

## 2023 Call for Applications for ALS research projects Full Proposals evaluation guidelines - Committee members

This document is an operational guide for AriSLA International Scientific Committee (ISC) members to perform the **Full proposals evaluation** of the Applications submitted to the “2023 AriSLA Call for Applications for ALS research projects”.

The Call is dedicated to both **Pilot and Full Grant Applications**.

### *Review phases*

Both type of Applications will be assessed by a two-step peer-review: 1) Triage selection, and 2) Full proposal evaluation, which entails a remote review and a Consensus Meeting (details are available in the “2023 Call for Applications”).

The Applications selected for the **Full proposal Evaluation** will be assigned to three independent reviewers of the AriSLA ISC, selected on the basis of the needed expertise, among those available to take part in the Consensus Meeting. **During this phase all Sections of the Application will be evaluated.**

In addition to remote individual evaluations, the panel of reviewers involved in the second step will proceed to a comparative evaluation of the top-scoring Applications during the Consensus Meeting, and all reviewers will score each one. **The outcome of the Consensus Meeting will be a final merit-based list.**

### *Full proposals evaluation procedure*

The Full proposals evaluation will be conducted in remote, by accessing the Applications through the AriSLA web portal (operating instructions are reported below).

**Triage scores range from 1 (very poor) to 50 (excellent).**

### *Pilot Grants*

Full proposal evaluation will be based on the following criteria:

- **Innovation** of the proposed project with regards to the current knowledge.
- **Expected impact** of the results **on the disease** knowledge and treatment or any other influence on clinical management of patients; proximity to therapeutic development or to any other potential impact on patients of the proposed study; potential admissibility of results for intellectual property protection.
- **Objectives** and **methodologies**: clarity of the objectives and appropriateness of design and methods proposed to achieve them.
- **Capability to successfully carry out the project**: ability of the Applicant to finalize the proposed research program according to the project duration and budget.
- **Potential** for the expected results **to attract large-scale funding**.
- **Adherence to the priority topics of the Call**.

## Full Grants

Full proposal evaluation will be based on the following criteria:

- Strength of the **background** and **rationale**.
- **Availability of solid preliminary data** to support the research program and relevance of the project for ALS.
- **Objectives and methodologies**: clarity of the objectives and appropriateness of design and methods proposed to achieve them.
- **Expected impact** of the results **on the disease** knowledge and treatment or any other influence on clinical management of patients; proximity to therapeutic development or to any other potential impact on patients of the proposed study; potential admissibility of results for intellectual property protection.
- **Investigator experience and synergy with Partners (if any)**: competence and scientific independence of the Applicants; complementarity and synergy among PI and Partners of Multi-centre studies.
- Sound and effective exploitation of the **results derived from previously funded AriSLA Pilot/Full Grant** (if applicable).
- **Adherence to the priority topics of the Call**.

ISC members are asked to **assign a numerical score to each project**, according to the scale reported below. The score will reflect the recommendation whether the project deserves to be funded. It is desirable to use the entire numerical range, in order to avoid most of the projects falling within an intermediate interval.

Full Proposal evaluation Scoring Scale		
Score	Project Evaluation	Recommendation
46 - 50	Outstanding	No concerns
41 - 45	Excellent	Only minor concerns
36 - 40	Good	Only few critical points
31 - 35	Average	Several critical points
1 - 30	Poor	Major concerns

For each Application, ISC members are requested to **justify their score** by providing a comment on the scientific merit in the “**Overall comment**” field on the basis of the previous criteria also specifying if the Application has any ethical issues that need further attention. It is requested to summarize the key reasons for the overall rating, indicating the relative strengths, weaknesses and overall final considerations. Any concerns and/or identified weaknesses of the Application should be clearly specified.

ISC members are also asked to **evaluate the adherence of the proposal to the priority topics** suggested in the Call by **selecting a value from 1** (not adherent to the priority topic(s)) **to 5** (highly relevant to the priority topic(s)) **and justifying the score in the text box**.

The individual comments of the ISC members will be anonymously sent to the Principal Investigators. **It is therefore important that the written material is accurate, clearly written, and does not include derogatory language.**

## **Operating Instructions**

### **Online Registration and General Instructions**

The Remote Evaluation Forms must be completed online. Reviewers can login at <https://proposals.arisla.org/> (in the “already member?” box) using the same credentials (Username and Password) used for the Triage phase.

Please note that this account can be used by one device per time.

Please contact AriSLA Scientific Office at [bandi@arisla.org](mailto:bandi@arisla.org) if both Username and Password have been lost.

Once logged in, each reviewer can find the list of Applications that have been assigned to her/him.

**Confidentiality on all information about the projects has to be preserved at any time, as reported in the AriSLA Contract.**

Each Application can be open by clicking on the pdf icon and on the “Full Proposal” link. The available attached documents (i.e., figures, collaboration letters) will be downloaded within the application, after the “Applicant” section V.

By clicking on “Evaluate” button a pop-up window will open, where comments for each criterion and the overall score can be filled out.

For each Application, in the “My Score” Column each reviewer can see the assigned score. Only if the Application has been evaluated during the Triage phase, the score previously assigned will be visualized.

**In order to be able to evaluate the Application, reviewers must flag the “non-conflict of interest” box. If the Reviewer perceives to have any conflicts, she/he should immediately contact AriSLA staff at [bandi@arisla.org](mailto:bandi@arisla.org), to re-assign the Application.**

If the reviewer does not feel confident regarding the theme proposed by a project, she/he can contact AriSLA staff at [bandi@arisla.org](mailto:bandi@arisla.org), in order to re-assign the Application.

By clicking the “**Save changes**” button data entered in the Form are saved.

By clicking the “**Save changes and Submit**” button, the evaluation is completed and closed. **Once the evaluation has been submitted, modifications are no longer possible.**

An email will confirm the submission of comments and score for each Application.

The web application is compatible for most of the commonly used browsers. In particular, we ensure its compatibility with these browsers and following versions: Firefox 74; Chrome 80; Safari 13.

## **Assistance**

For any information about the revision process please contact:

*E-mail Help Desk:* [bandi@arisla.org](mailto:bandi@arisla.org)