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EEA Financial Mechanism 2014 – 2021 The Baltic Research Programme Guide for Applicants

The 3rd call of the Baltic Research Programme
Coordinated by Latvia

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1. General principles of the Baltic Research Programme and the call in 2019

The terms and conditions of the “Guide 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 “Guide 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 Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania through their Ministries 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 and Science of the Republic of Latvia and the State Education Development Agency (hereinafter- SEDA) are responsible for the implementation of the second call for proposals, provided with financing through the MoU between Latvia and Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein. The objectives of the programme will be ensured through the joint Programme Committee, with scientific experts from Latvia, Estonia, 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 challenges. As such, the Baltic Research Programme represents a true innovation, implemented in cooperation with Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein.

Regional added value of the 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 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 is operated by Estonian Research Council and the next ones will come in Latvia and in Lithuania.

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 EU and regional 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 postdoctoral researchers (hereafter – 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 Baltic States' researchers and to establish advanced collaborative research between research institutions in donor states and Baltic States.

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 challenges.

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 programme:

- Internationally refereed joint publications published in the best journals of respective areas as part of the projects: in a joint capacity minimum 2 Baltic States with at 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 experiences 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: 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 the 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: There must be no double financing of any part of the project by any other source of funds.

- 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

The programme shall fund collaborative research projects in basic and applied research. For the Latvian call in 2020, the research proposals should focus on at least one of the following five thematic priorities and topics:

1. Public health; e- health

The research projects in the thematic area should contribute to knowledge about disease prevention and patient-centred health care system.

The research proposal should be focused on at least one of following topics:

- Population based studies on health behaviours (alcohol and drug use and addiction; physical activity, sedentary lifestyle and diet; and mental health) and implications for disease prevention;
- E-health and integrated care;
- Cardiovascular disease and cancer prevention, their personalized and patient-centered care.

2. Migration; social inclusion

The thematic area contributes to exploring migration processes and tackling challenges that arise from migration, as well as studying other challenges and topics related to social inclusion and equality:

- The study of social inclusion involves identifying patterns and trends of social inequality in a broad perspective, e.g. economic inequality, inequality of education, inequalities between geographic areas or minority and majority groups, as well as exploring causes and consequences of these patterns;
- Research proposals can investigate third country migration into EEA/EFTA countries, as well as inter-EEA/EFTA migration;
- Migration between the Baltic countries and Scandinavia is an area of special interest.

Proposals on migration are encouraged to not only explore and identify solutions for challenges which arise from immigration, but also challenges around emigration such as brain drain and depopulation.

Proposals should aim to deliver policy impact via policy recommendations and other pathways.

3. Cyber security; public security

Thematic area of cybersecurity and public security will contribute towards research challenges surrounding resilient public and private infrastructure (especially critical infrastructure) and overall safety of digital life in EEA/EFTA countries especially for protecting people against malicious cyber activities.

The research proposal should be focused on at least one of the following topics:

- Proposals on cybersecurity should explore questions surrounding data protection and safety of online activity for public and private institutions and society in general;
- Proposals in public security should be focused towards research to optimize the functionality of different emergency services and the criminal justice system.
- Regional economic development; employment, labour market regulations and social policy

4. Regional economic development; employment, labour market regulations and social policy

In the context of urbanisation, emigration and ageing society, the economically lagging regions experience decline of their populations, low productivity growth and a strain on their social services.

The research proposals should focus on at least one of following topics:

- addressing the challenges of societal and economic transformations in regions in the context of declining and ageing population and low productivity growth;
- delivering quality social services and implementing viable and equitable labour market policies;
- solutions for increasing the prosperity of regions, comparatively examining social policies, labour market policies and their effects on individuals and households.

The use of advanced quantitative methods using a wide range of available datasets (e.g. big data) is encouraged.

5. Innovative solutions for efficient and sustainable use of resources

This thematic area addresses how to tackle global issues of energy efficiency, decarbonisation and more responsible use of resources. Research proposals should focus on materials, technologies, digital solutions and socioeconomic aspects in at least one of the following topics:

- 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.

1.3. ALLOCATION FOR PROJECTS

Overall allocation for the 2020 call	7 541 272 EUR
Minimum grant amount per project	300 000 EUR
Maximum grant amount per project (for applications with a partner from either Estonia or Lithuania, and at least one from Donor State partner(s))	800 000 EUR
Maximum grant amount per project (for applications with partners from both Estonia and Lithuania, and at least one from Donor State partner(s))	1 000 000 EUR

1.4. TYPES OF RESEARCH AND PROJECTS

Type of research: basic and/or applied research

Type of projects: joint research collaboration projects involving at least one Latvian partner (project promoter) and one partner from other Baltic States and one Norwegian and/or Icelandic and/or Liechtenstein's (project partners). Only Latvian research organisations/institutions may apply as project promoters. See section 2.2.

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.

2. Eligibility criteria

2.1. MINIMUM NUMBER OF PARTNERS

A mandatory criterion for the projects is the involvement of:

- at least one project partner from at least one of the Baltic States (Estonia and/or Lithuania);
- at least one project partner from Norway and/or Iceland and/or Liechtenstein (donor project partner).
- 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.

2.2. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR PROJECT PROMOTERS

Eligible applicants are research and development organisations in Latvia, 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.'*

The project promoter should correspond to the status of a research institution registered in the national register of Latvia. List is provided: <https://izm.gov.lv/en/research-institutions>.

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

Must be an experienced senior researcher/ the project manager with doctoral degree of Latvia.

Please note that applicant shall ensure that Law on International Sanctions and National Sanctions of the Republic of Latvia is followed¹.

2.3. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR PROJECT PARTNERS

Project partners are research organisations, as defined in the EU Framework for State aid for research and development and innovation (2014/C198/01), established in the Donor States, Estonia and Lithuania.

The proposal is submitted electronically via rsgrants.viaa.gov.lv (hereinafter – rsgrants system) by the project promoter.

The project team is made of administrative staff (administrative management team e.g. project coordinator, project accountant) and implementation staff consisting of a research team/staff. Senior researcher, researchers, postdocs, research technical staff, research attending staff and PhD students may be included in the composition of a research team/staff.

Please note, that the evaluators will pay particular attention to the qualification and performance of qualification of the project participants, as well as the gender balance.

Information about the project partner institution(s) (name and their role in the project) has to be provided in the application. All involved **project partner(s)** should be listed under section “Project’s partner” in the project application form (official name of the institution in English is mandatory).

¹ More detailed information can be found here: <https://www.mfa.gov.lv/en/policy/sanctions>

To approve the eligibility status of project partner(s), they should:

- correspond to the list of verified organisations (the respective links provided in the document below or as Annex I);
- carry out self-assessment form in case of not being verified (Annex II to this document);
- go through the verification process provided by the respective council or agency in case of insufficient information in self-assessment form (the respective information provided in the document below):
 - Project partners from Norway: approved Norwegian research organisations, who are automatically eligible, may be found here: <https://www.forskningsradet.no/en/apply-for-funding/who-can-apply-for-funding/research-organisations/approved-research-organisations/>. Other Norwegian partners may consult the Research Council of Norway to verify their eligibility status.
 - Project partners from Iceland: For questions, please, consult RANNIS.
 - Project partner(s) from Lithuania, may look up the List of Research Organisations in Lithuania, which displays those who are automatically eligible². For questions, please, consult Research Council of Lithuania.
 - Project partner(s) from Estonia, may look up the List of Research Organisations in Estonia, which displays those who are automatically eligible: <https://www.etis.ee/Portal/Institutions/Index?lang=ENG>. For questions, please, consult the Estonian Research Council.
 - Project partners from Latvia should correspond to the status of a research institution registered in the national register of Latvia. List is provided: <https://izm.gov.lv/en/research-institutions>.
- 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. Additional project partner(s) should be listed under “Project’s partner” (naming additional partner) in the application form (official name of the institution in English is mandatory).
- Each project partner shall provide a letter of intent confirming their participation in the project which will be submitted to the application form by project promoter.
- Please note that adding project partners during the project is not allowed.

² Annex I to this document

2.4. INVOLVEMENT OF EXTERNAL 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 has to be provided in the application with the indicative estimation of travel costs for them. External scientific expert(s) should be listed under “External expert(s)” in the application form.

2.5. ELIGIBLE DURATION OF PROJECTS

Eligible duration of the projects is **36 months**, but not later than April 30, 2024.

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

3. The budget and eligible costs

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.

3.1. DIRECT ELIGIBLE COSTS

Personnel costs

The costs of a staff (administrative and implementation 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 partner’s usual policy on remuneration. Administrative costs may be up to 10% of the direct eligible costs. Conditions for Norwegian research institutions see section 3.2.

Additional costs shall not be paid to leading research fellows, senior research fellows and other research fellows and professors and docents who get paid for full-time employment from other financing sources.

Travel costs

Travel and subsistence allowances for staff assigned to the project, incl. reimbursement of travel costs to the PhD students and postdocs who do not have employment contract and external scientific experts should be in line with the project promoter’s and project partner’s usual practices on travel costs and shall not exceed the relevant national scales.

Travel costs should be limited to the necessity of the project.

As a general rule, the travel cost should be calculated on the basis of economy class travel on public transport. **Please note** that no other costs than travel costs for external scientific experts will be

covered from the project grant.

Please note that for partners from third countries no costs (including travel costs) will be covered from the project budget.

Other costs

Costs of publishing and dissemination of project results, costs of scientific forums (organization or participation) and other justified costs necessary for implementation of the project. All other costs which are clearly required for the implementation of the project and respectively identifiable (e.g. costs of any financial services).

Depreciation costs of existing equipment of the project promoter and project partners– should take into account generally accepted accounting principles. The depreciation of equipment may be charged to the project proportionally to its actual workload and usage period in the project according to accountancy rules and good accountancy practice.

Costs of inventory, tools and materials - should be identifiable and assigned to the project (materials, reagents, laboratory animals necessary for research and experiments etc.).

Please note that The Baltic Research Programme is not foreseen for acquisition of new equipment.

Subcontracting

Generally, only additional or complementary tasks (for example translation, costs of analyses, etc.) may be subcontracted to third parties, incl. audit costs, if project budget for project promoter or project partner exceeds EUR 325,000. Core project research tasks shall not be subcontracted.

The need for subcontract must be detailed and justified in the detailed budget of the application form. The subcontractor is neither a project participant nor a signatory to the project contract or the consortium agreement. Public procurement rules shall be respected.

Please note that subcontracting is limited with 15% of total project costs.

3.2. INDIRECT ELIGIBLE COSTS

Institutional overheads

To cover the research institution's infrastructure costs with flat rate 25% of total direct eligible costs, excluding direct eligible costs for subcontracting.

Please note that most partners from Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein (such as universities, university colleges, enterprises, health authorities) calculate their costs as in H2020 projects. Indirect costs (overheads) are calculated as a flat rate 25% of the total direct eligible costs.

As an alternative, Norwegian research institutes, which annually report hourly rates to the Research Council of Norway³ for use in RCN applications, may instead use these rates as *Standard scales of unit costs* (ref. Regulation art. 8.4. b). This means that they should use the same rates in the applications to the programme that they use in applications in calls announced by the Research Council of Norway. It is important to note that in such cases, no indirect or overhead costs should be included in the budget, as they are already included in the hourly rates. Other costs claimed by that entity (e.g. travel costs) will follow the general rules on eligibility of expenditure contained in the call documents and will be budgeted separately.

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.

6. 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 SEDA before the signing of the project contract. The project's budget should reflect the actual contribution made by each party and should be subject to negotiation between the project promoter and the 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. Costs listed under section 3 are eligible costs for project promoter and project partner(s).

7. 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 SEDA in advance. If the reallocation of funds does not exceed 10% of the total budget, new addendum will not be needed. For reallocation of funds above 10% of the total budget, a written permission from SEDA 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 partners should be ensured.

8. Payment model

Project funds will be transferred to 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.

9. 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

³ <https://www.forskingsradet.no/contentassets/3aac4d1b26724a1d8b9d1919814e84d7/stim-eu-liste-over-institutter-2019-med-logo.pdf>

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.

4. How to apply?

4.1. THE SUBMISSION

Applications are submitted electronically via the rsgrants system by Latvian research organizations (project promoters). In order to access the rsgrants system project promoter must obtain a login name from the SEDA. Each application has a unique user name and password which will remain the same throughout the duration of the project. The proposal must be written in English (summary and title also in Latvian).

The rsgrants system will be available for applications as of 19 August, 2020. Once the call has closed, correcting or revising the application is not possible. The proposals submitted via the rsgrants system are entered into database after the call closure. **Versions of applications sent in paper, removable electronic storage medium (e.g. CD-ROM), by e-mail or by fax will not be considered as having been received by the SEDA.**

Technical details on the use of the system can be resolved by contacting the technical support. Contact details are available on the website of the SEDA and on the rsgrants system.

To submit the application, a responsible person nominated by Latvian research organisations (project promoter) has to approve the application via the system.

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 and implementation phase of the project. The project promoter should inform all partners about the final version of the project proposal prior to submission. Project partners have to discuss and define further the role of the project coordinator according to their needs, submit the necessary information and agree with the project promoter on their respective roles and contributions.

Application form:

Application form has the following sections:

- Application

- Project promoter, partners and external experts

- Budget

- Annexes as uploadable documents as research proposal, detailed budget, timetable, ethics assessment etc.

APPLICATION

Please submit the following information:

- Project title in Latvian and English

Project promoter in Latvia (*research and development organisation as defined in the EU Framework for State aid for research and development and innovation (2014/C 198/01)*)
Registration number
Planned start and end of the project
The total costs (EUR) (*will appear automatically after providing information under the "Budget", incl. EEA grants (85% of the total costs) and state budget co-financing (15% of the total costs)*)
Project summary in English (*Please write a concise summary in a popular science format describing the objectives, planned activities as well as planned results of the project for non-specialist audience. The description should include also information on all project partners (incl. Project promoter), planned implementation period and planned total cost. If the application is approved, this summary will be made public. Project summary in English should clearly correspond to the information provided in the Annex 1 "Project Summary (in Latvian)"*)
Maximum length of each summary is 3 200 (*incl. spaces*)
Submission date:
Date of status change
Type of research - Basic and/or Applied research
Field of research
Field of research (detailed)
Smart specialisation area
Does application address the challenges/priorities set for this call? (*Possible to select multiple choice*)
Justification of the selected challenges/priorities (*Maximum length is 2000 characters (incl. spaces)*)

PROJECT PROMOTER , PARTNERS AND EXTERNAL EXPERTS

Please submit the following information about project promoter and partners (if applicable additional partners (third countries)) in appropriate sections of proposal (name of partner organisations should be displayed in English):

Name (name of the organisation)
Registration number
Address
Country
E-mail
Internet address
Letter of intent submitted by project partners (*Please submit a pdf file*)
Project coordinator for project promoter and partner contact person
Name, surname
Position
Phone number
E-mail
Legal representative of project promoter and partners
Name, surname

Position

Phone number

E-mail

International cooperation (*Please, describe international cooperation carried out within the project. Please describe the role of project partner(s) and if applicable please describe additional project partners (third countries). 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? Maximum length is 10 000 characters (incl. spaces)*)

Please, submit the following information (in English) under the section "senior research staff":

Project promoter's senior researcher and senior research staff:

- Institution
- Person (name of senior researcher)
- Degree (start and end date of PhD studies)
- Current position(s)
- Participation period in project
- CV in English/Please submit pdf file

Participation of senior research staff under the section "actions of the research staff"

- Describe their role and distribution of tasks. Please describe how you intend to provide gender balance in the project implementation.
- Maximum length is 5000 characters (incl. spaces)
- Postdocs involvement in the project under the section "actions of the research staff"
- Describe the expected contribution of postdocs 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 5000 characters (incl. spaces)
- PhD students' involvement in the project under the section "actions of the research staff"
- Describe the expected contribution of 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, the time of admittance to the degree studies and expected time of graduation shall also be specified. Please describe how you intend to provide gender balance in the project implementation.
- Describe are you planning to apply for scholarship programme under EEA grants?
- Maximum length is 5000 characters (incl. spaces)

Please note: master students do not belong to the main participants and they are not listed in the administrative form of application under "senior research staff" (no CVs required), but in case of project funding they should be listed (by name) in the project contract.

Please submit the following information (in English) under the section "senior research staff" for each of the project partners:

Project partners in Norway, Iceland and/or Liechtenstein

Name of the organization (mandatory in English)

Name, degree, current position, participation period in the project and CV of senior researcher
(Please insert pdf file (CV))

Project partners in Estonia and/or Lithuania

Name of the organization (mandatory in English)

Name, degree, current position, participation period in the project and CV of senior researcher
(Please insert pdf file (CV))

Additional project partners (third countries)

If applicable, please submit the following information about additional project partners (third countries):

Name of the organization (mandatory in English)

Name, degree, current position, participation period in the project and CV of senior researcher
(Please insert pdf file (CV))

Project partners in Latvia

If applicable, please submit the following information about project partners in Latvia:

Name of the organization (mandatory in English)

Name, degree, current position, participation period in the project and CV of senior researcher
(Please insert pdf file (CV))

External expert(s)

If applicable, please submit the following information about external expert(s) in the project under the section "external experts":

Name and full affiliation of experts

(Please insert pdf file (CV))

Name of the organization (mandatory in English)

Comments

THE BUDGET

Eligible costs (please see also section 3 and section other documents "Detailed budget")

A. Direct eligible costs

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

Travel and subsistence allowances for staff taking part in the project

Depreciation costs

Costs of inventory, tools and materials

Other costs (consumables)

Subcontracting costs (no more than 15% of total budget project)

Total direct eligible costs

B. Indirect eligible costs

Overheads (flat rate 25% of total direct eligible costs, excluding direct eligible costs for subcontracting)

Total indirect eligible costs

Total costs

ANNEXES

Please upload the following Annexes (please submit pdf files only):

Project summary (in Latvian)

Timetable (in English)

Please describe work packages and results of research proposal by indicating appropriate time for the project implementation.

Detailed budget (in English)

The financial background of the project should include a justification and calculations for the applied funding and the intended expenses by budget lines during the project. Budget justification should be made by project years and by project promoter and project partner(s).

The research proposal (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 apparatus to be used, incl. existence or absence thereof;

Forecast on internationally refereed (Baltic-Donor States in a joint capacity) publications submitted for publication or published as part of the project;

The Expected significance of the project with respect to the science, national and regional economy, social sphere, culture, etc.;

The list of references, charts and schemes.

Publicity plan (in English)

Describe publicity activities, including the aim of each activity, target group, communication tools, timeframe, venue, organiser, partners and other parties involved, contact person and measures for the assessment of publicity activities to be carried out to measure the impact of publicity activity. As a minimum each project should foresee 3 information activities (seminar, conference or other public event) and establish and maintain a dedicated webpage for the project.

Project risk assessment (in English)

Describe potential project risks, indicating their likelihood and impact level, and define their mitigation measures.

Ethics assessment (in English)

Confirmation of adherence to the requirements of research ethics

Is the ethics committee decision mandatory?

Please select yes/no

Ethics committee licence

Please insert file (max 3 MB)

Does the project necessitate compliance with the Nagoya Protocol?

Please select yes/no

Compliance with the Nagoya Protocol

Please insert file (max 3 MB)

Please note that if the applicant obtains the permit after the submission deadline, it shall be submitted to the SEDA before the project starts.

Project promoter's annual reports from the last three years (in Latvian)

Project promoter's finance and accounting policy (in Latvian)

Confirmation letter (in Latvian)

Confirmation letter (in English)

Power of attorney or internal legal act of the institution certifying the authorization to sign the project (applicable if the project is signed by a person other than the legal representative of the institution or his deputy)

Other relevant documents (if applicable)

5. Check list

In order to be evaluated, proposals must be:

- 1) submitted via the rsgrants system before the submission deadline;
- 2) submitted by an eligible project promoter;
- 3) completed following the prescribed format;
- 4) approved by the organization.

Make sure that your proposal fulfils all administrative and eligibility criteria of the call (see also section 6).

Respect the length limitations set for the proposal. Enter the requested information on the submission site as soon as possible. Leave enough time for your organization to approve and sign the proposal.

6. The eligibility check

Only the proposals that meet administrative and eligibility criteria will be subject to the evaluation. The appraisal of eligibility and administrative criteria is carried out by the SEDA.

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

1. Project proposal is written in English and is submitted electronically via the on-line submission system within the deadline set in the call for proposals. (N)
2. Eligible project promoter from Latvia and project partner from Latvia, if applicable, is a research institution registered in Latvia which complies with the criteria of a research organization defined in the Article 2.8 of the Regulations for the implementation of the activity "Baltic Research Program" and the activity "Scholarships" of the program "Research and Education" of the European Economic Area Financial Mechanism and Norwegian Financial Mechanism for the period 2014-2021 (hereinafter- the Regulations). (N)
3. Project partners are at least one research organization registered in Estonia or Lithuania and at least one research organization registered in the donor country (N);
4. A confirmation letter is signed by the legal representative of the project promoter or appropriate authorisation is provided. (N)
5. Project proposal is filled completely and all requested Annexes stated in the call of the project proposal are attached (N)

6. The activities planned in the project are with non-economic character as stated in the Article 2.3. of the Regulations. (C)
7. The calculations of eligible costs are precise and comply with the requirements specified in the call of the project proposals. (C)
8. Eligible costs in the project correspond to the list of eligible expenditures stated in the Article 22 of the the Regulations and the project costs planned in the project application complies with the amount of project funding specified in the Article 7.1.1. and 7.1.2. of the the Regulations. (C)
9. Project promoter and Latvian partner (if applicable) have no tax debts, including social security charges in the Republic of Latvia, each of which in total exceeds 150 euros. (C)

*N – if the criterion has not been fulfilled, the proposal cannot be amended and will be rejected;

*C – if the criterion has not been fulfilled, the proposal can be amended and the necessary information will be requested from project promoter by the SEDAs.

Please note that the completeness of the information contained in the proposal will be for the experts to evaluate; the administrative and eligibility checks only apply to the presence of the appropriate parts of the proposal. If it becomes clear that one or more of the administrative and eligibility criteria marked with (N) 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. Proposals and all relevant documentation will be maintained in the databases of system and in the SEDAs.

7. The evaluation of submitted proposals

A detailed description of the evaluation process is provided in the „Guide for evaluators“.

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. Based on the three evaluations a consensus report 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 4):

- 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 3, 5):

- 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
- research training
- strengths of consortium complimentary of skills
- 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 the Baltic region
- potential of the research topic to be internationally relevant
- take up and potential 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 scale from 0 to 5. If the evaluation of the proposal in the relevant criterion exceeds the requirements of the previous lowest evaluation, but does not fully meet the requirements of the next highest evaluation, the evaluation may also be expressed by awarding a half-point score. Maximum total score can be 0-15, (threshold – 12.5). No weightings will apply.

The scoring scale

For each criterion under examination, score values indicate the following assessments:

Score	Grade	Description
0	Unsatisfactory	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 the independent expert evaluations a single ranking list is prepared to be submitted to the Programme Committee.

8. Evaluation by the Programme Committee

According to the Guideline for Research Programmes, the Programme Committee shall provide input to the strategic direction of the programme. The Programme Committee shall recommend to the SEDA which proposals to select for funding and final awarding of grants.

The recommendation is as follows: the Programme Committee selects at least one project proposal from each thematic priority, which is above the threshold (12.5.). If in some of thematic priorities the project proposals have not reached the threshold, then the rest of the funding will be distributed according to the overall project-ranking list. The Programme Committee may also determine that the binary criterion (criterion No. 1 Scope – Relevance in relation to the objective of the Call for Proposals) has been evaluated incorrectly by the experts or during the Consensus Assessment and change it to another result, which may result in a change of recommendation whether to award a grant to the project proposal.

The Programme Committee evaluates the proposals based on the ranking list as well as checks separate list of any proposals having been found ineligible during the evaluation submitted by the SEDA based on the evaluation scores, and according to the proposals' relevance to the call.

8.1. SELECTION CRITERIA APPLIED FOR EQUALLY SCORED PROPOSALS

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

- proposals are prioritized according to the scores they have been awarded for the criterion „Scientific excellence“;
- 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 Baltic regional added value and sustainability of bilateral cooperation;
- proposals having a good gender balance (project promoter) are considered to have the priority.

8.2. THE SELECTION PROCESS

The Programme Committee will make its final decision to support or not support the proposals on the basis of the ranking list proposed by the experts' and the Programme Committee's final evaluation. SEDA will prepare and send the decision to the applicants. The applicants will be notified of the results of evaluation of proposals within ten working days after the final decision of the Programme Committee. Each applicant will receive a notice regarding the decision. All materials relating to the evaluation of proposals will be confidential until the adoption of financing decisions. The list of successful proposals will be made public on the website of SEDA.

8.3. NEGOTIATION AND AWARD PROCESS

The project promoters of proposals that have not been rejected and for which funding is available are invited to begin negotiations.

In addition to any issues raised in the evaluation summary 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 between the SEDA and project promoter 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 each project partner.

9. Tentative timetable and specific information for this call

Programme Committee meeting – November 2019
Open call for proposals, conference – August 2020
End of the open call – October 2020
Planned start of the selection period – October 2020
Planned end of the selection period – January 2021
Planned start of the projects – March 2021
Planned end of the projects – 30.04.2024.

Annex I



Annex_I.xlsx

Annex II



Annex_II.docx

Contacts:

The questions and queries concerning the call for proposals should be directed to info@viaa.gov.lv. Answers to questions submitted by project applicants are sent electronically. Questions shall be submitted no later than 2 working days before the deadline for submission of the project proposal.