

NKFIH - Information for applicants

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This document “NKFIH - Information for applicants” (version No. 4) applies to and is used for all applications of the Slovenian section of Hungarian-Slovenian research projects submitted according to this information from 28 March 2024 onwards.

The Slovenian Research Agency reserves the right to change or amend this document (“NKFIH - Information for applicants”).

1. GENERAL

The Slovenian Research and Innovation Agency (hereinafter: ARIS) on the basis of Article 34 of the Scientific Research and Innovation Activities Act¹ in connection with Article 2 of the ZZrID and on the basis of Articles 83 and 102 of the General Act on Procedures for Financing, Co-financing, Evaluating and Monitoring the Implementation of Scientific Research Activities² in connection with the fifth paragraph of Article 47 of the Decision establishing the Public Research Agency of the Republic of Slovenia³, Methodology for the assessment of applications in procedures for the (co)financing of scientific research activities⁴ in connection with the Lead Agency Agreement - Memorandum of Understanding on the unilateral administration and mutual recognition of evaluation procedures of 4 April 2014⁵ publishes on its website more detailed information for applicants regarding the application for a direct agreement on implementation and (co)financing of scientific research activities by the ARIS.

Signatories of the International Lead Agency Agreement with NKFIH, ARIS and the National Research, Development and Innovation Office (hereinafter: NKFIH Lead Agency) have committed themselves to consider the applications for bilateral research projects either as Lead Agencies or as Partner Agencies.

NKFIH is a government body responsible for research, development and innovation in Hungary, and is not a signatory of the Multilateral Lead Agency Agreement for Weave⁶.

2. LEAD AGENCY PRINCIPLE

The International Lead Agency Agreement with NKFIH is based on the Lead Agency Procedure principle. In accordance with the aforementioned agreement ARIS and NKFIH enable researchers to apply for a joint Hungarian-Slovenian research project at a Lead Agency, which carries out the evaluation process of the joint application of Hungarian-Slovenian research projects.

The Lead Agency Procedure principle represents a significant administrative relief for applicants, as the evaluation process of joint application for Hungarian-Slovenian research projects is carried out only by the **Lead Agency**. When the joint application of a Hungarian-Slovenian research project is assessed as successful in the evaluation process and is proposed for (co)funding by the Lead Agency, the participating **Partner Agency** generally recognises the results of the evaluation process and takes

¹ Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, Nos. 186/21 and 40/23, hereinafter: ZZrID.

² Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 166/22, hereinafter: General Act on Procedures for Financing, Co-financing.

³ Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 48/23.

⁴ No. 6319-5/2022-5 of 9 January 2023, No. 6319-5/2022-6 of 17 January 2023 – corr., No. 6319-5/2022-7 of 19 June 2023, No. 6319-5/2022-8 of 13 November 2023, No. 6319-5/2022-9 of 18 December 2023, No. 6319-5/2022-10 of 4 March 2024, hereinafter: Methodology.

⁵ Memorandum of Understanding on the Unilateral Administration and Mutual Recognition of Evaluation Procedures, hereinafter: International Lead Agency Agreement with NKFIH (see <https://www.aris-rs.si/sl/medn/vodilna/inc/sporazum-OTKA.pdf>).

⁶ Multilateral lead Agency Agreement (MLA) No. 020-5/2020-1.

over the (co)funding of its national part of the Hungarian-Slovenian research project without an additional evaluation process.

Co-applicants who have agreed to submit a joint application for a Hungarian-Slovenian research project to the Lead Agency determine a coordinating applicant, who submits the joint application of a Hungarian-Slovenian research project to the Lead Agency. The second co-applicant must submit a copy of the joint application to their national agency (Partner Agency) according to the rules set out by the Partner Agency.

2.1. How to choose the Lead Agency

Co-applicants can freely choose the Lead Agency. When jointly applying for a Hungarian-Slovenian research project, the co-applicants must comply with the stipulation that the part of the project that is (co)financed by the Lead Agency must exceed the financial resources of the part of the research project that is (co)financed by the Partner Agency. A Partner Agency that (co)finances a larger financial share performs the role of Lead Agency.

Both co-applicants are obliged to make a significant and complementary contribution to joint Hungarian-Slovenian research projects. The joint application of a Hungarian-Slovenian research project must include a joint scientific description of the research project, in which the scientific contributions of both co-applicants are defined. The individual national parts of the project must be closely related and complementary. The scientific contribution of each co-applicant must be clearly visible.

Cooperation according to the Lead Agency principle in the Republic of Slovenia is possible in two ways, specifically:

- ARIS can act as the Lead Agency (Chapter 3 of this information) or

- ARIS can act as a Partner Agency (Chapter 4 of this information).

3. ARIS AS A LEAD AGENCY

Applicants in Slovenia can submit a joint application of a Hungarian-Slovenian research project with a partner from Hungary to the **national call for research projects**, where ARIS acts as the Lead Agency.

More information including conditions, possible collaborations and submission procedure on calls in which ARIS acts as Lead Agency are available on the ARIS webpage: <https://www.aris-rs.si/sl/progproj/rproj/>

4. ARIS AS A PARTNER AGENCY

When ARIS acts as a Partner Agency, submitting a joint application for a Hungarian-Slovenian research project is possible in cooperation with researchers from Hungary (NKFIH).

The joint bilateral research project is financed by NKFIH as the Lead Agency and ARIS as a Partner Agency. Each agency finances its national part.

4.1. Duration of the joint Hungarian-Slovenian research project

The period of implementation of a joint Hungarian-Slovenian research project may be a maximum of 3 years.

4.2. Calculation of the costs of the Slovenian part of the Hungarian-Slovenian research project at ARIS

Each national part of the Hungarian-Slovenian research project is separately (co)financed by the corresponding national agency in accordance with its own rules. The costs or requested funds of each national part of the Hungarian-Slovenian research project must be listed separately for each national part of the project and calculated in accordance with the guidelines of the co-financing agency that finances the corresponding national part of the Hungarian-Slovenian research project.

When submitting the Slovenian part of a Hungarian-Slovenian research project at ARIS (hereinafter: the Slovenian part of the joint research project) as a Partner Agency, the following must be taken into account:

1. Eligible costs of the Slovenian part of the joint research project are determined in accordance with the Regulation on the financing of scientific research activities from the Budget of the Republic of Slovenia⁷.
2. In the process, ARIS takes into account that the amount of requested funds of the Slovenian part of the research project stated in the joint application of the Hungarian-Slovenian research project is converted into EUR at the exchange rate published by NKFIH. If NKFIH does not publish the exchange rate, the conversion is carried out according to the exchange rate published by the Bank of Slovenia (daily exchange rate - ECB reference rates) on the first day when it was possible to submit the application for the Slovenian part of the research project to ARIS.

The amount of the Slovenian part of the joint research project stated in the application submitted to ARIS must be the same as the amount of the Slovenian part of the joint research project stated in the joint application of the Hungarian-Slovenian research project. In the event that ARIS finds a data discrepancy between the application submitted to ARIS and the joint application submitted to NKFIH regarding the requested funds of the Slovenian part of

⁷ Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, Nos. 35/2022, 144/22 and 79/23, hereinafter: Regulation.

the joint research project, which is greater than the permitted deviation of +/-3% in relation to the amount stated in the application submitted to ARIS, ARIS considers the amount that is lower, while simultaneously taking into account the maximum amount of (co)financing of the Slovenian part of the research project.

3. The amount of the Hungarian part of the Hungarian-Slovenian research project (hereinafter: the Hungarian part of the joint research project) must be the same in the application submitted to ARIS and in the joint application of the Hungarian-Slovenian research project. In the event that ARIS finds a discrepancy between this data, it takes into account the amount from the joint application of the Hungarian-Slovenian research project, which was submitted to NKFIH. The conversion of the stated amount of requested funds in EUR from the joint application of the Hungarian-Slovenian research project is carried out in the same way and under the same conditions as determined for the conversion of the amount of requested funds of the Slovenian part of the joint research project from the joint application of the Hungarian-Slovenian research project (see previous point 2.).
4. The amount of requested funds (for the entire period of implementation of the Slovenian part of the joint research project), as indicated by the applicant on the NKFIH/year⁸ application form, is converted by the ARIS into the equivalent of full-time employment (FTE) at the valid price of equivalent full-time employment (FTE) on the day of issuing the decision of the Director of ARIS on (co)financing of the application and is authoritative for the entire period of (co)financing of the Slovenian part of the joint research project. The volume of financial resources is coordinated with the valid price of the equivalent of full-time employment for one year.
5. ARIS (co)finances the Slovenian part of the joint research project considering budgetary options in the financial plan and work programme of the ARIS up to a maximum of 350,000.00 EUR of new accepted obligations annually.
6. The total amount of (co)financing of the Hungarian part of the Hungarian-Slovenian research project that is (co)financed by NKFIH must exceed the total amount of (co)financing of the Slovenian part of the joint research project that is (co)financed by the ARIS.
7. ARIS (co)finances the Slovenian part of the joint research project only if NKFIH (co)finances the Hungarian part of the joint research project.

4.3. Procedure for submitting the application for the Slovenian part of the joint research project

4.3.1. Submitting the joint application of the Hungarian-Slovenian research project at NKFIH

The joint application of the Hungarian-Slovenian research project must be prepared in accordance with the rules of the NKFIH Lead Agency. It must include a common scientific description of the research project, in which the scientific contributions of both co-applicants are defined, and both national parts of the project must be closely related and complementary. The scientific contribution of each side must be clearly visible. The scientific contribution of each co-applicant must be clearly visible.

⁸ See point 4.3.2.2. of this information.

More detailed information regarding the submission process of the joint application for Hungarian-Slovenian research projects is available on the website of the NKFIH, which acts as the Lead Agency: <https://nkfi.gov.hu/for-the-applicants>. We suggest that you contact your Hungarian partner or the NKFIH Lead Agency directly regarding the details connected to the submission of the joint application of a Hungarian-Slovenian research project at NKFIH.

4.3.2. Submitting the application of the Slovenian part of the joint research project at ARIS

Before submitting the application for the Slovenian part of the joint research project, please consult the following applicable legislation and regulations:

- ZZrID,
- General act on (co)financing procedures,
- Methodology,
- Criteria for determining compliance with the demonstration of internationally comparable research results and the period covered by internationally comparable research results for the head of the research project and programme⁹,
- Decree,
- International Lead Agency Agreement with NKFIH.

WARNING: In the event of possible discrepancies between this information and legislation and regulations applicable at the time of submitting the application, the provisions of the legislation and regulations applicable at the time of submitting the application shall prevail.

4.3.2.1. Entities eligible to apply

The applicants of the Slovenian part of the joint research project can be either research organisations registered in the database of research and development activity providers (hereinafter referred to as: the RO records) or private researchers registered in the register of private researchers that is kept by the ARIS, and that meet the requirements set out in the Scientific Research and Innovation Activities Act (ZZrID) and general acts of ARIS.

The Slovenian part of the joint research project is carried out by a project group comprising the project leader, researchers, and technical associates.

If there are several providers of research activities collaborating on the Slovenian part of the joint research project, the applicant is the parent RO. The parent RO is the RO that submits the application of the Slovenian part of the joint research project, is listed first on the application form, and employs the project leader of the Slovenian part of the joint research project upon signing the contract on implementation and (co)financing of scientific research activity.

⁹ No. 007-5/2022-3 of 16 May 2022, and No. 007-1/2023-1 of 2 February 2023, hereinafter: Criteria.

4.3.2.2. Application documentation

When ARIS acts as a Partner Agency, the application of the Slovenian part of the joint research project to ARIS must contain the following completed and signed forms and documents:

- Application form NKFIH/year¹⁰, available on the ARIS DigitalForms web portal (<https://digitalforms.arrs.si/>),
- other required forms, which are determined by ARIS on the NKFIH/year application form,
- a copy of the joint application form of the Hungarian-Slovenian research project submitted to the NKFIH Lead Agency.

4.3.2.3. Means and form of application

The application for the Slovenian part of the joint research project must be completed and submitted electronically to the ARIS DigitalForms web portal (<https://digitalforms.arrs.si/>).

A submitted application is deemed formally complete if it is signed digitally (no digital signature certificate is required) by the applicant's representative (or authorised person) and the project leader of the Slovenian part of the joint research project. The application is considered formally complete if it is submitted using the prescribed forms and contains all the required information and attachments, as defined in item 4.3.2.2. of this information. Incomplete applications will be processed in accordance with Article 22 of the General Act on (co)financing procedures.

4.3.2.4. Application submission deadline

The deadline for submitting the application of the Slovenian part of the joint research project depends on the deadline for submitting applications, which is set by the NKFIH Lead Agency.

More detailed information regarding the deadline for submission of the joint application of the Hungarian-Slovenian research project is available on the website of the NKFIH, which acts as the Lead Agency: <https://nkfi.gov.hu/for-the-applicants>.

When submitting the Slovenian part of the joint research project application, the following must be considered:

¹⁰ The ARIS application form for the call of the NKFIH Lead Agency in which ARIS acts as a Partner Agency is named in the following way: NKFIH/"year", where "year" is the year when the NKFIH Lead Agency publishes the call. For example, the ARIS application form named "NKFIH/2023" refers to the submission of the Slovenian part of a joint research project in which NKFIH acts as the Lead Agency in connection with the call launched by NKFIH in 2023.

1. The **joint proposal** of the Hungarian-Slovenian research project must be submitted to the NKFIH **Lead Agency** under the conditions and by the deadline set by the NKFIH Lead Agency.
2. **The application for the Slovenian part of the joint research project must be submitted to ARIS** (see item 4.3.2. of this information) **within the same deadline set by the NKFIH Lead Agency for submitting the joint proposal of the Hungarian-Slovenian research project.**
3. In addition, the applicant must submit a **copy of the joint proposal** of the Hungarian-Slovenian research project **within seven days** after the expiration of the application deadline set by the NKFIH Lead Agency for submitting the joint proposal of the Hungarian-Slovenian research project (a copy of the joint proposal of the Hungarian-Slovenian research project submitted to the Lead Agency NKFIH can be submitted in the application form "NKFIH/year" or in the special form "NKFIH/year - Attachment", which will be opened 7 days after the deadline set by determined by the Lead Agency NKFIH for the submission of a joint application of a Hungarian-Slovenian research project).

The application of the Slovenian part of the joint research project is considered timely if it is completed and submitted on the ARIS DigitalForms web portal, as specified in item 2 of the previous paragraph of this information. If the applicant does not submit a copy of the joint proposal of the Hungarian-Slovenian research project that was submitted to NKFIH within the deadline specified in item 3 of the previous paragraph of this information, it is deemed a formally incomplete application. Incomplete applications will be processed in accordance with Article 22 of the General Act on (co)financing procedures.

Applications will be opened no later than eight days after the deadline for submitting the applications. The ARIS' official opens the electronic applications of the Slovenian part of the joint research project by recording the list of applications received within the electronic application system and evidence that the applications were late. In the case of an untimely application, ARIS informs the applicant of the Slovenian part of the joint research project by means of an accompanying letter that it will not further process the untimely application.

4.3.2.5. Entry conditions

The applicant of the application for the Slovenian part of the joint research project (hereinafter: the applicant) must be an eligible entity (in accordance with item 4.3.2.1. of this information).

The project leader of the Slovenian part of the joint research project (hereinafter: the project leader) must have a researcher's record number, which means that he or she is registered in the database of research and development activity providers or the register of private researchers at ARIS. The project leader, who does not yet have an assigned researcher's record number, must (in order to gain access to the DigitalForms web portal) complete and submit a form for obtaining a researcher's record number to the ARIS in time, which must be accompanied by a statement on the intention of employment, signed by the applicant and the project leader.

The project leader must have an education obtained from a third-level study programme or an education that corresponds to the level of education obtained from a third-level study programme and, in accordance with the law governing the Slovenian framework of qualifications, is ranked at level

10, and demonstrate international comparable research results in accordance with the ZZrID, the General Act, the Criteria, and the Methodology.

Quantitative grades for each evaluation factor (A1 and CI) and each scientific discipline defined in the Methodology are obtained and calculated by the ARIS. To calculate the quantitative grade, ARIS will use the data entered into the SICRIS (COBISS) databases and ARIS' records on the day of the expiration of the deadline for application submission at the NKFIH Lead Agency (A1) or on the day of the last data capture in the SICRIS (COBISS) database prior to the day of the expiration of the deadline for application submission at the NKFIH Lead Agency (CI).

To evaluate the bibliographic indicators of a researcher's research performance (calculation of quantitative assessments), researchers themselves must, through an authorised library, timely enter the researcher's record number from the database of research and development activity providers that is maintained by the ARIS, into the normative record for the author in the CONOR.SI normative database.

The project leader can only be a researcher who, on the day the deadline for submission at the NKFIH Lead Agency expires, is the leader of only one project, which is (co)financed in an amount greater than 50,000.00 EUR per year, whereby the annual amount of (co)financing refers to the year when the research project is carried out throughout the duration of the whole year. This limitation also includes research projects with an extended deadline for completion, based on Article 81 of the General Act.

A researcher may apply to ARIS as a project leader for only one research project within each open call of the NKFIH Lead Agency.

Researchers who have received a negative grade on a final report for a project in which they were the project leader in the period of three years prior to the starting year of the call cannot apply as project leaders on this call.

The research project may only be a basic research project.

The period of implementation of the Slovenian part of the joint research project may be a maximum of three years.

The Slovenian part of a joint research project lasting two or three years may not exceed 100,000.00 EUR per year, with the consideration that the total amount of (co)financing of the Hungarian part of the joint research project, which is (co)financed by NKFIH, exceeds the total amount of (co)financing of the Slovenian part of a joint research project, which is (co)financed by ARIS.

The joint proposal of the Hungarian-Slovenian research project must be submitted to the NKFIH Lead Agency. The joint proposal of the Hungarian-Slovenian research project must meet the conditions set by the NKFIH Lead Agency. It must include a common scientific description of the research project, in which the scientific contributions of both co-applicants are defined, and the national parts of the project must be closely related and complementary. The scientific contribution of each side must be clearly visible. The scientific contribution of each co-applicant must be clearly visible. The project leader of each national part of the joint research project, indicated in the joint application of the joint research project submitted to the NKFIH Lead Agency, must be the same as the project leader indicated in the application of the Slovenian part of the joint research project.

Applicants of the Slovenian part of the joint research projects, who are engaged in economic activity, regardless of their legal status or legal organisational form, and participate in the joint Hungarian-Slovenian research project as a contractor, co-contractor or co-financier of the project, must, in accordance with the applicable rules on state aid in the field of scientific research, submit also a completed form for awarding state aid ARIS-DP-LA-xxxx¹¹.

4.3.2.6. Other conditions

Members of the project group of the Slovenian part of the joint research project (hereinafter: members of the project group) must have a researcher record number at the ARIS, which means that they must be entered into the database of research and development activity providers or the register of private researchers at ARIS.

The project leader and members of the project groups must have available capacities regarding effective research hours to carry out the research project (the maximum permitted capacity for full-time employment is 1,700 effective research hours or one FTE) and must be employed by the RO that will carry out the Slovenian part of the joint project, or have the status of private researcher.

The project leader must have at least 170 effective research hours (0.1 FTE) available annually. A project group member (except for young researchers, doctoral students, financed by other sources, retired researchers, and JRZ heads who may participate in the project with 0 hours) must participate with at least 34 effective research hours (0.02 FTE) available annually.

The project leader must be employed in at least 20% of full-time capacity at the RO in the Republic of Slovenia carrying out the Slovenian part of the joint research project.

The participating RO must be registered in the RO register or register of private researchers and must collaborate with at least 170 effective research hours during the period of the project's implementation, whereby the minimum amount of RO collaboration is 170 effective research hours per annum. During the Slovenian part of the joint research project's implementation, the number of hours rendered annually by the participating RO can be 0.

The applicant must have a signed agreement with the other participating RO on the regulation of mutual rights and obligations.

The joint research project must be positively evaluated in the evaluation process of the NKFIH Lead Agency and the NKFIH Lead Agency must accept the Hungarian part of the joint research project for (co)financing.

4.3.2.7. Fulfilment of entry and other conditions

Entry conditions (item 4.3.2.5.) must be fulfilled on the day of the deadline determined in the NKFIH Lead Agency call. Evidence regarding the fulfilment of the conditions from the eleventh and twelfth

¹¹ Where "xxxx" stands for the year when the call is published by NKFIH as the Lead Agency.

paragraph of item 4.3.2.5. are acquired by ARIS from the NKFIH Lead Agency. If the entry conditions of item 4.3.2.5. are not met, the application will be rejected.

Other conditions (item 4.3.2.6.) must be fulfilled when the contract on implementation and (co)financing of scientific research activity is concluded, except for the condition of free capacity regarding the effective hourly research work of the project leader and members of the project group, which is checked annually, bearing in mind that this condition for the project leader and members of the project group must be met on the day the project starts. If the conditions from item 4.3.2.6. are not met, the contract on implementation and (co)financing of scientific research activity will not be concluded, regardless of the decision issued by the director on the selection of the application for (co)financing, by which the application is selected for (co)financing.

4.4. Evaluation procedure, funding threshold, deadline in which applicants will be informed of the results and method of (co)financing by ARIS

Only timely and complete applications that meet the entry conditions from item 4.3.2.5. and the entry conditions of the NKFIH Lead Agency will be included in the evaluation process.

The evaluation process will be managed by the NKFIH Lead Agency in accordance with its own rules and existing funding schemes. Based on the Multilateral Lead Agency Agreement with NKFIH, ARIS (co)finances the participation of applicants in joint Hungarian-Slovenian research projects, which are in the NKFIH Lead agency's call, in the international peer review process, positively evaluated and fulfil the conditions set by the ARIS.

The implementation of the evaluation process is taken over by the NKFIH Lead Agency.

After the evaluation process is completed, the NKFIH Lead Agency informs ARIS about the results of the evaluation process and provides it with a list of applications that are recommended for (co)funding and a list of applications that were not recommended for (co)financing. Applications recommended for (co)funding by the NKFIH Lead Agency are considered by the Scientific Council of ARIS (hereinafter: ZSA). The Scientific Council of ARIS considers that only applications that have been positively evaluated and accepted for (co)financing by the NKFIH Lead Agency can be (co)financed, while also taking into account that ARIS (co)finances the Slovenian part of the joint research project according to the available funds in the ARIS financial plan and work programme and up to a maximum of 350,000.00 EUR of new accepted obligations annually. The final decision regarding the (co)financing of applications is taken by the Director of the ARIS based on the proposed decision of the ZSA.

Applicants will be notified of the results within eight days of the decision regarding the selection of projects for (co)financing made by the Director of ARIS.

A contract on the implementation and (co)financing of scientific research activity is concluded by the ARIS with the selected applicant, which regulates in detail the method of (co)financing and other rights, obligations, and responsibilities of the contracting parties.

4.5. Open access to reviewed scientific publications and web access to information about the research project

The applicant is obliged to follow the principles of open access to scientific information in accordance with the ZZrID and the Scientific Research and Innovation Strategy of Slovenia or its individual parts and other regulations governing the field of open science.

In their reports publishing the results or in any public presentation of research results, project group members shall state RO affiliation, project number and the title of the co-financier, the Slovenian Research and Innovation Agency.

After the Slovenian part of the joint project is approved for (co)financing, the applicant must create a website or subpage on their RO's website dedicated to the joint Hungarian-Slovenian research project and enabling the dissemination of its results. The minimum requirements of the website content are: a content description of the joint and Slovenian part of the research project including basic information about (co)financing, composition of the project group with links to data in the SICRIS system, the phases of the joint and Slovenian part of the research project and descriptions of their implementation, bibliographical references arising directly from the implementation of the joint and Slovenian part of the research project, as well as the Slovenian Research Agency's logo and logos of other (co)financers. Content included in the SICRIS system should be linked and need not be provided twice. The website presenting the joint and Slovenian part of the research project must remain active for five (5) years after the joint Hungarian-Slovenian research project has been completed. The implementer reports on the establishment of the website in the interim and final report.

5. CONTACTS

ARIS

ARIS website: <http://www.aris-rs.si/sl/razpisi/>.

Contact person: Aleksandra Panič, phone: +386 1 400 5924, e-mail: aleksandra.panic@aris.rs.si.

NKFIH

NKFIH website: <https://nkfi.gov.hu/for-the-applicants>.

Contact person: Nemerkenyi Előd, e-mail: elod.nemerkenyi@nkfi.gov.hu.

Dr. Špela Stres,
Director

Number: 5110-1/2023-11

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