



Slovak Academy of Sciences Programme



# Statute of the Programme SASPRO

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## **Statute of the Programme SASPRO**

**(hereafter also as the "Statute")**

### **Article I**

#### **Introductory provisions**

1. Programme SASPRO (hereafter also as "Programme") is an initiative of the Slovak Academy of Sciences (hereafter only as "SAS") aimed at the creation of appropriate and incentive working conditions for researchers coming from abroad. Under this Programme SAS offers them the opportunity to apply for jobs in scientific organisations of SAS.
2. The objective of the Programme SASPRO is to strengthen SAS scientific organisations by researchers from top-level foreign institutions and provide them with an opportunity to broaden and deepen their scientific and other expertise and skills. It is also an effort to improve the SAS liaison with foreign institutions and build a network of contacts that will facilitate international cooperation.
3. This Statute regulates the fundamental terms of the Programme SASPRO, its bodies, system of applications submission, evaluation criteria, evaluation procedure, implementation and financing of the fellowships.
4. The research project (the "Project") which the applicant plans to implement at the scientific organisation of SAS (hereafter also as "host organisation") has to be an integral part of all applications.
5. Neither submission of an application form to the Programme, nor an invitation to negotiation do not qualify for financing of the fellowship.
6. SASPRO Programme implementation as well as the implementation of individual fellowships funded under the Programme shall be governed by the law of the European Union (EU) and the Slovak legislation.



## Article II

### Mobility Schemes of the Programme SASPRO

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

- **Reintegration scheme** – is dedicated for Slovak nationals who have carried out their main activity in the Third countries at least 3 years prior to the application submission and who have resided or carried out their main activity in the Slovak Republic for maximum 3 months prior to the application submission;
- **Incoming scheme** - is dedicated for researchers who have not resided or carried out their main activity (work, studies, etc.) in the Slovak Republic for more than 12 months in the last 3 years prior to the application submission.

## Article III

### Financing and Budget of Programme SASPRO

1. SASPRO program is financed from two sources. The first source is the SAS budget chapter, from which it is financed 60% of the cost of implementing the Programme SASPRO. The remaining 40% of the cost is financed by a "Co-financing of regional, national and international programs (COFUND)", which is part of the Marie Curie Action of the EU 7<sup>th</sup> Framework Programme, under Grant Agreement No. 609427: SASPRO/Mobility Programme of the Slovak Academy of Sciences: Supportive Fund for Excellent Scientists, which is published in the Central Register of Contracts.

2. The programme SASPRO total budget for its entire duration is 7.785 million Eur.



## Article IV

### Programme SASPRO duration and duration of fellowships

1. SASPRO programme duration is five years, from 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2018. All fellowships funded must be completed no later than on 31 December 2018.
2. The individual fellowships may have a duration min. 12 and max. 36 months. Duration of the fellowship shall be proposed by the candidate in the application after consultation with the host organisation.
3. The final duration of fellowship shall be approved by the Presidium of SAS.

## Article V

### Programme SASPRO Bodies

1. Programme SASPRO Bodies are:
  - a) Board of the Programme SASPRO;
  - b) Evaluation Committees of the Program SASPRO;
  - c) Ethical Committee of the Programme SASPRO.
2. The executive and managing body of the programme is the Board of the Programme SASPRO.
3. Evaluation Committees of the Programme SASPRO are professional and evaluation bodies of the Programme.
4. The Ethical Committee of the Programme SASPRO is an advisory body of the Programme.
5. Status of these bodies, their field of activity, structure and other details are specified in their separate Statutes and Rules of procedure, which are available on the Programme SASPRO website.

## Article VI

### Organisations involved in the Programme SASPRO

1. Coordinator of the Programme SASPRO is the Slovak Academy of Sciences (hereafter only as "coordinator").
2. Organisations eligible for recruiting the scientists under the Programme SASPRO are scientific organisations of SAS.
3. Following the decision of the Presidium of SAS concerning financing the fellowship of the applicant and after signing the contract with that applicant, coordinator enters into a contract with the appropriate host organisation, under which funds will be allocated and where coordinator determines the conditions for the funds drawing.
4. The list of the SAS Scientific organisations is in Annex I of the Guide for applicants.

## Article VII

### Eligibility criteria for scientists

1. Applicant authorized to submit an application to the Programme SASPRO must meet the following general criteria:
  - a) must be in possession of PhD or equivalent title (titles equivalence is judged according to ERC standards and in accordance with Slovak law)<sup>1 2 3</sup>
  - b) PhD or an equivalent degree gained not earlier than 14 years prior to the application submission. Exceeding this period is allowed in the event of legitimate career breaks such as maternity leave, parental leave and other. Length of career breaks and justification should be indicated in the application, and supported with

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<sup>1</sup> [http://erc.europa.eu/sites/default/files/document/file/erc\\_policy\\_phd\\_and\\_equivalent\\_degrees.pdf](http://erc.europa.eu/sites/default/files/document/file/erc_policy_phd_and_equivalent_degrees.pdf)

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

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

evidence, if necessary, with solemn declaration. The recognition of the legitimacy of career breaks and its length is made by the Evaluation Committee of the Programme SASPRO.

2. Other eligibility criteria vary according to the selected scheme of mobility, as described in Article II of this Statute.

### **Article VIII**

#### **Eligibility criteria for application**

1. Submitted application must meet the following criteria:
  - a) must be written in English;
  - b) must be sent in electronic form through the system for the submission and administration of applications (hereafter only as the "System") before the deadline;
  - c) must contain all the parts and requirements as set out in the Guide for applicants.
2. There are not given any restrictions on the field of science in which the applicant submits the application. Selection depends on scientific orientation of the host organisation and on the agreement between the applicant and the statutory body of the host organisation.
3. Ethical issues in research projects are governed by the Slovak law and the rules of the European framework programs.
4. Guide for applicants, in part 6 – Ethical Issues, deals with ethical issues in applications in details.

### **Article IX**

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

1. The main evaluation criteria will be used for the evaluation of applications in the second round. On that basis the quality of the applicant, the quality of the proposed project, the

quality of the host organisation is assessed and the expected impact of implemented fellowship is evaluated.

2 The main assessment criteria that are weighted, are divided into sub-criteria, as shown in the following table:

<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Applicant</b>	<b>Project</b>	<b>Host organisation</b>	<b>Transfer of knowledge and estimated impact</b>
<b>Weighting</b>	<b>(30%)</b>	<b>(25%)</b>	<b>(25%)</b>	<b>(20%)</b>
	Research experiences	Scientific quality and originality	Scientific quality of host institution (achieved results and outputs; publications, citations, patents, etc.)	Predicted impact of training on future scientific career of researcher
	Scientific outputs – publication, patents, citations, etc.	Interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary aspects	Relevance of the project to international scientific collaboration	Predicted impact on host institution (new methods, improvement of scientific work, new research fields, etc.)
	Teaching and other skills and experiences	Appropriateness and adequacy of methodology	Projects implemented in the host institution (number, funding resources, duration)	Possible transfer of achieved results into the practice (cooperation with industry, business sector, etc.)
	Leadership qualities	Timeliness of project	Implementation of the project in the host institution	
		Expected outputs (publications, products, patents, etc.)	Quality of infrastructure and personal resources	

## Article X

### Enrolment on Programme SASPRO

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

## Article XI

### Evaluation of applications

1. Applications are evaluated in two rounds of evaluation.
2. In the first round the compliance with the eligibility criteria of the applicant, host organisation and application is assessed as given in Articles VI and VIII of the Statute. In the second round the fulfilment of main evaluation criteria as listed in Article IX of this Statute is judged.
3. Meeting of the eligibility criteria is assessed by authorized personnel of the Department of Research and Development of the SAS Office (hereafter only “R&D Department”), their proposals are discussed by respective committees and committees decide on them.
4. Results of the first round of evaluation are sent electronically to applicants’ given e-mail addresses and are also available for each candidate after logging into the system. Together with the notification of the evaluation results of the first round the information on



correction options is also sent (redress) where the applicant can remove small formal deficiencies that were listed in the notice. However in the process of redress is not possible to change the content of a research project or making significant changes in the application.

5. Applications that were evaluated in the first round as successful, advance to the second round of evaluation. In the second round at least three independent external evaluators assess each application in accordance with the criteria set out in Article IX of the Statute.

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

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

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

8. For each criterion was determined threshold of 70%, which determines the minimum of the score that the application must achieve for the given criterion in order to be funded.

9. Except the score assigning evaluators also verbally express to each criterion, and also to the application generally. This verbal comment will subsequently serve as feedback to candidates in order to clarify for them apparent strengths and weaknesses of their project.

10. On basis of evaluators' opinions are rejected applicants whose applications in the evaluation have not reached the specified threshold. Other applicants whose applications reached the specified threshold for all criteria will be invited for personal interviews during the meeting of the Evaluation Committee.

11. On basis of to evaluators' opinions, personal interviews with candidates and committees' own discussions, committees divide the applications into the following categories:

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

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

13. Decision of Committees and of Presidium of SAS on classifying applications into categories is final and cannot be appealed.



14. Success ratio, i.e. the ratio of funded applications to submitted applications cannot be higher than 50%.
15. Applicants will be informed of the evaluation results by e-mail, publishing the results in the system, as well as on the Programme website.
16. Applications which have been classified into categories A and B will be discussed by the Ethical Committee of the Programme SASPRO in relation to ethical issues that may arise from the project proposal. R&D Department may, on a proposal from the Ethical Committee of the Programme SASPRO, require the applicant to submit the necessary permits and other documents issued by the Slovak authorities regarding ethical issues of the project.

## Article XII

### Negotiation of the Grant Agreement

1. According to decision of the Presidium of SAS on classifying the applications in category A coordinator assigns the project officer from R&D Department to each application in category A, who will contact the applicant and invite him to the negotiation regarding the Grant Agreement. Statutories of host organisations are also invited to the negotiation.
2. During the negotiations, applicants and statutories of host organisations are required to complete the necessary information and details, they agree details of allocation of funds, their drawing, start and termination of the fellowship.
3. In the event that during the negotiations the applicant and the Programme coordinator shall not reach the agreement, the application may be rejected by the decision of Presidium of SAS and the applicant whose application was placed in category B will be invited for negotiation. Applicants in this category are invited for negotiating on the basis of the score of their applications; the replacing applicant must be from the same Evaluation Committee of which was the applicant whose application was rejected.
4. Final version of the Grant Agreement approves the Presidium of SAS. In the event of successful completion of negotiations, according to decision of the Presidium of SAS, signing

of a Grant Agreement between the coordinator and the successful applicant will take place in the end of the negotiations. Consequently, Contract is signed between the Coordinator and the host organisation, as referred to in Article VI, paragraph 3 of this Statute.

### Article XIII

#### Implementation and financing of the project

1. Funding as was agreed during negotiation will be allocated to the host organisation.
2. Terms of funds drawing, the obligations of the host organisation, control mechanisms and other relevant requirements shall be governed by a contract between the coordinator and the host organisation.
3. The host organisation shall conclude with the incoming scientist (hereinafter referred to as "scientist") an employment with the statutory weekly working time and fixed-term contract, agreed in the Grant Agreement.
4. The host organisation must provide the incoming scientist cooperation and assistance in obtaining a temporary residence permit and for other administrative matters relating to his/her arrival to Slovakia and to the host organisation.
5. The host organisation must provide the incoming scientist adequate conditions for the implementation of his/her research project.
6. The following types of eligible costs are paid in the frame of projects funded under the programme:

#### **Direct:**

- **Living allowance** - its height is determined by the length of work experience of incoming scientist. Amounts are stated pre-tax, including mandatory deductions of the employer and employee:

- a) 1-5 years working experience after obtaining a PhD: €2860-3140/month;
- b) 6-10 years work experience after obtaining a PhD: €3640-3900/month;

c) 11-14 years of working experience after obtaining a PhD: €4000-4280/month;

- **Mobility/travel allowance** - the amount depends on family obligations of incoming scientist. It is paid together with salary and it is also subject to taxation and levies:

a) €660/month - for fellows with family obligations and in charge of children under 26 years;

b) €550/month - for fellows with family obligations and in charge of children above 26 years/without children;

c) €440/month - for fellows without family obligations;

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

a) €800/month - laboratory based research projects;

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

**Indirect** - costs to cover activities related to the solution of the project (e.g. electricity, water consumption, sewerage, communications, retail supplies, etc.). Indirect costs may be paid to max. 8.5% of direct costs.

7. Ineligible costs cannot be covered by funds allocated to projects under the Programme SASPRO. Ineligible expenses include in particular:

- Any identifiable indirect taxes, including VAT or duties;
- Interest owed;
- Provisions for possible future losses or charges;
- Exchange losses;
- Costs declared, incurred or reimbursed in respect of another project;
- Costs related to return on capital;
- Debt and debt service charges;

- Excessive or reckless expenditure.

## **Article XIV**

### **Interim and final reports**

1. Duty of a scientist to submit the interim and final report is the part of conditions of implementation and financing of the project. Interim and final report contains a financial report on the drawing funds status and the report on the implementation status of the research project.
2. The interim report shall be submitted every 12 months from the start of the project. In the event that the Grant Agreement agreed fellowship for 12 months, scientist submits only the final report.
3. The relevant Evaluation Committees discuss interim reports. In the event that the Evaluation Committee finds serious deficiencies in meeting the goals of the project, or misconduct in the use of funding, Committee issues a proposal for early termination of fellowship. Presidium of SAS decides about the proposal.
4. Scientist submits the final report in the month prior to the planned end of his/her fellowship. Submission of the report is related to the personal presentation of a scientist at a SAS Presidium meeting with presence of Programme SASPRO Board members.
5. More details on the content of the interim and final reports will be published on the Programme website.

## **Article XV**

### **Termination of fellowship**

1. Fellowship of the scientist ends in the following events:
  - a) as planned under the Grant Agreement;
  - b) for reasons of force majeure;



c) ahead of schedule:

- by decision of SAS Presidium on a proposal of Evaluation Committee under Article XIV, paragraph 3 of the Statute;
- by decision of SAS Presidium at the written request of a scientist after discussing by the relevant Evaluation Committee;
- by decision of SAS Presidium at the written request of the statutory body of the host organisation after discussing by the relevant Evaluation Committee.

2. Detailed conditions for termination of fellowship shall determine Grant Agreement and the agreement between the coordinator and the host organisation.

## Article XVI

### Final provisions

1. This Statute shall enter into force on the date of its approval by the SAS Presidium and becomes effective at the date of its publication.
2. All changes of the Statute must be approved of the SAS Presidium as written numbered amendments of the Statute.
3. Current wording of the statute and its amendments will be published on the Programme SASPRO website.

In Bratislava, on 6 February 2014

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President of the Slovak Academy of  
Sciences