



FULL TEXT OF DIRECTIVE NO. 180

elaborated on 28 July 2021

Grant System of the University of Žilina

Discussed by: -

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PART 1
GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article 1
Grant System of the University of Žilina and Its Parts

1. The grant system of the University of Žilina (hereinafter referred to as UNIZA) aims to promote the scientific research activities of UNIZA students and young scientific and pedagogical staff, up to and including 35 years of age.
2. The UNIZA Grant System comprises the following parts:
 - a) Student grant competition of projects submitted by UNIZA students of the 2nd level of university studies in full-time form of study.
 - b) Student grant competition of projects submitted by UNIZA students of the 3rd level of university studies in full-time form of study.
 - c) Grant competition of young scientific and pedagogical staff of UNIZA, up to and including 35 years of age concerning projects that are related to their scientific research area of focus.
3. Administrative tasks related to the UNIZA grant system are handled: in the case of UNIZA students referred to in paragraph 2, point (a) of this Article, by the UNIZA Department for Education. In the case of UNIZA students referred to in this Article, par. 2, (b), and UNIZA scientific and pedagogical staff, referred to in this Article, par. 2, (c), by the UNIZA Department for Science and Research.

PART 2
GRANT BOARD

Article 2
Establishment and Meetings of the Grant Board

1. The Grant Board has been established.
2. The Grant Board is the rector's permanent advisory body, responsible for approving project proposals submitted within the UNIZA grant system, assessing project reports and evaluating the results and outputs of project solutions.
3. The chairman of the Grant Board is the rector. Its members are the vice-rector for science and research, the vice-rector for education, the deans of the UNIZA faculties, the director of the University Science Park and the director of the Research Centre of the University of Žilina.
4. The meetings of the Grant Board are private unless the Board decides otherwise.
5. A meeting of the Grant Board is convoked by its chairman via invitations sent no later than 7 calendar days before the date of the meeting. The invitation shall include a draft of the agenda, including the supporting material for the meeting.
6. The meeting of the Grant Board is governed by its chairman or Board member appointed by him/her.

7. The Grant Board shall have a quorum when the majority of all its members are present at the meeting. A resolution of the Grant Board is adopted if it is voted for by a majority of the members present.
8. Voting of the Grant Board may also be conducted using devices for remote communication. The results of the vote are announced to the members of the Grant Board by the chairman, who also holds all the documents relating to the respective vote.
9. The meetings of the Grant Board shall be accompanied by minutes – the minutes clerk shall be appointed by the chairman. The minutes clerk shall distribute the minutes to the members of the Grant Board and the rector within seven calendar days after the Grant Board meeting.
10. For consultation, the Grant Board may invite other experts to the meeting – they, however, will not have the right to vote.
11. The resolutions of the Grant Board serve as a recommendation to the rector.

Article 3
Authority of the Grant Board

1. Grant Board:
 - a) nominates one opponent for each project application,
 - b) discusses opinions of the opponents regarding the applications for submitted projects,
 - c) appoints project supervisors for projects submitted by students of 2nd and 3rd level (if they are not indicated in the grant application),
 - d) submits the final evaluation of grant application proposals to the rector,
 - e) proposes the members of the assessment committees, depending on the number of projects and their research focus,
 - f) discusses the results of the project assessments conducted by the assessment committees.
2. The Grant Board comments on other matters, submitted by the rector, related to the grant system of UNIZA.
3. Once a year, the Grant Board shall draw up a report concerning its activities.

PART 3
UNIZA GRANT COMPETITION

Article 4
Announcement of the Grant Competition

1. The grant competition and its requirements are announced by the rector. The competition announcement is published via the UNIZA website, subpage UNIZA Grant System.
2. The competition announcement must include at least:
 - a) the method for submitting project proposals,
 - b) assessment criteria for the project proposals,

- c) deadlines for the submission of the project proposals,
- d) deadlines for the evaluation of the project proposals,
- e) deadlines for the publication of the results regarding the project proposal evaluation,
- f) the scope of the data required and the instructions for preparing the project proposal,
- g) preconditions for competition cancellation.

Article 5

Requirements for the Submission of the Project Proposal

1. Project duration:
 - a) one year for full-time, engineering/master's and postgraduate students, if the rector's announcement of the grant competition does not determine otherwise,
 - b) one or two years for young scientific and pedagogical staff, up to and including 35 years of age, if the rector's announcement of the grant competition does not determine otherwise,
2. The funding for a project for one calendar year is specified in the rector's call.
3. The funds provided may only be used following the announced grant competition call, and in relation to the project implementation.

Article 6

The Proposal of the Grant Project and the Research Team

1. A project proposal prepared under the terms of the announced grant competition and supplied with the required content of the UNIZA grant project application (Annex 1 of this Directive) can be submitted by an applicant who is:
 - a) UNIZA student who, at the time of project proposal submission, is studying in the 1st year of an accredited 2nd-level study programme in the full-time form of study,
 - b) UNIZA student who, at the time of project proposal submission, is studying in the 1st or 2nd year of an accredited 3rd level study programme in the full-time form of study,
 - c) young scientific and pedagogical UNIZA employee who, at the time of grant competition call deadline, is not older than 35 years (35 years including).
2. The applicants have the right to withdraw their project proposal until the call for project proposals is ended (until its deadline).
3. The applicant cannot modify its project proposal after its submission.
4. Once the project has been approved, the applicant becomes the lead project researcher.
5. The research team may have 1 to 3 members. If the research team has 2 or 3 members, the lead project researcher must be established. In the case of a project proposal under par. 1 of this Article, a member of the research team may also be a UNIZA student, who, at the time of submission of the project proposal, is studying in

the 2nd or 3rd year of an accredited study programme of the 1st level of study in full-time form; the lead project researcher of such a research team must be a student of UNIZA, who, at the time of submission of the project proposal, is studying in the 1st year of the accredited study programme of the 2nd level of full-time study. All members of the research team, either students or employees, must meet the requirements defined for the respective category of applicants.

6. Each lead project researcher and researcher may be listed as a person in only one grant application.
7. If the lead project researcher is a student of the 2nd level of study, he/she must have a project supervisor who is part of the research team and an employee of the relevant department. If the lead project researcher is a 3rd level student, the member of the research team must be his/her supervisor or manager, who is an employee of the relevant department.
8. According to paragraph 7, the project supervisor is proposed by the lead project researcher and he/she has to agree to the proposal. Should the lead project researcher not propose a project supervisor in the grant application and the project is approved for implementation, the project supervisor will be appointed by the Grant Board.
9. The lead project researcher is obliged to implement the project following the requirements of the announced grant competition and the decision concerning the approval of the project implementation. The lead project researcher is responsible for the timely and complete preparation of the required documents.
10. In the case of young UNIZA scientific and pedagogical staff up to and including 35 years of age, the lead project researcher is the authorising person of the financial operation concerning the project. If the lead project researcher is a student of an accredited UNIZA study programme of 2nd or 3rd level in the full-time form of study, the person in charge of the financial operations is his/her manager or supervisor. The authorising person is responsible for the efficient use of the allocated funds. For projects implemented by 2nd or 3rd-level students, the project supervisor is the administrator of the project funding; for projects implemented by young scientific or pedagogical employees of UNIZA up to and including 35 years of age, the funding administrator is the lead project researcher. The use of funding must be compliant with the requirements of the grant competition and UNIZA's internal regulations, including UNIZA's budgetary rules.
11. The change of the research team during the grant project must be approved by the chairman of the Grant Board, following a written request from the lead project researcher. The request must include a justification for the change of the research team.

Article 7

Opponents' Assessment of the Grant Project Proposals

1. Each project proposal will be accompanied by two opponent's opinions, following Annex 2 of this Directive.

2. The opponent's evaluation of project proposals represents the first stage of project proposal assessment.
3. The dean of the relevant faculty or an authorised vice-dean must provide an opponent's opinion for each project proposal. The opponent is an employee of the relevant faculty/department or a member of the professional public. Delegation of the opponent is determined by the grant applicant's affiliation to a specific faculty, i.e. a student studying an accredited study programme at a specific faculty, a young research or pedagogical employee up to and including 35 years of age employed at a specific faculty.
4. For each submitted project, the Grant Board must provide a second opinion from an independent opponent chosen from UNIZA employees or the professional public.
5. The opponent may not be biased towards the submitted project proposals or the applicants, may not be involved in the preparation of the project proposal, and may not be personally interested in the decision to approve the project. A member of the Grant Board cannot be an opponent.
6. The opponent's opinions must be completed within the deadline specified in the rector's call.
7. The completed opponents' opinions are saved in the UNIZA Science and Research Information System (ISVV system).
8. For project proposals submitted by students studying university-wide, 2nd or 3rd-level, full-time study programmes, or young scientific or pedagogical staff up to and including 35 years of age, who do not have an affiliation to a specific faculty, the activities referred to in par. 3 of Article 7 of this Directive shall be ensured by the directors of the relevant UNIZA units to which these university-wide study programmes or young staff members belong.

Article 8

Grant Board's Assessment of the Grant Project Proposals

1. The Grant Board's evaluation of project proposals represents the second stage of project proposal assessment.
2. When assessing the project proposals, the members of the Grant Board may not be biased towards the submitted project proposals and cannot be personally interested in the decision to approve the project. If a member of the Grant Board participates in a project as a project supervisor or researcher, he/she shall not participate in the evaluation of that project or in the nomination of its opponents.
3. The Grant Board shall evaluate the fulfilment of the grant competition requirements and prepare a written report, which shall include:
 - a) a list of submitted project proposals,
 - b) a list of project proposals recommended for approval,
 - c) a list of project proposals not recommended for approval, supported by a justification for such evaluation.
4. The chairman of the Grant Board or its authorised member shall register the results of the evaluation via the UNIZA Science and Research Information System (ISVV) web portal.

5. The chairman of the Grant Board ensures the publication of the complete overview of the decisions regarding the project proposals on or before the deadline set for the completion of the assessment process.

Article 9

Decision on the Approval of the Grant Project and Publication of the Competition Results

1. The rector can approve the project for implementation based on the recommendation of the Grant Board, but no later than by the deadline set by the call.
2. The rector's decision on project approval is final and cannot be appealed.
3. Based on the opinions of the opponents and the recommendation of the Grant Board, the rector is authorised to reduce the project funding.
4. The Department for Science and Research/Department for Education shall notify the lead project researcher, whether his/her project proposal was approved or not. In the case of projects submitted by students of the 2nd and 3rd level, the respective Department shall also notify the project supervisor and the heads of the units providing university-wide study programmes of UNIZA.
5. The overall results of the grant call are published by the UNIZA Department for Science and Research/Department for Education based on the materials submitted by the rector via the UNIZA website, subpage UNIZA Grant System.
6. The documentation regarding the grant call shall be recorded and archived by the UNIZA Department for Science and Research/Department for Education for 5 years from the project completion.

Article 10

Cancellation of the Grant Competition

1. The rector shall cancel the grant competition, if:
 - a) no project proposal was submitted,
 - b) no project proposal proceeded to the second stage of assessment,
 - c) unexpected circumstances arose which could not have been anticipated or caused by the rector.
2. The cancellation of the competition shall be announced immediately, via the UNIZA website.

PART 4

EVALUATION OF IMPLEMENTED GRANT PROJECTS WITHIN THE UNIZA GRANT SYSTEM

Article 11

In-between Assessment of the Grant Project Implementation

1. Based on the approved projects, an assessment committee is established for each respective field of research. The chairman and members of the assessment committee are nominated and approved by the Grant Board. The committee shall have at least 5 members, the chairman included. The chairman of the assessment committee is

commonly the chairman of the Grant Board. The members of the assessment committee are commonly the members of the Grant Board.

2. The assessment committee evaluates the achieved results and outputs of the projects, and continuously monitors their status, compliance with the schedule and the use of the allocated funds based on the ongoing reports prepared by the researchers.
3. In the course of the project, the researcher prepares a simple mid-term report on the research project within the deadline set in the rector's call.
4. The researcher submits a mid-term report via the ISVV UNIZA portal.
5. The form and structure of this report is also available on the ISVV UNIZA portal.
6. In case of non-compliance with the prescribed conditions, the chairman of the assessment committee may file a proposal for the early termination of the grant project and the return of the unspent funds. The assessment committee shall vote on the early termination of the project. In case of a serious breach of the prescribed conditions, the chairman of the Grant Board may request the return of the funds granted.

Article 12

Conclusion of the Grant Project and Results Evaluation

1. Following the assessment of the grant project results, the assessment committee decides on its successful conclusion.
2. The basis for the evaluation is the final report, prepared by the lead project researcher and sent via the ISVV UNIZA portal within the deadline set in the rector's call.
3. The form and structure of the final report shall be available on the ISVV UNIZA portal or sent via email to the lead project researcher.
4. The evaluation of the project is based on the presentation of the archived project results, held in front of the assessment committee, focusing on the set objectives of the project.
5. The presentation of the project results is public, held on the date set out by the rector's call.
6. The assessment committee evaluates completed grant projects in terms of: a) fulfilled; (b) fulfilled with comments; and (c) not fulfilled.

6.1. If the evaluation marks: "not fulfilled":

- a) the lead project researcher is immediately disqualified from participation in the grant competition for the following three years (both as lead project researcher and a researcher),
- b) the project supervisor is immediately disqualified from participation in the grant competition for the following three years (as the project supervisor, lead project researcher and researcher).

This three-year period shall start from the beginning of the next calendar year following the year in which the project ended.

6.2. If the evaluation marks: "fulfilled with comments":

- a) the lead project researcher is immediately disqualified from participation in the grant competition for the following year (both as lead project researcher and a researcher),

- b) the project supervisor is immediately disqualified from participation in the grant competition for the following year (as the project supervisor, lead project researcher and a researcher).

This period shall start from the beginning of the next calendar year following the year in which the project ended.

7. The assessment committee evaluates the efficiency of the use of the funds allocated to the project.
8. A record of the project assessment shall be drawn up following Annex 3 of this Directive. This record shall be prepared and signed by the assessment committee.
9. The final overview of the evaluations of all projects, including the names of the researchers, will be published on the UNIZA portal, section Department for Science and Research/Department for Education of UNIZA.

PART 5 FINAL PROVISIONS

Article 13

1. This Directive enters into force on the date of its signature by the rector and comes into effect on the day following its publication.
2. The full text of the Directive is prepared according to Amendment No. 1 dated 16 May 2019 and Amendment No. 2 dated 28 July 2021.
3. This Directive includes annexes No. 1 to 3.
 - Annex No. 1: Application for UNIZA grant project for UNIZA students and young scientific and pedagogical staff, up to and including 35 years of age
 - Annex No. 2: Assessment form and evaluation criteria for the UNIZA grant project application
 - Annex No. 3: Assessment form and the evaluation criteria of the achieved results of the UNIZA grant project

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