

# SMASH Conflict of Interest Policy for Evaluators

For evaluators assisting in the various stages of the evaluation of proposals, the following situations will **automatically** be considered as **conflict of interest**. The precise consequences vary depending on the situation:

## 1. **Exclusion from the evaluation for a *proposal***, if they are:

- a director, trustee or partner involved in the management of any entity involved in the proposal (applicant, affiliated entity or other participant involved in the proposal)
- employed or contracted by one of the entities involved in the proposal (applicant, affiliated entity, named subcontractor or other participant involved in the proposal).

Exceptionally, the SMASH EB may decide to nevertheless allow the expert to take part in the evaluation procedure, if all of the following apply:

- they work in a different department from the ones where the project is to be carried out
- the departments within the organisation concerned operate with a high degree of autonomy
- their participation can be justified by the requirement to use the best available expertise and that there is a limited number of qualified persons (and this is documented).

## 2. **Exclusion from the evaluation of a *proposal* AND from *all proposals competing for the same call***, if they:

- were involved in the preparation of a proposal submitted to the same topic/other topic within the same call,
- would benefit if a proposal submitted to the same topic/other topic within the same call is accepted or rejected.
- are members of SMASH implementing or associated partner departments and are in any way directly involved in the implementation of the project SMASH.
- have close family ties (*spouse, domestic or non-domestic partner, child, sibling, parent, etc*) or other close personal relationship with a person (including affiliated entities or other participants) involved in the preparation of a proposal submitted to the same topic/other topic within the same call budget-split or with a person which would benefit if such proposal is accepted or rejected.

In this case, the evaluator must be excluded from the entire evaluation process for the proposal concerned AND competing proposals.

## 4. **Potential exclusion** from the evaluation (for proposal, proposal and competing proposals or entire call) if the SMASH EB decides so, if they:

- are involved in a contract, grant, management structure (*e.g. member of management or advisory board etc*), business or close scientific collaboration with an applicant or primary supervisor, or have been so in the last 3 years. **Note that in the case of expert evaluators suggested by the applicants themselves, past collaborators and supervisors cannot be suggested.**
- are in any other situation that could cast doubt on their ability to participate impartially in the evaluation, or that could reasonably appear to do so (appearance of impropriety).

If an evaluator finds him/herself in any of the above described conflicts of interest, he/she cannot participate in the evaluation of the proposals. In case a conflict of interest is not fully described in this document, the Executive Board will make the final decision as to whether the particular evaluator may participate in the evaluation procedure or not, and whether to accept the evaluation report.

Source: adapted from EU Experts, Expert Code of Conduct, Funding & Tenders Portal Expert Database, Evaluators and Monitors 2021-2027 ([https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/experts/code-of-conduct\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/experts/code-of-conduct_en.pdf) )