**VWS applicant surveys for DPR experiment 2024**

Surveys completed at application, on reviewing other proposals, and on receipt of funding decision and review comments

1. **Application**

**Applicant Consent and application form**

***Disciplinary Self-Identification***

Please select at least one and up to three subject areas in which you can review proposals based on your expertise (in descending order). If you cannot assign yourself to any of the disciplines in the drop-down menu, please use the text box.

*(Refers to DFG subject area structure)*

***Expectations of the DPR process***

Please give us your initial views about the DPR process by answering the following questions. The following questions will not be used to make funding decisions about the proposal but may help us evaluate and improve the process of peer review.

This process is suitable to review my proposal

This process will identify appropriate reviewers

My proposal will receive a fair evaluation under this process

Overall, I trust this process to select the best research to fund

I expect the process to select more adventurous proposals than conventional panel review

I expect the process to select a similar set of proposals to panel review

*(Strongly agree, agree, slightly agree, Neither agree nor disagree, Slightly disagree, Disagree, Strongly disagree)*

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**2. Review**

***Reviewer characteristics (asked once per reviewer)***

Please indicate your gender

(Female, Diverse, Male, No answer)

Are you the first generation of your family to attend University?

(Yes, No, I don’t know, No answer)

How many years have you worked in research? Answer in terms of working years, e.g. if 6 years of working half-time then answer 3 years

**Proposal Evaluation (questions for each proposal)**

The evaluation of each proposal will take the form of a structured response (quick assessment). In addition to the rating, you will also be asked to provide a comment summarising your assessment. Remember that your feedback will be passed on to the candidates unedited and that you are solely responsible for the content and integrity of your comments.

Please note that the Volkswagen Foundation encourages reviewers to give full consideration to projects with a high degree of exploration, which may be associated with a correspondingly risky nature of the project – the possibility of not achieving the intended project objectives is therefore not a reason for rejecting a project.

Please provide your evaluation of the proposal below. Your scores will be weighted to take into account how you score in all the reviews you submit. This removes any incentive to give consistently high or consistently low scores to other people's proposals.

1. **Proposal details**

Hello *reviewer*!

You are reviewing the reference *xxxxx*.

Please download the file for the application *project title* here .

1. **Declare a conflict of interest**

We take conflicts of interest into account when matching proposals to reviewers. However, you have the opportunity to declare conflicts of interest at this stage. You are not eligible to be a reviewer if you are already familiar with the exact proposal, e.g. you have seen it in draft form, or you are sure that you can identify the applicant with a high degree of confidence.

​​☐​ Yes, I am familiar with the exact proposal and want to report a conflict of interest (if this is ticked, the survey will be closed).

​​☐​ No, I am not familiar with the proposal.

1. **Proposal grading**

**Review criteria**

Please assess the following aspects:

* Opening of a new research space (exploratory nature and novelty of the topic): The project not only offers new perspectives on already known research subjects, but also explores entirely new research spaces and topics.
* Added value of the constellations for exploring the research object: The constellation of researchers is suitable for exploring the scientific challenge addressed. The constellation of (sub)disciplines is new and original.
* Originality of the research project: The idea shows unorthodox thinking and introduces a unique approach and, if applicable, a novel hypothesis, a non‐standard methodology, etc.
* Scientific quality of the project: Based on a well defined research question, awareness of the standard knowledge in the domain, conclusiveness of the intended approach, feasibility.

For each proposal and each of the above-mentioned aspects, you will give a grade (between A+ “outstanding” and C- “unsuitable”). The full grade scale should be used so as to ensure that the resulting ranking of the proposals is as meaningful as possible. The meaning of the scale is as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| A+ | outstanding: breakthrough science |
| A | excellent: definitely above average |
| A- | very good: no significant weaknesses |
| B+ | good: minor deficiencies do not detract from strong scientific case |
| B | fair: good scientific case, but with definite weaknesses |
| B- | rather weak: limited science return prospects |
| C+ | weak: little scientific value and/or questionable scientific strategy |
| C | very weak: deficiencies outweigh strengths |
| C- | unsuitable |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | A+ | A | A- | B+ | B | B- | C+ | C | C- |
| Opening of a new research space (exploratory nature and novelty of the topic) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Added value of the constellations for exploring the research object |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Scientific quality of the project |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Originality of the research project |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**Overall vote**

The four components above reflect the criteria for the call and should therefore inform your overall vote.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | A+ | A | A- | B+ | B | B- | C+ | C | C- |
| Overall vote |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**Comment**

As the DPR is intended to provide feedback, it is particularly important that you, as a reviewer, provide constructive feedback to your peers. In this process, keep in mind that you should provide feedback of the same quality you are expecting from your peers. Also, consider that the main purpose of the feedback is to suggest ways of improving both quality and clarity of the proposal. Keep in mind that your feedback will be passed unedited to the applicants, and that you are responsible for the content of the comments and their integrity. Consider the directions in the [DPR – Rules and Guidelines](https://www.volkswagenstiftung.de/sites/default/files/documents/MB_102_Open_Up_DPR_Rules_and_Guidelines.pdf), Section 5, when reviewing.

It is not necessary to write a lengthy comment. An informative review can be only a few sentences in length if it is concise and relevant. Please avoid writing only a single, generic sentence.

1. **Reviewer uncertainty, effort & expertise**

The following questions will not be used to make funding decisions about the proposal but may help us evaluate and improve the process of peer review. Your answers will not be shared with your review.

**Review Confidence**

Regarding your overall vote, please write the lowest and highest possible score you considered for this proposal.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | A+ | A | A- | B+ | B | B- | C+ | C | C- |
| Highest |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Lowest |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

Review Time

How much time did you spend on your review of this proposal in minutes? Include your time reading the proposal and providing feedback.

Average Score

What do you predict will be the average score given to this proposal by the reviewers?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | A+ | A | A- | B+ | B | B- | C+ | C | C- |
| Average Score |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

Disciplinary Fit

With respect to the fit between your knowledge and experience, and the topic of this proposal, how confident do you feel providing a review of this proposal?

Choose one of the following answers (drop down)

* Totally confident
* Very confident
* Confident
* Somewhat confident
* Low confidence
* Not confident
* Certain that I was inappropriate to provide a review

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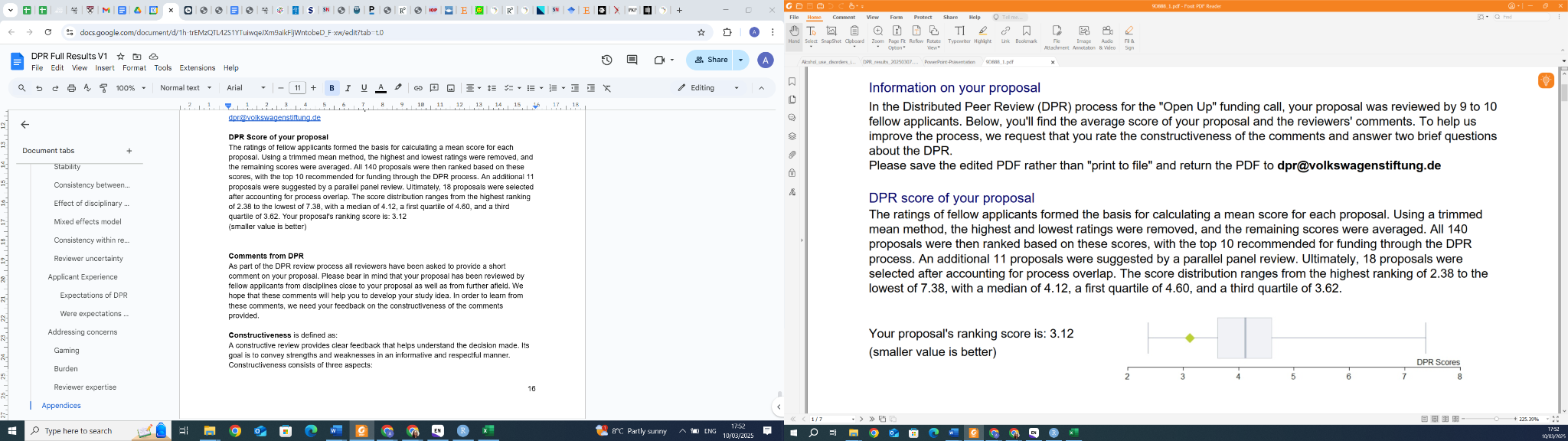
**3. Feedback**

**Information on your proposal**

In the Distributed Peer Review(DPR) process for the “Open Up” funding call, your proposal was reviewed by 9 to 10 fellow applicants. Below, you’ll find the average score of your proposal and the reviewers’ comments. To help us improve the process, we request that you rate the constructiveness of the comments and answer two brief questions about the DPR.

Please save the edited PDF rather than “print to file” and return the PDF to [dpr@volkswagenstiftung.de](mailto:dpr@volkswagenstiftung.de)

**DPR Score of your proposal**

The ratings of fellow applicants formed the basis for calculating a mean score for each proposal. Using a trimmed mean method, the highest and lowest ratings were removed, and the remaining scores were averaged. All 140 proposals were then ranked based on these scores, with the top 10 recommended for funding through the DPR process. An additional 11 proposals were suggested by a parallel panel review. Ultimately, 18 proposals were selected after accounting for process overlap. The score distribution ranges from the highest ranking of 2.38 to the lowest of 7.38, with a median of 4.12, a first quartile of 4.60, and a third quartile of 3.62. 

Your proposal's ranking score is: XXXX

(smaller value is better)

**Comments from DPR**

As part of the DPR review process all reviewers have been asked to provide a short comment on your proposal. Please bear in mind that your proposal has been reviewed by fellow applicants from disciplines close to your proposal as well as from further afield. We hope that these comments will help you to develop your study idea. In order to learn from these comments, we need your feedback on the constructiveness of the comments provided.

**Constructiveness** is defined as:

A constructive review provides clear feedback that helps understand the decision made. Its goal is to convey strengths and weaknesses in an informative and respectful manner. Constructiveness consists of three aspects:

**Politeness:** The language is friendly, professional and free from offensive or derogatory terms.

**Helpfulness:** The review clarifies the reasons behind the acceptance or rejection, aiding the author in comprehending the decision.

**Domain expertise:** The reviewer is very likely an expert in the relevant field, ensuring credible insights.

Is the review constructive?

*(Constructive, somewhat constructive, neutral, somewhat non-constructive, non-constructive)*

Overall how would you rate the reviews you received on each of the following dimensions?

Politeness

Helpfulness

Expertise

*(Very good, good, somewhat good, neutral, somewhat poor, poor, very poor)*

**Questions regarding DPR**

In this year's call for proposals in 'Open Up', the Volkswagen Foundation experimented with 'Distributed Peer Review' for the first time. Therefore, we are very interested in your perspective and opinion on the DPR as an applicant and would be pleased to receive your brief feedback below.

How would you feel about participating in future funding calls from Volkswagen foundation which use DPR?

*(Very positive, somewhat positive, neutral, somewhat negative, very negative)*

Is there anything else you would like us to know?

*(Open text response)*