Swiss National Science Foundation

Ambizione Call 2024: Evaluation form for panel members and reviewers

1 Introductory remarks

All applications that meet the personal and formal requirements are evaluated scientifically. All panel members as well as all peer-reviewers (only for applications selected for phase 2) are asked the same questions on the applicant and the project, following the assessment criteria in article 15 of Ambizione regulations. The question on the research institution is only answered by panel members.

2 Evaluation form

Questions on "Applicant"

Q1: Career development (education, acquired expertise and independence of scientific achievements to date) and statement of mobility

Evaluate the applicant's career path on the basis of the CV and the major achievements. This document as well as the section “Current state of personal research and required competences for the project” of the research plan should demonstrate the expertise necessary for the submitted project.

Assess the acquired competences and the independence of scientific achievements to date while taking the net academic age and the statement of mobility into account. Please consider these elements in context of the scientific discipline in question.

In terms of Ambizione, independence is judged with particular references to the PhD. Ideally, the applicant should have at least one major achievement independent from their work as a PhD student and the associated PhD supervision framework.

Comment also on the applicant’s ability to lead original research of high impact and high scientific quality. Note that the biological age must not be used as an evaluation criterion. It is not necessary to summarise the CV.

Evaluate the statement of mobility while referring to the CV and the major achievements as well as the submitted project. Take into account both retrospective mobility and future mobility planned during the grant period. Please consider the different types of mobility: institutional and international mobility as well as networking activities; sectoral mobility; switching between disciplines and knowledge transfer activities. Focus on the quality, not the quantity of past and future mobility. Assess the overall mobility by the end of the project in view of the objective of the funding scheme.

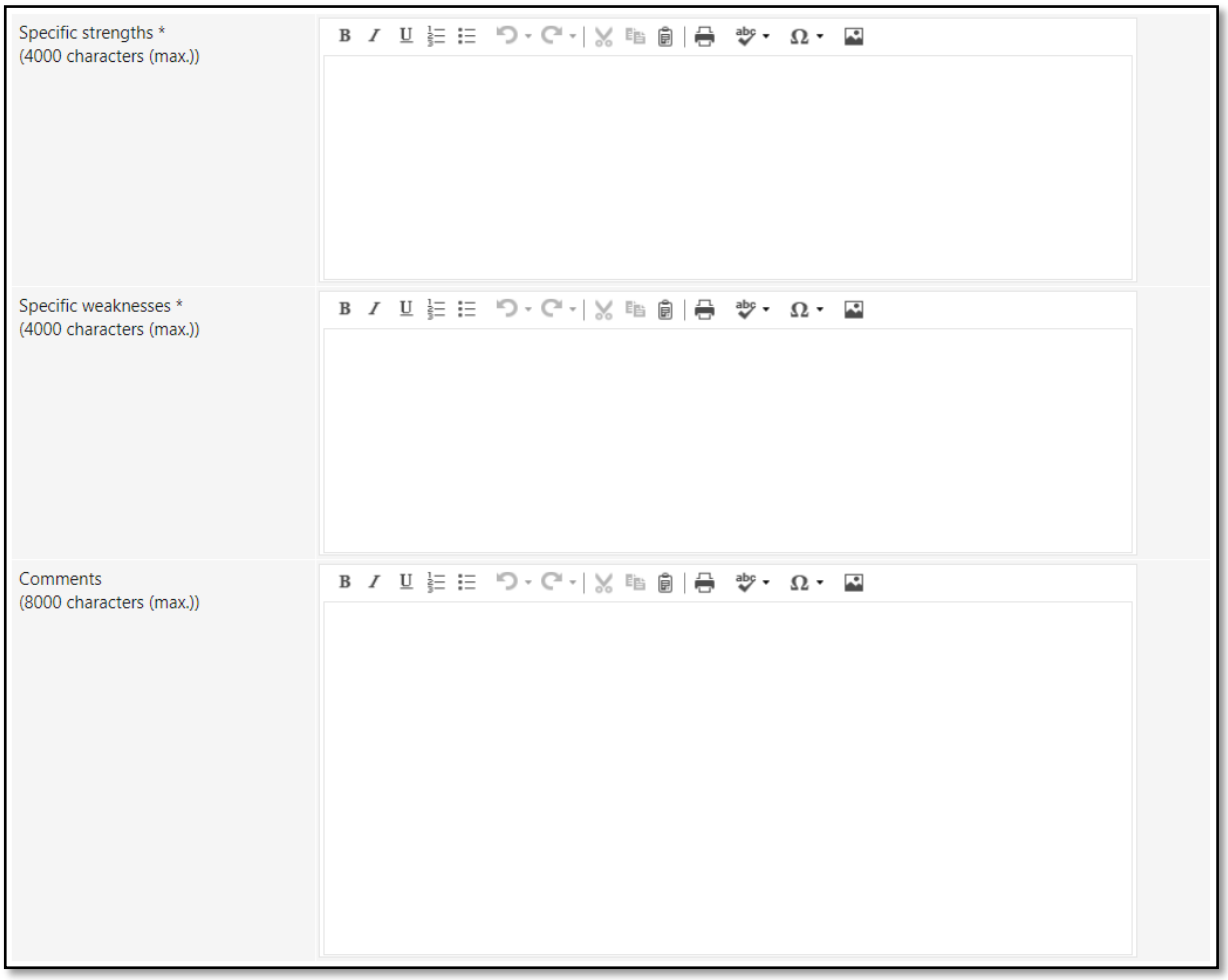


Figure 1: Screenshot of comment fields.

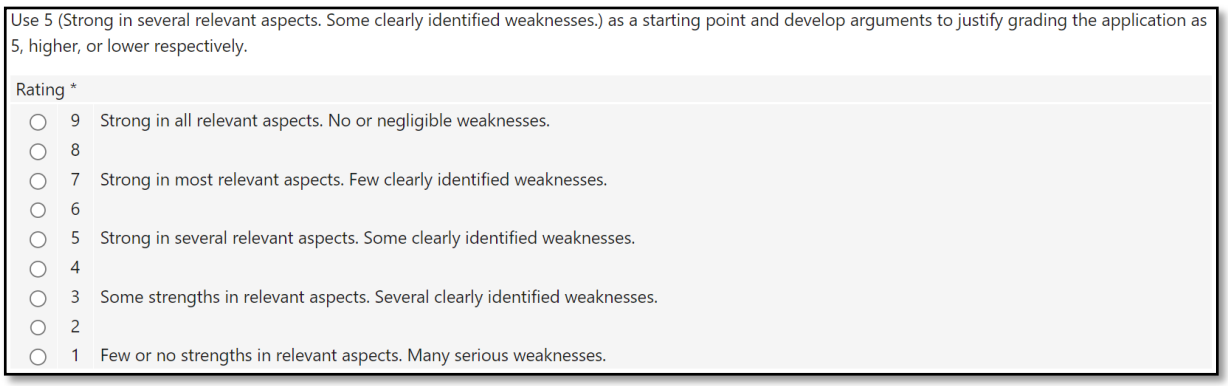


Figure 2: Screenshot of SNSF rating scale.

Q2: Major scientific achievements to date as outlined in the CV

The SNSF has signed the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA), which states that the scientific content of the entire scientific output is significantly more important than publication metrics or the identity of the journal in which it was published.

Evaluate the applicant's scientific achievements to date using the CV and the extent to which the claimed achievements therein are supported by the evidence provided. Use your own scientific judgement when making this judgement. It is important that you also consider the applicant's net academic age (see CV). The net academic age spans from the date of the doctoral defence or equivalent qualification or from the date of the medical degree to the submission deadline, minus all non-academic activities calculated in full-time equivalents.

Please note: A journal-based metric (e.g., Journal Impact Factor) or career spanning metric (e.g. the H index) cannot replace a qualitative assessment of the achievements. Therefore, please refrain from using such values in your evaluation. You may however refer to number of articles or citations to support your expert judgement of the applicant's achievements or impact in the research field, but this should be done with caution given influences on citations that are not necessarily related to impact and quality.

[Text boxes related to specific strengths and weaknesses as well as for comments (cf. Figure 1) and rating scale (cf. Figure 2)]

Questions on "Project"

Q1: Scientific relevance, originality, topicality and independence of the project

It is not necessary to summarise the project, but rather assess the scientific relevance, originality, topicality and independence of the project.

Indicate whether and to what extent the subject of the proposed project is of current interest. Indicators of topicality are, on the one hand, the importance and new insights of recent scientific publications devoted to the subject. On the other hand, a proposed project may be considered topical if it addresses a recent development that is of importance for the discipline in question or even beyond it.

By independence we mean the ability of the applicant to lead the project themselves even if they are dependent on collaborations in their proposed host institution. Thus, you should assess the ability to lead the proposed project on the basis of their past achievements as evidenced in the CV and status of research in the science case.

[Text boxes related to specific strengths and weaknesses as well as for comments (cf. Figure 1) and rating scale (cf. Figure 2)]

Q2: Approach, methodology and feasibility

Comment on the approach and methodology of the project based on the description in the research plan.

Comment on the feasibility of the project as it is described. Take into account whether the applicant has sufficient expertise to implement the project.

[Text boxes related to specific strengths and weaknesses as well as for comments (cf. Figure 1) and rating scale (cf. Figure 2)]

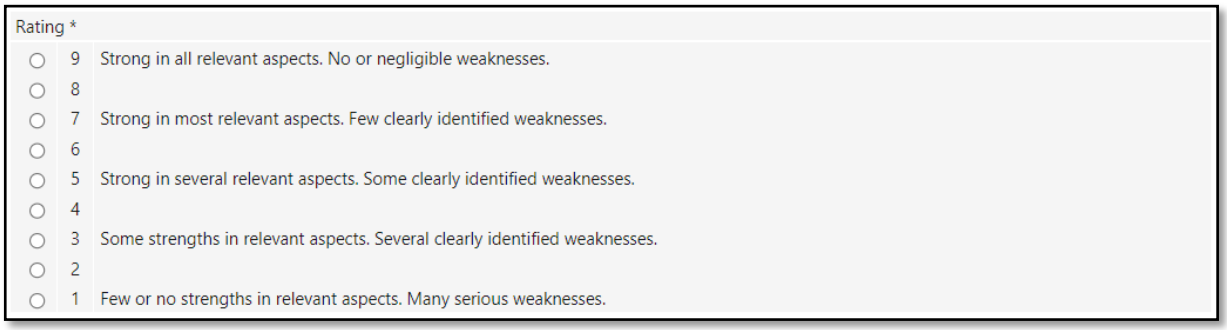
Question on "Research institution"

Assess the added value of the chosen research institution: scientific support and suitability with regard to implementing the project, opportunities for continuous intellectual development and training, and fostering of the applicant's scientific independence.

[Text boxes related to specific strengths and weaknesses as well as for comments (cf. Figure 1) and rating scale (cf. Figure 2)]

Question on "Overall assessment"

Please provide a rating on the following scale for your overall assessment of the proposal, considering the strengths and weaknesses in the criteria-based assessment. Use 5 as the entry point from which to develop your arguments to grade lower or higher.



Please summarise the main reasons for your overall assessment by listing the **strengths** and **weaknesses** of the proposal.

This statement is the most important part of your recommendation, as it makes the reasoning behind your assessment transparent, it prepares the panel for the decision-making, and it provides the administrative office with the necessary information for the further processing of the proposal. A summary of your statement will be forwarded to the applicant, especially in the case of negative funding decisions.