***Project Call***

**Riga Technical University Research excellence grant for young scientists** (<https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/jobs> lapā)

Riga Technical University (RTU) is the oldest and one of the largest technology universities in the Baltic region, located in Riga, Latvia (more information on: www.rtu.lv). RTU Research excellence grant is aimed at supporting outstanding and promising young scientists to be able to start a career at RTU, developing a research in the new field with global importance and novelty. Grant is awarded for realization of the research project which includes such activities as research, attracting funding to RTU, establishing of self-financed research group or department (research unit), and participation in study process.

Candidates with the appropriate qualifications (see *Eligibility criteria;* Appendix 7) from any country can participate in the tender.

The following documents must be submitted (see below):

1. *Proposal form*; Appendix 1*;*
2. *Synopsis of the scientific proposal*; Appendix 2;
3. *Curriculum Vitae*; Appendix 3;
4. *Early achievements track-record*; Appendix 4;
5. *The* *scientific proposal*; Appendix 5
6. *Supporting documentation*; Appendix 6.

Detailed information about the grant application and evaluation process, the grant amount and conditions, and reporting is provided in the Appendices 7-10 below.

All application documents written by the applicant must be written in English language and submitted in pdf format by email to: [sandra.vasilevska@rtu.lv](mailto:sandra.vasilevska@rtu.lv).

The deadline of submission of the application is 09.04.2018.

Contact person: Mrs. Sandra Vasilevska ([sandra.vasilevska@rtu.lv](mailto:sandra.vasilevska@rtu.lv); ph. +371 67089356).

Appendix 1

*Proposal form*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Call**  **identifier** | The call identifier is the reference number given in the publication of the call. |
| **Proposal**  **Title (max. 200 characters)**  **(non-confidential information)** | The title should be no longer than 200 characters (with spaces) and should be understandable to the non-specialist in your field. |
| **Keywords** | Please enter free text keywords that you consider best characterise the scope of your research proposal. The choice of keywords should take into account any multi-disciplinary aspects of the proposal. |
| **Abstract (min.100/ max. 2000 char.)**  **(non-confidential information)** | The abstract should, at a glance, provide the reader with a clear understanding of the objectives of the research proposal and how they will be achieved. **The abstract will be used as the short description of your research proposal in the evaluation process and in communications to contact in particular the experts. It must therefore be short and precise and should not contain confidential information.**  Please use plain typed text, avoiding formulae and other special characters. **The abstract must be written in English**. There is a limit of 2000 characters (spaces and line breaks included). |
| **ORCID** | ORCID number (an example is 0000-0002-1825-0097). |
| **Researcher ID** | If you have any other researcher identifier number please enter it here. |
| **Last Name** | Last name as given on Passport or Identity Card. |
| **Last Name at Birth** | Your last name at birth. |
| **First Name(s)** | Your first name(s) as given on Passport or Identity Card. |
| **Title** | Please choose one of the following: Prof, Dr, Mr, Mrs, or Ms. |
| **Gender: Female(F)/Male(M)** | This information is required for statistical and mailing purposes. Indicate F or M as appropriate. |
| **Nationality** | Please write the country of nationality. |
| **Country of residence and citizenship** | Please write the country in which you legally reside and citizenship. |
| **Date of Birth (DD/MM/YYYY)** | Please specify your date of birth using the format (DD/MM/YYYY). |
| **Contact Address** | |
| **Current Organisation name** | Name under which your organisation is registered. |
| **Current Department/Faculty/**  **Institute/Laboratory name** | Name under which your department/faculty/institute/laboratory is registered. |
| **Street** | The street name and number. |
| **Town** | The town, in English (please avoid any district codes). |
| **Postcode/Cedex** | The postal code. |
| **Country** | The country. |
| **Phone 1** | Please insert the full phone number including country and city/area code. Example +32-2-2991111. |
| **Phone2/Mobile** | Please insert the full mobile number including country and city/area code. Example +32-2-2991111. The mobile phone number is optional, but it is strongly recommended to insert it since this may be used to reach the applicant concerning the interview. |
| **E-mail** |  |
| **Declarations** | |
| **1) The Applicant declares that the information contained in this proposal is correct and complete.** | [Yes - signature] |
| **2) The Applicant declares that this proposal complies with ethical principles (including the highest standards of research integrity — as set out, for instance, in the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity — and including, in particular, avoiding fabrication, falsification, plagiarism or other research misconduct).** | [Yes - signature] |
| **3) The Applicant declares that she/he is aware that it is expected that the applicant will be employed as a researcher at RTU with full working load (including load of participation in a study process)** **over the period of the grant.** | [Yes - signature] |
| **4) I acknowledge that I am aware of the eligibility requirements for applying for this grant as specified in the call documentation and certify that, to the best of my knowledge my application is in compliance with all these requirements. I understand that my proposal may be declared ineligible at any point during the evaluation or granting process if it is found not to be compliant with these eligibility criteria.** | [Yes - signature] |

**In fairness to all applicants, the page limits below will be applied strictly. Only the material that is presented within these limits will be evaluated (peer reviewers will only be asked to read the material presented within the page limits, and will be under no obligation to read beyond them).**

The following parameters **shall** be respected for the layout:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Page Format** | **Font Type** | **Font Size** | **Line Spacing** | **Margins** |
| A4 | Times New Roman Arial or similar | At least 11 | Single | 2 cm side  1.5 bottom |

All application documents written by the applicant must be written in English language and submitted in pdf format by email and the deadline indicated in the call.

Appendix 2

*Synopsis of the scientific proposal (max. 3 pages)*

The synopsis (summary) should, at a glance, provide the reader with a clear understanding of the objectives of the research proposal and how they will be achieved. It should give a concise presentation of your scientific proposal, with particular attention to the ground-breaking nature of the research project, and a short description of the methodology that should allow to assess the feasibility of the outlined scientific approach. Describe the proposed work in the context of the state of the art of the field. References to literature can also be included, but do not count towards the page limit. The synopsis will be used as the short description of your research proposal in the evaluation process. It must therefore be short and precise.

Appendix 3

*Curriculum Vitae (max. 2 pages)*

The CV should include the standard academic and research record. The template below is provided only for guidance. It may be modified as necessary and appropriate. The structure of the CV may be modified. Any research career gaps and/or unconventional paths should be clearly explained so that they can be fairly assessed by the evaluators.

**PERSONAL INFORMATION**

Family name, First name:

Researcher unique identifier(s) (such as ORCID, Research ID, etc. ...):

Date of birth:

Nationality:

URL for web site:

* **EDUCATION**

20? PhD

Name of Faculty/ Department, Name of University/ Institution, Country

Name of PhD Supervisor

20? Master

Name of Faculty/ Department, Name of University/ Institution, Country

* **CURRENT POSITION(S)**

201? – Current Position

Name of Faculty/ Department, Name of University/ Institution/ Country

201? – Current Position

Name of Faculty/ Department, Name of University/ Institution/ Country

* **PREVIOUS POSITIONS**

20? – 20? Position held

Name of Faculty/ Department, Name of University/ Institution/ Country

20? – 20? Position held

Name of Faculty/ Department, Name of University/ Institution/ Country

* **FELLOWSHIPS**

20? – 20? Scholarship, Name of Faculty/ Department/Centre, Name of University/ Institution/ Country

? – ? Scholarship, Name of Faculty/ Department/Centre, Name of University/ Institution/ Country

* **SUPERVISION OF GRADUATE STUDENTS AND POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWS**

20? – 20? Number of Postdocs/ PhD/ Master Students

Name of Faculty/ Department/ Centre, Name of University/ Institution/ Country

* **TEACHING ACTIVITIES (if applicable)**

201? – Teaching position – Topic, Name of University/ Institution/ Country

20? – 20? Teaching position – Topic, Name of University/ Institution/ Country

* **ORGANISATION OF SCIENTIFIC MEETINGS (if applicable)**

201? Please specify your role and the name of event / Country

20? Please specify type of event / number of participants / Country

* **INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES (if applicable)**

201? – Faculty member, Name of University/ Institution/ Country

20? – 20? Graduate Student Advisor, Name of University/ Institution/ Country

20? – 20? Member of the Faculty Committee, Name of University/ Institution/ Country

20? – 20? Organiser of the Internal Seminar, Name of University/ Institution/ Country

20? – 20? Member of a Committee; role, Name of University/ Institution/ Country

* **COMMISSIONS OF TRUST (if applicable)**

201? – Scientific Advisory Board, Name of University/ Institution/ Country

201? – Review Board, Name of University/ Institution/ Country

201? – Review panel member, Name of University/ Institution/ Country

201? – Editorial Board, Name of University/ Institution/ Country

20? – Scientific Advisory Board, Name of University/ Institution/ Country

20? – Reviewer, Name of University/ Institution/ Country

20? – Scientific Evaluation, Name of University/ Institution/ Country

20? – Evaluator, Name of University/ Institution/ Country

* **MEMBERSHIPS OF SCIENTIFIC SOCIETIES (if applicable)**

201? – Member, Research Network “*Name of Research Network*”

20? – Associated Member, Name of Faculty/ Department/Centre, Name of University/ Institution/ Country

20? – Funding Member, Name of Faculty/ Department/Centre, Name of University/ Institution/ Country

* **MAJOR COLLABORATIONS (if applicable)**

Name of collaborators, Topic, Name of Faculty/ Department/Centre, Name of University/ Institution/ Country

* Activities related to organization of a research

* **CAREER BREAKS (if applicable)**

Exact dates Please indicate the reason and the duration in months.

Appendix 4

*Early achievements track-record (max. 2 pages)*

The Applicant must provide a **list of achievements reflecting their track record**. The Applicant should list his/her activity as regards:

1. Publications (in English language) in major international peer-reviewed multi-disciplinary scientific journals and/or in the leading international peer-reviewed journals (**at least 5** as the main author (contribution of the Applicant to the publications must be described); the journals must be indexed in SCOPUS (with SNIP ≥ 1) or Web of Science (with impact factor ≥ 3), peer-reviewed conferences proceedings and/or monographs of their respective research fields, highlighting those without the presence as co-author of their PhD supervisor, and the number of citations (excluding self-citations) they have attracted (if applicable); indicate your h-index from SCOPUS filtered with the option “Exclude self-citations of all authors” (**at least 10**);
2. Research monographs and any translations thereof;
3. Granted patent(s);
4. Invited presentations to peer-reviewed, internationally established conferences and/or international advanced schools;
5. Prizes/Awards/Academy memberships;
6. Description of the achievements regarding attracted funding for research (attracted research project funding, contracts with industry), which demonstrate an applicant’s ability to develop a self-financed research unit at RTU.

Appendix 5

*The scientific proposal (max. 15 pages)*

This part is evaluated in the peer review. References do not count towards the page limit. The scientific, technical, and/or scholarly aspects of the project should be described more in detail demonstrating the ground-breaking nature of the research, its potential impact and research methodology. The fraction of the applicant's research effort that will be devoted to this project and a full estimation of the real project costs also need to be indicated.

**a. State of the art and objectives:** Specify clearly the objectives of the proposal, in the context of the state of the art in the field. When describing the envisaged research it should be indicated how and why the proposed work is important for the field, and what impact it will have if successful, such as how it may open up new horizons or opportunities for science, technology or scholarship. Specify any particularly challenging or unconventional aspects of the proposal, including multi- or inter-disciplinary aspects.

**b. Methodology:** Describe the proposed methodology in detail including, as appropriate, key intermediate goals. Explain and justify the methodology in relation to the state of the art, including any particularly novel or unconventional aspects addressing 'high-risk/high-gain' balance. Highlight any intermediate stages where results may require adjustments to the project planning. In case it is proposed that team members engaged by another host institution participate in the project, their participation has to be fully justified. This should be done emphasising the scientific added value they bring to the project.

The scientific proposal must contain the Activity plan describing the planned activities, results and time schedule on the quarterly basis (at least). The results and time schedule of the Activity plan must agree with those shown in the table of the key performance indicators (the Appendix: *Scientific and financial reporting*). Evaluation of progress of the project will be based upon fulfillment of the Activity plan and achievement of the key performance indicators (KPI’s).

**c. Resources (incl. project costs):** It is strongly recommended to use the budget table template included below to facilitate the assessment of resources by the evaluators. Detailed information on eligible- and non-eligible direct and indirect costs is provided below the budget table template. Please use whole Euro integers only when preparing the budget table.

State the amount of funding considered necessary to fulfil the objectives for the duration of the project. The funding attracted by the applicant from other funding sources, e.g. external projects, has to be indicated in the table which currently shows the minimum requirement for the attracted funding. The resources required should be reasonable, i.e. corresponding to the actual needs to fulfil the objectives of the project and fully justified in the proposal.

You are entitled to hire other team members, also from outside RTU. Describe the size and nature of the team, indicating, where appropriate, the key team members and their roles. The participation of team members should be justified in relation to the additional financial cost this may impose to the project. Take into account the percentage of your dedicated time to run the funded activity when calculating your personnel costs. Number of persons employed in each category of the personnel as well as planned working hours and hourly payment rate must be indicated in the budget table.

Specify any existing resources that will contribute to the project. Describe other necessary resources, such as infrastructure and equipment. It is advisable to include a short technical description of the equipment requested, a justification of its need as well as the intensity of its planned use. When estimating the costs for travel, please also consider participation of the applicant and team members in conferences and dissemination events. Indicate also number of people traveling and travel costs per person.

Applicants should be aware that it will be mandatory to provide Open Access (free of charge, online access for any user) to all peer-reviewed scientific publications resulting from the projects funded by this grant.

Costs for providing immediate Open Access to publications (article processing charges) are eligible and can be charged against the grant if they are incurred during the lifetime of the project. When drafting the budget, it is highly advisable to consider the need to include such expenditure, and if that is the case, to make a realistic estimation of the amount needed. In addition, it is recommended that all funded researchers follow best practice by retaining files of research data produced and used, and are prepared to share these data with other researchers when not bound by copyright restrictions, confidentiality requirements, or contractual clauses. In any case, the applicant and the team members will need to follow the RTU policy on Open Access and research data management.

In the budget table: Include the direct costs of the project plus a flat-rate financing of indirect costs calculated as up to 25% of the total eligible direct costs (excluding subcontracting) towards overheads. Furthermore, include a breakdown of the budget subdivided in personnel costs, travel, equipment, consumables, publication costs (including any costs related to Open Access), other direct costs, and any envisaged subcontracting costs.

The funding to access large research facilities owned by a third party and not used on the premises of RTU should be listed in cost category “C”.

The project cost estimation should be as accurate as possible. The evaluation panels assess the estimated costs carefully; unjustified budgets will be consequently reduced.

The proposal has to provide description on continuity (sustainability) of operation of established research group after the term of the grant project. Information about research equipment and services available at RTU are published in the internet portal [www.usescience.eu](http://www.usescience.eu)

*The budget table template*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Cost category** | | | **Total in Euro (including taxes)** | | | |
| **1st year** | **2nd year** | **3rd year** | **In total** |
| **Direct Costs** | **Personnel** | The applicant |  |  |  |  |
| Senior staff |  |  |  |  |
| Postdocs |  |  |  |  |
| Students |  |  |  |  |
| Other |  |  |  |  |
| *i. Total Direct Costs for Personnel* | |  |  |  |  |
| **Travel** | |  |  |  |  |
| **Equipment** (depreciation, rent of RTU equipment) | |  |  |  |  |
| **Other goods and services** | Consumables |  |  |  |  |
| Publications (including Open Access fees), etc. |  |  |  |  |
| Other (please specify) |  |  |  |  |
| *ii. Total Other Direct Costs* | |  |  |  |  |
| **A – Total Direct Costs (i + ii)** | | |  |  |  |  |
| **B – Indirect Costs (overheads)** up to 25% of Direct Costs | | |  |  |  |  |
| **C – Subcontracting** (no overheads) | | |  |  |  |  |
| **Total Estimated Eligible Costs (A + B + C)** | | |  |  |  |  |
| **Total covered by RTU grant** | | | 120000 | 90000 | 60000 | 270000 |
| **Total covered by funding, attracted to RTU by the beneficiary from other sources of funding (e.g.international projects). The beneficiary must be able to cover part of the costs of the 2nd year by the funding attracted from other sources in the 1st year, and that requirement applies to the subsequent years (the values shown are the minimum required amounts)** | | | 0 | 30000 | 60000 | 90000 |

*Eligible and ineligible costs*

‘**Eligible costs**’ are costs that meet the following criteria:

(i) they must be actually incurred by the beneficiary;

(ii) they must be incurred in the period of the grant project, with the exception of costs related to the submission of the final report;

(iii) they are the Direct Costs, Indirect Costs and Subcontracting as indicated in the estimated budget. 15% of the RTU grant funding (from the cost category “B”) must be provided for coverage of RTU research infrastructure maintenance costs, in accordance with the decision of Senate of RTU;

(iv) they must be incurred in connection with the grant project and necessary for its implementation, and the cost items covered by the grant project must be within limits of the grant amount;

(v) they must be identifiable and verifiable (justified by the relevant corroborative documents – cheques, bank statements, invoices or receipts), in particular recorded in the beneficiary’s accounts in accordance with the accounting standards applicable in Latvia;

(vi) personnel costs are eligible, if they are related to personnel working for the beneficiary under an employment contract (or equivalent appointing act) and assigned to the action. They must be limited to salaries, social security contributions, taxes and other costs included in the **remuneration**, if they arise from national law or the employment contract (or equivalent appointing act). The maximum hourly-rate of payment which can be used in the budget (the maximum hourly rate of a leading researcher) is 36.73 EUR/hour (gross amount, including taxes). Social security payment according to Latvia’s legislation from the gross salary has to be added to the budget;

(vi) they must comply with the applicable national law on taxes, labour and social security, and

(vii) they must be reasonable, justified and must comply with the principle of sound financial management, in particular regarding economy and efficiency.

‘**Ineligible costs**’ are:

(a) costs that do not comply with the conditions set out above, in particular:

(i) costs related to return on capital;

(ii) debt and debt service charges;

(iii) provisions for future losses or debts;

(iv) interest owed;

(v) doubtful debts;

(vi) currency exchange losses;

(viii) excessive or reckless expenditure;

(ix) deductible VAT;

(x) costs incurred during suspension of the implementation of the project.

(b) costs declared under another EU grant or grants awarded by other bodies;

(c) construction and repair costs of office space.

**Additional requirements related to the budget:**

The procurement of external services have to be performed in conformity with the regulatory enactments regulating procurement procedures, procurement specifications have to be prepared by the project research group.

A working time of the scientific staff involved in project implementation shall comply with the employment legislation.

Applicable remuneration and salary rates correspond to the remuneration system of Riga Technical University and are comparable with pay in other research projects.

Appendix 6

*Supporting Documentation*

Any additional annexes, including the PhD documentation, have to be provided electronically as separate pdf documents. These annexes do not count towards the maximum page limit. A scanned copy of the following supporting documentation needs to be submitted with the proposal:

* the applicant must submit scanned copies of documents proving his/her eligibility for the grant, i.e. the PhD certificate (or equivalent doctoral degree) clearly indicating the date of award (additional information is provided below);
* 2 letters of recommendation (support): 1 - from PhD thesis supervisor; 1 – from superior at the current affiliation;
* agreement of other team members to participate in the research group if they will be hired.

Copies of official documents can be submitted in any of the EU official languages. **Document(s) in any other language must be provided together with a certified translation into English.**

Please provide only the documents requested above. Unless specified in the call, any hyperlinks to other documents, embedded material, and any other documents (company brochures, support letters, reports, audio, video, multimedia etc.) will be disregarded. Experts will not have access to any supporting documentation during the evaluation.

***1. The necessity of ascertaining PhD equivalence***

In order to be eligible to apply to the grant an applicant must have been awarded a PhD or equivalent doctoral degree. First-professional degrees will not be considered in themselves as PhD-equivalent, even if recipients carry the title "Doctor". See below for further guidelines on PhD degree equivalency.

***2. PhD Degrees***

The research doctorate is the highest earned academic degree. It is always awarded for **independent research** at a professional level in either academic disciplines or professional fields. Regardless of the entry point, doctoral studies involve several stages of academic work. These may include the completion of preliminary course, seminar, and laboratory studies and/or the passing of a battery of written examinations. The PhD student selects an academic adviser and a subject for the dissertation, is assigned a dissertation committee, and designs his/her research (some educators call the doctoral thesis a dissertation to distinguish it from lesser theses). The dissertation committee consists usually of 3-5 faculty members in the student's research field, including the adviser.

***3. Independent research***

Conducting the research and writing the dissertation usually requires one to several years depending upon the topic selected and the research work necessary to prepare the dissertation. In defending his/her thesis, **the PhD candidate must establish mastery of the subject matter, explain and justify his or her research findings, and answer all questions put by the committee**. A successful defence results in the award of the PhD degree.

***4. Degrees equivalent to the PhD:***

It is recognised that there are some other doctoral titles that enjoy the same status and represent variants of the PhD in certain fields. All of them **have similar content requirements**. Potential applicants are invited to consult the following for useful references on degrees that will be considered equivalent to the PhD:

- EURYDICE: "Examinations, qualifications and titles - Second edition, Volume 1, European glossary on education" published in 2004. Please note that some titles that belong to the same category with doctoral degrees (ISCED 6 classification or ISCED 8 – 2011 classification) may correspond to the intermediate steps towards the completion of doctoral education and they should not be therefore considered as PhD-equivalent.

***5. First Professional Degrees (for medical doctors please see below):***

It is important to recognise that the initial professional degrees in various fields are **first degrees, not graduate research degrees**. Several degree titles in such fields include the term "Doctor", **but they are neither research doctorates nor equivalent to the PhD**.

***6. Medical Doctors (or applicants holding a degree in medicine):***

For medical doctors (or applicants holding a degree in medicine), **a medical doctor degree will not be accepted by itself as equivalent to a PhD award**. To be considered an eligible applicant, medical doctors (or applicants holding a degree in medicine) need to provide the certificates of **both a medical doctor degree and a PhD or proof of an appointment that requires doctoral equivalency** (e.g. post-doctoral fellowship, professorship appointment). Additionally, candidates must also provide information on their research experience (including peer reviewed publications) in order to further substantiate the equivalence of their overall training to a PhD.

For medical doctors who have been awarded both an MD and a PhD, **the date of the earliest degree that makes the applicant eligible** takes precedence in the calculation of the eligibility time-window (2 - 10 years after PhD).

Appendix 7

*Eligibility criteria*

The eligibility criteria for an applicant are the following:

* 1. h-index from SCOPUS filtered with the option “Exclude self-citations of all authors”: **at least 10.**
  2. Publications (in English language) in major international peer-reviewed multi-disciplinary scientific journals and/or in the leading international peer-reviewed journals (the journals must be indexed in SCOPUS; SNIP ≥ 1 or Web of Science with impact factor ≥ 3): **at least 5 as the main author (contribution of the Applicant to the publications must be described).**
  3. The applicant shall have been awarded his or her **first PhD ≥ 2 and ≤ 10 years prior to the date of call.**
  4. The research project is submitted in the fields of engineering and technology, natural sciences, or humanities and social sciences.
  5. Proficiency of English language corresponds to at least C1 level of the Europass CV language skill table (http://europass.cedefop.europa.eu).
  6. After awarding of the grant and signing of a the grant agreement, the applicant must be able to become full-load employee of RTU and he/she will be employed as a researcher at RTU with full working load (including load of participation in a study process) over the period of the grant.
  7. Demonstrated experience to secure funding for research (attracted research project funding, contracts with industry).

A proposal must fulfil all of the following eligibility criteria:

* It must be submitted before the single submission deadline.
* It must be complete, readable and printable (i.e. all of the requested forms, parts or sections of the proposal, and supporting documents must be completed and present).
* Its content must relate to the objectives of the call, as defined in the call documents.
* The proposed research is in the fields of engineering and technology, natural sciences, or humanities and social sciences.
* It must meet the eligibility requirements of the respective grant.
* It must be in compliance with the restrictions on submission of proposals.

The reference date towards the calculation of the eligibility period should be the date of the actual award of PhD according to the national rules in the country where the degree was awarded.

The eligibility is checked on the basis of the information given by the applicant in the proposal. Where there is a doubt about the eligibility of a proposal, the evaluation may proceed pending a final decision by the evaluation committee. If it becomes clear before, during or after the evaluation phase, that one or more of the eligibility criteria has not been met (for example, due to incorrect or misleading information), the proposal will be declared ineligible and not considered any further.

Appendix 8

*Evaluation procedure and criteria*

**Evaluation procedure**

A single submission of the full proposal will be followed by a four-stage evaluation:

**1st stage**: Proposals are first checked to ensure that all of the eligibility criteria are met (see the *Eligibility criteria*). The proposals which do not meet at least one of the eligibility criteria will be rejected, informing an applicant. The proposals which meet all the eligibility criteria will proceed to the 2nd stage.

**2nd stage**: The proposals are sent to the deans of faculties for assessment of willingness to elect a potential grantee in research personnel of the faculty and sign an employment contract, in case of award of the grant. The willingness is confirmed with written support statement. In case if the proposed research topic does not correspond to research directions of any of the faculties but it is worth of development for reaching RTU strategic goals, vice-rector for research is entitled to support establishment of an independent research unit. The proposals which do not receive support from faculties or vice-rector of research are rejected, informing an applicant. The others proceed to the 3rd stage.

**3rd stage**: the proposals are evaluated by peer-review conducted by the Scientific Council of RTU with remote involvement of 3-5 internationally recognized external researchers by following the *Evaluation criteria* (provided below).

**4th stage**: applicants whose proposals are selected in the 3rd stage of the evaluation will be invited for a an interview to present their project to the evaluation panel including members from the hosting faculty and the Scientific Council of RTU. The remote interview via Internet can be organized with applicants from foreign countries.

**Evaluation criteria**

Scientific excellence is the sole criterion of evaluation. It will be applied in conjunction to the evaluation of both: the ground-breaking nature, ambition and feasibility of the research project; and the intellectual capacity, creativity and commitment of the applicant. In general, projects wholly or largely consisting in the collation and compilation of existing material in new databases, editions or collections are unlikely to constitute ground-breaking or "frontier" research in themselves, however useful such resources might be to subsequent original research. Such projects are therefore unlikely to be recommended for funding by the experts. Plagiarism detection software may be used to analyse the submitted proposals. The detailed evaluation elements applying to the excellence of the research project and the applicant are set out below.

**1. Research Project**

**Ground-breaking nature, ambition and feasibility**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ***1.1 Ground-breaking nature and potential impact of the research project*** | | |
| **Criteria** | **Valuation mark on scale of 0 to 5** | **Short justification of the mark** |
| *1.1.1 To what extent does the proposed research address important challenges?* |  |  |
| *1.1.2 To what extent are the objectives ambitious and beyond the state of the art (e.g. novel concepts and approaches or development between or across disciplines)?* |  |  |
| *1.1.3 To what extent is the proposed research high risk/high gain?* |  |  |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ***1.2 Scientific Approach*** | | |
| **Criteria** | **Valuation mark on scale of 0 to 5** | **Short justification of the mark** |
| *1.2.1 To what extent is the outlined scientific approach feasible bearing in mind the extent that the proposed research is high risk/high gain?* |  |  |
| *1.2.2 To what extent is the proposed research methodology appropriate to achieve the goals of the project?* |  |  |
| *1.2.3 To what extent does the proposal involve the development of novel methodology?* |  |  |
| *1.2.4 To what extent are the proposed timescales and resources necessary and properly justified?* |  |  |

**2. Applicant**

**Intellectual capacity, creativity and commitment**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ***2.1 Intellectual capacity and creativity*** | | |
| **Criteria** | **Valuation mark on scale of 0 to 5** | **Short justification of the mark** |
| *2.1.1 To what extent has the applicant demonstrated the ability to propose and conduct ground-breaking research?* |  |  |
| *2.1.2 To what extent does the applicant provide evidence of creative independent thinking?* |  |  |
| *2.1.3 To what extent have the achievements of the applicant typically gone beyond the state of the art?* |  |  |

**Application of Evaluation Criteria**

Each proposal will be evaluated and marked for each of the two main elements of the proposal: the ground-breaking nature, ambition and feasibility of the research project; and the intellectual capacity, creativity and commitment of the applicant. **Each evaluation criterion will be marked on a scale of 0 to 5 (max).** At the end of peer-review evaluation, the proposals will be ranked on the basis of the peer-review expert overall appreciation of their strengths and weaknesses taking into account the marks they have received. Only the proposals which reach an overall quality threshold of 80% will be used to establish the retained list of proposals which will be ranked in order of priority for further evaluation.

**Not more than three proposals** with the highest rank will be selected for the interview of the 4th stage of evaluation.

**Approval of the application and signing of agreements**

A decision regarding approval of the grant is taken by the Scientific Council of RTU. If the grant is approved, Vice-Rector for Research of RTU signs with the beneficiary the Grant agreement (see the appendix *Grant agreement*) about financing of the project in accordance with regulations of legislative norms and this project call.

At least 3 (three) months after entering into force of the Grant agreement, provided that the beneficiary has previously received the necessary work and residence permits of the Republic of Latvia and submitted certified copies thereof to RTU, the beneficiary is elected in the position of the leading researcher at RTU in the hosting faculty, or an independent unit, which is under supervision of Vice-Rector for Research, and the contract of employment is concluded for the term of the grant project. If the beneficiary is hosted in a faculty, the separate research unit is established. The beneficiary is employed at RTU with full working load (including teaching load).

Appendix 9

*Grant agreement*

Added in the separate document.

Appendix 10

*Scientific and financial reporting*

The beneficiary not less frequently than once every 6 months (reporting period), on a date fixed by the Scientific Council of RTU must report to the Scientific Council of RTU about the project progress, by prior submitting of the scientific report 15 working days before the reporting date:

- ‘**periodic scientific report**’ within every six months (except the last 6-month period) and

- ‘**final scientific report**’ within 60 days after the end of the last reporting period.

The **periodic scientific report** must include:

(a) information about the **scientific progress** of the work;

(b) **achievements and results** of the project, including accomplishment of the following **key performance indicators**:

* publications in major scientific peer-reviewed journals;
* granted international patents;
* attracted funding, including international projects (e.g. Horizon 2020);
* supervised PhD students.

(c) declaration of any major change of scientific strategy;

(d) information on whether and how open access has been provided to the results of research;

(e) contain a summary of the achievements of the project, for publication by RTU.

The **final scientific report** must:

(a) present the **final results, achievements and conclusions** of the project, and how they have been disseminated. The project must also contain the same key performance indicators as the period scientific report;

(b) describe how an operation of the established research group will be sustained after the end of the grant period;

(c) contain a summary of the achievements of the project, for publication by RTU.

Numerical values of the key performance indicators (KPI’s) which will be set in the grant agreement (the values are cumulative):

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **No** | **Key performance indicators**  **(deliverables of the project)** | **Numerical values of KPI’s (the values are cumulative)** | | |
| 1st year | 2nd year | 3rd year |
| 1. | publications in major scientific peer-reviewed journals (number). Journals must be indexed in SCOPUS (SNIP ≥ 1) or Web of Science (5-year impact factor ≥ 3) | at least 1 submitted | 2 published  and 1 submitted | 4 published  and 2 submitted |
| 2. | or granted international patents (number) |  | 1 | 2 |
| 3. | attracted funding, including international projects (e.g. Horizon 2020) (thous. EUR) | 30 | 90 | 210 |
| 4. | Supervised PhD students (number) | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 5. | Established self-financed research unit |  |  | 1 |

All reports also must include information about participation of the beneficiary in study process of RTU.

The beneficiary not less frequently than once every 6 months (reporting period) along with the scientific report must submit also the financial report. The reporting periods are:

- **‘periodic financial report’** within every six months (except the last 6-month period) and

- **‘final financial report’** within 30 days after the end of the last reporting period.

The financial report must contain:

(a) information on the eligible costs;

(b) ‘individual financial statement’ for the reporting period concerned which must detail the eligible costs for each budget category (see *The scientific proposal*).