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# Rector's Directive No. 41/2019

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*appealed by Rector's Directive No. 55/2020*

## Rules for the Primus Grant Scheme

Date of effect: 1 January 2020

### Article I – Introductory Provisions

1. Charles University (“the University” or “CU”), in accordance with its Long-Term Plan, announces a call for Primus Grant Proposals. The purpose of the Primus Grant Scheme is to support researchers (usually those with international experience) in their effort to establish new research groups and laboratories at the University. The Primus Grant Scheme does not intend to provide additional support for existing groups.
2. The Primus Grant Scheme should increase the momentum of research work including the mobility of researchers. This programme is designed for the best young scientists to set up a new group and develop their own independent research programme, and to offer a top-quality workplace for research by students, primarily from master’s and doctoral programmes. One of the long-term objectives of the programme is to increase the University’s success in obtaining international grants, such as European Research Council (ERC) grants.

### Article II – Conditions for the Grant Scheme

1. The application for the Primus Grant Scheme (“project proposal”) is submitted to the Rector’s Office via a module called Internal Tenders within the “Věda” information system (“the information system”) <sup>1</sup>.
2. Project proposals cannot be submitted by persons who hold the positions of Rector, Vice-Rector, Dean, Director of a higher education institute (Institute of the History of Charles University and Archives of Charles University; Centre for Theoretical Study; Centre for Economic Research and Graduate Education; Environment Centre of Charles University – “higher education institute”), or persons who are members of the expert commission under Article V (1) of these Rules. Each applicant can submit only one project.
3. The project proposal can be submitted in these three research areas: HUM – humanities and social sciences, SCI – natural sciences, mathematics, and informatics, MED – medical sciences and biomedicine.
4. The principal investigator of the project is expected to apply for an ERC Grant before the completion of the project, or, in the case of a project in the area of humanities and social sciences, the principal investigator is expected to apply for another prestigious international grant.
5. The research team consists mainly of:
  - a. The principal investigator, who is an academic or researcher, and who obtained a Ph.D./Th.D. degree no earlier than eight years <sup>2</sup> before filing the project proposal, has international experience, excels in his/her field, and participates in international cooperation. The principal investigator has usually completed at least a six-month research internship abroad. In the application of this important criterion, the inherent limitations of the particular field, or the exceptional health and social circumstances of the applicant will be taken into consideration. The principal investigator is not required to be an employee of the University at the time of submitting his/her project proposal. However, he/she must become an employee of the University before the research work on the project starts. His/her full-time equivalent at the University must be at least 0.5 (a part of this full-time equivalent may be carried out in faculty hospitals or at a joint workplace shared between CU and the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, v.v.i. (public research institution));
  - b. Postdoctoral researchers;
  - c. Students in doctoral programmes of the University;
  - d. Students in master’s programmes of the University;
  - e. Other academics or researchers of the University;
  - f. Technical specialists and expert employees of the University

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<sup>1</sup> Information on access rights to the information system will be specified in Rector’s Directive “Call for the 5th Primus Grant Scheme at Charles University”.

<sup>2</sup> This time-limit does not include duly documented maternity leave and parental leave and performance of military service or substantiated long-term sick leave.

6. The research team may be modified by the principal investigator during the course of the project implementation. However, the research team must include, in addition to the principal investigator, at least three doctoral students or postdocs no later than by 31 December of the year following the year of submission of the project proposal.
7. The work on the project cannot start earlier than 1 January and must begin no later than on 1 September of the year following the year of submission of the project proposal. An extension of a project for two additional years, if the project has been evaluated by the commission as excellent, will be considered if such extension is applied for (Article VI (7) of these Rules).
8. An applicant whose project receives a recommendation for funding may be involved in other internal University Grant Schemes, but not as the principal investigator.

## Article III – Funding Structure

1. The funding for the project will be provided through the University institutional support and from the resources of faculties and higher education institutes. The financial resources allocated to the project are structured as follows:
  - a. Personnel costs;
  - b. Bursaries/scholarships;
  - c. Operating costs, travel expenses, and services;
  - d. Long-term tangible and intangible property costs;
  - e. Supplementary and overhead costs amounting to no more than 15% of all non-investment resources. This condition applies separately to the resources provided by the University and the resources provided by the faculty/higher education institute.
2. The University will support the project with the amount of money matching the amount to which the supporting faculty/higher education institute will agree. The University support will amount to a maximum of 1.5 million CZK per year per project, with the exception of cases stated in paragraph 3.
3. If the applicant submits a project from an institution abroad, where the applicant has spent at least the last two calendar years, the evaluation commission may recommend a higher financial institutional support of up to 2 million CZK on condition that the relevant faculty/higher education institute agrees to support the project with the same or a higher amount of money. The evaluation commission may propose an increase in the proportion of project funding from the University up to three quarters of the requested financial resources.
4. A maximum of 5% of the originally allocated financial resources by the University that remained unused may be transferred to the fund of resources for a defined purpose of the faculties or higher education institutes.

## Article IV – Project Proposal

1. The project proposal must include:
  - a. The project title (in the Czech and English languages);
  - b. Information about the research team members, or description of the main vacant positions if the names are not known at the time of submission of the proposal;
  - c. A brief abstract of the project (in both the Czech and English languages);
  - d. Description of the research project in the English language<sup>3</sup>;
    - Project objectives;
    - Procedures to achieve them;
    - Expected outcomes of the project;
    - Specification of the workplace where the project is to be implemented;
  - e. Information about the principal investigator: personal identification data, CV, up to five most significant publications, a complete list of publications, possibly also other outcomes of the investigator's individual research work<sup>4</sup>, information about the duration of internships abroad;
  - f. A specification of the required financial resources for the first calendar year of the project, and a general outline of the resources required for the entire duration of the project;
  - g. Designation of the faculty/higher education institute of the principal investigator, or a list of the faculties/higher education institutes where the project will be implemented.
2. The dean of the faculty or the director of the higher education institute provides an opinion on the project and uploads it to the information system within seven days of the deadline for the submission of project proposals.

## Article V – Evaluation of Project Proposal

1. The project proposals are evaluated by commissions of experts, and the membership and activities of the commissions is governed by a Rector's Directive.
2. The overall quality of each project proposal is evaluated as well as the following criteria:
  - a. Applicant's qualifications and research activities to date with an emphasis on excellent outputs and international collaboration;
  - b. Self-reliance and independence of the applicant;
  - c. Clearly defined research objective of the submitted project;

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<sup>3</sup> As an exception and in justified cases only, the project description may be submitted in the Czech language

<sup>4</sup> This is substantiated by a full-text reference. If the output cannot be substantiated electronically, it will be made available in a different format.

- d. The proposal's compliance with the long-term plan of the University, the conception of the workplace, and whether the project's results have the potential to create a new line of research, or to form a new school of research at the University;
  - e. Whether good conditions are created for supervising the work of doctoral students;
  - f. Whether the expert level of the research team and the required financial resources are appropriate to the stated objectives.
3. Each project proposal is evaluated by two evaluators and a reviewer for the commission.
  4. The commission discusses every project proposal and its evaluation. Subsequently, the commission determines the order of the project proposals and proposes whether the financial support will be granted or not to individual project proposals. In the case of projects that the commission proposes to support, the commission either agrees with the amount of resources required or recommends an adjustment. The commission also determines which other projects may additionally receive financial support should additional funds be released (e.g., due to failure to make an agreement with an applicant whose project ranked higher).
  5. The project proposals are discussed in the CU Research Board and they may also be consulted with the CU International Board.
  6. The project will be supported only on condition that the relevant faculty/higher education institute agrees with the match funding, and the agreement is confirmed by the dean of the faculty or the director of the higher education institute.
  7. The Rector decides on the allocation of the resources to the project based on the opinion of expert commissions and the CU Research Board. If the proposal for allocation of the resources is not accepted by the principal investigator or the faculty/higher education institute, the commission or the Research Board of CU may recommend that the next project in the list be funded.
  8. The applicant is informed of the Rector's decision after receiving e-mail notification. The decision is available in the Internal Tenders section of the information system of Charles University. A formal objection can be filed against the Rector's decision within 15 days of the date on which the notification of the uploading of the decision in the information system was sent to the applicant. The Rector decides on the objection based on the recommendation of the commission. The Rector's decision is final.
  9. There is no right to receive funding for the project.

## **Article VI – Agreement on Project Implementation, Financial Statement, Interim Report, Final Report, and Publication of Outputs**

1. The details of the project implementation, allocation of financial resources, and financial management are provided in the Agreement on Funds Allocation ("the Agreement"). The parties to the Agreement are the University, the faculty/higher education institute and the principal investigator. If more faculties/higher education institutes participate in the project, these additional collaborators are included in the Agreement, or the co-funding of the project and the use of the research outputs is governed by a separate agreement. Should the principal investigator or the faculty/higher education institute fail to sign the Agreement by 31 December of the year in which the project proposal was submitted, the University has no further obligation to fund the project.
2. The principal investigator<sup>5</sup> is responsible for the proper drawing and economical spending of the allocated resources, and for compliance with the conditions set forth in the Decision on Granting Institutional Support for the Conceptual Development of Research Organisations issued by the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports of the Czech Republic.
3. In the Agreement, the principal investigator agrees:
  - a. To handle intellectual property and property rights to research outputs in accordance with the law;
  - b. To submit upon request the detailed documents concerning the drawing of resources to the bodies of the faculty/higher education institute;
  - c. To return to the University within the stipulated time the financial resources that cannot be spent or transferred to the fund of resources for a defined purpose;
  - d. To finance the project using the faculty's/higher education institute's funds at least in the amount equal to the resources provided by the University in the given year;
  - e. The faculty agrees to create appropriate material and space conditions for the investigator and to provide the investigator with due administrative and technical support for the duration of the project.
4. If required due to serious reasons on the part of the principal investigator, the funding of the project may be suspended for a period of time. The exact duration of the suspension and the conditions for the resumption of the project are agreed upon by the faculty/higher education institute, the University, and the investigator.
5. The principal investigator submits an annual interim report on the project implementation and an overview of spending of the resources separately for the resources received from the University and from the faculties/higher education institutes. The report and the overview are evaluated by a relevant expert commission.

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<sup>5</sup> The responsibilities of the principal investigator may be fulfilled by another person for a limited period of time and with the consent of the Rector.

6. The budget and an application for the allocation of funds for the next calendar year along with a written commitment from the dean/director of the institute to co-finance the project form part of an appendix to the Agreement.
7. Continuous supervision of the use of the allocated resources is carried out by the faculties/higher education institutes.
8. Should the project be exceptionally successful, it is possible to apply for an extension in funding for a maximum of two additional years. As a prerequisite, the principal investigator must apply for an ERC grant (or in humanities and social sciences, he/she may apply for another significant individual grant abroad). The applications for an extension are reviewed by the Rector upon consultation with the expert commission and the International Board of Charles University.
9. The final report must be submitted within three months of the completion of the project. The final report must include a description of the activities, a list of published outcomes, and an overall verbal evaluation of the outputs. The Rector informs the Research Board of Charles University and the Academic Senate of Charles University ("the Senate") of the achieved outputs.
10. The publications and other outcomes achieved with support of the Primus programme must carry a dedication note. Primus must also be indicated as a source of financing in the OBD application. All publication outcomes must include the specific affiliation of the authors to the University and to the faculty/higher education institute as required by the applicable Rector's Directive<sup>6</sup>.
11. Should the Act No.130/2002 Sb., as amended, change, or should any other relevant legal regulation change, which would consequently result in substantial changes to the conditions for the institutional support of research at Charles University and within the Primus Grant Scheme, the Rector submits with sufficient notice a proposal for further course of action to the deans of faculties and directors of the higher education institutes.

## **Article VII – Common and Final Provisions**

1. The Primus Grant Scheme based on these rules is coordinated by the Vice-Rector for Research and is administrated by the Research Support Office of the Rectorate.
2. Basic information about the Grant Scheme and its results, including the minutes of the meetings of its commissions, are published in a regular manner.
3. The Rector sets the date of the call for applications for the Primus Grant Scheme, the date for submitting the project proposals, the date of publishing the results of the call, the date of commencement of implementation of the projects, the dates for submitting interim reports, overviews of spending of the resources, final reports, and other important dates and administrative requirements. The dates of the commencement and of the completion of the projects which started before these rules became effective are governed by the provisions of the relevant Agreement on Project Implementation.
4. These rules for the Primus Grant Scheme were approved by the Rector's Board of Charles University on 3 December 2019 and become effective on 1 January 2020.

Prague, 20 December 2019

Rector

Prof. MUDr. Tomáš Zima, DrSc., MBA

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<sup>6</sup> Currently Rector's Directive No. 24/2018.