

## FOREST - European Partnership for F0rests, forestry, and the forest-based sector: REsearch and innovation for a Sustainable Transition

# JOIN THE FOREST JOINT CALL INTERNATIONAL EXPERT PANEL

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

A Conflict of Interest (CoI) exists when an individual's personal, financial, professional, or other interests could interfere, or be perceived to interfere, with the impartial and objective performance of their duties.

Experts must declare any actual or potential CoI related to the proposals they evaluate. Any situation that may reasonably compromise impartiality must be disclosed.

### Situations Considered as CoI

The following are considered Conflicts of Interest:

- Involvement in the preparation of any proposal submitted to the call.
- Leadership, governance, or management role in an applicant organisation.
- Employment or contractual relationship with an applicant organisation within the last 3 years (for large organisations, this applies at department level or equivalent).
- Close personal relationships with applicants or individuals benefiting from the proposal outcome, including family or similarly close ties.
- Close scientific or professional collaboration with an applicant within the last 3 years, such as: co-authorship or joint publications,
  - working in the same research group,
  - supervisory or subordinate relationships,
  - mentor–mentee relationships,
  - professional rivalry or hostility.
- Membership in advisory boards or similar bodies of the applicant's institution.

- Any direct or indirect personal or financial benefit from the acceptance or rejection of a proposal.

### Measures to Avoid CoI

Members of the International Expert Panel (IEP):

- Must not submit applications to the call.
- Must act independently and in a personal capacity.
- Must complete a CoI declaration before accessing proposals.
- Will receive a list of participating institutions in advance and must declare any relevant CoI.
- Must confirm the absence of CoI for each assigned proposal via the evaluation system.
- Must immediately report any newly identified CoI and stop the evaluation of the affected proposal.
- Must not participate in evaluation or discussion of proposals where a CoI exists and must withdraw from related discussions when required