

Vastavusnõuded rahvusvahelistel ühiskonkurssidel Eesti riigieelarvest toetuse taotlejatele

National Eligibility Criteria for grant applications in calls for transnational research projects

The present eligibility criteria concern Estonian partners in project proposals that compete in transnational calls for research projects. In such calls, research entities from several countries form an international consortium which, as a unit, submits a joint proposal. Apart from the general call conditions, each partner in the joint proposal must comply with their respective national eligibility criteria. If a positive funding decision is made for the joint proposal, each partner will be funded by their respective national funding organisation.

It is mandatory for all Estonian applicants to follow the Estonian eligibility criteria. Please note that if one of the partners is not eligible, the entire proposal might be considered ineligible.

If a positive funding decision is made for a project that includes an Estonian partner, the Estonian Principal Investigator, the Host Institution and the Funding Organisation will enter into a trilateral agreement.

1. Project Participants

1.1 The Principal Investigator is a researcher who acts as the Estonian team leader in the project proposal. The Principal Investigator is responsible for how the Estonia's part in the grant budget is allocated and how Estonia's part in the project is executed in case of a positive funding decision.

The Principal Investigator:

- 1.1.1. must have an updated public profile in the Estonian Research Information System (ETIS) by the submission deadline;
- 1.1.2. must hold a doctoral degree or an equivalent qualification. The degree must be awarded at the latest by the submission deadline of the grant application;
- 1.1.3. must have published or received formal acceptance for at least three articles that comply with the requirements of Clause 1.1 of the ETIS classification of publications, or at least five articles that comply with the requirements of Clauses 1.1, 1.2, 2.1 or 3.1, within the last five calendar years prior to the proposal submission deadline.¹ International patents are equalled with publications

¹ ETIS classification: **1.1.** *Scholarly articles indexed by Web of Science, Science Citation Index Expanded, Social Sciences Citation Index, Arts & Humanities Citation Index, Emerging Sources Citation Index and/or indexed by Scopus (excluding chapters in books); 1.2.* *Peer-reviewed articles in other international research journals with an ISSN code and international editorial board, which are circulated internationally and open to international contributions; 2.1.* *Scholarly monographs; 3.1.* *Articles/chapters in books published by the publishers listed in Annex*

specified under Clause 1.1. A monograph (ETIS Clause 2.1) is equalled with three publications specified in Clause 1.1 if the number of authors is three or fewer. If the applicant has been on pregnancy and maternity or parental leave or performed compulsory service in the Defence Forces, or has another acceptable reason, they can request the publication period requirement to be extended by the relevant period of time.

1.2 The Host Institution may be any legal entity that is registered and located in Estonia.

The Host Institution must confirm to the Estonian Research Council (with a confirmation letter after the submission deadline) that the project can be carried out on their premises and that they will employ the Principal Investigator during the proposed project, should the project receive funding.

If the Host Institution is a for-profit institution, then State aid and de minimis aid regulations must be taken into account (see Section 3).

2. Requested Budget

2.1 Research expenses consist of **direct costs**, **indirect costs** and **subcontracting costs**. The research expenses must be used to carry out the project and be separately identifiable.

2.2 Direct costs

2.2.1 Personnel costs are monthly salaries with social security charges and all the other statutory costs of the project participants, calculated according to the person's commitment and in proportion to the person's total workload at their Host Institution.

2.2.2 Scholarships may be paid to master's and doctoral students.

Alternatively, remuneration can be paid as salary to students.

All payments to the students should be done according to the usual practices of the Host Institution, following the Estonian legal acts.

2.2.3 Travel costs may cover expenses for transport, accommodation, daily allowances and travel insurance.

2.2.4 Other direct costs include:

- consumables and minor equipment related to the project;
- publication and dissemination of project results;
- organising meetings, seminars or conferences (room rent, catering);
- fees for participating in scientific forums, conferences and other events related to the project;
- all other costs that are identifiable as clearly required for carrying out the project (e.g. translation, copy editing, webpage hosting, etc.).

2.2.5 Subcontracting costs should cover only the additional or complementary research related tasks (e.g. analyses, conducting surveys, building a prototype, etc.) performed by third

parties. Core project tasks should not be subcontracted. Subcontracting costs should not be included in the overhead calculation. The activities and budget should be described in the proposal. Subcontracting costs may not exceed 15% of the total requested budget.

2.4 Indirect costs are overhead costs, which may not exceed 20% of the eligible (requested) direct research costs and should cover the general expenses of the Host Institution. Costs for equipment and services intended for public use (a copy machine or a printer that is publicly used, phone bills, copy service, etc.) should be covered from the overhead.

2.5 Double funding of activities is not acceptable.

3. State Aid

EU Regulations on State aid and de minimis aid must be taken into account when requesting funding from the Estonian Research Council.

The grant is not considered to be State aid for research and development, if the project has ties to the non-economic activities of the Research (or Host) Institution, as long as the research and development activities and the related costs, funding and revenue can be clearly separated, thus avoiding the cross subsidisation of economic activity.

The criteria defined in Clauses 17-22 of Communication from the European Commission – Framework for State aid for research and development and innovation (2014/C 198/01) forms the basis for determining whether the activities carried out are economic activities and whether the Host Institution is an undertaking that is considered to be a State aid recipient when it receives support.

When an entity applies for State aid or de minimis aid, it has to fill in the **State aid form**. No tax arrears are allowed on the proposal submission date.

If State aid and de minimis aid are given, the documents related to giving the support must be kept for 10 years as of the date when the agreement was entered into.

If the grant is considered State aid or de minimis aid, then it will not be granted to a Host Institution that is subject to a support withdrawal decision pursuant to a previous European Commission decision deeming the aid illegal and incompatible with the common market, if that decision has not been complied with.

State aid pursuant to the Block Exemption Regulation

If the grant is considered to be State aid, then it is allocated on the basis of Article 25 of Commission Regulation (EU) No 651/2014 declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the internal market in application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty (OJ L 187, 26.6.2014, p. 1–78) (hereinafter the Block Exemption Regulation), and the provisions of the Commission Regulation and Section 34² of the Estonian Competition Act apply.

State aid is not given in cases specified under Articles 1(2) to (5) of the Block Exemption Regulation.

In case of State aid, the eligible costs of the project activities must comply with the requirements specified under Article 25(3) of the Block Exemption Regulation (except clause (c)), and the maximum aid intensity must comply with Articles 25(5) and (6).

If the grant applied for can be considered to be State aid, then the application must include the information specified in Article 6(2) of the Block Exemption Regulation, and the application has to be submitted before the start of the activities.

De minimis aid

If the grant is considered de minimis aid, then the funding is subject to the Commission Regulation (EU) No 1407/2013 on the application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union to de minimis aid (OJ L 352, 24.12.2013, p. 1–8) (hereinafter the De Minimis Aid Regulation), and the provisions of the Regulation and Section 33 of the Estonian Competition Act apply.

De minimis aid is not given in cases specified under Article 1(1) of the De Minimis Aid Regulation.

In case of de minimis aid, the maximum aid intensity must comply with Article 3 of the De Minimis Aid Regulation.

De minimis aid given to the Host Institution together with de minimis aid applied for cannot exceed 200,000 euro during the current financial year and the two previous financial years.

Article 5 of the De Minimis Aid Regulation applies to cumulating de minimis aid.

A single undertaking is an undertaking specified in Article 2(1) of the De Minimis Aid Regulation.

4. Grant Agreement

If a positive funding decision is made, the Estonian Research Council enters into a grant agreement with the Host Institution and the Principal Investigator. Information on the transnational project must be entered into ETIS once the agreement has been signed.

The Consortium Agreement (CA) should be signed at the latest six months after the grant agreement has been signed. If one year has elapsed and the CA has not been signed, the next instalment of funding will not be paid out.

5. Research Involving Human Subjects or Animal Testing

If human research or animal testing are intended in the project, a positive resolution by the Human Research Ethics Committee or the Authorisation Committee for Animal Experiments must be submitted to the Estonian Research Council by the start of the relevant activities.

6. Nagoya Protocol

By applying for funding by the Estonian Research Council, the applicants agree to consider the relevance of the Nagoya protocol for their research, and to submit the Due Diligence Declaration, if applicable.