

## ANNEX 1

### Methodological approach for the assessment of the project proposal and tasks of the independent evaluators

#### First call for proposals

The first call for proposals is open to the following Programme Priority Axes and Specific Objectives, summarised below:

<p><b>Priority Axis 1: Innovative and Smart Region</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Specific Objective 1.1:</b> Support the development of a regional innovation system for the Adriatic-Ionian area.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Priority Axis 2: Sustainable region</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Specific Objective 2.1:</b> Promote the sustainable valorisation and preservation of natural and cultural assets as growth assets in the Adriatic-Ionian area;</li> <li>▪ <b>Specific Objective 2.2:</b> Enhance the capacity in transnationally tackling environmental vulnerability, fragmentation and the safeguarding of ecosystem services in the Adriatic-Ionian area.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Priority Axis 3: Connected region</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Specific Objective 3.1:</b> Enhance capacity for integrated transport and mobility services and multimodality in the Adriatic Ionian area.</li> </ul>

Under the terms of this call, a project proposal must focus on one Priority Axis and one programme Specific Objective only.

Beneficiaries and target groups include: public authorities, agencies, international organizations, research organisations, (public) service providers, higher education institutions, education/training centres, schools, business support organisations, interest groups including NGOs and cultural/citizens organisations, enterprises (including SMEs), natural heritage and green infrastructure management organisations, infrastructure and public service providers as well as other institutions which are affected by the thematic priorities concerned.

### **Methodological approach for the assessment of the project proposals**

The MA of the ADRION programme is responsible for the coordination of the selection process of the project proposals performed by the JS. Main decision-making body is the “Monitoring Committee”, which is composed of representatives of the Partner States of the Programme.

Operations to be appraised according to State Aid requirements (*de minimis*) have previously to pass the following steps:

- 1) Admissibility and eligibility checks;
- 2) Strategic Assessment;
- 3) Operational Assessment.

### **Tasks of the State Aid independent evaluators**

The selected evaluators shall be in charge of assessing the project proposals using a standard assessment form made available by the Programme.

In particular, they shall check the State Aid relevance of the project proposal specifically with regard to the analysis of the activities to be carried out within the project – and outputs obtained – by project partners acting as undertaking; additionally, they shall highlight the eventual presence of “disguised” partners.

The assessment of the State Aid relevance shall be performed according to the following:

- Information included by applicants in the application form;
- Information included in the State Aid self-declarations submitted by applicants together with the application form;
- Further specific information requested by the experts for performing the assessment; information shall be requested to the project lead applicants by the MA/JS in coordination with the experts.

The selected evaluators shall also be asked to:

- a) define measures and conditions the project(s) recommended for funding has to implement to minimize or annul the State Aid relevance of the identified activities;
- b) support the JS in verifying that the aforementioned conditions have been fulfilled by the project during the negotiation process.

The evaluation may be performed at experts’ home or place of work (“remote evaluation”).

The selected evaluators may be asked to attend a workshop aimed at presenting the activities to be done, the evaluation process, documentation to be used and time line.

The selected evaluators shall also be required to:

- be acquainted with the relevant programme documents (e.g.: Cooperation Programme, Programme Manual, application package);
- closely communicate, update and exchange information with the JS.