

IHI JU responses to the Independent Observer's report

Call ID: HORIZON-JU-IHI-2024-07-single-stage

IHI JU 7th Call for Proposals – single stage

Dates of evaluation: 24 to 26 June 2024

Name of the Independent Observer: Himanshu HIMANSHU

Summary of Recommendations

After observing the complete evaluation process and gathering feedback from expert evaluators, some recommendations were identified for consideration by the IHI Programme Office for future evaluations:

1. While variations in moderation styles were within acceptable limits during the present evaluation, moderators should consider assertively playing the role of 'Timekeeper' to manage lengthy discussions effectively. This may involve course corrections, including terminating extended discussions when necessary. It is crucial for expert evaluators to accept these interventions professionally and not take them personally.
2. Virtual meeting platforms offer various productivity-enhancing features such as voting mechanisms. These tools should be explored for potential implementation in future evaluations to improve efficiency. Prior to implementation, conducting test runs is essential to ensure all participants are comfortable and proficient with using these tools.
3. Some experts have strongly suggested replacing long lunch breaks with multiple short breaks during the consensus phase meetings. Moderators should discuss and explore this option with all experts during the initial briefing on the first day of the consensus phase.
4. Considering the emerging use of generative AI in fields such as health, it may be advantageous to enhance the AI expertise within the evaluation process in order to ensure specialised insights of proposals involving AI technologies.

IHI JU responses to the recommendations

IHI JU welcomes the Independent Observer conclusions, which confirm the high quality of the evaluation.

To the best extent possible, IHI office will take into consideration the recommendations made:

1. When providing the briefing to external evaluators, in preparation to the evaluations, the importance of the timing is already highlighted by the panel moderators. IHI Office welcomes the Independent Observer recommendation and will ensure that the time keeping is clearly illustrated to evaluators prior to the first consensus meeting; so, the experts are well informed and aligned.
2. IHI Office will investigate the possibility to add productivity-enhancing features, within the possibilities offered by the software currently used to host virtual consensus meetings. In addition, IHI Office will identify available trainings to enhance skills and capabilities for the moderations of remote consensus meetings.
3. Depending on the number of proposals submitted, IHI Office may schedule the consensus meetings to accommodate the needs of the external evaluators without compromising the flow of the evaluation.

4. IHI Office recruit expert evaluators with high level of skills, experience and knowledge in the areas covered by each Call/Topic, e.g. scientific area, project management, innovation, exploitation, dissemination and communication. If Artificial Intelligence (AI) is addressed in the topic text, IHI Office ensures that an expert(s) with the relevant expertise is part of the panel composition. IHI Office takes note of the Independent Observer recommendation and will explore how to further enhance the AI expertise when required by the Call/Topic.