



# SASPRO 2 Programme Statute

August 2020



project partner



**100**  
project partner



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No. 945478

## **SASPRO 2 Programme Statute**

**(hereinafter refers as „the Statute“)**

### **Article I**

#### **Introductory provisions**

1. SASPRO 2 Programme (hereinafter refers as "the Programme") is an initiative of the Slovak Academy of Sciences (hereinafter refers as "SAS") and the partners of the Slovak University of Technology hereinafter refers as "STU") and Comenius University (hereinafter refers as "CU") intended to create appropriate and incentive working conditions for researchers and scientists coming from abroad. Under this Programme SAS offers them the opportunity to apply for jobs in scientific organisations of SAS and departments of STU and CU Universities.
2. The objective of SASPRO 2 Programme is to strengthen the SAS scientific organisations and STU and CU Universities departments with researchers from premium top level foreign institutions and provide them with an opportunity to expand and enhance their scientific and other expertise and professional skills, improve cooperation with science and applied science sector, to support multidisciplinary approaches to solve projects. Another objective is to improve the SAS liaison with STU and CU universities together, support their collaboration with foreign institutions and networking that will facilitate international cooperation.
3. The present Statute governs the fundamental terms of SASPRO 2 Programme, its bodies, system of applications submitting by applicants, evaluation criteria, application evaluation procedure, implementation and financing of the fellowships.
4. An integral part of all applications shall be a research project (the "Project") which an applicant plans to implement at the scientific organisation of SAS and departments of STU and CU Universities (hereinafter refers as "the host organisation").
5. There is no entitlement or qualification to finance a fellowship if SASPRO 2 Programme application is submitted, or a negotiation invitation is sent.

6. SASPRO 2 Programme implementation as well as execution of individual fellowships funded under SASPRO 2 Programme shall be governed by the law of the European Union (EU) and the Slovak legislation.

## **Article II**

### **Mobility Schemes of SASPRO 2 Programme**

1. SASPRO 2 Programme is divided into two mobility schemes, under which the applicants may submit applications for funding their fellowships:

- **Reintegration scheme** – is dedicated for Slovak nationals who have carried out their main activity (work, study and other) in the Third countries at least for 3 years minimum (not in EU countries or the associated countries) within the period of 5 years prior to the deadline of application submission and who have resided or carried out their main activity in the Slovak Republic for maximum 3 months prior to the deadline of application submission;
- **Incoming scheme** - is dedicated for scientists (EU citizens, or associated countries citizens and third countries citizens) who have not resided or carried out their main activity (work, studies, etc.) in the Slovak Republic for more than 12 months in the last 3 years prior to the deadline of application submission.

## **Article III**

### **Organisations involved in SASPRO 2 Programme**

1. SASPRO 2 Programme Coordinator is the Slovak Academy of Science (hereinafter refers as „the coordinator“)
2. SASPRO 2 Programme Partners are the Slovak University of Technology, Bratislava (STU), and Comenius University, Bratislava (CU).

3. Organisations entitled to accept scientists within the SASPRO 2 Programme are scientific organisations of SAS, STU and CU scientific departments.
4. After decision of individual partners and final decisions made by SAS Presidium about financing applicant's fellowship SAS shall conclude a Contract on provision of funding to co-finance a project within SASPRO 2 Programme with respective host organisation, upon which the financial funds shall be allocated and conditions to draw funds. The host organisation shall conclude employment contract with respective applicant.
5. The host organisations list (SAS, STU, and CU) is enclosed in the Enclosure No. 1 attached to the Guide for applicants.

#### **Article IV**

##### **SASPRO 2 Programme budget and financing**

1. SASPRO 2 Programme is financed from four sources. The first source is the SAS budget being a Coordinator, the second and third source is a budget of partners determined for SASPRO 2 Programme execution. The Coordinator and partners participate in project amounting to 5.047 million Euro. The fourth source are funds from EU Marie Skłodowska-Curie Programme under the Grant Agreement No: 945478-SASPRO2-H2020-MSCA-COFUND-2019, aimed to support science and innovations H2020 which is published in the Central Register of Contracts.
2. The SASPRO 2 Programme total budget for its entire duration is 9.350 million Euro.
3. Within SASPRO 2 Programme it is foreseen to be co-financed by individual partner host organisations. The financing rules and its amount will be determined by SASPRO 2 Programme partners individually.

## **Article V**

### **SASPRO 2 Programme duration and fellowships duration**

1. SASPRO 2 Programme duration is five years, from the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020 by the 30<sup>th</sup> September 2025. All fellowships funded from SASPRO 2 Programme must be completed no later than on 30 September 2025.
2. The individual fellowships may have a duration for 12 months minimum and 36 months maximum. The fellowship duration shall be proposed by the candidate in his/her application.
3. The fellowship final duration length shall be approved by the SAS Presidium. In case of fellowships of scientists in project's partner host organisation these shall be approved by a STU or CU statutory body/dean.

## **Article VI**

### **SASPRO 2 Programme Bodies**

1. SASPRO 2 Programme Bodies are as follows:
  - a) SASPRO 2 Programme "Steering Committee", a managerial body;
  - b) SASPRO 2 Programme Evaluation Committees;
  - c) SASPRO 2 Programme Ethics Committee;
  - d) SASPRO 2 Programme Appeal Committee.
2. The executive and managerial body of the Programme is the SASPRO 2 Programme "Steering Committee"
3. Evaluation and Appeal Committees for SASPRO 2 Programme are professional and evaluation bodies of the Programme.
4. The Ethical Committee for SASPRO 2 Programme is an advisory body of the Programme.

5. Status of these bodies, their scope of activities, structure and other details are specified in their separate Statutes and Rules of procedure, which are available on the SASPRO 2 Programme website.

## **Article VII**

### **Eligibility criteria for scientists**

1. Applicant authorized to submit his/her application for SASPRO 2 Programme must meet the following general criteria:
  - a) Must be in possession of PhD or equivalent title (titles equivalence is judged according to ERC standards and in accordance with the Slovak law)<sup>1, 2, 3</sup>
  - b) PhD or an equivalent degree earned not earlier than 15 years prior to the application submission. Exceeding this period is allowed in the event of legitimate career breaks such as maternity leave, parental leave and other. The length of career breaks and justification should be indicated in the application, and supported with evidence, if necessary, with a solemn declaration. The recognition of the legitimacy of career breaks and its length is decided by the respective SASPRO 2 Programme Evaluation Committee Chairman,
  - c) An applicant's application, who has signed employment contract for undefined period with a host organisation shall not be supported.
2. Other eligibility criteria vary according to the given scheme of mobility, as described in Article II herein.

## **Article VIII**

### **Eligibility criteria for application**

1. The submitted application must meet the following criteria:

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<sup>1</sup>[https://erc.europa.eu/sites/default/files/document/file/ERC\\_policy\\_on\\_PhD\\_and\\_equivalent\\_doctoral\\_degrees\\_2016.pdf](https://erc.europa.eu/sites/default/files/document/file/ERC_policy_on_PhD_and_equivalent_doctoral_degrees_2016.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Act No. 131/2002 Coll. on Universities and on Changes and Amendments of Certain Acts in the current version

<sup>3</sup> Act No. 293/2007 Coll. on Recognition of Professional Qualifications in the current version

- a) Must be written in English;
  - b) Must be sent electronically through the system for submitting documents and administration of applications (hereinafter refers as "the System") before the deadline;
  - c) Must contain all requested parts and requirements as stipulated in the Guide for applicants.
2. There are not given any restrictions regarding science field, within which an applicant files his/her application. Selection depending on scientific topic orientation, suitability of environment of the host organisation (research topics, infrastructure, Sources) shall be assessed by the Evaluation Committee during the evaluation process.
3. Ethical issues in research projects are governed by the Slovak law and the rules of the European framework programs.
4. For more details, the Guide for applicants, in part 6 – “Ethical Issues,” deals with applications ethical issues.

### **Article IX**

#### **The main evaluation criteria**

1. The main evaluation criteria will be used for applications evaluation in the second round. On that basis the quality of the applicant, the quality of the proposed project, the quality of the host organisation is assessed and the expected impact of implemented fellowship is evaluated.
2. The main assessment criteria that are weighted, are split into sub-criteria, as shown in the following table:

Table No. 1. Evaluation criteria and its weighting

<b>Project Excellence (50%)</b>	<b>Impact (30%)</b>	<b>Quality and efficiency of Implementation (20%)</b>
Quality and credibility of the research/innovation project; level of novelty, appropriate consideration of inter/multidisciplinary, inter/multi -sectoral and gender aspects	Enhancing the future career prospects of the researcher after the fellowships	Coherence and effectiveness of the work plan
Quality and appropriateness of the training and of the two-way transfer of knowledge between the researcher and the host	Quality of the proposed measures to exploit and disseminate the project results	Appropriateness of the allocation of tasks and resources
Capacity of the researcher to reach or re-enforce a position of professional maturity/independence during the fellowships*	Quality of the proposed measures to communicate the project activities to different target audiences including prospects for responsible research and innovations	Appropriateness of the management structure and procedures, including risk management
	Potential for cooperation with the application sector	Appropriateness of the institutional environment (research topics, projects, infrastructure, resources) for the given project**
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Priority in case of ex aequo</b>		
<b>An overall threshold of 70% will be applied to the total weighted score.</b>		

\* To consider the capacity of the researcher to reach or re-enforce a position of professional maturity/independence, the following items will be taken into the consideration: (1) previous achievements of the researcher, in terms of publication activity, leadership, and independent thinking; (2) the match between the researcher background and the scope of the proposed research and training program.

\*\* Since the Participating Organisations are comprised from 70 potential host organisations which are freely chosen by the applicants it is necessary to assess the match between the proposed project and host organisation and the adequacy of institutional environment in order to assess feasibility of the project at given host organisation.



## **Article X**

### **Applying/Enrolment for SASPRO 2 Programme**

1. An applicant shall apply for the SASPRO 2 Programme upon the Call announced by the SASPRO 2 Programme Steering Committee.
2. Applications shall be submitted by applicants electronically via the online system for applications, which is available on the SASPRO 2 Programme website.
3. Application must be submitted before the deadline, otherwise it will not be considered.
4. Terms of calls, as well as other SASPRO 2 Programme key dates are determined by the indicative time schedule published on the SASPRO 2 Programme website for every calendar year.
5. More information on how to register to the system for applications, information on application to submit and information on its individual requirements is given in the Guide for applicants, the part 3 – *How to apply*.

## **Article XI**

### **Evaluation of applications**

1. Applications are evaluated in two rounds of evaluation.
2. In the first round are considered the eligibility criteria of the applicant, and application as it is given in Articles VII - VIII herein of the Statute. In the second round the fulfilment of the main evaluation criteria as listed in Article IX herein of this Statute is judged.
3. Meeting the eligibility criteria is assessed by authorized personnel of SAS, STU, CU Universities depending on which host organisation the application has been submitted. The elaborated proposals shall be evaluated by respective committees which shall make decision about them.

4. The first round evaluation results are sent via email to e-mail addresses given by applicants and are also available for each candidate after logging into the system. The part of the first round evaluation results is also the information about correction option (*redress*) where the applicant may remove small formal mistakes that were listed in the announcement. However, in the process of *redress* is not possible to change the contents of a research project or making significant changes in the application.

5. Applications that were evaluated as successful in the first round pass forward to the second round of evaluation. In the second round at least three independent external evaluators assess each application in accordance with the criteria stipulated in Article IX of the Statute which represents 80% of total evaluation. The remaining 20% constitutes an interview.

6. Each of the criteria evaluators assign a score of 0 to 5. Scores are awarded with a resolution of one decimal place. The verbal description of assigned points is given in the following table:

Table No 2 numerical score definition

<b>0</b>	Application does not match the criterion, in some case the criterion cannot be assessed due to missing or incomplete information.
<b>1</b>	Insufficient. Application corresponds to the criterion in inadequate manner, or there are present serious imperfections.
<b>2</b>	Sufficient. Although the application corresponds to the criterion, there are present significant imperfections.
<b>3</b>	Good. Application corresponds to the criterion well, although improvements are necessary.
<b>4</b>	Very well. Application corresponds to the criterion very well, although certain improvements are still possible.
<b>5</b>	Excellent. Successful application corresponds to the criterion in all relevant aspects. Any imperfections are minor.

7. Score is assigned only to main criteria, not to sub-criteria. They serve to evaluators for a better estimation of the main criteria; they also can help applicants in preparing the application, if necessary.

8. For this part of evaluation a threshold of 70% was determined, which determines the minimum of the score that the application must achieve so that it may pass forward into further part of evaluation, which is an interview.

9. Besides the score assigning the evaluators also comment in writing on each criterion. The score and evaluations are background for consensual opinion elaborated by the application Rapporteur.

10. On basis of evaluators' opinions are rejected applicants whose applications in the evaluation have not reached the specified threshold. Other applicants whose applications reached the specified threshold for all criteria will be invited for personal interview during the Evaluation Committee session. The interview makes 20% of total application evaluation. The consensual opinion (80%) altogether with interview evaluation (20%) will consequently serve as feedback for applicants so that they are familiar with weaknesses and strengths of their project.

11. The final evaluation of each applicant is calculated in ratio: 80% of evaluator's consensus, and 20% evaluation of interview by respective evaluation committee. In case applicants are not invited for interview the final evaluation will be that following from evaluators consensus (0 – 56%).

12. On basis of final evaluation the committees split application into individual categories:

Table No. 3 Categories classification

<b>A</b>	<b>Applications recommended for funding.</b> Applications are placed within the allowed budget. Applicants whose applications were placed in this category will be invited to the negotiation.
<b>B</b>	<b>Applications on the reserve list.</b> Funding is available in such case if the applications of A category are withdrawn by applicants or the agreement shall not be reached during negotiation. Applicants will be kept informed.
<b>C</b>	<b>Applications of sufficient quality.</b> Applications reached a specified threshold for all criteria, but their funding is impossible due to limited budget. These applications will be rejected.
<b>D</b>	<b>Applications of poor quality.</b> Applications have not reached the given limit in one or more of the criteria. These applications will be rejected.
<b>E</b>	<b>Not rated/evaluated applications.</b> These applications were not assessed during the second round of evaluation for the following reasons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Application failed to meet one or more of the criteria evaluated in the first round of evaluation;</li> <li>- Application was a copy of another application, which has been assessed;</li> <li>- Application was withdrawn by the applicant before the second round of evaluation.</li> </ul>

13. Proposal to class the applications into individual categories approves Presidium of SAS according to individual Committees proposals. When deciding, Presidium of SAS takes into account proportional representation of the applications of individual Committees in A category.

14. It is possible to appeal against decision of SAS Presidium about classifying applications into individual categories. The SASPRO 2 Programme Appeal Committee shall deal with appeal in compliance with the Statute of the Appeal Committee.

15. Success ratio, i.e. the ratio of funded applications to submitted applications total number cannot be higher than 50%.

16. Applicants will be informed about the evaluation results via e-mail, publishing the results in the system, as well as on the SASPRO 2 Programme website.

17. Applications which have been classified into categories A and B will be discussed by the Ethics Committee for SASPRO 2 Programme concerning ethical issues that may arise from the project proposal. SAS, STU and CU Universities may, on a proposal from the SASPRO 2 Programme Ethics Committee, require that applicant shall submit the necessary permits and other needed documents issued by the Slovak authorities regarding project ethical issues.

## **Article XII**

### **Negotiation**

1. On base of SAS Presidium decision about classifying the applications in A category the coordinator assigns to each project of A category a project officer, who will be from SAS, STU, CU. Project officer will contact the applicant and a host organisation and invite him/her to the negotiation regarding the contract conditions.

2. During the negotiations, applicants and statutory representatives/dean of host organisations are required to complete the necessary information and details, they will agree details of allocation of funds, their drawing, start and termination of the fellowship. It also will

be agreed, who shall be a scientific tutor from applied science sector for scientist, if a project allows so.

3. In case that during the negotiations the applicant and the SASPRO 2 Programme partner organisation do not reach agreement, the application may be rejected upon the decision made by SAS Presidium and the applicant whose application was ranked in B category will be invited for negotiation. Applicants from this category are invited for negotiation on the basis of the score evaluation of their applications, while the replacing applicant must be from the same Evaluation Committee evaluated of which was the applicant whose application was rejected.

4. Should be successful completion of negotiation in the end a contract will be signed between coordinator and host organisation.

### **Article XIII**

#### **Implementation and financing the project**

1. Funding as amount was agreed during negotiation will be allocated to the host organisation.
2. Terms of funds drawing, the obligations of the host organisation, control arrangements and other substantial requirements shall be governed by a Contract on provision of funding to co-finance a project, between the coordinator and the host organisation.
3. The host organisation shall conclude with the incoming scientist (hereinafter referred to as "scientist") an employment contract with the statutory weekly working time and for a defined period which is specified in the contract.
4. The host organisation must provide scientist a collaboration and assistance in obtaining a temporary residence permit and other administrative matters relating to his/her arrival to Slovakia and to the host organisation.

5. The host organisation must provide scientist reasonable terms for implementation of his/her research project.

6. The following types of eligible costs are paid in the frame of projects funded under SASPRO 2 Programme:

**Living allowance** - its amount is determined by the scientist's length of working experience.

Incomes are stated before tax, including mandatory employer's and employee's deductions:

1 - 5 years working experience after obtaining a PhD degree: 3336 Euro/monthly gross;

6 - 10 years working experience after obtaining a PhD degree: 3792 Euro/monthly gross

11 - 14 years of working experience after obtaining a PhD degree: 4242 Euro/monthly gross

**Mobility/travel allowance** - It is paid together with salary (a part of it) and it is also subjects to taxation and levies: 500 Euro/monthly, gross

**Family allowance** – amounting to 500 Euro/monthly gross. It will be paid to scientist having family with children under 26 years who still study, regardless number of children. The family allowance is a part of salary and is also pre-tax. Possibility to have the family allowance will be identified and checked by appointed project worker during negotiation phase, it is possible to ask for it during working fellowship too. In case two family partners apply for the Programme who look after common children, entitlement for the family allowance is just for one of them.

**Contribution to research cost** - the amount depends on the type of research. Contribution is not paid directly to scientist, but the scientist has the right to dispose of them and use them to perform his/her research:

€800/month - laboratory based research projects;

€400/month - for non-laboratory based research projects;

**Contribution for Overheads** - costs to cover activities related to the project implementation (e.g. electricity, water consumption, sewerage, communication cost, retail supplies, etc.). Indirect costs are amounting to 600 Euro/scientist/month.

7. Project costs under item 6 herein the present Article are considered justifiable if:

- were used practically, or were made during course of project,
- were inevitable and essential to execute project or were arisen from project, and
- are identifiable and verifiable.

8. Unjustifiable costs cannot be covered by funds allocated to projects under the SASPRO 2 Programme. Unjustifiable expenses are in particular:

- a) Costs, which does not fulfil conditions given in item 7 herein,
- b) Costs showed within another EU grant or EURATOM (including grants appointed to EU member states and financed from EU budget or EURATOM and grants appointed by bodies different than REA for EU or EURATOM budgeting purposes).

## **Article XIV**

### **Interim and final reports**

1. The host organisation 's duty with collaboration with scientist is to submit the interim and final reports which is the part of implementation and project financing conditions. Interim and final report contain a financial standing report on the drawing funds and the report on the research project implementation.

2. The interim report shall be submitted every 12 months from the project start. In case that in the contract is agreed fellowship for 12 months, scientist submits only the final report.

3. The relevant Evaluation Committees discuss interim reports. In case the Evaluation Committee finds serious deficiencies in meeting the project goals, or, misconduct when using funding, the Committee issues a proposal for early termination of fellowship. Presidium of SAS

decides about the proposal. In case of scientist fellowship in project partner organisation, a statutory body of STU, or CU shall give their opinion before SAS Presidium makes decision.

4. Scientist submits the final report in the month prior to the planned end of his/her fellowship. Submission of the report shall be connected with scientist's personal presentation at SASPRO 2 scientific seminar.

5. More details on the interim and final reports contents will be published on the SASPRO 2 Programme website.

## **Article XV**

### **Termination of fellowship**

1. Scientist's fellowship terminates in the following events:

- a) As planned under the agreement about funding the SASPRO 2 Programme project;
- b) For reasons of force majeure;
- c) Earlier to schedule:
  - Upon SAS Presidium decision on a base of the Evaluation Committee proposal under Article XIV, paragraph 3 of the Statute herein, in case of scientist fellowship in the partner organisation a STU or CU statutory representative shall give opinion prior to SAS Presidium decision;
  - Upon SAS Presidium decision on a base of scientist's written request after discussing with the relevant Evaluation Committee, in case of scientist fellowship in the partner organisation a STU or CU statutory representative shall give opinion prior to SAS Presidium decision;
  - Upon SAS Presidium decision on a base of statutory representative's written request after discussing it with respective Evaluation Committee.



2. Detailed conditions for fellowship termination shall determine an agreement on project co-funding within SASPRO 2 Programme.

## **Article XVI**

### **Final provisions**

1. The present Statute shall enter into force on the date of its approval by the SAS Presidium and prior shall be approved by the partners. It becomes effective at the date it is published on the SASPRO 2 Programme website.
2. All changes of the Statute must be approved of the SAS Presidium as written number amendments of the Statute.
3. Current wording of the Statute and its amendments will be published on the SASPRO 2 Programme website.

Bratislava, dated 9 September 2020

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President of SAS