

## Masaryk University Directive No. 3/2020

### **RULES OF SPECIFIC UNIVERSITY RESEARCH**

*(in the version effective from 9 September 2020)*

*In accordance with Section 10(1) of Act No. 111/1998 Coll., on Higher Education Institutions and on Modification and Amendment of Other Acts (Higher Education Act), as later amended (hereinafter referred to as the "Act"), I issue this Directive:*

#### Section 1

##### **Subject of Regulation**

- (1) This Directive regulates the rules of specific university research. Specific university research (hereinafter referred to as "specific research") means research carried out by students during the implementation of accredited doctoral or Master's degree programmes and directly related to their education. Specific research is governed by the following documents:
  - a) Resolution of the Government of the Czech Republic of 30 September 2019 No. 697 regarding Draft Rules for Providing Targeted Support for Specific University Research (full wording in Czech is available on the website of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, hereinafter "MEYS"),
  - b) Rules for Providing Targeted Support for Specific University Research (full wording in Czech is available on the MEYS website),
  - c) Act No. 130/2002 Coll. on the Support of Research, Experimental Development and Innovation from Public Funds and on the Amendment of Certain Related Acts, as later amended.

#### Section 2

##### **Funds for Support of Specific Research**

- (1) Specific research is funded from targeted support for specific university research.
- (2) The funds may only be used for:
  - a) reimbursement of eligible costs of student projects selected in the student grant competition
  - b) reimbursement of eligible costs associated with the organization of student scientific conferences, however, only up to a maximum of 10% of the funds provided,
  - c) reimbursement of eligible costs associated with the organization of a student grant competition, but only up to a maximum of 2.5% of the total funds for specific research.
- (3) The amount of support for specific research awarded to individual faculties for the investigation of projects in the given calendar year is determined by the Rector after receiving the decision of the MEYS on the provision of targeted support for specific university research.
- (4) The competition is organized at the level of faculties. All faculties observe the same principles of the student grant competition as stipulated hereby.

- (5) The faculty undertakes to provide adequate administrative support and infrastructure to the accepted projects.

### Section 3

#### Competition Announcement

- (1) The Rector of MU announces a competition to support projects in the following categories:
- a) **Support for student specific research projects**
  - b) **Support for specific research projects aimed at organizing student scientific conferences**
- (2) Along with the announcement, the Rector sets indicative financial limits for the calendar year for which the competition is announced:
- a) **Total indicative limit of a faculty** is defined as a proportion in the amount allocated to Masaryk University (hereinafter referred to as "MU") in the previous year (or a qualified estimate using currently available information), based on the formula stated in the funding body's rules and on the relevant input data available.
  - b) **Percentage limit** for specific research projects aimed at the organization of student scientific conferences, however, up to a maximum of 10% of the total funds awarded to specific research.
  - c) **Percentage limit for providing centralized project management** (grant competition organization including costs of evaluation, project inspection and evaluation of results), up to a maximum of 2.5% of the total funds awarded to specific research.
- (3) The limits may be adjusted according to the actual amount of funds awarded to MU based on the funding body's decision. The adjustments shall be decided by the Rector upon a proposal of the vice-rector authorized under the MU Organizational Regulations (hereinafter referred to as the "vice-rector"), discussed with the bursar.

### Section 4

#### Basic Competition Rules

- (1) **The applicant and responsible investigator** (project investigator) in a category may only be:
- a) a student enrolled in a doctoral degree programme at MU; in such case, the supervisor of the investigator must be a member of the project team,
  - b) an academic employee of MU.
- Other members of the project team are students enrolled in MU doctoral or Master's degree programmes, or MU academic, research or development staff.
- (2) **Financial support for projects** may only be granted toward eligible costs or expenses:
- a) personnel costs or expenses (wages, social security and health insurance payments and statutory social fund contributions), including scholarships,
  - b) costs or expenses for the acquisition of low-value tangible and intangible assets,
  - c) other operating costs or expenses related to the implementation of the project,
  - d) costs or expenses for services,
  - e) additional costs or expenses (projects must include the share in common operating costs corresponding to the Joint Operating Costs (JOC) coefficient for the given economic unit in the year concerned in accordance with MU Instruction

for determining the proportion of administrative overheads and system of applying overheads to projects, as amended).

- (3) In projects focused on organization of student scientific conferences, travel expenses of participants cannot be settled from the project budget.
- (4) The support may cover the costs or expenses of a project implemented at a research facility of a legal entity other than MU only if, based on an agreement of the legal entity with MU pursuant to Section 81 of the Act, it implements an accredited degree programme at this facility in which students who are members of the project team are studying.
- (5) The project team consists of 50 people at the maximum.
- (6) The project duration within categories is one year.
- (7) The maximum financial support per project in the category Support for student specific research projects is CZK 3,000,000 if the investigator is a student of a doctoral degree programme, or CZK 5,000,000 if the investigator is an MU academic employee.
- (8) The share of personal costs for students, including scholarships, must be more than 75% of the total personnel costs.
- (9) The number of students involved in the project must be at least 50% of the total number of persons involved in the project.
- (10) The deans of individual faculties shall decide on allocation of the support to projects by the end of the evaluation period. The allocation of the support is contingent on the total amount determined by the funding body for specific research.

## Section 5

### **Project Proposals**

- (1) Project proposals shall contain the following requisites:
  - a) Student specific research projects:
    1. summary,
    2. professional description of the project, which will briefly state:
      - i. specification of investigated issues,
      - ii. current state of knowledge,
      - iii. aims/objectives of the project and methods of achievement,
    3. anticipated outcomes,
    4. planned participation in professional events. Academic staff are expected to participate actively (e.g. poster, lecture or publication in proceedings).
    5. list and brief summary of principal professional results of the research team members relevant to the project over the past 3 years,
    6. total number of students (both Master's and doctoral) involved in the project team,
    7. total number of academic employees involved in the project team,
    8. amount of funds required and corresponding financial budget,
    9. if the future investigator is a student, a written consent of the project guarantor to the student's membership in the project team and a written statement regarding the project; with this statement, the guarantor confirms the student's ability to lead the project and the adequacy of the team's composition.
  - b) Student scientific conferences:
    1. summary,

2. professional description of the planned conference,
3. planned dates of the conference,
4. target group for which the conference is organized,
5. description of organization of the event,
6. total number of students (both Master's and doctoral) involved in the project team,
7. total number of academic employees involved in the project team,
8. amount of funds required and corresponding financial budget.

By agreeing to the project proposal, the dean expresses the promise of providing institutional support for the project.

## Section 6

### **Evaluation of Project Proposals in Categories A and B**

- (1) The evaluation of project proposals is organized at individual faculties. The dean or the vice-dean authorized by him/her, is responsible for the implementation of the evaluation procedure.
- (2) A project submitted to the student grant competition is assessed by at least one reviewer who did not participate in the preparation of the proposal and who is not a member of the project team of the assessed project.
- (3) Criteria for the evaluation of proposals of student specific research projects:
  - a) professional qualification of the supervisor if the applicant is a student, or professional qualification of the applicant if the applicant is an academic employee,
  - b) thematic relationship of the project to research carried out at the relevant faculty or at MU,
  - c) potential for a long-term project plan,
  - d) professional level of expected project results, including the possibility of their presentation,
  - e) adequacy of the overall budget and financial planning to the planned results of the project,
  - f) adequacy of the research team composition to the planned project outcomes,
  - g) degree of coordination of proposals in terms of research and teaching needs of the faculty.
- (4) Criteria for the evaluation of project proposals aimed at organizing student scientific conferences:
  - a) thematic relationship of the conference to research accentuated at the faculties or at MU,
  - b) ensuring the professional level of the conference,
  - c) quality of organization,
  - d) nature and scope of the target group (conference participants),
  - e) impact of the event on MU promotion,
  - f) expected efficiency of the use of funds.
- (5) At each of the faculties, the submitted project proposals together with reviewer's reports are submitted to the evaluation board composed of experts in the fields of science pursued by the faculty (hereinafter referred to as "faculty board"), which shall rank the selected projects against the above criteria. The members of the faculty board are appointed by the dean or the authorized vice-dean within three

working days after the beginning of the evaluation period. The board is chaired by the dean or the vice-dean authorized by him/her. The faculty board decides by an absolute majority of all its members' votes.

- (6) The board may recommend adjustments of budgets of individual projects.
- (7) The acceptance, conditional acceptance or rejection of a project proposal is decided by the dean. A conditionally accepted project proposal means a proposal selected for the support beyond the indicative limit, which shall be implemented only if the funds allocated to the faculty are increased. The ranking of conditionally accepted proposals is determined by the dean.
- (8) In case the investigator refuses to implement the project with an adjusted budget, the funds may be used toward a conditionally accepted project in accordance with the ranking.
- (9) Copies of the deans' decisions shall be provided by contact persons at individual faculties to the contact person of the RMU Research Office without undue delay.
- (10) The amount of the financial support allocated by the dean for the calendar year concerned is not mandatory and is contingent on the amount awarded to MU by the funding body's decision.

#### Section 7

##### **Decision on the Amount of Support**

- (1) The amount of support for specific research awarded for the investigation of accepted projects in a given calendar year is determined by the deans of individual faculties pursuant to the Rector's decision on limits for individual faculties.
- (2) In the initial project evaluation, the relevant department of the faculty shall deliver the list of changes in the funding of projects accepted for implementation to the RMU Research Office's contact person without undue delay. The list shall be confirmed by the dean or authorized vice-dean. The list shall contain:
  - a) the list of approved projects that will actually be implemented by the faculty in the calendar year concerned, and
  - b) changes (if any) in the budgets of the projects, resulting from the final amount of funds awarded to the project implementation.
- (3) If the support for an economic unit is higher than the determined indicative limit for the competition, additional project proposal(s) may be submitted.

#### Section 8

##### **Implementation and Changes**

- (1) The duration of the projects is one year, and therefore it is not possible to transfer unspent funds to a special purpose fund.
- (2) A substantial change to the project means:
  - a) a change in the budget breakdown consisting in the transfer of funds between projects,
  - b) a change in the person of the investigator,
  - c) early termination of the project,
  - d) overspending a budget item by more than 20%.
- (3) Substantial changes may only be carried out upon a request by the investigator. The request is decided by the dean of the faculty concerned. Requests are submitted through the Project Management Information System (PMIS).
- (4) Overspending a budget item by less than 20% is permitted only on condition that the planned objectives and outcomes of the project are maintained. The justification of the change shall be included in the final report on the project results.

## Section 9

### **Project Completion and Final Evaluation**

- (1) The results of the project investigation are evaluated in the period from 1 January to 31 March of the calendar year immediately following the calendar year of granting the support.
- (2) For the purposes of the final evaluation procedure, the investigator shall prepare the final report on the project results including an overview of the drawdown of funds in the PMIS.
- (3) Final evaluation procedure:
  - a) The faculty board shall evaluate the results of the project. It may request a reviewer's report for that purpose. The reviewer may participate in the meetings of the board in an advisory capacity.
  - b) The faculty board shall submit the proposal for evaluation to the dean of the faculty for approval.
  - c) The evaluation shall be referred to the RMU Research Office's contact person without undue delay.
  - d) On the basis of the deans' decisions on the evaluation, MU shall publish the results of the procedure in the manner specified by the funding body by 31 March of the calendar year immediately following the year of the project implementation. The vice-rector is responsible for the publication.

## Section 10

### **Transitional Provisions**

The rules stipulated by this Directive shall first apply to projects whose application to the competition (Section 5) was submitted after the effective date hereof. Projects in progress shall be completed in the method under MU Directive No. 8/2017 – Grant Agency of Masaryk University.

## Section 11

### **Final Provisions**

- (1) I authorize the vice-rector authorized under the Masaryk University Organizational Regulations to interpret the individual provisions of this Directive.
- (2) This Directive is part of the methodological procedure "Project Support (excluding structural funds and development projects)".
- (3) The compliance with this Directive shall be inspected by the head of the Research Office at the Rector's Office of Masaryk University and heads of individual faculties.
- (4) This Directive shall enter into force on the day of its execution.
- (5) This Directive shall enter into effect on 9 September 2020.

electronic signature

*Martin Bareš*  
Rector