

AWARD PANEL

Terms of Reference

F4E Supply Chain Excellence Award

1. Purpose

The Award Panel evaluates applications to the F4E Supply Chain Excellence Award and selects the winners, fairly, transparently and in a manner that is documented and defensible.

2. Status

The Award is a recognition programme. It is not a procurement procedure, and the Panel's decisions confer no advantage, preference or expectation in any F4E procurement or contract. The Panel operates consistently with the principles of F4E's Financial Regulation and F4E's rules on the avoidance of conflicts of interest.

3. Composition

The Panel is a mixed body combining internal operational knowledge with an external majority. It comprises three internal members — a PCSCF representative (Chair), a Projects Department representative and a FUTED Department representative — and four external members: the Chair of the Procurement & Contracts Committee; the Chair of the ILO Network; a representative of a peer Big Science Organisation (e.g., CERN, ESO, ESS, ESA, European XFEL), rotating each cycle; and an academic specialising in procurement or innovation policy. Gender and nationality balance are considered. No industry representatives sit on the Panel, to avoid commercial conflicts of interest.

4. Appointment and term

Members are appointed for the cycle. The Big Science Organisation seat rotates each edition. External members may be reappointed. Appointments are confirmed before the Call for Applications opens.

5. The Chair

The Chair convenes and chairs the Panel, ensures the process is followed, holds a casting vote in the event of a tie, and signs the Decision Record. The Chair's vote carries no greater weight than any other member's in scoring.

6. Decision-making

Each member scores applications independently from 0 to 10 on each published criterion, applying the published weightings. To be considered for an award, an application must reach at least 50% on each individual criterion and at least 60% overall. Award decisions are taken by simple majority, with the Chair holding a casting vote. The Panel may decide not to make an award in a category if no application meets the threshold, and may confer a non-competitive Special Recognition citation. As a rule, one award is made in each category — the highest-scoring eligible application that meets the thresholds; the Panel does not make more than one award in a category.

To promote consistency between assessors, each 0–10 score follows a common band scale: 9–10 outstanding; 7–8 very strong; 5–6 meets expectations (5 being the pass level for a criterion); 3–4 limited; 0–2 little or no evidence. The same band scale is set out in the Evaluation Scoring Sheet.

An application's overall score is the mean of the valid individual assessments. Where a member has recused from an application, that member's assessment is excluded and the score is calculated from the remaining valid assessments; if fewer than three valid assessments remain, the Chair arranges one or more additional assessments before the application is decided. Recusals are recorded in the Decision Record.

Applications are assessed on the strength of the evidence presented against the published criteria; claims that are not substantiated by evidence are scored accordingly. The mandatory F4E Project Manager endorsement, together with any verification carried out by F4E, underpins the factual accuracy of an application but does not rate or rank it. Where a supplier's account of its achievements differs from the view of the relevant F4E project team, the difference is treated as one of fact or of evaluation: factual matters are resolved through the endorsement and, where appropriate, verification, while the assessment of merit is for the Panel. F4E's own operational perspective is represented within the Panel through its three internal members, so that F4E's view is reflected in the collective decision without displacing the independence of the external majority.

7. Conflicts of interest and confidentiality

Every member signs the Declaration of Interests before taking part, recuses themselves from any assessment in which they have a conflict, and keeps all applications, scores and deliberations confidential during and after the process.

8. Quorum

A quorum is at least four members, including the Chair and a majority of the external members present.

9. Process

PCSCF screens applications for eligibility; the list of eligible applicants is then provided to the Panel, and each member completes and signs the Declaration of Interests against that list — declaring any conflict and recusing accordingly — before receiving or scoring any application; eligible applications are scored independently by each member; the Chair consolidates the scores; the Panel meets (in person or remotely) to agree the outcome; shortlisted applicants may be invited to a brief interview; and the decision is recorded and signed. The duty to disclose a conflict is continuing: any conflict identified later is raised with the Chair without delay. The indicative timetable for the inaugural edition is scoring during the second half of September 2026 and confirmation of winners by 30 September 2026.

10. Records and data protection

Scoring sheets, declarations and the Decision Record are retained in accordance with F4E rules. Personal data is processed under Regulation (EU) 2018/1725.

11. Review

These Terms of Reference are reviewed after each edition and updated as necessary.