

PROFEEDBACK RESEARCH MANAGEMENT TOOLKIT

Prepared by

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1 Introduction

1.1 About PROFEEDBACK

The COST Action PROFEEDBACK – Platform OF policy Evaluation community for improved EU policies and Better ACKnowledgement (CA20112, MoU 052/21) 2021-2025 aims to foster the networking of the policy evaluation community at EU-level, raise awareness on the importance of evaluation policy research and improve its impact on policymaking. The Platform, following a bottom-up and open approach, gathers researchers and professionals from various scientific fields and sectors to present and evaluate theories, topics, tools and methods of policy evaluation. Results of the Europe-wide assessment of good practices provides direct and high-quality inputs for national and EU bodies responsible for policy evaluation. Policy evaluation is a key tool in understanding, developing and modernising EU policies, thus there is a growing demand for EU-wide and high-quality evaluation services. The main challenge is the shortage of sufficient bottom-up platforms for European researchers and professionals working in policy evaluation. Professionals have limited possibilities to discuss common problems, assess country-specific practices and share their knowledge in a mutually beneficial and effective way. The PROFEEDBACK Action aimed to contribute to these discussions during its four Grant Periods (18/10/2021 – 17/10/2025) and beyond:

- Foster networking and knowledge-exchange of the policy evaluation community at European level,
- Raise awareness on the importance of policy evaluation research and improve its impact on policymaking,
- Reinforce state-of-the-art research in the policy evaluation field and contribute to evaluation standards.

1.2 About the PROFEEDACK Research Management Toolkit

The PROFEEDBACK network has built a strong foundation of expertise in evaluation across Europe, combining methodological innovation with practical experience in research, policy, and program assessment. Over the course of the COST Action, PROFEEDBACK members have shared, tested, and refined tools that enhance evaluative capacity and connect professional communities. This accumulated expertise now forms a valuable base from which the network can sustain itself beyond the Action's formal end.

Sustainability, in this context, means turning collective knowledge into continued cooperation and new projects. The PROFEEDBACK community already has the professional capacity, thematic diversity, and Research Management (RM) insight necessary to act as a partner in future European and international initiatives. By leveraging its strong knowledge base and cross-sectoral collaborations, the network can continue to promote high-quality evaluation practice, strengthen evaluator-researcher partnerships, and contribute to the European Research Area.

The following webinars and resources were developed to support this continued professional and institutional growth.

2. How the Toolkit is Structured

The PROFEEDBACK Research Management Toolkit is structured around the knowledge and professional resources developed within the network's sustainability activities. Its content reflects the growing intersection between evaluation practice, research management, and European cooperation. The Toolkit's design allows users to explore targeted thematic areas—each represented by one of the webinars—while also accessing a practical knowledge base that supports continued professional development and partnership building.

2.1 Thematic Webinars

At the core of the Toolkit are three webinars, each addressing a specific competence area that strengthens evaluators' ability to participate in European projects and tenders. Together, they offer a comprehensive view of how evaluators can engage with the broader funding and research landscape. The webinar topics are the following:

- **How Evaluators Can Contribute to EU Grant Projects:** Introduces evaluators to the lifecycle of EU-funded initiatives, illustrating how evaluation contributes to proposal design, project implementation, and reporting. This session highlights the strategic role of evaluation in ensuring accountability, impact, and learning across funding programmes such as Horizon Europe, Erasmus+, and Interreg.
- **Research Management for Evaluators:** Explores the professional field of Research Management (RM) and its relevance for evaluators. By understanding RM processes—from identifying funding opportunities to managing project delivery—evaluators can collaborate more effectively within research consortia and strengthen their methodological and administrative competence.

- **Tenders 101: Finding Evaluation Contracts in Europe:** Offers a step-by-step guide for evaluators seeking consultancy opportunities through public procurement. Participants learn how to use key portals, identify relevant CPV codes, and position themselves within European and international evaluation markets.

Each webinar is both conceptual and practical, combining methodological insight with tools and examples that can be directly applied in professional settings.

2.2 Knowledge Base of Research Management Know-How

The Toolkit also features a Research Management Knowledge Base, a structured Excel database that compiles essential sources, frameworks, and learning materials for evaluators engaged in research and innovation environments. It includes references to competence frameworks, training programmes, and institutional resources relevant to proposal development, project coordination, and evaluation.

Two versions of this database ensure accessibility and depth:

- **Public Database** (on the PROFEEDBACK website): Provides open access to key resources and references for anyone interested in research management and evaluation links.
- **Detailed Database** (within the Sustainable Impact Hub): A members-only version offering expanded content, including internal tools, templates, and examples developed within the network.

This dual structure enables both visibility and professional enrichment—promoting knowledge sharing externally while supporting in-depth cooperation among members.

3. Profeedback Sustainable Impact Hub

The PROFEEDBACK Sustainable Impact Hub is the central sustainability mechanism of the network—designed to ensure that collaboration, knowledge sharing, and project development continue beyond the lifetime of the COST Action. Building directly on the outcomes of the Budapest Capitalisation Workshop (2025), the Hub transforms PROFEEDBACK's achievements into an ongoing, self-sustaining platform for cooperation.

The Impact Hub serves both external and internal functions.

Externally, it acts as a public-facing gateway to the network's expertise, providing open access to training materials, project highlights, and a light version of the PROFEEDBASE expertise map. This layer enhances the visibility of the network and invites collaboration with new partners.

Internally, it operates as a secure collaboration environment for members, housing detailed databases, funding call repositories, and advanced training resources. It facilitates matchmaking between expertise and funding opportunities, while promoting peer learning and joint proposal development.

The Hub's functions are organised around three interlinked processes:

- **Map (Profeedback):** Develop and maintain a living map of evaluators' expertise and project experience, enabling targeted cooperation.
- **Match (Google Form+Google Sheet):** Identify and share relevant funding opportunities across Horizon Europe, Erasmus+, ESF+, and other programmes, linking them directly to available expertise within the network.
- **Train (Google Drive):** Provide members with capacity-building materials and workshops on grant writing, tender preparation, budgeting, and project management.

Technically, the Hub relies on familiar tools (Google Drive, Sheets, Forms, and Groups) and integrates a dedicated section on the PROFEEDBACK website for its public-facing activities. The private member space—the Sustainable Impact Hub—hosts detailed resources, internal trainings, and application support materials, ensuring the continuity of knowledge exchange and professional cooperation.

By connecting these functions, the PROFEEDBACK Impact Hub turns knowledge into action. It ensures that the network remains visible, relevant, and productive—supporting both ongoing partnerships and the emergence of new joint projects across Europe.

This publication is based upon work from COST Action CA20112 PROFEEDBACK, supported by COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology). COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology) is a funding agency for research and innovation networks. Our Actions help connect research initiatives across Europe and enable scientists to grow their ideas by sharing them with their peers. This boosts their research, career and innovation. Visit www.cost.eu