

Assessment Criteria

TRACE Call 2025: A Path to Resilience

Below are four assessment criteria, each of which is unfolded in a number of points that form the basis for the assessment of the application for Pool 4 and pool 5 funding for the TRACE Partnership.

All four criteria are included in the assessment and contribute to the overall assessment. The assessment provided by each evaluator is the reasoned opinion of the evaluator and is not a simple weighted sum of the ratings on the criteria. A good project cannot have a low rating on any of the four criteria.

The points listed under each criterion serve as guidance for both applicants and evaluators. Depending on the application, some points may be more relevant than others. The overall assessment for each criterion is the evaluator's judgment based on these points and the specific application.

Assessment Criteria

1. Strategic fit and relevance to the TRACE Partnership's objectives as described in the roadmap (RM2021), the amended Roadmap (RM2025) and the TRACE Impact Framework Version One.

Assessed on the basis of:

- a. That the project meets the mandatory, systemic focus by giving examples of how one or more of the project partners has worked with systemic leadership and how the project partners intend to work with the systemic approach in the project.
- b. That the project significantly contributes to the realization of the TRACE Partnership goals outlined in the original roadmap (RM2021), and the second amendment (RM2025)
- c. **Applicants must describe how their project supports TRACE's North Star vision and mission logic, as defined in the TRACE Impact Framework Version One. Specifically, applicants must:**
 - c1. Identify the tipping point and learning question the project addresses.
 - c2. Explain how the project contributes to generating new knowledge relevant to that learning question.
 - c3. Propose project-specific milestones that demonstrate clear learning progression toward answering the selected learning question. These milestones must be:

- c3.1 Forward-looking and strategically aligned with the learning question
 - c3.2 Within the project's sphere of influence
 - c3.3 Based on learning outcomes, not activity outputs
 - c3.4 Measurable (qualitatively or quantitatively) and time-bound
- c4. Applicants should relate their proposed milestones to the preliminary TRACE milestones provided in the call text.
- c5. Final milestones will be validated after funding decisions, through a dialogue between the consortium, TRACE Secretariat, and the TRACE Board, ensuring scientific robustness and strategic coherence
- d. That the project is complementary to already initiated or projects for the realization of the TRACE Partnership's goals (two different solutions to the same problem are considered complementary here).
- e. That the project demonstrates synergy with other TRACE projects that support the TRACE Partnership's goals – further information about the projects see www.trace.dk
- f. That the project strengthens the partnership, e.g. through the building of methods or knowledge that can be used and scaled.

2. The quality of the idea

(Quality of research and innovation)

Assessed on the basis of:

- a. That the goals and objectives of the project -are clear and that they are specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound.
- b. That it is clear that the idea is innovative and goes beyond state-of-the-art in an academic and industrial field at an international level.
- c. That the competitive situation of the idea is made clear– both with regard to the academic and industrial elements. The disruptive potential of the idea must be clearly stated.

3. Impact

(Value creation during and after the project period)

Assessed on the basis of:

- a. That it is clear which unmet need/societal problem the project addresses in a national and international perspective
- b. That it is plausible that the project will generate a societal and/or economic impact for Denmark by solving societal challenges.

- c. Account (as far as possible) of the project's quantified contribution to the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions measured in CO2 equivalents – both in Denmark and globally.
- d. Statement (as far as possible) of the project's contribution to reducing negative environmental impacts – both in Denmark and globally.
- e. Explanation (as far as possible) of the project's contribution to reduced consumption of limited or non-renewable resources, including clean water – both in Denmark and globally.
- f. Statement of the project's contribution to improved working environment – both in Denmark and globally to the extent relevant.
- g. That the project's progress towards implementation – after the project period has ended - is adequately explained to the extent relevant.
- h. That any implementation, business or sales model is adequately described, including a plan for scalability.
- i. That IPR (Intellectual Property Rights) is adequately described, if relevant.
- j. That the project's Technology Readiness Levels (TRL) have been adequately explained, including an explanation of how and why the project is progressing on the TRL scale.
- k. That the project's Society Readiness Levels (SRL) have been adequately explained, including an explanation of how and why the project is progressing on the SRL scale.
- l. That it is clear what strategic relevance the project has in relation to the project partners' strategy.
- m. That the project clearly explains its strategic relevance to Roadmap 2025 and clarifies how it contributes to systemic change as defined in the TRACE Impact Framework Version One, including TRACE's dual approach to impact measurement.
- n. That the possibilities for international market penetration and scaling are clearly described to the relevant extent.

4. Quality of execution

(Efficiency in the execution of the project and implementation of the project results)

Assessed on the basis of:

- a. That a clear and detailed operational plan has been prepared, including the methods applied within the project and listing the project's work packages and their content, deliverables, milestones and participant contribution.
- b. That the relevant critical path of the project and the dependencies of the work packages are adequately described.
- c. That the project is realistically budgeted and realistic in relation to the set activities.
- d. That the composition of project participants has the relevant competencies and experience to carry out the project work tasks, and that organization, governance and leadership will be handled in a reassuring manner.

- e. That relevant and specific risks have been identified, and it has been explained how these are mitigated.
- f. That relevant legal, ethical and regulatory aspects are adequately described in relation to the implementation of the project.
- g. That it is clear what other funding opportunities the project will attract or have attracted before, during and after the end of the project, to the extent relevant.
- h. That relevant end users and core stakeholders either help shape the project, participate in the project, or are otherwise directly involved in the project, e.g., through investment. To the extent relevant and in collaboration with end users and core stakeholders, a plan for the project's implementation must be drawn up – including a process plan for this.
- i. The proposal is efficient, that is, the expected achievements are commensurate with the requested resources
- j. The proposal is effective, that is, there is reasonable confidence that the set objectives will be met that the project demonstrates a clear understanding of its obligations under Work Package 1, including participation in collaborative activities, shared learning, and contribution to the TRACE Data Space, as outlined in the PI/PIL responsibilities document.

Decision - specific to the partnership

The Partnership Director, employed by the Partnership Association which is not a beneficiary of the funding under consideration, has neither personally nor through her place of employment, any conflicts of interest in relation to the selection of projects for funding. The Partnership Director will play a central role in drawing up the basis for the selection of projects for funding. This includes drafting of the motivations for selection or rejection of project applications that the Partnership will share with Innovation Fund Denmark and the applicants.

Workstream Leaders will generally have conflicts of interest, both personally and through their interest in employment. They are therefore not having any role that can be considered to have any influence on the selection of projects for funding.

Members of the TRACE Board of Directors are likely, through the interests of their places of employment or association, to have conflicts of interest in relation to individual proposals. Members must declare which project applications they have conflicts of interest in relation to. Members of the Board will not take part in deliberations or decisions about proposals for which they have conflicts of interest. If there are fewer than 8 proposals for consideration by the Board, a member with a conflict concerning one or more proposals will have to be excused from the entire selection process.

Based on draft motivations recommended by the Partnership Director for funding or rejection of funding, for each project application as well as the available budget, the Partnership Board comes to a reasoned decisions regarding funding or rejection of funding for each project application. The draft motivations are augmented by the deliberations and considerations in the Board of Directors to form the final written reasons for decisions regarding funding or rejection of funding for each project application.

If there are fewer than 8 proposals for consideration by the board, it is conceivable that the Partnership Board of Directors cannot muster the required number of non-conflicted members to make the final decision. In that case, the Partnership Director in collaboration with two or more non-conflicted members of the Board of Directors will determine the next steps.