

Academic partnerships: Selection process

1) Formality and eligibility check by the appear team

As a first step, the **appear** team checks if the project proposal meets the following criteria:

- the deadline has been met
- the project proposal in its electronic and hard-copy version is complete and includes all necessary signatures
- the proposal is within the budget scope and guidelines
- the partners/participants of the project are eligible to participate
- the project proposal addresses the thematic priorities of **appear**

2) Review of proposals by two external peer reviewers

Formally correct project proposals are reviewed by two international experts. Reviewers are chosen on the basis of their specific knowledge of the topic areas and of the regional context covered by the project proposals. All reviewers have to declare that they do not have a conflict of interest at the time of their appointment.

A review consists of two parts:

1. Scoring matrix: Reviewers score the following aspects of the project proposal: (1) Project design and substantive quality, (2) Project management and capacity of the consortium, (3) Relevance for and contribution to development, (4) Results & sustainability and (5) Cost effectiveness. Each criterion has a maximum score of 20, which adds up to a total maximum score of 100.
2. Textual report

All reviewers remain anonymous during the decision process by the **appear** Selection Board.

3) Project selection by the Selection Board

The **appear** [Selection Board](#) currently has the following members:

- 1 expert on gender mainstreaming and development cooperation: Elisabeth Schmid
- 2 scientists who are familiar with science and research in developing countries (key regions of the Austrian Development Cooperation) as well as experts on development research: Marie-France Chevron, Gudrun Lettmayer
- 2 representatives of the Austrian Development Agency (ADA): Gertraud Findl, Ursula Steller
- 1 representative of the Austrian Research Promotion Agency (FFG): Ralf König
- 1 representative of the Austrian Science Fund (FWF): Reinhard Belocky

The **appear** Selection Board meets to discuss all project proposals. The Board decides on the basis of the score and textual report of the reviewers. Furthermore, results of the consultation with the Coordination Offices of the Austrian Development Cooperation in its priority countries are taken into account.

Aspects that may be decisive when a choice between equally scoring projects needs to be made are gender aspects, new cooperation between institutions, support or build-up of South-South cooperation, balanced overall coverage of thematic priorities and balanced regional distribution.

The Selection Board is entitled to accept the entire project proposal and the requested funds, to agree only to partial funding and a reduced set of activities or to reject the entire proposal.

Decisions are taken by qualified majority.

The **appear** team has no voting rights in the Selection Board.

4) Communication of decisions

The **appear** team communicates the decisions taken by the Selection Board to the respective project coordinators. Project coordinators of rejected proposals will be provided with excerpts of the reviews giving the reasons for rejection and recommendations for improvement. Project coordinators of approved proposals will be informed about the contracting procedure.