

THE VELUX FOUNDATIONS

VILLUM FONDEN ✕ VELUX FONDEN

Terms of reference for selection panel and reviewers – Algorithms, Data and Democracy

The objective of ‘Algorithms, Data and Democracy – a Strong Democracy in a Digitalised World’ is to create and bring together solutions – societal, institutional, organisational, and, not least, technical solutions – to address challenges and develop potentials serving the best interests of democracy and all sections of society.

Expressions of interest submitted in this call will be evaluated by an international selection panel. The panel will decide who to invite to submit a full application. Full applications will also be sent for external peer review, and subsequently the applicants will be invited for an interview.

For the assessment of the expressions of interest the selection panel must address the following points:

Project

- Does the project address the objective of the initiative in a convincing manner?
- Are the proposed activities well integrated and do they contribute to the overall aims of the project?
- Is the proposal clearly a product of genuine collaborative work?
- Is the process for allocation of the additional funds for extension and capacity-building clearly defined?

Applicants

- Is the track record of the PI and co-PIs within their respective disciplines characterised by groundbreaking research and have their achievements typically gone beyond state of the art?
- Have the applicants formed a workable grouping of disciplines and people?
- Do the applicants have the necessary expertise to manage a large project?

Research

- Does the proposed research present new and original ideas, both within computer science and within the humanities/social sciences?
- Does the research have the potential to achieve significant scientific breakthroughs?
- Are the research questions directly relevant to the overall aims of the project?

Outreach and impact

- Is there a clear plan for a partnership with the outreach agent?

For the assessment of the full applications the selection panel and the reviewers must in addition to the above points also address:

- Is state of the art, and how the project will move beyond it, described satisfactorily?
- Is the governance of the project operational and well-considered?
- Is the budget appropriate to the scope and aims of the project?

The external reviews should include an overall assessment of the proposal, pointing out the three top qualities and the three weakest points.

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Conflict of interest

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

Members of the selection panel must declare possible conflicts of interest and in such cases cannot evaluate the given proposal or take part in any discussion or scoring of it and must leave the room or the electronic forum when the proposal is discussed.