

Guide to FRIA Juries

Adopted by the Board of Trustees of the FRIA on 21st June 2019

COMPOSITION OF JURIES

The Board of Trustees of the FRIA shall appoint members of the juries upon the proposal of the Guidance Committee of the F.R.S.-FNRS (COMA).

Members are appointed for a term of one year, renewable 4 times. Their mandate is personal and may be renewed after a 2- year period of vacancy.

The FRIA has adopted 19 subject areas corresponding to the 19 LS and PE panels of the ERC (European Research Council). These subject areas are identified in a list of ERC descriptor fields complemented by FNRS keywords reflecting certain specificities of research in the French-speaking Community of Belgium (CFB).

The list including the **19 subject areas** is the following:

- **LS1:** molecular biology, biochemistry, biophysics, structural biology, biochemistry of signal transduction
- **LS2:** genetics, population genetics, molecular genetics, genomics, transcriptomics, proteomics, metabolomics, bioinformatics, computational biology, biostatistics, biological modelling and simulation, systems biology, genetic epidemiology
- **LS3:** cell biology, cell physiology, signal transduction, organogenesis, developmental genetics, pattern formation in plants and animals
- **LS4:** organ physiology, pathophysiology, endocrinology, metabolism, ageing, regeneration, tumorigenesis, cardiovascular disease, metabolic syndrome
- **LS5:** neurobiology, neuroanatomy, neurophysiology, neurochemistry, neuropharmacology, neuroimaging, systems neuroscience, neurological disorders, psychiatry
- **LS6:** immunobiology, aetiology of immune disorders, microbiology, virology, parasitology, global and other infectious diseases, population dynamics of infectious diseases, veterinary medicine
- **LS7:** aetiology, diagnosis and treatment of disease, public health, epidemiology, pharmacy, pharmacology, clinical medicine, regenerative medicine, medical ethics
- **LS8:** evolution, ecology, animal behaviour, population biology, biodiversity, biogeography, marine biology, eco-toxicology, prokaryotic biology
- **LS9:** agricultural, animal, fishery, forestry and food sciences; biotechnology, chemical biology, genetic engineering, synthetic biology, industrial biosciences; environmental biotechnology and remediation
- **PE1:** all areas of mathematics, pure and applied, plus mathematical foundations of computer science, mathematical physics and statistics
- **PE2:** particle, nuclear, plasma, atomic, molecular, gas, and optical physics
- **PE3:** structure, electronic properties, fluids, nanosciences
- **PE4:** analytical chemistry, chemical theory, physical chemistry/chemical physics
- **PE5:** materials synthesis, structure-properties relations, functional and advanced materials, molecular architecture, organic chemistry¹
- **PE6:** informatics and information systems, computer science, scientific computing, intelligent systems

¹ Since the 2019 FRIA call, given that correspondence between PE3 and PE5 subject areas, PE5-jury 2 has been broadened, henceforth including members whose descriptor fields also cover PE3 subject area.

- **PE7:** electronic, communication, optical and systems engineering
- **PE8:** product design, process design and control, construction methods, civil engineering, energy systems, material engineering
- **PE9:** astro-physics / chemistry / biology; solar system, stellar astronomy, galactic and extra-galactic; planetary systems, cosmology; space science, instrumentation
- **PE10:** physical geography, geology, geophysics, meteorology, oceanography, climatology, ecology, global environmental change, biogeochemical cycles, natural resources management

Some juries may be built around the same subject area, depending on the number of applicants.

Each jury is made up of 1 non-academic member from a research center or an expert from the industry sector, plus 6 to 8 members from CFB universities, respecting the balance between universities:

- 2 UCLouvain, 2 ULB, 2 ULiège
- 1 UMon and/or 1 UNamur, depending on the field concerned

POSSIBLE COI

Every member who:

- is a (co-)promoter of an applicant → may not, even partially, sit on the jury in charge of interviewing the applicant
- has a direct family relationship with an applicant/a (co-)promoter → may not, even partially, sit on the jury in charge of interviewing the applicant
- holds/has held a hierarchic or directly subordinate position during the last 3 years with regard to an applicant/a (co-)promoter → leaves the meeting during the evaluation of the application file in question
- is cited as a referee in the application file submitted by the applicant → leaves the meeting during the evaluation of the application file in question
- has supervised the Master thesis of an applicant as a (co-)promoter → leaves the meeting during the evaluation of the application file in question
- is referenced in the applicant's application file as a collaborator → depending on the contribution of the member, s/he should leave the meeting with regard to the application file, or should not, even partially, sit on the jury in charge of interviewing the applicant
- has/had an active collaboration with an applicant/(co-)promoter in the last 3 years (co-publication, common research projects, ...) → leaves the meeting during the evaluation of the application file in question

Every member who leaves the session while the jury is interviewing the applicant shall refrain from commenting, participating and voting during the final ranking.

PRESIDENCY AND VICE-PRESIDENCY

Presidents and vice-presidents are appointed by the Board of Trustees of the FRIA upon collegiate proposal of members of the jury who shall recommend 2 “candidates” from different academic or non-academic institutions. The Board of the FRIA shall make the final decision while respecting gender balance and institutions distribution for all juries as possible.

The duration of mandate of President and Vice-president can not exceed 3 years, it takes into account all previous years spent as President/Vice-president and is associated to the duration of mandate as a member within the jury.

The President shall not be entrusted with any rapporteur assignment, except in cases of force majeure.

When the President of the jury is prevented from attending, the functions of President of the jury shall be exercised by the Vice-president.

VALIDATION OF THE SUBJECT AREA AND DISTRIBUTION OF THE FILES BETWEEN THE DIFFERENT JURIES OF A SUBJECT AREA

The choice of subject area by the applicant will be accepted or denied by the Presidents of juries, as long as they don't come from the same university as the applicant (in which case a Vice-president will be in charge of this procedure).

When there are more than one jury in the subject area of the [jury](#) chosen by the applicant, the FRIA reserves the right to transfer the applicant to another jury, taking into account the number of applicants and the management of potential conflicts of interest. If necessary, the FRIA may transfer the applicant to another jury when their (co-)promoter is a member of the jury.

HOW JURIES WORK

For the evaluation, each application file is assigned to a rapporteur selected among members of the jury by the President. The rapporteur shall be from an institution different from the applicant. For applicants from the same institution as the President, application files are assigned by the Vice-president.

Prior to their meetings, jury's members will have access to all the application files, except files for which they have reported a conflict of interest (COI). The President shall undertake the functions of a rapporteur who is unable to exercise his/her duties.

The F.R.S.-FNRS insists on strict compliance with the instructions given for each part of the proposal (scientific section relevant to the instrument selected, number of pages allowed for documents to be enclosed with the application form...) and stresses again the sovereign consideration of the juries assessing the application file.

Each rapporteur shall draw a report and submit it on the [e-space](#) secured platform prior to the jury's session.

This report shall be communicated to members of the jury at the start of the meeting and will serve as a basis for the interview. Additions will be made to the report in light of the conduct of the interview. To respect the European Charter for Researchers, final version of the report will serve as the evaluation report communicated to the applicant, including the final grade given by the jury after the applicant is interviewed.

Juries shall devote 30 minutes at most to each applicant.
The oral presentation of the applicant may not exceed 10 minutes.
Following the interview, the jury shall debate and give a grade to the applicant in the absence of the applicant.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Criteria which are taken into account for the evaluation of the FRIA applications are the following:

CRITERIA
Quality of the research project: Feasibility, originality, host laboratory, work plan, and activities report (applicable only for applicants to a 1 st Grant 2 nd Year)
Skills of the applicant with respect to his/her speciality (CV)
Presentation and answers given to questions about the project
Scientific knowledge in general

The evaluation grid is the following:

Categories	Grades	
A	A+	outstanding
	A	excellent
	A-	very good
B	B+	good
	B	average
	B-	weak
C	C	insufficient

The jury shall rank the applicants. The ranking is adopted and agreed by "consensus". If the consensus cannot be reached, the jury shall proceed to a vote excluding members facing a conflict of interest.

For applicants to a 1st Grant, juries will assess their capability to conduct their doctoral research in 4 years. Depending on the progress of the research work, juries may decide to recommend applicants whether for a 1st Grant 1st year or 1st Grant 2nd year.

LABELLING OF LAUREATES PROJECTS BY THE WALLOON REGION

The jury shall assess the application potential of the research programme and the "Industry and Agriculture" approach, and shall give its opinion accordingly.
To that end, the jury shall identify one or several [domain\(s\)/theme\(s\) considered a priority](#) and approved by the Walloon government.

After the juries met, the FRIA shall discuss and make a selection with a Walloon Region representative (appointed by the Minister whose responsibilities include the scientific research matters) among proposals preliminary identified by the juries being deemed to be "labelled" by the Walloon Region.

After the Board of Trustees of the FRIA decided on granting, the definite list shall be submitted to the Minister in charge for approval, to be supported by the subsidies provided by the Walloon Region.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Any support document, tool, database, programme, or written material submitted in any format and media whatsoever to the jury for the conduct of the evaluation is considered strictly confidential.