

Selection Board - Terms of Reference

1. General Information about appear

The overall objective of the Austrian Partnership Programme in Higher Education and Research for Development – **appear** – is to strengthen the institutional capacities in education, research and management in the priority countries of the Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC) through academic partnerships with Austrian academic institutions and Master’s and PhD grants as a contribution to effective and sustainable reduction of poverty. **Appear** is implemented by the Austrian Agency for International Cooperation in Education and Research (OeAD-GmbH) and the Latin America Institute (LAI). The **appear** office is at the OeAD-GmbH.

The formality and eligibility check of the project proposals (component 1: academic partnerships and preparatory funding) and applications (component 2: Master’s and PhD grants) regarding the focus of the programme as well as the formal requirements will be completed by the **appear** team before the Selection Board (SB) meeting. The final decision on the selection of projects and applications is taken in the meeting of the Selection Board and the SB will advise the **appear** team to start the contracting process.

Selection process - component 1

The partnership proposals will be reviewed by two independent, anonymous reviewers, who are chosen by the **appear** team based on their specific knowledge of the topic areas and of the regional context covered by the applications. Additionally the coordination offices will be requested to give a short statement on the proposed project. Proposals will be selected by the selection board based on the scores/comments of the reviewers and how well they integrate and demonstrate ability to implement the following five dimensions (see **appear** guidelines, page 12):

- Project design and substantive quality
- Project management and capacity of the consortium
- Relevance for and contribution to development
- Results and sustainability
- Cost effectiveness

The selection criteria for the preparatory funding are the same as for the funding of academic partnerships but applications for preparatory funding will not be reviewed by external reviewers.

Selection process - component 2

Applications for Master's and PhD grants will be evaluated based upon the grants scoring matrix (see **appear** guidelines, page 22) by the **appear** team (relevance for development and quality of established contacts, cooperation and partnership) and the Austrian supervisor (scientific quality of the applicant and the proposed thesis). A ranking list based upon the overall score will be provided for the members of the selection board on which the final decisions are made. In case of the same score women and younger applicants will be given priority. Applications from students and academics who are already or will be involved in an **appear** academic partnership will be given priority. Care is taken that applicants with special needs are given the same opportunities.

2. Tasks

The Selection Board awards funding from the components 1 and 2 of the Austrian Partnership Programme in Higher Education and Research – **appear**. In doing so it has to observe the contract regarding the administration of the programme. It decides about

- the award of funds for academic partnerships
- the award of preparatory funding for the initiation and development of new partnerships
- the award of Master's and PhD grants.

3. Members of Selection Board

The Selection Board consists of:

a) Members with voting rights:

- 3 experts in development cooperation with expertise in the following areas
 - o Gender mainstreaming
 - o Familiarity with science and research in developing countries (key regions of the OEZA) as well as expertise in development research
 - o Development policies and research for development
- 2 representatives of the Austrian Development Agency (ADA)
- 1 representative of the Austrian Research Promotion Agency (FFG)
- 1 representative of the Austrian Science Fund (FWF)

b) Members with consultative vote:

- 2 representatives of the consortium OeAD and LAI

The experts named in 3 a) are selected by mutual consent by the ADA and the consortium. The other members are nominated by the relevant institutions. If necessary, the board can call in other respondents to their meetings.

When selecting members of the Selection Board particular attention is to be paid to their impartiality, which means that these people must not have any relationship to an institution or person submitting applications.

The selection board is chaired by the representative of the ADA. Should he/she be unable to attend, a chair will be nominated by the representative of the ADA.

The function in the Selection Board is unpaid. Travel costs can be refunded against submission of appropriate documents (2nd class train ticket, flight ticket).

4. Mode of working

The first Selection Board meeting will take place anticipated on May 31st 2010, when decisions will be made on Master's and PhD grants applications as well as applications regarding preparatory funding for the elaboration of partnerships (component 2 and 1). The second Selection Board meeting for the award of funding academic partnership projects (component 1) and further Master's and PhD grants will be in November 2010. In the following the Selection Board will usually hold two meetings a year.

Upon request of at least two members with voting rights additional meetings can be called as required; these must be called 3 weeks before they take place.

The exact dates of the meetings of the Selection Board are determined by mutual consent between the members at the end of each meeting for the next meeting. The meetings are called by the chairperson, who also informs about the agenda of the meeting, at least 3 weeks before they take place.

The documents – prepared by the consortium – necessary for assessing the submitted applications as well as the agenda are sent to the members at least 3 weeks before the meeting takes place.

Due to the limited time the documents for the first Selection Board meeting will be sent 10 days before the meeting.

5. Quorum and voting

The Selection Board is quorate if the members have been duly invited to the meeting and if at least half of the members with voting rights are present. Decisions of the Selection Board are taken by simple majority. Abstentions and proxy voting are not possible. In urgent cases a circular resolution is also possible.

The selection board is entitled to award either a full agreement with the proposed activities and requested funds, to agree only to partial funding and a reduced set of activities, or to reject the entire proposal. Improved proposals may be resubmitted in subsequent calls.

In case of equal number of votes the chair of the Selection Board (ADA) will make the final decision.

The Selection Board will formally approve the decisions and advise the **appear** team to inform the applicants and/or start the contracting process.

6. Minutes

Decisions of the Selection Board are minuted. The minutes are established by the consortium and signed by the chairperson (ADA) and countersigned by another member of the Selection Board. An electronic version of the minutes has to be sent to all members of the selection committee within 3 weeks after the meeting.

7. Miscellaneous

The decisions of the Selection Board written down in the minutes are the basis for the award and disbursement of the grants and they will also be used for the checking of the adequate use of the project funds by an organ of the ADA.