

**DECLARATION OF NO CONFLICT OF INTEREST
AND CODE OF CONDUCT**

Open Call #2

Conflict of interest definition

1. The Principle

The SynergistEIC consortium has to ensure that the selected experts do not have any conflict of interest in relation to the proposal or project on which they are required to give an opinion.

The experts must perform their work impartially. To this end, the expert is required to:

- a. confirm there is no conflict of interest for the work s/he is carrying out by signing a declaration prior to the start of the work;
- b. inform the contracting party of any conflicts of interest arising in the course of their work.

In general, a conflict of interest exists if an expert has any vested interests in relation to the proposals upon which s/he is asked to give advice, or the expert and/or their organisation stands to benefit directly or indirectly, or be disadvantaged, as a direct result of the work carried out, or is in any other situation that compromises their ability to carry out their work impartially.

The SynergistEIC consortium will decide whether a conflict of interest exists, taking account of the circumstances, available information and related risks when an expert is in any situation that could cast doubt on his/her ability to carry out his/her work, or that could reasonably appear to do so in the eyes of an external third party.

If an expert knowingly conceals a conflict of interest, and is discovered during the evaluation, the expert will be immediately excluded, and (part of) the evaluation needs to be redone.

•1.1 *Disqualifying Conflict of Interest*

A **disqualifying** conflict of interest exists if an expert:

- Was involved in the preparation of the proposal
- Stands to benefit directly should the proposal be accepted
- Has a close family relationship with any person representing an applicant organisation in the proposal
- Is an investor, director, trustee or partner of an applicant organisation
- Is employed by one of the applicant organisations in a proposal
- Is a member of one of the Future Internet advisory groups set up by the Commission
- Is in any other situation that compromises his or her ability to evaluate the proposal impartially.

•1.2 **Potential Conflict of Interest**

A **potential** conflict of interest may exist, even in cases not covered by the clear disqualifying conflicts indicated above, if an expert:

- Was employed by one of the applicant organisations in a proposal within the previous three years
- Is involved in a contract or collaboration with an applicant organisation, or had been so in the previous three years
- Is in any other situation that could cast doubt on his or her ability to evaluate the proposal impartially, or that could reasonably appear to do so in the eyes of an external third party.

Experts with a disqualifying conflict of interest will not participate in the evaluation at all. Experts with a potential conflict of interest will not participate in the evaluation at all.

•2 **Identification, monitoring, and reporting**

- The SynergistEIC Open Call organisers shall **brief** the experts in writing or verbally on need to exclude a conflict of interest prior to their engagement. The briefing shall be documented.
- The SynergistEIC Open Call organisers will provide the experts with a **contact** to report conflicts of interests as soon as they arise, upon which the evaluation organisers take action without delay. Overall the evaluation organiser shall **monitor** potential conflict of interest and document all issues arising.
- As part of the evaluation report provided to the European Commission, the SynergistEIC Open Call organisers shall include a section **reporting** how conflicts of interest have been handled and any specific issues which arose prior and during the evaluation.

Declaration of No Conflict of Interest

I agree to abide by the code of conduct for independent experts acting as evaluators covered in Annex (Code of Conduct for Independent Experts Appointed as Evaluators).

I agree to inform the evaluation organizer immediately if I discover any disqualifying or potential conflict of interest with any proposal that I am asked to evaluate or which is the subject of discussion in any evaluation meeting in which I participate (Independent Evaluator Declaration of No Conflict of Interest).

Please check one of the two boxes below

- In particular, I declare that I have not submitted, nor am I, to my knowledge involved in any proposal currently under evaluation or submitted for evaluation, under the SynergistEIC Open Call for Proposals.
- In particular, I declare that my participation in the evaluation of the following proposal(s) could create a conflict of interest:
- ...
 - ...
 - ...
 - ...

I agree to not reveal any detail of the evaluation process and its outcomes or of any proposal submitted for evaluation without the express written approval of the evaluation organiser. In case of evaluations carried out outside evaluation organisers controlled premises, I understand that I 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, unless otherwise instructed.

Full Name of the Expert:

Signature:

Place, Date:

ANNEX Specific Conditions - Code of Conduct for Independent Experts Appointed as Evaluators

1. The task of an expert is to participate in a confidential, fair and equitable evaluation of each proposal according to the procedures described in this guide and in any programme-specific evaluation document. He/she must use his/her best endeavours to achieve this, follow any instructions given by the SynergistEIC Consortium and the European Commission to this end and deliver a constant and high quality of work.
2. The expert works as an independent person. He/she is deemed to work in a personal capacity and, in performing the work, does not represent any organisation.
3. The expert must sign this Declaration of No Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality before starting the work, by which he/she accepts the present Code of Conduct. Invited experts who do not sign the declaration will not be allowed to work as an expert.
4. In doing so, the expert commits him/herself to strict confidentiality and impartiality concerning his/her tasks.
5. If an expert has a conflict of interest with a proposal, he/she must declare such facts to the responsible contact person designated by the evaluation organisers as soon as he/she becomes aware of this.
6. Experts may not discuss any proposal with others, including other experts or personnel of the evaluation organisers not directly involved in the evaluation of the proposal, except during the formal discussion at the meetings moderated by or with the knowledge and agreement of the responsible contact person from the evaluation organizer.
7. Experts may not communicate with applicants. No proposal may be amended during the evaluation session. Experts' advice to the evaluation organisers on any proposal may not be communicated by them to the applicants or to any other person.
8. Experts are not allowed to disclose the names of other experts participating in the evaluation.
9. Where it has been decided that proposals are to be posted or made available electronically to experts, who then work from their own or other suitable premises, the expert will be held personally responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of any documents or electronic files sent and returning, erasing or destroying all confidential documents or files upon completing the evaluation as instructed. In such instances, experts may seek further information (for example

through the internet, specialised databases, etc.) in order to allow them to complete their examination of the proposals, provided that the obtaining of such information respects the overall rules for confidentiality and impartiality. Experts may not show the contents of proposals or information on applicants to third parties (e.g. colleagues, students, etc.) without the express written approval of the evaluation organisers. It is strictly forbidden for experts to make contact with applicants.

10. Where the evaluation takes place in an office or building controlled by the evaluation organisers, experts are not allowed to take outside the evaluation building any parts of proposals, copies or notes, either on paper or in electronic form, relating to the evaluation of proposals. Experts may be given the possibility of seeking further information (for example through the internet, specialised databases, etc.) to allow them to complete their examination of the proposals, but they may not contact third parties without the express consent of the evaluation organiser.
11. Experts are required at all times to comply strictly with any rules defined by the evaluation organisers for ensuring the confidentiality of the evaluation process and its outcomes. Failure to comply with these rules may result in exclusion from the immediate and future evaluation processes.