

CALL FOR PAPERS

BETWEEN EXPERTISE AND RELEVANCE – ADVISORY COUNCILS, SCIENCE FOR POLICY, AND EVALUATION IN TRANSITION

SPECIAL ISSUE OF THE FTEVAL JOURNAL FOR RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY POLICY EVALUATION

1 CALL FOR PAPERS

In recent years, discussions around scientific expertise and its relevance for policy making have heightened. In Austria, too, significant steps have been taken to address the **role of scientific advice and its relation to science and innovation policy as well as sectoral policies**. Austrian legislators have been **restructuring science and innovation policy advice** by merging two existing councils into FORWIT. At the same time, European efforts to better understand, and improve, **science-for-policy ecosystems** have begun to resonate across various policy fields. And, just recently, the new government has announced its plan to conduct **a system evaluation of the Austrian research and innovation policy landscape**.

These developments provide an opportunity to examine **how advisory councils and evaluation institutions can work together more effectively to inform policymaking**. The fteval platform and FORWIT seek to explore how **prospective policy advice and retrospective evaluation** can complement each other in the Austrian context and beyond, and also aim at understanding underlying historical and institutional trajectories.

Specifically, this special issue solicits contributions from three parallel and intersected developments. One concerns the transformation of science advice: Traditional **advisory bodies**, including councils and expert panels, remain central to evidence-informed policymaking, yet their roles, independence, and impact are continuously evolving. These shifts are driven by new governance frameworks, changing political priorities, and increasing demands for **responsiveness and transparency**.

Simultaneously, **evaluation practices and methodologies** are adapting to meet the growing complexity of policy challenges. The integration of qualitative and quantitative approaches, the rise of participatory evaluation, and the demand for real-time policy feedback are reshaping how expertise informs decision-making. This evolving interplay between knowledge production, advisory functions, and policy implementation highlights the need for **robust, adaptive, and reflexive advisory mechanisms**.

Beyond traditional advisory structures, the broader science-for-policy ecosystem is being redefined by novel advisory formats, interdisciplinary knowledge production, and new institutional arrangements. This includes the rise of **mission-oriented policy advice, foresight-driven strategies, and co-creative approaches** that engage a wider range of stakeholders. However, these developments raise critical questions about the legitimacy, accountability, and effectiveness of advisory processes.

This special issue focuses on the **evolving working methods of advisory councils and the role of evaluation** in shaping science and innovation policy. We seek to explore how advisory councils and evaluation interact, their respective strengths and limitations, and how their integration can lead to more robust, evidence-based policymaking. By examining both conceptual foundations and international case studies, we aim to contribute to a deeper understanding of how different national systems organise and implement research policy advice and evaluation.

2 FOCUS OF THE SPECIAL ISSUE

We invite both academic contributions as well as (self-)reflexion of practices that address, but are not limited to, the following topics:

- **The development of advisory councils in historical perspective:** why and how did advice bodies and councils come into being? How did these structures develop over time, and which organizational models developed?
- **The evolving role of advice bodies and councils:** How have councils adapted their advisory functions to meet new policy demands? Did changing governance frameworks lead to the reorganization, abolishment or introduction of advice bodies?
- **Bridging prospective advice and retrospective evaluation:** How can forward-looking policy advice from research councils and retrospective policy evaluations complement each other?
- **Integrating evaluation into policy cycles:** How are evaluation results used to shape future policy advice and decision-making?
- **Assessing Austria's evidence-for-policy ecosystem:** What are the strengths and weaknesses of Austria's current advisory and evaluation structures?
- **Institutional settings and governance models:** What structures best facilitate an effective interplay between advisory bodies, evaluation institutions, and policymakers?
- **Science-for-policy ecosystem:** How do different national systems integrate both advisory and evaluative functions to support evidence-informed policymaking?

- **Learning opportunities:** What mechanisms exist to enhance the capacity of advisory councils and evaluators to engage in productive policy dialogue?
- **Empirical case studies:** What international examples illustrate successful (or failed) interactions between advisory councils and evaluation?

3 CONTRIBUTION FORMATS

The **fteval Journal** operates at the intersection of research and technology policy while maintaining a strong commitment to academic quality. It serves as a platform for exchange among diverse stakeholder groups in research, technology, and innovation policy. Published as an **open-access journal** with a broad thematic scope, the **fteval Journal** releases regular issues, ensuring wide accessibility. Articles in special issues undergo both **editorial review** and **international peer review**, maintaining high academic and professional standards.

The journal fosters dialogue on **systemic reflection, evaluation practices, and methodological advancements**. To encourage diverse perspectives, it welcomes not only traditional academic articles but also **practice reports, policy analyses, case studies, and discussion papers**. Submissions may be in **German or English**, though preference is given to submissions in—or eventually translated into—**English** to support international readership and engagement within the evaluation community.

4 SUBMISSION GUIDELINES AND TIMELINE

IMPORTANT DATES

- Abstract submission deadline: **May 30, 2025**
- Manuscript submission deadline: **September 30, 2025**
- Review process: Autumn 2025
- Final revision, approval, typesetting: Early 2026
- Special issue **publication**: Spring 2026

FORMAT REQUIREMENTS

Abstracts

- **Length:** approximately 500 words
- **Submission deadline:** May 30, 2025

Manuscripts

- **Practice-oriented reports:** 2000 to 3500 words

- **Academic manuscripts:** 3500 to 5500 words
- **Format:** MS Word, RTF, or Open Document Text, including:
 - Title and subtitles
 - Tables and figure captions
 - Footnotes at the end of the page
 - References at the end of the article
 - 5 keywords
 - Abstract in English and German
 - Author information: Name, Affiliation, email, [ORCID](#)
- **Manuscript submission deadline:** September 30, 2025
- **Submission and contact:** special-issue@fteval.at

General information for authors of the fteval Journal can be found on our website: <https://fteval.at/en/for-authors/> . Publication is free of charge for authors.

5 ABOUT THE FTEVAL JOURNAL FOR RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY POLICY EVALUATION

Since 2002 the fteval Platform regularly publishes the fteval **Journal for Research and Technology Policy Evaluation**. The target audience of the fteval Journal includes members of the fteval platform, currently 26 institutional members - ministries, agencies, evaluation institutions, and research institutes. It reaches an audience interested in research and innovation from academia and research, as well as research policy, with approximately 800 national and 700 international subscriptions. More details and all previous issues of the fteval Journal for Research and Technology Policy Evaluation are open access: <https://fteval.at/en/journal/>.

In 2025, the **Austrian Council for Sciences, Technology and Innovation** and the fteval Platform want to join forces to create **#58 as a special issue on the role of councils, commissioned research and evaluation in science for (science) policy**.

6 CONTACT

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