

Guide for Evaluators – Participant Selection

The IdeaLab workshop ‘Cities for the future: services and solutions’

1. IdeaLab approach

The IdeaLab is an approach that will bring together 20-30 Participants, the workshop director and a number of mentors (referred to as the members of the Panel of Experts in this document), and independent stakeholders over a period of 5 days. The essential element of the IdeaLab is the highly multidisciplinary mix of Participants. The IdeaLab requires knowledge and expertise from a broad range of disciplines and cultures, to drive lateral thinking and radical approaches to addressing particular research challenges.

Selecting the right people

The right mix of people will determine the success or failure of the IdeaLab. Selecting the Participants is one of the main tasks of the members of the Panel of Experts.

We need Participants from a range of disciplines and backgrounds (e.g. urban planning & governance, ecology, ICT, social science, humanities, technologies and other specialists) with the right mix of personal attributes. The whole IdeaLab approach is about bringing together people who would not normally interact. We are looking for people who can bring new thinking to an existing problem. They do not necessarily need to have any prior experience of the problem domain, but will need to demonstrate enthusiasm for working at the interface between disciplines. Please re-read the IdeaLab Workshop Guideline (Annex 1) and the application form (Annex 2) to become familiar with the concept of the IdeaLab. Before assessing the applications it is important to tune into the different set of requirements that come into play for the IdeaLab compared to the way research bids are normally assessed. Both the scientific/formal background and the person have to be right: the ‘right’ individual is as important – often more so – as the ‘right’ science or experience.

2. Whom do we seek?

Besides looking for an appropriate blend of disciplines and competences for the full breadth of the IdeaLab theme, our current wisdom on the ideal profile of an IdeaLab candidate is encapsulated in the following statement (from the participant’s application form):

‘The IdeaLab will be especially suited to individuals who: enjoy stepping outside their area of expertise or interest, are positively driven, enjoy creative activity and can think innovatively. The IdeaLab is an intensive setting requiring you to develop novel approaches with individuals you may not know’.

So, ask yourself: to what extent do I think this applicant has the right blend of an innovative, trans-disciplinary mindset and the right blend of intellectual curiosity & flexibility? Do they have the required positive outlook and the ability to play as equal, collegial, enthusiastic team-players? Or do they look more suited to the conventional bid route rather than the IdeaLab?

Striking the right balance between Participants from Poland and EEA states

Striking the right balance between Participants from Poland and EEA states is crucial to the formation of eligible partnerships during the IdeaLab workshop. Eligible partnerships, must as, a minimum consist of the Polish Project Promoter and a workshop Participant from Iceland, Liechtenstein or Norway.

Therefore, at least 10 workshop participants need to represent Polish research organisations or Polish enterprises that can be potential Project Promoters, and at least 10 workshop participants need to be from research organisations or enterprises from Norway, Iceland or Liechtenstein (potential project partners).

Including various actors important for the research challenge of the IdeaLab workshop

In order to address the research challenges of the workshop, cross-disciplinary participants representing various organisations should be selected, including:

- Research organisations,
- Enterprises,
- Potential end-users and stakeholders of developed solutions: NGOs, municipalities and other relevant entities.

Other issues to take into account

- Equal opportunity implications. The members of the Panel of Experts need to bear in mind that candidates from some cultures tend to understate their qualities and may be reluctant to highlight their virtues.
- Striking the right gender balance among the Participants selected.
- Striking the right balance between experienced Participants and those at an earlier stage of their career.

For further guidance on the appropriate profile of an IdeaLab Participant, please see Annex 3.

3. Selection process

The National Centre for Research and Development (NCBR) will carry out an eligibility check before the Participant application forms are sent to the members of the Panel of Experts. The following criteria will be taken into account:

- Was the application submitted before the deadline date and time set in the invitation and to the given e-mail address?
- Is the entity delegating the participant a legal entity established in Poland, Iceland, Liechtenstein or Norway?¹
- Have the two required statements – the participant’s statement and the entity’s statement – been submitted, complete and signed?
- Has the participant’s CV (in English) been submitted? Is the participant’s CV no longer than four A4 pages?
- Are all fields of the application form filled in and written in English? Is the text within the limits set in the application form?
- Does the participant meet the minimal requirements stipulated in the IdeaLab Workshop Guideline, that is:

¹ The National Centre for Research and Development, during the eligibility check, may ask an applicant to send additional documents proving that the entity is a legal person (entity) i.e. an entity that is capable of having and amend legal rights and obligations within a certain legal system, such as to enter into contracts, sue, and be sued, excluding natural persons.

- has at least a master's degree or equivalent – checked on the basis of information given in the participant's application form;
- is able to effectively communicate in English (similar level to B2 or higher) - checked on the basis of information given in the participant's application form;
- is ready to participate in the IdeaLab workshop in Poland for the whole week of 2-6 March 2020 – checked on the basis of information given in the participant's statement.

The process for selection of the Participants will be as follows:

- The members of the Panel of Experts will perform an individual rating of each applicant,
- The members of the Panel of Experts will meet to discuss the ratings and perform the final selection of Participants. In exceptional cases (e.g. illness of an experts, coincidence of the dates of important meetings, cancelled flights) expert(s) can participate in the panel meeting by electronic means of communication (e.g. tele- or video-conference).

Individual rating of each applicant

During the individual rating the experts will assess all applicants. The applications will be randomly divided between experts (mentors and director) for individual assessment. Each application will be assessed by at least three experts.

- 1) You will be given access to the volume of IdeaLab applications (only participants' application forms).
- 2) You will be given and will read the guide for evaluators – this document.
- 3) You will be sent by email 3 spreadsheets which will detail the applications in terms of the applicant's name, gender, professional title/academic degree, year of PhD award, institution and department, country, as well as an indication of top-level expertise. The applications will be ordered alphabetically by surname.
 - a) a list of applications from Polish research organisations and enterprises (potential Project Promoters);
 - b) a list of applications from Norwegian, Icelandic and Liechtenstein research organisations and enterprises (potential Project Partners);
 - c) a list of applications from other legal entities (including e.g. NGOs, city authorities) from Poland, Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein.
- 4) Please read through all the applications and use the spreadsheet to rate the applicants (A-excellent, B-good or C-weak) with regard to the following criteria:
 - a) Relevance of their expertise to the research challenges in the workshop;
 - b) Ability to develop new, adventurous and highly original research ideas;
 - c) Potential to contribute to research at the interface between areas of expertise;
 - d) Ability to work in a cross-disciplinary team and to communicate effectively.

The rates given to applicants based on the above-mentioned criteria (from A to C) are to help you to prepare the overall score.

Provide your overall score for the applicant according to the following (please make sure you use the entire range of scores):

4 – HIGHLY PROMISING – meets all the abovementioned criteria (point 4 a-d) should bring special value

3 – PROMISING – is strong in a minimum of three of the areas with an allowable weakness in the remaining; good promise overall, however having weak points in some areas

2 – MIXED VALUE – a mixed profile but not without the odd sign of promise

1 – UNSUITED – a thin or an unconvincing application, or too packed or dense, or with self-promotion, showcasing their primary motive, or too set in their thinking, or better suited to the conventional individual-bid funding route; or too much at an early or late career stage.

Half points cannot be given. Only the overall score will be used in the further selection process. After assessing the candidate, please look through your overall score and make sure that your overall score is not in contradiction with the scores on criteria.

We aim for approximately **30 applicants in total to be selected** (including **at least 10 workshop participants from Polish research organisations or Polish enterprises**, and **at least 10 workshop participants from research organisations or enterprises from Norway, Iceland or Liechtenstein**). However, do not feel constrained by the space limits – at this stage, you should concentrate on rating all applications against the criteria. This initial scoring will instantly enable us to see if there are any definite decisions that the Panel of Experts agrees on, and so will expedite discussions at the Panel of Experts meeting.

- 5) The members of the Panel of Experts should be aware that managing and avoiding a **conflict of interest** is essential for the NCBR. For guidance concerning conflicts of interest, please see Annex 4. If you think that your involvement in assessing a particular application might be perceived as a conflict of interest **do not read the application nor assess the application**. An additional column on the master spreadsheet 'conflict of interest' is for recording potential conflicts between the applicants and the members of the Panel of Experts.

During the meeting of Panel of Experts, the members of the Panel of Experts will be expected to leave the room during the assessment of applications and their exclusion from the discussion will be recorded in the minutes of the outcome of the meeting.

Please contact the NCBR if you feel that you need further advice about this matter or any other aspects of the IdeaLab selection process.

- 6) **We ask you to complete your initial scores on the spreadsheet and rename it with your name in the title - e.g. 'Cities for the future NAME.xls' and send the completed spreadsheet by email.** The NCBR office will populate the master spreadsheet with all scores before the Panel of Experts meeting.

The Panel of Experts meeting

An outline process for operating the Panel of Experts is given below.

Once all the Panel of Experts members' ratings have been merged, the three spreadsheets will be displayed and preliminarily categorised into **Yes, No and Maybe categories** by the NCBR. Candidates

are divided into Yes, No or Maybe Categories based on the overall scores (from 1 to 4) given by experts. The Panel of Experts will assess the applications in the following way:

1) First Pass of the applications:

The Expert's first task will be to look at those applications (via the spreadsheets) which have been recorded as **No**. If the Panel agrees, then these applications will be preliminarily rejected. The Panel of Experts may also decide to move some of the applications to the Maybe category.

Experts will then discuss the group of applications that are in the **Maybe category** in each spreadsheet. These applications will probably have the most mixed views from the Experts. **Maybe** applications will be discussed in turn by the Panel of Experts until a **yes** or **no** decision is collectively made and recorded on the spreadsheets. We should aim to spend no more than a couple of minutes on each application.

Experts will then discuss the **Yes** group in each spreadsheet and repeat the process, checking that they agree that all those applicants in the **Yes** group have the appropriate attributes, skills and research expertise to attend the IdeaLab and that there is the right balance referring back to the selection criteria.

2) Second Pass of the applications:

Once the experts have done the first pass they will revisit the entire list and look through applicants from the **No** group that could be moved into the **Yes** group. If the Panel of Experts agrees, then they reject the **No** group.

Then, experts closely examine the **Yes** group and check whether the selected group has:

- the right number of applicants;
- the right balance of candidates from Poland and the EEA countries;
- good gender balance and institutional balance,
- and also a good mix of people with diverse research backgrounds and at different stages of their careers.

The Panel of Experts will refine the **Yes** group until satisfied with the final selection. Candidates from the **Maybe** group that were previously rejected may be re-evaluated and included in the **Yes** group if necessary to obtain the optimal mix of people in the group.

If the panel members cannot make a consensus decision regarding the candidate based on the assessment of his/her application form they will be given access to the participant's CV. Then, if the information given in the CV does not help the Panel of Experts to make a decision, the voting is proceeded. In case when an equal number of experts have voted for and against the candidate the chair of the panel (the director) makes the decision regarding the candidate.

The aim of the Panel of Experts meeting is to select approximately 30 Participants and 5-10 substitutes from the Yes group for the IdeaLab. At least 10 participants should be from Polish research organisations or enterprises, and at least 10 Participants should be from research organisations or enterprises from Norway, Iceland or Liechtenstein. The list of substitutes should be divided into three categories:

- a) a list of reserve participants from Polish research organisations and enterprises (potential Project Promoters)

- b) a list of reserve participants from Norwegian, Icelandic and Liechtenstein research organisations and enterprises (potential Project Partners)
- c) a list of reserve participants from the other legal entities (including e.g. NGOs, city authorities) from Poland, Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein.

3) Final Panel of Experts selection decision:

The above final decision is recorded onto the spreadsheet, the spreadsheet is printed and the chair of the Panel of Experts will sign the list and the Panel of Experts meeting is complete.

After the Panel of Experts meeting

The list of the workshop participants and the list of substitutes will be reviewed by the NCBR and approved by the Programme Committee. After approval of the lists, an email will be sent to the applicants that have been selected to attend the IdeaLab informing them of this decision, and asking them to confirm their attendance. Unsuccessful applicants will be informed that they are not among the selected Participants and will be provided with the reason for the rejection. No applicant will receive any feedback from the Panel of Experts, the applicants will be informed about the results by the National Centre for Research and Development.

If the selected applicants cannot participate, candidates from the group of 5-10 substitutes may be selected in their place.

Annex 1

The IdeaLab Workshop Guideline

Annex 2

Participant's application form

Annex 3

Additional prompts for experts to select the IdeaLab workshop participants:

1. All four features of potential participants – expertise, innovativeness, openness for various scientific disciplines and personal attributes – are important, however the most important is to select the right people.
2. Resist favouring a particular discipline over another. Applicants from outlier disciplines can bring dynamic and freshness into the IdeaLab workshop.
3. Be aware that less experienced participants can bring a valuable contribution to the workshop by presenting new approaches and perspectives. Choosing only the most recognised researchers from the scientific area is not recommended for the IdeaLab workshop.
4. To ensure fairness of the selection process, your assessment should be based only on the application form. Resist dipping into publication records or websites. The CV of the participants can be used for assessment only when the Panel of Experts cannot reach a decision regarding the candidate.
5. During the individual assessment, please note your remarks and opinions regarding the candidate, especially when you are not sure if it is the right candidate or not. Your notes can be useful during discussions at the meeting of the Panel of Experts.

Annex 4 Code of ethics and conflicts of interest in the IdeaLab procedure

1. International experts must be resident and working outside Poland, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway.
2. By agreeing to evaluate the applications submitted at all stages of the IdeaLab organised by The National Centre for Research and Development, the expert undertakes to maintain full confidentiality and not to disclose any part of the information contained in the participant's applications, project pre-proposals (project idea) and full proposals including the names of the applicants. All proposals and related data, knowledge and documents communicated to the National Centre for Research and Development are treated in confidence. Application documents should therefore be handled with care and treated as confidential before, during and after the evaluation process. The experts will be held personally responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of any documents or electronic files sent, and for returning, erasing or destroying all confidential documents or files upon completing the evaluation as instructed. Experts, Programme Committee members and observers must not disclose any information concerning application documents or evaluations to outsiders, nor should they use confidential information to their own or any other party's benefit or disadvantage.
3. The full confidentiality of the information implies that any content of the project idea or full proposal cannot be used for any purposes other than the evaluation process. Withdrawal from the evaluation process does not release the expert from the duty to maintain full confidentiality with respect to the information contained in the evaluated proposal.
4. The expert should be sensitive to the appearance of a conflict of interest with respect to the Participant applying for participation in the IdeaLab workshop.
5. The expert is not eligible for evaluation of the Participant's application form, project pre-proposal or full proposal (disqualifying conflict) in the case of:
 - taking a personal part in the preparation of the participant's application form, or full proposal;
 - remaining in such a personal relationship with the applicant that could raise doubts as to his/her impartiality;
 - being related to the applicant through marriage, family relationship and affinity up to the second degree;
 - being linked with the applicant: by means of adoption, custody or guardianship;
 - remaining in such a legal relationship with the applicant that could result in the outcome of the case affecting his or her rights or obligations;
 - being in any other situation that compromises his or her ability to evaluate the proposal impartially.
6. A potential conflict of interest may exist, even in cases not covered by the clear disqualifying conflicts indicated above, if a person:
 - remained in the three years preceding the date of receiving an application for assessment, in a business relationship or in any other form of cooperation with the entity delegating the participant to the IdeaLab workshop, in particular:
 - was linked with the entity through an employment relationship;

- provided services for the entity based on relations under the civil law, which could raise doubts as to their impartiality;
 - was a member of the management and supervisory bodies of the entity;
 - was a partner, shareholder or stockholder of the entity.
 - is in any other situation that could cast doubt on his or her ability to evaluate the application impartially, or that could reasonably appear to do so in the eyes of an external third party (e.g. having joint publications with an applicant of the IdeaLab workshop).
7. The expert should inform the National Centre for Research and Development about the existence of the conflict of interest. In case of a disqualifying conflict, an expert is excluded by the National Centre for Research and Development from assessment of Participant's application form, project pre-proposal or full proposal for which the disqualifying conflict is disclosed. In the case of a potential conflict of interest the National Centre for Research and Development will consider the circumstances of the case and will decide, on the basis of the objective elements of information at its disposal, on the existence of an effective conflict of interest. If such an effective conflict is established, the expert will be excluded in the same manner as for a disqualifying conflict. The National Centre for Research and Development may decide to replace the expert having a conflict of interest with a new expert.
8. Experts are required to sign a declaration that they undertake to inform the National Centre for Research and Development if a conflict of interest should arise in the course of their duties. They also sign a declaration that they have no conflict of interest for each Participant's application form, project pre-proposal or full proposal that they are asked to examine at the moment of the evaluation.