

NGI Sargasso

Call for evaluators

OPENING: 15/11/2023

CLOSING: 15/12/2023 at 17:00PM CET

Project Website: <https://ngisargasso.eu>

Open Call platform: <https://cascadefunding.sploro.eu/application/new?program=ngi-sargasso-2nd-open-call-for-evaluators>

V2.0 01/12/2023



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon Europe Research and Innovation programme under Grant Agreement No. 101061548

About NGI Sargasso project

NGI Sargasso focuses on strengthening EU cooperation and strategic partnerships with the USA and Canada in the Next Generation Internet. The project has been organized to support all Internet innovators in the areas of trust and Internet data sovereignty, trusted open search and discovery, and Internet Architecture and Decentralized Technologies. With NGI Sargasso, an international ecosystem will be created with the presence of the USA and Canada in order to promote the values of Europe beyond its borders, such as openness, inclusion, transparency, privacy, cooperation, and data protection. Our mission is to catalyse transatlantic collaboration on the development and experimentation of new ideas, implementation of prototypes, and contribution to standards and open-source communities on technology trends with the potential to reshape tomorrow's Next Generation Internet technologies and services.

NGI Sargasso Open Calls

NGI Sargasso will issue and promote a second general open call.

NGI Sargasso General Open Call: NGI Sargasso's approach is to foster a sustainable and open Internet environment through transatlantic collaboration (EU-USA-Canada). The objective is to cooperate on emerging topics for the Next Generation Internet, leveraging innovative ideas from Europe and partnering with leaders in Internet research and development.

NGI Sargasso is looking for evaluators!

Evaluators profile

NGI Sargasso is looking for independent evaluators who can assess the quality of the received applications within the second Open Call shortly after they have been closed. The evaluators should meet the following criteria:

- ❑ European (EU nationals (Member States (MS) of the European Union (EU), including their outermost regions, as well as Overseas Countries and Territories (OCT) linked to an EU Member) as well as nationals of Horizon Europe associated countries, full list [HERE](#)).
- ❑ Specialists - scientists (technical, social sciences, etc.) or business experts: from academia or industry, researchers or engineers. The evaluator should be motivated by advancing trust, security, and innovation in emerging technologies, while promoting openness, inclusivity, and responsible Internet governance, in order to drive digital transformation and shape a sustainable and human-centric Next Generation Internet.
- ❑ Experts with experience in evaluating proposals for the European Commission or similar experience.



An evaluator must not work for an organization that aims to participate in the open call of NGI Sargasso or for an organization that is currently involved in the NGI Sargasso consortium.

The evaluators will be responsible for providing a neutral but technical/scientific and/or commercial review of the received applications, generally focusing on, but not limited to, the following aspects:

- ❑ Quality and relevance of the proposed project or initiative.
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- ❑ Technical feasibility and innovation potential.
- ❑ Alignment with the objectives and focus areas of NGI Sargasso.
- ❑ Potential impact and scalability of the proposed solution.
- ❑ Consideration of ethical, legal, and regulatory aspects.
- ❑ Evaluation of the applicant's expertise, track record, and capacity to execute the project.
- ❑ Financial viability and sustainability of the proposed project.
- ❑ Contribution to fostering collaboration and partnerships within the NGI Sargasso ecosystem.
- ❑ Adherence to the principles of trust, security, inclusivity, and responsible Internet governance.

It is important to note that the number of applications per evaluator depends on various factors: the availability of evaluators' time and the number of applications submitted.

Evaluation procedure

Step 1: online evaluation

All activities will be carried out individually on the Sploro platform. The evaluation process will start with a brief informational session on the evaluation procedure, with special attention to the evaluation criteria. Each proposal will then be assigned to 2 evaluators, and consequently, 2 individual evaluation reports will be prepared for each proposal, which should be based on the assessment of 3 main criteria:

- 1) Alignment
- 2) Excellence
- 3) Impact



Each evaluator will score a proposal without knowing the evaluation of their colleague, thus preventing one evaluator from influencing the other. Therefore, the same evaluation can receive very different scores.

The **normalization** method will be employed to address this, which will be explained in the evaluator's manual. This method ensures a more balanced distribution of scores and reduces the possibility of biases and distortions. All proposals will be ranked based on their scores at the end of the evaluation process. This method will be applied by the NGI Sargasso consortium.

Step 2: Interview

The top-ranked projects of the external remote evaluation shall be duly invited to participate in an online interview. The primary aim of the interview is to gain a comprehensive understanding of the project's concept, the team's skills and competence, and their capacity and willingness to exploit the results. At least 2 evaluation board members will carry out the interviews (**Please note that not all evaluators will participate in the interview.**) The evaluation of this stage will be simple. The 2 evaluators will determine individually if the proposal they are interviewing should move forward with a yes/no decision.

The number of interviews per evaluator depends on various factors: the availability of evaluators' time, the evaluator's expertise and the number of applications submitted.

Payment conditions

In the case of the NGI Sargasso project, evaluators will receive compensation per evaluation, with the amount of up to €65 per evaluation.

Action	Amount/Action
Review	40€
Interview	25€

The minimum and maximum number of applications to be evaluated per evaluator will depend on the quantity of applications received and other factors such as the evaluator's availability throughout the entire process, etc.

Each evaluator will sign a contract for evaluating the proposals with ESF (European Science Foundation), the coordinator of the project.

The evaluator is required to prepare an invoice and forward it to ESF. ESF will pay the invoice through a bank transfer, strictly in Euros. The transfer should be made to the evaluator's personal account within 60 days of receiving the invoice. It is important to mention that all rates include taxes, and ESF is exempt from VAT. The invoice can only be dispatched once



the evaluation submission deadline has passed. Please be aware that the invoice must be sent no later than 1 month following the evaluation submission deadline. In the event that reviewers are employees of a different organization, they should be permitted to submit their reviews and receive payment accordingly.

For the reviewers with a VAT number, they will have to invoice NGI SARGASSO "VAT free".

Evaluators selection process

Evaluators will be selected by the NGI Sargasso team members based on their competences and needs for the second open call.

Expression of interest

If you are interested in becoming an evaluator, please create an evaluator profile on the [SPLORO platform](#), complete all the necessary fields in the form ([see Annex 1](#)) and upload your CV (**in .pdf format**). The application should not take you more than 5 minutes!!

Apply here: [LINK](#)

If you know someone else who might be qualified for this task and might be interested, please forward this to him or her. By applying to NGI Sargasso Call for Evaluators, applicant automatically accepts all the rules and conditions described below.

Tentative timeline of activities

NGI Sargasso Second Open Call duration: October 18th – December 18th, 2023.

Call for evaluators: November 15th to December 15th, 2023.

Selection of evaluators by NGI Sargasso: December 18th to December 20th, 2023.

Contracting with selected evaluators: December 21st to January 8th, 2023

Webinar with evaluators: 8th January at 10AM CET (1 hour)

Evaluation: January 8 to January 18, 2024.

Interviews: The evaluators will have an interview stage only with those applicants who have passed the evaluation stage. Therefore, they will have to have availability on the following dates: **22.01.2024 to 26.01.2024 and 29.01.2024 to 2.02.2024**, between **15:00 PM and 19:00 PM CET/8:00 AM and 12:00 PM CST**.

Evaluators who cannot be present on the specified interview dates will not be eligible to receive any compensation as evaluators. This availability during the interview phase is a mandatory requirement to ensure the integrity of the evaluation process.



Evaluators' liability

All evaluators must sign a declaration of no conflict of interest ([see Annex 2](#)) and a confidentiality agreement with the NGI Sargasso consortium prior to the start of the evaluation.

By applying to the NGI Sargasso evaluator Call and registering on the Sploro platform, the expert:

- understands that submitting an application (registration) does not guarantee selection as an evaluator for any of the open calls.
- understands that they will need to provide a signed Code of Conduct and a Declaration of Honor (DoH), along with any other requested documents, if selected to serve as an evaluator for a specific open call published on the Sploro platform.
- confirms that the team in charge of the second open call will inquire about their availability to perform the evaluation within the specified timeframe for the given open call, to attend an informative session (if necessary), and a debriefing session after selection (if necessary).
- confirms interest in being informed about future opportunities to act as an evaluator in ongoing and upcoming open calls.
- ensures that they will only evaluate applications from applicants with whom they have no Conflict of Interest (Col).

Admissibility

- The applicant must be European (citizens of EU Member States, including their outermost regions, as well as countries and territories overseas linked to EU members, as well as nationals of Horizon Europe associated countries, full list [HERE](#)) (Note: if not a citizen of these countries but a resident/taxpayer in one of these countries, you are still eligible to become an evaluator).
- Applications for the call for Evaluators can be submitted at any time starting from 15/11 to 15/12.
- Applications for the call for Evaluators must be submitted electronically through the Sploro platform, as indicated in this call, using the provided form on the platform, and a **CV must be attached as a .pdf** file as part of the application. Paper or email submissions are NOT possible.
- Applications must be complete in all parts, and the CV must be legible, accessible, and printable.

If the eligibility criteria are met, the expert evaluation will be conducted by the NGI Sargasso team members. To formalize the collaboration, unless otherwise specified, selected evaluators will be required to sign a declaration of no conflict of interest ([see Annex 2](#)) and a confidentiality agreement with the project representative (coordinator, treasurer, etc.) prior to the start of the evaluation.



Conflict of interest

Evaluators must not have a conflict of interest at the time of their appointment and must sign a contract stating that they do not have one. They must also notify the consortium if such a conflict arises in any of the applications to which they have been allocated. When an evaluator reports a potential conflict of interest or it is brought to the project consortium's attention in any way, the project consortium will assess the circumstances and any objective aspects of information available. If the consortium determines that there is a conflict of interest, the evaluator will be removed from the application's evaluation. All potential conflicts of interest will be thoroughly investigated. More information can be found [HERE](#).

Confidentiality

All information connected to the evaluation process is absolutely confidential, thus evaluators are bound by secrecy. They are not permitted to reveal any information regarding the applications submitted, as well as the outcomes of the assessment and selection, to anyone. They are also not permitted to use the application's concepts for their own purposes.

