

WIDESPREAD-04-2019: ERA Chairs

Guide for Evaluators

Safety in Nanomaterials & Nanotechnology
Acronym: SiNFONiA



Table Contents

1.	Introduction	2
1.2	<i>Specific objectives of the SiNFONiA project</i>	2
2.	Eligibility and Requirements	3
3.	Application Process	3
4.	Selection workflow and powers entrusted to different actors	5
5.	Evaluation Process.....	6
6.	Monitoring/ Follow-up of Ethics in research	9
7.	Open recruitment policy and alignment with the "European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers"	10
8.	Helpdesk	10



1. Introduction

This guide for evaluators aims to support the Selection Committee in the evaluation of the application's to the Era Chair calls.

The SiNFONiA project aims to attract and maintain a high-profile researcher (ERA Chair holder) and a supporting team with excellent research capabilities in the Nanosafety research domain, particularly in the emerging area of evaluating the safety of nanomaterials. SiNFONiA is designed to catalyse and maximise the impact of the ERA Chair on the scientific and research excellence of the International Iberian Nanotechnology Laboratory (INL).

1.2 Specific objectives of the SiNFONiA project

Scientific Objectives

- **Establish and advance research in the evaluation of the safety of nanomaterials**, leading to the consolidation of INL as a reference facility on fundamental and applied Nanosafety research, recognized among the international research communities and industrial sectors. This research topic will be complementary, synergistic, and cross-sectional for the four nanotechnology research focus areas at INL: health, food and environment, ICT, and renewable energy.
- **Enhance research output, qualitatively and quantitatively**, including the number and impact of publications and the number of patent applications at the national, European, and international level.
- Attract highly qualified personnel and **create a critical mass of excellent researchers** for sustainable research on the safe design, production, and applications of nanomaterials.

Strategic Objectives

- **Establish networking activities to expand collaborative networks and strengthen the ability of INL to participate in competitive funding calls, at regional, national, and international levels**, through an active policy of engagement with different institutions and funding agencies at national, transregional, and European level.
- **Maximise the benefits of the investments** driven by the funding instruments at the EU and at national level. As an international organization, INL may take a key role in concerting efforts to maximize the benefits of such investments and building capacity by connecting high-quality scientific communities throughout Europe and worldwide.

Regional and Political Objectives

- **Support the development of national and international regulatory policies.** Nanosafety was recognised as a strategically important issue for the successful development of nanotechnology as soon as nanomaterials started to be used in commercial applications. This major role of NMs is guided by regulatory policies and standardization measures which require the appropriate analytical and toxicity assessment capabilities. Given the multitude of existing and novel NMs in industrial processes and daily life, there is a need to establish a strategic vision for future research on the safe use and safe applications of NMs and for further development of analytical techniques.
- Provide training and education, **boosting the development of a new generation of highly-trained researchers** able to work and communicate in multidisciplinary teams and possessing the combination of fundamental and applied skills related to nanosafety.
- Develop regional and international networking activities by **widening the links to regional and national institutions** with interests in the nanosafety RTD field and by improving the dialog and RTD interactions between the regional institutions working in the field namely: consumer associations, regulatory bodies, hospitals, academia, local SMEs, and established national networks such as Health and Food Clusters in Portugal.



2. Eligibility and Requirements

Candidates must comply with the following requirements:

1. Hold a PhD Degree within the fields of the selected vacancy;
2. Be a Portuguese citizen, a European Union citizen or a non-European Union Citizen with a scientific and professional curriculum that demonstrates an appropriate profile for the activity to be performed;
3. Fluency in English is required.

The SiNfONiA project will fund experienced researchers that meet the following requirements:

- PhD Degree in Chemistry, Biology or any relevant fields related with Nanosafety;
- 10+ years of active research after PhD studies. Candidates with an exceptional and international CV, but with shorter research career will also be considered;
- Expertise in functionalization and characterization of nanoparticles, microfluidics or lab-on-a-chip technology, or cytotoxicity screening of nanoparticles will be positively evaluated;
- Strong record of publications, professional service, and recognition within the scientific community;
- Large experience in leading research groups in research organizations and/or industry;
- Proven track-record in securing funding;
- Experience in establishing collaborative relationships with relevant industry R&D stakeholders;
- Experience in technology transfer and contracts with industry will be highly valued;
- Proven track-record in workshop and conference organising committees and delivering invited talks.

3. Application Process

For the application to be valid, the candidate must complete all the required sections of the online application form as well as submit all the required documents.

One complete application consists of the following:

- a) Candidate personal information:** complete the online registration form.
- b) Documents in pdf format, to be uploaded in the dedicated area of the online submission form:**
 1. Cover letter in English;
 2. Curriculum Vitae in English including the contact details of 3 references;
 3. List of publications;
 4. Statement on research interest for the next 5 years (maximum 10 pages) including the funding plan, S&T excellence, objectives, overall work plan, expected main results/impact and synergies with current activities at INL;



5. Official transcripts of all relevant academic degrees;
6. Optional: Any other documentation providing evidence of the applicant's professional qualifications and experience.

INL has already in place an **electronic application system** streamlined through Jobvite™¹. Electronic applications submitted will be registered in a database. Any documents received via any other means will not be taken into account. Applicants will get a receipt upon the submission of the application and feedback on the outcome of the evaluation or the result of the eligibility check.

Only full proposals will be considered for evaluation. The **application language is English**. The applicant is responsible for submission of all the required information and validation of the respective components before the deadline.

¹ Jobvite™ is the hiring software streamlining the hiring processes at INL. It is a web-based service operating globally, enabling organisations to post job openings and manage the recruitment process. Services available include a tracking system tool for monitoring and managing recruitment and the "Jobvite Video" tool for interviewing potential employees by video.



4. Selection workflow and powers entrusted to different actors

The R&S will be managed by the Human Resources Unit (HR) unit together with the Project Director and different committees will be involved through the selection process. The evaluation and selection process will run for two months.

ERA Chair applications will be examined through a rigorous, multi-stage review process that includes consideration by independent experts and professional staff at INL. The final authority for decisions regarding the awards rests with the INL's Director General.



Fig. 1: Overview of the ERA Chair selection process



5. Evaluation Process

The evaluation process of the SINFONIA Project applications follows four stages as described below.

The selection process takes into consideration the whole range of experience of the candidates. The merit is judged both qualitatively as well as quantitatively, focusing on outstanding results within a diversified career path and not only on the number of publications. INL provides an appropriate assessment and evaluation of the academic and professional qualifications, including non-formal qualifications, of all researchers.

INL provides an appropriate assessment and evaluation of the academic and professional qualifications, including non-formal qualifications, of all researchers, in particular within the context of international and professional mobility.

The evaluation process will follow a four-stage process:

5.1 First stage: candidate eligibility check

An eligibility check for each proposal will be made by INL HR staff before the evaluation. Incomplete applications and/or that fail to meet the above requirements will be considered non-eligible. Those candidates whose profiles initially meet the requirements will be included in a long list of potential candidates that will be delivered to INL's respective Selection Committee. **Application ineligibility criteria:** incompleteness; failure to meet deadline of application; noncompliance with the call requirements.

5.2 Second stage: CV evaluation and RTD programme presentation

Each eligible proposal will be assessed independently by an Evaluation Committee composed by the: Project Director and three experts (at least one being external) and one member from the HR Unit. For each proposal, one expert will be designated as the chair and will assume additional responsibilities in the evaluation phase, namely drafting of the consensus report, moderation of the remote consensus and implementation of comments from the other members. The Director General of INL (Programme Director) will determine the composition of the Evaluation Committee. External experts will be selected according to their relevance to the Nanosafety based research.

The reliance upon the role of the ERA Chairs will result in a more thorough and competitive searches for skilled leaders. The ERA Chair should have demonstrated effectiveness in teaching and an established record of peer-reviewed research as essential qualifications. The ERA Chair will also be expected to have demonstrated management skills, in managing teams and on getting research funding (private or public). In the CVs the selection Committee will be looking for applicants that have:

- Profile of an established researcher (R3) or Leading Researcher (R4)²;
- Established reputation based on research excellence in Nanosafety;
- Outstanding academic record;
- Proven International research experience;
- International reputation based of research excellence;

² According to the Research Profiles Descriptors established by EURAXESS:
<https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/europe/career-development/training-researchers/research-profiles-descriptors>



- Proven record in securing research funding;
- Experience in managing and leading research teams.

General skills	Para-meter	Skills	Score
Research Excellence & Scientific outputs	Publications & Patents	<p>Proven international reputation based on research excellence in the field, as expressed in the publications as a senior author in major international peer-reviewed scientific journals, or equivalent such as the number of monographs.</p> <p>Patents and scientific publications, including book chapters, articles in peer-reviewed journals and proceedings of international conferences that the candidate has authored or co-authored. The impact of publications (measured by the impact factor of the journals and the number of citations) is taken into account as well as scientific and technological level, degree of innovation, evidence of international collaboration, and contribution to advancing the state-of-the-art.</p> <p>Providing the impact factor and number of citations is recommended for publications listed in the CV.</p>	40%
RTD Projects & Securing Project Funding	Coordination	<p>Proven track record in securing significant research funding taking into account the territorial scope, size, scientific and technological level, and degree of innovation. Evidence of research autonomy will be favourably evaluated.</p> <p>Demonstrated experience in managing and leading research projects.</p> <p>Proven track record in coordinating multi-institutional International and national projects.</p> <p>Other scientific activities: participation as a coordinator in scientific projects subject to competitive application process taking into account the territorial scope, size, level scientific / technological and degree of innovation.</p>	20%
International & inter-disciplinary experience	Other	<p>Proven international research experience, demonstrated through – inter-alia – mobility, internationally co-authored publications, well established international collaboration, etc.</p> <p>Inter-disciplinary research experience in more than one research area valued.</p>	10%
Sum Total		Maximum achievable score	70%

Table 1: Scoring guideline for assessing CV's

5.3 Third stage: Interview and final assessment

Shortlisted candidates will be invited for an interview with an Interview Panel which will be composed by the members of the Evaluation Committee. The interview will be the



final evaluation stage. At this stage, INL's Selection Committee assesses each applicants' education and experience, verifies if the candidate meets the technical requirements, analyses in-depth his/her research experience, level of responsibilities, types of environments where he/she has worked, and career track. INL also evaluates the candidate's level of motivation and interest and his/her availability to join the ERA Chair's programme and INL. During the final assessment, candidates carry out a scientific presentation to demonstrate his/her communication capabilities as well as research maturity. The interviews and associated communications will be typically carried out via on-demand video interviewing system available at Jobvite™, WebEx™, Skype™ or similar communication tools. If a face-to-face interview is deemed necessary by the Evaluation Committee, INL will cover travel and accommodation costs. Evaluation criteria are detailed below in section (table 1). After this process, the Evaluation Committee must submit a recruitment report, following a defined template, to the HR Unit. In this report, the Evaluation Committee gives a ranking of the selected applicants, and a clear justification for such a ranking. The justification shall include scientific and technical arguments, reports from interviews, which led to the list of selected applicants in order of preference.

Table 2: Methodology for assessing Interview

Indicative evaluation parameters	Partial weighing
Fluency in English	10%
Capacity to present and defend the RTD proposal	20%

The selection criteria will be based on the results obtained from the evaluation of the CVs and the interviews, as shown below in table 3.

Table 3: Evaluation components and scores – Evaluation grid

Evaluation Components	Weighing	Priority in case of ex aequo
Candidate CV	70%	1
Interview	30%	2

5.4 Fourth stage: approval and formal offer

Once the final decision is taken by the Evaluation Committee, each applicant receives a letter containing the information on the results of the evaluation, including the scores and the comments. Candidates will be also informed that a redress procedure is available. A financial offer will be offered to the top ranked candidate. The offer will be in accordance to the financial parameters set by the letter of INL Director -General provided under section 6. INL offers a remuneration package designed to be attractive for high-quality candidates and to promote the international character of INL community. Candidate will need to state in writing, via email, their acceptance of the employment contract under the proposed terms within 10 working days. The final evaluation outcome will be published on the programme website within 90 days after the closing of the call. The starting date of the contract must be chosen between 1 to 4 months after the accepting the offer.



6. Monitoring/ Follow-up of Ethics in research

Recognition of the Profession	Providing everyone who works at INL with opportunities to exercise their responsibility, integrity and creativity, while growing personally and professionally and independently on the career level.
Non-discrimination	INL does not discriminate against researchers in any way on the basis of gender, age, ethnic, national or social origin, religion or belief, sexual orientation, language, impairment or disability, political belief or activity, social or economic condition, marital status, pregnancy or obligations as a parent career. All employees at INL are educated about discrimination at the workplace and encourage to respect other's differences. Any evidence or complaint of inappropriate behaviour and discrimination will be responded promptly and confidentially.
Research environment	INL ensures a stimulating and multidisciplinary research environment giving access to the state-of-the-art equipment and facilities . The ERA chair and his/her team will have ample opportunity to receive training in the use and operation of these equipment.
Working conditions	INL is committed with improving working conditions for researchers, including for disabled researchers. Staff Members may benefit from the various social facilities available at INL , including free nursery services, guest house and gym. INL gives employees the opportunity to explore flexible working options as part-time working and teleworking, as well as to the necessary financial and administrative provisions governing such arrangements. The measures in place are also to help enable both female and male employees to combine employment and parenthood . Some of these measures are: kindergarten services at the INL Campus with a timetable facilitating work-life balance.
Stability and permanence of employment	The ERA chair and his/her team will have the opportunity to work at INL through a five-year employment contract . SiNFONiA researchers may also be given the opportunity to get their contracts extended (supported by INL) or be offered a tenure-track position.
Funding and salaries	Researchers will enjoy fair and attractive conditions of salaries in accordance with the budget categories defined. As for the remaining INL employees, financial benefits also include family allowance, child allowance and education fees for dependent children, private health insurance and travel allowances.
Gender balance	INL aims for a representative gender balance at all levels of staff . There is a continuous monitoring of gender equality with the identification and implementation of innovative strategies to correct any bias. This should be achieved on the basis of an equal opportunity policy at recruitment ; always acknowledging the gender equality issues when recruiting a new employee; and wages always taking the equality aspects into consideration.
Career development and career advice	Regardless of their contractual situation, INL staff researchers get support on the development of their career strategy, namely through counselling about the job market and guidance in developing a competitive CV.
Value and mobility	INL strongly acknowledges the value of geographical mobility and the importance of enhancing scientific knowledge and professional development by means of inter- and cross-sectoral mobility as well as interdisciplinary research training.
Research training and continuous development	Continuous professional development is given at INL. Besides the world-class research training in an S&T area, SiNFONiA researchers will be given the opportunity to attend scientific courses and will receive training in complementary and soft skills .
Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)	INL IP Policy clearly specify what rights belong to researchers, including fellows, in terms of ownership and handling of intellectual property. SiNFONiA researchers will reap the benefit of the exploitation of their R&D results through appropriate protection of Intellectual Property Rights, including patents , models and copyrights. Co-authorship is viewed by INL as evidence of a constructive approach to the conduct of research and is strongly encourage internally.
Evaluation/appraisal systems	INL has an evaluation/appraisal system in place for all researchers , for assessing their professional performance on a regular basis and in a transparent manner. Such evaluation and appraisal procedures take due account of their overall research creativity and research results.
Recruitment	INL clearly specifies the entry and admission standards for researchers . All the standards related to the R&S process are clearly specified within the project documentation.



7. Open recruitment policy and alignment with the "European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers"

INL ensures continued career development of researchers by regularly updating and expanding their skills and competencies leading to a successful performance in generating, transferring, sharing and disseminating knowledge and technological development.

INL will ensure that researchers adhere to the recognized ethical practices and fundamental ethical principles appropriate to their discipline(s) as well as to ethical standards as documented in the different national, sectoral or institutional Codes of Ethics. INL's Intellectual Property Right regulations, requirements and conditions will be made available before contract signature. One of INL's aim is to make sure that research developed at INL is relevant to society and is not duplicated research, previously carried out elsewhere.

8. Helpdesk

Any doubt concerning the R&S process must be addressed to the following e-mail: hr.services@inl.int.

For questions related to the Era Chairs project please use the following e-mail: sinfonia@inl.int.

