

The Scientific Merit rating scale takes into account the research strategy, investigator(s), and environment in which the research will take place.

Score	Scientific Merit Rating Scale (Revised October 2020)	Priority for funding
4.7 – 5.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exceptional research design with clearly defined aims and well-described methodological approach, including alternative strategies</li> <li>• Extremely likely that all objectives will be met within the proposed timeframe and budget</li> <li>• Where applicable, sex, gender and diversity (and their intersectionalities (SGBA<sup>+</sup>)) considerations, in the context of research design, analysis and dissemination of findings, are clearly described and of the highest quality</li> <li>• Exceptional expertise of the research team to carry out the proposed research</li> <li>• Equity, diversity and inclusion considerations, in the context of the research team, are highly appropriate and clearly defined</li> <li>• The research team has (or has a plan to secure) the necessary resources to complete the work, including alternative strategies</li> <li>• No weaknesses</li> </ul>	<b>Highest</b>
4.3 – 4.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent research design with well defined aims and well-considered methodological approach, including alternative strategies</li> <li>• Likely that all objectives will be met within the proposed timeframe and budget</li> <li>• Where applicable, sex, gender and diversity (and their intersectionalities (SGBA<sup>+</sup>)) considerations, in the context of research design, analysis and dissemination of findings, are clearly described and of high quality</li> <li>• Excellent expertise of the research team to carry out the proposed research</li> <li>• Equity, diversity and inclusion considerations, in the context of the research team, are appropriate and clearly defined</li> <li>• The research team has (or has a plan to secure) the necessary resources to complete the work, including alternative strategies</li> <li>• At least one minor weakness identified that can be addressed during the term of the grant</li> </ul>	<b>High</b>
3.9 – 4.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very good research design with moderately well-defined aims and methodological approach (with or without alternative strategies presented)</li> <li>• Likely that most objectives will be met within the proposed timeframe and budget</li> <li>• Where applicable, sex, gender and diversity (and their intersectionalities (SGBA<sup>+</sup>)) considerations, in the context of research design, analysis and dissemination of findings, are clearly described and of sufficient quality</li> <li>• Very good expertise of the research team to carry out the proposed research</li> <li>• Equity, diversity and inclusion considerations, in the context of the research team, are appropriate</li> <li>• Some minor weaknesses identified that can be addressed during the term of the grant</li> </ul>	<b>Medium-High</b>
3.5 – 3.8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good research design with adequately defined aims and methodological approach (with or without alternative strategies presented)</li> <li>• Potential for most objectives to be met within the proposed timeframe and budget</li> <li>• Where applicable, sex, gender and diversity (and their intersectionalities (SGBA<sup>+</sup>)) considerations, in the context of research design, analysis and dissemination of findings, are described and of acceptable quality</li> <li>• Acceptable expertise of the research team to carry out the proposed research</li> <li>• Equity, diversity and inclusion considerations, in the context of the research team, are acceptable</li> <li>• At least one moderate weakness, and/or several minor weaknesses identified</li> </ul>	<b>Medium-Low</b>
3.0 – 3.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inadequate research design with aims and methodological approach lacking sufficient detail</li> <li>• Unlikely that objectives will be met within the proposed timeframe and budget</li> <li>• Where applicable, sex, gender and diversity (and their intersectionalities (SGBA<sup>+</sup>)) considerations, in the context of research design, analysis and dissemination of findings, are</li> </ul>	<b>Low</b>

	<p>not clearly described or are insufficient</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insufficient expertise of the team to carry out the proposed research</li> <li>• Equity, diversity and inclusion considerations, in the context of the research team, are not clearly defined or are insufficient</li> <li>• Numerous moderate weaknesses, and/or one or more significant weaknesses</li> </ul>	
<b>Below 3.0</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research in need of further development before being competitive</li> <li>• Numerous major weaknesses</li> </ul>	<b>None</b>