

MELCOE

Interaction of IT Systems and Repositories Education Research Project Selection Committee

Terms of Reference



Document Approval

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1. Purpose

- 1.1. A Selection Committee for COLIS Demonstrator Education Research Projects will be established in accordance with the objectives outlined in the HEIP grant: Interaction of IT Systems and Repositories (IIS&R), 2002/2003.
- 1.2. The Selection Committee has been established to:
 - review the Education Research Project Expressions of Interest (EOIs);
 - select four successful applications for grants in 2003;
 - make recommendations to the IIS&R Project Board regarding the successful applications;
 - advise successful applicants and distribute funds to the successful applicants.

2. Membership

2.1. Composition

- 2.1.1. Members of the Selection Committee will be invited by MELCOE to sit on the panel and will include:
 - active researchers from the University, public and or private sectors;
 - representatives from MELCOE; and
 - a balance of male and female members.
- 2.1.2. Overall, the membership of the Committee should have:
 - a knowledge and understanding of e-learning systems and repositories;
 - professional and/or academic standing;
 - prior research grant selection committee experience;
 - experience in coordination of research activities; and
 - demonstrated capacity to exercise good judgement.
- 2.1.3. The Committee will consist of a minimum of five members.
- 2.1.4. The Education Research Project Coordinator will chair the meetings.
- 2.1.5. An administrative assistant to the Committee will be provided by MELCOE.

2.2. Duties

- 2.2.1. The duty of members of the Committee is to make the best possible decision regarding the strategic investment of public funds, according to the guidelines for the IIS & R Research Project.

- 2.2.2. The Committee will ensure that the processes and procedures as laid out in this document are adhered to.
- 2.2.3. The Committee will provide arbitration in the event of any dispute with the EOI applicants.
- 2.2.4. The Committee is convened to select four eligible applicants from amongst the EOIs submitted. The Committee is then disbanded once the Committee's report and recommendations have been forwarded to the IIS&R Project Board and four applications accepted for award of funds.

2.3. Training

- 2.3.1. Members of the Committee will receive a briefing in processes and procedures in accordance with Prince 2 Project Management Standards.

2.4. Conflicts of interest

- 2.4.1. All members of the Selection Committee must make a full declaration of any potential conflict of interest and complete and agree to a conflict of interest monitoring plan. Refer to the MELCOE Conflict of Interest Monitoring Plan for further details.

2.5. Meetings

- 2.5.1. A quorum will be 50% of the members.
- 2.5.2. An initial meeting will be held to review the Expressions of Interest (EOIs). Further meetings, as required, will be scheduled to complete the selection process in a timely fashion. It is expected that only about two meetings will be required for this process.

3. The selection process

3.1. Outline

- 3.1.1. Expressions of interest (EOIs) will be received by the IIS&R Project Manager by 30 May, 2003.
- 3.1.2. All applicants will be notified by mail of the receipt of their applications.
- 3.1.3. After an initial review by the Project Coordinator and the Director of MELCOE, EOIs will be forwarded to the Selection Committee. There may be a need for some negotiation with the applicants prior to sending the EOIs to the Committee if, for example, collaboration between two applications (two Education Research projects, or one Education Project and one Substitutability project) seems appropriate.
- 3.1.4. The Committee will review the applications in accordance with the ranking methodology outlined below, and select four suitable EOIs for the award of a grant. After the selection of the best four applicants, all other applications will be ranked for suitability (or not) to receive a grant. This is to ensure

transparency of process as well as identification of other suitable applicants should any grant award be refused.

- 3.1.5. If further information is required and/or negotiation with the applicants is necessary, this will be coordinated by the Committee through the Project Manager.
- 3.1.6. If applicants have also lodged a Substitutability Project Research Grant EOI, negotiation may be entered into with the applicants regarding the interaction of the two research projects. Applicants may then be required to review their EOI according to feedback from either the Education Research Selection Committee or the Substitutability Research Selection Committee.
- 3.1.7. The selection process will be completed by 27 June 2003. The Committee will notify the successful applicants and request confirmation or rejection of the offer by 4 July 2003.
- 3.1.8. To formally accept the offer, successful applicants will be required to sign a contract. The contract will include the provision that before funds are released, a fully developed research proposal including a budget and timeline must be completed and submitted to the IIS&R Board.
- 3.1.9. If successful applicants choose not to take up the offer of participation then funds will be allocated to the applicant ranked next in the list of suitable EOIs.
- 3.1.10. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified by letter, by 14 July 2003.
- 3.1.11. A copy of the list of ranked applicants will be sent to the IIS&R Project Board.

3.2. Ranking procedure

- 3.2.1. Applications will be ranked according to how well they meet the selection criteria:
 - relationship to the COLIS Demonstrator Research Project
 - objectives and outcomes of the research
 - impact of the research
 - methodology
 - record of the researchers
 - partnerships
 - funds requested
- 3.2.2. Committee members will be given copies of the applications and after the first meeting required on their own to assess and rank each application according to the criteria.
- 3.2.3. At the next meeting of the Selection Committee, each EOI will be reviewed by the Committee as a whole, and a composite ranking allocated following negotiation amongst the Committee members.

4. Selection criteria

The eligible research proposals will be reviewed according to the following criteria. The Committee has discretion to request more information from the applicants should it be required to adequately assess the proposals.

4.1. Relationship to the COLIS Demonstrator Research Project

- Does the research fit with the theme of the COLIS Demonstrator and the Interaction of IT Systems and Repositories Research Project?
- Does the proposal adequately describe the rationale for research?
- Does the proposal have a related substitutability research project? (Not a required field; for information only)

4.2. Objectives and outcomes of the research

- Is this a significant and relevant issue for research?
- Is the scale and depth of the research appropriate?
- Are the target groups of the research relevant and appropriate?
- Are the outcomes of the research achievable in the timeframe?

4.3. Record of researchers

- Do the researchers have relevant backgrounds in a related or supporting area?

4.4. Impact of the research

- Have the likely results and implications of this research been indicated in the proposal?
- Does the proposal indicate who will be affected by the research?
- If an ethics proposal is necessary for the research, has this been included in the outline?

4.5. Methodology

- Does the methodology incorporate appropriate research methods?
- Is the methodology appropriate to the IIS&R Project?
- Is the methodology understandable and clear?

4.6. Partnerships

- Is the applicant a COLIS/IIS&R consortium member?
- Is the applicant proposing a joint partnership with other institutions?
- Have matching funds or other resources been identified? What are they?

4.7. Funds requested

- Is the funding requested appropriate to the research proposed?

5. Grant allocation

- 5.1. The total grant fund is \$200,000. It is expected that each grant will receive a maximum of \$50,000 each.
- 5.2. The Committee has discretion to grant less or more money to any applicant, and/or approve more than four applicants, as long as the overall grant allocation does not exceed \$200,000.

6. Communications with applicants and stakeholders

6.1. Applicants, selection report and announcement of decision

- 6.1.1. Applicants will be notified by mail of the receipt of their Expression of Interest and the success or failure of their application at a later date.
- 6.1.2. A short written report will be prepared by the Committee for each successful application. This report will advise applicants of the amount they have been awarded, any conditions with which they must comply, their duty to report to the IIS&R Project Board, details of the contract they agree to abide by, and any other details as necessary.
- 6.1.3. The Selection Committee and IIS & R Project Board will delegate the IIS&R Project Manager to contact the successful applicants by mail and email. Once acceptances have been received, and contracts exchanged between the applicants and the Chair of the IIS & R Board, the successful applicants will be announced via the MELCOE website and other media as deemed suitable by the IIS&R Project Board and Project Team.

6.2. Complaints about the selection process

Complaints about the selection process will be forwarded to IIS&R Project Board and may be referred to the Selection Committee if necessary. The following should be noted:

- 6.2.1. All applicants have access to exactly the same volume and quality of information concerning their application.
- 6.2.2. All EOIs will be treated in exactly the same way.
- 6.2.3. The Selection Committee respects the confidentiality of applicants' information.
- 6.2.4. All correspondence and documentation relating to assessment of the EOIs is stored, and all decisions taken during and in relation to the application process are accurately documented so as to provide a clear audit trail of the process.