

## Guidelines for the EXCITE TNA Scientific Review Panel members

### Context and background information

EXCITE offers unique opportunities for transnational physical and remote access to 24 Electron Microscopy and X-ray facilities, which includes 50 pieces of state-of-the-art equipment.

EXCITE is an Integrating Activity project supported by the European Commission under the Horizon 2020 – Research and Innovation Framework Programme, H2020-INFRAIA-2020, Grant Agreement number 101005611. The project consists of distributed Electron Microscopy and X-ray research facilities in the field of Earth-materials science. The project will deliver Transnational Access (TNA) to distributed Earth-material science EM and X-ray facilities.

Access provision under EXCITE is coordinated by the EXCITE TNA Management Team, which consists of INGV (Istituto Nazionale di Geofisica e Vulcanologia, Rome) and UU (Utrecht University) staff.

Transnational Access to EXCITE facilities is organized on a per-call basis, with four calls in the period of May 2022 to April 2024. Each call contains a review phase, during which members of the EXCITE TNA Review Panel will assess two-page proposals based on scientific excellence. Per call, each Review Panel member will be asked to review 5-10 proposals.

### Composition and profile of the EXCITE TNA Scientific Review Panel

The EXCITE TNA SRP will be composed of international experts in the diverse fields of Earth-materials sciences, who are specialists in electron microscopy and/or X-ray based analytical techniques, and are independent from the EXCITE beneficiaries. Applications from potential panel members with different skills, experience, gender, and from all geographic regions are welcome.

TNA SRP members shall have strong scientific and technical expertise in one or more of the areas of earth and material sciences listed below:

*PE10\_1 Atmospheric chemistry, atmospheric composition, air pollution*

*PE10\_3 Climatology and climate change*

*PE10\_5 Geology, tectonics, volcanology*

*PE10\_6 Palaeoclimatology, palaeoecology*

*PE10\_7 Physics of earth's interior, seismology, geodynamics*

*PE10\_8 Oceanography (physical, chemical, biological, geological)*

*PE10\_9 Biogeochemistry, biogeochemical cycles, environmental chemistry*

*PE10\_10 Mineralogy, petrology, igneous petrology, metamorphic petrology*

*PE10\_11 Geochemistry, cosmochemistry, crystal chemistry, isotope geochemistry, thermodynamics*

*PE10\_12 Sedimentology, soil science, palaeontology, earth evolution*

*PE10\_15 Geomagnetism, palaeomagnetism*

*PE10\_17 Hydrology, hydrogeology, engineering and environmental geology, water and soil pollution*

*PE10\_18 Cryosphere, dynamics of snow and ice cover, sea ice, permafrosts and ice sheets*

*PE10\_19 Planetary geology and geophysics*

*PE10\_20 Geohazards*

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*PE3 Condensed matter physics, including structure, electronic properties, fluids, nanosciences, biological physics*

*PE4 Physical and analytical chemical sciences, including surface chemistry and spectroscopic-based studies*

*PE5 Synthetic chemistry, organic chemistry, molecular architecture and solid-state chemistry*

*PE8 Products and processes engineering, including design, chemical, civil, environmental, mechanical and vehicle engineering*

*PE11 Materials engineering and development, including performance enhancement, large-scale preparation, modification, tailoring, optimisation, novel and combined use of materials*

### **Appointment and term**

Experts who have been accepted to become members of the TNA SRP are appointed by the TNA Management Team. SRP members are appointed for the entire duration of the EXCITE project, starting from the date of their nomination. Within EXCITE there will be four TNA calls, with one distinct review phase per call. These review phases will take place in the periods March-April 2022, September-October 2022, March-April 2023, September-October 2023. The SRP members will be asked, per call, if they can act as reviewer.

A Review Panel member may withdraw from the panel at any time upon written notification to the TNA Management Team. SRP members can also withdraw from reviewing on a per-call basis, for instance when they want to submit a proposal to a call themselves.

### **Tasks of the TNA Scientific Review Panel**

Each reviewer will typically receive 5-10 proposals to evaluate, with a total expected working load of one to two days. Each proposal will be reviewed by 2-3 reviewers. Reviewers will have two weeks to conclude the individual reviews and release the recommendations for selection. Prior to the scientific evaluation by SRP members, each proposal has already been reviewed by the Facility Manager for technical feasibility. The TNA proposals will be short and concise (max. 2 pages) and will be anonymous and devoid of any information related to the identity of the applicant(s). The working language is English. An easy, user-friendly Scientific evaluation form will be provided.

Review of each proposal consists of:

- Reading and examining the proposal, and evaluating the research project against the four criteria detailed in the EXCITE TNA Proposal Scientific Evaluation Form, which the reviewer will receive along with TNA proposals to be evaluated.
- Read the general outcome of the technical evaluation on the same proposal.
- Assigning scores for each criterion. Providing brief explanatory comments sustaining the score given.
- After the review phase, provide reviewer feedback, by completing a short questionnaire.

Once the individual review is concluded, the TNA management team draws up a summary report of the individual assessments and formulates recommendations for the selection.

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Only where additional clarification is needed, a remote consensus meeting may be arranged between the respective SRP members and the TNA Management Team.

### **Code of conduct**

All members of the SRP serve in their personal and technical capacities and act in an honorary capacity. As such, they do not represent their employer, institution, or any other entity. They guarantee that the TNA proposals submitted by users are selected based on an expert, sound, fair, impartial, and transparent assessment. The scope of the panel evaluation encompasses the proposal research focus, scientific merit and potential for impact.

Reviewers will only evaluate proposals that are in line with their personal expertise, and which do not cause any conflict of interest with respect to the research facility concerned or specific national interests.

Reviewers shall maintain the confidentiality of any documents or files received for the evaluation, deleting all copies of the files they may have stored on personal devices upon completion of the assignment, and shall not communicate and discuss the assigned TNA proposal with any other panel member established for review of the said proposal. The SRP members reviewing a TNA proposal must not disclose the results of the evaluation outcome.

Reviewers can submit proposals to any EXCITE TNA call. However, in that case, they shall not act as reviewers on that specific call.