



CARIPLO – TELETHON ALLIANCE

Joint call for Applications

PEER REVIEWERS GUIDELINES

Fondazione Cariplo (FC) and Fondazione Telethon (FT) made an alliance to foster basic research to support projects focused on unknown aspects of rare diseases. Basic research, especially in the field of rare diseases, is still an orphan area of investment, but it is also pioneering for the development of applied research in more frequent diseases.

Indeed, the analysis of scientific literature has highlighted the tendency of researchers and funding agencies to focus on a limited portion of the human genome. The most studied genes are not necessarily the most significant: sometimes studying one gene instead of another is simply linked to the timing of its discovery. There are therefore numerous DNA regions and gene sets - with their relative mRNA and proteins - whose function is still unknown but could potentially play an important role within molecular pathways, physiological and pathological mechanisms.

FT has implemented and maintains a quality management system compliant with the UNI EN ISO 9001:2015 for the peer review process: initial and final evaluation, selection and scientific and administrative monitoring of funded research projects, management of research funds assigned to external Institutions (universities, hospitals and other research institutes).

EXTERNAL REVIEWER'S ROLE

External Reviewers will support the Scientific Committee members in the evaluation process by providing written comments and an overall recommendation.

Peer Review Process

External Reviewers are requested to fill in the "Evaluation Form" available in *TETRA - Telethon Projects Managements system portal* at <https://projects.telethon.it> accessible through personal login and password.

Written Comments

Written comments are an essential part of the review and are critical in developing summary statements for the Applicants.

The individual written comments will be anonymously incorporated into a complete review report that will be returned to the Applicant. It is therefore important that the written material is accurate, clearly written, and does not include derogatory language.

External Reviewers are asked to provide written comments based on the following criteria:

Description

The description should be a summary of the hypothesis to be tested, the specific aims, and the procedures of the proposed research.

Project quality and feasibility

Scientific Evaluation (max 3,000 characters including spaces)

What are the proposal's major strengths and major weaknesses?

Appropriateness of Design and Methods (max 3,000 characters including spaces)

Are the experimental approaches/methods appropriate to accomplish the specific aims of the proposal?

Can the research be completed within the proposed time frame?

Does the Applicant acknowledge potential problem areas and consider alternative plans?

Preliminary results – if ANY: Please note preliminary results are not mandatory and as such their absence should not be considered detrimental to the significance and originality of the Proposal. If present, please verify whether the provided results are adequately supporting the principles to be tested.

Team Competence (max 3,000 characters including spaces)

Is the Team appropriately trained and well suited to carry out the work proposed? Is the work proposed proportionate to the level of experience of the principal investigator and key personnel (Partner/collaborators)? Does the Team play a significant role in the field of the submitted proposal? Is the plan to engage/train young researchers appropriate?

Budget (max 3,000 characters including spaces)

Is the budget appropriate for the proposed research?

For Multicentre research proposals, is the shared budget appropriately justified?

Project impact

Potential of the proposed research (max 3,000 characters including spaces)

- What will be the potential impact of the proposed research if successful (does it address an important gap, what difference will it make to the scientific community)?

Potential impact on patients (max 3,000 characters including spaces)

What will be the potential impact on patients in the long term?

Overall Recommendation

Based on the specific points raised in the written critique, the External Reviewers are asked to choose their recommendation as follows:

- A - Outstanding; no concerns.
- B - Excellent; no substantial issues need discussion.
- C - Good; only one or a few addressable concerns.
- D - Average; several concerns in one or more Aims.
- E - Poor; major concerns in one or more Aims.

Milan, June 28, 2023