

Guidelines for the TC Award

Version 1

Valid from 2018-08

1. Advisory Committee

The Assembly of Delegates of tekomp Europe convenes the members of the Advisory Committee for The TC Award at the start of its office term. The Advisory Committee's role is to carry out the TC Award.

The Advisory Committee keeps a record of its activities and procedures each calendar year in The TC Award logbook.

2. Reviewers

The Advisory Committee will select suitable candidates to form a pool of reviewers for the evaluation of submissions.

2.1. Selection Procedure

The call for reviewers is announced to all tekomp and tekomp Europe members. The call includes the selection criteria and relevant information. All members and interested candidates may apply. Members of the Executive Board cannot apply as reviewers. Advisory Committee Members can be co-opted as reviewers, especially if there are insufficient reviewers.

Applicants will submit a self-evaluation report based on the selection criteria. For the selection of reviewers, the criteria are as follows:

- Professional status
- Professional qualifications
- Practical experience
- Technical knowledge
- Professional focus

Two Committee Members are responsible for the selection of reviewers using the four-eyes principle. After the selection procedure is completed, all applicants will be notified of the outcome.

The results of the selection procedure will be recorded in the logbook.

2.2. Obligations of the reviewers

Together with their notification, the reviewers will receive these documents:

- Code of conduct
- Guidelines for the TC Award
- Declaration of Commitment for reviewers

In the declaration, the reviewer will maintain strict neutrality and inform the Advisory Committee immediately if this neutrality is compromised. Bias exists if:

- The information product was previously made known to the reviewer
- The reviewer has collaborated in the product's creation
- An economic or, in particular, a financial connection exists between a reviewer and the participating company
- Other valid reasons that would prevent the reviewer from providing a neutral review

All reviewers, regardless of their membership in the Advisory Committee, will fulfill the same obligations.

3. Approval of Applicants / Information products

3.1. Registration

Before reviewers can evaluate an information product, approval of the respective applicant/information product must be given. To do so, the applicant will submit a completed registration form and a copy of the information product in a suitable form by the published registration deadline.

The manufacturer can submit the information product. If a service provider were to do so instead, the manufacturer's permission must be included in the submission. Submission by third parties is not permitted.

Only information products in English can be approved.

3.2. Pre-Examination by the Advisory Committee

The first step for approval is pre-examination by the Advisory Committee. For this purpose the Advisory Committee will appoint one member as the Committee Member in Charge of the pre-examination.

The objectives of the pre-examination are to establish the following:

- Whether the review and evaluation of the information product are technically and logistically feasible
- Whether the information product is innovative based on first impressions
- Whether the evaluation of the information product will at least be "satisfactory"

If it is unclear if the information product fulfills the criterion a), a request will be made to the participating company to clarify the technical or logistical circumstances.

If the information product does not fulfill one of the aforementioned criteria, the participating company will receive a notification stating reasons why the information product has not been approved for participation in The TC Award of that calendar year.

3.3. Approval Process

3.3.1 Roles

The Committee Member in Charge decides on the approval of the submitted information products and informs the other Committee Members and the Executive Board regarding the decisions made.

The Committee Members or the Executive Board Members can override the decisions of the Committee Member in Charge.

3.3.2 List of Conclusions

The list of conclusions contains details about the submitting companies, the exact designation of the products whose information products should be reviewed, and, if applicable, remarks of the Advisory Committee.

3.3.3 Declaration of Bias

Bias exists if:

- The information product was previously made known to the Member in Charge
- The Member in Charge has collaborated in the product's creation
- An economic or, in particular, a financial connection exists between the Member in Charge and the participating company
- Other valid reasons that would influence the decision of the Member in Charge

If bias exists, the Member in Charge must report this matter to the Committee by providing a statement of reasons. These reasons for bias will be recorded. The Committee then appoints another Member for the approval process.

3.4. Conclusion of Approval

The Advisory Committee will inform the participating companies of the final approval or rejection of the information products they have submitted.

The results of the approval process will be documented in the logbook.

4. Evaluation Process

4.1. Method

The Advisory Committee establishes a heuristic method that is used in the evaluation process. The method comprises main criteria, sub-criteria, and guiding questions for the evaluation of information products. Furthermore, the Committee has developed a key to weigh main criteria against one other.

The Advisory Committee creates an evaluation template with the main and sub-criteria, guiding questions, and weighing ratio to assist reviewers and to document the results of the review process.

4.2. Procedure

4.2.1 Assignment of Information Products to reviewers

The Advisory Committee assigns the evaluation of an information product to two reviewers.

If one of the reviewers declares bias towards one or several information products, these information products will be assigned to another reviewer.

The final allocation of information products and any declaration of bias are recorded in the logbook.

4.2.2 Review

The reviewers will receive the evaluation template, the information product that they have been assigned to, and a notification of the review deadline. They will then begin the review process.

The reviewers will comment on the fulfillment of the sub-criteria based on the guiding questions, and then award points accordingly. The comments describe the strengths and weaknesses of the information products in the respective sub-criteria and, serve as a justification for the points awarded.

In addition, the points of the sub-criteria are weighed against one other, then using an equation, the points for the main criteria are calculated with a key.

The overall grade for an information product is calculated based on the weighted grades of the main criteria. If a main item cannot be used for the information product, it is labeled as “not applicable” and is not incorporated into the overall grade.

The comments are later included in the review text, and then sent to the participating companies.

For each criterion, if the difference between points awarded by both reviewers is more than the tolerance value determined by the Advisory Committee, a reasonable score will be awarded based on the reviewers’ consensus. Otherwise, they will each submit their reviews to the Advisory Committee for a final decision.

Results of the review are recorded in the logbook.

4.2.3 Product Test

This test is done at a location determined by the Advisory Committee in coordination with the participating company.

If one of the reviewers declares bias towards the information product for which he or she is to carry out the test, another reviewer will be assigned. Every reviewer will include the points and comments in the evaluation template by an agreed deadline.

Results of the test and any declaration of bias by reviewers are recorded.

4.2.4 Determination of the Final Results

After the evaluation has concluded, the Advisory Committee will notify the Executive Board of the final results of the evaluation procedure.

All information products with a final grading average of 80% or more will receive The TC Award of that calendar year.

Award winners will be notified. They can choose when and where the award ceremony will take place:

- On site (The award winner will reimburse all travel costs)
- At a regular tekomp or tekomp EU event

The final results are recorded in the logbook.

5. Logbook

The logbook of The TC Award is kept in the form of a folder. The folder is stored in the tekomp head office in a locked cabinet. In this folder, sorted by year, all the documents required for the documentation of The TC Award are filed in paper form.

The logbook of each year includes:

- The decision on approval
- The determination of bias
- The results of the selection of the information products (approval procedure)
- The results of the selection of reviewers
- Declarations of bias by reviewers
- The review results