way of working...) in Belgium or within Belgian Scientific Institutions - Integration of the contributions - If applicable: Added value of the contribution of the international research partners and/or academic, non-academic experts, commercial subcontractors... - (See Gender checklist) <p>*Note: Bottom-up projects may be introduced by one or more institutions. In the case of having one institution, the added value of the partnership must not be explained.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">BRAIN-be 2.0 Website > Gender checklist</p> <p>b. Adequacy and added value of the proposed partnership in addressing the topic – only if applicable This part evaluates the adequacy of the partnership as reasoned by the applicants in relation to the project objectives, including gender aspects and/or issues.</p>

3.2 Detailed description of the work plan	3.2 Adequacy of the work plan
<p style="text-align: right;">Proposal description</p> <p>i. Detailed description of the work plan (max. 0.5 pages / work package) Please provide a description of the project in terms of work packages, tasks, and deliverables in accordance with the GANTT chart (see Point 3.2.ii). Refer to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Number and title of Work Package, Work Package leader (financed, non-financed) - Number, title and timing of tasks, task leader, participants to the task (financed, non-financed, subcontractors...) - Timing of deliverables - Number of person-months for each task - Means, tools, procedures, techniques to carry out the tasks <p>Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The work plan must be detailed to the level of work packages (WP) and tasks (Tasks). The definition of subtasks is not possible. - Compulsory work packages: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination, project management and reporting • Data management • Valorisation / Dissemination / Exploitation - Work packages or tasks necessary for the implementation of the project but not financed by BELSPO must also be described and added to the GANTT chart. - The WP valorisation will be detailed in Point 4.3.i. - In the project phase, (one of) the Belgian project partner(s) must ensure the follow-up of the tasks carried out by the African research partner(s) and will also be responsible for the flow of information to and from the African research partner(s). It is therefore requested to clearly indicate in the work plan which Belgian partner will be responsible for the link with the African research partner. - For Pillar 3, a compulsory deliverable developing the state of the art for decision-makers and other stakeholders is required. 	<p style="text-align: right;">BRAIN-be 2.0 online Platform > Research Proposal > Documents > Proposal description</p> <p>a. Relation of the work packages to the proposal theme(s) and aim(s) Notwithstanding work intensity and duration of tasks and WP, assess the way the breakdown of the work plan in work packages and tasks enables the realization of the project.</p> <p>Note: The WP valorisation is not evaluated here, but later in Point 4.3.i.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">GANTT Chart</p> <p>ii. Work planning and time schedule: GANTT chart</p> <p>Complete BELSPO's GANTT chart in accordance with the description of the detailed work plan, tasks and deliverables above:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work intensity of each partner within each task (expressed in person-month [PM]) - Include for each partner the person-months funded by the BRAIN-be 2.0 project and the person-months funded by other sources (see notes). <p>Notes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Partners include: financed, non-financed and subcontractors. - 1 Person-month [PM] = 1 full-time equivalent [FTE] or 2 half-time equivalents over 1 month... - Other sources of financing may include: salary payment by institutions other than BELSPO and/or via other projects, voluntary contributions... If a given task requires 7 person-months, and 6 	<p style="text-align: right;">BRAIN-be 2.0 online Platform > Research Proposal > Documents > GANTT Chart</p> <p>b. Work planning: GANTT chart Is the work planning (time schedule, duration and person-power effort per task) appropriate and feasible to run the project? Is it well-distributed among partners in function of their expertise? (horizontal lecture of the GANTT chart, not going into detail for each partner, with recommendations regarding the length and pertinence of the activities within the calendar)</p> <p>If the proposal is deemed 'reasonable' or 'good', please describe the necessary/possible improvements within the comments.</p> <p>Note: The online submission platform automatically checks the specific rules for the budget repartition in terms of staff, operating costs, overheads, equipment, subcontracting and African research partners – thus, there is no need to check the compliance with the financial rules.</p>

months will be financed by the BRAIN-be 2.0 project, the 7th month must appear under 'other sources of financing'.

- Compulsory work packages:
 - Coordination, project management and reporting
 - Data management
 - Valorisation / Dissemination / Exploitation

[Proposal description](#)

[BRAIN-be 2.0 online Platform > Research Proposal > Documents > Proposal description](#)

iii. Implementation risk management

Number, identify and explain the main incurring risks that could delay or hinder the project and the contingency plans foreseen to deal with them. (max. 1.5 pages)

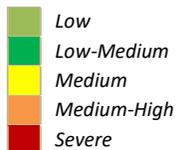
Locate the number of each risk in terms of its likelihood of occurrence and impact on the project within **Table III**.

Table III: Risk likelihood vs. impact.

		IMPACT				
		Negligible	Minor	Moderate	Significant	Severe
LIKELIHOOD	Very likely					
	Likely					
	Possible				1, 3	
	Unlikely					2
	Very Unlikely					

→ E.g:

- Risk 1: Online survey input insufficient*
- Risk 2: Fieldwork postponed for one year*
- Risk 3: ...*



c. Implementation risk management

Assess the implementation risk management and contingency plans.

[GANTT Chart](#)

[BRAIN-be 2.0 online Platform > Research Proposal > Documents > GANTT Chart](#)

Note: Information already provided, in the **GANTT chart (Point 3.2.ii)**.

d. Workload intensity in relation to the work packages

Provide an overall assessment of the requested level of person-power of each partner throughout the work packages and tasks (vertical lecture of the **GANTT chart**, with recommendations regarding the intensity of their activities and pertinence of participation in them).

<p>3.3 Budget</p> <p style="text-align: right;"> To be filled in on line, except:  Antarctica form</p> <p>i. Detailed budget ONLINE BUDGET TABLE - Please consult the BUDGET RULES file on the BRAIN-be website: (https://www.belspo.be/belspo/brain2-be/call_open_en.stm)</p> <p>Fill in the online budget table, and complete the Antactica form if necessary.</p> <p>Note: In addition to the financing of the project, BELSPO pays for the real expenses of the researchers of Belgian Institutions employed by the project for taking part in field work campaigns in Antarctica. These campaigns - if any – must be integrated and explained in the detailed description of the tasks and timetable.</p>	<p>3.3 Budget assessment</p> <p style="text-align: right;">BRAIN-be 2.0 online Platform > Research Proposal > Partners Table & Budget BRAIN-be 2.0 online Platform > Research Proposal > Documents >  Antarctica form</p> <p>a. Budget assessment Is the budget realistic, well-balanced among partners (if applicable), and in line with the objectives and expected outcomes of the project? If the project asks for an Antarctica campaign budget, please take this into account in the evaluation.</p> <p>Note: The online submission platform automatically checks the specific rules for the budget repartition in terms of staff, operating costs, overheads, equipment, subcontracting and African research partners – thus, there is no need to check the compliance with the financial rules.</p>
<p>3.4 Data management plan</p> <p style="text-align: right;"> Data management form</p> <p>i. Data management plan</p> <p>Data Management Plans (DMPs) are a key element of good data management. As the data collected within the framework of the proposed research must be available to other users for other purposes, the proposal must clearly indicate when and in what format the data will be made accessible, specifying which categories of users are likely to benefit from access to the data.</p> <p>Using the Data Management Plan form, develop a Data Management Plan (DMP), in which is specified what data will be open, detailing what data the project will generate, whether and how it will be exploited or made accessible for verification and re-use, and how it will be curated and preserved.</p>	<p>3.4 Data management plan</p> <p style="text-align: right;">BRAIN-be 2.0 online Platform > Research Proposal > Documents >  Data management form</p> <p>a. Data management plan, and availability of generated data after the research is finalised Assess the quality of the data management plan and availability of the generated data (see Data Management form)</p>
<p>4. Impact</p> <p>Note: The positioning of the project in terms of the state of the art and the strategic scientific objectives of the FSI has already been explained in Point 1.1.i, Table I; Point 2.1.i.</p> <p>Note: Information concerning the positioning of the project in terms of its foreseen impact has been signaled in Point 1.1.ii, Table II.</p> <p>4.1 Potential impact of the project (max. 1.5 pages)</p>	<p>4. Impact</p> <p>The positioning of the project regarding the state of the art and the strategic objectives of the FSI is explained in Point 1.1.i., Table I and Point 2.1.i and does not need to be evaluated here. The Impact table required to judge this section can be found in point 1.1.ii, Table II.</p> <p>4.1 Potential impact of the project</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Proposal description</p> <p>i. Potential impact of the proposal in light of the expected outcomes Explain and justify in detail the position of the project regarding its expected impact in accordance to Point 1.1.ii, Table II.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">BRAIN-be 2.0 online Platform > Research Proposal > Documents > Proposal description</p> <p>a. Potential impact of the proposal in light of the expected outcomes Assess the potential impact as described in the proposal in Point 1.1.ii, Table II</p>
<p>4.2 Follow-up committee (max. 2 pages)</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Proposal description Follow-up committee letter</p> <p>i. Follow-up committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Specify the functioning and role (informed, consulted, involved in research) of the follow-up committee - Provide a motivated list of possible committee members with their role and profiles. <p>Members can confirm their interest and possible contribution to the committee via the completion of a Follow-up Committee letter of intent (see template) - non-compulsory</p> <p>Note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Each project is accompanied by a follow-up committee. The objective of this committee is to provide an active follow-up of the project and to assist in the valorization of the research, via exchange and provision of data and information, giving advice, suggesting means of valorization, etc. - The follow-up committee is composed of potential users of the results, such as representatives of public authorities at national, regional, European, or international level, social actors, scientists, industrial actors, etc. - The members of the follow-up committee are non-funded. - The final composition of the follow-up committee will be defined in collaboration with BELSPO. 	<p>4.2 Follow-up committee</p> <p style="text-align: right;">BRAIN-be 2.0 online Platform > Research Proposal > Documents > Proposal description & Follow-up committee letter</p> <p>a. Follow-up committee Assess the coherence of the composition of the follow-up committee, its proposed role (informed, consulted, involved) and functioning (number of meetings, method of information exchange, etc.) with the foreseen impact of the project. Evaluate the involvement of non-scientific stakeholders in the early stages of the project (co-creation of results) – where appropriate.</p> <p>Note: Bear in mind that the set-up of a follow-up committee composed of possible users of the project results is compulsory. However letters of intent from this committee are not mandatory.</p>
<p>4.3 Valorisation plans (max 3 pages)</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Proposal description</p> <p>i. Plans to maximize the impact of the project (science and other) Explain the concrete plans of valorisation, dissemination and exploitation of the research and research results to scientific and non-scientific audiences, in accordance to the WP valorisation and GANTT chart (point 3.2), and the expected impact (point 1.1.ii, Table II and point 4.1.i). The target groups of these valorisation proposals must be explicitly described.</p>	<p>4.3 Valorisation plans</p> <p style="text-align: right;">BRAIN-be 2.0 online Platform > Research Proposal > Documents > Proposal description</p> <p>a. Plans to maximize the impact of the project (science and other...) Assess the capacity of promoting results and knowledge and enabling publication and exploitation of data; the adequacy of the targeted audiences, the appropriateness of communication tools and approaches, ...</p>

EVALUATION CRITERIA FOR PANEL EVALUATORS

These guidelines describe the criteria for the evaluation of project proposals at the stage of the PANEL.

DOCUMENTS AVAILABLE PRIOR TO THE PANEL MEETING	DOCUMENTS AVAILABLE DURING THE PANEL MEETING
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Information File• Submission and Evaluation guidelines (this document)• Budget Rules• Scientific ranking of the proposals (from the marks given in the consensus report)• Submitted project proposals (remotely evaluated), including:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><i>Compulsory</i><ul style="list-style-type: none">- General information- Proposal description- Gantt chart- Budget table- Data management plan- Ethics form<i>Optional</i><ul style="list-style-type: none">- Antarctica campaign form- Follow-up committee letter of intent- Cash or in-kind commitment letter• 1 consensus report elaborated by 4 remote experts / proposal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Proposals and consensus reports• Funding scenario spread sheets (templates):<ul style="list-style-type: none">- For Thematic proposals- For Bottom-up proposals (except for Pillar 3)• Document (template) to explain the funding scenario(s) proposed during the Panel meeting• Recapitulative tables with classification of projects:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- By thematic priority- By institution- ...• Any other type of information provided by BELSPO that would help the evaluation Panel to develop (a) funding scenario(s). (E.g. previous BRAIN-be projects with potential synergies with 2020 Call applications,...)

Please note that different criteria may apply for Thematic proposals and Bottom-up proposals.

PANEL EVALUATION CRITERIA GUIDELINES FOR THEMATIC AND BOTTOM-UP PROPOSALS



The funding scenario(s) produced during the Panel meeting must be accompanied by a document explaining the choices made in terms of the following criteria and the suggestions/recommendations made by the remote evaluators within the consensus report. Thematic proposals and Bottom-up proposals will be treated separately.

Available Call budget

Project budget versus Call budget

Coverage in terms of the scope of the Call

- **Thematic projects:** Coverage in terms of the different thematic priorities, and Call subjects
- **Bottom-Up projects:** Coverage in terms of the scope of the Pillars, and research subjects

Coverage in terms of participation

- **Thematic projects:** Coverage in terms of institutions, number and distribution of partners
- **Bottom-Up projects:** Coverage in terms of institutions

Critical mass

Coverage in terms of synergy compared to previous financed subjects within the frame of BRAIN-be

Adjustments, recommendations

- **Thematic projects:**
 - Adjustments/recommendations in terms of partnership, follow-up committee, workplan, ...
 - Adjustments of budget (either suggested by the remote evaluators or in view of the ensemble of proposals)
- **Bottom-Up projects:**
 - Adjustments/recommendations in term of follow-up committee, workplan, ...
 - Adjustments of budget (either suggested by the remote evaluators or in view of the ensemble of proposals)