

## TUL Rector's Directive

No. 4/2019

Title:	<b>TUL Grant Program to Support Basic Research of Young Academic and Research Staff Members "RISING-STARS" Announcement</b>			
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### 1. General Provisions

This directive announces the TUL Grant Program to support basic research of young academic and research staff members "RISING-STARS" (hereinafter referred to as GP RISING-STARS or program).

### 2. Basic characteristics and the objective of the grant program

The strategic objective of GP RISING-STARS is to (i) provide young talented academic and research staff working in the field of basic research at TUL, (ii) support the creation of excellent, internationally competitive results, (iii) strengthen young workers' international contacts, and (iv) support the preparation of project proposals for basic research grant competitions of national

(GAČR) and international (ERC) providers. The tool for implementing the objective is to provide targeted support for talented and motivated scientists and their teams who will work on specific, clearly defined and original projects with active involvement in international collaboration in basic research. An indispensable aspect of this type of grant support is the motivation of workplaces to further invest in extraordinary scientific young talents.

The basic mandatory objectives to be evaluated within each project are:

- (i) sending at least two grant support applications to a competition by a national basic research (GAČR - Junior) or an international (ERC) provider,
- (ii) publishing the results of work in basic research in professional impact journals,
- (iii) passing a post-doctoral internship in another country lasting at least 180 days (unless the applicant has already passed such an internship).

### 3. Time period for grant funding

The RISING-STARS grant program is announced for the period from 1 July 2019 to 31 December 2025.

### 4. Total amount of funds allocated

The total funds allocated to the program for the period from 1 July 2019 to 31 December 2025 shall be a minimum of CZK 10 million. In case of an increase in the institutional support for long-term conceptual development of the TUL<sup>1</sup>, the funds for the program will be increased optimally to CZK 20 million. Program funds shall be drawn on the basis of individual calls for grant applications according to the schedule below.

### 5. The method of announcing calls for the grant program

Unless the Rector specifies otherwise, the GP RISING-STARS call parameters shall be set out by the following schedule:

Beginning and end of the period for receiving grant applications	Beginning and end of the evaluation period	Date of announcement of projects accepted for financing	The beginning of the project
15 April – 12 May 2019	13 May – 15 June 2019	15 June 2019	1 July 2019
15 December 2019 – 31 January 2020	1 February – 31 March 2020	1 April 2020	1 May 2020
15 December 2020 – 31 January 2021	1 February – 31 March 2021	1 April 2021	1 May 2021

<sup>1</sup> see document of the Office of the Government of the Czech Republic, Innovation Strategy of the Czech Republic 2019-2030, p. 7, chapter "Financing and Evaluation of Research and Development", section "Goals"

In subsequent years according to the same schedule.

## 6. Definition of grant support beneficiaries

Financial support will be awarded to smaller, clearly defined and compact teams led by a member of TUL academic staff (Group A) or a TUL researcher (Group C)<sup>2</sup> who was awarded the Ph.D. degree or its equivalent 7 years ago at maximum. With persons taking care of an underage child, the period demonstrably spent on maternity and parental leave shall not be counted into this limit. With persons who have undergone a long-term illness, the period of sick leave shall not be counted into this limit.

Each member of the research team of the proposed project may be a member of a maximum of one proposed or ongoing GP RISING-STARS project<sup>3</sup> or GP RISING-STARS project.

## 7. Financial and time limits for grant support applications

The maximum amount of support for one project per year is CZK 800 000.-. The maximum duration of the project is 3 years. The solution of the multiannual project will be divided into individual phases of 12 calendar months from the beginning of the project, ie from 1 May of the relevant calendar year to 30 April of the following calendar year.

## 8. Requirements for grant support applications

The grant application for the project (hereinafter referred to as the "the project") is processed according to the following basic requirements:

- a) The abstract of the project, the project proposal and the applicant's CV are processed in English.
- b) The project proposal has the scope, structure, form and other content requirements corresponding to the tender documentation of the basic research grant competitions of national (part C of standard projects of the GAČR) or international (ERC) providers.

The grant application for a project (hereinafter referred to as "the project") shall contain the following information:

- a) Basic information about the project (name, abstract, project duration).
- b) Information on the principal investigator and members of the research team (planned project hours, personnel costs).
- c) Project budget over the whole period of its duration and detailed justification for funds drawing in the first phase of the project.
- d) Description and justification of the project proposal (motivation, description of the current state of knowledge, objectives of the project, justification of their originality,

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<sup>2</sup> See TUL Internal Wage Regulation (see [here](#))

<sup>3</sup> Information about GP RISING-STARS are stated at <https://www.tul.cz/gp>.

methods used to achieve the objectives, controllable project schedule including material and time milestones, controllable outputs and project results).

- e) Data on research experience and previous scientific results of the applicant: h-index, total number of results published in journals monitored in the WoS, total number of citations of all results of the applicant and the research team without self-citations<sup>4</sup>, results in RIV created by the applicant and the research team which were the subject to evaluation of pillar II (until 2016) or subject to evaluation for excellence within Module 1 of the M17+ methodology (since 2017) including the final evaluation.
- f) Data on the completion or the plan to complete a post-doctoral internship in a country other than where the project applicant earned a Ph.D. degree in the total length of at least 180 days. This internship can be split into two shorter ones.
- g) Plan for preparing and sending grant applications (project proposals) to national (GAČR - Junior) grant competitions and international (ERC) providers.
- h) Consent of the head of the investigator's workplace to the grant application; consent is submitted electronically via the online application form.
- i) If the researcher has unsuccessfully proposed project applications with similar research focus to get support in the grant calls of other providers (e.g. GAČR, ERC, etc.) over the past two years, they shall submit the previous project applications and their evaluations by reviewers and reporters.

Applications are submitted via the online portal at <https://www.tul.cz/gp> within the deadline for receiving grant support applications listed in section 5. The statement of support of the head of the workplace and the dean of the faculty according to point i) shall be uploaded as an annex to the application in PDF format.

## 9. Evaluation criteria for grant support applications

Grant support applications will be evaluated by the GPAB (Grant Program Advisory Board) TUL according to the following criteria:

- a) Project proposal quality. A total of 0 to 25 points can be obtained in this criterion. The evaluation is carried out by an assessor appointed by GPAB TUL.
  - i) The preliminary research part of the project demonstrates the importance of the project in international comparison (0 to 5 points).
  - ii) Project objectives are clearly defined. Furthermore, the project application must clearly document that the project objectives are genuine, open and ambitious issues corresponding to the current state of knowledge at international level (0 to 5 points).
  - iii) The methods used to achieve the objectives are clearly defined and described in detail (0 to 5 points).

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<sup>4</sup> Self-citation means any reference of an article published by the proposer or a member of the research team to any article whose author or co-author is the proposer or a member of the research team.

- iv) The project solution procedure, in terms of timing and subject matter, is defined in clearly stated and controllable milestones (0 to 5 points).
  - v) Project outputs and results are controllable and are at international level in the given field (0 to 5 points).
- b) Quality and previous results of the applicant and members of the research team. 0 to 25 points can be obtained for this criterion in total. All projects will be ranked according to the following 4 evaluation parameters:
- i) The applicant's h-Index according to WoS
  - ii) The total number of results published in the journals monitored by WoS by the applicant and the research team over the past 5 years, weighted by the magazine's quartile stated in WoS. (Q1 weight 1.00, Q2 weight 0.75, Q3 weight 0.5, Q4 weight 0.25)
  - iii) The number of citations of all results of the applicant and the research team without self-citations.
  - iv) Number of results in RIV created by the applicant and the research team, which were the subject of evaluation pillar II (until 2016) or subject to evaluation for excellence within Module 1 of the M17 + methodology (since 2017) weighted by the final grade. (mark 1 weight 1.00, mark 2 weight 0.75, mark 3 weight 0.5, mark 4 weight 0.25, mark 5 weight 0.00)

For each evaluation parameter i) through iv), the best project receives 5 points and the other 4 projects gradually 4, 3, 2 and 1 point. In the case of identical evaluation of multiple applications, these applications receive the same number of points.

Further applications will be evaluated by GPAB TUL members according to the following criteria:

- v) The articles published by the author's team and listed in the application are at least 50% focused or overlapping with the project theme. (1 point)
  - vi) The results evaluated on excellence created by the authoring team and included in the application are at least 50% focused or overlapping with the project theme. (1 point)
  - vii) The research team is compact, consisting of specialists working on the project topic. (1 point)
  - viii) The competences of the research team members are clearly described in the application form. (1 point)
  - ix) The team is actively involved in clearly defined international cooperation. (1 point)
- c) The strategic impact of the project. A total of 0 to 10 points can be earned in this criterion. The evaluation is carried out by GPAB TUL members.
- i) The project is strongly focused on basic research. (0 to 2 points)

- ii) The publication output plan corresponds to the size of the research team and aims to strengthen the performance and quality of scientific work in the area of basic research. (0 to 2 points)
  - iii) The project proposal is competitive at least at the national level and it is realistic that the project solution will lead to a successful application for grant support in basic research grant competitions with national (GAČR - Standard, EXPRO and others) or international (ERC) providers. (0 to 2 points)
  - iv) The plan for submitting grant applications (GAČR, ERC) during project implementation is clearly and specifically described. (0 to 2 points)
  - v) The plan for the implementation of post-doctoral scientific internships during the project solution is clearly and specifically described. (1 point)
  - vi) The drawing of funds is effective in terms of the use of the subsidy for the long-term conceptual development of the research organization. (0 to 2 points)
- d) Bonus for the evaluation of grant applications will be prior participation and positive evaluation of content-comparable projects proposals with national grant support providers in the field of basic research, even though no financial support for these projects had been granted. Bonus is possible in the range from 0 to 5 points. Points are allocated to projects by GPAB during the evaluation period.
- e) Bonus for the evaluation of grant applications will be the awarding of bonus points on the proposal of the Dean of the Faculty or the Director of the Higher Education Institute that the project falls within the strategic R&D directions in the field of basic research of the faculty and/or institute. Each Dean of the Faculty or the Director of the Institute may propose a total of maximum 5 points for individual projects registered in the call. Project points are awarded by the GPAB TUL according to the proposal of the Dean of the Faculty or the Director of the Higher Education Institute during the evaluation period.

## 10. Eligible costs and rules for managing grant resources

- 10.1. Grant funds allocated may only be used to cover eligible costs of the project selected for support in GP RISING-STARS TUL. For grant purposes, recognized costs are those that are eligible for institutional support for the research organization's long-term conceptual development and are justified and accountable. (The eligible costs of institutional support for the long-term conceptual development of the research organization are set out in the document Výzva pro vysoké školy k podání žádosti o poskytnutí dotace na dlouhodobý koncepční rozvoj výzkumné organizace na základě zhodnocení jí dosažených výsledků.)
- 10.2. The project researcher, who is also the budget executive under the Rector's Directive on Internal Control System, is responsible for the use of the provided grant funds, their proper and efficient use. The funds allocated to the project are drawn on the basis of the internal project number provided by the Accounting Department.
- 10.3. When presenting the results of the project, including the publications, the researcher is obliged to state that the result was supported by GP TUL grant funds.

- 10.4. The course of the project and the drawing of grant support is under the ongoing control of the GPAB TUL. If the project's solution digresses significantly from the project plan, i.e. from the objectives and expected results, the project's schedule or the drawing of funds stated in the grant application, GPAB TUL is to suggest to the Rector the suspension of the project solution and the drawing of grant funds. The investigator is obliged to return the unused project funds to the GP RISING-STARS account no later than 30 days after the Rector's decision to stop the project solution.
- 10.5. As significant diversion from the project plan is considered to be:
- a) The specified project time and subject-matter milestones are not met.
  - b) Grant support is used in a different way than stated in the project budget justification for the given year.
  - c) Planned publication results are not met; only results fulfilling the condition of paragraph 10.3 will be accepted within the project evaluation.
- 10.6. If Rector decides to stop the project, the project investigator is excluded from all GP TUL grant calls for the next three years.
- 10.7. Grant funds are always provided for individual phases of the project duration of 12 months from the beginning of the project implementation, ie from 1 May of the given calendar year to 30 April of the following calendar year. It is not permissible to transfer the provided grant funds between individual phases of the project.
- 10.8. The investigator is obliged to return the unused grant funds of the project back to the GP TUL account by 30 April of the given year at the latest.
- 10.9. At the turn of the calendar year, according to the deadline set by the "Příkaz kvestora k závěrečným pokladním, bankovním a účetním operacím" ("Quaestor's order for final cash, banking and accounting operations", not available in English), the investigator transfers the unused project funds to the special means fund (FÚUP). The transfer to FÚUP for GP TUL projects is not limited to 5% of the total amount of received funds.

## **11. Method of continuous and final control and project evaluation**

- 11.1. The progress of the project subject matter investigation is under the ongoing control of the GPAB.
- 11.2. The project investigator is obliged to submit a grant application to the competition in the basic research by the national (GAČR - Junior) or international (ERC) provider.
- 11.3. The project investigator is required to present the following information to the GPAB at a personal interview twice a year:
- a) progress of project work,
  - b) achieved results,
  - c) justify any changes in the investigation of the project,
  - d) an overview of the financial drawing of the project grant,
  - e) justify any changes in the drawing of the grant,

- f) proposal for further investigation of the project,
  - g) detailed justification of the drawing of funds for the next stage of the project solution,
  - h) provide information on submitted grant applications within the competition in the basic research of the national (GAČR) or international (ERC) provider.
  - i) provide information on the plan or course of the post-doctoral internship.
- 11.4. If the project investigator had not completed a postdoctoral internship in a country other than the Ph.D. degree was awarded in the length of at least 180 days prior to the start of the project, they are obliged to complete the internship during the course of the project period.
- 11.5. The project investigator is obliged to annually present the progress of the work and the results achieved at a public lecture in front of the TUL academic community.
- 11.6. At the end of each project solution phase, the investigator makes interim reports on the course of the project through the online portal at <https://www.tul.cz/gp>. Unless the Rector specifies otherwise, the dates for submitting interim project reports in GP RISING-STARS are set at 15 May of the given calendar year.
- 11.7. After completing the project, the investigator prepares the final report on the project through the online application at <https://www.tul.cz/gp>. Unless the Rector specifies otherwise, the deadlines for submitting the final project reports in GP RISING-STARS are set at 15 May of the given calendar year.
- 11.8. Extracts from analytical accounts (VEMA) of ongoing projects are an integral part of interim and final reports.
- 11.9. Interim and final reports are subject to evaluation by at least two evaluators who are nominated for each project by GPAB TUL.
- 11.10. The result of the continuous evaluation of the project solution based on the interim report is:
  - a) continue with the project solution,
  - b) stop the project solution.
- 11.11. The final evaluation of interim and final reports shall be:
  - a) met with honours,
  - b) met,
  - c) met with reservations,
  - d) not fulfilled.
- 11.12. If the project applicant during the GP RISING-STARS project solution gets the GAČR – Junior or ERC project, the project solution is terminated. The project will also be terminated if the promoter receives a project focused on a different area than the GP RISING-STARS project. The final evaluation of the final report of the project shall be "fulfilled" or "fulfilled with honours". The investigator is obliged to return the unused



funds of the project to the GP TUL account no later than 30 days after the decision to grant from the grant provider.

- 11.13. In case that during the project solution, grant applications (GAČR or ERC) were not submitted by the applicant in accordance with point 11.2 or the planned publication outputs were not fulfilled, the resulting project evaluation is “not fulfilled”.
- 11.14. If the interim project report is evaluated as “stop the project solution”, the project and drawing of funds shall be terminated by the Rector. The Rector may decide on the return of the funds up to the amount of actual drawdown due to violations of the rules on the management of grant funds. Funds are returned by the investigator’s workplace.
- 11.15. If the interim project report is evaluated “stop the project solution” or final project report is evaluated “not fulfilled”, the project investigator is excluded from all subsequent calls of all GP TUL for the following three years.

## **2. Transitional and final provisions**

The Vice-Rector for Science, Research and Foreign Affairs monitors and evaluates compliance with this Directive.

The Vice-Rector for Science, Research and Foreign Affairs and the Legal Department are responsible for interpreting the provisions of this Directive

This Directive shall become valid on the date of its approval and effective on the date of its publication.

Revision No. 1 becomes valid on the day of its signature and takes effect on August 30, 2019. Projects submitted before the effect of Revision No. 1 continue to be assessed according to the Directive as revised No. 1.