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MINISTRY
OF EDUCATION,
SCIENCE
AND SPORT
OF THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA



Research
Council of
Lithuania

EEA Financial Mechanism 2014-2021 Baltic Research Programme Guidelines for Applicants

Table of content

1. GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF THE BALTIC RESEARCH PROGRAMME AND THE CALL IN 2020 IN LITHUANIA.....	4
1.1. OBJECTIVES OF THE BALTIC RESEARCH PROGRAMME	4
1.2. AREAS AND TOPICS OF THE CALL	6
1.3. ALLOCATION FOR PROJECTS.....	8
1.4. TYPES OF RESEARCH AND PROJECTS.....	8
1.5. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	8
1.5.1. Minimum number of partners.....	8
1.5.2. Eligibility criteria for Project Promoters	8
1.5.3. Eligibility criteria for project partners	9
1.5.4. Involving external scientific experts	10
1.6. ELIGIBLE DURATION OF PROJECTS	10
1.7. BUDGET	10
1.7.1. Eligible costs.....	10
1.7.2. Division of budget among the partners	12
1.7.3. Budgetary flexibility.....	12
1.7.4. Payment model.....	12
1.7.5. Co-financing requirements	12
2. HOW TO APPLY	12
2.1. The role of project promoter and the project partners	12
2.2. Application Form	13
2.2.1. General information	13
2.2.2. Project promoter and partners	13
2.2.3. Scientific rationale	15
2.2.4. Budget	15
2.2.5. Annexes.....	17
2.2.6. Submit	17
3. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION.....	17
3.1. Rules and procedures for submission of proposals.....	17
3.4. Correcting or revising a proposal	17
3.5. Withdrawing a proposal	17
4. CHECK LIST.....	17
5. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT	18

5.1. Eligibility check	18
5.2. Evaluation of submitted proposals	18
5.2.1. Evaluation by the individual international experts	19
5.2.2. Evaluation by the Programme Committee	20
5.2.3. Selection criteria applied for equally scored proposals	20
5.3. Selection Process	20
5.4. Negotiation and award process	21
6. TENTATIVE TIMETABLE AND SPECIFIC INFORMATION FOR THIS CALL	21
7. FURTHER INFORMATION AND HELP	21
Annex I Budget calculations	23

1. GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF THE BALTIC RESEARCH PROGRAMME AND THE CALL IN 2020 IN LITHUANIA

The terms and conditions of the “Guidelines for Applicants” have been developed on the basis of the “Regulation on the implementation of the European Economic Area (EEA) Financial Mechanism 2014-2021” adopted by the EEA Financial Mechanism Committee pursuant to Article 10.5 of Protocol 38c to the EEA Agreement on 8 September 2016 and confirmed by the Standing Committee of the EFTA States on 23 September 2016 (hereafter “the Regulation”). The [“Guideline for Research Programmes”](#) constitutes the framework for the “Guidelines for Applicants” by determining the rules for the establishment and implementation of programmes falling under the Programme Area „Research“.

The Baltic Research Programme is composed by Programme Operators in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania through their Ministries responsible for education and research, as well as their implementing agencies for research in close cooperation with the Research Council of Norway. The Ministry of Education, Research and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania and the Research Council of Lithuania are responsible for the implementation of the call for proposals, provided with financing through the MoU between Lithuania and Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein. The objectives of the Baltic Research Programme will be ensured through the joint Programme Committee, with scientific experts from Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Norway.

1.1. OBJECTIVES OF THE BALTIC RESEARCH PROGRAMME

There are two main objectives of the EEA Grants; namely to reduce social and economic disparities in Europe and to strengthen bilateral cooperation of the targeted countries and Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein.

The main goal of the Baltic Research Programme is to **enhance research-based knowledge development in the Baltic States through research cooperation with Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein**. Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania are all targeted in the European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (EUSBSR), which is the first macro-regional strategy in Europe, approved by the European Council in 2009. The aim is to enable the Baltic Sea region to achieve a sustainable environment and an optimal economic and social development. This is the framework within which the Baltic Research Programme relates. The EEA Grants provide instruments for the realisation of the joint Baltic research cooperation aimed at approaching important common challenges. As such, the Baltic Research Programme represents a true innovation, implemented in cooperation with Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein.

Regional added value of the Baltic Research Programme

The Baltic countries share many cultural, geographical, political and social characteristics, and they face many of the same challenges. The collaboration should create outcomes and impact of greater value for the countries involved than could be achieved through national activities alone. Examples of such added value could be building critical mass; networking; sharing data, infrastructures and resources; enhancing scientific excellence; creating societal impacts; and contributing to research-based policymaking.

The projects funded under the Baltic Research Programme should have a detailed communication and knowledge exchange strategy. Where appropriate, the strategy should describe the processes by which research-based knowledge can feed into practice and policy in collaboration with stakeholders.

Design of the programme and aims

The Programme is designed, through competitive and open calls for proposals for joint research projects, to ensure the quality and high level of research. The first call was operated by Estonian Research Council, the next two calls – by Latvia and by Lithuania respectively.

The Programme shall strengthen multilateral relations with the aim of stimulating long-term cooperation, capacity and competence-building, and shall provide a step for future collaborative research projects on the EU and Baltic level. An important objective of the Programme is to strengthen human resources in research through the facilitation of international relations and involving PhD students and postdocs in the projects.

The aim of the Programme is to foster the exchange of scientific knowledge between Norwegian, Icelandic, Liechtenstein's (hereafter Donor States) and the researchers from Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania and to establish advanced collaborative research between research institutions in these countries.

The Programme will be implemented through joint research projects, enabling research teams to bring together complementary skills, knowledge, and resources to jointly address specific research tasks.

The Programme shall contribute to strengthen existing and create new long-term scientific relations between Baltic and Donor States' research institutions and research teams.

Some examples of expected results of the Baltic Research Programme:

- Internationally refereed joint publications published in the best journals of respective science areas as part of the projects: in a joint capacity minimum 2 Baltic States with least 1 Donor State (Norway, Iceland and/or Liechtenstein);
- New scientific methods acquired/training in relation to the scientific methods as part of the project, developing scientific methodology;
- Active involvement of PhD students and postdocs in the project;
- Preparation of joint applications to be submitted for further funding (e.g. EU framework programmes);
- Close cooperation between the partners involved in project from Baltic States and Donor States with the aim for building sustainable cooperation for future activities;
- Knowledge transfer, sharing expertise and best practices.

The Programme is open to the projects

- with or without additional funding from other sources;
- with different kind of and number of project partners involved;
- with already established cooperation with the project partner(s) to be involved as well as projects with the aim of establishing and building up new partnerships;
- with or without a link to other programmes.

Please note that these conditions (pre-existing collaboration, pre-existing publications, extra funding, etc.) will not place any project automatically in a more favourable position compared to others in the evaluation process. No additional points based on these aspects will be awarded.

The project may be additionally financed from other sources and/or be a part of another project. In that case, the budget for the activities under the project financed by Baltic Research Programme must be clearly separated from the other activities and financial sources, and have clear aims and focus, and deliver concrete results, which will be independently evaluated.

Please note that there must be no double financing of any part of the project by any other source of funds.

Please note:

- An application submitted to the calls administered by Latvia or Lithuania will not be considered for support if a similar application already was funded by the Baltic Research Programme under its first call (administered by Estonia). Both theme and research group (Principal Investigator) will be considered in this regard.
- Similar applications sent to both the call in Latvia and in Lithuania will only be considered for support under one of the calls. Both theme and research group (Principal Investigator) will be considered in this regard.

1.2. AREAS AND TOPICS OF THE CALL

Applications to the call have to address the challenges of the Baltic region in the following areas:

1. Technologies and innovation development

This thematic area tackles global issues of climate change, fostering energy efficiency, decarbonization and more responsible using of resources by creating new technologies and innovations. The project should address at least one of the following subtopics.

- Efficient urban energy systems (buildings, industry, services, transport and mobility);
- Renewable energy for local energy systems;
- Alternative fuels for transport and heating;
- The development of waste-to-resource (can refer to any kind of waste, e.g. food, materials, water – and technological solutions converting it into a new resource);
- Safe and sustainable food systems;
- Sustainable management of water and aquatic resources.

2. Cyber security

This thematic area contributes towards exploring possibilities of using artificial intelligence for developing new technologies in the fields of digital security, infrastructure security and the public safety. The project should address at least one of the following subtopics.

- Security of critical infrastructure (prevention, detection, response and reduction of common physical and cyber threats) by applying artificial intelligence;

- Public security and the fight against crime and terrorism (prevention, detection, response and reduction of common physical, biological and cyber threats), including creation and development of new technologies;
- Digital security (governmental institutions, private enterprises and individuals digital privacy and data protection).

3. Preventive and personalized medicine

This thematic area aims to obtain knowledge and develop new approaches about chronic diseases prevention and personalized patient care. The project should address at least one of the following subtopics.

- Population based studies on health behaviours (alcohol and drug use and addiction; physical activity, sedentary lifestyle and diet; mental health) and implications for disease prevention;
- Risk assessment, personalized care, secondary and tertiary prevention of chronic diseases.

4. Culture, migration and inclusive society

This thematic area addresses various aspects of change of cultural-social environment in the Baltic region and Scandinavia tackling challenges that raises from globalization, migration, inequalities and segregation. The project should address at least one of the following subtopics.

- Cultural, social, political aspects of migration between Baltic countries, Scandinavia and third countries;
- Identifying cultural and social patterns as causes for segregation and exclusion;
- Preservation and management of cultural resources of the region in order to increase social awareness, cohesion and inclusive cooperation;
- Facilitation of social inclusiveness by fighting inequalities (gender, education, languages, age, ethnic) in various fields such as everyday life, social infrastructure, labor market or legal systems.

5. Economic, social challenges and innovative society

This thematic area contributes towards exploring processes of social and economic development and tackling challenges to sustainable growth, social inclusion and public services. The project should address at least one of the following subtopics.

- Dynamics in labor markets and income in contemporary societies, and their impact on social services and welfare;
- Social and economic innovations in such areas as education, new business models, social services, labor market;
- Effects of demographic, social, economic and technological transformations on access to public services (education, health care and social services, cultural services).

1.3. ALLOCATION FOR PROJECTS

Overall allocation for the 2020 call	10 000 000 EUR
Minimum amount of project grant	300 000 EUR
Maximum amount of project grant (for applications with partners from both Estonia and Latvia, as well as Donor State partner(s))	Up to 1 000 000 EUR

1.4. TYPES OF RESEARCH AND PROJECTS

Type of research: fundamental and/or applied research

Type of projects: joint research projects involving at least: one Lithuanian partner (Project Promoter), one partner from Estonia, one partner from Latvia and one Norwegian and/or Icelandic and/or Liechtenstein's partner (Project Partners) (see also section 1.5.3).

Activities promoting measures to increase mobility of researchers and PhD students and postdocs participating in the research projects are encouraged in order to facilitate cooperation between the partners and to provide a good platform for future cooperation.

Proposals with cross-disciplinary and multi-disciplinary approach in the proposals are highly welcomed.

1.5. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

1.5.1. Minimum number of partners

A mandatory criterion for the projects is the involvement of:

- Project Promoter from Lithuania; project partners from Lithuania are also possible;
- at least one project partner from Estonia;
- at least one project partner from Latvia;
- at least one project partner from Norway and/or Iceland and/or Liechtenstein (donor project partner).

1.5.2. Eligibility criteria for Project Promoters

Eligible applicants are research organisations¹ established in Lithuania. List of these institutions is provided in the state Register of Education and Research Institutions in the Information, Consultation and Guidance System, AIKOS (www.aikos.smm.lt).

The research team consists of a principal investigator (researcher in charge) and a research staff (main participants, including PhD students, and other participants).

Eligibility criteria for the principal investigator (researcher in charge):

- must be an experienced researcher/project leader with doctoral degree of Lithuania or an equivalent academic degree.

¹ https://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/modernisation/rdi_framework_en.pdf, Ref section 1.3.ee on p.11

Please note that the evaluators will pay particular attention to the qualification and performance of principal investigator (PI).

Eligibility criteria for main participants:

- a main participant of the project is a person who participates in the substantial performance of the project. The main participant of the project shall have at least the master's degree or the respective qualification.

1.5.3. Eligibility criteria for project partners

- **Project partners have to be research organisations**, as defined in the EU Framework for State aid for research and development and innovation (2014/C 198/01): *'research and knowledge dissemination organisation' or 'research organisation' means an entity (such as universities or research institutes, technology transfer agencies, innovation intermediaries, research-oriented physical or virtual collaborative entities), irrespective of its legal status (organised under public or private law) or way of financing, whose primary goal is to independently conduct fundamental research, industrial research or experimental development or to widely disseminate the results of such activities by way of teaching, publication or knowledge transfer. Where such entity also pursues economic activities, the financing, the costs and the revenues of those economic activities must be accounted for separately. Undertakings that can exert a decisive influence upon such an entity, for example in the quality of shareholders or members, may not enjoy a preferential access to the results generated by it.'*²

Information about the project partner institution(s) (name and their role in the project) has to be provided in the application.

- **Project partner(s) from Norway and/or Iceland and/or Liechtenstein** should be listed under „Project partners in Norway, Iceland and/or Liechtenstein“ in the application form (official name of the institution in English is mandatory). Norwegian entities included in the Research Council of Norway List of Research Organisations,³ are eligible in this call. Other Norwegian partners may consult the Research Council of Norway to verify their eligibility status. Icelandic partners should consult RANNIS.
- **Project partner(s) from other Baltic States** should be listed under „Project partners in Estonia and Latvia“ in the application form (official name of the institution in English is mandatory). Estonian partners may consult the Estonian Research Council and Latvian partners may consult the State Education Development Agency to verify their eligibility status.
- **Entities established in countries outside the Baltic States or Norway, Iceland or Liechtenstein (third countries)** can participate as additional project partners. Project costs will not be covered for third country partners from the project grant, except for travel costs for participants from their institution. Indicative estimation of travel costs

² https://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/modernisation/rdi_framework_en.pdf, Ref section 1.3.ee on p.11

³ Research Council of Norway Definition and specification of the concept “research organisation” with list of verified institutions:

<https://www.forskningsradet.no/servlet/Satellite?cid=1253981763130&pagename=VedleggPointer&target=blank>

for them has to be provided in the application. Additional project partner(s) should be listed under “Additional project partners (3rd countries)” in the application form (official name of the institution in English is mandatory).

- **Project partner(s) from Lithuania** should be research organization(s)⁴ established in Lithuania included in the state Register of Education and Research Institutions AIKOS (www.aikos.smm.lt) and listed under “Project partners in Lithuania”.
- Each project partner has to provide a **letter of intent** confirming their participation in the project which will be submitted to the application form by project promoter. The letter of intent shall be signed by the Head of Institution.

Please note that adding project partners during the project is not allowed.

1.5.4. Involving external scientific experts

In justified cases, the external scientific experts outside the project partner(s) institution(s), whose involvement in the research project is important and necessary, may be involved in the project.

Preliminary information about and the justification for involving expert(s) in the project shall to be provided in the application with the indicative estimation of travel costs for them. External scientific expert(s) should be listed under “External scientific expert(s)” in the application form.

1.6. ELIGIBLE DURATION OF PROJECTS

Eligible duration of the project is **36 months**.

The end of the programme period of eligibility of expenditures in the projects is **30 April 2024**.

1.7. BUDGET

1.7.1. Eligible costs

Personnel costs

- The cost of staff assigned to the project (including personnel costs for postdocs and PhD students), comprising actual salaries plus social security charges and other statutory costs included in the remuneration, provided that this corresponds to the project promoter’s and project partners’ usual policy and/or national legislation on remuneration.

Subcontracting

- Generally, only additional or complementary tasks (for example translation, costs of analyses, etc.) could be subcontracted to the third parties. Core project research tasks may not be subcontracted.
- The need for a subcontract must be detailed and justified under “Budget justification” in the application form. The subcontractor is neither a project participant nor a signatory to the project contract or the consortium agreement.
- **Please note** that subcontracting is limited with 15% of total project budget.

⁴ https://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/modernisation/rdi_framework_en.pdf, Ref section 1.3.ee on p.11

Travel costs

- Travel and subsistence allowances for staff taking part in the project, provided that they are in line with the project promoter's and project partner's usual practices on travel costs and do not exceed the relevant national scales.
- Travel costs should be limited to the necessity of the project. Any conference presentation or related published paper must acknowledge the support of the EEA Financial Mechanism 2014-2021.
- As a general rule, the travel cost should be calculated on the basis of economy class travel on public transport.
- Travel costs for students, partners from third countries and external scientific experts involved in the project will be indicated under "Other costs".
- **Please note** that no other than travel costs for partners from third countries and external scientific experts will be covered from the project grant.

Other costs

- Costs of consumables, supplies and services, provided that they are identifiable and assigned to the project; maintenance and using costs of equipment.
- Costs for laboratory animals
- Costs for publishing and disseminating project results
- Costs of scientific forums (organising or participating in)
- Reimbursement of travel costs to the PhD students and postdocs who do not have employment contract, external scientific experts, and partners from third countries.
- All other costs which are clearly required for the implementation of the project and respectively identifiable (e.g. costs of any financial services).
- **Please note** that Baltic Research Programme does not foresee acquisition of equipment.

Institutional overheads

- Institutional overheads to cover the research institution's infrastructure costs with flat rate of 25% of total direct eligible costs, excluding direct eligible costs for subcontracting and the costs of resources made available by third parties, which are not used on the premises of the beneficiary, as well as financial support to third parties.
- Norwegian research institutes can use the same calculation as they do when reporting to the RCN per 2019, including personnel costs and indirect costs. Other direct costs (e.g. travel costs) are budgeted separately. The Norwegian research institutes can use the hourly rate at any time approved by the RCN.

Please note that the evaluators will pay attention to the composition of budget. Expenditures must be proportionate and necessary for the implementation of the project. They must be used for the sole purpose of achieving the objective(s) of the project and its expected outcome(s), in a manner consistent with the principles of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

Please note that the non-recoverable VAT (value added tax) is an eligible project cost.

1.7.2. Division of budget among the partners

Division of the budget among the partners will be a matter of **agreement between the partners to be submitted to the Research Council of Lithuania (hereinafter - RCL) before the signing of the project contract**. Costs listed under section 1.7.1. are eligible costs for project promoter and project partner(s). The distribution of the budget among partners should be adapted to the project activities and ensure that all partners will be actively involved in the project tasks.

1.7.3. Budgetary flexibility

During the course of the project, budgetary flexibility is foreseen in order to enable an appropriate project management. Reallocation of funds among the budget headings can be made once a year by informing RCL in advance.

If the reallocation of funds does not exceed 10% of the total budget, any new addendum to the existing contract will not be issued. For reallocation of funds above 10% of the total budget, a written permission from RCL must be obtained and a new addendum to the contract will be signed. This request must be fully substantiated and justified. If the request is deemed unfunded, the Project Promoter will be advised in writing. The balance of involvement of partners in the project activities should be kept.

1.7.4. Payment model

- Project funds will be transferred into the bank account of the Project Promoter (legal body) specified in the Project contract.
- Payments to Project Promoters will be made in the form of advanced payments, interim payments and final payment. The Project Promoters will have an opportunity to apply for an advance payment of up to 40% in the application submitted. At least 10% of the grant shall be withheld until the completion report has been positively evaluated and approved.
- Project Promoters will transfer funds to Project Partners in a timely manner according to the contract.
- The payment model will be specified in the Project contract.

1.7.5. Co-financing requirements

- Grants from the programme may be up to 100% of total eligible project costs, provided all applicable national and EU rules on State Aid are complied with.
- Any remaining costs of the project shall be provided or obtained by the Project Promoter and the project partners, according to their respective shares of the project budget. Co-financing cannot be in-kind.

2. HOW TO APPLY

2.1. The role of project promoter and the project partners

- Applications are submitted electronically to RCL via JUNKIS submission system (junkis.lmt.lt) by the Lithuanian institutions as Project Promoters (see also section 3).
- The Project Promoter has the main responsibility for initiating, preparing and submitting the application, taking care of the administrative and management tasks of the project,

and ensuring the active involvement of the Project Partner(s) in the preparation of the application and implementation of the project. Project Partners have to discuss and define further the role of the project coordinator according to their needs.

- Project Partners should take an active part in the preparation of the project proposal, submit the necessary information to and agree with the Project Promoter on their respective roles and contributions. The Project Promoter should inform all partners about the final version of the project proposal prior to submission.

2.2. Application Form

Application Form has the following sheets:

- General information
- Project promoter and partners
- Scientific rationale
- Budget
- Annexes
- Submit

2.2.1. General information

Please submit the following information in English and, where indicated, in Lithuanian:

- project title in Lithuanian and in English;
- research area, field, type of research, acronym, keywords
- does the application address some of the challenges set for this call?
 - possible to select multiple choice
- impact of the project on selected challenge(s)
 - maximum length is 2000 characters (incl. spaces)
- planned start and end of the project
- deadlines for submitting scientific reports
- summary in Lithuanian
 - please write a concise summary in a popular science format describing the objectives of the Project for non-specialist audience. This summary will be made public if the application is approved for financing.
 - maximum length is 2000 characters (incl. spaces)
- summary in English
 - please write a concise summary in a popular science format describing the objectives of the Project for non-specialist audience. This summary will be made public if the application is approved for financing.
 - maximum length is 2000 characters (incl. spaces)

2.2.2. Project promoter and partners

Please submit the following information (in English):

Project promoter and research team

- Project Promoter (Host institution in Lithuania)
 - name of institution
 - contacts, account number and legal status
- Principal investigator in Lithuania

- position within the project
 - degree
 - person (name of principal investigator)
 - current position(s)
 - institution where the person will be employed within the project
- Senior research staff in Lithuania
 - position within the project
 - degree
 - person (name of principal investigator)
 - current position(s)
 - institution where the person will be employed within the project
- Postdocs and PhD students involved in the project
 - please describe the expected contribution of postdocs and PhD students in the performance of the project and in which way the subject(s) of the dissertation(s) are related to the grant project. The topic of the dissertation, the name and academic degree of the supervisor shall also be specified. Please describe how you intend to provide for a gender balance in the project implementation.
 - maximum length is 6000 characters (incl. spaces)

Please note that master students do not belong to the main participants (no CVs required), but in case of project funding they should be listed (by name) in the Project Contract.

Please describe how you intend to provide for a gender balance in the project implementation.

Project partners

- Project partners in Norway, Iceland and/or Liechtenstein
 - state
 - name of institution (in English)
 - name of principal investigator
- Project partners in Latvia
 - state
 - name of institution (in English)
 - name of principal investigator
- Project partners in Estonia
 - state
 - name of institution (in English)
 - name of principal investigator
- Project partners in Lithuania
 - name of institution (in English)
 - name of principal investigator
- Additional project partners (3rd countries)
 - state
 - name of institution (in English)
 - name of principal investigator
- External scientific expert(s)

- scientific qualification
- name and contact information
- comments
 - please describe the role of external scientific expert(s) in the project. How will the partnership contribute to the achievement of the project goals? What is the expert's technical/ professional contribution to the project?
 - maximum length is 3000 characters, incl. spaces

2.2.3. Scientific rationale

Please provide the following information (in English):

- general theoretical background of the project along with references to the hitherto work, here and/ or elsewhere; the connection of the project with the research of the same direction of the applicant and other researchers;
- the main objectives and working hypotheses of the project;
- research methods, equipment and devices to be used, incl. existence or absence thereof;
- forecast on internationally refereed (Baltic-Donor States in a joint capacity) publications published as part of the project and other output is planned to be delivered;
- scientific competence of principal investigator, partners and other project implementers and the justification of the composition of a project group (including aspects of gender balance);
- the expected significance of the project with respect to the science, national and regional economy, social sphere, culture, etc.;
- the expected time schedule of the research by years and project milestones;
- international cooperation (Please submit information about international cooperation carried out within the project. Please describe the role of project partner(s). How will the partnership contribute to the achievement of the project goals? What is the project partner's technical/professional contribution to the project? Are wider effects of the partnership expected?);
- ethic issues related to project activities;
- additional information.

2.2.4. Budget

Eligible costs (see also 1.7.1 and Annex I):

- Personnel costs (the cost of staff assigned to the project)

- Travel and subsistence allowances for staff taking part in the project
- Subcontracting costs (no more than 15% of total budget project)
- Other costs (consumables)
- Institutional overhead (flat rate of 25% of total direct eligible costs, excluding direct eligible costs for subcontracting)

Costs are eligible if they are justified, necessary and appropriate, and directly related to the project.

For project promoter and each project partner a separate budget should be planned and prepared in accordance with their accounting principles and usual internal rules.

Costs should be stated in EUR.

Please note that no other than only travel costs for partners from third countries as well as for scientific experts will be covered from the project grant.

Please note that the donor partners' research institutions may, as an alternative to an institutional overhead flat rate of 25 %, use unit costs set on the basis of hourly rates related to "cost of staff" and "indirect costs", approved by the Research Council of Norway for each individual research institute.

These unit costs can form part of the grant awarded to research institutes from donor programme partners participating in projects falling under Programme Area "Research", provided that:

- That entity does not claim any further staff costs or indirect costs for its participation in the project;
- The RCN confirms to the relevant Programme Operator that the hourly rate has been approved for the specific entity in the framework of a funding scheme operated in donor states for a similar type of project. The RCN is Donor Programme Partner in all programmes including Programme Area "Research";
- That any other costs claimed by that entity (e.g. travel costs) follow the general rules on eligibility of expenditure contained in the legal framework of the EEA and Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2014-2021.

Budget justification

- The financial background of the project should include a justification and calculations for the funding applied for and the intended expenses by budget lines during the whole project (see Annex 1):

- budget justification should be made by project years and by project promoter and project partner(s)
- maximum length is 5000 characters, incl. spaces.

2.2.5. Annexes

- CVs of Lithuanian principal investigator and senior research staff, partners principal investigator(s), external scientific expert(s) (including the list of publications) shall be attached.
- Project promoter's and partners' letters of intent confirming participation in the project shall be attached.
- Other documents, relevant to the application.

2.2.6. Submit

Lithuanian principal investigator shall submit the application electronically via JUNKIS submission system (junkis.lmt.lt).

3. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

3.1. Rules and procedures for submission of proposals

- The application must be written in English (summary and title also in Lithuanian, see detailed description in part 2).
- The application shall be submitted electronically via JUNKIS (junkis.lmt.lt) in the period from 3 February 2020 to 3 April 2020.
- To submit an application via JUNKIS, the applicant must be registered as a user of the system and follow the instructions given in JUNKIS.
- The basis of the realisation of the grant project is a legal person (hereinafter referred to as the Institution). The application shall be accompanied with the mandatory supplementary documents - the letters of intent signed by the Head of participating institutions.

3.2. About JUNKIS

- Each application has a unique identification code (assigned by JUNKIS) which will remain the same throughout the duration of the grant. Any technical issues about using JUNKIS can be resolved by contacting technical support (Asta Aleksandraviciene, Tel. +370 676 18297, E-mail asta.aleksandraviciene@lmt.lt; Kornelija Janaviciute, Tel. +370 676 14629, E-mail kornelija.janaviciute@lmt.lt).

3.3. Call closure deadline

The deadline of submitting the grant applications for projects is 3 April 2020 at 16.00 (EET).

3.4. Correcting or revising a proposal

Once the call has closed correcting or revising a proposal is not applicable.

3.5. Withdrawing a proposal

Applications can be withdrawn any time prior the call submission deadline.

4. CHECK LIST

In order to be evaluated, proposals must be:

- 1) submitted via the online application form in JUNKIS before the submission deadline;

- 2) submitted by an eligible Project Promoter;
- 3) completed following the prescribed format and requirements;
- 4) accompanied by the letter of intent signed by the Head of the host Institution and other required annexes in the Application Form

Make sure that your proposal fulfils the eligibility criteria of the call (see also 5.1).

Respect the length limitations set for the application form.

Enter the requested information on the submission site as soon as possible.

5. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

5.1. Eligibility check

Proposals must fulfil all eligibility criteria if they are to be retained for evaluation.

The following eligibility criteria apply to all proposals submitted under the call:

- The planned requested funding of the programme grant per project should be no less than 3 00 000 and no more than 1 000 000 EUR and having project promoter from Lithuania, partners from Estonia and Latvia, in addition to partners from Norway and/ or Iceland and/ or Liechtenstein.
- Project implementation period fits the period of 36 months.
- Project promoter shall establish cooperation with at least one research team/ research organization from Estonia and at least one research team/ research institution from Latvia, in addition to at least one research institution from Norway and/ or Iceland and/ or Liechtenstein (donor project partner);
- Eligible project promoters and project partners are research organisations, as defined in the EU Framework for State aid for research and development and innovation (2014/C 198/01);
- Receipt of proposal before the deadline date and time established in the call;
- Completeness of the application form and presence of all requested files;
- The content of the proposal must relate to the topic(s) and funding scheme set out in the call.

Please note that the completeness of the information contained in the proposal will be for the experts to evaluate; the eligibility checks only apply to the presence of the appropriate parts of the proposal. If it becomes clear that one or more of the eligibility criteria have not been fulfilled, the proposal is declared ineligible and withdrawn from any further examination.

If a proposal fails to meet the requirements, then the applicant will be notified of that within ten working days after the deadline for submission of applications. Applications and all relevant documentation will be maintained in the databases of JUNKIS and in RCL.

5.2. Evaluation of submitted proposals

Detailed description of the evaluation process is provided in the „Guidelines for Evaluators“.

5.2.1. Evaluation by the individual international experts

Eligible proposals are submitted to independent international external peer evaluation. All proposals shall be evaluated by three independent experts with a doctoral degree or an equivalent academic degree. Based on these evaluations a consensus report with the scores for each proposal will be written. Consensus report will be available for the applicants (without the experts' names).

The experts are invited to review the quality of the submitted proposals based on three core evaluation criteria:

1) Scientific and/or technical excellence (score 0-5, threshold 3.5):

- sound concept, and quality of objectives
- progress beyond the state-of-the-art
- quality and effectiveness of the scientific methodology and associated work plan
- innovation and new approaches

2) Quality and efficiency of the implementation and the management, added value from the international cooperation (score 0-5, threshold 4):

- appropriateness of the Project Promoter and project partners participating in the project
- appropriateness of the work plan
- appropriate allocation and justification of the resources to be committed (personnel, travel, subcontracting and other costs)
- appropriateness of research environment for the proposed research
- strengths of consortium complementarity of skills
- researcher training
- international cooperation beyond the project, quality and sustainability of forward looking cooperation between the partners

3) Potential impact through the development, dissemination and use of project results (score 0-5, threshold 3.5):

- relevance of the proposal in relation to the objectives of the Programme and challenges of the call
- impact from the project to research-based knowledge development in Baltic region
- potential of the research topic to be internationally competitive
- potential take up and use of the project results by end-users including the clarity, appropriateness and efficiency of the planned knowledge transfer measures

Experts examine the issues to be considered comprising each evaluation criterion, and score these on a grading scale from 0 to 5. Half point scores may be given. Maximum total score can be 15 (threshold - 12.5). Score values indicate the following assessments:

- 0** The proposal fails to address the criterion or cannot be assessed due to missing or incomplete information.
- 1** **Poor.** The criterion is inadequately addressed, or there are serious inherent weaknesses.

- 2 **Fair.** The proposal broadly addresses the criterion, but there are significant weaknesses.
- 3 **Good.** The proposal addresses the criterion well, but a number of shortcomings are present.
- 4 **Very Good.** The proposal addresses the criterion very well, but a small number of shortcomings are present.
- 5 **Excellent.** The proposal fully addresses all relevant aspects of the criterion. Any shortcomings are minor.

Based on consensus reports prepared by the panels, an overall ranking list with the scores and ranking list of each expert panel with the scores is prepared to be submitted to the Programme Committee.

5.2.2. Evaluation by the Programme Committee

According to the Guideline for Research Programmes, the Programme Committee shall provide input to the strategic direction of the Baltic Research Programme. The Programme Committee shall recommend to the Programme Operator which proposals to select for funding and final awarding of grants. The Programme Committee evaluates the proposals based on the ranking list submitted by the Programme Operator based on the evaluation scores and according to the proposals' relevance to the call. The Programme Committee shall contribute to the achievement of the objectives given in the Programme Agreement, implemented through the call.

The Programme Committee may also propose adjustments to the ranking of proposals as far as needed to ensure the consistency of given scores to written evaluation.

The Programme Committee selects at least one project proposal from each thematic priority, which is above the threshold (12.5). If in some thematic priorities the project proposals have not reached the threshold, then the rest of the funding will be distributed according to the overall ranking list.

5.2.3. Selection criteria applied for equally scored proposals

Within the groups of equally scored proposals, the criteria for ranking are applied in the following order:

- 1) proposals are prioritised according to the scores they have been awarded for the criterion „Scientific excellence“;
- 2) proposals are prioritised according to the scores they have been awarded for the criterion „Quality and efficiency of the implementation and the management, added value from the international cooperation“, paying special attention to quality and sustainability of cooperation;
- 3) proposals having a good gender balance (project promoter) are considered to have the priority.

5.3. Selection Process

The Programme Operator in cooperation with the Programme Committee will make its final decision to support or not support the applications on the basis of the ranking list provided by RCL.

The applicants will be notified of the results of evaluation of applications within two weeks after the final decision of the Programme Committee. Each applicant will receive a notice

regarding the decision. The applicant can read the evaluation consensus report of appropriate proposal in JUNKIS.

All materials relating to the evaluation of application will be confidential until the adoption of financing decisions. The list of projects to be financed will be disclosed on the website of RCL.

5.4. Negotiation and award process

The Project Promoters of the proposals selected for funding will be invited to begin negotiations.

In addition to any issues raised in the evaluation consensus report, the applicants may receive requests for further administrative, legal, technical and financial information necessary for the preparation of a project contract. Changes, possibly including modifications to the budget, may be requested. All requested changes shall be justified.

With regard to each grant a Project contract will be concluded for the term of the grant.

The Project contract will establish mutual rights, obligations and liabilities of the parties.

Project Promoter shall also sign a partnership agreement with the project partner(s).

6. TENTATIVE TIMETABLE AND SPECIFIC INFORMATION FOR THIS CALL

- Launching and matchmaking event in Vilnius: tentatively January or February, 2020
- Open call for proposals: 3 February, 2020
- End of the open call: 3 April, 2020
- Planned start of the selection period: April, 2020
- Planned end of the selection period: October, 2020
- Planned start of the projects: 1 January, 2021
- Start-up seminar for the Project Promoters: 4th Q 2020
- Planned end of the projects: 31 December, 2023
- Final conference (organised by Lithuanian programme operator): tentatively, the second half of 2024
- The end of the programme period of eligibility of expenditures in the projects is: 30 April, 2024

7. FURTHER INFORMATION AND HELP

- [Regulation on the implementation of the EEA Grants 2014-2021](#)
- [Guideline for Research Programmes](#)

The questions and queries concerning the call for proposals should be directed to:

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Annex I Budget calculations

	Personnel costs (staff assigned to the project)	Travel and subsistence allowances for staff taking part in the project	Subcontracting*	Other costs	Total direct costs	Overhead **/***	Total budget with overhead
Partner 1							
Partner 2							
Partner n							
Total							

* Subcontracting cost will be no more than 15% of the project budget from the Programme.

** Indirect eligible costs (overhead) shall be determined by applying a flat rate of 25% of the total direct eligible costs, excluding direct eligible costs for subcontracting and the costs of resources made available by third parties which are not used on the premises of the beneficiary, as well as financial support to third parties.

*** According to the Research Council of Norway's (RCN) procedure for "Payroll and indirect costs", the Norwegian Research Institutes calculate the payroll and indirect costs together, as hourly rates for the staff participating in a project. These hourly rates are considered unit costs in the meaning of Article 8.4.1 (b) on the Regulation. In such cases, indirect costs may not be claimed as a separate category.

Norwegian research institutes can use the same calculation as they do when reporting to the RCN per 2019, including personnel costs and indirect costs. Other direct costs (e.g. travel costs) are budgeted separately. The Norwegian research institutes can use the hourly rate at any time approved by the RCN.