

IMPULZ Programme Statute

Project programme of the Slovak Academy of Sciences

Article I

The Objectives

The Impulz project scheme aims to improve the scientific organizations of the Slovak Academy of Sciences (SAS) by recruiting internationally recognized scientists and highly talented young researchers who come from abroad or do not leave for abroad. The task of this new generation of leading scientists will be to create their own research groups that will work on new research directions and current topics in line with world trends. The scheme will provide excellent scientists with incentive conditions for their development and will bring research organizations an improvement in the research environment and scientific outputs. The scheme is intended to help increase the Academy's excellence, internationalization and competitiveness in the European Research Area and its success in obtaining prestigious grants.

Article II

Constitutive rules and Programme criterion

1. The Program is designated for scientists working abroad as well as in the Slovak Republic. Applicants may apply regardless their citizenship or residence or working activity.
2. Projects shall be financed amounting from 60 to 160 thousand EUR per year.
3. Applicants for the project must be PhD. holders at the time of application or equivalent rank.
4. The project applicant must demonstrate sufficient research experience gained at a foreign internationally recognized research institute. Either he/she obtained a PhD. degree or completed a long-term stay outside the Slovak Republic, usually not shorter than 2 years.
5. The candidate must prove that he/she regularly publishes in important scientific journals with impact in the given scientific field, he/she has been repeatedly invited to present his/her scientific results at important international conferences and has been the accountable researcher of a scientific project.
6. Should be he/she a young researcher, the candidate must prove his/her autonomy from a supervisor of the thesis by providing a list of publications being not co-authored by a

supervisor. A proposed topic of the project must be different from the topic of the applicant's thesis.

7. The candidate must demonstrate the capability to lead a proposed research team as well as the ability in obtaining competitive resources for research in the long term. The applicant must undertake to file a project of the European Scientific Council, the ERC, or the Horizon Europe project, or another prestigious foreign grant scheme within the first half of the project solution. The financial gain for the host organization must be comparable to the Impulz project, which shall ensure the sustainability of the research team after the end of the Impulz project.
8. The theme of the project must be in line with international research trends in the field. Only research topics that represent a significant innovation at the host organization of SAS, it means they are either completely new for the workplace or are usually being not developed for more than 3 years, are considered eligible for the project. The project must clearly declare the current state of the proposed topic within the world and its targets. The evaluation process also assesses the impact of the new topic on the long-term development of the organization, as well as on its sustainability after the end of the project.

Article III

Preparation and filing the applications

1. Applications for the program are submitted on the basis of a call announced by the Presidium of the SAS (P SAS).
2. Applications shall be submitted exclusively in English, with the exception of the extended abstract, which shall also be submitted in Slovak.
3. The host organization may only be a scientific organization of the SAS. The responsible solver must have a full-time employment in the organization throughout the project implementation.
4. A project evaluation shall be carried out halfway through the solution project implementation. In case of a positive evaluation of the project, as well as the fulfilment of the pre-set conditions, the project will continue to be financed. Otherwise, project funding will be stopped. The evaluation of the project also takes into account the acquisition of additional funds for co-financing from sources outside the SAS and the submission of a project to obtain an ERC grant, Horizon Europe or another prestigious foreign grant with comparable funding, such as the Impulz project.

5. The application shall be completed in accordance with the sample, which shall be published whenever the call is issued. An application that is not elaborated using the published template shall not be included in the professional evaluation.
6. The application shall contain the parts necessary for assessment of the qualities of the applicant, the host organization and the proposed research topic, in particular:
 - a. Structured professional curriculum vitae of the candidate, including the presentation of scientific activities and outputs. The CV must contain a unique scientist identifier (ORCID, Researcher ID, etc.).
 - b. Extended project abstract.
 - c. Project proposal for the entire period with a detailed work plan for the period of the first half of the project.
 - d. Draft budget for the entire project period.
 - e. Opinion of the host organization describing the relationship of the project towards the organization's plans for its further development. Description of the scientific infrastructure, staffing capacity and other possible support to be provided to the project, including a specification of the indirect costs provided.
 - f. Acknowledgement made by the organization that the successful candidate will be full-time employed in the organization and that the organization will provide the necessary resources and infrastructure.
 - g. Declaration of project compliance with ethical rules and legislation, consent to capture and process the personal data, a statement on the data veracity and other.

Article IV

Application assessment

1. Applicants who do not meet the formal requirements will be invited to complete their application within 5 working days of invitation receipt. Applications that meet the necessary formal requirements shall be accepted for peer review.
2. The evaluation process is two-round.
3. In the first round, the application is assessed by the Impulz Programme Evaluation Committee, established by the decision of the Presidium of SAS. It consists of independent foreign evaluators from the areas as follows:
 - a. Earth and space sciences
 - b. Mathematical, physical and computer sciences
 - c. Technical science
 - d. Medical science
 - e. Biological and chemical sciences

- f. Agricultural and veterinary sciences
 - g. History science
 - h. Sciences of human and society
 - i. Sciences of culture and art
4. The number of members of the commission is usually 9, in the case of a larger number of submitted applications, the P SAS may increase the number of its members.
 5. Within the first round it evaluates the applicant's curriculum vitae, the extended abstract of the project and the opinion of the host organization. The evaluation committee assesses in particular the following parameters:
 - a. Quality, skills and experience of the applicant, his/her scientific results, ability to obtain and successfully implement projects, especially the ability to submit a successful project to obtain an ERC grant or other prestigious grant scheme, domestic and international cooperation, autonomy from the dissertation supervisor, leadership and other competencies.
 - b. The quality of the project research intention, the topicality of the topic within the international context.
 - c. The quality of the host organization and the conditions it is able to provide for the implementation of the project (research focus, domestic and international cooperation, resources and capacities, infrastructure).
 6. The evaluation committee shall evaluate the projects within the above three parameters. It will propose applications that shall be shortlisted for the second round and reject the others. It will send a brief wording assessment to candidates with rejected applications.
 7. In the second round, the entire project is evaluated, which is at first assessed by three independent foreign evaluators. Evaluators must reach a final consensus evaluation under the responsibility of a rapporteur, who is a member of the Evaluation Committee. The final evaluation will take place in the Evaluation Committee.
 8. The evaluation of applications is carried out mainly at a distance. The Commission's final evaluation, which shall propose the project financing or non-financing, will take place in person. The P SAS may decide that the evaluation also includes a personal presentation of the applicant with the participation of representatives of the host organization.
 9. The final decision on project financing shall be made by the P SAS. All applicants shall receive a project evaluation.

Article V

Project Financing

1. The amount of project funding shall be a minimum of EUR 60 000 and a maximum of EUR 160 000 per year.
2. The eligible project costs are:
 - a. Personnel costs
 - b. Travel costs
 - c. Material
 - d. Research infrastructure
 - e. Publishing costs including Open Access
 - f. Services
3. The contribution to the responsible researcher's wage costs covered from the project is amounting to 1.5 times the salary tariff 11 and the salary scale No. 14 of the valid Special salary scale of university teachers and research and development employees.
4. The respective scientific organization of the SAS undertakes to ensure to pay the indirect project costs.
5. The funds will be transferred to the host organization on the basis of a grant agreement concluded between it and the SAS. This contract shall also specify the conditions for drawing the allocated funds.
6. The funds allocated to the project must be utilized economically, efficiently, effectively and demonstrably in connection with the planned activities of the project.

Article VI

Interim and final project evaluation

1. The part for the implementation and project financing also includes the condition to submit an interim and final report on the solution of the project.
2. The interim report shall be submitted after half term of the project solution. The interim report is evaluated by the Evaluation Committee. Part of the evaluation of the interim report is also a personal presentation made by the responsible researcher with the participation of the host organization's representatives. Based on the evaluation of the interim report, the project is either approved or not for the further funding.
3. The final report shall be submitted at the end of the project solution. The final report is evaluated by the relevant evaluation committee and the P SAS. The evaluation of the final report also includes a personal presentation of the incoming scientist with the

participation of the host organization representatives. Based on the evaluation of the final report, the P SAS will issue a decree of fulfilment/non-fulfilment of the project objectives.

4. When evaluating the interim and final report, only those publications are considered as project outputs in which the responsible solver states thanks exclusively to the Impulz Programme project and projects of prestigious grant schemes obtained during the project implementation.
5. The SAS reserves the right, if necessary, to determine the project evaluation more frequently.

Article VII

The Final Stipulations

1. The present Statute shall enter into force on the very same day it is approved by the P SAS and shall come into force on the same day following the day it is published.
2. All alterations to the Statute must be approved by the P SAS as written sequence numbered amendments to the Statute.

Bratislava 13 February 2020

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President of SAS