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KARLOVA

Methodology for Reviewers in the Start programme

This methodology is binding for all reviewers in the Start programme.

- **First round of evaluation - formal aspect of evaluation by the university clerk**
- **Second round of evaluation - evaluation by evaluators**

Dates and method of evaluation

Every project proposal accepted for evaluation must be evaluated by an external evaluator within fourteen calendar days of receiving access data in IS Věda.

The evaluation is performed in the evaluation protocol in IS Věda. Each evaluator assigns 0 - 100 points to the project proposal and the project proposal is evaluated with marks A - D according to the number of points awarded
(A: 81 - 100 points, B: 61 - 80 points, C: 41 - 60 points, D: 0 - 40 points).
The following is evaluated for each project proposal:

a) overall quality of the project: 0 - 40 points (0 - 10 points project insufficiently prepared, 11 - 20 points average project in acceptable quality, 21 - 30 points very good project, 31 - 40 points excellent and innovative project),

b) clearly defined research goal (scientific hypothesis) of the submitted project: 0 - 30 points (0 - 10 points unclear or insufficiently defined goal, 11 - 20 points goal defined in very general terms, 21 - 30 points goal defined clearly, intelligibly and precisely),

c) composition of the research team: 0 - 20 points (0 - 6 points team composed of researchers with professional orientation that does not correspond to the research goal, or team with inadequate work capacity with respect to the set goal, 7 - 14 points researchers with appropriate professional orientation and and likely adequate work capacity for set goal, 15 - 20 points appropriate composition of team from the point of view of researchers' professional orientation and work capacity corresponding to the set goal),

d) adequacy of the budget, including justification[1]: 0 - 10 points (0 - 3 points insufficiently described or justified budget items, 4 - 6 points adequately and sufficiently justified budget, 7 - 10 points very precisely compiled and well-justified budget).

[1]Personnel costs, mentor costs, faculty overhead costs, and the total amount of the budget are not the subject of the budget evaluation.
The subject of evaluation is: non-investment equipment necessary for the project, internship costs, and training costs.

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If the project proposal is rated D by both evaluators, it is excluded from further evaluation. For all other project proposals, the points from both evaluators are added up and they proceed to the third round of evaluation.

- **Second round of evaluation - Evaluation by the Review Commission**

The Review Commission is appointed by the Rector and composed of an equal number of representatives of the HUM, SOC, SCI and MED subject panels. If the number of project proposals in one panel significantly exceeds the number of project proposals in the others, the Rector may additionally increase the representation of reviewers for such a panel in the Commission. The proceedings of the RC are governed by the Statute and the Rules of Procedure (sample contained in Appendices 1 and 2 to this Methodology). The reviewers must become acquainted with the project proposals and their two assessments. The Commission first assesses the quality of the opinions produced, especially for those project proposals where the evaluation of two evaluators is in conflict (one evaluator recommends the project for funding, and the other does not - allocated D).

Criteria for assessing the quality of the evaluation performed:

5 points Evaluation contains no deficiencies that objectively impact the grant application in accordance with the rules for grant competition (Principles…, etc.).

4 points Evaluation contains only minor shortcomings, which do not impact the objectivity of the overall evaluation (e.g. some comments are too brief).

3 points Average evaluation, which contains several minor shortcomings (e.g. some irrelevant comments, or insufficient justification).

2 points Evaluation shows serious shortcomings (inadequate, insufficient justification for allocation of the number of points, missing comments, transcribed or non-corresponding comments, missing assessment of the financial aspect of the project, non-compliance with the conditions set out in the grant rules), or the evaluation shows minor shortcomings that affect a large number of criteria.
The evaluation shows a discrepancy between the amount of points awarded and the commentary for the individual criteria.

1 point Evaluation shows very serious shortcomings (e.g. the overall statement does not correspond to the number of points awarded) or other serious shortcomings (irrelevant comments, proposed adjustments that are in breach of the grant competition rules, lack of assessment of the financial aspect of the project) that are reflected in most criteria.

If the evaluator's opinion receives 1 or 2 points, the Review Commission replaces the assessment with a new one, which it assigns to one of the reviewers for processing. If he/she finds both opinions of the proposal insufficiently from a professional perspective, he/she replaces it with new assessments, one of which he/she assigns to one of the reviewers for processing, and the other to another evaluator for processing through the university clerk. The evaluation of the assessments and the justification for their replacement by new assessments is be stated in the minutes of the Commission meeting (for a sample of the minutes of the meeting, see Appendix 3 to this Methodology). New assessments are prepared in accordance with paragraph 3. If the proposal is thus rated with two D marks, it is excluded from further evaluation.

The reviewers **further assess project proposals in terms of their feasibility and innovative approach** and propose the allocation of additional points in the range of 0-60 points (0 - 20 points project is feasible, but only slightly innovative, 21 - 40 points project is feasible and innovative, 41 - 60 points project is feasible and highly innovative). He/she then justifies this evaluation proposal.

The Commission assesses project proposals and project score proposals from reviewers and votes on the allocation of points to individual project proposals, including justifications.
The Commission approves the final list of all project proposals, ranked according to the sum of the points awarded in the second and third rounds of evaluation with the marked limit for granting or not granting financial support (according to available funds in the START programme). Minutes are taken of the meetings of the Commission, which are published in the usual manner.

Process steps:

a) assignment of reviewers to project proposals that have advanced to the third evaluation round,
b) Reviewers acquaint themselves with the assigned project proposals and both evaluation assessments in the second round,
c) meeting of the Review Commission (RC), election of the president of the RC,
d) RC evaluates the quality of processed expert opinions,
e) if the RC considers any of the assessments to be professionally insufficient (e.g. the point evaluation is not adequate to the quality of the proposal or is not sufficiently justified), it asks a reviewer from the same subject panel to prepare a new assessment. If both expert assessments are professionally insufficient for a given project proposal, one new assessment is assigned to the reviewer and the other is assigned to another evaluator (the other evaluator is selected by the university clerk from the database of evaluators).
f) the project proposal is evaluated with two marks D, is excluded from further evaluation,
g) the RC assesses project proposals in terms of their feasibility and innovative approach and allocates additional points in the range of 0 - 60 points, and justifies this allocation,
h) the RC approves the final list of all project proposals sorted according to the sum of points allocated in the second and third round of evaluation and sets the limit for the granting of financial support,
i) the minutes of the meeting of the RC are published in the usual way (overseen by the university clerk).

- **Completion of evaluation - announcement of final status**

The university clerk shall then announce the final status of the project proposal, assessments and points available to all head researchers through IS Věda.
The Rector shall decide on the allocation of funds to project proposals on the basis of the opinion of the Review Commission. In the event that the head researcher refuses the allocation of funds, the Rector may decide to allocate funds to the next project proposal in the order.

- **Appeal**

Comments on the evaluation process can be submitted only after the announcement of the results (publication of the final list of supported projects, signed by the Rector of CU). Comments must be submitted to the Rector of Charles University through the Vice-Rector for Research in writing within seven days of announcement of the results.

- **Conflict of interest/bias**

a) at the level of the grant competition: If the evaluator is a member of the research team or a project mentor, he/she is obliged to immediately notify the university clerk if he/she is approached for the evaluation of project proposals of that grant competition. On this basis, he/she is subsequently **excluded from the evaluation of project proposals under the START programme**.

b) at the level of a specific project: Any evaluator at risk of conflict of interest due to a connection with the applicant/research team must notify the university clerk of this fact, including the justification, and immediately withdraw from the evaluation process of the relevant project proposal (refuse to accept the project proposal for evaluation, or temporarily leave the Commission meeting). It is the responsibility of every reviewer to consider whether any current or past cooperation with the applicant/research team does not create a conflict of interest under the signed declaration or not, i.e. whether his/her independence is unimpeachable.

Conflict of interest of a member of the RC/reviewer

If a member of the RC/reviewer finds a connection or connection to one of the submitted/discussed project proposals that could affect his/her impartiality in the assessment of the project, he/she must inform the president of the RC and the university clerk before the meeting begins. Any member of the RC who is in a conflict of interest may not participate in the discussion of the given project, i.e. he/she must leave the meeting room for the period of discussion, or decline to attend the meeting. Conflicts of interest must be considered by each of the members of the RC with regard to the possible questioning of impartiality during the entire approval process. The bias of a RC member is assessed in connection with his/her links to the evaluated project proposals and research teams. Compliance with the rules on the impartiality of a member of the RC is supervised by the university clerk, who has the power to exclude a member of the RC from the discussion of a project if his/her bias is proven.

- **Impartiality and confidentiality**

All information related to the project evaluation/selection process, as well as the content of the project itself, is confidential. The reviewer is obliged to maintain complete confidentiality towards all entities/persons, with the exception of entities/persons who are responsible for the monitoring of the evaluation process and project selection, and is also obliged to ensure the integrity of the entire evaluation process. Any doubts about a breach of this rule must be investigated and may lead to the termination of cooperation with the reviewer and, as a last resort, to the suspension of the entire evaluation process, with all the consequences that that entails. It is therefore necessary to prevent any leakage of information, even if due to mere negligence. **The reviewer must approach the assessed project objectively and impartially, using all of his/her knowledge and skills, or using publicly available information. Under no circumstances may the reviewer contact the applicant in the evaluation process, not even for the purpose of supplementing or explaining the data from the project proposal. All members of the Review Commission must sign a statutory declaration** of independence, impartiality and non-bias and the code of ethics on the date of their appointment and prior to the start of the evaluation and selection of projects.

- **Evaluation of final reports - NOTE: can be further amended**

The university clerk grants reviewers access to the final reports in IS Věda. The reviewers acquaint themselves with the final reports of the projects belonging to their field panel. The RC then evaluates the fulfillment of the research goal of the project and its outputs (scientific publications, participation in conferences, etc.) and the fulfillment of the educational goals of individual researchers.

Criteria for the evaluation of Final Reports:

- fulfillment of the research goal (YES/NO/PARTIALLY)

- expected outputs fulfilled (YES/NO/PARTIALLY - expected output was fulfilled, but for objective reasons at an earlier stage of processing than defined in the project proposal, e.g. the article is in the form of a manuscript and not in review proceedings due to change(s) during the project implementation etc.)
- fulfilment of the educational goals of the main researcher (YES/NO/PARTIALLY)
- fulfilment of the educational goals of other researchers (YES/NO/PARTIALLY)
- internships were beneficial for students (YES/NO/PARTIALLY)
- successful managment of the team and organisation of the project solution by the head researcher (YES/NO/PARTIALLY)

Minutes shall be taken of the meeting of the Commission, which shall include any list of prematurely terminated projects. The minutes of the meeting are published in the usual way.

Timetable

03. 08. 2020 - 11. 09. 2020: appointment of reviewers and Review Commission (Vice-Rector for Research)

15. 09. 2020 12:00 – 30. 10. 2020 12:00: submission of project proposals in IS Věda (head researchers)

02. 11. 2020 – 06. 12. 2020: addition of the number of reviewers from subject panels with a large number of project proposals (Vice-Rector for Research)

02. 11. 2020 – 06. 11. 2020: 1st round of evaluation - formal aspect (university clerk)

02. 11. 2020 – 20. 11. 2020: assignment of project proposals to external evaluators (university clerk)

From 02. 11. 2020 fourteen calendar days, no later than 20. 11. 2020:

- corrections of formal deficiencies (head researchers)
- evaluators receive an e-mail with the names and annotations of project proposals in their panel (university clerk)

23. 11. 2020 – 06. 12. 2020: second round of evaluation (external evaluators)

07. 12. 2020: raporteurs granted access to all project proposals in IS Věda (university clerk)

07. 12. 2020 – 11. 12. 2020: assignment of evaluated project proposals to reviewers (university clerk)

14. 12. 2020 – 12. 1. 2021: 3rd round of evaluation - acquaintance with project proposals and their assessments, proposal of further point evaluation of assigned project proposals (reviewers)

13. 01. 2021 – 19. 01. 2021: Third round of evaluation - meeting of the Review Commission

- election of the president of the Review Commission

- assessment of the quality of assessments

- where appropriate, the submission of new opinions to the reviewers (including justification for the inadequacy of the original opinions)

- assessment of project proposals (feasibility, innovative approach)

- allocation of 0-60 points to each proposal (including justification)

- approval of the list of all project proposals according to the sum of points in the second and third rounds of evaluation, with indication of the limit for granting or not granting financial support (in the case of entering new opinions, preparation of an incomplete list and postponement of voting)

- filling in of minutes from the meeting of the RC (university clerk)

by 29. 01. 2021:

- **elaboration of new assessments**, if necessary, **(appointed reviewers**, or other evaluators selected by the university clerk**)**
- **elimination of project proposals with two "D" marks,**
- **vote on an updated list of project proposals with a marked limit for granting or not granting financial support - per rollam (RC)**, if new assessments have been prepared.

01. 02. 2021 - 26. 02 2021: announcement of results - head researchers granted access to evaluation of project proposals in IS Věda (university clerk)

01. 03. 2021 – 31. 03. 2021: signing of Agreements on the Allocation of Funds (head researchers, deans, Rector)
01. 04. 2021 – 31. 03. 2023: project implementation
01. 04. 2023 – 30. 04. 2023: submission of final reports (head researchers)
01. 05. 2023 - 31. 05. 2023: evaluation of final reports (reviewers and Review Commission)
01. 06. 2023 – 30. 07. 2023: Submission of final evaluation report to the Rector's Board (Vice-Rector for Research)

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