Committee Terms of Reference 2025
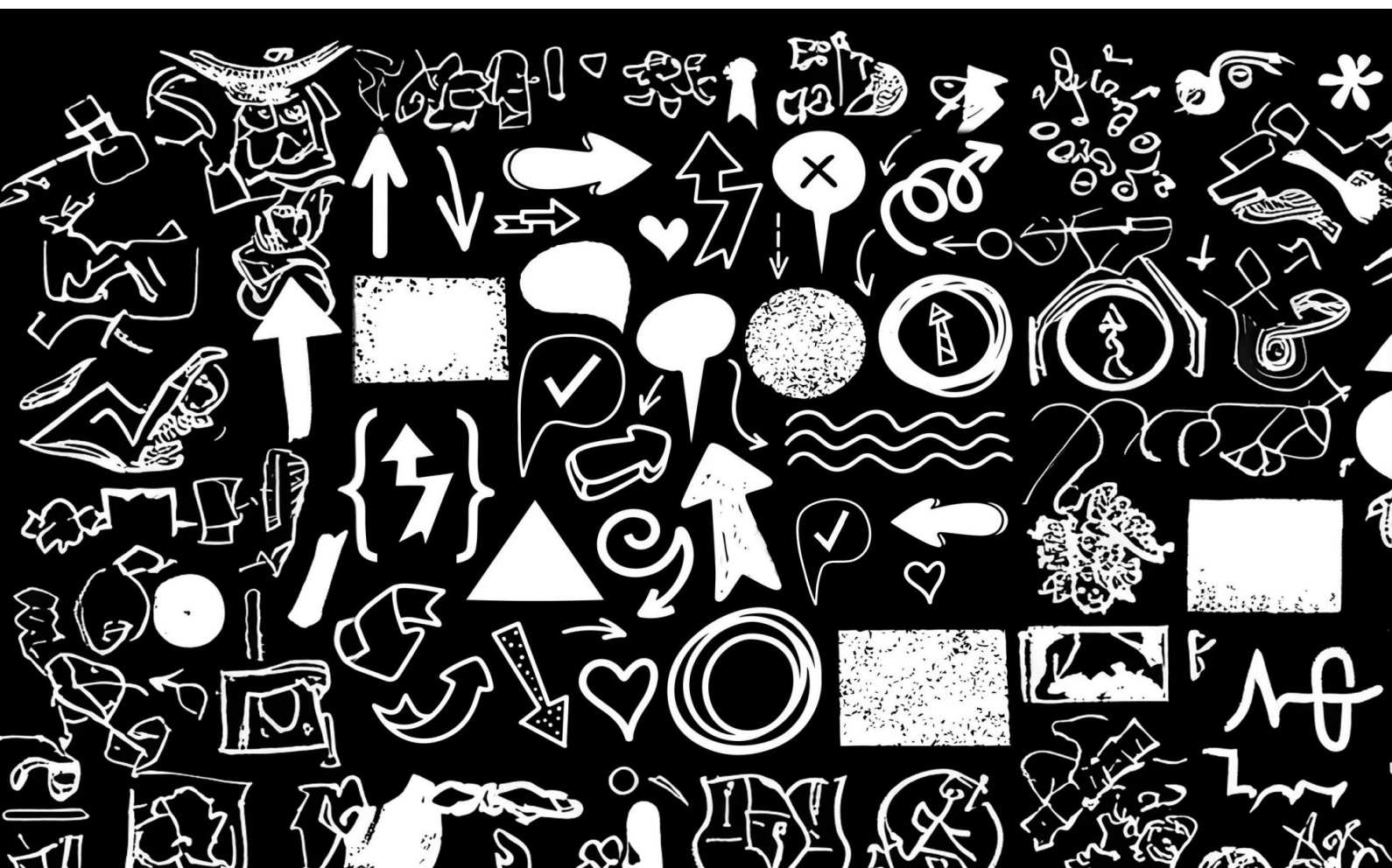
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1. Introduction

Through our network activity and investments, the goal of the TDCC SSH programme is to accomplish a substantial increase of reusable research data and software across the domain. We'll do this by supporting researchers and support staff to address issues related to the collection and usage of data and software. We'll broker funding and advocate for knowledge sharing, awareness raising, digital transformation and policy development.

2. Background

The TDCC SSH governance has a simple four part structure. The **Leadership Team** - a Network Manager and a Community Coordinator - are responsible for the day to day operations of the programme. The **Advisory Board -** a small group of people from the SSH sector, offer advice and strategic guidance. The **Executive Board,** with ultimate decision making mandate, is a three person entity representing the consortium members of the programme - CLARIAH, ODISSEI and DANS. The **Network** underlies all activities and represents our broader community of stakeholders. For further information about the programme and our governance please refer to tdcc.nl/ssh.

3. Committees Purpose and Objectives

Committees will form for specific periods of time to focus on strategic and operational processes that require community input and/or a decision making mandate. These committees will be composed of individuals from the network with relevant expertise and insights.

4. Guiding Principles

All committees will uphold the values of the Science Europe Values Framework:
- autonomy / freedom
- care and collegiality
- collaboration
- equity, diversity, inclusion, integrity and ethics
- openness and transparency

5. Personal Interests

All members will adhere to NWO's Code Strategy and Policy Advice when acting in an advisory capacity. In a decision making role, members will follow the NWO's Code for Dealing with Personal Interests. Committee members might apply for TDCC SSH funding, which does not preclude them from joining a committee. In cases of potential conflict of interest, their involvement will be limited according to the NWO codes noted above. At all times, members are required to be transparent and disclose (possible) conflicts of interest. During the onboarding process all members will be briefed on the codes as they relate to them.

6. Members

Each committee will consist of members brought together by their expertise and experience with the content of a particular topic (e.g. open science) and / or context around it (e.g. project management). The number of members in each committee will vary according to specific requirements and processes. Membership is only open to people working closely with the Dutch research sector.

Appointment

Seats will be filled through an invitation and/or open call process, to be determined for each committee. The TDCC SSH Leadership Team and Executive Board are ultimately responsible for selecting committee members, in consultation with the Advisory Board (excluding anyone in the committee itself).

Period of Service

Members are expected to commit for the entire duration of the committee. They will receive an overview of the expected timeline and time commitment before agreeing to join.

Compensation

Expenses accrued for participating in committee related meetings or events will be compensated. In general, no other monetary remuneration will be offered.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

The general structure of the committee is outlined here, with further specifics outlined in the specific committee guidelines (see annexes).

Technical Chair

The technical chair of each committee is a representative from the Leadership Team. The chair has the following responsibilities:

- facilitating meetings and ensuring productive discussions;
- If necessary, guide the members in their decision making process (in a non-voting capacity)
- setting the agenda for the meetings in consultation with members;
- making sure that each meeting is planned effectively and that matters are dealt with in an orderly and efficient manner;
- encouraging participation of all members in the discussions; and
- summarising the conclusions of discussions and any agreed follow-up actions.

Members

Members have the following responsibilities:

- participating actively in meetings and discussions;
- reviewing and providing feedback on documentation
- providing expertise, insights, and recommendations related to the committee remit
- where relevant, follow a decision making process to reach consensus

8. Meetings and Alignment

Frequency and format

Meeting frequency will be determined for each committee. Remote participation will be facilitated.

The chair will develop the meeting agendas, taking into account any input from members. Agendas and any supporting materials will be circulated at least one week prior to each meeting, allowing sufficient time for preparation.

Alignment

An online space will be created for committee members to share documents and discussions in a protected and secure environment. Any documents for review, input or considered by the committee will be presented by the chair to the group.

9. Support and Resources

The committees will be provided administrative support via the Leadership Team for:

- maintaining a shared online dedicated workspace
- scheduling meetings
- coordinating meeting logistics such as online links and if necessary room bookings and equipment
- distributing meeting agendas and relevant materials
- taking and distributing meeting minutes
- publishing documents online
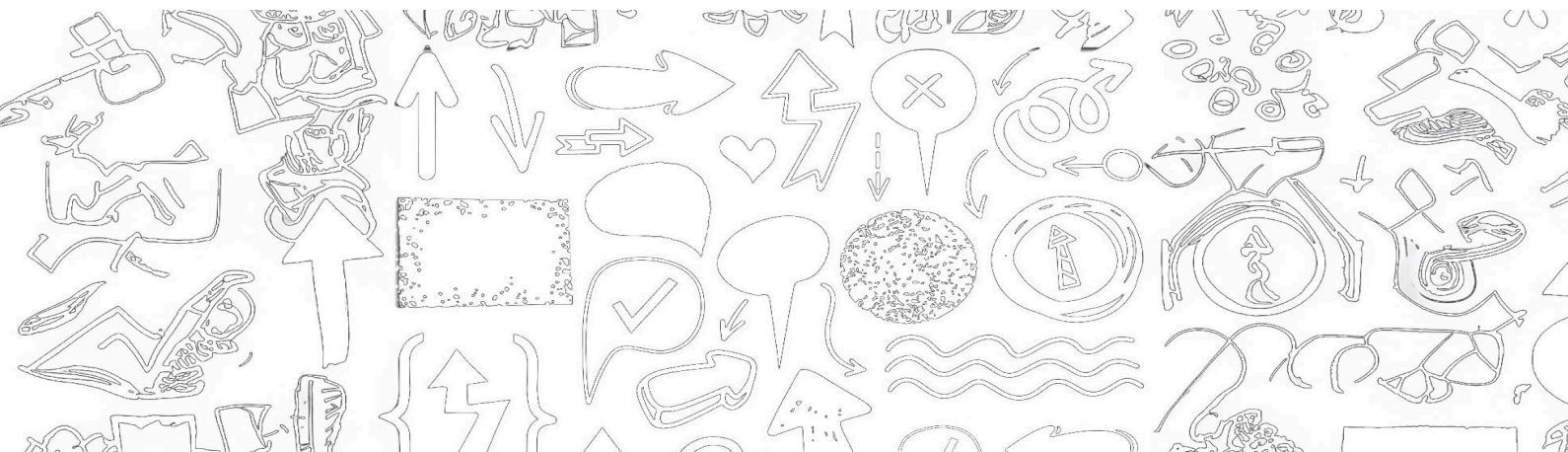
Purpose

The Assessment & Selection (A&S) committee has the remit to assess and select the projects that will be submitted under the TDCC SSH NWO open call. The A&S committee members will evaluate project ideas and advise on the prioritisation of which applicants to invite to write a full proposal.

Background

The NWO TDCC call offers project funding to address sector specific challenges outlined by each TDCC. For the TDCC SSH, ten general challenges were defined and clustered into five bottleneck areas, outlined in our roadmap. The call runs from May 2025 - 20 November 2025, with €800k for each TDCC to broker into projects (plus any remaining funding from the call 2023/2024). Individual projects can run for up to 24 months with a budget between €50k - €400k and 25% in-kind support.

The aim of the assessment and selection process is to ensure that project submissions under the TDCC SSH reflect the needs of the Social Sciences and Humanities sector at large. Throughout the process, different entities of the TDCC SSH governance play a role, as outlined below.

Guiding Principles and Values

Through consultation with the community, values were agreed to help guide the assessment and selection process. The TDCC SSH values for this funding call focus on project ideas that feature an open and inclusive approach and a diversity of expertise and disciplines. Project outcomes should be tangible and use a robust methodology that ensures sustainability.

The community-driven approach of the NWO TDCC call is a novel endeavour which deviates from standard

NWO calls. The process will be iterative and dynamic with challenges that could not not have been anticipated. All people involved will be asked to develop and evaluate the processes critically. Everyone is expected to engage with an open mind, acknowledging that mistakes may occur, and encouraging each other to reflect and learn during the experience.

Use of Generative AI

All members will adhere to NWO's Policy on the use of Generative AI (GAI). As such, they are expected to assess the content of applications without using GAI tools.

Members

Profiles and Appointment

Members for this committee will have expertise from Humanities, Social Sciences, Project Development, Open Science, Research Data, Research Software and Meta Research.

Schedule and Time Commitment

An initial briefing meeting will take place followed by individual and group check-in meetings, as needed. Overall the expected time commitment will be 15 hours. Most of the work will take place asynchronously in July/August and the first week of September 2025.

Projects Timeline
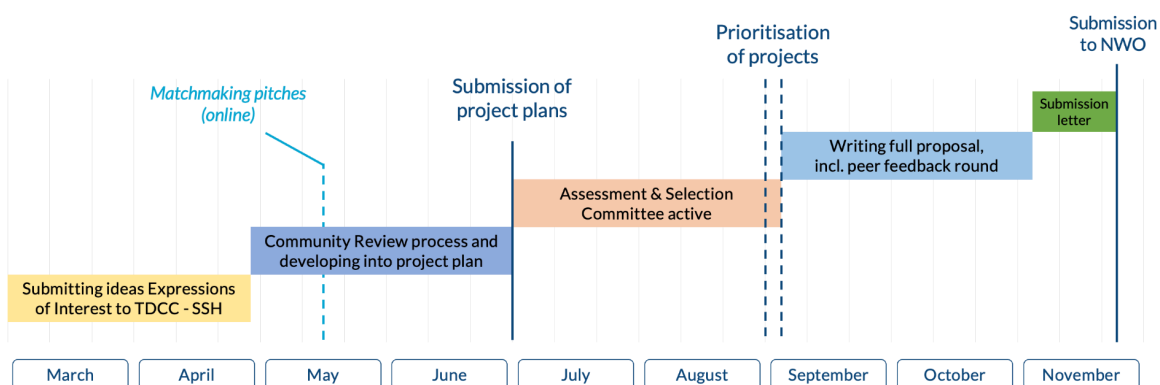
Idea Submission

Project ideas were submitted through the TDCC website in **April 2025** as "Expressions of Interest". These ideas were then openly shared on the TDCC website to encourage community feedback.

Public Review

All applicants presented their project idea during the matchmaking presentations in **May 2025**. During these public and open online meetings, submitters were grouped together with similar projects (where possible) with individuals from the broader SSH community providing feedback and input.

From this point forward, idea submitters develop their concept into a more detailed "project plan". This allows for adding partners, following any internal organisational processes, combining ideas (where applicable), and creating a budget. The resulting project plan must be submitted to the TDCC SSH by **1 July 2025** and is the basis for the assessment and selection by this Committee.

Assessment

The TDCC SSH Leadership Team will ensure that the members of the committee receive the full project plans. The Committee's assessment and selection process runs from **the beginning of July until the end of August 2025**. During this period, project ideas will be reviewed by the Committee (described in more detail below).

Selection

The selected projects will be announced publicly in the first week of **September 2025**, the project teams may then start writing their proposals.

Proposal Writing

The proposal writing period runs from **September to November 2025.** The Committee is not involved in this phase.

Proposal Submission to NWO

Barring any major issues or concerns, each applicant will receive a submission letter from the TDCC SSH Executive Board along with the final feedback in early **November 2025**. The applicant must then upload their proposal and letter to the NWO ISAAC platform by **20 November 2025, 14:00 CET**.

Decision Making Process

These are the initial steps envisaged during the assessment and selection process, which will remain iterative and open to further refinement, together with the committee.

Eligibility check

After project ideas are submitted, they will undergo a cursory eligibility check by the TDCC SSH Leadership Team. All viable ideas will then be published on the TDCC website.

Assessment criteria

The A&S committee members will be expected to adhere to a decision making process that reflects the NWO's inclusive assessment policies. They will be guided in this by the committee's technical chair. The NWO TDCC call includes the following evaluation criteria:

1. TDCC domain involvement in application preparation
2. Relevance
3. Project design

These criteria inform the assessment questions (listed below), which are the basis for the initial review by the A&S committee members. The questions also reflect the guiding principles listed above.

Prioritisation of project ideas

Each idea will be reviewed by at least four committee members. Based on this evaluation, a prioritisation order will be used to choose which ideas are invited to be developed into proposals, keeping in mind the available budget in the NWO TDCC Call. Feedback will be compiled and sent to applicants, including the decision on how much budget they will be allocated. Project ideas that are not chosen will be placed on a waiting list and will also remain eligible for future calls.

Questions:

Each project idea will be scored based on these questions and their weighted value (in square brackets).

1. TDCC domain involvement in application preparation
   ○ Statement: The project fits the collaborative spirit of the TDCC, involving multiple parties in the development and execution of the project idea.
   ○ Statement: The TDCC-SSH roadmap challenges are addressed convincingly in the project.
   ○ Statement: The project plan convincingly demonstrates that the project will build on existing knowledge and projects.
2. Relevance
   ○ Statement: The project team brings the right expertise to achieve the project goals.
   ○ Statement: The project idea addresses an urgent issue.
   ○ Statement: The project idea is convincing in how it will reach its target audience and ensure adoption/use.
3. Project design
   ○ Statement: The project idea is described clearly.
   ○ Statement: The proposed project design fits the aim of the project.
   ○ How appropriate is the estimated budget?

…as well as these general items:

● What is your general impression of the proposal?
● [not scored] Statement: The idea is one that usually wouldn't get funded, but that I think is worthwhile.

The different items will be weighted to fit this stage of the selection. The committee members will be informed of the exact item weights ahead of the assessment and selection.