

IMI2 JU responses to the Independent Observers' reports

Call ID: H2020-JTI-IMI2-2020-20-two-stage

IMI2 JU 20th Call for Proposals

Dates of evaluation: 9 – 12 June 2020 (Stage 1)

8 – 10 December 2020 (Stage 2)

Name of the Independent Observers:

Kate Barker and Silviya Aleksandrova-Yankulovska

Summary of Recommendations – Stage 1

The observed evaluation process was robust and mature. It ran in accordance with the standards published. The experts were satisfied with the workload, timeframe, the IT tools, and skills of moderators.

There are a few minor recommendations:

- Agreeing in advance conventions for using Cisco WebEx such as the hand raise signal to allow expression of experts' opinion and using the chat as a standard for voting.
- Trying to achieve better gender balance of experts per topic.
- Involving more experts from EU-13 countries.
- To speed up the process of writing consensus report, it would be helpful to keep in the draft version citation of authorship of the expressed opinion.
- It is worthwhile for the Scientific Officers to reiterate the equal weight of the three evaluation criteria towards the final ranking as explained in the materials distributed before the remote evaluation and during the briefing session at the beginning of the consensus meeting.

Summary of Recommendations – Stage 2

The overall evaluation process enabled the panels to evaluate their respective proposal smoothly in the time allocated.

There are a few minor recommendations:

- Trying to achieve better gender balance of experts per topic at stage 1 in order to be able to keep it at stage 2.
- Involving more experts from EU-13 countries at stage 1 in order to increase the chance to involve them at stage 2.

IMI2 JU Responses to the recommendations

IMI2 JU is pleased to have the confirmation that the overall quality of Call 20 evaluation was high with transparent and rigorous procedures.

The recommendation to inform experts at the beginning of the consensus meeting on how to use hand raise and chat functionalities in WebEx has been applied in all IMI2 JU evaluations conducted after Call 20 stage 1, as a complement to the WebEx technical guidelines sent to the experts before the meeting.

We have paid special attention to reiterate the equal weight of the three evaluation criteria in the briefings to experts, especially when the evaluation panels include experts who participate in IMI2 JU evaluations for the first time.

IMI2 JU takes note of the recommendation to keep in the draft consensus report the authorship of the different comments as a way to facilitate the discussion, especially when the author of a particular comment was not immediately evident. The reason why we keep anonymous the authorship of the Individual Evaluation Reports that feed the first draft consensus report is to avoid any potential bias in the preparation of this draft, linked to the authorship of the different comments and views. Although IMI2 JU is maintaining this practice in the ongoing last Calls under Horizon 2020, this recommendation will be taken into consideration for the future Calls for proposals under Horizon Europe.

Finally, we also take note of the recommendation concerning gender balance at topic level and the involvement of more experts from EU-13 countries. IMI2 JU is following the H2020 rules for the selection of experts and tries to ensure that the evaluation panels are balanced in terms of technical expertise, gender and geographical representation. However, it is important to mention that in some cases these targets (gender balance and EU-13 experts' participation) might not be sufficiently achieved due to the conflict of interest cases and at the same time ensure that the expertise required at a topic level is fully covered. As the Independent Observers pointed out, any target on gender and/or country of origin distribution should be achieved at the first stage of two-stage evaluations, as an unbalanced distribution at stage 1 is likely to remain at stage 2.