Annex 2

By-law for the selection of project applications

**Methodology for the application of the evaluation criteria of a Project application**

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| Program Name | European Union Cohesion Policy Programme 2021-2027 |
| Priority number and name | **6.1. Transition to climate neutrality** |
| Number and name of specific support objective | **6.1.1.** Mitigation of the economic, social and environmental impacts of the transition to climate neutrality in the most affected regions |
| Number and name of the specific support objective measure | **6.1.1.2.** Research development for the sustainable use of natural resources related to environmental and climate goals |
| Type of selection of project applications | **Open selection of project applications** |
| Responsible authority | **Ministry of Education and Science** |

**General conditions for the application of the assessment criteria of a project application**:

1. In order to assess the conformity of the project application with the relevant evaluation criterion of the project application, the evaluator shall take into account both the information provided in the relevant sections of the project application form, as well as all other information available in the form of the project application (other sections and annexes of the application form).
2. When assessing the conformity of a project application with the assessment criteria of a project application, only the information available in the project application form (form and annexes of the project application) shall be taken into account. The assessment cannot be based on assumptions or other information which cannot be verified or proved or which does not relate to the project application in question. However, where the evaluator has any information which may influence the assessment of the project, specific facts and sources of information supporting and proving the information provided by the evaluator must be provided.
3. When evaluating a project application, attention shall be paid to the coherence of the information provided in the project application form among all sections of the project application form in which it is referred to. If the information between the titles is not consistent, it is necessary to make provision for further clarification of the criterion to which the discrepancy applies.
4. The following shall be used for the evaluation of project applications:

1. [The Regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 746 of 26 November 2023, Regulations for implementation of Measure 6.1.1.2 “Research development for the sustainable use of natural resources related to environmental and climate goals” of the Specific Objective 6.1.1 “Mitigation of the economic, social and environmental impacts of the transition to climate neutrality in the most affected regions” of the European Union Cohesion Policy Programme 2021-2027 (](https://likumi.lv/ta/id/356674)hereinafter ₋ the Regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 746.);
2. An addendum to the European Union Cohesion Policy Programme 2021-2027;
3. 6.1.1. the Specific Objective “Mitigation of the economic, social and environmental impacts of the transition to climate neutrality in the most affected regions” Measure 6.1.1.2. “Research development for the sustainable use of natural resources related to environmental and climate goals” by-law for selection of project applications, criteria for evaluation of project applications and[[1]](#footnote-2) methodology for filling in the project application form;
4. The European Union Cohesion Policy Programme 2021-2027;
5. [Methodology No 3.1 of the Ministry of Finance of 11 April 2024. Methodology for the selection of project applications from the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund plus, the Cohesion Fund and the Just transition Fund for 2021-2027.](https://www.esfondi.lv/normativie-akti-un-dokumenti/2021-2027-planosanas-periods/eiropas-regionalas-attistibas-fonda-eiropas-sociala-fonda-plus-kohezijas-fonda-un-taisnigas-parkartosanas-fonda-projektu-iesniegumu-atlases-metodika-2021-2027-gadam)

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| **4. QUALITY CRITERIA** | **Evaluation system** | | | | | | | |
| **Maximum number of points to be obtained and procedures for assigning points** | | | **Minimum number of points required** | | | **Explanation for the determination of conformity** | |
| **4.1 Excellence \*** | | | | | | | | |
| 4.1.1. Clarity and conformity of the objectives of the project with the field “knowledge-intensive bioeconomy” and supported regions of the Smart Specialisation Strategy of Latvia (hereinafter - RIS3). | 0-5  (weight – 1)  Unit of valuation – 0.5 points) | | | 3 | | | **The criterion shall assess the following aspects:**  **I. clarity of objectives and consistency with RIS3 area knowledge-intensive bioeconomy**  Evaluate whether in the project application:  1. is explained the main idea of the proposed project and the assumptions for the implementation of the thematic tasks;  2. objectives[[2]](#footnote-3) are clearly defined, measurable and correspond to the field of smart specialisation “knowledge-intensive bioeconomy” and project activities and results are targeted for the statistical regions of Kurzeme, Latgale, Vidzeme and Zemgale (in accordance with the Cabinet of Ministers of level 3 (NUTS level 3) of the nomenclature of territorial units for statistics specified in Cabinet order No. 911 of 7 December 2021 on Statistical Regions of the Republic of Latvia and the Administrative units included therein);  3. the expected results and their numerical values are clearly identified, the results are realistic and achievable during the project implementation period or during the life cycle of the project, they are consistent with the objectives of the measure and the project.  **II. Research methodology**  The assessment of the research methodology shall take into account the following aspects:  1. if the project application details the research methodology – the rules for the formation of scientific theory, which are intended to be applied in the following stages of project implementation:   1. definition of problems and solutions; 2. examination of the relevance of the study; 3. selection and arrangement of study methods (techniques) in a specific system, by which it is possible to obtain the expected result and provide scientifically substantiated information;   2. if the research methodology is related to the work plan, which devises the stages of the research process and the expenditures to be performed therein, defining the results to be achieved and the intermediate results (including the mid-term results), the time schedule for achieving them;  3. if the chosen methodology will allow the expected results of the project to be achieved. The methods to be used must be identified for each particular step of the operation on the basis of a defined work plan.  The evaluation of the research methodology shall also be linked to the research category to be implemented within the framework of the project. It is necessary to assess whether the methods and approaches chosen are within the framework of a fundamental, industrial study or experimental development.  The study submission should provide a reasonable choice of methodology (approach) for the implementation of the study (the preferred alternative), taking into account the optimal and most effective approach for the implementation of the planned study in order to obtain the desired outcome and provide scientifically sound information. The project justifies that the methodology used to implement the project is optimal and that the objective (s) and the result (s) are achievable through this approach.  **III. Expected results**  The project application defines the outcome indicators to be achieved in accordance with Paragraph 10 and the requirements of paragraphs 11 and 12 of the Regulation of the Cabinet of MinistersNo. 746.  The project application defines the expected research results specified in the programme in accordance with the thematic research directions of the ACTIVITIES to be supported specified in Sub-paragraph 30.1 of the Regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 746.  The results shall be appropriate to the selected research category (basic research, industrial research or experimental development, including taking into account whether several research categories are to be implemented within the framework of the project in accordance with the conditions laid down in the Regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 746, paragraph 31)[[3]](#footnote-4) and relate to the planned research stages of the project.  Examine whether the scientific value, level of novelty and conformity with the needs of the specific economic sector or society is justified in the project application.  Assess the conformity of the expected project outcome, a prototype of a new product or technology, with the definition of a new product or new technology, taking into account the level of analogous and best practice of products, processes and services on the market at the date of submission of the study application, including:   * what progress in comparison with the established situation is expected as a result of the project implementation – how much positive changes in comparison with the initial situation are expected, including comparison of the parameters of the market analogues and study results and target market and other aspects justifying the current development of the study; * comparison of analogue and developmental parameters on the market: functional characteristics, type of use, technical specification, components, materials, software, average market price or cost; * what positive changes the results of a particular study will bring to the industry as a whole compared to the zero alternative.   A new product is a product or service that is completely new or has improved functional characteristics or changed its intended use (including changed or improved technical characteristics, components, materials, connected software, user-friendly properties). The following shall not be considered as a new product:  1. discontinuation of any part of the process;  2. replacement of capital or extensive increase of capital (purchase of modules identical to the modules used, non-essential extensions, updates to equipment and software). New installations or extensions must have significant improvements in the specification;  3. changes due to changes in component prices (changes in product price or production process productivity are not product innovations, for example in computer manufacturing, decrease in chip price, decrease in sales prices of the same computer model);  4. product adaptations to specific needs (e.g. adapting the product to the needs of the customer, which does not lead to changes in the functional or technical characteristics of the new product that ensure a higher competitiveness of the new product compared to existing products);  5. daily, seasonal and cyclical changes and improvements (for example, in the manufacture of clothing, the collection of a new season does not constitute innovation);  6. design changes (including taste and smell) which do not change functions, usage or technical characteristics;  7. resale of goods or processes of other manufacturers;  8. improvements to promote marketing (including aesthetic changes);  9. improvement of organisational processes in the activities of the merchant.  New and innovative technology is a new technology which has not yet proven itself compared to the technical level achieved in the sector, which is linked to the risk of technological or industrial failure and is not an optimisation or improvement of existing technology.  According to Sub-paragraph 30.1.4 of the Regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 746, project studies shall support the development of new technologies and products to promote climate neutrality of the peat sector “aimed at reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and creating innovative and alternative solutions aimed at the collection of carbon dioxide and promoting their widespread use, including research into new peat and other substrate types”.  The activities to be supported by the measure are not directed towards support to the peat industry for increasing peat extraction, but towards support for development of research capacity and excellence in the natural resources sector for achieving climate neutrality of Latvia. In accordance with Paragraph 5 of the Regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 746, it is planned to support research within the scope of the measure in the supported activities referred to in Sub-paragraph 30.1 of the Regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 746, including dissemination of knowledge. Paragraph 30.1.4 of the Regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 746 provides support for research into new technologies and products that replace or reduce the need for peat substrates and, in accordance with paragraph 30.1.4 of the Regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 746, simultaneously aim at reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and attracting carbon dioxide. In this measure, support for research into new technologies and products is essential as the objective of the measure also includes support to mitigate the socio-economic consequences of the transition process in the most affected regions.  **IV. Interdisciplinary nature of research**  Cross-disciplinarity in the implementation of the study is an advantage. Research shall be qualified as interdisciplinary if the theories, concepts, knowledge, data and techniques applied in the study come from two or more scientific sectors, including integration of research on social and cultural aspects into technological development projects. Interdisciplinarity contributes to the development of fundamental knowledge or to solving complex problems, and facilitates the involvement of several/different actors in the research and innovation process.  Social and humanitarian sciences play an important role in cross-cutting issues, contributing to complex societal challenges. Integration of social sciences and humanities into research provides a greater return to society from investment in science and technology. Research in this field should take into account the social, economic, behavioural, institutional, historical and/or cultural aspects of the social issue applied for.  Integrating the socio-economic dimension into the design, development and implementation of the research plan and new technologies to be developed can help to find solutions to societal challenges. Depending on the subject of the planned study, the success of the contribution of the social and humanities sectors may require cooperation between different subsectors of the social and humanities sciences or other branches of the sciences, in particular nature or engineering.  The interdisciplinary nature of the project is justified by providing information on the sectors and institutions in cooperation with which it will be provided. The project application shall describe theoretical and methodological qualifications in all related disciplines. Justification must be given for the relevance/added value of the interdisciplinarity described and for the contribution to achieving the expected results of the appropriate quality.  The unit of valuation in quality criterion 4.1 is 0.5 points. The maximum number of points awarded by an expert shall be 5 points, the minimum number of points to be obtained shall be 3 points.  **Five points shall be assigned to a** project application if the project application conforms successfully to all aspects of the particular criterion (if deficiencies exist, they are minor):  1. clearly defined objectives and corresponding to the area of smart specialisation “**knowledge-intensive bioeconomy”** and targeted at assisted regions  2. the expected results and their numerical values are clearly defined. The results directly contribute to the achievement of SO 6.1.1 output, output indicators and thematic tasks;  3. the chosen research methodology is an optimal alternative and will enable the expected results of the project to be achieved and science-based information to be provided;  4. the research carried out under the project is interdisciplinary.  **A project application shall be assigned 0 points** if none of the aspects or compliance assessed in the criterion can be assessed due to missing or incomplete information. | |
| 4.1.2. Justification of the research methodology (chosen alternative), including theoretical and practical, quality and relevance for achieving the objectives. |
| 4.1.3. The scientific value of the planned research results, the level of novelty and consistency with the project objective and the RIS3 area “knowledge-intensive bioeconomy”, taking into account an analogous and best practice level of existing products, processes and services in the field concerned. |
| 4.1.4. The effectiveness and quality of the research work plan, including the quality of the study's interdisciplinary approach (if any is planned) and complementarity of planned activities with other studies. |
| 4.1.5. Clarity of the planned project results and conformity with the project implementation stages specified in the work plan. |
| If it is not possible to achieve the minimum required score of 3 points in the evaluation of criterion 4.1, **the project application shall be rejected**. | | | | | | | | |
| **4.2. IMPACT \*** | | | | | | | | |
| Socio-economic impact of planned project results in the implementation of expected project results: | 0-5  (weight – 1,5) rating unit – 0.5 points | | | 3 | | | **The criterion shall assess the following aspects:**  **I. Contribution of the project to the achievement of the objectives of the programme and to the achievement of indicators**  1. The conformity of the project application with quality criterion 4.2 shall be assessed taking into consideration the expected impact of the project and its results on research development for the sustainable use of natural resources in the context of environmental and climate objectives.  1.1. The project application describes how research fields will be developed as part of the project, involving researchers in these fields in the project, as well as a plan for the creation of an internationally competitive team of scientists using research methods and technologies recognised by world scientists in scientific activities. The project application describes how the project and its results will strengthen the international competitiveness of the scientific group.  The project application describes how it is planned to develop innovative solutions within the framework of the project and promote wider use thereof.  The project application describes a plan for the preparation of new projects (for example, contribution to the preparation of new projects for submission to European Union research and innovation framework programme tenders, European Union funds and other research and innovation support programmes and technology initiatives), using the results and scientific knowledge obtained in this project, as well as involvement in international cooperation networks and consortia.  In order to describe the preparation of new projects (e.g. Horizon Europe in project tenders) using the results obtained in this project, the project indicates which tender is planned to submit the new applications, which partners will be attracted, the thematic framework of the new project application, etc.  1.2. Impact of the project and its results on policymakers and enforcers in planning the development and implementation of policy recommendations on sustainable and rational use of natural resources, increasing their value in changing environmental conditions.  The project application describes a plan for co-operation with policy makers, institutions, NGOs and entrepreneurs, using the results of the study (also after the end of the project), for example development of policy, development of recommendations, guidelines or regulatory enactments, as well as provision of consultations, especially emphasising the development of co-operation of the project scientific group with specialists of the relevant economic sectors.  1.3. Impact of the project and its results on the economy and society as a whole, ensuring knowledge transfer and raising awareness of the role and contribution of research to the economy and society as a whole.  The project application describes which target groups (including peat industry enterprises, associations) in assisted regions (Kurzeme, Latgale, Vidzeme and Zemgale statistical regions) the project applicant has identified. The project application describes how the needs of identified target groups will be identified so that targeted knowledge transfer can be ensured.  The project application describes the approach to effective public information using the results of the project (including promotion of its science sector and science in general), publicity measures of the identified target group, planned publicity measures (e.g., popular scientific articles, information campaigns, public discussions, etc.).  The project application describes the activities envisaged within the framework of the project in order to involve the wider public by promoting its understanding of research and its contribution to society, for example, in the process of knowledge-based decision-making and other relevant issues.  In assessing the socio-economic impact of the project, the opinion of an association registered in Latvia regarding the study for the transition of peat and related economic sectors to climate neutrality shall also be taken into account, if the opinion has been appended to the project application and the association:  1. represent the sectors in which the results of the studies planned within the framework of the project may be applied;  2. has been registered in the Register of associations and foundations of the Enterprise Register for at least five years.  In assessing the impact of the project on the socio-economic situation, an opinion regarding the significance of studies for the transition of peat and related economic sectors to climate neutrality (if the opinion has been appended to the project application), which has been provided by the following institutions, shall also be taken into account:  1. an association registered in the Register of associations and foundations of the Enterprise Register for at least five years whose members work in the peat sector and whose members have a total turnover of at least EUR 150 000 000 per year;  2. the Ministry of industry with competence in the field of climate or natural resource management policy.  **II. Management of intellectual property**  Evaluate the planned measures for the management of intellectual property resulting from the activities carried out within the framework of the project.  Possible mechanisms for intellectual property management (technology transfer) include:   * free access to study data for any interested party; * publications (scientific articles, monographs, articles in articles, newspapers, etc.); * strengthening of industrial property rights (technology rights); * dissemination of technology rights through the conclusion of intellectual property licences or transfer agreements.   **III. Sustainability and** **accessibility of project research results**  The project application lists specific plans for the publication of scientific publications, the publication of data, the strengthening of intellectual rights or participation in and organisation of scientific events. The project application describes the subject matter of the publications, the scientific expenditure in which they are intended to be published, as well as their relevance to the project theme.  The project application describes how public access to research results will be ensured, including publishing results in random access journals and depositing newly acquired research data in research data repositories in accordance with the principles “as open as possible” and FAIR (*findable, accessible, interoperable, reusable)* can be found - accessible, interoperable and reusable.  The impact of project results on research development for sustainable use of natural resources in the context of environmental and climate objectives shall be assessed taking into account the sustainability of project results, in accordance with the provisions OF SUB-paragraphs 14.5 and 26 of the Regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 746.  The sustainability of the expected results for at least five years after the final payment is made shall be justified by one or more investments in the increasment ofthe capacity of the innovation system within the framework of the non-economic project created know-how and technology transfer, including scientific articles, registered technology rights.  The study application should discuss whether and how co-operation with the project co-operation partners – scientific institutions involved in the consortium – will continue after the end of the study, as well as co-operation with the foreign scientific institution or performer of economic activity has developed during the implementation of the research, including indicated possibilities for research development, including contribution to the preparation of new projects for submission to European Union research and innovation programme tenders and other research and innovation support programmes and technology initiatives.  **IV. Development of student research skills**  Impact of the project and the results thereof on students in the educational process by integrating research into the study process, utilisation of the scientific results of the project in the study process of higher education, as well as building the capacity of students and the scientific group.  The project application describes a plan for building the capacity and skills of students involved in the project, applicants for a doctoral degree, young scientists and other scientific personnel of the project, strengthening the project theme of the scientific group and raising its international competitiveness by applying the latest research methods and technologies (for example, describing tasks within a project that will add experience).  A plan for investing in improvement of the educational process project in science sectors by developing programme-related, currently implemented, master's and doctoral programmes. A description of how the lessons learned from the studies and the data collected can be applied to the study and research process.  Evaluate, in the project application, the planned involvement of students, applicants for a scientific degree or young scientists who have obtained a doctorate in the last 10 years in the implementation of the project, as well as whether it is intended that educational programmes are implemented and accessible to interested persons and whether they are intended to continue to be implemented after the end of the project.  The objective of involvement of students, applicants for a scientific degree and young scientists in the implementation of the project is to ₋ promote renewal, supplementation of the scientific staff and involvement of young scientists in research.  **!** The involvement of students, applicants for a scientific degree and young scientists shall be evaluated taking into consideration the workload of the referred staffs in the implementation of the project in terms of the full-time equivalent (not less than 5 PLE students).  Applicants for an accredited or licensed higher education programme and for a scientific degree, as well as young scientists who have obtained a doctorate in the last 10 years from entering into a work or company contract, who perform the duties of a scientific employee within the scope of the project, shall qualify for participation in the implementation of the project. Are employed in the Republic of Latvia and receive remuneration within the scope of the project in accordance with the employment or enterprise contract.  **V. Contribution of the project to addressing climate change, the environment and other societal challenges in assisted areas** (In the statistical regions of Kurzeme, Latgale, Vidzeme and Zemgale (in accordance with the Cabinet of Ministers of Statistical territorial units Nomenclature level 3 (NUTS level 3) specified in Cabinet [order No. 911](https://likumi.lv/ta/id/328252-par-latvijas-republikas-statistiskajiem-regioniem-un-tajos-ietilpstosajam-administrativajam-vienibam) of 7 December 2021 on Statistical Regions of the Republic of Latvia and the Administrative units included therein).).  The conformity of the project application shall be evaluated taking into account the socio-economic impact of the project results, which address the issues related to climate and environmental change and other public needs, including the socio-economic impact in assisted regions (In the <https://likumi.lv/ta/id/328252-par-latvijas-republikas-statistiskajiem-regioniem-un-tajos-ietilpstosajam-administrativajam-vienibam> statistical regions of Kurzeme, Latgale, Vidzeme and Zemgale (in accordance with the Cabinet of Ministers of Statistical territorial units Nomenclature level 3 (NUTS level 3) specified in Cabinet order No. 911 of 7 December 2021 on Statistical Regions of the Republic of Latvia and the Administrative units included therein)).  Assess whether the public is involved in the identification and resolution of societal issues within the framework of the project and to inform it regarding the results of the project.  The unit of valuation in quality criterion 4.2 is 0.5 points. The maximum number of points awarded by an expert shall be 5 points, the minimum number of points to be obtained shall be 3 points.  **Five points shall be assigned to a** project application if the project application conforms successfully to all aspects of the particular criterion (if deficiencies exist, they are minor):   1. the project and its results directly contribute to the development of research for the sustainable use of natural resources in the context of environmental and climate objectives and to the fulfilment of the common (horizontal) tasks set out in Paragraph 14 of the Regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 746, in cooperation with enterprises; 2. the project application describes the measures for the management of intellectual property arising from the activities carried out within the framework of the project; 3. the project application shall substantiate the sustainability of the project results and the impact on research development for the sustainable use of natural resources in the context of environmental and climate objectives. 4. students are involved in the implementation of the project, thus promoting the research skills of persons, academic growth and renewal of the scientific staff; 5. project results contribute to addressing climate change, the environment and other societal challenges in assisted regions (In the statistical regions of Kurzeme, Latgale, Vidzeme and Zemgale (in accordance with the Statistical territorial units Nomenclature level 3 (NUTS level 3) specified in Regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers on December 7th 2021 ). Within the framework of the project, it is planned to involve and inform the public regarding the results of the project.   **A project application shall be awarded 0 points** if it does not conform to any of the aspects assessed in the criterion or the conformity cannot be assessed due to missing or incomplete information. | |
| 4.2.1. Intellectual property management: know-how and technology transfer activities planned during the project lifecycle, their potential impact on research development for the sustainable use of natural resources in the context of environmental and climate objectives, and societal needs.  4.2.2. Sustainability of planned project results.  4.2.3. The implementation of the study shall contribute to strengthening the scientific capacity of the scientific staff of the study, including students or applicants for a scientific degree. |
| 4.2.4. Contribution of the project to the promotion of long-term co-operation with the scientific institution of Latvia or a foreign state. |
| 4.2.5. Contribution of the project to addressing climate change, the environment or other societal needs.  4.2.6. Sustainability of acquired knowledge and qualitative plan for dissemination thereof, including provision for scientific publications and informing the public regarding the results of the project, which are not related to intellectual property rights. |
| If a minimum score of 3 points is not reached in the evaluation of criterion 4.2, **the Project application shall be rejected**. | | | | | | | | |
| **4.3. Quality and efficiency of PROJECT implementation \*** | | | | | | | | |
| 4.3.1. The scientific capacity of the personnel involved in the implementation of the research and compliance with the achievement of the specific objectives and results of the project. | 0-5  (weight – 1)  Scoring Unit - 0.5 points | | | 3 | | | The criterion shall assess the following aspects:  **I. Scientific capacity and scientific management of the project**  Assess the capacity of personnel involved directly in the implementation of research, including:   1. the capacity of the scientific director, characterised by the information on scientific and professional qualifications and experience provided in the personal lifestyle description (CVs), demonstrating the professionalism and compliance of each person with the expected duties and achievement of the objectives of the project; and 2. the capacity of the team of scientists, taking into consideration the information on the planned project implementation personnel, broken down by function group.   **II. Administrative management of the project and efficiency of cooperation**  Assess whether the partner actions are complementary to each other, excluding overlapping or duplication. taking into consideration:   * the division of activities and responsibilities to be implemented within the framework of the project; * the contribution of each partner to the implementation of research; * the allocation of intellectual property resulting from the activities carried out within the framework of the project, taking into consideration the contribution of each partner (human and material) to the implementation of the project.   Assess whether the project management structure and decision-making mechanism will ensure the achievement of the results of the project objectives within the deadlines specified in the project and the Regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 746.  Assess whether effective innovation management will be implemented.  ***Definition****: Innovation management is a process that requires understanding of market needs and technical challenges with a view to successfully implementing respective creative ideas. A new or improved product, service, or process is a typical outcome of this process.*  **III. Resource Management system**  Evaluate the information provided in the study submission regarding the resources at the disposal and necessary for each stage of project implementation for ensuring project implementation and achievement of results  The description of the project work plan provides information of such level of detail as to justify the resources necessary for the implementation of the study stages and includes quantitative information to ensure monitoring of progress in the implementation of the study.  The project application lists the resources that will be used at each stage of the implementation of the study and indicates their source and method of engagement.  Assess whether it is planned to involve third parties in the implementation of the project, including the use of their resources:   * whether the project applicant or the co-operation partner (if applicable) intends to subcontract to service providers (in the procurement procedure) for the performance of individual tasks.   **! Evaluates** the budget summary of the project (including: In the format of the XLS file, ensuring the traceability of calculations), including staff remuneration calculations, in which the number of staff, the number of hours and the rate shall be indicated in conformity with the equivalent work rates specified in the remuneration procedures of the institution.  The unit of valuation in quality criterion 4.3 is 0.5 points. The maximum number of points awarded by an expert shall be 5 points, the minimum number of points to be obtained shall be 3 points.  **Five points shall be assigned to a** project application if the project application conforms successfully to all aspects of the particular criterion (if deficiencies exist, they are minor):   1. the scientific capacity of the project team shall be sufficient to achieve the objectives and results of the project; 2. the project management structure and decision-making mechanism shall be sufficient to ensure the achievement of the results of the project objectives within the time periods specified in the project and the Regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 746; 3. the project management and resource management system shall be appropriate for achieving the objectives and results of the project.   In case the project plans the creation or acquisition of research infrastructure (in accordance with Sub-paragraphs 30.4 and 34.1.3 of the Regulation of the Cabinet of MinistersNo. 746), the project application shall provide an evaluation and substantiate the conformity of the new research infrastructure with the objectives of the project and ensuring the sustainability of the project, as well as the necessity of the acquisition and additionality thereof with the research material and technical base at the disposal of the BENEFICIARY and co-operation partners, including indicating whether the costs of the construction or acquisition of such infrastructure or amortisation costs will be applied to the project in order to ensure the performance of studies and ensuring the horizontal tasks specified in Paragraph 13 of the Regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 746.  A project application shall receive **0 points** if the project application does not conform to any of the aspects evaluated in the criterion or the conformity cannot be assessed due to missing or incomplete information. | |
| 4.3.2. Efficiency of cooperation – division of functions and responsibilities of partners, contribution to transfer of knowledge and technologies and ensuring sustainability of project results.  4.3.3. Quality of the resource, risk and result management system.  4.3.4. The conformity of the planned infrastructure with the objectives of the project and evaluation for ensuring the sustainability of the project shall be purchased in the project. |
| If the minimum required score of ₋ 3 points is not reached in the analysis of 4.3, **the Project application shall be rejected**. | | | | | | | | |
| **4.4. CONTRIBUTION TO SECTORAL POLICY OBJECTIVES** | | | | | | | | |
| Project contribution to the following indicators:  4.4.1. Advanced research excellence, capacity and international cooperation.  4.4.2. Increased innovation capacity, social and economic value of knowledge and research. | 0-2  (weight – 0,5) | 0 | | | The criterion shall be awarded **2 points** if the project describes the contribution to the fulfilment of the following performance indicators defined in [the Science, technological Development and Innovation Guidelines 2021-2027 (](https://likumi.lv/ta/id/322468-par-zinatnes-tehnologijas-attistibas-un-inovacijas-pamatnostadnem-2021-2027-gadam)hereinafter - ZTAIP), which comply with the policy objective “Advanced Research Excellence, capacity and International Cooperation”:  4.4.1. Advanced research excellence, capacity and international cooperation (1 point);  4.4.2. Increased innovation capacity, social and economic value of knowledge and research (1 point).  0 points shall be awarded **in the** evaluation of the criterion if the project application does not conform to any of the aspects assessed in the criterion or the conformity cannot be assessed due to missing or incomplete information. | | | |
| The criterion is not exclusive. | | | | | | | | |
| **4.5. THE PROJECT APPLICANT HAS SUBMITTED AN OPINION OF A SOCIETY REGISTERED IN LATVIA AND THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY REGARDING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDIES.** | | | | | | | | |
| **The project applicant together with the project application has submitted:**  4.5.1. Associations registered in the Register of associations and foundations of the Enterprise Register for at least five years;  4.5.2 industry ministries with competence in the field of climate or natural resource management policy  **an opinion** on the importance of studies for the transition of peat and related economic sectors to climate neutrality in order to justify the positive impact of the project on the socio-economic situation of the most affected regions in the transition process. | | | 0-1  Scoring Unit - 0.5 points  (weight – 1) | | | 0 | | In criterion 4.5.1, **0.5 points** shall be granted, if the project applicant together with the project application has submitted a positive opinion regarding the significance of studies for the transition of peat and related economic sectors to climate neutrality to justify the positive socio-economic situation of the project in the transformation process in the regions most affected, in accordance with Paragraph 28 of the Regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 746, to the associations registered in the Register of undertakings and foundations, the members of which work in the peat sector and the total turnover of the members of WHICH are at least EUR 150 000 000 per year.  In criterion 4.5.2**, 0.5 points** shall be granted if the project applicant together with the project application has submitted a positive opinion of the sectoral Ministry, whose competence is the field of climate or natural resource management policy, regarding the significance of studies for the transition of peat and related economic sectors to climate neutrality in order to justify the positive impact of the project on the socio-economic situation in the most affected regions during the transition process, in accordance with the provisions of Paragraph 28 of the Cabinet of Ministers Regulation No. 746.  A project application shall receive **0 points**, if the project application has not been accompanied by an association registered in the Register of Enterprise Register and foundations for at least five years, the members of which work in the peat sector and the total turnover of the members of which is at least EUR 150 000 000 per year and a positive opinion of the Ministry of industry confirming the significance of studies for the transition of peat and related economic sectors to climate neutrality in order to justify the socio-economic impact of the project. |
| The criterion is not exclusive. | | | | | | | | |
| **4.6. The project envisages actions contributing to the implementation of the horizontal principle of equality, inclusion, non-discrimination and respect for fundamental rights.** | | | | | | | | |
| The project provides for actions contributing to the implementation of the horizontal principle of equality, inclusion, non-discrimination and respect for fundamental rights. | 0-5  (weight – 0,1) | 2[[4]](#footnote-5) | | | The guidelines developed by the Ministry of Welfare (Ministry of Welfare) and the Ministry of Justice (Ministry of Justice) for implementation and supervision of the horizontal principle “Equality, inclusion, non-discrimination and respect for fundamental rights” (2021-2027) are used in the evaluation of the criterion. *(Available:* [*https://www.lm.gov.lv/lv/vadlinijas-horizontala-principa-vienlidziba-ieklausana-nediskriminacija-un-pamattiesibu-ieverosana-istenosanai-un-uzraudzibai-2021-2027*](https://www.lm.gov.lv/lv/vadlinijas-horizontala-principa-vienlidziba-ieklausana-nediskriminacija-un-pamattiesibu-ieverosana-istenosanai-un-uzraudzibai-2021-2027)*).*  **2 points (minimum number of points)** **shall be granted** if the project application provides for:   * + 1. 3 general horizontal principles actions; and     2. 1 specific horizontal principle action, and     3. one horizontal project principle indicator has been defined;     4. if applicable, the budget cost lines of the project shall be indicated, which shall, inter alia, promote the horizontal principle;     5. the project application identifies the main problems affecting the target group in the field where the project applicant is active and a description of how the horizontal principle actions envisaged in the project will address the identified problems;     6. information is provided on project management and implementation personnel by gender, etc. characteristics (or planned to be provided) and information is provided (or planned to be provided) by gender, etc. characteristics of project target groups;     7. the project application explains how non-discrimination on grounds of age, gender, ethnicity, etc. will be ensured in project management and implementation and promotes measures that promote non-discrimination and respect for fundamental rights.   The planned general horizontal activities should cover all areas of general activities ₋ **communication and visual identity, project management and implementation and public procurement (if applicable).**  A higher score shall be granted for those projects in which the intended number of general and specific horizontal principle activities and horizontal principle indicators exceeds the minimum requirements, as well as the project application indicates that information will be provided in a breakdown according to the characteristics of gender etc., if possible, and the project application details the impact of the project on the horizontal principle.  If the project application conforms to the minimum requirements and the number of horizontal principle activities and/or indicators provided for therein exceeds the minimum requirements, a higher number of points shall be assigned to the project application.  **3 points** **shall be granted** if the project application conforms to the specified minimum requirements and the minimum requirements are exceeded **in one of the following positions:**  1) general activities of the horizontal principle;  2) specific activities of the horizontal principle;  3. horizontal principle indicator  **4 points shall be assigned** if the project application conforms. the specified minimum requirements and minimum requirements are exceeded in **two of the following positions:**  1) general activities of the horizontal principle;  2) specific activities of the horizontal principle;  3) indicators of the horizontal principle.  **5 points** shall be granted if the project application conforms to the specified minimum requirements and the minimum requirements are exceeded in **each of the following positions**:  1) general activities of the horizontal principle;  2) specific activities of the horizontal principle;  3) indicators of the horizontal principle.  **0 points shall be awarded** if the project application does not provide for at least three general and at least one specific action promoting equality, inclusion, non-discrimination and respect for fundamental rights, nor does it specify at least one indicator of the horizontal principle “equality, inclusion, non-discrimination and respect for fundamental rights”,  For example, the project application does not provide for general and specific horizontal principle actions, which will promote equality, inclusion, non-discrimination and respect for fundamental rights, as well as indicators of the horizontal principle are not attached, or the intended activities do not have a link with the horizontal principle, information regarding project management and implementation personnel by gender, etc. features of the project has not been provided (or it is not planned to provide) information by gender, etc. features regarding target groups of the project have not been provided.  If the project application does not initially reach the minimum required number of points in this criterion, but reaches the total minimum number of points specified in the quality criteria, 0 points shall be assigned to the project application in this criterion, but it shall not be rejected due to non-conformity of this criterion and shall be included in the total ranking list, while at the same time including a condition in the decision with the updated project application to ensure compliance with the minimum requirements of the criterion.  **If after the performance of the clarifications the project application still does not reach at least the minimum number of points in this criterion, the project application shall be rejected.**  **The activities of the general horizontal principle** concern project management and implementation staff, communication and visual identity measures, public procurement and generally promote equal opportunities, non-discrimination and respect for fundamental rights.  **Examples of general horizontal principle activities in a project application**:  **For project management and implementation staff:**  - measures promoting work-life balance will be directed towards project management and implementation, providing for flexible and part-time work opportunities for parents with children and those caring for loved ones;  - the selection of project management and implementation personnel will be ensured without any direct or indirect discrimination, promote the attraction of the less represented sex, attract persons with disabilities and do not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnic origin, sex, age, disability, religion, belief, sexual orientation or other circumstances;  - equal pay and equal career opportunities will be ensured for women and men, including through participation in training, seminars, missions;  - accessibility, including tailored workstations and tailored information and communication technologies, will be ensured for persons with disabilities during the project management and implementation process;  **Communication and visual identity activities shall:**  - in implementing the communication and visual identity activities of the project, their content will be carefully evaluated and language and visual images will be selected which reduce discrimination and stereotyping towards one of the sexes, persons with disabilities, religious beliefs, age, race and ethnic origin or sexual orientation, *see the methodological material “recommendations for discrimination and stereotyping communication with society” (*[*https://www.lm.gov.lv/lv/media/18838/download*](https://www.lm.gov.lv/lv/media/18838/download));  - information search, t, will be accessible to people with disabilities through multiple sensors (vision, hearing, touch) channels (*see VAR Guidelines “evaluation of the website in accordance with the accessibility requirements of the digital environment (WCAG 2.1 AA)” (for* [*https://pieklustamiba.varam.gov.lv*](https://pieklustamiba.varam.gov.lv)*/, guidelines for the assessment of accessibility are available at* [*https://www.varam.gov.lv/lv/wwwvaramgovlv/lv/pieklustamiba*](https://www.varam.gov.lv/lv/wwwvaramgovlv/lv/pieklustamiba));  - a “easy to read” section will be created on the project's website, which will include brief descriptive information on the project and other information needed by readers in light language to enable the general public to learn about EU fund investments (*see LM methodological material “Roadmap to Building an inclusive Environment in State and local Government institutions (2020) in* [*https://www.lm.gov.lv/lv/celvedis-ieklaujosas-vides-veidosanai-valsts-un-pasvaldibu-iestades-2020*](https://www.lm.gov.lv/lv/celvedis-ieklaujosas-vides-veidosanai-valsts-un-pasvaldibu-iestades-2020)*).*  **Public procurement:**  - the project will implement socially responsible procurement by purchasing ethically produced products and services and using public procurement procedures to create jobs, decent working conditions, promote social and professional inclusiveness, ensure access to the place of delivery of service/vide/object/priority venue, as well as promote better working conditions for people with disabilities and disadvantaged people.  **Specific activities of the horizontal principle –** specific activities of the horizontal principle are planned in the project application, which arise from the activities to be supported by the measure and the content of the project and which in particular promote equal opportunities, non-discrimination and accessibility of the environment and information to persons with movement, visual, hearing or mental impairments, seniors and parents with young children.  **Examples of specific actions:**  With regard to the promotion of gender equality: - consultations (or advisory measures) of gender equality experts will be provided for the evaluation of activities and content of materials developed within the framework of the project from the perspective of gender equality (attaching relevant documents, e.g. consultation protocols, service contracts, etc.) (relevant HP indicator VINPI\_01)  - in the implementation of media campaigns, seminars, conferences and communication activities, formats accessible to people with various types of disabilities will be provided for informing the public (e.g. sign language translation, subtitling, Braila printing, real-time transcription, recording of broadcasts and events) (relevant HP indicator VINPI\_02.2);  - events and discussions (discussion panels) will attract experts of both sexes, opinion voters to ensure representation of opinions, situations, needs and interests of both sexes.  With regard to equal opportunities for persons with disabilities:  - in order to ensure accessibility of the venue and environment of the event, rental of technical solutions will be ensured (e.g. mobile panhandle, lift, rental of individual induction loops, etc.);  - Consultative activities will be provided on issues of equal opportunities for persons with disabilities, including seconded experts or consultations with non-governmental organisations representing the interests of persons with disabilities (*for example, in the process of developing informational materials, assessing the accessibility of the service area environment, addressing and reaching target groups, etc. (attaching, as appropriate, documents such as consultation protocols for u.c*.) (relevant HP indicator VINPI\_01);.  **Horizontal principle indicators.** N Specifies at least 1 HP VINPI score:  - the number of media campaigns, seminars, conferences and communication events in which formats accessible to persons with various types of functional disorders were provided for informing the public (e.g. translation into sign language, subtitling, real-time transcription, recordings of broadcasts and events) (specified in the Regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 746 VINPI\_02.2);  In addition, you can predict the following HP VINI Index:  - number of consultations on issues of gender equality, equal opportunities for persons with disabilities, non-discrimination on age, ethnic origin etc. and fundamental rights, including legal and practical aspects (VINPI\_01) | | | |
| If the minimum required score of ₋ 2 points has not been reached in the evaluation of criterion 4.6, **the evaluation shall be “Yes, conditional”,** including a condition with the specified project application to ensure compliance with the minimum requirements of the criterion. If after the performance of the clarifications the project application still does not reach at least the minimum number of points in this criterion, **the project application shall be rejected**. | | | | | | | | |
| \* in the selection of project applications compliance with the specified quality criteria shall be ensured by international scientific expert-examination, in accordance with the provisions of the Regulation of the Cabinet of Ministers No. 746, paragraphs 46, 47 and 48. | | | | | | | | |
| Procedures for the selection of Project applications in the selection of Project applications:  1. the project application shall be evaluated and cross-checked by applying the following conditions:  2. a project application which has received a higher number of points in the total value of the quality criteria shall be supported as a priority;  3. if the total amount of the quality assessment of several project applications is equal, the project application, which in quality criterion 4.2, shall be supported as a priority. “Impact” (weight 1,5) has received a higher rating;  4. if the evaluation of several project applications in the quality criterion “impact” is the same, the project application, which in quality criterion 4.1, shall be supported as a priority. “Excellence” has received a higher rating;  5. if evaluation of several project applications in quality criterion 4.2. “Impact” and 4.1. “Excellence” shall be the same, a panel of experts on the evaluation of international scientific expertise shall be convened and experts shall deliver an opinion to which the project shall be awarded a higher score.  Calculation of the total coefficient of the project:  K k = K 1 + 1,5 \* K 2 + K 3 + 0,5 \* K 4 + K 5 + 0,1 \* K 6  where:  K k – the total coefficient;  K 1 – coefficient of excellence;  K 2 – impact factor;  K 3 – coefficient of quality and efficiency of project implementation;  K 4 – coefficient of contribution to the achievement of sectoral policy objectives;  K 5 – coefficient of opinion of an association registered in Latvia and of the Ministry of industry regarding the significance of studies;  K 6 – coefficient of the horizontal principle of the project “equality, inclusion, non-discrimination and respect for fundamental rights”.  International scientific expert-examination shall evaluate the conformity of project applications with the quality criteria 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3. According to the expert evaluation form, the expert shall substantiate the number of points awarded.  The project application evaluation Commission shall evaluate the quality criteria 4.4, 4.5 and 4.6 and prepare a calculation of the total coefficient of the project. | | | | | | | | |

1. The evaluation criteria have been approved in the written procedure of the monitoring Committee of the European Union Funds 2021-2027 by Decision No 2025/5.2-6/16/3 of 13 January 2025, documents available at: <https://www.esfondi.lv/profesionaliem/uzraudzibas-komiteja/uk-e-portfelis-2021-2027/2024-11-29-uk-rakstiska-procedura-izm_6112> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Objective: consistent with the objective of measure 6.1.1.2, provide an overview of the results of the project and the solutions applied to resolve an identified problem. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. In the case of industrial research and experimental development, restrictions may be imposed on the dissemination of research results related to intellectual property rights. (including to ensure protection of industrial property rights). [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. If the project application does not initially reach the minimum number of points required in this criterion, but reaches the minimum number specified in the quality criteria 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3 overall, 0 points shall be assigned to the project application in this criterion, but it shall not be rejected due to non-conformity of this criterion and shall be included in the total ranking list, while at the same time including a condition in the decision with the updated project application to ensure compliance with the minimum requirements of the criterion. If after the performance of the clarifications the project application still does not reach at least the minimum number of points in this criterion, the project application shall be rejected. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)