

# Guidance for reviewers: how to write a useful review

Useful reviews are invaluable in helping the panel make funding decisions. Panel members will use a reviewer's comments and score to help them in their assessment and ranking. As a reviewer you should bear this in mind. To write a useful review:

## Do:

- read the assessment criteria
- be familiar with the grading scale / score and descriptors
- be objective, fair and professional
- provide full, clear and concise comments and objective criticism
- clearly identify strengths and weaknesses
- provide justification for your comments and grade, whether you are supportive of the proposal or not
- be aware that not everyone reading the comments will be a specialist in the field
- be aware of unconscious bias
- treat all information as confidential

## Don't:

- make it personal
- reiterate the proposal or re-state the assessment questions
- include anything in the assessment that will identify you such as references to your own work, where you have worked or who you have worked with
- exceed the space restriction in Je-S or part of your review will be lost.
- allow your review to be influenced by bias for your own field of research

## Questions to ask yourself:

- How important are the research questions, or gaps in knowledge, that would be addressed?
- Is the proposal novel, innovative and timely?
- Are the researchers up to the job? Do they have the right team, experience and infrastructure? Are they at the forefront nationally? Internationally?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of the proposal?
- Is the methodology and experimental design clearly set out and justified? Are the methods appropriate? What could they do better? Are there alternative approaches?
- Are there major flaws or weaknesses?
- Are there any ethical issues?
- Does this proposal represent good value for money?