

BRAIN-be 2.0

BELGIAN RESEARCH ACTION THROUGH INTERDISCIPLINARY NETWORKS

PHASE 2 - 2018-2023



Call for proposals 2020-2021

Pillar 1: Challenges and knowledge of the living and non-living world

Pillar 2: Heritage science

Pillar 3: Federal societal challenges

Platform Evaluation Guidelines

For Remote evaluators



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PART I: ADMINISTRATIVE ASPECTS

On the basis of your prior agreement to contribute to the evaluation procedure, you will receive an **appointment email** from the BRAIN-be secretariat.

This email:

- formally appoints you as evaluator
- lists the research proposal(s) you are appointed to evaluate
- gives you the necessary information to access the online platform BRAIN-be 2.0
- confirms the financial conditions for the evaluation contribution

You will in a separate mail receive an **order letter** from the Chairman of the Board of Directors of BELSPO, defining the work to be done and the remuneration for this work.

After the completion of your task as remote evaluator, you will be required to fill out a **note of credence**, with your contact details, account number, and details of the work to be reimbursed.

You may contact the BRAIN-be secretariat via email at any stage of the procedure:

- For Pillar 1 : BRAIN-be-P1@belspo.be
- For Pillar 2 : BRAIN-be-P2@belspo.be
- For Pillar 3 : BRAIN-be-P3@belspo.be

PART II: GUIDELINES

1.1. GENERAL

The **remote evaluation** is carried out online, via the **BRAIN-be 2.0 EVALUATION platform**.

The online BRAIN-be 2.0 EVALUATION platform:

<https://brain-be.belspo.be>

What follows are the **guidelines to navigate the platform and practical aspects of the evaluation**.

1.2. INDIVIDUAL EVALUATION

Evaluators will not have access to proposals other than the ones they are evaluating. There will be 4 remote evaluators for each proposal. Each evaluator will be reviewing the proposal individually and independently from their 3 co-evaluators. As remote evaluator, at this stage, you will not know who your co-evaluators are, nor have access to their evaluations.

To access the proposals they have agreed to evaluate, evaluators must first **Log In to the BRAIN-be EVALUATION platform**.

Please note that in the case where a proposal has been previously submitted in the call 2019 (see Note below), evaluators will also be provided with the Consensus Evaluation Report of 2019. This document will be sent attached to the **'appointment email'**. The previous research proposal content can be provided on request.

Note: Evaluation of a proposal submitted in the previous call (2019)

Applicants have the opportunity to resubmit a proposal they introduced in the previous call(s). For thematic projects this is subject to the condition that they fit within the call priorities of the current call for proposals.

For "Resubmitted proposals" the following sentence is mentioned in the Research proposal page (see section 1.2.3): "The proposal is the same (acronym, title and content) as the one submitted in the previous BRAIN-be 2.0 call, but with improvements based on the comments of the expert panel"

The evaluation team is (partially) composed of experts having performed the 2019 evaluation of the proposal. The evaluation experts will have access to the previous consensus evaluation report.

This allows the evaluators to verify whether the applicants have taken into account remarks and recommendations of the panel of evaluators having performed the review in 2019 and, on this basis, introduced an improved version of their research proposal.

1.2.1. ACCESS TO THE BRAIN-be 2.0 PLATFORM

Access the **Platform Homepage BRAIN-be 2.0** via the link <https://brain-be.belspo.be>.



The screenshot shows the BRAIN-be 2.0 platform homepage. At the top, there is a green header with the BRAIN-be 2.0 logo on the left, the BELSPO logo in the center, and a 'Login' button on the right. Below the header, the main content area is white with a green border. It features the text 'Online Platform for submitting proposals in the context of the BRAIN-be 2.0 program'. Below this, it states 'The call 2020-2021 concerns the three pillars of the Brain-be 2.0 program:' followed by three pillars: 'Pillar 1 : Challenges and knowledge of the living and non-living world', 'Pillar 2 : Heritage science', and 'Pillar 3 : Federal societal challenges'. At the bottom, there is a 'LOGIN if you want to have access to the online platform:' section with two bullet points: '- as an APPLICANT to introduce a proposal or to have access to already created-proposal(s) in which you are recorded as Coordinator, Partner or African Partner.' and '- as an EVALUATOR to have access to the list of research proposals you are appointed to evaluate.'. The footer contains 'Platform submission guidelines', '© BELSPO - Federal Science Policy Office 2020 - Privacy policy - Cookie policy', and 'Contact BELSPO'.

🖱️ Click on the **Log In** button ❶ to proceed to the **Log In** page.

The Registration/Log-in procedure is done using the evaluator's email address. This email address is the unique identifier of the evaluator's account in the online platform. The Personal work page of the platform is exclusively accessible via this email address.

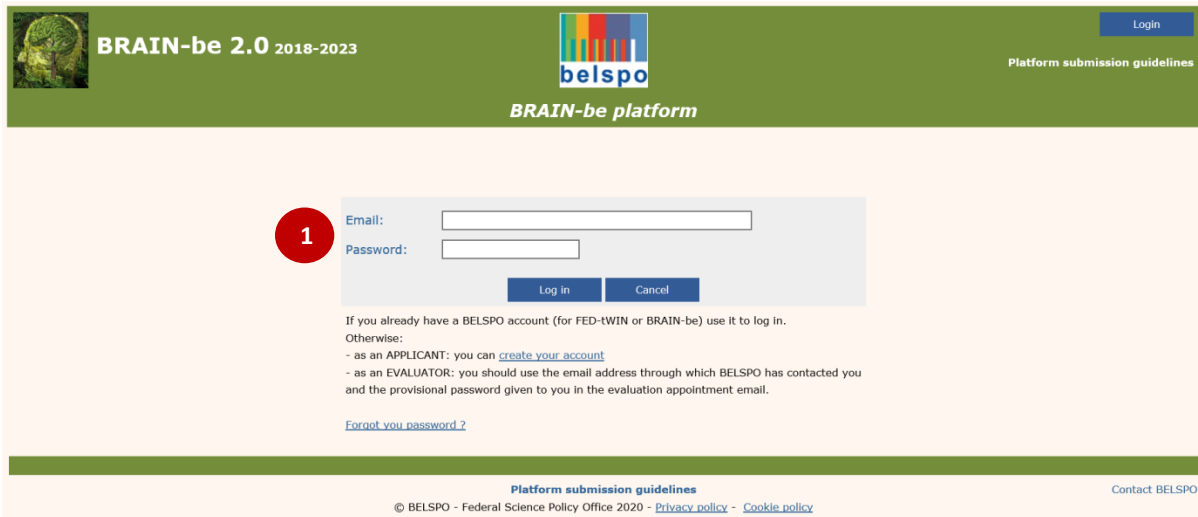
ONE EMAIL ADDRESS = ONE ACCOUNT

Should you need to change the email address that allows you to enter the online platform, please contact the BRAIN-be secretariat (see section '[Administrative aspects](#)').

FOR AN ALREADY REGISTERED EVALUATOR

If you have previously used the FED-tWIN or the BRAIN-be 2.0 EVALUATION platform, please Log In using your existing account. If you have forgotten your password, you may retrieve it by clicking '**Forgot your password**'.

🖱️ Introduce your **email** ❶ and your **password** to enter the platform. You will be directed to your **Personal work page**.



FOR A NOT-YET REGISTERED EVALUATOR

If you do not have a registered BELSPO account, Log In with the same **email address** used for the communication with the BRAIN-be secretariat, and the **provisional password** that will have been sent to you.

🔑 Introduce your **email** ❶ and the **provisional password** to enter the platform. You will be directed to the **Profile page**. This is the **Profile page** for the validation of the registration:



🔑 Check that all your personal data are correct (in case of inaccuracy, contact [BRAIN-be secretariat](#)).

- ❶ Choose a **new password** (other than the provisional password)
- ❷ Accept the rules of **confidentiality**
- ❸ **Save** your profile



You will be directed to your **Personal work page**.

1.2.2. PERSONAL WORK PAGE

After being logged in to the Platform, you must choose **the relevant Pillar** to access your **Personal work page**:

This is your **Personal work page** for the chosen Pillar (example, Pillar 2):

The following documents **1**, **linked** in the upper right corner of the page will guide you through the evaluation:

- **Information file Call 2020-2021** : General information on the programme and the call for proposals
- **Platform evaluation guidelines**: Practical guidelines for the evaluators
- **Submission and evaluation guidelines**: Evaluation procedure and evaluation criteria
- **Evaluation matrix**: Overview detailed evaluation ratings
- **Gender checklist**: For all gender issues that must be considered throughout the proposal
- **Note of credence** for the evaluators

The research proposal(s) ② to be evaluated will appear as a table with the Reference (Prp-XXX) and type of project (thematic or bottom-up), acronym and general information.

Each proposal will be accompanied by a menu on the right ③:

- Research proposal
- Evaluation form
- Print evaluation

🖱️ **Click on Research proposal in the menu** ④ **to access the content of the proposal.** You will be directed to the **Research proposal** page.

1.2.3. RESEARCH PROPOSAL PAGE


The research proposal page contains the necessary information for the evaluation of the proposal. Some parts are directly displayed, whereas other parts will appear as downloadable documents

Content of the research proposal:

- Information detail
- Partners information
- Partners table & budget
- Documents: contains the following downloadable documents (separately accessible and printable)
 - Proposal description
 - Gantt chart
 - Antarctica campaign form – only if applicable
 - Data management form
 - Ethics form
 - Cash or in-kind commitment letter (from institutions / organisations which are not partners of the project) – non mandatory, only if applicable
 - Follow-up committee letter of intent – non mandatory

1.2.4. EVALUATION FORM

From your **Personal work page**, you have access to the individual evaluation form, via the **Evaluation form** ¹ button in the right menu:



2

Reference	Acronym	General information	Submitted	
▶ Proposal (thematic) Prp-023	TEST 1	Title: TEST1 Title	✓	Research proposal Evaluation form Print evaluation
▶ Proposal (bottom-up) Prp-024	TEST 2	Title: TEST 2 : Title		Research proposal Evaluation form Print evaluation

1

Back to Homepage

Platform evaluation guidelines
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The **evaluation form** consists of different sections and subsections to be completed (see table here under). These sections are described within **Part II: Criteria** of the **Submission and Evaluation guidelines** available in the upper right corner of the platform page ².

You must compulsorily provide an **appreciation** followed by a **comment** for each of the sub-sections.

0. In-out of scope
1. Impact review <i>Section 1 'Impact overview' does not require an evaluation here.</i>
2. Scientific quality
2.1 Objectives and state of the art
2.1.a. Research objectives
2.1.b. Knowledge of the state of the art
2.1.c. Position of the project with respect to the state of the art
2.1.d. Scientific risk of the project in relation to its objectives
2.2 Coherence between research objectives and methodology
2.2.a. Methodological approach
2.2.b. Methodology
3. Quality and efficiency of the implementation
3.1 Quality of the network
3.1.a. Individual quality of the partners
3.1.b. Adequacy and added value of the proposed partnership in addressing the topic – only if applicable
3.2 Adequacy of the work plan
3.2.a. Relation of the work packages to the proposal theme(s) and aim(s)

- 3.2.b. Work planning: GANTT chart
- 3.2.c. Implementation risk management
- 3.2.d. Workload intensity in relation to the work packages

3.3 Budget assessment

- 3.3.a. Budget assessment

3.4 Data Management Plan

- 3.4.a. Data management plan, and availability of generated data after the research is finalised

4. Impact

4.1 Potential impact of the project

- 4.1.a. Potential impact of the proposal in light of the expected outcomes

4.2 Follow-up committee

- 4.2.a. Follow-up Committee

4.3 Valorisation plans

- 4.3.a. Plans to maximise the impact of the project (science and other...)

5. Strengths, weaknesses and recommendations

APPRECIATION SCALE

APPRECIATION SCALE

Insufficient information • Deficient • Weak • Reasonable • Good • Excellent

Each category in the appreciation scale is linked to a different statement for each sub-criterion. These statements are displayed in the **Evaluation Matrix** that is also available in the upper right corner of the platform page [2](#). The Evaluation Matrix is an excel file with an A3-sized landscape-oriented layout. Please change the settings of your printer accordingly if you cannot see it properly on screen, or if you wish to print it.

Be sure to have the **Submission and Evaluation guidelines** and the **Evaluation Matrix** by your side when evaluating the proposal.

COMMENTS

Comments justifying the choice of appreciation are **mandatory** and must be in agreement with the detail of the appreciation chosen for each sub-criterion. Comments will be articulated texts (no schematic bullet-points allowed) that will explicitly refer to the content of the proposal without being a summary of the proposal sub-section.

BELSPo has not imposed a minimum (or a maximum) length for the comments. It is the evaluators' responsibility to provide sufficient useful feedback of good quality to work with. Should your feedback

be deemed as 'insufficient' or 'of low quality', you will be asked to reformulate your comments. Well-developed feedback will facilitate the drafting of the consensus report which is the joint responsibility of all 4 individual reviewers.

🖱️ **Fill out the fields of the Evaluation form and click 'Save'.**

- A provisional version can be saved via the **Save** button, so that the form can be completed in several sessions
- Before submitting the individual information, the evaluator has
 - to certify that he/she has **no conflict of interest** for evaluating the research proposal and will respect the rules of confidentiality
 - to confirm that he/she has read and accepted the **GDPR** and the BELSPO clauses referring to it

💾 **Do not forget to 'SAVE' before you go 'Back to list'** 💾

🖱️ **Click on 'Back to List'.** You will be directed to your **Personal work page**.

🖱️ **Click on 'Check'** to verify if all necessary fields are completed.

🖱️ **Click on 'Submit' whenever you are ready to submit your evaluation.** After successful submission, you will receive an automatically generated confirmation of receipt and a ■ will appear on your **Personal work page**. In case of non-compliance, an error message appears. Please note that once submitted, changes to your evaluation will no longer be possible.

If you have mistakenly pressed the submission button and you are within the deadline, please contact the [BRAIN-be secretariat](#) to manually de-submit your proposal.

The status of the evaluation(s) can be monitored from the **Personal work page** of the platform: from the moment the evaluation form is submitted, a green symbol ■ appears in the table.

1.2.5. PRINT EVALUATION

From your **Personal work page**, you will be able to print or download your evaluation. We recommend you to do so in order to check that your comments correspond to correct the fields, especially if you have been working off-line and copying said comments.

🖱️ **Click on 'Print evaluation'.** A new tab will open in your internet browser containing a printable version of your evaluation.

1.3. CONSENSUS REPORT

1.3.1. WHAT IS A CONSENSUS REPORT

The **Consensus Report** of a given proposal will be elaborated by the same 4 evaluators who performed the individual assessment. It holds the unified view of the 4 evaluators regarding the proposal, displaying the agreed appreciations and comments. It is a self-standing text that will serve as basis for

the next step of the evaluation process (expert panel discussion), and once anonymised, as feedback for the applicants.

Note: for the work of the expert panel members and as feedback to the applicants it is extremely important that the Consensus Report contains as much evaluation feedback as possible (positive as well as negative).

1.3.2. THE PROCESSUS OF REACHING A CONSENSUS

The process of reaching a consensus report will be guided by one of the 4 evaluators, previously chosen by BELSPO: the **'reporter'**. The reporter will be responsible for drafting the consensus report, consisting of appreciations and comments for each sub-criterion that hold a balanced view of the 4 individual assessments.

Only the Reporter has the rights to edit the Consensus Report ('appreciation' and 'comments' fields) for a given proposal in the BRAIN-be Platform. **The 3 others evaluators** for that proposal, **will only be able to react to the Draft consensus text** edited by the Reporter, by agreeing or putting their agreement on hold accompanied **by comments**.

Once the 4 evaluators have completed and submitted their individual assessments for a given proposal, BELSPO will enable the **'consensus report mode'** in the BRAIN-be Evaluation Platform and at this time **only** the reporter will be informed by e-mail.

In the **consensus report mode** two additional documents will be available on the BRAIN-platform:

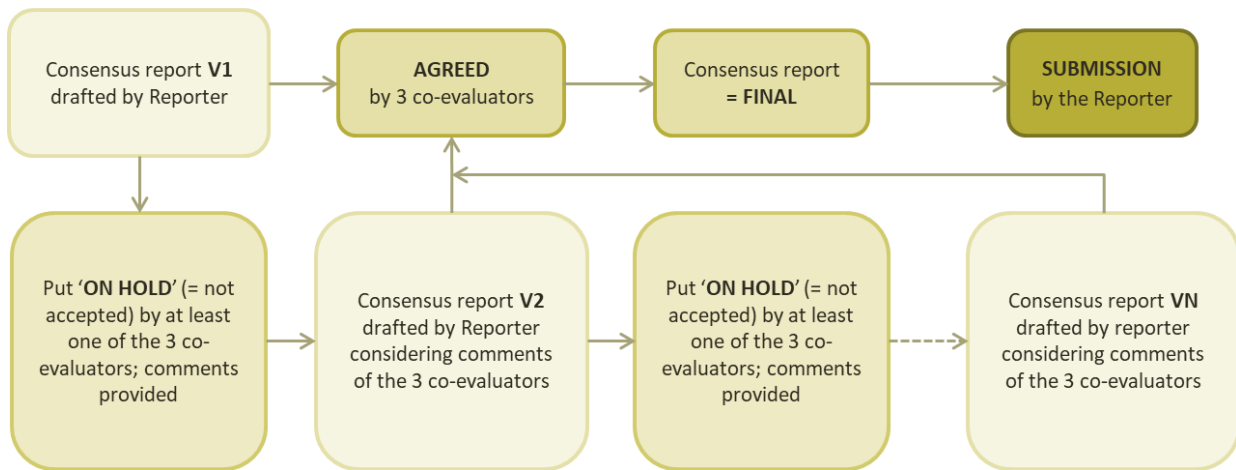
- **Compiled Evaluation**: document with all appreciations and comments of the 4 evaluators, accompanied by their respective names
- **Draft consensus form** : editable form for drafting the consensus report

The reporter will provide a first draft (V1) of the **Consensus Report**. Once submitted, the 3 other co-evaluators will receive an email from the BRAIN-be secretariat, inviting them to react in the BRAIN-be Evaluation Platform.

The other 3 co-evaluators will respond to the drafted consensus text, either **by agreeing or putting their agreement 'on hold'**. If they do not agree with the consensus appreciations or the comments, they will have to explain their divergent views or provide additional remarks.

The reporter will then produce a second draft (V2) taking into account the input received. Again, once the draft is submitted, an email will be sent by the BRAIN-be secretariat to the 3 co-evaluators, and the other 3-co-evaluators will respond again. This iterative process will go on until the evaluators agree on the consensus appreciations and comments for all sub-criteria. The Consensus Report will then be final, and the reporter will submit it to BELSPO.

Note: to facilitate the drafting of the consensus reports and/or in case of differences of opinion, the reporter can choose to exchange views with the co-evaluators via virtual meeting(s), email(s) etc. The reporter will therefore be provided with the email-addresses of the 3-co-evaluators. If desired, BELSPO can facilitate the organisation of (a) virtual meeting(s).



Note: if the proposal is deemed **out of scope by at least 3 out of the 4 evaluators**, the consensus report will only contain comments concerning the 'IN/OUT of scope' criterion.