VLIR-UOS selection system

Policy and guidelines

Version dd. 03.07.2019

Applicable to VLIR-UOS calls launched as from 1 July 2019

Present document includes all decisions taken by the Bureau UOS on 4 July 2014 and the revisions in 2015-16-17-18-19. The last revision is based on the decisions taken by the Bureau UOS on 13 December 2018, 31 January and 28 June 2019.
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Introduction

The VLIR-UOS selection system applies to all activities (projects/programmes/scholarships) of VLIR-UOS. The flowchart below gives an overview of these activities (middle), through which calls they are selected (left), and by which selection body (right).

Thus, VLIR-UOS launches:

- Regional calls for the open, competitive selection of proposals, which will be selected by three regional commissions;
- Belgium programme calls for the open competitive selection of proposals, which will be selected (ITP/ICP) by the Belgium commission and assessed (Global Minds) by the Global Minds Assessment Commission;
- Policy initiated calls for institutional (IUC and (post IUC) NETWORK) proposals;
- Decentralized calls for proposals/scholarship applications selected at the decentralized level of the Flemish higher education institutions. For these calls decentralized selection bodies are used, and VLIR-UOS lays down the minimum selection framework and criteria and has a monitoring/validation role in terms of checking the fit of the decentralized selection systems and the results from it with the overall framework.
The system has two main features:

- All proposals will be selected against the same set of 6 criteria;
- All selection commissions are composed of external experts.

This results in a more uniform, objective, transparent selection system. As such, the system ensures a uniform implementation of the selection process (step 1 & 2) for all VLIR-UOS activities.

The present Info Document gives a general description of the VLIR-UOS system. It is the basis for a number of other documents, in order to communicate in an efficient and transparent way to all target groups involved in the selection process:
Eligibility criteria

Eligibility criteria define whether or not a proposal can be accepted to enter the selection process. Eligibility criteria will be checked on the basis of an objective and simple yes/no answer. Therefore, eligibility criteria which are not fulfilled, will in principle result in the rejection of a proposal1.

Each call for proposals defines clear eligibility criteria, using the following sections where appropriate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eligibility of applicants</th>
<th>Eligibility of Flemish and local (co)promoters and eligibility of Flemish and local (co)partner institutions.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eligibility of budget and implementation period</td>
<td>Maximum budget and maximum implementation period.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eligibility of countries and/or intervention types and/or participants</td>
<td>List of eligible countries and eligible intervention types (SI, TEAM, JOINT, ITP…).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eligibility of activities and related costs</td>
<td>Non-fundable items (e.g. personnel costs in Flanders) can be taken out of the budget in the post-selection phase and thus do not necessarily lead to non-eligibility of the proposal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eligibility of submission modalities</td>
<td>Timely and complete submission, and respect for formats and other possible formality guidelines (max. number of pages, font, …).</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

1. The procedure to check the eligibility of proposals varies between the different selection bodies. For the regional commissions see section 1.6. For the Belgium commission see section 2.6.
Selection criteria

All proposals that are to be assessed by the regional and Belgium commissions, will be selected on the basis of the same set of six selection criteria.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCIENTIFIC QUALITY</th>
<th>The extent to which a proposal has a ground-breaking nature and ambition (excellence).</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RELEVANCE</td>
<td>The extent to which the objectives of a proposal are consistent with beneficiaries’ requirements, country needs, synergy opportunities, global priorities and partners’ and donors’ policies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EFFECTIVENESS</td>
<td>The extent to which the proposals’ objectives are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EFFICIENCY</td>
<td>A measure of how economically resources/inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc) are converted to results.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMPACT</td>
<td>Potential positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by the proposal, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUSTAINABILITY</td>
<td>The continuation of benefits after the activities have been completed.</td>
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</table>

These six criteria are further defined, and translated into a non-exhaustive list of descriptors, that are illustrative but provide an objective interpretation of the criteria, both for the applicant as well as for the selection commissions. The descriptors differ according to the intervention type and will therefore be specified under the sections 1.7., 2.7 and 3.7.

The weighing of each of the six criteria can differ, in order to meet the diversity of different intervention types. The selection commission should score each criterion according to the following scale:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>SCORE</th>
<th>MEANING</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>very poor</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>adequate</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>very good</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Consequently, the commission’s score of the proposal on each criterion is multiplied by a factor that results in the weighted score. The sum of all weighted scores determines the proposal’s ranking after phase 1 (see 1.7., 2.7. and 3.7.).

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2 Based on the ERC (European Research Council) and OECD-DAC (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development-Development Assistance Commission) definitions.
**Track record**

A track record is two-fold. There is the applicant who will be asked to (i) identify relevant experience with similar projects, and (ii) when it concerns a re-submission of a VLIR-UOS proposal, to comment on how the feedback of the commission has been taken into account.

On the other hand, VLIR-UOS makes up a track record of former and ongoing interventions per partner country and local institution in order to assess the possible linkages with other interventions and the experience of the local institution with project interventions.

If applicable/ requested VLIR-UOS can provide an overview of earlier VLIR-UOS projects implemented by the applicants in order to assess the financial and operational capacity of the partner(s).

Proposals without track record, i.e. in case there is no previous experience with similar projects or VLIR-UOS projects, will not be disadvantaged.

For proposals with track record, i.e. in case there is (are) previous experience(s) with similar projects or VLIR-UOS-projects, positive or negative experiences in the past will be considered during discussion within the selection commission.

**Budget control**

Each proposal will be subject to a budget control by VLIR-UOS, in order to verify whether the proposed expenses are in line with the VLIR-UOS financial guidelines. The VLIR-UOS secretariat will be responsible for this budgetary control.

The selection commissions will look into the budget of project proposals as to assess feasibility and value for money.

**Peer review**

**Applicability**

Whether or not peer review applies is determined by the nature of the intervention type. It will be determined in the respective calls.

For the moment peer review only applies for the TEAM projects whereby the selection by the independent selection commission is supported by a peer review assessment focussing on the criterion ‘scientific quality’. Peer review does not apply to South Initiatives (SI) and JOINT, as these intervention types should maintain their high accessibility and proneness to exploration (SI) and exchange between VLIR-UOS partners/projects (JOINT), whereby the scientific nature is less emphasized.³

**Modalities**

- VLIR-UOS requests a minimum of 2 peer reviews per TEAM project proposal. For other intervention types, no peer review is requested.
- VLIR-UOS will provide the peer reviewers with a template for the peer review assessment.

³ Bureau UOS, 6 March 2015.
The applicant will list 6 potential reviewers for his or her TEAM project proposal when submitting a proposal in the context of a VLIR-UOS call for proposals.

Peer reviewers will be contacted directly by VLIR-UOS after the submission deadline of the call for proposals and are requested to comment on their willingness to perform this unpaid assignment within the foreseeable period (indicatively within 2-3 weeks depending on the call deadlines). It is the responsibility of VLIR-UOS to guarantee that at least two peer reviews are submitted in time.

Peer reviewers should submit their report directly to the VLIR-UOS secretariat and not via the applicant or the ICOS (institutional coordinators for development cooperation, i.e. the VLIR-UOS focal points at the Flemish universities and university colleges).

The peer review assessment has to be considered as an advisory document to the selection commission regarding the scientific quality, the latter being completely independent in its decision-making. This implies that peer reviewers do not score the (criteria of the) proposal, but only comment the proposals in terms of strengths and weaknesses, with an exclusive focus on the criterion ‘scientific quality’.

**Eligibility**

Reviewers must be affiliated to a university or university college, research institute or any other higher education institution, and must be active at least at a postdoctoral level or dispose of equivalent expertise in case a postdoctoral degree is not pertinent for the subject matter of the proposal concerned, e.g. for proposals that do not have a research focus. The latter is to be motivated by the applicant but will be assessed by the selection commission concerned.

The following persons are not eligible as reviewer:

- members of the Bureau UOS;
- members of a VLIR-UOS selection commission;
- persons appointed to a Belgian university or university college, research institute or any other higher education institution organization or, in the case of calls for proposals with foreign partners, persons appointed to higher education and (international) research institutions in the country where the foreign project partner is professionally active;
- persons with a professional appointment to a foreign institute where the applicant(s) had been enrolled as a student or professional after January 1st of the year n-3 (n=year of application);
- any partners of the applicant(s) in a research/education project that has been applied for or has been running after January 1st of the year n-3 (n=year of application);
- any co-authors with the applicants of a publication that was submitted or published after January 1st of the year n-3 (n=year of application).

‘Co-authorship’ is to be understood as follows:

- Co-authorship of a monograph of which the applicant is co-author as well;
- Co-authorship of an article or another type of contribution to a collection (book, journal issue, report, congress proceedings, abstract …) of which the applicant is co-author as well;

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4 Bureau UOS, 6 March 2015
• Editors are not regarded as co-authors insofar as they have not acted as what is understood under ‘co-author’ as described above. Co-editors of the applicant are not accepted as an external referee.

The applicants are responsible for

• the eligibility of the proposed reviewers. If the proposed reviewers do not comply with the eligibility criteria, the peer review assessment will be declared ineligible.

The VLIR-UOS secretariat is responsible for contacting the (6) listed reviewers and ensuring availability of at least 2 peer review assessments by the time the selection commission members start their assignment. The secretariat also has decision authority with respect to the eligibility of the reviewers (compliance with the eligibility criteria).

Selection bodies

1. Regional Commissions

1.1. Composition

A regional commission is qualified to evaluate proposals that will be executed in VLIR-UOS partner countries. Originally this meant that 3 commissions (Africa, Asia and South America) were active but taking into account the fact that Africa includes a very broad portfolio the Africa commission was split into 2 commissions as of the selection rounds 2018 (selection of projects as of 2019 programme):

(i) Africa commission 1: Great Lakes: Burundi, DR Congo, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda
(ii) Africa commission 2: Ethiopia, Morocco, South Africa
(iii) Latin America: Bolivia, Cuba, Ecuador, Nicaragua, Peru
(iv) Asia: Cambodia, Indonesia, the Philippines and Vietnam.

Depending on the available programme budget, certain countries of the above list will not be eligible for specific project calls.

The regional commissions consist of four members.

At least two substitute members are selected to constitute a reserve pool. In case a permanent member cannot participate due to force majeure or conflict of interest, one of the reserve members will be invited to participate.

The following competences should be covered by each regional commission:

• international academic or development cooperation background (thematic focus – development studies, poverty reduction, …);
• specific regional expertise (geographical focus – countries, regions);
• generic expertise in higher education policy, scientific research policy and practice;
- technical expertise (programme management, intervention modalities, effectiveness & efficiency, impact, sustainability, monitoring and evaluation,...).

In order to guarantee the academic quality the four members should have an international academic or development cooperation background. At least two of the four members should have expertise in higher education policy, scientific research policy and practice. In addition, as the focus is on partnerships between Flemish universities and university colleges and HEIS in partner countries, knowledge of the Flemish higher education system can also be an advantage. The commission members have experience with an interdisciplinary approach and are interested in the broader development challenges of the particular regions. In the case of the Great Lakes Africa commission, all commission members should be able to assess proposals in French (e.g. proposals from DRC).

VLIR-UOS attaches great importance to gender balance and the presence of commission members from developing countries within the commissions.

1.2. Eligibility and code of conduct

The commission members will be invited to sign a code of conduct, in which the criteria of eligibility and general rules of conduct will be stated.

The members of the regional commissions are not appointed to a Belgian university or university college, research institute or any other higher education institution. Combining membership of a regional commission and executing external evaluation assignments for VLIR-UOS, and having another responsibility for VLIR-UOS-projects/programmes, is not possible either.

The commission members function in their individual capacity. They do not represent institutions. Every member gives an objective assessment on the basis of the selection criteria, and only on the basis of the information that was provided by the VLIR-UOS secretariat. No contact can be taken with the applicants, or with related parties.

Commission members will be asked to abstain from evaluating proposals in the following cases:

- A commission member with a professional appointment to a foreign institute where the applicant(s) has been enrolled as a student or professional after January 1st of the year n-3 (n=year of application);
- A commission member is co-author with the applicant(s) of a publication that was submitted or published after January 1st of the year n-3 (n=year of application);

‘Co-authorship’ is to be understood as follows:

- Co-authorship of a monograph of which the applicant is co-author as well;
- Co-authorship of an article or another type of contribution to a collection (book, journal issue, report, congress proceedings, abstract ...) of which the applicant is co-author as well;

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5 This only applies for the commission member in question, not for the entire staff of the institution / organization the commission member is part of.
• Editors are not regarded as co-authors insofar as they have not also acted as what is understood under ‘co-author’ as described above. Co-editors of the applicant are not accepted as an external referee.

• A commission member is partner of the applicant(s) in a research project that has been applied for or has been running after January 1st of the year n-3 (n=year of application).

If one of the above situations occurs the commission member will be replaced by a reserve member.

1.3. Mandate

In 2014 an open call for regional commission members was launched to select the members of the different regional commissions. In March-April 2018 the selection commissions were re-composed for a period of 2 years. The regional commission members are selected by the Bureau UOS.

The mandate of a commission member is in his / her individual capacity.

The duration of the mandate of a selection commission member is 2 years, renewable up to 4 years maximum. The general principle is that every 2 years half of the commission would be renewed.

The mandate of the commission is:

• Guarantee minimum quality standards of VLIR-UOS on the level of individual proposals that will be selected

• Evaluate alignment of proposals with VLIR-UOS country strategies

• Identify potential complementarity and synergy between proposals and with other cooperation projects of Belgian actors of the non-governmental cooperation (ANGC) as listed in the Joint Strategic Frameworks (JSF) per country

• Rank proposals in three lists:
  a) List of selected proposals
  b) List of reserve proposals (above the quality threshold, but outside the indicative minimum available budget for a specific commission)
  c) List of not-selected proposals

• Propose binding remediation actions to improve selected proposals that meet the minimum quality standards (e.g. budget, logframe aspects)

• Formulate recommendations to VLIR-UOS as to the policy for the respective call and / or the selection procedure, if appropriate.

Each regional commission is chaired and moderated by a member of the Bureau UOS. The chair does not have access to the individual project proposals, only to the annotated agenda. His /her role is to chair the meeting, keep the time, and make sure that the rules and procedures of VLIR-UOS in place for this call and project selection are correctly applied by the commission. In case of questions, he /she can give information as to these systems and procedures to the Commission members. He / she can also report to the other members of the Bureau UOS as to reasons for (non-)selection of specific projects as well as to the overall conduct of the meeting, during the Bureau UOS meeting when the selection results will be validated, in addition to the information that the VLIR-UOS staff will provide. Each regional commission is chaired by a member of the Bureau UOS.

Each regional commission has a permanent secretary (i.e. VLIR-UOS programme manager).
The VLIR-UOS head of programmes and the concerned programme managers (resource persons taking part for specific country sessions) participate in the meeting and have an informative role. VLIR-UOS is also responsible for the VLIR-UOS track record of the applicant (re-submissions) and the partner institutes per country (former/ongoing projects).

Also representatives of the Directorate General of Development and Humanitarian Aid (DGD) (Belgian government) can take part in the meetings and have an advisory role. Their focus will be on the development relevance of each individual project, as well as the opportunities for synergy, complementarity and cooperation among Belgian actors, including the bilateral cooperation.

1.4. Assignment

The selection commission members will be compensated for the delivered services. The total time dedicated per selection will depend on the call for proposals and the number of proposals.

Commission members are expected to be available for the selection meeting. Only in case of force majeure or conflict of interest absence will be accepted. In that case the fee will be reduced for that day.

Accommodation and transport will be organized and/or costs reimbursed by VLIR-UOS.

1.5. Sanctioning

VLIR-UOS has the right to replace members in the case of repeated absenteeism, late submission of written comments, or any other aspect that hinders a normal functioning of the selection commission. In that case, VLIR-UOS will fall back on the list of reserve members.

1.6. Preparation of selection commission meeting

- The ICOS (Institutional coordinators for development cooperation, i.e. the VLIR-UOS focal points at the Flemish universities and university colleges) and the VLIR-UOS secretariat are responsible for the eligibility check. The eligibility check follows a two-stage process: (i) firstly, the ICOS fills in an eligibility checklist when applicants submit to their institution, and when he/she submits all proposals from academics from his/her institution to VLIR-UOS, (ii) secondly, VLIR-UOS will bring together all proposals received through the ICOS and double check on the basis of the eligibility checklist and will formulate an eligibility advice that is to be confirmed by the Bureau UOS.6

- The VLIR-UOS secretariat transfers the files (including the peer review reports) of all eligible proposals to the selection commission members before the meeting, in principle only in electronic way, and guarantees a minimum number of days for reading the proposals.
- A track record per country is sent together with the project files, and when necessary additional information will be provided orally during the selection commission meeting.
- The VLIR-UOS secretariat will provide the selection commission members with the VLIR-UOS assessment form.
- All members of the selection commission have read and scored all project proposals on the basis of the VLIR-UOS assessment form, and have returned it before the selection meeting (cfr. infra).

6 After the eligibility check, the VLIR-UOS secretariat will inform the applicant about the violations that were found. In case the alleged violations are contested by the applicant and result from a factual error of the VLIR-UOS secretariat, the proposal will be declared eligible.
• An annotated agenda explaining the objectives of the programme, the available budget, the selection criteria, and the working method is sent to the commission members prior to the selection meeting.

• The VLIR-UOS secretariat performed a first check of the project budgets and logframes against the VLIR-UOS methodological, financial and scholarship guidelines. Also information on country strategy development – fit with the country strategy is part of the selection assessment (under ‘relevance’)- can be provided if so requested. Feedback will be given -where needed- orally during the selection meeting.

1.7. Selection commission meeting

The commission is fully attended (with the exception of force majeure or conflict of interest), and decides in principle by consensus. If no consensus can be reached, the commission may proceed to vote. The language in the selection meetings is English. All commission members should be present. In case of force majeure commission members will be asked to submit their written comments and scores.

The selection of proposals is realized during one single commission meeting.

A member of the Bureau UOS chairs the selection commission meeting. He / she does not give any personal evaluation. He / she is neutral and has a moderating role.

Proposals need to meet the quality threshold in order to be selected for funding by VLIR-UOS. A budgetary logic shall not be applied, however, the indicative budget per regional commission, if applicable, will be used to make a distinction between selected within the indicative budget and reserve proposals (sufficient quality but outside the indicative budget of the commission).

Selection commission members will be invited to ask questions or to give comments about the opportunity of the proposed budgets, and proposed expenses, in a way to check the efficiency of the project. However, they are not supposed to evaluate the conformity with financial formats and guidelines, since this is the responsibility of the VLIR-UOS secretariat.

Each project assessment should be provided with a good justification of the (non) selection, in order to be able to inform the project promoters about the strengths and weaknesses of the proposals.

Before the meeting, commission members will be asked to score all individual proposals against the six selection criteria. The same set of six selection criteria will be used for all VLIR-UOS calls. However, the weighting of criteria might differ on the basis of the specificity of each call, and are decided upon by the Bureau UOS. The Bureau UOS has agreed upon the following descriptors and weighting for all regional calls:
### REGIONAL CALL

#### TEAM SI JOINT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Score (max.)</th>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Score (max.)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SCIENTIFIC QUALITY</td>
<td>5 25</td>
<td>5 25</td>
<td>4 20</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>RELEVANCE</td>
<td>5 25</td>
<td>6 30</td>
<td>7 35</td>
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<td>EFFECTIVENESS</td>
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### SCIENTIFIC QUALITY

The extent to which a proposal has a ground-breaking nature and ambition (excellence).

- The proposal is original, creative, innovative (excellence)
- The proposal uses an appropriate methodology
- The partner(s) has(ve) sufficient scientific and/or technical expertise and experience (knowledge of the issues to be addressed) to successfully approach the project

### RELEVANCE

The extent to which the objectives of a proposal are consistent with beneficiaries’ requirements, country needs, synergy opportunities, global priorities and partners’ and donors’ policies.

- Contextual relevance
  - The proposal is based on a genuine and adequate needs/context analysis with a sound analysis of stakeholders & the future engagement with stakeholders
  - The proposal has potential to deliver applicable results relevant to development and the needs of (direct and indirect) beneficiaries
  - The proposal demonstrates local ownership and is in line with the local partners’ priorities

- Policy relevance
  - Relevance of the proposal to the objectives and priorities of the intervention type (TEAM/SI/JOINT)
  - The proposal is in line with the VLIR-UOS country strategy
  - The proposal seriously considers, and (if relevant) integrates synergy with other initiatives/interventions/actors (and in particular with other Belgian development actors)
  - The proposal appropriately takes into account gender, private sector, environment and D4D

### EFFECTIVENESS

The extent to which the proposals’ objectives are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance.

- The proposal identifies a long-term development objective to which it can realistically contribute (general objective)
- The proposal clearly defines a maximum of 2 specific objectives (outcomes) which the intervention can realistically achieve by the end of the project
- The proposal identifies relevant intermediate results to achieve the objectives
- Convincing intervention logic with a clear flow between general objective, specific objectives, intermediate results and activities (Theory of Change)
- The proposal presents a convincing set of indicators that will allow the monitoring of progress in general and the measuring of the achievement of the specific objectives in particular
- The proposal has identified the most important uncertainties (assumptions/risks) and adequately deals with them
### EFFICIENCY

A measure of how economically resources/inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc.) are converted to results.

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</table>

- The partner(s) has(ve) sufficient (financial) management capacity and experience
- There is a clear definition and adequate distribution of the roles and tasks for all involved partners (incl. coordination and communication between the involved partners)
- The project budget is reasonable and justified

### IMPACT

Potential positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by the proposal, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.

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- The proposal has a clear dissemination/extension/valorization strategy which increases the likelihood of uptake/upscaleing/… and eventually impact
- The proposal shows a high potential for effective impact on ultimate beneficiaries (outside the partner institution: e.g. local communities, policy makers, local industry, etc.)
- The proposal is likely to have multiplier effects

### SUSTAINABILITY

The continuation of benefits after the activities have been completed.

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- The proposal is likely to realize a clear institutional embeddedness (within the partner organization; with relevant local, national, international networks and stakeholders) allowing the activities to continue after the funding (institutional sustainability)
- The proposal demonstrates awareness of sustainability risks and has foreseen adequate measures (technical and social sustainability)
- If applicable, the proposal takes into account its positive/negative impact on the policy level (political sustainability)
- If applicable, the proposal takes into account its negative/positive environmental impact (environmental sustainability)
For the criterion ‘scientific quality’ the commission members can rely on the advice of the external peer reviewers when peer review is applicable. However, the advice of the reviewers is not binding.

This meeting follows 3 successive phases⁷ (discussion rounds), as described below.

**Phase 1: Assessment of individual proposals**

In this first phase, individual proposals are assessed on their intrinsic quality and scored along the six selection criteria. In fact, these assessments are done as part of the meeting preparation by the individual selection commission members whereby they assess (and score) each proposal using an assessment form, provided by VLIR-UOS. These ex-ante assessments are to be submitted before an agreed upon deadline previous to the selection commission meeting. The VLIR-UOS secretariat compiles the individual scores into one overview scoring table which reflects the overall ex-ante assessment whereby the total score for each criterion is the average of the weighted individual scores of the commission members. The total score of the proposal is the sum of the average weighted scores per criterion. This scoring table, prepared by VLIR-UOS on the basis of the input from the commission members, is beamed at the start of round 1 and will still permit a monitoring of individual scores of commission members as well. This table consists of all proposals, which are ranked on the basis of their average score. There is no ranking per country nor per intervention type. Subsequently the commission will start the discussion on individual proposals per country. Per proposal the discussion will start from the divergent criteria. If there is no divergence, the commission can decide not to discuss a proposal and just collect the main arguments. The discussion per proposal starts as follows: when a particular criterion is scored both very poor/poor (score 1 and 2) and /good/very good (score 4 and 5) by different commission members, the commission will be asked to discuss the criterion. In case the proposal is a re-submission, the arguments of the previous selection rounds are checked in order to assess improvement of the proposal.

Based on the discussion, the members can decide, based on consensus, to adapt or maintain the provisional overall score of the proposal for a criterion. The discussion starts from the diverging score, but can lead to discussing, and in some cases even re-scoring, of other criteria.

In case of force majeure, the scores and comments of commission members who cannot be present will be taken into account (in the ex-ante scoring table and in the discussion). In order to be considered for funding, an application should reach the following threshold:

- Score at least 50% of the maximum points for each selection criterion
- Score at least 60% of the maximum total points.

The result of this quality check is a:

- List of fundable proposals
- List of not fundable proposals.

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⁷ With the introduction of country programme budgets and necessary follow-up with a Five-Year-Programme the Bureau UOS decided to go from a 2 steps approach during the selection meeting to a 3 steps approach to permit the selection commission to compare the selection results with the available country programme budgets.
Phase 2: Assessment of fundable proposals

During this second phase in the same selection commission meeting, the individual proposals on the list of fundable proposals now enter into competition with each other, with focus on and starting from the selection criterion ‘relevance’. In other words, fundable proposals will now be assessed in a collective, comparative way.

The comparative fit within the VLIR-UOS country strategy will be of high importance and also the following aspects will be taken into account: the potential for synergies and complementarities with other cooperation actors (more specifically within the Joint Strategic Frameworks of Belgian ANGC in a given country), the alignment with the policy priorities of the Belgian minister of development cooperation (D4D, gender, environmental sustainability, private sector development, ...).

The discussion starts, as indicated above, from the criterion ‘relevance’ but eventually this can also lead to discussing the other selection criteria. Based on discussion the commission members can decide, if considered appropriate, to change the ranking of individual proposals.

For all fundable proposals VLIR-UOS will be asked to comment on the track record, with attention being given, when appropriate, to former IUC cooperation.

For those proposals that were further discussed during this phase 2 of the meeting, a substantiated justification – at least with reference to the descriptors of the criterion ‘relevance’ – should be provided.

If a selection meeting is expected to select several distinct intervention types (e.g. TEAM, SI & JOINT), it is in this second phase, after the minimum quality threshold (phase 1) has been met, that the type of intervention can also be taken into account during the discussion.

After the complete and final ranking has been approved by consensus, the available indicative budget of the regional commission is allocated to the ranking, making a division between selected and reserve proposals.

Hence, the result of round 2 is:

- List of selected proposals (ranked)
- List of reserve proposals (ranked above the quality threshold, but outside the budget volume per regional commission for this call for proposals)
- List of not selected proposals

Phase 3: Fit of the ranking after Phase 2 with the available country programme budgets

Since 2017 a third phase was added to the selection commission meeting, whereby the selection results are related to the remaining available country programming budgets in the Five Year Programme (FYP).

Each commission has a ‘ceiled’ regional commission budget which can be allocated on the condition of sufficient qualitative projects. However, the country programme budget is not to be exceeded at this

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8 In the calculation of the cumulative budget, only the budgets concerning the 5 Year Programme (2017-2021) will be taken into account.

9 Not fundable meaning that these projects did not meet the quality threshold, independent from any country budget limits.
point. This can lead to situations whereby certain country programme budgets are completed which leads to the need to adapt the ranking accordingly.

This means that if the situation occurs that in the ‘list of selected proposals’ at the end of round 2, the budget of a country programme is surpassed, the ‘surpassing’ project needs to be taken out. As a consequence next proposals from the ‘reserve list’ after round 2 come into the ‘selection list’. If a project of a given country surpasses the country programme budget, this does not automatically exclude next ranked proposals from the same country from the selection list as certain projects with lower budgets might still fit the country programme budget.

To explain with an example: a project of country ‘X’ surpassing the available country programme budget is taken out of the final selection list of the commission and the next proposal comes into the list. Please note that this does not mean that no further, lower ranked, proposals from country ‘X’ can be considered. If in the final selection list a lower ranked proposal of country ‘X’, with a lower budget (e.g. SI, JOINT), does fit into the respective country programme budget, the ranking will be respected and it will be retained.

When applying the country programme budgets as detailed above, and considering the sum of available country programmed budgets equals the regional budget, it is to be expected that after applying round 3 a remaining budget becomes available that would permit the selection of one or more extra projects in case certain country budgets could be surpassed. As this implies a policy decision, the commission is therefore only asked to provide –based on the ranking and available budget- an advice as to which projects could potentially become fundable when surpassing certain country budgets, but remaining within the limits of the regional commission budget.

Once a complete and final ranking of proposals has been reached, the commission members will run through the lists of selected, reserve and not selected proposals as a final check, and make sure that sufficient and relevant feedback for all proposals is available. Only if also this phase has been successfully completed, the commission members can conclude the selection meeting with a final ranking based on consensus. Hence, the final output of the selection commission after round 3 is:

- List of selected proposals (ranked)
- List of reserve proposals (ranked above the quality threshold, and divided in proposals ranking within the regional budget but surpassing country budgets, and followed by proposals ranked outside the budget volume per regional commission for this call for proposals)
- List of not selected proposals

The final, and binding, selection advice is taken to the Bureau UOS which will take note of the results of the regional selection commissions and relate them to the available budget for this Call and the available (country programme) budgets within the Five-Year Programme (FYP).

1.8. Follow-up of selection commission meeting

The VLIR-UOS secretariat will draft the selection meeting report, in English. The report will be based on the written assessment reports from the peers and the individual commission members, sent to VLIR-UOS prior to the selection meeting, on the one hand, and on the minutes of the discussion within the commission, on the other. The draft report will be sent to the commission members for comments and
validation within one week after the meeting. Commission members will have 1 week to respond. As such, the report is final after (in principle) two weeks.

After validation of the report by the commission members, this report is sent to the Bureau UOS, which ratifies the binding conclusions of the selection commission and decides on the possible allocation of budget to reserve projects.

The selection advice and ranking of the selection commission is binding, and cannot be modified.

However, a number of situations might occur:

- the Bureau UOS will relate the results of the regional commissions to the policy decision to award Flemish university colleges with a dedicated annual budgets per SI-JOINT call. In case certain projects of university colleges are fundable, but remained outside the indicative budget of a commission, they will be related to the budget. If after putting together the results of the different regional commissions, the budget for this call was not fully allocated, the available budget will be awarded to reserve project proposals from university colleges. If there is no remaining budget and the dedicated budget for university colleges for this call is not completely filled, this could lead to a revision of the final selection/reserve list for a specific regional commission.

- in case the call budget is still not fully allocated after consideration of the above policy priority regarding university colleges, it is the Bureau UOS that decides which reserve proposals from which regional commission will enter the final selection list and receive funding. This might lead to surpassing certain country programme budgets in view of maximizing the allocation of funds.

Finally, the Bureau UOS will relate the results of the regional selection commissions to the available budgets in the Five-Year Programme (FYP). In exceptional cases whereby budget cuts lead to a lowering of available budgets for a specific selection round, this could lead to a revision of the final list of fundable proposals and shift certain proposals to the reserve list.

Reserve list proposals that are not retained will lose this status and need to re-submit in a next call for proposals.

Hence, the result of the matching between the selection advice and the available overall (and country) budgets, is a:

- List of selected proposals (ranked)
- List of not selected proposals.

Depending on the overall timing of all calls and selections, it is preferred that overall and final decision by the Bureau UOS on funding of proposals, on the basis of the advice of regional commissions, is taken during one single meeting.

It is up to the Bureau UOS to decide during the FYP whether a given country programme budget is to be revised and certain countries with a full country programme budget can take part in a next call for proposals.

After the Bureau UOS has decided on the final selection, applicants will be informed of their selection or non-selection. At that point, selected applicants will have the time to finalize their proposals on the basis of recommendations by the selection commission or on the basis of technical comments by the VLIR-UOS secretariat (budget and logical framework control). This exercise can result in budgetary shifts, which can require a second Bureau UOS meeting in order to assess if additional reserve projects can be selected.
2. Belgium Commission

2.1. Composition

The Belgium commission is qualified to evaluate proposals that will be executed in Belgium or (partly) in developing countries of the VLIR-UOS list.

The Belgium commission consists of four members. Three reserve members are selected and called upon when a permanent member cannot participate in case of force majeure or conflict of interest.

The following competences should be covered by the Belgium commission:

- specific expertise related to development cooperation (thematic foci – development studies, poverty reduction, ...);
- generic expertise in higher education, scientific research policy and practice and educational policy;
- technical expertise (curriculum development, (innovative) learning and teaching methodologies, monitoring and evaluation, programme development, target group strategies, ...).

In order to guarantee the academic quality the four members should have an international academic or development cooperation background. At least two of the four members should have expertise in higher education policy, scientific research policy and practice. In addition, as the focus is on partnerships between Flemish universities and university colleges and HEIs in partner countries, knowledge of the Flemish higher education system is an advantage. The commission members have experience with an interdisciplinary approach and are interested in the broader development challenges. VLIR-UOS attaches great importance to gender balance and the presence of commission members from developing countries within the commissions.

English is the overall working language, thus excellent knowledge of English is required.

2.2. Eligibility and code of conduct

See under 1.2.

2.3. Mandate

An open call for Belgium commission members was launched to select the members of the Belgium commission. The commission members were selected by the Bureau UOS in May 2019.

The mandate of a commission member is in his / her individual capacity.

The duration of the mandate of selection commission member is 4 years maximum. Current commission members can re-apply for a duration of another 2 years maximum.

The mandate of the commission is:

- Guarantee minimum quality standards of VLIR-UOS on the level of individual proposals,
- Identify potential complementarity and synergy between proposals,
- Rank proposals in three lists:
d) List of selected proposals

e) List of reserve proposals

g) List of not-selected proposals (non-ranked)

- Propose remediation actions to improve proposals,
- Formulate recommendations to VLIR-UOS as to the policy for the respective call and / or the selection procedure, if appropriate.

For the Global Minds programme (GM) the institutional proposals are assessed by a commission comprising four members of the Belgium commission and a DGD representative, and renamed the Global Minds Assessment Commission, as it does not concern a competitive selection.

The Belgium commission is chaired by a member of the Bureau UOS.

The Belgium commission has a secretary (i.e. VLIR-UOS programme manager). The VLIR-UOS programme manager and head of programmes participate in the meeting and have an informative role. VLIR-UOS is responsible for the VLIR-UOS track record of the applicant and his / her partners.

Also DGD representatives (Belgian government) can take part in the meetings and have an advisory role. Their focus will be on the development relevance as well as the opportunities for synergy, complementarity and cooperation among Belgian actors, including the bilateral cooperation.

2.4. Assignment

The selection commission members will be compensated for the delivered services. The total time dedicated per selection will depend on the call for proposals and the number of proposals.

Commission members are expected to be available for the selection meeting. Only in case of force majeure or conflict of interest, absence will be accepted. In that case the fee will be reduced for that day. Accommodation and transport will be organized and/or costs reimbursed by VLIR-UOS.

2.5. Sanctioning

VLIR-UOS has the right to replace members in the case of repeated absenteeism, late submission of written comments, or any other aspect that hinders a normal functioning of the selection commission. In that case, VLIR-UOS will fall back on the list of reserve members.

2.6. Preparation of commission meeting

- In preparation of ITP/ICP selection meetings, the ICOS (Institutional coordinators for development cooperation, i.e. the VLIR-UOS focal points at the Flemish universities and university colleges) and the VLIR-UOS secretariat are responsible for the eligibility check. The eligibility check follows a two-stage process: (i) firstly, the ICOS fills in an eligibility checklist when applicants submit to their institution, and when he / she submits all proposals from academics from his / her institution to VLIR-UOS, (ii) secondly, VLIR-UOS will bring together all proposals received through the ICOS and double check on the basis of the eligibility checklist. VLIR-UOS will then formulate an eligibility advice that is to be confirmed by the Bureau UOS.10

10 After the eligibility check, the VLIR-UOS secretariat will inform the applicant about the violations that were found. In case the alleged violations are contested by the applicant and result from a factual error of the VLIR-UOS secretariat, the proposal will be declared eligible.
• In preparation of Global Minds assessment commission meetings, the ICOS and the VLIR-UOS secretariat are responsible for checking whether a submitted proposal is complete, whether correct templates have been used and whether the guidelines for submitting files have been followed. The VLIR-UOS secretariat will collect all proposals and inform the Bureau UOS about the procedure.

• The VLIR-UOS secretariat transfers the files of all eligible proposals to the selection commission members and the files of all proposals to the Global Minds Assessment Commission members before the meeting, in principle only in electronic way, and guarantees a minimum number of days for reading the proposals.

• The VLIR-UOS secretariat prepares an annotated agenda explaining the objectives of the programme, the available budget, the selection criteria, and the working method.

• The VLIR-UOS secretariat will prepare the VLIR-UOS track record for ITP/ICP proposals, and when necessary give additional information during the selection commission meeting.

• The VLIR-UOS secretariat will provide the commission members with the VLIR-UOS assessment forms.

• All members of the selection commission should read and score all project proposals on the basis of the VLIR-UOS assessment form, and send back their assessment forms before the selection meeting. Since the Global Minds proposals are not subject to a competitive selection procedure, the members of the assessment commission should not score the proposals after reading them but they should be assessed on the basis of the VLIR-UOS assessment form and sent back before the assessment meeting.

• For the preparation of the commission meeting, the VLIR-UOS secretariat controls the project budgets of the project proposals against the VLIR-UOS financial guidelines. Feedback will be given orally during the meeting.

2.7. Selection / assessment commission meeting

The commission is fully attended (with the exception of force majeure or conflict of interest), and decides in principle by consensus. If no consensus can be reached, the commission may proceed to vote.

A member of the Bureau UOS chairs the selection / assessment commission meeting. He / she does not give any personal evaluation. The chair does not have access to the individual project proposals, only to the annotated agenda. His/her role is to chair the meeting, keep the time, and make sure that the VLIR-UOS rules and procedures applying to this call and project selection are correctly applied by the commission. In case of any questions, he/she can provide information to the commission members with regard to these systems and procedures. During Bureau UOS meetings, he/she can also inform the other members of the Bureau UOS about reasons for (non-)selection of specific projects as well as about the overall conduct of the meeting, in addition to the information that the VLIR-UOS staff provides.

Selection / assessment commission members will be invited to ask questions or to give comments about the opportunity of the proposed budgets, and proposed expenses, in a way to check the efficiency of the project or programme. However they are not supposed to evaluate the conformity with financial formats and guidelines, since this is the responsibility of the VLIR-UOS secretariat.
Each project evaluation or programme assessment should be provided with a good justification of the (non) selection or negative assessment in order to be able to inform the project promoter about the strengths and weaknesses of the proposals.

A budgetary logic shall not be applied. Proposals need to meet the quality threshold in order to be selected for funding by VLIR-UOS.

The language in the selection and assessment meetings is English. All commission members should be present, in case of force majeure commission members will be asked to submit their written comments and scores.

Before the meeting, commission members will be asked to score all individual proposals against the six selection criteria. The same set of six selection criteria will be used for all VLIR-UOS calls. However, the weighting of criteria might differ on the basis of the specificity of each call, and are decided upon by the Bureau UOS.

The Bureau UOS has agreed upon the following descriptors and weighting for the International Training Programme (ITP) calls:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCIENTIFIC QUALITY</th>
<th>The extent to which a proposal has a ground-breaking nature and ambition (excellence).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Factor</td>
<td>Score (max.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The proposal is original, unique among competitors, creative, innovative (excellence)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- The proposal uses an appropriate methodology</td>
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<tr>
<td>- The proposed programme is scientifically relevant for partner countries and local institutions and organisations</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The applicant(s) has(ve) sufficient scientific and technical expertise and experience (knowledge of the issues to be addressed) to successfully organize a training programme. He/she/they demonstrate that the application is related to his/her/their qualifications and teaching.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The proposed programme demonstrates a marked ability to attract a good percentage of international students and students from developing counties. Data on scholarship applicants and previous participants if provided if applicable.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RELEVANCE</th>
<th>The extent to which the objectives of a proposal are consistent with beneficiaries’ requirements, country needs, synergy opportunities, global priorities and partners’ and donors’ policies.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Factor</td>
<td>Score (max.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contextual relevance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The proposal is based on a genuine and adequate needs analysis</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- The proposal has clear added value or complementarity with regard to other initiatives already carried out</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- The proposal is aimed at capacity development and has potential to deliver applicable results that can improve the educational/research/organizational capacity of the participants’ organizations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The proposal relates to the South beneficiaries' requirements (i.e. ambitions of organizations sending students) and/or country needs (manpower planning) and/or global priorities as regards the necessary competencies required for societal impact.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy relevance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The proposal seriously considers, and (if relevant) integrates synergy with other initiatives/interventions/actors (within the VLIR-UOS portfolio and with other Belgian development actors)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- The proposal appropriately takes into account gender, private sector, environment and D4D.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EFFECTIVENESS</th>
<th>The extent to which the proposals’ objectives are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Factor</td>
<td>Score (max.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,5</td>
<td>12,5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The proposal defines a clear specific objective (outcome) and describes how the intervention can realistically achieve this by the end of the programme.

The proposal clearly describes the inputs, activities and results that will contribute to achieving the specific objective.

Monitoring of results and objectives is foreseen.

Measures for participants' support are in place.

The proposal shows an awareness of possible uncertainties that can affect the programme results and objective and adequately deals with them.

**EFFICIENCY**

_A measure of how economically resources/inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc.) are converted to results._

- The promotors/team has(ve) sufficient (financial) management capacity and experience.
- There is a clear definition and adequate distribution of the roles and tasks for all involved partners (incl. coordination and communication between the involved partners).
- There are no (better, cheaper) alternatives to realize the proposed objectives.
- The project budget is reasonable, realistic and justified against the objectives and length of the programme.

**IMPACT**

_Potential positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by the proposal, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended._

- The proposal shows a potential for effective impact on direct beneficiaries (individual course participant level) and indirect beneficiaries (e.g. in the organization, institution, local community, policy makers through change agency).
- Applicability in the South has been taken into account and is analyzed in the proposal.
- The proposal is likely to have a multiplier effect.
- The proposal has a clear dissemination/extension/valorization strategy which increases the likelihood of up-take/upscaling/… and eventually impact.

In case of proposals that were selected before, the following is also taken into account:

- The proposal entails clear evidence of the impact of previous editions.

**SUSTAINABILITY**

_The continuation of benefits after the activities have been completed._

- The proposal foresees a clear follow-up strategy to finance activities after the funding ends (financial sustainability).
- The proposal foresees working with institutional structures and relevant local, national and/or international networks, allowing the activities to continue after the funding (institutional sustainability).
- The proposal entails a clear follow-up strategy for participants/alumni in order to establish or maintain a network of professionals/alumni.
- If applicable, the proposal takes into account its positive/negative impact on the policy level (political sustainability).
- If applicable, the proposal takes into account its negative/positive environmental impact (environmental sustainability).
In case of proposals that were selected before, the following is also taken into account:

- A well-developed sustainability plan (including alternative funding/an interim business model) is part of the proposal
The Bureau UOS has agreed upon the following (non-exhaustive list of) descriptors and weighting for the International Masters Programme (ICP) call:\footnote{Bureau UOS, 31 March 2015. This set was established for the 2017-2021 ICP call (launched June 2015) and will require an update for the next call.}:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scientific quality</th>
<th>The proposal demonstrates high scientific value and has a strong research connection.</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>25</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Scientific value** | - The proposed programme is original and has scientific value and merit. For instance, it demonstrates what scientific gap it does fill.  
- The proposed programme is scientifically relevant for partner countries and institutions.  
- An analysis of how the programme will contribute to the scientific quality in the beneficiary country/ institution is presented in the proposal. | | |
| **Expertise and research connection** | - The academic applicant(s) is (are) among the high level experts/specialists in the domain. He (they) demonstrate that the application is related to his/their qualifications and teaching.  
- The proposed programme draws on the research expertise of the Flemish university (universities). The Flemish university (universities) has (have) a track record on development research.  
- All course providers have a research background. The majority of the teaching staff has published development-related papers, preferably in international peer-reviewed journals. | | |
| **Recognition and quality assurance** | - The proposed programme demonstrates international competitiveness, proof of international standards and quality as required by International Frameworks and Proof of Global competence. The programme has an excellent international reputation and standards and is enhanced by strong international connections. The programme is internationally competitive. | | |
### ICP specific descriptor A: Internationalisation

- The proposed programme demonstrates a marked ability to attract a good percentage of Belgian, European and other international students, as well as students from developing countries, into the same programme.
- The nature, scope and relevance of the target group of students from developing countries of students and the academic admission criteria and selection procedure are clearly demonstrated in the application form. Data on student flow and outflow are provided.
- Interuniversity cooperation in Flanders is an added value if well justified. If an interuniversity programme is proposed, the proposal must clearly provide justification of the added value of each partner e.g. in terms of division of labour and funding, institutional specialization, synergies and complementarities.

#### RELEVANCE

The proposal responds to the development context, and its approaches and objectives contribute to the objectives of the partnering institutions and capacity development.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy relevance / context relevance</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The proposed programme is aimed at capacity development and demonstrates a link to employability of graduates from developing countries, entrepreneurial attitude, poverty reduction or innovation.</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The proposed programme relates to the South beneficiaries’ requirements (i.e. ambitions of organizations sending students) and/or country needs (manpower planning) and/or global priorities as regards the necessary competencies required for societal impact.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The proposed programme is in line with the VLIR-UOS country strategies’ themes where applicable (i.e. when referred to by the applicant in terms of geographical scope for attracting students from developing countries).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The applicant has proven knowledge on how to apply knowledge and expertise in the South. The majority of the teaching staff engaged in the implementation of the programme have (research, teaching, project implementation) experience in developing countries; they have a proven track record of research or other activities in developing countries.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### ICP specific descriptor B: Transformation

- The proposal introduces plans, through the teaching and learning process, on the translation of development relevance to actual development and on the transformation of students into change agents.

#### Content and objectives

- The curriculum of the proposed programme including the choice of thesis subjects, is oriented towards development issues and needs in the South. Thesis subjects can be chosen that are related to such issues and needs,
- The proposed programme demonstrates a link between the scientific and development objectives.
- The development relevance is demonstrated in the objectives, contents or implementation plan.

#### Implementation

- Teaching and learning methodologies are presented as to how the development relevance will be implemented (e.g. field action in the South, cooperation with industry, student joint projects, case studies, integrated projects, data collection and examples from the South).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EFFECTIVENESS</th>
<th>The proposal demonstrates how it will support the achievement of objectives.</th>
<th>2,5</th>
<th>12,5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Support measures** | • Appropriate support measures are in place, such as training connection to other projects in the South; involvement with industries; interdisciplinarity; proof of student-centered instructional methodology with application in development country context. There is interuniversity or inter-institution cooperation where appropriate to strengthen the development relevance.  
• Measures for student support and orientation are in place. The proposal contains a remedial strategy on how it supports students from different backgrounds and contexts.  
• Applicability / multiplication in the South has been taken into account and analyzed in the proposal. Measures on how to support the graduates (e.g. use of alumni, peer support etc.) are presented in the proposal.  
• The proposal has a policy and measures to support gender equity among students. | | |
| **Monitoring and Evaluation** | • Monitoring systems and frameworks are in place. This includes follow-up of outputs and outcomes such as collecting feedback from the students from developing countries at the end of a semester, and indicators related to this group’s intake, graduation rate, return rate and publications.  
• There is a clear after-graduation policy and measures on how to support the graduates from developing countries (e.g. use of alumni, peer support etc.). There is a monitoring plan to track the alumni. Other outreach programmes are developed. | | |
| **ICP specific descriptor C: Institutional embeddedness** | • The proposed programme demonstrates a clear relationship with the university’s Mission and Strategic plan. The proposed programme is part of the internationalization policy of the institution(s). The proposed programme demonstrates its firm embeddedness in the university.  
• The proposal presents the availability of teaching and administrative staff. | | |
| EFFICIENCY | The proposal demonstrates that the resources are efficiently used to achieve and maintain the objectives. | 2,5 | 12,5 |
| **Task efficiency** | • There is a clear definition and distribution of roles and tasks for all involved partners.  
• There are efficient mechanisms for coordination and communication between the involved partners in the North and South, if any. | | |
| **Cost efficiency** | • The programme budgets are reasonable and justified for the achievement of the intended objectives (e.g. in terms of hosting location and effectiveness, impact and sustainability).  
• The break-down of the budget for organizational costs is presented.  
• There is evidence that the partners have sufficient financial management capacity and experience (ability to handle the budget) to successfully deliver all aspects of the project; e.g. experience in managing similar projects. | | |
**IMPACT**

| The proposal clearly demonstrates the impact on capacity development. |
|---|---|---|

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impact on capacity development</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The proposed programme clearly demonstrates the expected impact on capacity development. It shows a potential tangible impact at direct and indirect beneficiary level and both in academic and development context.</td>
<td>2,5</td>
<td>12,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The proposed programme is likely to realize employability through reinsertion of the graduate, with relevant local, national, international networks and stakeholders.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>When partnerships are envisaged, the proposed programme will have a positive and measureable effect on capacity building of partner institutions in the South.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SUSTAINABILITY**

| The proposal demonstrates measures how the achievements and activities will be sustained. |
|---|---|---|

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sustainability strategy</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There is sound ownership and commitment by participating universities which is verified by different means e.g. joint proposal writing, needs assessments, previous cooperation etc.</td>
<td>2,5</td>
<td>12,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The proposed programme includes a sustainability strategy which will includes an analysis on how the capacities developed will be sustained and possible factors that enhance or inhibit sustainability of the activities and outcomes both in the North and in the South, (such as e.g. ownership / commitment / economic / financial / institutional / technical / socio-cultural aspects, strategies to educate a critical mass, south networks, thematic networks, alumni strategy, feasible plans for involvement and use of postgraduates to sustain the programme (e.g. guest lectures, visiting professors schemes)). The proposal foresees working with institutional structures allowing the activities to continue after the funding (institutional sustainability).</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>The proposed programme justifies joint programming as a way of enhancing the objectives. In this case there are clear indications on the embeddedness in the South, including institutional agreements, policy, cooperation mechanisms, rules for student secondment, level of commitment, matching funds.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>The proposal could envisage a progressive programme development in three possible stages: (1) joint programme (2) double degree (3) joint degree. The proposal provides a clear plan as to how additional issues emerging from joint and exchange programmes and North-South mobility will be handled (cost efficiency with regards to effectiveness and impact, extra cost, MoU, possible matching funds from the university in the South, degree architecture and credit transfer, teacher and student mobility arrangements, teacher qualifications, curriculum development, administration, student assistance, short term housing etc).</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>The proposed programme justifies South-South cooperation (as an indication for sustainability and ownership).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A cost analysis for financial sustainability is elaborated and the proposal foresees a clear follow-up strategy to finance the programme after funding ends (financial sustainability).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are other external funding sources or scholarships for the same programme.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The selection of proposals is realized during one single commission meeting. This meeting follows 2 successive phases, as described below.

**Phase 1: Assessment of individual proposals**

In this first phase, individual proposals are assessed on their intrinsic quality and scored along the six selection criteria. In fact, these assessments are done as part of the meeting preparation by the individual selection commission members whereby they assess (and score) each proposal using an assessment form, provided by VLIR-UOS. These ex-ante assessments are to be submitted before the deadline agreed upon preceding the selection commission meeting. The VLIR-UOS secretariat compiles the individual scores into one overview scoring table which reflects the overall ex-ante assessments. The total score for each criterion is the average of the weighted individual scores of the commission members. The total score of the proposal is the sum of the average weighted scores per criterion. This scoring table, prepared by VLIR-UOS on the basis of the commission members’ input, is projected at the start of round 1 and will still permit a monitoring of individual scores of commission members. This table consists of all proposals, which are ranked on the basis of their average score.

Per proposal the discussion will start from the divergent criteria. If there is no divergence, the commission can decide not to discuss a proposal and just collect the main arguments. The discussion per proposal starts as follows: when a particular criterion is scored both very poor/poor (score 1 and 2) and good/very good (score 4 and 5) by different commission members, the commission will be asked to discuss the criterion. In case the proposal is a re-submission, the arguments of the previous selection rounds are checked in order to assess improvement of the proposal.

Based on the discussion, the members can decide, based on consensus, to adapt or maintain the provisional overall score of the proposal for a criterion. The discussion starts from the diverging score, but can lead to discussing, and in some cases even re-scoring, of other criteria.

In case of force majeure, the scores and comments of commission members who cannot be present will be taken into account (in the ex-ante scoring table and in the discussion). In order to be considered for funding, an application should reach the following threshold:

- Score at least 50% of the maximum points for each selection criterion
- Score at least 60% of the maximum total points.

The result of this quality check is a:

- List of fundable proposals
- List of not fundable proposals.

**For ICP**, after preliminary deliberation by the commission, an oral presentation by the applicant is foreseen. The incremental cost plan is also discussed in this phase.

**Phase 2: Assessment of fundable proposals**

During this second phase in the same selection commission meeting, the individual proposals on the list of fundable proposals now enter into competition with each other, with focus on and starting from the selection criterion ‘relevance’. In other words, fundable proposals will now be assessed in a collective,
comparative way.

Comparative fit within the Belgium strategy will be of high importance. Also the possibilities for synergies with other Belgian indirect cooperation actors in Belgium (cfr. link with the Joint Strategic Framework) are to be explained, as also the alignment with the policy priorities of the Belgian minister of development cooperation (D4D, gender, environmental sustainability, ..).

The discussion starts, as indicated above, from the criterion ‘relevance’ but eventually this can also lead to discussing the other selection criteria. Based on discussion the commission members can decide, if considered appropriate, to change the ranking of individual proposals.

For all fundable proposals VLIR-UOS will be asked to comment on the track record.

For those proposals that were further discussed during this phase 2 of the meeting, a substantiated justification – at least with reference to the descriptors of the criterion ‘relevance’ – should be provided.

After the complete and final ranking has been approved by consensus, the available indicative budget foreseen for this commission round is allocated to the ranking, making a division between selected and reserve proposals.

Hence, the result of round 2 is:

- List of selected proposals (ranked)
- List of reserve proposals (ranked above the quality threshold, but outside the budget volume per regional commission for this call for proposals)
- List of not selected proposals12.

For ICP, VLIR-UOS needs to be able to ensure that the ICP portfolio is reasonably diverse, in order to be able to reflect the multifaceted definitions of development relevance and needs. Therefore the Belgium commission is mandated to make the selection so as to enable VLIR-UOS to effectively implement this diversity policy.

Once a complete ranking of proposals has been reached, the commission members will run through the lists of selected, reserve and not selected proposals as a final check, and make sure that sufficient and relevant feedback for all proposals is available. Only if also this phase has been successfully completed, the commission members can conclude the selection meeting with a final ranking based on consensus.

The commission’s final decision is binding. The Bureau UOS will be asked to ratify this advice.

2.7.1. Assessment meetings

The assessment of the Global Minds (GM) proposals differs from the above selections:

- The purpose of the assessment by the commission is to check whether the individual programme proposals meet the requirements stated in the call. Since it is not a competitive selection, the Bureau UOS has decided not to use weighting or scores per criterion, but to aim for an assessment in view of improvement of proposals.

12 Not fundable meaning that these projects did not meet the quality threshold, independent from any budget limits.
The six generic VLIR-UOS selection criteria function as guidelines for assessment. For Global Minds proposals the focus is on:
  o Development relevance
  o Coherence:
    ▪ Internal: the cohesion between the proposed interventions and their connection to institutional policy;
    ▪ External: the connection to the general objective of the GM programme at VLIR-UOS level and the VLIR-UOS Belgium country programme.
  o The use of institution-specific quality assurance systems when implementing the GM programme.

The same set of six criteria used for other calls applies, but they are defined in more detail and translated to a non-exhaustive list of descriptors, which are illustrative but provide an objective interpretation of the criteria, for both the applicant and the assessment commission. The criteria and descriptors have been adapted to suit the specific characteristics of GM. Additional criteria are internal coherence and alignment to the institution policy. “Quality” now mainly covers the coherence and alignment to the institutional policy. Important in this respect is the question how the institution-specific quality assurance systems will be used during the implementation of the GM programme.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUALITY</th>
<th>The extent to which a proposal has a clear rationale.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• The proposal addresses strategic research/education/sensitization needs and opportunities for the Flemish institution and its (potential) South partners and network</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The proposal is consistent with research/education/sensitization strategies of the Flemish institution</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The components of the proposal are demonstrably coherent (e.g. based on a transparent strategy/analysis/target audience) and their possible interlinkages are explained in a clear manner, as well as the link between the Global Minds proposal and the Flemish institution’s own policy and strategy in the field of capacity-building at the level of development cooperation at large</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• …</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RELEVANCE</th>
<th>The extent to which the objectives of a proposal are consistent with beneficiaries’ requirements, country needs, synergy opportunities, global priorities and partners’ and donors’ policies.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• The proposal meets the needs of (direct and indirect) beneficiaries</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The planned results and outcomes are development relevant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The proposal is in line with the VLIR-UOS country strategy in case of components aiming at a specific (set of) country(ies)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The proposal is complementary to the internationalization policy of the institution, but clearly aims at another finality and target group (development cooperation)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The proposal has clear added value or complementarity with regard to other initiatives already carried out, e.g. ongoing south projects (VLIR-UOS funded or otherwise), the activities of other Belgian actors, etc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The proposal has potential to deliver applicable results</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• …</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EFFECTIVENESS</th>
<th>The extent to which the proposals’ objectives are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Clear description of key elements (inputs, activities, results, objectives) of the underlying Theory of Change</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• Clear and realistic results chain in the underlying Theory of Change, in line with the institutional policy and strategy
• Realistic objectives that address the identified needs
• Feasible project activities
• Appropriate results to achieve the objectives
• Multiplier effects can be generated
• Objectively verifiable indicators are available, not only for intermediate results level but also to monitor different outcomes (specific objective level)
• Monitoring of results and outcomes is foreseen
• Risk management takes into account the most important risks and appropriately deals with them
• …

EFFICIENCY
A measure of how resources/inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc) are converted to results in an economic way.

• The Flemish institution uses its own transparent selection systems and procedures which might be modified in view of Global Minds components, if necessary
• The Flemish institution has a network of existing and/or potential south partners based on previous cooperation and/or relevant synergy/complementarity
• There is a clear definition and distribution of the roles and tasks for all involved stakeholders
• There are efficient mechanisms for coordination and communication between the involved stakeholders
• There are no (better, cheaper) alternatives to realize the proposed objectives
• The project costs are reasonable and justified
• Maximum use is made of the available budget in relation to the proposed results (value for money)
• …

IMPACT
Potential positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by the proposal, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.

• The proposal’s strategy has a clear vision on the long term effects that are envisaged
• The proposal shows a potential tangible impact on (direct and indirect) beneficiaries
• The proposal is sensitive to transversal aspects such as gender, culture, and environment, that can accelerate or hinder the potential impact of the project
• The proposal has a clear dissemination/valorization strategy
• The proposal is likely to realize a clear institutional embeddedness (within the Flemish institution, and between the Flemish institution and relevant local, national, international networks and stakeholders)
• …

SUSTAINABILITY
The continuation of benefits after the activities have been completed.

• The proposal foresees a clear follow-up strategy (financial sustainability)
• The proposal foresees working with institutional structures (institutional sustainability)
• If applicable, the proposal takes into account its positive/negative impact on the policy level (political sustainability)
• If applicable, the proposal takes into account its negative/positive environmental impact (environmental sustainability)
• The proposal formulates clear and appropriate strategies to ensure the sustainability of all results and outcomes achieved
• …

Apart from the descriptors presented in the table, it is also understood that under the criterion ‘relevance’, the appropriateness of the intervention type for the proposal is to be assessed, by comparing the envisaged objectives of the proposal with the given objectives of the intervention type as stated in the call.

For the criterion ‘scientific quality’ the commission members can rely on the advice of the external peer reviewers when peer review is applicable. However, the advice of the reviewers is not binding.
The assessment of proposals is realized during one single commission meeting. The assessment procedure is as follows:

(i) First examination by the commission:

- The commission assesses all proposals after reading and after an oral explanation of the proposals by the applicants, and will recommend any improvements as needed.
- The commission formulates recommendations for strengthening the proposal with arguments. The commission can make recommendations for strengthening the coherence, development relevance or quality assurance of (part of) the proposal and make suggestions with regard to the individual actions in the proposal.

The commission writes an in-depth commission report on each proposal, including a motivated strength and weakness analysis (related to coherence, development relevance and quality assurance) and recommendations to strengthen the proposal.

(ii) All institutions can begin with the implementation of their Global Minds programme in year 1 (2017), with guaranteed budget for this first year but in full knowledge of the commission’s assessment and recommendations. DGD is also notified of this assessment. The institutions can integrate the recommendations during implementation if they wish.

The institutions are given the time to formulate a management response on how they will implement the recommendations. The institutions will provide VLIR-UOS with a management response with description per institution of how the recommendations have been or will be addressed eight months later (by 1 August 2017), together with an updated schedule for 2018.

(iii) Second examination by the commission in September 2017, in which each programme is reassessed based on the management response and the updated plan for 2018. The commission checks whether the institutions has provided an adequate response to the recommendations and whether they have implemented the actions proposed in the management response. A poor response by the institutions can have negative consequences from year 2 (2018). In this second examination the commission will issue a positive, conditional or negative decision.

- The commission will issue a **positive decision** if it feels that the programme satisfies the requirements with regard to coherence, development relevance and internal quality assurance or will do so within a reasonable term.
- The commission will give **conditional approval** for 1 year with clear recommendations for how the proposal must be improved. The institution must satisfy these recommendations by the time of its first annual report. If not, the negatively assessed part of the programme may be considered non-fundable and the resources used to fund it deducted from the GM funding for the following year.
- The commission will issue a **negative decision** if it feels that the programme does not satisfy the requirements with regard to coherence, development relevance and internal quality assurance and will not do so within a reasonable term. Each negative decision is accompanied by a commission report in which detailed reasons are given for this decision. The assessment may refer to the whole programme or a specific part of the programme. However, a negative assessment for a specific part of the programme cannot
lead to the non-selection of the whole proposal. A negative decision may lead to a loss of funding for the negatively assessed part of the programme for one year.

The commission’s final decision is binding. The UOS Bureau will be asked to ratify this advice.

2.8. Follow-up of selection commission meeting

The VLIR-UOS secretariat will draft the selection / assessment meeting report, in English. The draft report will be sent to the commission members for comments and validation within one week after the meeting. Commission members will have 1 week to respond. As such, the report is final after two weeks (indicative).

After validation of the report by the commission members, this report is sent to the Bureau UOS, which has to ratify the binding conclusions of the selection commission and decide on the possible allocation of budget to proposals of the reserve list.

The ranking of the selection commission is binding, and cannot be modified. However, it is the Bureau UOS that decides which reserve proposals from which calls will receive funding.

After the Bureau UOS has decided on the funding of the proposals, the applicants will be informed of their selection or non-selection. At that point, applicants will have the time to finalize their proposals on the basis of recommendations by the selection commission or on the basis of technical comments by the VLIR-UOS secretariat (budget control). This exercise can result in budgetary shifts, which can require a second Bureau UOS meeting in order to assess if additional reserve projects can be selected.

For Global Minds,

- In year 2 the institutions issue a report, as provided for, but there is normally no special role for the commission.
- In year 3 the first mid-term evaluation occurs, in accordance with the relevant stipulations in the Royal Decree.
3. Policy initiated calls – Institutional University Cooperation programmes (IUC and post-IUC NETWORK)

3.1. Composition

A specific IUC commission will be composed to assess the proposals for IUC cooperation during its different selection stages starting from a Concept Note South to a final IUC partner programme proposal. Considering the IUC call is directed to a limited set of VLIR-UOS partner countries in different continents (Africa, Latin America and Asia) a mixed commission is installed prior to the selection stage of Concept Notes South. The submitted IUC concept notes South will be assessed in a comparative way, crossing over regional borders.

Post-IUC NETWORK programme proposals will—in case of a specific call for proposals—also be assessed by the IUC commission.

3.2. Eligibility and code of conduct

See under 1.2.

3.3. Mandate

See under 1.3.

3.4. Assignment

See under 1.4.

3.5. Sanctioning

See under 1.5.

3.6. Preparation of selection commission meeting

See 1.6. for the main preparation steps with the exception that for the first round of IUC, proposals are submitted directly by an institution in the South to VLIR-UOS.

3.7. Multi-stage IUC\textsuperscript{13} intake and selection procedure - overview

A multi-stage selection procedure is foreseen when selecting new IUC programmes. Here-under we provide a schematic overview with below a short general explanation per stage.

\textsuperscript{13} The procedure for post-IUC NETWORK intakes could be differentiated and will be optimized at the occasion of an possible new call (not before 2021). Also the procedure for assessment of Phase 2 IUC / NETWORK partner programme proposals is to be revised in view of Phase 2 2022-2026.
Stage 1: Call for proposals for IUC cooperation (shortlist of partner universities on the basis of IUC concept note South)

Stage one is the preselection of potential IUC partner institutions. An IUC call is launched and open to Southern partner universities in the country list as defined by VLIR-UOS. The IUC candidate institutions are invited to submit a concept note South. The result of the selection commission round is a shortlist of potential IUC partner universities.

Stage 2: Selection of partner institutions moving into "Phase In" (preselection of partner universities on the basis of extended concept note)

The shortlisted partner institutions after stage 1 are invited to elaborate an extended concept note in collaboration with a Flemish coordinator. A call for Flemish coordinators will be launched shortly after stage 1. The Flemish coordinators will be appointed by VLIR-UOS on the basis of the advice of the partner institutions. Via a parallel procedure, VLIR-UOS will contract external expert teams to perform institutional assessments visits to the shortlisted partner institutions. The institutional assessments should allow VLIR-UOS to assess the local context, as well as the needs and capacities of the partner institutions, as well as serve as a reality check of the concept notes South. These assessments will provide input to the decision making process for selection (based on the extended concept note + institutional assessment input), will ensure the context is known, and can serve as a baseline.

The result of this stage is the selection of partner institutions moving into Phase In.

Stage 3: Pre-partner programme phase leading to final selection of an IUC partner programme

The partner institutions preselected for Phase In start with an IUC pre-partner programme phase. Meanwhile a matchmaking process is organised and Flemish academics from different Flemish HEIs will be appointed as project leaders and will be involved in the IUC formulation missions leading to the elaboration of final partner programme proposals by joint teams in the South and the North. The final selection stage focusses on the assessment of an IUC partner programme (3rd and final selection round). The partner institution selection and thematic focus being defined in stage 1 and 2, the objective of stage 3 is to assess the intrinsic quality of the detailed programme/projects, the proposed theories of change linked to the developmental and institutional priorities of the proposed IUC partner institution, and the quality of the partnership.
3.8. Selection commission meetings – general principles and selection criteria per stage

The commission is fully attended (with the exception of force majeure or conflict of interest), and decides in principle by consensus. If no consensus can be reached, the commission may proceed to vote. A member of the Bureau UOS chairs the selection commission meeting. He / she does not give any personal evaluation. He / she is neutral and has a moderating role.

Selection commission members will be invited to ask questions or to give comments about the opportunity of the proposed budgets, and proposed expenses, in a way to check the efficiency of the project. However, they are not supposed to evaluate the conformity with financial formats and guidelines, since this is the responsibility of the VLIR-UOS secretariat.

Each programme assessment should be provided with a good justification of the (non) selection, in order to be able to inform the coordinators/project leaders about the strengths and weaknesses of the proposals.

Proposals need to meet the quality threshold in order to be selected for funding by VLIR-UOS.

The language in the selection meetings is English. All commission members should be present. In case of force majeure commission members will be asked to submit their written comments and scores.

Before the meeting, commission members will be asked to assess all individual programme proposals against the six selection criteria used for all VLIR-UOS calls. However, the weighting of criteria differs on the basis of the specificity of each intervention type, and are decided upon by the Bureau UOS.

The IUC selection procedure being specific and in multi-stage, an overview on the selection procedure and criteria (incl. descriptors) per stage is included below. A difference is made between the shortlisting and pre-selection (partner institutes selection, stage 1 and 2) and the final selection (selection of final partner programme proposals, stage 3) with regard to the level of selection (programme/projects). In stages 1-2, only the programme level is appraised as there are no final project proposals involved. During the final selection round both the programme and project level is to be assessed.

Stage 1 – shortlist of partner institutes (selection Concept Note South)

The following scoring system will be applied for the preselection of partner institutions in stage 1 (Concept Note South):

The standard selection criteria as presented below will be applied. The following descriptors and weighting are foreseen:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy initiated Call</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>IUC – shortlist of partner institutions (Stage 1 – Concept Note South)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Score (max.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SCIENTIFIC QUALITY</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The extent to which a proposal has a ground-breaking nature and ambition (excellence).

- The concept note is original, creative, innovative
- The partner institution has sufficient academic, scientific and/or technical expertise and experience (knowledge of the issues to be addressed) to successfully engage in an IUC partnership
- The concept note is ambitious in terms of:
  - envisaged institutional change
  - vision and strategy on how academic capacity building and progress (e.g. educational and scientific progress; evolution towards more research-based academic programmes, role of research in this process, ...) can be achieved with the support of an IUC cooperation
  - the role of the university as a driver of change in society

RELEVANCE
The extent to which the objectives of a proposal are consistent with beneficiaries’ requirements, country needs, synergy opportunities, global priorities and partners’ and donors’ policies.

- Contextual relevance
  - The institution is less privileged in terms of accessing national or international resources and has potential for playing the envisaged role of driver of change.
  - The institution is in line with the main characteristics of an IUC institution
  - The concept note is based on a genuine, adequate and convincing analysis of:
    - the partner’s institutional capacities and needs
    - local needs and development challenges (can also be national needs and challenges)
    - stakeholders
  - The concept note shows that an IUC partnership would be well in line with the partner’s institutional strategy and institutional development status
  - The priorities of the proposed programme match well with the institutional and local context
  - The concept note’s proposed programme has potential to deliver applicable results relevant to development and the needs of (direct and indirect) beneficiaries

- Policy relevance
  - The concept note is in line with the objectives and priorities of the intervention type (IUC)
  - The concept note is in line with the respective VLIR-UOS country strategy and the Joint Strategic Framework
  - The concept note seriously considers, identifies and (if relevant) integrates potential for synergy and/or complementarity with other initiatives/interventions/actors
  - The concept note takes into account gender and environment throughout the proposal (e.g. in the context and stakeholder analysis, programme vision and strategy, domains of change, ...)

EFFECTIVENESS
The extent to which the proposals’ objectives are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance.

- The concept note identifies long-term objectives to which the programme can realistically contribute
- The concept note defines a number of domains of change the programme wishes to contribute to. These are ambitious but realistic and coherent (academic and/or developmental)
- The concept note identifies approaches as to how to approach the domains of change in terms of key strategies that will be used to translate these in capacity building approaches
- The concept note has a convincing vision on the domains of transversal institutional strengthening to be addressed within the IUC programme
- The concept note has a convincing theory of change at the level of the programme demonstrating a sound idea about the envisioned change process
- The concept note has identified the most important uncertainties (assumptions/risks) and adequately deals with them

EFFICIENCY
A measure of how economically resources/inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc) are converted to results.

- The partner has sufficient (financial) management capacity and experience, illustrated by experience with other external funding.
There is a clear vision on how the necessary resources/inputs (financial, personnel, ..) can be put in place to implement a successful IUC programme.

The proposed programme already has links with Flemish HEI (may also include earlier/current VLIR-UOS interventions) or has a sound strategy to easily initiate them.

**IMPACT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Potential positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by the proposal, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.</th>
<th>2.5</th>
<th>12.5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

- The concept note has a clear vision on the impact it wants to realise via an IUC programme.
- The proposed partnership is experienced in successfully working together with external stakeholders (e.g. local communities, policy makers, local industry, etc).
- The proposal has a vision on dissemination/extension/valorization strategy which increases the likelihood of uptake/upscale/… and impact.
- The proposed programme shows a high potential for effective impact on ultimate beneficiaries (outside the partner institution: e.g. local communities, policy makers, local industry, etc).

**SUSTAINABILITY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The continuation of benefits after the activities have been completed</th>
<th>2.5</th>
<th>12.5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

- The concept note (process leading to the concept note, persons involved, etc) demonstrates high levels of ownership of the institution.
- The proposed programme is likely to realize a clear institutional embeddedness (within the partner organization; with relevant local, national, international networks and stakeholders) allowing the activities to continue after the funding (institutional sustainability).
- The concept note demonstrates awareness of sustainability risks and has adequate measures (technical and social sustainability).
- If applicable, the concept note takes into account the positive/negative impact of the programme on the policy level (political sustainability).
- The concept note takes into account the negative/positive environmental impact of the programme (environmental sustainability).

In addition to the descriptors presented in the table, in stage 1 under the criterion ‘relevance’, in particular “policy relevance”, a reasonable spreading over countries and regions of the IUC proposals, if so possible, will be aimed at, as overall policy consideration to be taken into consideration by the IUC selection commission. The commission will also relate all proposals to the overall IUC objective, being a programme that facilitates capacity building at the level of partner universities but also mobilises and involves a maximum of Flemish HEIs.

In order to be considered for funding, a proposal for IUC partner institution should reach the following threshold:

- Score at least 50% of the maximum points for each selection criterion.
- Score at least 60% of the maximum total points.

The result of this quality check is:

- a shortlist of institutions, not ranked, fitting within the budget framework as indicated by VLIR-UOS within the specific call for proposals.
- a list of non-selected institutions.

Once there is final agreement on the result of the IUC commission meeting, the commission members will run through the reasons and make sure that sufficient and relevant feedback for all proposals is available. Only if also this phase has been successfully completed, the commission members can conclude the selection meeting.
Stage 2 - Selection of partner institutions moving into “Phase In” (preselection of partner universities on the basis of extended concept note)

The selection of IUC partner institutions engaging in a Phase In for IUC cooperation (the so-called prepartner programme) is based on the assessment of the extended concept notes, jointly with the feedback/input from the institutional assessments.

The same standard selection criteria and descriptors apply as in stage 1, with the exception of a few descriptors with regard to policy recommendations to be taken into account, in particular when assessing the criterion ‘relevance’ (policy relevance).

The standard selection criteria as presented below will be applied. The following descriptors and weighting are foreseen:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy initiated Call</th>
<th>IUC – selection of partner institutions starting a Phase In (Stage 2 – Extended Concept Note)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Weight</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Factor</td>
<td>Score (max.)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SCIENTIFIC QUALITY</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The extent to which a proposal has a ground-breaking nature and ambition (excellence).</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The extended concept note is original, creative, innovative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The partner institution has sufficient academic, scientific and/or technical expertise and experience (knowledge of the issues to be addressed) to successfully engage in an IUC partnership</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The extended concept note is ambitious in terms of:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o envisaged institutional change</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o vision and strategy on how academic capacity building and progress (e.g. educational and scientific progress; evolution towards more research-based academic programmes, role of research in this process, ...) can be achieved with the support of an IUC cooperation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o vision on the role of research within the institution and of interdisciplinary cooperation within a future IUC programme proposal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o The role of the university as a driver of change in society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RELEVANCE</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The extent to which the objectives of a proposal are consistent with beneficiaries’ requirements, country needs, synergy opportunities, global priorities and partners’ and donors’ policies.</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Contextual relevance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o The institution is less privileged in terms of accessing national or international resources and has potential for playing the envisaged role of driver of change.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o The extended concept note is based on a genuine, adequate and convincing analysis of:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o the partner’s institutional capacities and needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o local needs and development challenges (can also be national needs and challenges)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o stakeholders</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o The extended concept note shows that an IUC partnership would be well in line with the partner’s institutional strategy and institutional development status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o The priorities of the proposed programme match well with the institutional and local context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o The extended concept note’s proposed programme has potential to deliver applicable results relevant to development and the needs of (direct and indirect) beneficiaries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Policy relevance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Relevance of the concept note to the objectives and priorities of the intervention type (IUC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o The extended concept note is in line with the VLIR-UOS country strategy and the Joint Strategic Framework</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The extended concept note seriously considers, identifies and (if relevant) integrates potential for synergy and/or complementarity with other initiatives/interventions/actors.

The extended concept note takes into account gender and environment throughout the proposal (e.g. in the context and stakeholder analysis, programme vision and strategy, domains of change,...)

The extended concept note has taken into account the policy considerations with regard to setting up a broad partnership with Flemish universities and university colleges.

**EFFECTIVENESS**
The extent to which the proposals' objectives are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>3</th>
<th>15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The extended concept note identifies long-term objectives to which it can realistically contribute.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The extended concept note defines a number of domains of change it wishes to contribute to. These are ambitious but realistic and coherent (academic and/or developmental)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The extended concept note identifies relevant projects that will allow the partner to obtain the envisaged (domains of) change (academic and/or developmental)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The extended concept note has a convincing vision about the positioning and role of a transversal institutional strengthening project</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The extended concept note has a convincing theory of change at the level of the programme demonstrating a sound idea about the envisioned change process</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The extended concept note has identified the most important uncertainties (assumptions/risks) and adequately deals with them</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

**EFFICIENCY**
A measure of how economically resources/inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc) are converted to results.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2</th>
<th>10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The partner has sufficient (financial) management capacity and experience, illustrated by experience with other external funding.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>There is a tentative outline of the roles and tasks for all involved partners at the local level</td>
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<tr>
<td>There is a clear vision on how the necessary resources/inputs (financial, personnel, ..) can be put in place to implement a successful IUC programme</td>
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<tr>
<td>The proposed programme already has links with Flemish HEI (may also include earlier/current VLIR-UOS interventions) or has a sound strategy to easily initiate them</td>
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</table>

**IMPACT**
Potential positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by the proposal, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2,5</th>
<th>12,5</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The extended concept note has a clear vision on the impact it wants to realise via an IUC programme</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The proposed partnership is experienced in successfully working together with external stakeholders (e.g. local communities, policy makers, local industry, etc)</td>
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<tr>
<td>The proposal has a vision on dissemination/extension/valorization strategy which increases the likelihood of uptake/upscaling/... and impact</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The proposed programme shows a high potential for effective impact on ultimate beneficiaries (outside the partner institution; e.g. local communities, policy makers, local industry, etc)</td>
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</table>

**SUSTAINABILITY**
The continuation of benefits after the activities have been completed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2,5</th>
<th>12,5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The extended concept note (process leading to the concept note, persons involved, etc) demonstrates high levels of ownership of the institution</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The proposed programme is likely to realize a clear institutional embeddedness (within the partner organization; with relevant local, national, international networks and stakeholders) allowing the activities to continue after the funding (institutional sustainability)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The extended concept note demonstrates awareness of sustainability risks and has foreseen adequate measures (technical and social sustainability)</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>If applicable, the concept note takes into account its positive/negative impact on the policy level (political sustainability)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The extended concept note takes into account its negative/positive environmental impact (environmental sustainability)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The result of this stage 2 is:

- Selection of IUC institutions, within the budget framework as indicated by VLIR-UOS within the specific call for proposals, invited to start an IUC phase in with the formulation of a pre-partner programme
- List of institutions that did not make the final selection stage.

Once there is final agreement on the result of the IUC commission meeting, the commission members will run through the reasons and make sure that sufficient and relevant feedback for all proposals is available. Only if also this phase has been successfully completed, the commission members can conclude the selection meeting.

Stage 3 – Pre-partner programme phase leading to final selection of an IUC partner programme

The final selection of an IUC partner programme (3rd and final selection round) will occur on the basis of final partner programme proposals elaborated by joint teams in the South and the North.

The partner institution selection and thematic focus being defined in stage 1 and 2, the objective of stage 3 is to assess the intrinsic quality of the programme/projects, the proposed theory of change linked to the developmental and institutional priorities of the proposed IUC partner institution, and the quality of the partnership. During the final selection round both the programme and project level is to be assessed.

The Bureau UOS has agreed upon the following descriptors and weighting for the final stage of IUC selection (partner programme assessment) (the descriptors are still subject to fine-tuning in the course of 2002 on the basis of input from the stages 1 and 2):

The standard selection criteria as presented below are applied. The following descriptors and weighting are foreseen:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy initiated Call</th>
<th>IUC – final partner programme selection (Stage 3)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Weight</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Factor</td>
<td>Score (max.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SCIENTIFIC QUALITY</strong></td>
<td>The extent to which a proposal has a ground-breaking nature and ambition (excellence).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>RELEVANCE</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>6</td>
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<td></td>
<td>30</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- The partner programme proposal is original, creative, innovative
- The partner(s) has(ve) sufficient academic, scientific and/or technical expertise and experience (knowledge of the issues to be addressed) to successfully implement an IUC
- The different projects use appropriate methodologies
- The programme is interdisciplinary.
- The partner programme proposal is ambitious in terms of:
  - Envisaged institutional change
  - Vision and strategy on how academic capacity building and progress (e.g. educational and scientific progress; evolution towards more research-based academic programmes, role of research in this process, ...) can be achieved with the support of an IUC cooperation
  - The role of the university as a driver of change in society

VLIR-UOS Selection System – Policy and guidelines – version 03.07.2019
The extent to which the objectives of a proposal are consistent with beneficiaries’ requirements, country needs, synergy opportunities, global priorities and partners’ and donors’ policies.

### Contextual relevance
- The priorities of the proposed programme and projects match well with the institutional and local context (taking into account the analysis of local needs/challenges and stakeholder potential)
- The proposed programme and projects have potential to deliver applicable results relevant to development and the needs of (direct and indirect) beneficiaries

### Policy relevance
- Relevance of the final programme proposal to the objectives of the intervention type (IUC)
- The programme/project proposals align with the VLIR-UOS country strategy and the Joint Strategic Framework
- The programme and projects seriously consider, identify and (if relevant) integrate synergy and/or complementarity with other initiatives/interventions/actors (including Belgian development actors)
- The programme and projects take into account gender and environment throughout the proposal (e.g. in the context and stakeholder analysis, stakeholder analysis, programme vision and strategy, domains of change, sustainability...)
- The final programme proposal has taken into account the policy considerations with regard to setting up a broad partnership with Flemish universities and university colleges by indicating inter-institutional partnership potential at the Flemish level

### EFFECTIVENESS
The extent to which the proposals’ objectives are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2,5</th>
<th>12,5</th>
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</table>
- The programme and projects identify long-term objectives to which they can realistically contribute. The programme proposal has a convincing programme theory (Theory of Change) in which the added value of each project to the programme objectives is evident
- The objectives are ambitious but realistic and coherent
- The projects define clear (maximum 2) specific objectives (outcomes) which they can realistically achieve. Clear intermediate results to achieve them have been identified.
- The projects have a convincing strategy and clear flow between general objectives, intermediate results and activities (Theory of Change)
- The programme has a convincing vision about the positioning and role of a transversal institutional strengthening project
- The transversal projects are clear on how they are supposed to contribute to institutional change
- The proposal (programme/projects) presents convincing sets of indicators that will allow the monitoring of progress in general and the measuring of the achievement of the specific objectives in particular
- The proposal has identified the most important uncertainties (assumptions/risks) and adequately deals with them (mainly at programme level)

### EFFICIENCY
A measure of how economically resources/inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc) are converted to results.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2,5</th>
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</table>
- The involved project departments have sufficient (financial) management capacity and experience, illustrated by experience with other external funding.
- The programme proposal has considered important risks related to efficiency and has foreseen the necessary measures
- There is a clear definition and adequate distribution of the roles and tasks for all involved partners, at programme and project level
- The role and positioning of the PSU is clear.
- The operationalization of the management manual is adequate
- The project budgets are reasonable and justified, demonstrating good value for money

### IMPACT
Potential positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by the proposal, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.

| 2,5 | 12,5 |
The proposed programme has a clear vision on the impact it wants to realise.
The partnership is experienced in successfully working together with external stakeholders (e.g. local communities, policy makers, local industry, etc).
The proposal (programme and projects) has a clear dissemination/extension/valorization strategy which increases the likelihood of uptake/upscaling/… and eventually impact.
The proposed programme and projects shows a high potential for effective impact on ultimate beneficiaries (outside the partner institution: e.g. local communities, policy makers, local industry, etc).

**SUSTAINABILITY**

*The continuation of benefits after the activities have been completed.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2.5</th>
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</tr>
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</table>

- The partner programme proposal (process leading to the partner programme, persons involved, etc) demonstrates high levels of ownership of the institution.
- The proposed programme is likely to realize a clear institutional embeddedness (within the partner organization; with relevant local, national, international networks and stakeholders) allowing the activities to continue after the funding (institutional sustainability).
- The programme proposal demonstrates awareness of sustainability risks and has foreseen adequate measures (technical and social sustainability).
- If applicable, the programme proposal takes into account its positive/negative impact on the policy level (political sustainability).
- The programme proposal takes into account its negative/positive environmental impact (environmental sustainability).

In order to be considered for funding, the final partner programme proposal should reach the following threshold:

- Score at least 50% of the maximum points for each selection criterion.
- Score at least 60% of the maximum total points.

Per project an assessment of quality is to be included. If a given project is considered insufficient, remediation possibilities are investigated. If no remediation is possible, this can lead to non-selection of a programme.

The assessment by the commission can lead to:

- approval with or without recommendations,
- approval subject to remediation (for which the procedure still will be defined by the Bureau UOS prior to the final selection stage)
- in exceptional cases (if a minimum quality threshold is not obtained and remediation is not feasible) the non-continuation of the pre-partner stage of the programme.

Once there is final agreement on the result of the IUC commission meeting, the commission members will run through the reasons and make sure that sufficient and relevant feedback for all proposals is available. Only if also this phase has been successfully completed, the commission members can conclude the selection meeting.

The IUC commission formulates a binding advice as to the final IUC selection. This binding advice of the IUC commission is ratified by the Bureau UOS.
3.9. Follow-up of selection commission meeting

The VLIR-UOS secretariat will draft the selection meeting report, in English. The draft report will be sent to the commission members for comments and validation within one week after the meeting. Commission members will have 1 week to respond. As such, the report is final after two weeks (indicative).

After validation of the report by the commission members, this report is sent to the Bureau UOS for ratification. It is the Bureau UOS that endorses the final decision on which proposals will move forward to the next selection stage (extended concept note, phase in stage).

After the Bureau UOS has ratified the selection decision per stage, applicants will be informed of their selection or non-selection.
4. Decentralized selection bodies

4.1. Travel grants

Since 2017 the VLIR-UOS Reisbeurzen (REI) for Belgian and EEA students from Belgian universities and university colleges are incorporated into the Global Minds programme. The higher education institutions select the travel grants on the basis of general minimum criteria set by VLIR-UOS. These criteria can hence not be discarded but can be applied in a more limiting manner if required by or relevant for the programmes concerned. VLIR-UOS has an ex ante and ex post monitoring and evaluation role. The documents related hereto can be found on the VLIR-UOS website: https://cdn.webdoos.io/vliruos/4d4f385fc5f61300c285097546682e24.pdf

Within the framework of the Global Minds scheme, the higher education institutions can organize a number of calls in line with the specific objective of the Global Minds scheme14 and the institution’s selection policy and procedures. Each institution thus defines the criteria for the different stages in the selection procedures. The selection procedures and criteria are described in the Global Minds programme proposals and VLIR-UOS will be notified of changes and/or updates in the annual progress reports of the Global minds programmes.

VLIR-UOS scholarships for ICP and ITP for students and/or professionals from developing countries (applicable country list) are selected by the universities (ICP, ITP) and university colleges (ITP) themselves, following a four-stage selection process: (i) academic admission, (ii) scholarship eligibility, (iii) scholarship selection, and (iv) validation by VLIR-UOS. VLIR-UOS defines the criteria for stages (ii) and (iii) and has an ex ante and ex post monitoring and evaluation role. The documents related hereto can be found on the scholarships pages on www.vliruos.be.

4.2. Policy Supporting Research (PSR)

Together with ARES, VLIR-UOS is mandated by DGD to administer the PSR platforms, which are academic research groups for policy support. DGD determines the research themes and selection criteria and makes the selection of the submitted proposals. VLIR-UOS and ARES are responsible for the administration, management and M&E.

14 The Flemish higher education institutions’ basic academic capacity to perform effective university cooperation for development with other stakeholders is reinforced.
Feedback

The applicant will receive the following feedback:

- Selection or not selection
  - if applicable, the final ranking after selection will be communicated\(^{15}\)
- Strengths & weaknesses and, if applicable, recommendations for improvement.

Scores per selection criterion (not for Global Minds) are not included in the feedback. These scores are calculated prior to the comparative round of discussion with the selection commission meeting and do not necessarily reflect the final ranking.

There is no procedure for appeal / notice of objection\(^{16}\). Complaints cannot be responded to otherwise than that VLIR-UOS, if possible, will try to

- provide clarification of the feedback;
- make sure that general remarks on the selection system will be fed back into the system as procedural improvements, if of technical nature. All other remarks will be submitted to the Bureau UOS.

Application modalities

1. Methodology

Particular methodological requirements will be specified in each call for proposals. For example, for all projects in its south country portfolio VLIR-UOS requires the use of a Theory of Change approach, the Logical Framework methodology, risk management and a number of standard and other indicators for planning and monitoring.

2. Formats & Annexes

VLIR-UOS provides the applicants with standardized formats to apply for funding. A maximum of uniformity is sought between application formats and annexes of different calls for proposals. This standardization will be further supported through the VLIR-UOS database.

3. Application Deadline

Each call for proposal clearly indicates the deadline for submission. In principle, this concerns the deadline that applicants should submit to the ICOS (not for stage 1 of the IUC call). This will be the same deadline for all universities and university colleges (approx. 3 to 4 weeks before deadline for submission to the VLIR-UOS secretariat).

\(^{15}\) Decision of the Bureau UOS of 24 May 2019
\(^{16}\) Bureau UOS, 6 March 2015.
Peer reviewers –if applicable- should submit their report directly to the VLIR-UOS secretariat and not via the applicant or the ICOS. Up until the 2017 call, the peer reviewers were contacted only via the applicant but as of the call 2019 a new system was applied whereby VLIR-UOS contacts the peer reviewers listed by the applicant. The deadline for submission of the peer review is at least 2 weeks after the deadline for the submission of the proposal by the ICOS to VLIR-UOS. This will be clearly indicated in each call.

4. Submission Modalities

Applicants are invited to submit full proposals in one round, meaning that immediately a full application form is submitted. Proposals are submitted in a phased system, first to the ICOS at the level of individual universities or university colleges, and then to VLIR-UOS.

Proposals should be submitted in English (or in the case of DRC and Burundi they can also be submitted in French).

Proposals are to be submitted as described in the respective call for proposals: as of xxx by means of the database (not for the IUC call). Applicants will no longer submit hard copies, and VLIR-UOS will no longer send hard copies to commission members. As a result VLIR-UOS accepts scanned signatures in the application phase.

5. Application Support

As a general principle support will be provided in a multi-stage process, in which applicants first contact the ICOS on the level of their institution (not for the IUC call). The ICOS answer the questions and cluster and forward those questions they cannot answer to VLIR-UOS.

Information and training sessions can be organized by VLIR-UOS and complementary also by the ICOS at level of the Flemish institutions/association.

6. Timeline

For each call for proposals an indicative timeline is presented. The following steps will be considered in all calls for proposals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STEP IN PROCESS</th>
<th>RESPONSIBLE</th>
<th>DATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Launch Call</td>
<td>VLIR-UOS Secretariat</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deadline for Submission to ICOS (if applicable)</td>
<td>Applicant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deadline for Submission of peer review assessments to VLIR-UOS (if applicable)</td>
<td>Peer reviewers (min.2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deadline for Submission to VLIR-UOS (if applicable)</td>
<td>ICOS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Responsible Party</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eligibility Check</td>
<td>VLIR-UOS Secretariat, and decision by the Bureau UOS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notification of Eligibility</td>
<td>VLIR-UOS Secretariat</td>
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<tr>
<td>Selection</td>
<td>Selection Commission</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ratification of Selection</td>
<td>Bureau UOS</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Notification of Selection</td>
<td>VLIR-UOS Secretariat</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feedback</td>
<td>VLIR-UOS Secretariat</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Signing of contract</td>
<td>VLIR-UOS and contract partners</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Start of project</td>
<td>Selected applicant and Flemish counterpart</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>