VILLUM FONDEN

Villum Infrastructure – Terms of reference for the selection committee and reviewers

The objective of the Villum Infrastructure Programme is to strengthen access to state-of-the-art research infrastructure at Danish research institutions to enable world-leading Danish research, while strengthening research leadership to pave the way for groundbreaking research and significant scientific breakthroughs within the technical and natural sciences.

Research infrastructure is here broadly defined as technical equipment and facilities required for research and experimentation, including software and digital solutions.

Applicants must present a cohesive and ambitious plan for the infrastructure in question.

The selection process puts high emphasis on finding the research environments and scientific areas that are of internationally recognized significance and consist of people who have proven their research leadership and academic track record of excellent research and capacity building for the last 8 years or more.

In order for the foundation to be able to evaluate the applicant and the proposed infrastructure, the reviewer is asked to address the points below in the review report. The foundation expects a well-argued review of approximately 2-3 pages.

Infrastructure
- To what extent does the proposed infrastructure represent the state-of-the-art within the specific field? (e.g. is it moving beyond the nice-to-have and what could be expected as the basic technical equipment for the specific area and research environment) Compare the current state of research infrastructure with that of other world-leading research communities within this field.
- Do you expect the proposed infrastructure to present opportunities for research and method breakthroughs that will place the specific research environment at the global forefront and also have an impact on future developments?
- How do you perceive the opportunities and plans described for further development of the facility beyond the granting period?
- Are the items included in the proposed budget relevant and reasonable?
- Are the plans outlined for accessibility sufficient and transparent?

Applicant
- Does the applicant(s) and the research field they lead have a high standing in the international research community within their field?
- Has the applicant argued convincingly for the necessity of the infrastructure in relation to their research plans.
- Is the track record of the applicant(s) characterised by ground-breaking research and have their achievements typically gone beyond state of the art?
- Has the applicant demonstrated sound leadership and commitment to building capacity by supporting, training and advancing junior researchers and engaging in strong external (i.e. beyond own group) and international collaborations? Are they well qualified for leading an infrastructure and initiative of the size, type, and scope in question? Do they appear to possess the necessary insights and know-how?

Research environment
- Is the research environment at the host institution ideal for the proposed infrastructure and for the plan and activities outlined in the application?
- How will the new installation help the applicant in comparison to existing environments within the same research field with/without similar research infrastructure?
- To what extent does the support letter of the host institution show commitment to hosting and ensuring the success of the continued integration of the infrastructure and the research environment it will be connected with?

Concluding remarks

Please sum up the overall assessment and point out the three top qualities and the three weakest points of the application.

Held against the objectives and criteria of the Villum Infrastructure Programme, please rank both the applicant(s) and the proposed infrastructure on a scale from 1 to 5 (1 poor, 2 fair, 3 good, 4 very good and 5 excellent). You will also be asked to enter the rankings in the online reviewer tool.

Conflict of interest

In order to ensure that an assessment is not suspected of bias, a reviewer must not have a conflict of interest (such as close family relationships or friendships with any of the persons involved in the proposed research, joint projects or co-authorship within the past 5 years, etc.). Applicants will receive an anonymised copy of the reviews and will be asked to comment on them before the foundation makes its final decision.