

Lead Agency Principle (co)funding scheme

# NKFIH - INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS

Department of International Cooperation

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# NKFIH – Information for applicants

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**This document “NKFIH – Information for applicants” (version No. 7) applies to and is used for all applications of the Slovenian part of Hungarian-Slovenian research projects submitted according to this information from 16 June 2025.**

**The Slovenian Research and Innovation 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 Act<sup>1</sup> (ZZrID) in connection with Article 12 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 Activities<sup>2</sup>, Methodology for the assessment of applications in procedures for the (co)financing of scientific research activities<sup>3</sup> in connection with the Lead Agency Agreement – Memorandum of Understanding on the Unilateral Administration and Mutual Recognition of Evaluation Procedures of 4 April 2014<sup>4</sup> 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 Weave<sup>5</sup>.

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

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<sup>1</sup> Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, Nos. 186/21, 40/23 and 102/24, hereinafter: ZZrID.

<sup>2</sup> Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, Nos. 166/22 and 92/24, hereinafter: General act on (co)financing procedures.

<sup>3</sup> 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, No. 6319-5/2022-11 of 29 May 2024, No. 6319-5/2022-12 of 9 September 2024, No. 6319-5/2022-13 of 23 September 2024, No. 6319-5/2022-16 of 29 October 2024, No. 6319-5/2022-17 of 13 January 2025, No. 6319-5/2022-18 of 3 March 2025, No. 6319-5/2022-20 of 24 March 2025 and No. 6319-5/2022-21 of 24 April 2025, hereinafter: Methodology.

<sup>4</sup> 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/si/medn/vodilna/inc/sporazum-OTKA.pdf>).

<sup>5</sup> Multilateral Lead Agency Agreement (MLA) No. 020-5/2020-1.

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 of the Hungarian-Slovenian research project and an 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 a Lead Agency is available on the ARIS webpage: <https://www.aris-rs.si/sl/progproj/rproj/razpisi/>**

### **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 considered:

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 Slovenia<sup>6</sup>.
2. In the process, ARIS considers 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 the joint research project, which is greater than the permitted deviation of  $\pm 3\%$  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.

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<sup>6</sup> Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, Nos. 35/2022, 144/22 and 79/23, hereinafter: Regulation.



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 considers 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/year<sup>7</sup> 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 of new accepted obligations annually, considering the assessment of the joint application of a Hungarian-Slovenian research project in the evaluation process with the Lead Agency.
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 co-applicant must be clearly visible.

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<sup>7</sup> 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 programme<sup>8</sup>,
- Regulation,
- International Lead Agency Agreement with NKFIH,
- Rules on state aid in the field of scientific research activities<sup>9</sup>.

**CLARIFICATION: All applications submitted within the individual deadline for (co)financing the Slovenian part of a joint research project are subject to the legislation and regulations in force on the date of the opening of the individual deadline for (co)financing the Slovenian part of a joint research project.**

##### 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 providers of scientific research activity (hereinafter referred to as: the RO database) 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.

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<sup>8</sup> No. 007-14/2024-4 of 22 May 2024, and No. 007-14/2024-5 of 24 May 2024, hereinafter: Criteria.

<sup>9</sup> No. 007-2/2024-1 of 7 March 2024, hereinafter: Rules on State Aid.

#### 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:

- NKFIH/year application form<sup>10</sup> 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 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:

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) **no later than seven days after the deadline set by the NKFIH Lead Agency for submitting the joint proposal of the Hungarian-Slovenian research project.**

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<sup>10</sup> 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.

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.

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 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 ID, which means that he or she is registered in the RO database or the register of private researchers at ARIS. The project leader, who does not yet have an assigned researcher ID, must (in order to gain access to the DigitalForms web portal) complete and submit a form for obtaining a researcher ID 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 qualifications framework, is ranked at level 10, and demonstrate internationally comparable research results which are in accordance with the ZZrID, the General act on (co)financing procedures, the Criteria, and the Methodology, and are established if the project leader successfully defended doctoral dissertation and was granted a scientific title PhD in a (1) third-level study programme or a study programme that corresponds to the third-level study programmes, and obtained education which in accordance with the law governing the Slovenian qualifications framework (SQF) is ranked at level 10; (2) study programme for obtaining education equivalent to level 8 of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) if it was obtained in one of the countries of the European Higher Education Area; (3) study programme for obtaining education comparable to level 8 of the EQF if it was obtained in other countries from outside of the European Higher Education Area and the comparability was established by the national authority responsible for recognizing foreign qualifications.

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 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 on (co)financing procedures.

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 € 150,000 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 and the applicant 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 and the applicant indicated in the application of the Slovenian part of the joint research project.

Applicants of research projects, who submitted applications indicating that research project implementers are participating as companies (in the public, higher education, business or private non-profit sectors) must, in accordance with Rules on state aid, submit also a signed and stamped completed form for awarding state aid ARIS-DP-LA-xxxx. Based on Article 4 of Rules on state aid, companies are legal or natural persons that carry out economic activity and operate in the field of scientific research activity or carry out activities related to scientific research activity, and meet the conditions set out in ZZrID, General act on (co)financing procedures and the Regulation.

#### **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 ID at the ARIS, which means that they must be entered into the RO database 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 Slovenian part of the joint 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 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, who may participate in the project with 0 hours) must (on the day the project starts) participate with at least 34 effective research hours (0.02 FTE) available annually. The heads of

public research institutes can also participate in the Slovenian part of a joint research project with 0 effective hours of research work.

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 ninth and tenth 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 International Lead Agency Agreement with NKFIH and considering budgetary options, 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 and applications not recommended for (co)funding by the NKFIH Lead Agency are considered by the Scientific Council of ARIS.

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 of new accepted obligations annually. The final decision regarding the (co)financing of applications is taken by the Director of the ARIS.

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 Withdrawal/discontinuation of (co)financing of the national/regional part of the research project by the Lead/Partner Agency**

Changed circumstances are circumstances which affect the successful implementation of a scientific research activity. Whenever one or more Partner Agencies withdraw from or discontinue the (co)financing of the national part of a research project, it is regarded that changed circumstances occurred.

Changed circumstances may occur before or after the conclusion of a contract on implementation and (co)financing of scientific research activity.

In the given case, ARIS will act according to the **Rules and the conduct procedure of ARIS in the case of withdrawal/discontinuation of (co)financing of the national part of the Weave research project by one or more Partner Agencies**, Version 2.0, Number: 007-4/2024-4 of 8 May 2024, available on the web page <https://www.arrs.si/sl/obvestila/24/pravila-odstop-financ-WEAVE.asp>. These operating guidelines are **to be used in the same sense also for other procedures in cases of (co)financing by the Lead Agency.**



1. If changed circumstances occur **before the conclusion of a contract** on implementation and (co)financing of scientific research activity (in the given case it means the Lead Agency and all the participating Partner Agencies have not accepted the research project for (co)financing),

it means that due to the failure of meeting the conditions from item 4.3.2.6, a 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. In this case, ARIS draws up a letter informing the applicant that according to applicable regulations and International Lead Agency Agreement with NKFIH/public call, a contract on (co)financing between the applicant and ARIS will not be concluded. Applicable legal bases for the decision must be explained in the letter and well-grounded reasons for not concluding a contract on (co)financing must be given.

2. If changed circumstances occur **after the conclusion of a contract** on implementation and (co)financing of scientific research activity, the applicant must inform ARIS of the changed circumstances by the deadline determined by the above-mentioned contract (if the applicant informs ARIS after the deadline, it is considered that the applicant's use of funds was not as intended by the contract). The applicant is particularly required to explain why their contractual obligations were not fulfilled (e.g. the obligation to inform ARIS), submit evidence if available and explain with well-founded reasoning and concrete examples why the changed circumstances prevent further and undisturbed implementation of the Slovenian part of the research project in accordance with the concluded contract on implementation and (co)financing of scientific research activity.

Possible consequences:

- temporary discontinuation of (co)financing of the Slovenian part of the research project – if ARIS assesses that the changed circumstances prevent further and undisturbed implementation of the project in accordance with the concluded contract on implementation and (co)financing of scientific research activity, and that there is a possibility that the applicant may eliminate the discovered irregularities or deviations by the determined deadline and report on this to ARIS;
- discontinuation of further implementation of activity and (co)financing, whereby the applicant is not required to return the funds which have already been paid out – if ARIS determines that the implementation of the Slovenian part of the research project based on the contract on (co)financing cannot be successfully carried out by the deadline due to the objective circumstances<sup>11</sup>.

After the applicant's response has been received, the Rules on monitoring the implementation of basic, applied and postdoctoral research projects are meaningfully used to establish the facts and assess the evidence.

Competent authorities (ARIS science and research councils, ARIS scientific council, ARIS Director) must assess in particular whether changed circumstances prevent further undisturbed

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<sup>11</sup> Circumstances that could not be foreseen, prevented, eliminated or dealt with are considered objective circumstances to avoid.



implementation of the Slovenian part of the research project according to the concluded contract on implementation and (co)financing of scientific research activity. The duration of the Slovenian part of the research project, after one or more Partner Agencies stopped (co)financing their national parts of the research project, is one of the circumstances being assessed by ARIS competent authorities.

If the ARIS science and research council, in accordance with the Rules on monitoring the implementation of basic, applied and postdoctoral research projects, issues a negative evaluation which is then confirmed by ARIS scientific council, the Director adopts a reasoned decision and forwards it to the applicant.

ARIS may adopt the following decisions:

- it may withdraw from the contract on (co)financing and demand the repayment of all funds as well as the lawful late payment interests from the transfer date to the refund date – if ARIS assesses that the applicant will not finish the Slovenian part of the research project successfully due to failure of fulfilment or breach of contractual provisions, and the applicant has not eliminated the discovered irregularities or deviations by the deadline;
- it may discontinue further implementation of the activity and (co)financing, whereby the applicant is not required to return the funds already paid out – if ARIS determines that the implementation of the Slovenian part of the research project based on the contract on (co)financing cannot be successfully completed by the deadline due to objective circumstances;
- it may decide that the implementation of the contract on (co)financing will continue.

#### **4.6 Open access to reviewed scientific publications and web access to information about the research project**

In accordance with Article 41 of ZZrID and Articles 2 and 3 of the Regulation on the implementation of scientific research in accordance with the principles of open science<sup>12</sup>, all peer-reviewed scientific publications resulting from the Slovenian part of the joint research project must be published in open access together with all the related research data and other research results.

In accordance with the first indent of the first paragraph of Article 3 of the Regulation on Open Science, the open access is implemented in such a way that the machine-readable digital format of the published version of the scientific publication (VoR) or reviewed manuscript (AAM) accepted for publication is saved in a trustworthy repository for scientific publications. A trustworthy repository is a repository which is certified or regional repository or some other repository which is trusted by researchers. A scientific publication must also contain data on (co)financer or (co)financers and a project number in accordance with Article 82 of the General act on (co)financing procedures, as well as information on the share of co-financing from public sources in accordance with Article 1 of the Decree on Open Science.

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<sup>12</sup> Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, No. 59/23, hereinafter: Decree on Open Science.

Open access costs (APC or BPC costs), including the costs of creating scientific publications and other results of scientific research, are eligible costs of the scientific research activities.

Authors of scientific publications or their employers, whenever the copyrights have been transferred to them, may transfer the copyrights over scientific publications to third persons only on a non-exclusive basis. Authors of scientific publications or their employers, whenever the copyrights have been transferred to them, must, in accordance with the second paragraph of Article 6 of the Regulation on Open Science, publish scientific publications under open licence, e. g. CC BY, CC BY-SA or their equivalents.

After the application has been selected for (co)financing, the applicant must create a website or subpage on their RO's website dedicated to the project and enabling the dissemination of its results.

The minimum requirements of the website content are:

- a description of the project's content with basic information on (co-)financing,
- a link to the data in the SICRIS system,
- Data Management Plan and its updates, and
- a reference to the ARIS logo and the logos of other (co-)financers.

Content included in the SICRIS system should be linked and need not be provided twice. The webpage presenting the project must remain active for five years after the project has been completed. The implementer reports on the establishment of the webpage in the interim and final reports on the implemented project's results.

In accordance with Article 4 of the Decree on Open Science the project must include a **Data Management Plan** (hereinafter: **NRRP**) which **must be submitted to ARIS within at least 6 months after the beginning of project's implementation**. If any changes occur, an updated NRRP must be submitted in the interim and final reports and published on the project's webpage. Obligatory NRRP content is available [here](#) (in Slovene).

According to Article 4 of the Decree on Open Science, the "FAIR" principle is applied to open access to research data together with the principle "as open as possible and as closed as necessary". With regard to the way and timeliness of saving as well as accessibility of research data and other research results in digital format, the first and second paragraphs of Article 5 of the Decree on Open Science need to be considered.

#### 4.7 Science Communication

The objective of scientific research activity implementation is to guarantee progress and well-being of the whole society. Therefore, it is important to appropriately explain the scientific research results to citizens and (political) decision-makers. It is important that scientific discoveries are interpreted and presented by the researchers themselves who best understand the meaning of their scientific research and discoveries, and that this is being done in an appropriate way, so that their information will be understandable and convincing to lay persons. The project must, therefore, include communication activities through which the (interested) public will not only be appropriately presented with the results of individual projects, but will also be enabled to have an insight into the research field

addressed by the project in such a way that the level of knowledge on the subject and the level of understanding are increased. The latter is particularly important when providing information to political decision-makers. The researchers must possess the communication skills and knowledge needed to appropriately implement science communication activities.

The project must, therefore, include a Plan of communication activities (hereinafter: the Communication Plan) which will have to be submitted to ARIS within at least 6 months after the beginning of the project implementation and will have to include various audiences. In the case of changes, an updated Communication Plan must be submitted in the interim and final reports.

Communication activities may also include the activities intended to train researchers for science communication activities, but they are not limited exclusively to education activities.

## 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](mailto: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](mailto:elod.nemerkenyi@nkfi.gov.hu).

Tjaša Dobnik,  
Director

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