

# Call documentation

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**2<sup>nd</sup> call for proposals**

**National Centres of Competence Programme**

Funding programme for applied research, experimental  
development and innovation

Ref. No.: TACR/11-57/2021

# The focus and conditions of the 2<sup>nd</sup> call under the National Centres of Competence Programme

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## What is the focus of the call?

The call is aimed at supporting and strengthening long-term cooperation between the research and the application spheres, and at strengthening the institutional base of applied research.

### The objective of the call and the programme itself is:

- to increase the efficiency and quality of applied research and technology transfer in key fields with growth prospects;
- to increase the competitiveness of enterprises;
- to strengthen the excellence and application relevance of research organisations.

The funded project proposals will serve as a tool to achieve that objective. The aim of those projects is to build sufficiently stable and long-term base of applied research (in the form of established national centres of competence) through concentration of research capacities and the establishment of a strong orientation towards practical application of their research results.

### The sub-objectives of the call and the programme include:

- linking of existing research centres;
- focusing on promising sectors of Czech economy according to the National RIS3 strategy;
- ensuring interdisciplinarity and promoting long-term cooperation;
- support for innovation through technology transfer, emphasis on the applicability of results in practice;
- increasing the number of innovation leaders.

## Who can apply for funding?

To determine the maximum funding rate, **each applicant** (main applicant, other project partners) must classify itself as one of the following **types of applicants**:

### Research organisation

- **must** always be **the main applicant**;
- may be in the role of other project partner.

### Enterprise

- there must be **at least five** small or medium-sized enterprises;
- must be in the role of other project partner.

## Important dates

**Call is open for submissions:** from 16. 12. 2021 until 6. 4. 2022

**Announcement of results:** 30. 11. 2022

**Start of project implementation:** January 2023

**Project duration:** 48–72 months

## Maximum amount of funding and funding rate

**Maximum amount of funding per project:** unlimited

**Maximum funding rate per project:** 80 %

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**Questions** about the call can be submitted via the [Helpdesk](#). You can use regional consultants at [contact points](#) for a personal or telephone consultation.

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# Introduction

For this call, the call documentation is published in Czech and English. In case of divergence between the language versions, the Czech version shall prevail.

Before submitting a project proposal, the Technology Agency of the Czech Republic (hereinafter TA CR) recommends that applicants become familiar with the following important references and terms that are directly related to the call:

- [General terms and conditions of TA CR](#) (version 7), which lay down all the rights and obligations of beneficiaries, including the definition of important terms. Furthermore, individual cost categories are described in more detail here;
- [Frascati manual](#), which describes the specifics of research and development projects, defines important terms and should also serve as a guide for classifying research activities into the right categories (industrial research and experimental development);
- ISTA information system (hereinafter „[ISTA](#)”) which is used to submit project proposals and the scope of the data is set out here pursuant to § 17 (6) of the Act on the Support of Research and Development.



The icon in front of the text serves as a hyperlink to the legal framework (Chapter 8). Clicking on this icon will take you to the relevant part of the legal framework.

## 1. Applicants in the call

### The main applicant:

- may be only an research organisation that has its registered office, establishment or branch in the Czech Republic;
- must carry out the project with at least five other project partners;
- can submit an unlimited number of project proposals (for a project proposal to be funded, the conditions must be met as set out in Chapter 3.7 Differentiation from own similar projects).

### Other project partner:

- may be an entity established in a Member State of the European Union (including the Czech Republic), in another state constituting the European Economic Area or in the Swiss Confederation;
- there must be at least five small or medium-sized enterprises.



To determine the maximum funding rate, **each applicant** (main applicant, other project partners) must classify itself as one of the following **types of applicants**:

- **research organisation;**
- **enterprise.**

## 2. Dates and deadlines

Dates and deadlines related to **the project proposal submission and to the proof of eligibility**

<b>Call opening</b> (from this time onwards, project proposals can be filled in and submitted in ISTA)	16. 12. 2021 at 9:00 a.m.
<b>Call deadline</b> (deadline for the submission of project proposals through ISTA)	6. 4. 2022 at 16:29:59 p.m.
<b>Deadline for sending a confirmation of submission of an electronic project proposal</b> from the data box of the main applicant to the TA CR data box	6. 4. 2022 at 23:59:59 p.m.
<b>Deadline for the receipt of proof of eligibility documents</b> (except for documents which constitute a part of the project proposal) in the TA CR data box	

TA CR shall **publish the results of the call at the latest on 30. 11. 2021** at the website [www.tacr.cz](http://www.tacr.cz). Subsequently, TA CR shall send the **Decision on the results of the call for proposals** to the main applicant through the data box.

Dates and deadlines related to **project implementation**

<b>Start of the project</b>	January 2023
<b>Project duration</b>	48–72 months
<b>Deadline for project completion</b>	December 2028

## 3. Project proposal

The **project proposal** is an application for funding, which applicants submit through ISTA. Applicants must include in the project proposal all the information that is necessary for its evaluation (directly in the boxes provided in ISTA or in the annexes to the project proposal). If TA CR decides to support the project proposal and a project contract is signed<sup>1</sup>, the project proposal becomes a **project**.

The project proposal shall be submitted in **English**. All information provided in the project proposal must correspond to the facts as of the date of the project proposal submission.

### 3.1 Focus of the call

The call is aimed at supporting and strengthening cooperation between the research, academic and private sectors and creating suitable conditions for the commercialisation of research outputs/results and their use for the needs of society.

Each project proposal must classify itself under one main and one secondary research topic from the list below:

- Biomedicine;
- Biotechnology, Professional Chemistry and Bioeconomics;
- The Czech Republic in the 21st Century (Climate Change and Globalization);
- Transport and Smart City;
- ICT in the digital age (AI, virtual reality, big data);
- Aviation and Space Technology;
- Modern Energy;
- Optics and Optoelectronics;
- Advanced Materials and Nanotechnology;
- Robotics, Informatics and Cybernetics for Society 4.0;
- Social Impacts of Technological Changes;
- Mechanical Engineering for 21 Century.

In addition, there will be the possibility to optionally subscribe to the European Commission's priority areas, which are:

- Green Deal;
- Digitisation.

The project proposals funded under this call should also contribute to the vision of building a sufficiently stable and long-lasting applied research base by concentrating research capacities and setting a strong focus on the practical application of their research results.

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<sup>1</sup>Where the call documentation refers to a **project contract**, this includes also a **decision on the provision of funding** which the TA CR issues only if the applicant is an organizational unit of the state or an organizational unit of a Ministry engaged in research and development.

In order to fulfil the above vision, it is expected that National Centres of Competence will be established, which can be built on the basis of existing cooperation from other centres, such as Centres of Competence (TA CR), Centres of Excellence (GACR), R&D&I Centres and other already established infrastructures, or by establishing new relationships leading to meaningful, effective, and long-term cooperation.

Each applicant's NCC Centre will be a group of facility teams. The research group will jointly contribute to the implementation of the research activities to meet the objectives of the NCC Centre and will be subordinate to the NCC Centre's joint management. The research group participate in the NCC Centre via their staff team, infrastructure, existing know-how and their own resources, as well as ongoing and future projects. Each research group must be a financially independent unit with separate accounting within the institution. These research groups should work intensively with the application sector and should generate knowledge with a high potential for direct application in practice; they should also acquire a significant portion of their income from contractual research as well as from other resources.

## 3.2 Specific implementation proces

Project implementation is carried out by implementing individual **sub-projects**.

In this call, the responsibility and control over the selection of sub-projects are transferred closer to the beneficiaries. A detailed elaboration of the sub-projects is not part of the project proposal. The sub-project will be submitted to the TA CR during the Project implementation by means of a defined form „[Sub-project proposal](#)“.

Sub-project proposal will contain, in particular, the declaration of specific outputs/outcomes under Chapter 3.5 this call, including the planned activities and milestones resulting in achieving the outputs/outcomes, mandatory annexes to the planned outcome under Chapter 3.5 this call, and including the planned budget under Chapter 4.2 this call, that will be planned for the individual beneficiaries involved and the sub-project as a whole.

The Beneficiary or Beneficiaries define the sub-project and submit it to the Centre Council for approval. As part of the sub-project assessment, the Centre Council will prepare an evaluation which will be part of the information submitted to the Provider on the sub-project (minutes from the meeting of the Centre's Council, including completed form “[Approval of a new sub-project by the Centre's Council](#)”). The sub-project will be submitted to the provider without undue delay after approval by the Centre's Council will be submitted to the Provider via ISTA in accordance with the SME-07 Project Change Management Directive. The Provider is entitled to submit comments to the sub-project within 30 business days of its delivery. These comments are binding for the beneficiary and the beneficiary shall either integrate them into the sub-project and resubmit it to the Provider or not implement the sub-project at all.

The sub-project must be implemented by a minimum of 2 or more beneficiaries. The costs of the sub-project are eligible and can be financed from the provided funding from the date of approval of the sub-project by the Centre's Council. Failure to comply with this obligation results in a reduction of the amount of the budget discipline, i.e. the amount of all aid, provided for the sub-project.

The project on a sub-project level may not be a duplicate of another project or research intention that is already implemented. The provider will check at the level of sub-projects whether there is no duplication among projects.

After conclusion of project contract, beneficiaries **are obliged** to submit a **strategic sub-project** (stand-alone or as a part of a management sub-project), through which the strategic agenda should be fulfilled as defined in the project proposal or in [Annex No. 5 to the call documentation "Strategic outlook and prospects in the field"](#).

The strategic sub-project will have a mandatory result of type "O - other results", which will summarise information on the outputs and results of the research, including a description of prospects in the field(s) under investigation. It should also describe the interrelationship (link) between the individual sub-projects and their planned/achieved outputs and results, and the importance of the sub-projects in relation to the overall state-of-the-art, and the current and expected development of the field(s) under investigation.

The result will have to be achieved at the end of third year and at the very end of the sub-project, while the duration of the strategic sub-project must be equal to the duration of the whole project.

## Centre Council

The Centre Council as the principal decision-making body meeting the conditions of the National Centres of Competence Programme is established prior to the submission of the project proposal to the call. The Centre Council governs the NCC Centre and is composed of e.g. representatives of public administration, research and the application or financial spheres with an adequate portion of members being from foreign facilities. Apart from their institutions, half of the Centre Council members must be involved in the NCC Centre. The Centre Council determines the conceptual and strategic direction of the NCC Centre and makes fundamental decisions about its operation; it especially oversees the implementation of the strategic research agenda and cooperation with the application sphere. The definition of the Centre Council role is included in the Agreement on the Establishment of the National Centre of Competence, a mandatory annex to the Project proposal under of Chapter 3.4 of this call.

Information about the activity of the Centre's Council will annually constitute a part of the interim/final project report (or of Technical project report) and the provided information will include among others the number of meetings of the Centre's Council, their attendance, the matters discussed and other activities of the Centre's Council.

## 3.3 Income from commercialisation activities

For the second call under the National Centres of Competence Programme, it is expected that the support will be granted only to the Project Beneficiaries:

- which declare in the Project proposal and for the duration of the Project implementation that they will ensure income from commercialisation activities in the amount of at least 19 % of the requested financial support.

For the purpose of the call, the following are considered to be the income:

- income from contractual research;
- income from licences;
- costs of a research organisation paid by the enterprise as part of the collaborative research project implementation, i.e. in the form of effective cooperation to which no targeted Public Aid was granted. In this respect, it is recommended to become familiar with the [Opinion on aspects of research cooperation](#);
- other (the beneficiary specifies this type of income himself).

The aforementioned income, as well as other income from commercialisation activities, must cover the performance implemented or incurred within the research or development activities; therefore, it cannot be e.g. income from non-research activities, rent, etc.

This income amounting to at least 19 % of the requested amount of support **will be recognised and reported only by the research groups of the research organisations involved in the NCC Project.**

Within the project proposal, applicants shall indicate the income from commercialisation activities of individual research groups in the prescribed structure in [Annex No. 4 - Annex for the applicant's research groups](#). The total income from commercialisation activities shall be given in [Annex No. 3 – Income from commercialisation](#). The amounts given in this Annex should be the sum of the amounts given in the individual Annexes for the research groups. The information from these annexes will provide the basis for the evaluation of compliance with the requirement of a minimum amount of income from commercialisation activities within the evaluation process. Its actual achievement will then be checked during project implementation.

A minimum share of income from commercialisation activities in relation to the requested amount of funding will have to be reported for every 2 years of the project together, e. g. 1st-2nd year of the project, 3rd-4th year of the project, etc. Income from commercialisation activities cannot be counted for linked enterprises.

Income from commercialisation activities will include income for which the accounting document has a taxable transaction date before 31 December of the second year under review.

For the reporting of income from commercialisation activities, a defined form is used ([Statement of income from commercialisation activities of a project under the NCC Programme](#)), which is enclosed by the beneficiaries as an annex to the interim/final project report.

### 3.4 Mandatory annexes to project proposal

The applicants shall enclose to the project proposal through ISTA the following mandatory annexes:

- **Agreement on the establishment of the National Centre of Competence** - or an amendment to an existing agreement of already established National Centre of Competence from the 1<sup>st</sup> call, this annex may be in Czech or English language, but they must always include a translation into the other language;

- **Proposal for composition of Centre Council** - [Annex No. 2 - Proposal for composition of Centre Council](#) (obligation to list internal and external persons including their organisation - at least 50% of external members and adequate representation of foreign members), this annex must be in English language;
- **Income from commercialisation** - a model table on income from commercialisation is provided in the [Annex No. 3 - Income from commercialisation](#), this annex must be in English language;
- **Annex for applicant's research group(s)** - mandatory annex for each applicant which must provide a list of individual research groups, and their experience with R&D and commercialisation - [Annex No. 4 - Annex for applicant's research group\(s\)](#), this annex must be in English language;
- **Rules of procedure of the Centre** - this annex must be in English language;
- **Strategic outlook and prospects in the field** – the applicants will describe the strategic outlook and prospects in the field on which their projects are focused - [Annex No. 5 - Strategic outlook and prospects in the field](#), this annex must be in English language.

In ISTA, this annex No. 2 - Proposal for composition of Centre Council, No. 3 - Income from commercialisation No. 4 - Annex for applicant's research group(s) and No. 5 - Strategic outlook and prospects in the field can be downloaded in an editable format. Insert the annex in Chapter 3. PROJECT PRESENTATION / Definition of the project or 8. PROJECT ANNEXES.

## 3.5 Outputs and results

In this call, TA CR can only fund project proposals where **practical exploitation of outputs/results is expected**.

In the project proposal, applicants shall indicate only **one result**, namely of the type **O - other results, with the title „Plan of results”**. In the description of the result, they shall indicate the number and type of results they plan to achieve through sub-projects. Applicants shall select the date of the end of the project as the deadline for the achievement of the result entitled 'Plan of results'. Additional individual results will be defined within the sub-projects. According to the General Terms and Conditions, all main outputs / results must be achieved by the time of the project completion.

Definitions and descriptions of individual types of results can be found in [Annex No. 4](#) of the Methodology for the Evaluation of Research Organizations and Targeted Support Programmes for Research, Development and Innovation (hereinafter referred to as the “[Methodology](#)”).

**SUPPORTED TYPES OF RESULTS IN SUB-PROJECTS and their mandatory annexes:**

**Fprum** - industrial design;

**Fuzit** – utility model;

**Gprot** - prototype;

**Gfunk** - function sample;

**Hneleg** - results projected into guidelines and other non-legislative regulations that are mandatory under the relevant provider - **the mandatory annex is proof of the interest of the future customer;**

**Nlec** - medical procedure;

**Nmap** - specialized map;

**NmetA** - methodologies and procedures accredited by the authorised body;

**NmetC** - methodologies certified by the authorised body;

**NmetS** - methodologies approved by the competent state administration body for the matter in question - **Form for the NmetS type of result is a mandatory annex;**

**P**-patent – **patent search is a mandatory annex<sup>2</sup>;**

**R** – software;

**S** - specialised public database;

**Zpolop** - pilot plan;

**Ztech** - verified technology;

**O** – other results - **the mandatory annex is an estimate of the potential use.**

If the planned output / result does not correspond to any description in the [Methodology](#), choose the **result of the “O” type**.

The mandatory or recommended annexes to the outputs/results must **constitute a part of the sub-project proposal submitted to the Centre's Council and subsequently to the provider.**

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<sup>2</sup> **Patent search** (state-of-the-art search, novelty search) – knowledge of the state-of-the-art and partly of the need for an innovative solution should be, among others, documented also by a state-of-the-art search, or product search and patent search (hereinafter referred to as „search“). The search can be performed either by any patent office (in the Czech Republic, the [Industrial Property Office](#)), a patent attorney or it is possible to use public databases (e.g. [EspaceNet](#)) and others.

### 3.6 Application of outputs and results

In this call will be supporting in particular projects proposal that can reasonably be expected to accomplish usable outputs and results, also through publications, and whose application will contribute to meeting the objectives of the National Centres of Competence Programme and benefits (social and economic) for the society.

In the project proposal, the applicants declare the general achievement of outputs and results of applied research and experimental development defined in the programme of the National Centre of Competence, while the applicability of the outputs and results will be described by the applicants in sub-projects or documented by annexes. The submitted evidence must show that the future user of the outputs and results is ready and able to ensure their application in practice.

### 3.7 Differentiation from similar projects



The Technology Agency of the Czech Republic only supports project proposals, the content of which or its part has not been in the past and is not currently being addressed within another own project of the applicant<sup>3</sup>. Double funding is not allowed.

Applicant are obliged to indicate (especially where there are identical key persons in research teams, and the same fields are being addressed) their own:

- **completed projects**, if the planned outputs/results constitute their follow-up and to describe this link (e.g. projects completed under the Centres of Competence Programme, the National Centres of Competence Programme, the Centres of Excellence Programme and others with a similar focus);
- **currently running related projects** and to describe the differences between those projects and the project proposal submitted to this call (e.g. projects funded under the THETA Programme, sub-programme 3; the Environment for Life Programme, sub-programme 3 and other similar focus);
- **project proposals submitted simultaneously to this or other calls**, where the simultaneous selection for funding **would not lead** to double funding. In that case, differences between those projects need to be described;
- **project proposals submitted simultaneously to this or other calls**, where the simultaneous selection for funding would lead to double funding. In that case it must be stated that only one project contract will be concluded, and this commitment must be adhered to.

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<sup>3</sup> **Own project proposals** mean all project proposals to any provider of public funding, involving an entity with the same ID number, regardless of whether it is the main applicant or other project partner.

In case of non-compliance with the conditions described above, **the project proposal will not be funded** due to non-compliance with the conditions of the call documentation.

If there are no such projects from which you would need to differentiate your proposal, **please state this explicitly**.

### 3.8 Thematic classification of project proposal

The classification of a project proposal in a correct category serves for statistical and analytical purposes and for the evaluation of public spending in the area of science, research and innovation. The classification is a mandatory step in the proposal submission process. The correct classification of the project proposal also has an impact on the correctness of the evaluation process. The objectives and fields that can be selected for the classification (defined according to the focus of the programme) are listed in the references provided below or in the help function in ISTA.

All the following details are entered in ISTA in Chapter 3. PROJECT INTRODUCTION, in the **Definition of the project** tab:

- objectives of National priorities of oriented research, experimental development and innovation (RDI priorities) – a list of objectives is given in the ISTA help system;
- fields according to Central Register of Projects (**CRP**) and according to Fields of Research and Development (**FORD**). The selected CRP and FORD fields should be in accordance;
- domains of research and innovation specialisation of the National Research and Innovation Strategy for Smart Specialization of the Czech Republic (**RIS3 strategy**).

## 4. Funding rules

<b>Expected amount allocated to the call</b>	CZK 6,2 billion
<b>Maximum amount of funding per project</b>	unlimited
<b>Maximum funding rate per project</b>	80 %

Beneficiaries must cover a mandatory co-funding at a minimum rate of 20 % from other sources.

There is no legal entitlement to the funding.

### § 4.1 Funding rate

The funding rate is determined according to the type of applicant. However, **the maximum funding rate per project** must always be respected.

#### Funding rate per applicant

The funding rate of an applicant is determined as a percentage of individual applicant's costs which is covered by funding.

The **maximum permitted funding rate**<sup>4</sup> for individual types of applicants is shown in the table below:

Types of applicants	Maximum funding rate
Small enterprise	60 %
Medium-sized enterprise	50 %
Large enterprise	20 %
Research organisation	100 %

## § 4.2 Eligible costs

The Beneficiary shall specify the financial plan by individual categories within the sub-projects. When submitting the Project proposal, the Beneficiary shall also present the financial plan collectively for the Project, total costs without specification for individual categories and resources, for individual applicants and in total for the whole project proposal.

All cost categories are listed and detailed in Article 18 of [General terms and conditions](#).

In this call, eligible costs **include**:

- **personnel costs** - including scholarships<sup>5</sup>;
- **subcontracting costs**;
- **other direct costs**;
- **indirect costs** – can be reported using the following methods:
  - **“full cost”** – the organization must have an existing system for allocating indirect costs in the form of an internal regulation, or
  - **“flat rate” of up to 25 %** of the sum of the personnel costs and other direct costs actually reported by the applicant in the given year.

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<sup>4</sup> The **maximum funding rate** is set irrespective of the ratio of industrial research and experimental development (IR/ED), which is defined only in the course of the project when individual sub-projects are underway. The maximum funding rate takes into account effective collaboration between research organisations and enterprises.

<sup>5</sup> TA CR warns applicants that in the case of reporting personnel costs in the form of scholarships, it is necessary to ensure the adjustment of the license conditions between the student and the university. The opinion of the TA CR on this load can be found [HERE](#).

## 5. Proof of eligibility and project proposal submission

### § 5.1 Proof of eligibility and other requirements stipulated by TA CR

Each applicant (main applicant as well as other partners in the project proposal) **shall demonstrate its eligibility** to implement the project separately on a prescribed form [Sworn statement of the applicant](#).

#### The sworn statement:

- must be sent by each applicant from its data box (each applicant for itself) to the TA CR data box (data box ID: afth9xp);
- does not need to be physically signed (the signature is replaced by the sending from the appropriate data box);
- in the „Subject matter“ data box, the following text should be entered „National Centres of Competence Programme – Proof of eligibility“.

If the other project partner does not have a data box, the Sworn statement of the applicant may be sent as a hard copy as the foreign project partner.

Applicants must further comply with the obligation stipulated by the Accounting Act and **publish their financial statements for years 2018, 2019 and 2020**. TA CR will use them to check whether the applicant is not an undertaking in difficulty and that the type of applicant was correctly chosen.

If the applicant submitted the financial statements to the court maintaining the commercial register ex-post and they had not been published before submission of the project proposal, the applicant shall enclose the financial statements in annexes to the project proposal, including confirmation of delivery to the appropriate commercial court.

#### Requirements for which compliance is documented through ISTA:

- **professional qualifications to implement the project** – to be filled in for key persons in the research team in the section „Professional CV“. Each main applicant must have at least one person in the role of a researcher in the project proposal and each potential other project partner must have at least one person in the role of other investigator.
- **authorisations to carry out the activities planned in the project proposal** – a copy is submitted with the project proposal (e.g. authorisation to perform a biological testing, authorisation to carry out research on human embryonic stem cells);

- **ownership structure of each applicant** – each applicant must indicate all ultimate owners - natural persons with a share of at least 10% (if it follows from the legal form of an applicant that he/she does not have an ownership structure, this obligation does not apply to him/her).

## 5.2 Method to document the eligibility of foreign project partners

Foreign partners shall send Sworn statement of the applicant as a hard copy (if they do not have a data box). In this case, the sworn statement must be signed by a statutory representative of the partner and it must be an original.

A foreign project partner which is an enterprise must provide in the annexes of the project proposal **a document in the form of a sworn statement** which shall **contain financial details necessary for the calculation of whether it does not fall into the category of „undertaking in difficulty“ for the years 2018, 2019 and 2020**. Specifically, the document must contain the following details: share capital, share premium, other equity funds, revenue reserves, profit or loss in the past years, profit or loss and the amount of advance payment of a share in the profits. The document must be signed by a person authorised to act on behalf of the partner.

## 5.3 Project proposal submission

A project proposal must be submitted to the call in **an electronic form through ISTA**. No other form of project proposal submission is permitted.

After submitting the project proposal through ISTA, the owner<sup>6</sup> of the project proposal shall generate a document „**Confirmation of submission of an electronic project proposal in ISTA**“. This document contains clear identifiers which must be identical with the electronically submitted project proposal.

### **Confirmation of submission of an electronic project proposal in ISTA:**

- It must be sent from the data box of the main applicant to the TA CR data box (data box ID: afth9xp);
- in the „Subject matter“ data box, the following text should be entered „National Centres of Competence Programme – Confirmation of submission“.

The owner of the project proposal can himself **withdraw the project proposal** in ISTA (e.g. in order to correct or complement already submitted project proposal). After submitting the project proposal, the "Project proposal withdrawal" button will be displayed to the owner of the project proposal in the PROJECT PROPOSAL OVERVIEW tab. This step cancels the submission of the project proposal. For a proper submission, the project proposal needs to be re-submitted in ISTA.

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<sup>6</sup> **Owner** is a role in ISTA. It is the person who initiated the project proposal and is the only one with the right to submit the project proposal to a call in ISTA and to subsequently generate the „Confirmation of submission of an electronic project proposal in ISTA“. The owner of the project proposal may assign and modify authorisations to revise the project proposal to all persons.

Subsequently, the confirmation of project proposal submission needs to be generated and sent to the TA CR data mailbox.

Once the call is closed, it is no longer possible to modify anything in the proposal.

## 5.4 Notification of changes after the submission of project proposal

As applicants, you are obliged to inform TA CR in writing about **changes** which take place **in the period from the project proposal submission until the possible conclusion of the project contract** and which concern your legal status (e.g. change of size of the enterprise, registered office, statutory representative, merger, or break-up) or the details required to demonstrate eligibility or which could have an effect on the TA CR decision making.

You must do so within **seven calendar days** of becoming aware of such a change. If you do not do so within the set deadline, the project proposal will be excluded from the call.

# 6. Evaluation

The evaluation will take place from 7. 4. 2022 to 30. 11. 2022. Immediately after the closing of the call, a formal check will begin to verify the basic requirements. Afterwards, TA CR will publish on its website which project proposals will be further evaluated and which will not be admitted to the call.

Details concerning individual evaluation steps, a list of the evaluation criteria together with the aspects that will be evaluated under individual criteria are provided in the following Annex to the Call Documentation: [Annex No. 1 - Evaluation process](#).

## § 6.1 Evaluation process

Each project proposal that is admitted to the call, i.e. that successfully passed the formal check, will be gradually evaluated by:

- experts;
- the rapporteur;
- consensus meeting;
- expert advisory body.

The TA CR Board will subsequently decide on the selection of project proposals in the call.

## 6.2 Binary criteria

If the binary criterion **is not met**, the project proposal cannot be recommended for funding regardless of the number of points that the project proposal receives in the evaluation.

Binary criterion
Fulfilment of the conditions and objectives of the programme and the call

### 6.3 Scored criteria

If 0 points are awarded for a scoring criterion, the project proposal cannot be recommended for funding.

Scored criterion	Point scale
1.1 Relevance, timeliness, and necessity <b>of the project proposal</b> in relation to the chosen topic and the objectives of the programme	a maximum of 20 points
2.1 Method how the NCC Centre's activities are organised, how it is managed, and risk analysis	a maximum of 10 points
2.2 Quality of the research team and the institutions involved, their technical support, the extent/level of cooperation among the participants of the NCC Centre	a maximum of 15 points
2.3 The extent to which the financial plan is realistic, balanced and adequate	a maximum of 5 points
3.1 The application and commercial potential of the results, the ability to introduce the results into practice (the Centre's strategy, the commercialisation experience of the Centre's members) and the impacts and benefits of the project implementation	a maximum of 20 points

### 6.4 Independence of the evaluation process

Independence and equal treatment are the basic principles applied by TA CR in the evaluation process. Therefore, none of the applicants or their authorized persons may contact the persons evaluating the project proposals with the intention of influencing them. Complaints concerning suspicions of corrupt practices or other unfair activities can be sent to the e-mail address [protikorupci@tacr.cz](mailto:protikorupci@tacr.cz).

## 7. Signature of the project contract and project implementation

TA CR draws the attention of the applicants to the obligation set out in § 14(3)(e)(2) of Act No. 218/2000 Coll., on budgetary rules, which concerns the obligation to ensure registration in the register of beneficial owners. **If an applicant fails to ensure registration in the register of beneficial owners by the deadline for announcing the results of the call (i.e. by 30 November 2022), it will be assessed as ineligible to receive the funding (and the project contract cannot be concluded) because the applicant's obligation set out in § 14(3)(e)(2) of Act No. 218/2000 Coll., on budgetary rules, would not be met.** More information can be found [here](#).

A **project contract** will be concluded with the main applicants of successful project proposals. The project proposal can be changed before signing of the project contract only if it is a change of an administrative nature or a change not caused by the applicant, which is worthy of special consideration.



Before signing the project contract, you are obliged to document all the facts set out in the Decision on the results of the call for proposals. In this decision, TA CR will state everything it requires of the applicants and within what time.

After concluding the project contract, the main applicant becomes the main beneficiary.

**The project contract** is generated in ISTA by **the owner** of the project proposal. The project contract can be generated before the documents specified in the decision on the result of the call for proposals are provided. First, an **agreement on participation in the project** must be signed between the main applicant and the other project partners and only then the **project contract** is signed between the main applicant and the TA CR.

### 7.1 Provision of funding

TA CR will provide the **funding in a one-off payment for the given year of the project** to the account of the main beneficiary in the amount specified in the binding parameters for the project implementation. TA CR will pay the funding:

- within 60 calendar days from the date of entry into force of the project contract and for multi-annual projects for the second and each subsequent year of the project within 60 calendar days from the beginning of the given calendar year;
- to public universities, public research institutions or other entities defined by the Act on Budgetary Rules to a bank account established with the Czech National Bank.

## 7.2 Implementation

When planning the start of project implementation, applicants do not have to take into account when the project contract will be signed. The project implementation can start before the signing of the project contract, but not before the date chosen by the applicants for the start of the project implementation.

In accordance with the above, approved costs incurred before signature of the project contract will be eligible, provided the contract is subsequently signed.

During project implementation, TA CR checks the project in several ways. Interim reports shall be submitted once a year. Other methods of project monitoring include administrative and financial inspections, monitoring visits or interim project evaluations. A final project evaluation shall take place after the end of project implementation.

In addition, TA CR will carry out a comprehensive evaluation of the progress of the implemented projects during 2026. TA CR will conduct the evaluation on the basis of the achieved project implementation progress and the activities of the Centre. Specifically, the project will be evaluated in terms of meeting the objectives of the strategic research agenda, and fulfilment of the programme's objectives. Further details of the evaluation will be published 6 months prior to its commencement. In case of non-fulfilment of the conditions, TA CR may terminate the project implementation prematurely. The termination of a project is being proposed by an expert advisory body, with the TA CR Board taking a decision on the basis of that proposal.

If the original project proposal changes during the project implementation, you must always inform us about such change. Types of changes, required supporting documents and method of their notification can be found in guideline SME-07 Procedures for changes in projects. Furthermore, throughout the project implementation, all beneficiaries must comply with the obligation to publish their annual financial statements.

## 8. Legal framework of the call

The National Centres of Competence Programme was approved by Government Resolution No. 1113 of 6. 12. 2021. The provider is the Technology Agency of the Czech Republic with its registered office at Evropská 1692/37, 160 00 Prague 6. The programme text, call documentation and other documents related to the call are published on the website [www.tacr.cz](http://www.tacr.cz). It is a one-stage call. It is announced pursuant to the [Act on the support of research and development](#) and in accordance with the [Framework](#), [Regulation](#) and [Budgetary rules](#).

The call is held in accordance with the updated National Research, Development and Innovation Policy of the Czech Republic for the period 2021+ as approved by the Resolution of the Government of the Czech Republic No. 759 of 20 July 2020, National Priorities of Oriented Research, Experimental Development and Innovation as adopted by Government Resolution No. 552 of 19 July 2012, and national and ministerial strategies.

Relevant provisions in the following internal regulations valid and effective on the day of announcement of the call and published on the website [www.tacr.cz](http://www.tacr.cz) are binding for TA CR and the applicants.

Directives and statutes present binding procedures of TA CR resulting from legislation and other regulations. The versions applicable to this call are given in the third column of the table below.

Code	Name of the directives or statutes	Version
<a href="#">SME - 06</a>	Directive on the admission of project proposals to a call	v8
<a href="#">SME - 08</a>	Complaints within the call	v5
<a href="#">SME - 10</a>	Directive on the cancellation of a call	v3
<a href="#">SME - 11</a>	Directive on call preparation and announcement	v10
<a href="#">SME - 13</a>	Directive on conclusion of a project contract/issuance of a Decision on the provision of funding	v4
<a href="#">SME - 17</a>	Helpdesk for applicants and beneficiaries	v3
<a href="#">SME - 23</a>	Preparation of evaluation reports, opinions and expert assessments	v7
<a href="#">SME - 34</a>	Directive on evaluation of project proposals submitted to a call	v5
<a href="#">RAD - 01</a>	Statutes and rules of procedure of the Committee for the admission of project proposals	v3
<a href="#">RAD - 02</a>	Statutes and rules of procedure of an expert advisory body	v7
<a href="#">RAD - 03</a>	Statutes and rules of procedure of the panel of rapporteurs	v6

## 8.1 Legal definition of applicants

**Research organisations** – entities meeting the definition pursuant to Article 2 (83) of the Regulation.

**Enterprises<sup>7</sup>** – legal persons or natural persons engaged in business activities pursuant to Act No. 455/1991 Coll., on small business activities or performing economic activities within the meaning of Article 1 of Annex I to the Regulation.

**Organisational units of the state** are defined pursuant to § 3 (1) of Act No. 219/2000 Coll. On the property of the Czech Republic and its acting in legal relations.

## 8.2 Insufficient differentiation and duplication

If TA CR finds out that a project proposal or its part duplicates another project proposal and the applicants have not explained how their project proposal differs from that other project proposal, the project proposal will not be funded on the grounds of a failure to meet the conditions of the Call Documentation, or the project contract will not be concluded with the applicants. This applies also to similar project proposals submitted to this or another ongoing call, which have not been disclosed in the relevant part of the ISTA system.

An applicant must immediately withdraw from the call if he/she concludes a project contract for identical project (in terms of the whole content or its part) under another call/public tender in the Czech Republic or abroad.

## 8.3 Funding

The highest funding rate provided to an applicant of the enterprise type may not exceed the highest funding rate allowed for individual types of enterprises as laid down in the Regulation.

For a research organisation, the provided funding is not a state aid, if the activities in the project proposal are not related to its economic activity. In that case, it may receive a funding rate of 100%. If the project proposal is connected with activities of economic nature, these entities apply to the call as enterprises.

The applicant must ensure that:

- unauthorised indirect state aid is avoided (in accordance with provisions 2.1 and 2.2 of the Framework);
- the distribution of rights and access to outputs/results in the project proposal are in accordance with point 28 under provision 2.2.2. of the Framework;
- overlap with other state aid for the same eligible expenditure (double financing) is avoided.

Applicants are not entitled to reimbursement of the costs associated with their participation in the call.

Eligible costs are listed and broken down into individual categories in Article 18 of the General Terms and Conditions. The project contract stipulates the method in which the TA CR funding is provided.

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<sup>7</sup> The [User guide to the SME definition](#) from the European Commission can serve as a guidance for **determining the size of an enterprise**. In the light of the current case law of the Court of Justice of the European Union, we point out that the recommendations set out in this guide are not legally binding and therefore it is necessary first and foremost to follow the provisions of the Regulation, which are legally binding.

The specific terms of the project contract (Article 4) stipulate the particulars set out in the General Terms and Conditions.

## 8.4 Proof of eligibility

Only applicants meeting the eligibility conditions laid down in § 18 (2) (b) to (i) of the Act on support of research and development and given by the Regulation may receive funding. Each applicant shall demonstrate its eligibility separately pursuant to § 18 of the Act on support of research and development.

Failure to meet the eligibility requirements or the obligation to demonstrate eligibility is a reason for not admitting a project proposal to the call.

If the „Confirmation of submission of an electronic project proposal“ is not sent properly and in time, such a project proposal will not be considered as submitted properly and in time and will not be checked for other requisites (e.g. proof of eligibility of applicants).

A project proposal may not contain classified information pursuant to Act No. 412/2005 Coll., on the protection of classified information and on security clearance, as amended.

## 8.5 Evaluation and submission of documents

The evaluation of project proposals is governed by SME-34 Directive on evaluation of project proposals submitted to a call.

Activities of the expert advisory body are governed by RAD-02 Statutes and rules of procedure of the expert advisory body.

No information related to particular project proposals or to interim evaluation results shall be provided in the course of the evaluations.

Before signing the project contract, applicants are obliged to demonstrate their continuing eligibility in a manner laid down in § 18 (5) to (7) of the Act on support of research and development, or other facts laid down in the Decision on the results of the call for proposals. In that decision, TA CR will state everything that needs to be documented by the applicants.

## 8.6 Reserved rights of TA CR

In accordance with § 24 of the Act on support of research and development, the provider reserves the right:

- to cancel an announced call and not to support the project proposals submitted under that call, in accordance with SME-10 Directive on the cancellation of a call and/or
- to restrict the number of project proposals to be funded.

The decision to cancel a call or to restrict the number of project proposals to be funded will be based especially on the total amount of funding allocated to TA CR for the support of applied research, experimental development and innovations from the state budget of the Czech Republic for the period 2020–2022.

In justified cases, the provider reserves the right to state in the Decision on the results of the call for proposals additional conditions determined on the basis of facts identified by the provider in the course of the evaluation of the project proposal. Only after those conditions are met, the project contract will be signed with the main beneficiary or, as the case may be, the Decision on the provision of funding to implement the project will be issued in favour of the main beneficiary.

In accordance with § 32 of the Act on support of research and development, TA CR will publish the project's details through the R&D Information System. After signing the project contract, the provider reserves the right to publish the information published through the RDI IS, and to keep it and provide access to it in the DAFOS system, in particular in its public component – the TA CR STARFOS search engine available at [www.starfos.tacr.cz](http://www.starfos.tacr.cz).

When announcing the results concerning compliance with conditions of the call and the results of proposal evaluation, TA CR will publish the following information from the project proposals: code of the project proposal, name of the project proposal, the main applicant and other project partners. TA CR will not publish confidential information.

Information on project proposals for which TA CR has decided that they would not be funded is not published, except for the information published when announcing the results concerning compliance with conditions of the call and the results of proposal evaluation.

## 8.7 Appeal

The main applicant may file an appeal against the TA CR procedure to check compliance with conditions of the call or the procedure to evaluate and select project proposals in the call. He/she may do so in accordance with the directive SME-08 Complaints within the call.