

**Tender documentation for the R&D&I public tender:**

# **EXCELES Programme**

**(Public Research & Development Support for Priority Areas of Medical Sciences and Related Social Sciences)**

**(Prague, 8. 12. 2021)**

1/63



## Contents

1.	Introduction.....	5
2.	Basic information about the programme.....	5
2.1.	Programme identification data.....	5
2.2.	Legal framework.....	6
2.3.	Definition of terms.....	7
3.	Focus and goal of the programme.....	8
4.	The subject of support.....	9
4.1.	Project goals.....	10
4.2.	Expected results and benefits at a project level.....	10
4.3.	Supported methods of achieving the goals.....	12
5.	Project proposal.....	12
5.1.	Content of the project proposal.....	12
5.2.	How to submit a project proposal.....	16
5.3.	Scope of the project proposal.....	17
5.4.	Mandatory annexes to the project proposal.....	17
6.	Applicants and proof of eligibility.....	18
6.1.	General information on proving eligibility.....	18
6.2.	Applicants and other participants.....	19
6.3.	Eligibility conditions and how to demonstrate them.....	19
6.3.1.	Economic and legal capacity.....	19
6.3.2.	Professional competence.....	20
7.	Eligible project costs.....	25
7.1.	Duplicate funding.....	25
7.2.	Definition of eligible costs.....	25
7.3.	Definition of ineligible costs and expenditure in the programme.....	29
8.	Support – the amount and method of provision.....	32
8.1.	Provision of support.....	32
8.2.	Limits on the amount of support.....	33
8.3.	Aid intensity.....	33
8.4.	Multi-source project funding.....	34
8.5.	Use of the support and reporting of eligible costs.....	35
8.6.	Change in the amount of support and eligible project costs.....	37
9.	Communication and publicity.....	37

9.1.	Mandatory publicity .....	37
9.2.	Definition of data to be disclosed .....	39
9.3.	Information support for applicants .....	41
10.	Selection method and evaluation criteria for project proposals .....	41
10.1.	Selection method for project proposals.....	41
10.2.	Criteria for the evaluation of project proposals in the public tender .....	43
10.2.1.	Ability of the applicant and other project participants to successfully implement the project.....	43
10.2.2.	Professional and personnel assurance .....	43
10.2.3.	Quality of the proposed project solution .....	44
10.2.4.	Results and outputs.....	46
10.2.5.	Degree of national cooperation within the consortium and international cooperation .....	46
10.2.6.	Composition of the "International Supervisory and Advisory Board - ISAB" .....	47
10.2.7.	Efficiency and cost-effectiveness of the project .....	47
11.	The interim and final evaluations of supported projects.....	48
11.1.	Set of evaluation criteria for supported projects.....	49
11.1.1.	Monitored indicators for project evaluation.....	50
11.2.	Threshold conditions for project success .....	62
12.	Tender documentation annexes .....	63

## 1. Introduction

This tender documentation (hereinafter referred to as TD) prepared in accordance with Act No. 130/2002 Coll, on the Support of Research and Development from Public Funds and on the Amendment to Some Related Acts (Act on the Support of Research and Development), as amended, is a set of documents and information necessary for the preparation and submission of a project proposal to the first public tender in research, development and innovation of the Programme for Public Research & Development Support for Priority Areas of Medical Sciences and Related Social Sciences – EXCELES<sup>1</sup> (hereinafter referred to as the "EXCELES programme"), which was approved by the Government of the Czech Republic on 13 September 2021 via Resolution No. 796. The tender documentation also contains the terms and conditions of the<sup>2</sup> project solution, the provision and use of support, the criteria and the method of evaluation in the EXCELES programme. Participation in the first public tender in research, development and innovation (hereinafter referred to as "public tender") of the EXCELES programme is subject to fulfilling all the requirements defined in this tender documentation. In particular, each applicant must submit an application for support in the EXCELES programme in the form of a project proposal prepared in accordance with this tender documentation and deliver it to the grantor within the tender period.

## 2. Basic information about the programme

### 2.1. Programme identification data

**Programme name:** Programme for Public Research & Development Support for Priority Areas of Medical Sciences and Related Social Sciences – EXCELES.

**Division into sub-programmes:** This programme is not divided into sub-programmes.

**Programme identification code:** For the purposes of registration in the publicly available R&D National Information System (hereinafter referred to as "IS VaVal"), the EXCELES programme has been assigned the code "LX".

**Grantor:** The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (hereinafter referred to as "MEYS").

**Delivery address of the grantor:** Ministerstvo školství, mládeže a tělovýchovy  
Odbor podpory vysokých škol a výzkumu - 32  
Karmelitská 529/5  
118 12 Praha 1

**Grantor's data box ID:** vidaawt

**Contact person for the EXCELES programme:** Ing. Jana Hakenová, Research and Development Support Unit, contact e-mail address: [programLX@msmt.cz](mailto:programLX@msmt.cz), phone no.: 234 811 560 (Secretariat: 234 811 547).

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<sup>1</sup> The name of the EXCELES programme stems from its focus on supporting EXCEllence in selected medical and social science disciplines studying mainly social and economic issues related to the impact of systemic health risks.

<sup>2</sup> For the purposes of the EXCELES programme, the term "project design" means the implementation of the project and its approved project activities in their entirety and including all aspects in order to meet the project goals in the conditions of the National Recovery Plan and the EXCELES programme conditions set out in the contract for the provision of support, this tender documentation, and related applicable national and European regulations.

**Duration of the programme:** The EXCELES programme was approved for the years 2022-2026 and corresponds to the period of implementation of the National Recovery Plan<sup>3</sup> (hereinafter referred to as "NRP"). The project is expected to start at the earliest on **1. 1. 2022**, but no later than 60 days after the entry into force of the contract for the provision of support.

**The duration of projects in EXCELES:** Project implementation may start on the day following the date of receipt of the project proposal for the public tender, but no earlier than 1. 1. 2022 and no later than 60 days after the entry into force of the contract for the provision of support. With regard to the implementing decision of the Council of the European Commission<sup>4</sup>, **all** supported projects must be completed at the latest by **15. 12. 2025** and each of them must be shown to meet the project success threshold conditions set out in this tender documentation by that date. The duration of the projects may be extended only on the basis of negotiations with the European Commission on changes to the schedule and conditions for meeting the milestones and targets of the NRP.

**Tender period:** Project proposals can be submitted from 7:30 a.m. on 9. 12. 2021 until 14:00 on 7. 2. 2022.

**Evaluation period:** The evaluation period will take place from 8. 2. 2022 until 11. 5. 2022.

The results of the tender will be published on 11 May 2022 on the grantor's website:

<https://www.msmt.cz/vyzkum-a-vyvoj-2/program-exceles-komponenta-5-1-narodniho-planu-obnovy>

Cancellation of the public tender is governed by the provisions of Section 24 of Act No. 130/2002 Coll. The grantor reserves the right to cancel and re-open the call for proposals if there are not enough quality projects suitable for support. The reopening of the public tender may also take place if the allocated support is not disbursed.

## 2.2. Legal framework

The EXCELES programme is a programme of support for research, development and innovation defined in Act No 130/2002 Coll.<sup>5</sup>, which is intended to support research, development and innovation projects also defined therein<sup>6</sup>. Targeted support will be provided for projects<sup>7</sup>.

The provision of support is governed by Act No 130/2002 Coll. And Commission Regulation (EU) No. 651/2014 of 17 June 2014 declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the internal market in application with Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty Text, as amended by Commission Regulation (EU) 2017/1084 of 14 June 2017 and amended by Commission Regulation (EU) 2020/972 of 2 July 2020, amending Regulation (EU) No 1407/2013 as regards its extension, Regulation (EU) No 651/2014 as regards its extension and the relevant adaptations (Treaty Text with EEA relevance) C/2020/4349, and Commission Regulation (EU) 2021/1237 of 23 July 2021 or the Communication from the Commission — Framework for State aid for research and development and innovation(2014/C 198/01) (hereinafter referred to as the 'R&D Framework'). The EXCELES programme as an implementation tool of NRP

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<sup>3</sup> Resolution of the Government of the Czech Republic of 17 May 2021 No. 467, National Recovery Plan.

<sup>4</sup> section "W. COMPONENT. 5.1: EXCELLENT RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE HEALTH SECTOR", p. 143 of the Annex to the Proposal for a COUNCIL IMPLEMENTING DECISION on the approval of the assessment of the recovery and resilience plan for Czechia, {SWD (2021) 211 final}, dated 19. 7. 2021, COM(2021) 431 final

<sup>5</sup> Section 2(2)(g) of Act No. 130/2002 Coll.

<sup>6</sup> Section 2(2)(h) of Act No. 130/2002 Coll.

<sup>7</sup> Section 3(2)(b) and Section 4(1)(b) of Act No. 130/2002 Coll.

Component 5.1 is in line with Regulation (EU) 2021/241 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 February 2021 establishing the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) and follows all its currently planned implementation documents and methodological guidelines<sup>8</sup>.

Following the provisions of Act No. 130/2002 Coll., certain procedural requirements for the provision of support under this programme are further governed by Act No. 218/2000 Coll., on Budgetary Rules and the Amendments to Certain Related Acts (Budgetary Rules), as amended, and Act No. 500/2004 Coll., Administrative Procedure Code, as amended.

Substantial technical details, in particular, in proving the eligibility of the applicant, are also related to Act No. 111/1998 Coll., on Higher Education Institutions and on Amendments and Supplements to some other Acts (The Higher Education Act), as amended, and Act No. 341/2005 Coll., on Public Research Institutions, as amended.

The legislation, implementing documents and methodological guidelines on the use of RRF and NRP funds must always be used in the current and effective version. The Ministry of Industry and Trade is responsible for providing information on the valid wording of EU regulations in the part of the implementation structure that is subordinate to the component owners or the implementing entity in the NRP and, among other things, has established a publicly accessible website [www.PlanobnovyCR.cz](http://www.PlanobnovyCR.cz) for this purpose. Applicants (with the exception of the tender period) or beneficiaries will also be notified of the changes by the grantor.

### 2.3. Definition of terms

The terms used in this tender documentation and its annexes are primarily used in the sense of the definitions set out in Act No. 130/2002 Coll. and other legal regulations, government resolutions or EU documents.

**“EXCELES programme”** means the Programme for Public Research & Development Support for Priority Areas of Medical Sciences and Related Social Sciences – EXCELES<sup>9</sup>

**“applicant”** means a legal person applying for provision of support<sup>10</sup>

**“beneficiary”** means the applicant in whose favour the decision to provide support has been made by the grantor<sup>11</sup>

**“principal investigator”** means the natural person who is responsible to the beneficiary for the professional level of the project<sup>12</sup>

**“other project participant”** means an organisational unit of the State or an organisational unit of the Ministry engaged in research and development, as well as a legal person whose participation in the

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<sup>8</sup> The documents are currently published on the European Commission's website (e.g. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/CS/LSU/?uri=CELEX:32021R0241>; [https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy\\_cs](https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy_cs) or [https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/recovery-plan-europe\\_cs](https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/recovery-plan-europe_cs); [https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/recovery-coronavirus/recovery-and-resilience-facility/recovery-and-resilience-plan-czechia\\_cs](https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/recovery-coronavirus/recovery-and-resilience-facility/recovery-and-resilience-plan-czechia_cs) ; [https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/recovery-plan-europe\\_en#figures](https://ec.europa.eu/info/strategy/recovery-plan-europe_en#figures) ), and on the website of the Ministry of Industry and Trade ([www.PlanobnovyCR.cz](http://www.PlanobnovyCR.cz)).

<sup>9</sup> Section 2(2)(g) 1. of Act No. 130/2002 Coll.

<sup>10</sup> Section 2(2)(b) of Act No. 130/2002 Coll.

<sup>11</sup> Section 2(2)(c) of Act No. 130/2002 Coll.

<sup>12</sup> Section 9(1)(e) of Act No. 130/2002 Coll.

project is defined in the project proposal and with whom the beneficiary has concluded a contract for participation in the project<sup>13</sup>

**"project collaborating investigator/ collaborating investigator"** means a natural person who is responsible to another project participant for the professional level of the project

**"research worker / researcher<sup>14</sup>"** means an academic staff member, researcher or other person with a university degree whose job description and assignment is in research, development and innovation

a **"consortium project"** is a project involving several different legal entities as other project participants and whose legal relations are governed by Czech law, while a draft agreement on the participation of other project participants (see Section 2(2)(j) of Act No 130/2002 Coll.) in the project must be submitted as an annexe as part of the project proposal

**"young and early career researchers / junior members of the investigation team"** means students of all types of higher education study programmes (bachelor, master, doctoral or their officially recognised equivalents), post-doctoral researchers (i.e. researchers for whom no more than 8 years have passed since obtaining their Ph.D. degree or its officially recognised equivalent by the date of the programme EXCELES call for proposals)<sup>15</sup>

**"small and medium-sized enterprises"** means economic operators, whatever their legal form, employing fewer than 250 persons and having an annual turnover not exceeding 50 mil. € or whose annual balance sheet total does not exceed 2 mil. €<sup>16</sup>

### 3. Focus and goal of the programme

The EXCELES programme is the only implementing instrument of the separate component of the National Recovery Plan listed under 5.1 "Excellent Research and Development in the Health Sector"<sup>14</sup> and the implementing instrument of the Innovation Strategy of the Czech Republic 2019–2030<sup>17</sup> for the area of "Innovation and Research Centres". The programme aims to significantly increase the quality and internationalisation of research carried out in the Czech Republic in chosen priority areas of research, development and innovation (hereinafter referred to as "R&D&I") and to achieve European or world excellence, so that the Czech Republic becomes an equal and respected player in the European Research Area that participates in the creation of trends of excellent European research.

The EXCELES programme aims to increase the ability of research capacities in chosen priority areas of R&D&I to respond to current trends and needs in R&D&I in relation to the incidence of serious diseases and the social and economic impact of systemic health risks associated with them.

The chosen R&D&I priority areas (hereinafter referred to as "R&D&I priority areas") are:

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<sup>13</sup> Section 2(2)(j) of Act No. 130/2002 Coll.

<sup>14</sup> To simplify the text, the masculine gender is used when referring to natural persons. However, the processor always has both men and women in mind.

<sup>15</sup> The applicable date is postponed by the time spent on maternity and parental leave, by the period of verifiable incapacity for work for persons who have suffered a long-term illness or similar verifiable long-term obstacles in the performance of work.

<sup>16</sup> Annexe I to Regulation (EU) No 651/2014

<sup>17</sup> The Innovation Strategy of the Czech Republic 2019–2030 was adopted via Government Resolution No. 104 of 4 February 2019.



- a) specific biological and medical disciplines and related engineering and technology disciplines specifically focused on the study of infectious diseases and virology, which concentrate on diseases with statistically the highest mortality or high direct (medical) and indirect (social and economic) costs, as well as on the impacts and complications of these diseases caused by Covid-19 type diseases;
- b) oncology and related disciplines studying cancers with the statistically highest mortality rates, while focusing on the impact and complications of these diseases caused by Covid-19 type diseases;
- c) specific medical and other related disciplines in the neurosciences specifically focused on neurodegenerative and other types of neurological diseases, which focus on diseases with statistically the highest mortality or high direct (medical) and indirect (social and economic) costs, as well as the impacts and complications of these diseases caused by Covid-19 type diseases;
- d) specific medical and other related disciplines focused on metabolic and cardiovascular diseases that target diseases with statistically the highest mortality rates or high direct (medical) and indirect (social and economic) costs, as well as on the impact and complications of these diseases caused by Covid-19 type diseases;
- e) specific social science and related disciplines focused on the social and economic impacts of systemic health risks, including similar risks of pandemics of the Covid-19 type, i.e. collectively focused on the issue
  - 1. the functioning of public administration, communication between public administration and the public, and the behaviour of society in situations of health risk,
  - 2. the effectiveness of healthcare, lifestyle and other socio-economic determinants of health risks and
  - 3. rebuilding the economy after health or security crises in terms of economic policy, labour market and unemployment, human capital and education, or tackling the rise in poverty.

#### 4. The subject of support

The EXCELES programme will support a consortium project focused on a priority R&D&I area and carried out by a multidisciplinary, highly qualified team with a high degree of internationalisation, using the most modern research infrastructures and cutting-edge scientific methodology available, to meet the goals of the programme.

The projects will support research activities leading to new breakthrough knowledge and knowledge with high added value and application potential in the above defined priority areas of R&D&I.

An essential part of the project must be the identification of the application potential of the expected knowledge and a plan for the protection of intellectual property and rights to the results, the identification of the possibilities of applying the "open access" regime in the publication of results and sharing of verified scientific data to the maximum extent possible, where this is possible in compliance with all applicable regulations for the protection of personal data, sensitive data and intellectual property.

The support is intended exclusively to cover the eligible costs of the project<sup>18</sup>, i.e. those eligible costs of the project<sup>19</sup>, which will be identified by the applicant in the project proposal, duly justified in relation to the project activities and to the fulfilment of the chosen project goals, and at the same time will be eligible under the EXCELES programme according to Chap. 7 of this tender documentation, which will be spent only in the course of the project and will be approved by the grantor.

The support may only be used for project activities that do not significantly undermine the EU's environmental objective of climate change mitigation and that have been reported by the beneficiary in accordance with applicable European rules<sup>20</sup>

#### 4.1. Project goals

The expected project goals must correspond to the goal and partial goals of the EXCELES programme. Only a project proposal that fulfils the following mandatory partial goals for the chosen R&D&I priority area through the **creation and establishment of a national scientific authority** in one of the R&D&I priority areas providing expert and informational support for "evidence-based" decision-making by the relevant public authorities can be supported:

- a) achieving and maintaining a European level of excellence in research;
- b) strengthening inter-institutional, interdisciplinary and inter-regional cooperation and the quality of national research by further increasing international cooperation;
- c) skills development, scientific education and support for the younger generation of researchers, including the provision of good working conditions;
- d) enhancing the relevance of research outputs or adding to existing knowledge by taking into consideration the gender perspective<sup>21</sup>;
- e) upgrading and developing research infrastructure and capacities, including securing of professional information capacities and mechanisms for the protection and sharing of results and scientific data;
- f) integration of the national scientific authority into the existing R&D&I system in the Czech Republic and ensuring its sustainability.

#### 4.2. Expected results and benefits at a project level

- a) The **expected results** of the project will be indicatively planned by the applicant in the project proposal in the chosen R&D&I priority area, in particular:

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<sup>18</sup> Section 2(2)(n) of Act No. 130/2002 Coll.

<sup>19</sup> Defined according to the definition in Section 2(2)(m) of Act 130/2002 Coll. and the definition in Sec. 4, Article 25(3)(a)-(e) of Regulation No 651/2014.

<sup>20</sup> in particular, Regulation (EU) 2020/852 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 June 2020 on the establishment of a framework to facilitate sustainable investment, and amending Regulation (EU) 2019/2088, as well as ANNEXE 1 and ANNEXE 2 of the Regulation of 4 June 2021 on the establishment of technical screening criteria, the Communication from the Commission (2021/188), the EU Taxonomy, corporate sustainability reporting, sustainability preferences and fiduciary duties: Directing funding to the Green Deal for Europe, Methodological Guidance on the application of the DNSH principle for the National Recovery Plan 2021-2026 (MIT, 2021)

<sup>21</sup> The term gender perspective/dimension is used as an umbrella term for both gender and sex perspectives/dimensions.

1. overcoming the current relative regional and disciplinary isolation of existing research capacities in the supported priority area of R&D&I, their unification and the creation of a functioning and sustainable expert scientific platform capable of further joint participation in other research projects on a national and international scale as a recognised national scientific authority,
  2. the establishment of an expert setting and verified scientific information for the needs of the state administration, including the introduction of a system for sharing information and scientific data,
  3. new internationally competitive and excellent R&D&I results – knowledge, expertise and skills that will move the existing knowledge base in the supported priority areas of R&D&I to a new qualitative level in the form of publication outputs,
  4. new non-publication outputs and applied research results (e.g. knowledge and skills for development leading to the finalisation of internationally recognised treatments, methodologies, internationally certified medical procedures or devices, impact studies or shared specialised databases and maps, etc.),
  5. new results and other outputs useful for the development of regulations, strategic documents, public policies and standards of a legislative and non-legislative nature, usable by public authorities in addressing national population health needs or major societal health crises such as the Covid-19 pandemic,
  6. other results anticipated by the applicant and other outputs, with a defined form and justification of their societal need.
- b) The **expected benefits** of the project, which the applicant indicates in the project proposal, and makes a qualified estimate of the planned change in measurable outputs compared to the baseline in the given R&D&I priority areas, in particular:
1. an increase in quality and internationally competitive publication and non-publication results in the chosen R&D&I priority area,
  2. expanding the application potential in medical fields and possibilities of the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of serious diseases<sup>22</sup>,
  3. an increase in interregional and interdisciplinary scientific research cooperation within the Czech Republic and abroad,
  4. increased participation of young researchers in priority R&D&I areas (higher co-authorship and contribution to outputs),
  5. reducing and minimising the social and economic impact of serious diseases.

The knowledge generated by the project must be both usable and useful to public authorities in addressing national population health needs or major societal health crises such as the Covid-19 pandemic.

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<sup>22</sup> with the specific indication of areas, subjects and volume of cooperation with the application sphere, planned applications and indicative list of their potential users

Taking into account the nature of the project results and benefits, the grantor will monitor their application as defined in the project proposal for the three years following the end of the project.

The R&D&I results produced by the project must be registered in the IS VaVal (in the RIV - central register of project results - module) under the assigned project identification code, and their authors or co-authors who are members of the research team (and have been supported by the project) must be uniquely identifiable internationally (e.g. by means of the "ORCID ID"), otherwise the grantor reserves the right not to recognise such results in the evaluation of the project.<sup>23</sup>

#### 4.3. Supported methods of achieving the goals

- a) Concentration of the best capacities from the Czech Republic in common topics and challenges into a centralised consortium project in a chosen priority area of R&D&I; unification of existing excellent teams and capacities into national authorities of higher quality, and the interoperable sharing of scientifically verified information;
- b) increasing the degree of internationalisation of supported national teams in R&D&I priority areas;
- c) development of human resources and improvement of working conditions in the priority areas of R&D&I at the workplaces supported by the project;
- d) harnessing the potential of young and emerging researchers by engaging them in supported research project activities;
- e) taking gender aspects into account in R&D&I priority areas, assessing and supporting their potential in project activities;
- f) the necessary renovation and modernisation, coupled with the necessary investment development of the existing research capacities of research facilities supported by the project, taking into account the European Commission's "do no significant harm" ("DNSH") requirements<sup>24</sup>.

## 5. Project proposal

### 5.1. Content of the project proposal

The proposal must be multi-year with a commencement date at the earliest of 1. 1. 2022 and a deadline for completion no later than 15. 12. 2025.

In particular, the project proposal must:

- a) Provide basic information about the project.
  1. Clearly identify the chosen R&D&I priority area according to Chap. 3 of the TD.

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<sup>23</sup> The fee for the re-assignment of an international author identifier (e.g. ORCID ID) during the project to a researcher or student who is a member of the project investigation team is an eligible project cost.

<sup>24</sup> Regulation (EU) 2020/852, Commission Notice Technical guidance on the application of 'do no significant harm' under the Recovery and Resilience Facility Regulation (2021/C 58/01), and Act No. 76/2002 Coll., on Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control, on the Integrated Pollution Register and on Amendment to Some Laws (the Act on Integrated Prevention).

2. Project abstract: A brief and clear summary of the project, i.e. its main goals and how they will be achieved, including a brief description of the consortium grouping, the time milestones for achieving the goals, and the expected results and benefits. (Maximum of 1 A4 page)
  3. Present the conclusions of the analysis of the state of knowledge in the chosen R&D&I priority area as of 2021, i.e. identification of the "baseline", which serves to set the project's partial goals, and select indicators and their target values. It will also be used to evaluate the applicant's ambition, contribution and quality of the project according to the criteria set out in Chap. 10.
  4. Clearly define the links between the subject of support and the implementation of the proposed project and all concurrent projects of the applicant, and all other project participants with similar or related topics supported from other public sources, including EU sources. The definition will be made down to the level of the individual project activities, the staff capacity of the persons who will implement them and their costs, so that the level of risk of double funding can be assessed and eliminated. In particular, the relationship of the subject of support in the project, its implementation, results, outputs and benefits to the activities supported in Components 5.2, 6.1 and 6.2 of the National Recovery Plan will be defined<sup>25</sup>.
- b) Describe the organisational structure and functioning of the consortium grouping through which the project goals will be implemented.
1. Describe the organisational structure of the consortium, the definition of the roles of each participant, the way in which the roles will be legally regulated, including material commitments such as the distribution of activities among the participants, staffing, space, material and technical support for the functioning of the consortium, the involvement of top teams and experts from the Czech Republic and abroad, the degree of involvement of large research infrastructures, access to sharing research infrastructure, knowledge and data within the consortium (Properly marked draft contracts with written commitments of other project participants or future contract agreements will be annexes to the project proposal).
  2. Specify how the sustainability of the functioning of the consortium will be ensured for at least another 3 years after the end of the EXCELES support (including the expected sources of funding for the consortium). Functioning means maintaining the scientific and research function of the consortium and its functioning as a national scientific authority.
- c) Describe the project solution process.
1. Specify the main goal of the project, its division into partial goals with a link to the expected results in the division according to Chap. 4.1 of the TD, and other intermediate steps necessary for the fulfilment of these goals. The relationship of the project goals to both the goals set by the EXCELES programme and the priorities identified in other strategic documents in the field of public health will be described<sup>26</sup>. For each project goal, the framework of project activities necessary to achieve them will be defined in the division according to Chap. 4.3 of the TD.
  2. Describe the methodological approach to the project.
  3. Identify gender aspects of the content of the conducted R&D&I and project activities.

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<sup>25</sup> <https://www.planobnovy.cz/>

<sup>26</sup> See Tender Documentation Chap. 10.2.3 (a).

4. Describe the schedule for fulfilling the project goals, project partial goals and planned project activities. The timeframe for the implementation of project activities, including their relation to the fulfilment of specific goals and partial goals of the project, and the gradual fulfilment of the values of selected indicators must be clearly visible from the schedule. The schedule will cover the entire duration of the EXCELES project. All planned project activities leading to the fulfilment of the project goals and the absorption of eligible project costs, including support, must be completed no later than 15. 12. 2025. By the same date, all target values of the indicators must be achieved and all project goals must be fully met.
- d) Describe the composition of the project team and the human resource management arrangements
    1. Identify and define the roles of persons providing the project solution (including organizational and administrative and other roles outside R&D&I activities).
    2. Identify and justify the involvement of the selected key experts (incl. demonstration of competence according to Chap. 6 of the TD). The project proposal also includes a description of the expertise and gender aspects of the project team.
    3. Describe the policy and reality of the human resource management area. In particular, the assertion of the HR AWARD implementation plan (if any) or the status of implementation of the conditions for obtaining the HR AWARD, the gender equality plan, or the status of its implementation (if already in place).
    4. Describe how the project will contribute to improving the quality of scientific education, to increasing the involvement of young and early career scientists in research, and to their professional or qualification growth (e.g. how to motivate junior members of the research team to career growth, to submit projects).
    5. Describe the degree of internationalisation of the project consortium, i.e. the involvement of researchers with foreign R&D&I experience and foreign researchers. Describe the recruitment policy and method of retention of these researchers in the context of maintaining the function of the consortium after the termination of support.
  - e) Describe the quality and capacity of the existing material and technical support for the project (including information security) for all project participants. Describe and justify in a factual, concise and unambiguous manner the plan and costs for the modernisation and renovation of facilities, research equipment and instruments, information and digital infrastructure (including identification of project activities that would not be possible without the planned modernisation).
  - f) Describe and justify the budget of the project broken down by year of solution. Eligible costs will be described per project participant and per project activity (including the correct categorisation of research types<sup>27</sup>).
  - g) Demonstrate the fulfilment of the motivational effect of the requested support, i.e. the adequacy and need for support<sup>28</sup>. It will be described and justified that the support requested will not subsidise the recurrent costs of activities that the beneficiary would have incurred in

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<sup>27</sup> Research categories according to the currently valid IS VaVal codebook (Available at: <https://www.isvavai.cz/is?s=prehled-ciselniku>).

<sup>28</sup> Statement of reasons with regard to the above factual description and scope of the project activities and the schedule for their implementation, and the identified project participants who will benefit from the support provided, their size, the amount of support requested in relation to each of them and a documented list of specific eligible project costs, in particular, investments and other costs for research equipment and devices (at least 20% share of research equipment costs in the total costs is expected).



any event even without the implementation of the project, nor will it compensate for the normal business risk of the economic activity, if the project will be carried out under the economic activities of the applicant or any of the other participants in the project. In addition, it will be described and justified that the support requested will lead via the implementation of the project to:

1. R&D&I activities or projects that would otherwise not have been carried out at all or only to a more limited extent,
2. achieving a higher quality of R&D&I activities of the applicant and other project participants,
3. significant acceleration of the R&D&I activities of the applicant and other project participants<sup>29</sup>.

The achievement of the incentive effect is conditional on the project activities not commencing prior to the submission of the project proposal<sup>30</sup>.

- h) Identify and describe the results and outputs of the project, i.e.:
1. Describe the expected results and outputs and justify their composition, number, relation to the stated goals of the project, relevance of the results and outputs for the applicants and other users, their impact on the environmental objectives set by the EU<sup>31</sup>, and their gender dimension.
  2. Describe the benefits and impacts of the project. The description will focus on the benefits and impacts of the project for the beneficiaries and other project participants, the impacts for the project site (including regional aspects), if not negligible, the impact on the R&D&I and application sphere in the Czech Republic, the socio-economic benefits and impacts of the project and its outputs in the health sector, especially in relation to the supported activities of Component 5.1, 6.1 and 6.2 of the NRP, for society and for public authorities (including the impact of the project on the fulfilment of the objectives set by other strategic documents in the field of public health and R&D&I, see above).
  3. Describe in detail the plan for the protection of intellectual property and rights to results in relation to the results and outputs of the project and the functioning of the consortium, and identify opportunities for the application of an "open access" regime in the publication of results, sharing of validated scientific data and compliance with FAIR principles.
- i) Indicate the expected collaboration and application potential, i.e.:
1. Indicate how, in what activities and to what extent the project will use large research infrastructures. Especially the large research infrastructures included in the roadmap of the Czech Republic.
  2. Indicate how and to what extent the consortium will cooperate with other entities (research organizations, enterprises, public organizations from the application sphere) outside the project consortium from different regions of the Czech Republic and abroad, and with public authorities.
  3. Describe and justify the anticipated financial benefits obtained by the consortium's collaboration with third parties or by granting rights to the results obtained in the project.

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<sup>29</sup> Chapter 4.4. Communication from the Commission - Framework for State aid for research, development and innovation (Available at: [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52014XC0627\(01\)&from=SL](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52014XC0627(01)&from=SL)).

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Regulation (EU) 2020/852 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 June 2020 establishing a framework to facilitate sustainable investments and amending Regulation (EU) 2019/2088 (Text with EEA relevance), Commission Notice Technical guidance on the application of 'do no significant harm' under the Recovery and Resilience Facility Regulation (2021/C 58/01).

- j) Describe how scientific excellence will be monitored and ensured, i.e.: describe the composition, modus operandi and establishment of the International Supervisory and Advisory Board (ISAB) of the project, including the form of the legal instrument to be concluded with the members for a period covering the entire duration of the project and at least six months following its termination. A comment will also be made on the composition of the ISAB in terms of its gender balance.
- k) State the conclusions of the analysis of the risks associated with the implementation of the project.

All of the above attributes will be subject to the evaluation of the project proposal in the public tender according to the criteria set out in Chap. 10 of the TD.

## 5.2. How to submit a project proposal

Each applicant may submit **only one project proposal** for the EXCELES public tender. This does not preclude its participation in another project in another R&D&I priority area as an additional project participant, but it is necessary to define in detail both such projects down to the level of project activities, supported persons and costs so that the risks of double funding can be assessed and clearly excluded. The forms annexed to the tender documentation shall be used for the project proposal<sup>32</sup>.

The project proposal must be complete and contain all the required information, mandatory annexes, including the required documents demonstrating the eligibility of the applicant and all other project participants according to Chap. 6 of the TD. The complete project proposal must be submitted by the applicant within the tender period.

It is possible to submit a project proposal for the EXCELES programme:

- a) electronically, by delivering a single<sup>33</sup> data message to the grantor's data box. The data message must be marked as "LX-VES1-NEOTVÍRAT";
- b) in paper form and in identical electronic form on a flash disk via delivery **in a single sealed envelope** to the grantor's mailroom at the above address during office hours<sup>34</sup>. The envelope must contain the name and address of the applicant, the address of the grantor and the clearly visible label "LX – VES1–NEOTVÍRAT".

The electronic project proposal shall be submitted in "PDF" format and in identical, machine-readable and editable formats according to the prescribed forms published by the grantor in the annexe to the tender documentation.

The project proposal shall be submitted in Czech (forms f1 – f7) and English (forms f1, f2, f3 and f7). This condition does not apply to documents referred to in the annexes of the project proposal, unless

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<sup>32</sup> If the applicant does not use the forms provided, it runs the risk that the project proposal will not be complete and will not contain all the necessary information to the required extent. An incomplete project proposal will not be accepted for public tender.

<sup>33</sup> Only in the case it is not possible to send the proposal in a single file due to limited capacity of the data box, the applicant may send the proposal in parts. For each separate part it is necessary to consistently indicate its serial number. Otherwise, the individual parts may be considered incomplete separate proposals that cannot be accepted for the tender. The messages will thus be labelled „LX–VES1–C1-NEOTVÍRAT“, „LX–VES1–C2-NEOTVÍRAT“, „LX–VES1–C3-NEOTVÍRAT“, etc.

<sup>34</sup> The current office hours of the grantor's mailroom are published on the Internet at:  
<https://www.msmt.cz/ministerstvo/provoz-podatelny-a-podminky-prijimani-dokumentu>.



expressly stated otherwise in their header. The identity of content of the electronic and paper versions and the language versions is the responsibility of the applicant.

The project proposal may not be changed during public the tender process. It is not considered a change to the project proposal if the grantor does not recognise part of the applicant's proposed project costs or reduces the total amount of aid requested by the applicant<sup>35</sup> The correction of deficiencies in the demonstration of eligibility following a written request from the grantor is not considered a change to the project<sup>36</sup>

### 5.3. Scope of the project proposal

The recommended scope of the project proposal is defined by the scope of the forms, which are published simultaneously and in the same place as the annexe to this tender documentation.

### 5.4. Mandatory annexes to the project proposal

1. Analysis of the state of knowledge in the chosen R&D&I priority area as of 2021. The analysis must be based on standard analytical methods and must include both Czech and EU data<sup>37</sup> allowing for an up-to-date international comparison.
2. Management and organizational structure of the newly emerging national scientific authority and its institutional integration and integration into the R&D&I system in the Czech Republic.
3. A copy of the draft contractual relationship between the applicant and other project participants, defining roles in the project, the disbursement of project funds, disposition of assets, project results and outputs, including research data.
4. An analysis (bibliometric, patent, performance or other standard and recognised) demonstrating the competence of the institute according to 6.3.2., paragraph 2, for the last 3 calendar years.
5. Copies, or a draft of employment relationships with the principal investigator, the collaborating investigator and the coordinator and their written commitment, demonstrating eligibility according to Article 6.3.2, paragraphs 7, or 5 of the TD respectively.
6. Documents demonstrating eligibility according to Article 6.3.2, paragraph 11, if relevant
7. Gender Equality Plan (or proof of HR Award and implementation).
8. Analysis of the risks associated with the implementation of the project. Briefly and clearly identify the risks, both in relation to the project activities and to the functioning of the consortium, their severity in relation to the project implementation, and describe the system of their management and elimination. The possible negative aspects of the project in relation to the chosen support scheme will also be indicated, if any.
9. Copies of documents demonstrating the economic capacity of the applicant and other project participants, i.e. financial statements of the applicant and other project participants for the past 3 calendar years or functional references to them.
10. Copies of documents demonstrating the professional competence of the applicant and other project participants, i.e. (business license, full statement of beneficial owners, annual reports for the past 3 calendar years or functional references).

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<sup>35</sup> Section 21(8) of Act No. 130/2002 Coll.

<sup>36</sup> Section 21(9) of Act No. 130/2002 Coll.

<sup>37</sup> It is expected that data available for 2020 will also be used for comparison.

If the applicant or other project participant applies for support under the EXCELES programme in several project proposals, the annexes under points 6, 9 and 10 need only be submitted once, for one of the proposals. However, in this case, the other proposals submitted to which these documents relate must also be clearly identified and, reciprocally, the proposal containing the documents in their complete form must be identified in the other proposals.

## 6. Applicants and proof of eligibility

### 6.1. General information on proving eligibility

Affidavits relating to the applicant or the other participant must always be signed by the must always be signed by the person or persons authorised to act for the applicant or other project participant.

Prior to the conclusion of the contract, the grantor shall verify the eligibility of the applicant and all other project participants in public registers, registries or national or European databases available to it, possibly by enquiry or in cooperation with another public authority, applying the legal procedures and procedures recommended by the implementing regulations of the European Commission (EC) and the Ministry of Industry and Trade (MIT) for the National Recovery Plan<sup>38</sup>

If, after the submission of the project proposal and before the conclusion of the contract for the provision of support, changes occur that affect the legal status of the applicant or any of the other participants in the project or the data required to demonstrate eligibility, or that could affect the grantor's decision to grant support, the applicant must inform the grantor in writing of these changes within 7 calendar days of becoming aware of them<sup>39</sup> Failure to comply with this information obligation is a reason for the project proposal to be excluded from the public tender or for the contract for the provision of support not to be concluded.

In order to demonstrate the eligibility of the applicant and other participants in the project or in the event that deficiencies are detected in the demonstration of eligibility, the grantor is entitled to call upon the applicant in writing to provide additional data and to eliminate discrepancies during the public tender<sup>40</sup> or in the period before the conclusion of the contract in the case of successful applicants, and to set a delivery deadline of 5 calendar days.

In the event of a failure to demonstrate the eligibility of the applicant or any of the other project participants, or in the event of the discovery of discrepancies between the particulars specified in the project proposal and the submitted documents on the eligibility of the applicant or other project participant that are not removed at the request of the grantor within the specified time limit, the grantor will exclude the project proposal from the public tender<sup>41</sup> or will not conclude the contract for the provision of support with the applicant.

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<sup>38</sup> Section 18(5), (6) and (7) of Act No. 130/2002 Coll., Methodological Instruction on the "RED FLAGS" warning system for the National Recovery Plan for the 2021-2026 programme period issued by the MIT.

<sup>39</sup> Section 18(10) of Act No. 130/2002 Coll.

<sup>40</sup> Section 21(9) of Act No. 130/2002 Coll.

<sup>41</sup> Section 18(12) of Act No. 130/2002 Coll.

## 6.2. Applicants and other participants

Applicants for support in the programme EXCELES may be legal entities that are research organisations or enterprises engaged in research, development or innovation. Another participant in a project under this programme may be an organisational unit of the State or an organisational unit of the Ministry engaged in research and development or a legal entity that is a research organisation or an enterprise engaged in research, development or innovation.

Only such an applicant or other project participant who meets the eligibility conditions set out in this tender documentation and the conditions for granting support under Act No. 130/2002 Coll. and Regulation (EU) No. 651/2014 can become a beneficiary of the support<sup>42</sup>.

## 6.3. Eligibility conditions and how to demonstrate them

### 6.3.1. Economic and legal capacity

The applicant and each other participant in the project is required to prove its economic eligibility<sup>43</sup>, i.e. it is required to demonstrate

- a) its beneficial owner / proprietor<sup>44</sup> by submitting a full extract from the Register of Beneficial Owners<sup>45</sup>, if this obligation applies to it under Act No. 37/2021<sup>46</sup>;

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<sup>42</sup> The beneficiary of support is defined here as the entity referred to in Section 2(2)(c) of Act No 130/2002 Coll. During the course of the solution, another entity may also become the "final beneficiary of the support" – another project participant or the contractor of a public contract awarded by the beneficiary of the support, or another project participant pursuant to Act No. 134/2016 Coll., on Public Procurement, as amended, which is not a commercial company, in which a public official or a person controlled by him/her owns a share of at least 25% of the shareholder's participation in the commercial company. The eligibility of the contractor and the expenditure shall be evidenced by the beneficiary when accounting for eligible costs by providing a copy of the documentation of the public procurement, including the concluded contract, a full statement of the beneficial owners/owners of the contractor in accordance with Act No. 253/2008 Coll., on Selected Measures against Legitimation of Proceeds of Crime and Financing of Terrorism, as amended, and Act No. 37/2021 Coll., on the Registration of Beneficial Owners, extracts from available public registers and databases pursuant to Act No. 159/2006 Coll., on Conflict of Interest, as amended; see also the list of public officials maintained by the Ministry of Justice and available at: <https://justice.cz/documents/12681/776900/Seznam+VF/66c1a92d-f6df-4dc7-b0a9-cab0229da2c6>, or e.g. the Commercial Register, Trade Licensing Register, ARACHNE, Register of Beneficial Owners, Register of Trust Funds, Central Register of Notifications.

<sup>43</sup> Section 18(2)(c), (d), (h) and (i) of Act No. 130/2002 Coll.

<sup>44</sup> pursuant to Section 4(4) of Act No. 253/2008 Coll. and Act No. 37/2021 Coll. Applicants for support or other project participants who do not have the beneficial owners registered in the Register of Beneficial Owners (except for those entities that are not legally obliged to do so) or who do not demonstrate the beneficial owners in any other relevant way will be excluded from the public tender on the grounds that they do not meet the eligibility condition.

<sup>45</sup> Available at: <https://esm.justice.cz/ias/issm/rejstrik>.

<sup>46</sup> The beneficial owner need not be ascertained or registered by those entities which, according to Section 7 of Act No. 37/2021 Coll., are deemed not to have such an owner. Thus, the following entities therefore, need not be registered: the state and a territorial self-government unit, a voluntary association of municipalities, a state contributory organisation and a contributory organisation of a territorial self-government unit, an educational legal person established by the state, a territorial self-government unit or a voluntary association of municipalities, a public research institution, a legal person established by law or an international treaty, a state enterprise and a national enterprise, a district and regional chamber or an incorporated community under another law, a European grouping for territorial cooperation, a political party and a political movement.

- b) that it is not a company in which a public official<sup>47</sup> or a person controlled by him / her owns a share of at least 25% of the shareholder's interest in the company<sup>48</sup> (evidenced by an affidavit in the appropriate form and an extract from available public registers and databases<sup>49</sup>);
- c) criminal integrity<sup>50</sup> via the affidavit included among the project proposal forms. In the relevant project proposal form, data on the statutory body shall be provided together with the data for the IS VaVal to ensure an extract from the Criminal Register, unless the statutory body's criminal record is already required by a specific legal regulation;<sup>51</sup>
- d) that it is not in liquidation and that its bankruptcy or imminent bankruptcy is not being dealt with in insolvency proceedings;
- e) that it has settled its due obligations in relation to the state budget or the budget of the local self-government unit and other due obligations towards the state, state fund, health insurance company or the Czech Social Security Administration;
- f) that it is not an enterprise in difficulty under a directly applicable European Union regulation<sup>52</sup>;
- g) that a recovery order has not been issued against it following a decision of the European Commission under a directly applicable regulation of the European Union<sup>53</sup>;
- h) that it is able to financially secure the project.

Economic eligibility is evidenced at the time of submission of the project proposal **by an affidavit** (mandatory annexe according to the project proposal form), a complete extract from the Register of Beneficial Owners, publication of annual reports and financial statements<sup>54</sup>, and a direct reference to them or their submission for the last three completed calendar years.

### 6.3.2. Professional competence

The applicant and each other participant in the project shall demonstrate:

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<sup>47</sup> according to Section 2(1)(c) of Act No. 159/2006 Coll.; see also the list of public officials maintained by the Ministry of Justice available at: <https://justice.cz/documents/12681/776900/Seznam+VF/66c1a92d-f6df-4dc7-b0a9-cab0229da2c6>. <https://esm.justice.cz/ias/issm/rejstrik>

<sup>48</sup> Section 4c of Act No. 159/2006 Coll.

<sup>49</sup> For example: the Commercial Register, Trade Licensing Register, ARACHNE, Register of Beneficial Owners, Register of Trust Funds, Central Register of Notifications. The grantor reserves the right to carry out a more in-depth examination prior to signing the contract for the provision of support, e.g. by requesting a more detailed analysis of the ownership structure of the controlled companies, including an analysis of foreign registers, or by requesting other supporting documents to eliminate the risk of conflict of interest.

<sup>50</sup> pursuant to Section 18(2)(e) and (f) of Act No. 130/2002 Coll.

<sup>51</sup> e.g. Act No. 341/2005

<sup>52</sup> Regulation (EU) No 651/2014 Article 2(18) or the commentary of the Office for the Protection of Competition (ÚOHS, 2021). Veřejná podpora (State Aid). Podniky v obtížích (Enterprises in Difficulty) [online]. ÚOHS [cit. 10. 8. 2021]. Available at: <https://www.uohs.cz/cs/verejna-podpora/podniky-v-obtizich.html>). Also defined in detail in the text of the relevant Affidavit for Enterprises form included in this tender documentation.

<sup>53</sup> Regulation (EU) No 651/2014 and Regulation (EU) No 702/2014 declaring certain categories of aid in the agricultural and forestry sectors and in rural areas. Details can also be found at <https://www.uohs.cz/cs/verejna-podpora/nesplacene-inkasni-prikazy.html>

<sup>54</sup> or via publication in a similar, publicly accessible register pursuant to Act No. 563/1991 Coll., the Accounting Act, as amended. The obligation to publish financial statements applies only to those entities that are subject to such obligations under Section 21a of the same Act.

- 1) that it is a research and knowledge dissemination organisation (hereinafter referred to as "research organisation")<sup>55</sup> operating in the chosen R&D&I priority area for at least 3 years or an enterprise active in R&D&I and R&D&I support programmes, or benefiting from R&D&I tax credits for at least 1 year. The facts shall be demonstrated via registration in the list of research organisations maintained pursuant to Section 33a of Act No. 130/2002 Coll. or by submitting a copy of the **charter of incorporation and annual activity reports for the last 3 years** (or active publicly available references to them, if they are no longer part of the collection of documents of the list of research organisations), and the relevant valid **authorisation to carry out the activity** relevant to the subject of support, if there is a legal obligation to obtain such authorisation to carry out the activity.
- 2) by bibliometric, patent, performance or other standard and recognised analysis or method that the institute where the project will be carried out has sufficient scientific expertise or experience in knowledge transfer and application of knowledge in practice in the chosen priority R&D&I area to be supported in the project. **An analysis prepared for the last 3 calendar years is a mandatory annexe to the project proposal.**
- 3) that it is able to provide the material, technical, informational and organisational administrative conditions for the successful implementation of the project in accordance with European standards<sup>56</sup> (this includes in particular, securing research, working and operational capacities, including the allocation of the necessary premises and equipment, as well as the necessary staff capacity in the research team and in the "service" organisational administrative and economic staff, access to information resources, economic-administrative service, legal service or project support for the research team). The method and level of this securing shall be described in the relevant project proposal form.
- 4) that it is able to ensure, on the basis of the facts stated in the project proposal, a gender balance preference of the project team and the project advisory body – demonstrated by a description of the implementation of the conditions for obtaining the HR Award<sup>57</sup> or a gender equality plan, including a plan for its implementation, as tools for improving the quality of working conditions.

The **applicant** also demonstrates its professional competence for the **entire project**<sup>58</sup>:

- 5) the ability to staff the project with sufficiently qualified professional capacity. The condition shall be evidenced by
  - a) identifying the person responsible for the professional level of the project, i.e. the **principal investigator** for the applicant and the **collaborating investigator** for each other participant in the project, together with their structured professional CV<sup>59</sup> and a proposal for an employment relationship with a time and content definition of the workload in the

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<sup>55</sup> or a research organisation meeting the definition of a research organisation under Chap. I. Article 2(83) of Regulation (EU) No 651/2014, or registered in the list of research organisations maintained pursuant to Section 33a of Act No 130/2002 Coll.

<sup>56</sup> A commitment to fulfil the terms and conditions of the project solution, e.g. in accordance with the ERC Model Grant Agreement, is considered to be a European standard.

<sup>57</sup> or by documenting an award already received.

<sup>58</sup> Pursuant to Section 18(9) of Act No. 130/2002 Coll.

<sup>59</sup> In the range of max. 1 A4 sheet with the full name, titles and currently valid contacts (e-mail and telephone) and information directly related to the subject of support in the chosen R&D&I priority area and the planned project solution according to the submitted proposal in EXCELES.

- project<sup>60</sup>. The employment relationship with the principal investigator is required to be at least 0.7 FTE<sup>61</sup>, and for the collaborating investigator (in case of another project participant) at least 0.5 FTE on average for the entire duration of the project. The proposal of the employment relationship is supplemented by a preliminary written agreement of the principal or collaborating investigator to the conditions proposed by the applicant or other project participant;
- b) an inventory of the planned positions and work commitments of the members of the project team, clearly showing the level of workload and its compatibility with the project solution and the link to the planned project activities;
  - c) a specimen of the employment contract and job description which has been or will be concluded with the principal investigator, the collaborating investigator and the key members of the research team;
  - d) a list of key persons on the research team, showing that representatives of internationally recognised teams from the Czech Republic working in the chosen priority area of R&D&I and persons with links to the application sphere are involved. (The list must include names, titles, place of work, field of study, a brief description of experience, current links to the application field or abroad, and a reference to the 3 most significant results achieved by the person in the last 3 years, with a link to the subject of support.)
- 6) the ability to coordinate and manage a consortium project by clearly defining the executive and management roles of the applicant and all other project participants according to Article 5.1 (b) of the TD;
- 7) the ability to ensure the coordination and organisational and administrative management of the project in terms of personnel, **by designating** a qualified person in the role of **project coordinator** who has participated in the preparation of the project proposal and will be responsible for the coordination, organisational, administrative and financial management of the project, and for communication with the grantor, documenting his / her qualifications and previous experience in a relevant manner, and concluding an employment relationship with him / her at least to the extent of 0.5 full-time equivalent (FTE) for the entire duration of the project, and at least for 6 calendar months following the date of termination of the project, including an evaluation of the project and its impact, dissemination of results or implementation of a 'data management plan' (supported by **a brief structured professional CV** with content relevant to the above and a copy of the employment relationship between the applicant and the coordinator);

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<sup>60</sup> The definition of the job description and the modification of the employment relationship must correspond to the eligibility of the costs in terms of time and content in the project and the EXCELES programme. A copy of the signed employment contract must be provided by the applicant prior to the conclusion of the contract for the provision of support. The conclusion or change of employment relationships with members of the research team or their effectiveness must not precede the date of submission of the project proposal to the public tender, otherwise their personal costs would not be eligible for support.

<sup>61</sup> The abbreviation "FTE" means full-time equivalent. 1.0 FTE is equal to the work of a full-time employee who is 100% dedicated to the activity for 1 year, i.e. in the case of an annual report, for the whole calendar year. 0.5 FTE in the case of half-yearly information on the work of a staff member who is 100% dedicated to the activity for the entire period 1. 1. - 30. 6. of that year. In Czech, the term "recalculated full-time equivalent" is also used.



- 8) the ability to provide sufficient expertise to ensure quality control of the project's research activities by ensuring the operation of the ISAB<sup>62</sup> in accordance to Article 5.1 (j);
- 9) demonstrating in the relevant project proposal form, in relation to the proposed project activities, that the project follows the principles of "no significant harm" (DNSH) and does not have a negative impact on any of the objectives defined in Article 9 of Regulation (EU) 2020/852,<sup>63</sup> which are:
  - a) Climate change mitigation;
  - b) Adapting to climate change;
  - c) Sustainable use and protection of water and marine resources;
  - d) Transition to a circular economy;
  - e) Pollution prevention and control;
  - f) Protection and restoration of biodiversity and ecosystems.
- 10) active participation in the project of a research organisation or enterprise which has been the beneficiary (host institution) of a project funded by the European Research Council (ERC)<sup>64</sup>, NSF<sup>65</sup> or a similar major international grant<sup>66</sup> during the last 3 calendar years in the chosen R&D&I priority area; whereas for a project submitted for an R&D&I priority area under Chap. 3(e), this condition must be fulfilled in all points 1 to 3. The condition is evidenced by a copy of the document providing support for such a project, e.g. the contract on the provision of support for its solution (ERC) or another adequate document issued by the grantor of support or the authority organising the evaluation of the project under study.
- 11) at least one person<sup>67</sup> on the research team who in the last 5 calendar years has successfully

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<sup>62</sup> The abbreviation ISAB means the International Supervisory and Advisory Board (ISAB) of the beneficiary established for the project, which will supervise and evaluate and argue in writing the quality of the professional project activities, and make professional recommendations in all R&D&I areas included in the project on an annual basis, so that the produced R&D&I publication results are directed at Q1 in the chosen R&D&I priority area and project activities have led to reaching or exceeding the limit of the current state of scientific knowledge (for social science research, the quality of publication results in Q2 can also be tolerated). At the same time, it will peer-review the project's outputs and results in the field of applied research, critically evaluate their application potential and how they are protected and handled in the project, and provide recommendations on their application and use. The applicant must fully ensure the ISAB's activities throughout the project and during the evaluation and dissemination of the results for at least another 6 calendar months after the project has been completed.

<sup>63</sup> The applicant and other project participants are obliged to prevent potential damage to the above mentioned climate objectives as defined in Article 9 and 17 of Regulation (EU) 2020/852. The applicant shall demonstrate this fact via an affidavit for the whole project and at the level of individual project activities. The affidavit form is part of the mandatory annexes of the project proposal.

<sup>64</sup> European Research Council, 2021 [online]. ERC. [cit. 23. 7. 2021]. Available at: <https://erc.europa.eu/>.

<sup>65</sup> NSF International, 2021 [online]. NSF. [cit. 23. 7. 2021]. Available at: <https://www.nsf.org/>. NSF International, 2021 [online]. NSF. [cit. 23. 7. 2021]. Available at: <https://www.nsf.org/>.

<sup>66</sup> H2020 projects such as the EIC Accelerator Pilot, Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) individual fellowships or Teaming projects are also eligible.

<sup>67</sup> If one person fulfils more than one of the conditions listed under a) to d), he/she can be counted only once, i.e. it is necessary to identify at least 4 such key persons in the research team who fulfil one of the above conditions and collectively all 4 conditions of point 11).

- a) worked on a prestigious foreign, European or non-European research project in the chosen R&D&I priority area funded by NSF, NASA or ERC (e.g. ERC grant) or a project awarded the Seal of Excellence<sup>68</sup>, or a person who has submitted such a project to the ERC and this has been evaluated in category A, or a person who is a member of international ERC or Seal of Excellence review panels or non-European prestigious review panels in the R&D&I priority area or in a close and related field intended to be the subject of project support under this programme, or a person who is the holder of at least one valid international patent, internationally recognised treatment, internationally recognised certified methodology or medical device, or a person who publishes in peer-reviewed journals with a citation index in the 'top 5' (at worst top 10 for high-profile fields, e.g. medicine or ICT according to WoS or Scopus) in the R&D&I priority area chosen for the project or in a related field. Evidenced by an affidavit, award, relevant citation analysis, extract from the relevant patent register or IS VaVal (or working link)<sup>69</sup>;
- b) carried out research and development practice in the R&D&I priority area and successfully participated in the transfer of knowledge into practice or the commercialisation of R&D&I results (e.g. demonstrable participation in successful patent proceedings, development of candidate compounds or drugs in advanced preclinical or clinical testing, knowledge transfer with output in the form of a recognised and established treatment procedure, prototype, functional sample, utility model, software application, certified methodology or medical device applied directly in medical practice, translation of R&D&I results into regulations and standards, specialised map or specialised database or its operation). The applicant is able to demonstrate this fact by e.g. an extract from the IS VaVal and a reference to the relevant source document.
- c) carried out successful R&D practice or has successfully participated in the knowledge transfer or commercialisation of R&D&I results in a foreign research organisation as an R&D worker or in a major innovative foreign enterprise continuously for at least 6 months and has made a demonstrable contribution to successful research or knowledge transfer<sup>70</sup>. The professional profile of such a person shall be submitted, including a list of three of his / her most significant R&D&I results or successfully completed projects or other activities, or a copy of a document demonstrating cooperation with a foreign research organisation or enterprise related to the professional focus of the proposed project (the list shall also include functional references to source documents)<sup>71</sup>.
- d) has active links to reputable foreign workplaces in the chosen R&D&I priority area, or is able to demonstrate active participation of members of the research team in international professional networks or links to them. Evidenced by an affidavit and records of membership of international professional societies or an employment relationship.

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<sup>68</sup> The label/seal of quality is awarded to project proposals submitted to European R&D&I support programmes or framework programmes (H2020/HE), see the European Commission, 2021. Seal of Excellence [online]. EC. [cit. 23. 7. 2021]. Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/info/research-and-innovation/funding/funding-opportunities/seal-excellence\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/research-and-innovation/funding/funding-opportunities/seal-excellence_en).

<sup>69</sup> The authorship of the result (or the rights to the result) must be clearly demonstrated.

<sup>70</sup> In the case of social science disciplines, it is necessary to substantiate at least the history of professional work at a foreign institution.

<sup>71</sup> including contact details of the organisation



## 7. Eligible project costs

### 7.1. Duplicate funding

The applicant and each other participant are obliged to avoid the double funding of project activities, i.e. to ensure that it is not drawing, will not draw and will not claim in the future any other state aid under Article 107(1) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, aid from Union funds centrally administered by the Union institutions, agencies, joint undertakings and other Union bodies, and which is not directly or indirectly controlled by Member States, or aid under the de minimis regime for the same eligible expenditure or part thereof.

In the event that the applicant fails to sufficiently identify the project expenditure in relation to other financial sources of public support or if identical expenditure is financed from more than one source in the course of the project, the grantor will not recognise such expenditure and will proceed in accordance with Section 14f of Act No. 218/2000 Coll.

### 7.2. Definition of eligible costs

Eligible project costs are defined in the EXCELES programme in accordance with Act No. 130/2002 Coll.<sup>72</sup>, and in the case of support for economic activities, also according to Annexe I of the R&D Framework<sup>73</sup>, and Chap. III Section 4, Article 25(3) and Article 26(5) of Regulation (EU) No 651/2014 as the costs or expenditure in research, development and innovation incurred by the applicant or other participants in the project for the necessary activities in R&D&I defined by the project in the context of and for the purpose of meeting the stated goals of the project and the programme to be fulfilled through the project.

Eligible costs are:

- 1) **Personnel costs or expenses** for members of the research team and for other researchers, technicians and other support staff to the extent necessary for the purposes of the project, and the corresponding costs of compulsory statutory contributions and the allocation to the cultural and social needs fund or the social fund. Personnel costs must not be deliberately overestimated or inflated for the purpose of obtaining support in the project, they must be usual for the time and place and must comply with the applicant's /other participant's pre-approved and valid internal or other commonly used wage or salary regulations. Only costs or expenses that are appropriate to the nature of the work performed and the number of hours actually worked on the project by the named persons directly carrying out the work within the project may be charged to the project. These persons must be directly employed by the applicant / beneficiary, who must have an employment relationship with them in accordance with specific legislation and its internal rules.

The share of the working capacity of an employee or other person on the project must not exceed one full-time equivalent (1 FTE). In case the share of the employee's or other person's work activity on the project is less than one full-time equivalent or the job description of the applicant's employee includes activities other than the project, it is necessary to demonstrate

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<sup>72</sup> Section 2(2)(m) of Act No. 130/2002 Coll.

<sup>73</sup> Chap. III, Section 4, Article 25(3).

the eligibility of the expenditure by a copy of the employment contract with a definition of the work on the project (including the identification of the project, description of the relevant part of the responsibilities and work capacity corresponding to the definition in the project) and the individual person's timesheets.

The eligibility of personnel costs in a project under this programme is limited to the above limit of 166 660 CZK per FTE in the case of a member of the research team in a senior research or academic position<sup>74</sup>

The following can be included as personal costs or expenses:

- a) personal costs or expenses of staff in an employment relationship<sup>75</sup> corresponding to the extent of their time commitment to the project;
- b) other personal costs or expenses based on a work activity agreement or a work performance agreement concluded by the applicant or other project participant in direct connection with the project;
- c) the cost of scholarships for students participating in the project paid according to Act No. 111/1998 on Higher Education, as amended.

2) **Costs or expenses for tools and equipment** to the extent necessary for the purposes of the project.

If these tools and equipment are not used within the project for their entire useful life and the final beneficiary is an enterprise<sup>76</sup>, only depreciation over the useful life of the project, calculated on the basis of established and generally accepted accounting principles and practices, is considered eligible. In accordance with the R&D Framework, the grantor may also recognise the reimbursement of the full purchase price of the assets acquired for the project, subject to the research organisation's commitment to use the assets acquired almost exclusively for the non-economic activities of the research organisation throughout their useful life.<sup>77</sup> Reimbursement can only be accepted on the basis of a detailed justification of the need of the final beneficiary or other project participant in relation to the project.

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<sup>74</sup> The limit was set based on statistical data provided for the average salary of a doctor in healthcare services: Zdravotnická ročenka (Medical Yearbook) 2018, p. 162 and in the CSO statistics "Průměrné mzdy ve výzkumu" (Average wages in research). Available at: <https://www.czso.cz/csu/czso/specialiste-v-oblasti-vedy-a-techniky-a-jejich-mzdy>, and the limits set for Horizon Europe projects. In the case of a member of the research team whose previous place of work was abroad, personal costs may be eligible up to the amount of the costs that are usual in the given location abroad and for a similar position, if the internal rules of the beneficiary or the relevant other project participant where the member of the research team is employed in the project allow it.

<sup>75</sup> for the purposes of this tender documentation, the term "employment/labour relationship" includes legal relationships under Act No. 262/2006 Coll., the Labour Code, as amended, as well as legal relationships under Act No. 234/2014 Coll., the Civil Service Act, as amended.

<sup>76</sup> Enterprise here means any final beneficiary of support to which support is to be granted under the state aid scheme pursuant to Regulation (EU) No 651/2014 (GBER).

<sup>77</sup> When requesting payment of the full purchase price, the applicant/beneficiary or other project participant as a research organisation must document the amount of its economic activities in R&D&I and economic activities with inseparable inputs from non-economic activities for the last 3 calendar years and document them annually throughout the duration of the project.

Both investment and non-investment costs or expenses for the acquisition of fixed and short-term tangible and intangible assets necessary for the project, to the extent and for the duration of their use for the project, which also bring new quality to the work processes in R&D&I<sup>78</sup> and meet the requirements of DNSH<sup>79</sup> are eligible. The applicant and each other project participant are obliged to justify all acquisitions of assets in the project proposal in relation to the project goals and specific planned research activities, and to indicate in the justification the extent and duration of the use of the fixed assets by the research team for the purposes of the project.

- 3) **Costs or expenditure for the modernisation and renovation of premises** and parts of buildings only to the extent necessary for the purposes of the project. In the case of enterprises, only costs or expenses up to the amount of depreciation over the course of the project, calculated on the basis of generally accepted accounting principles, are eligible.
- 4) **Costs or expenditure for contract research, knowledge and patents** purchased or acquired under licence from external sources under normal market conditions, as well as the cost of **consultancy** and other equivalent **services** used exclusively for the purposes of the project.
- 5) **Costs or expenses for externally supplied services or supplies**<sup>80</sup> incurred in direct connection with the project, provided that the procurement contractor is not the researcher or another member of the research team, another employee of the applicant, or a natural or legal person associated with them, or a legal person with direct supervision of the applicant / beneficiary or other project participant, or in a relationship of subordination or other exercise of ownership or influence. The services and supplies must be concretely specified, their scope and financial cost quantified, and may relate only to the execution of a limited part of the project. In addition, the necessity of these costs or expenses in relation to the fulfilment of the specific goal of the project must be duly justified by the applicant or other project participant in the project proposal, and it must be stated why these works cannot be provided by the applicant / beneficiary or other project participant within its own capacity. In the event that the applicant/beneficiary or other project participant resorts to such costs for externally supplied services or supplies, the rights and obligations of the applicant / beneficiary or other project participants relating to copyright and other intellectual property rights in knowledge and information, which is required for the project and which existed prior to the granting of the project support under this programme shall not be affected, while at the same time not affecting the rights and obligations of the applicant / beneficiary or other project participants in respect of new knowledge and information arising from the project or the results obtained from the project, whether or not they may be protected under applicable law. In the case of the application of service costs, the applicant / beneficiary must comply with the specific legislation<sup>81</sup>
- 6) **Other operating costs or project expenditure**, in particular, expenditure on
  - a) **materials**, supplies and similar products directly resulting from the project.

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<sup>78</sup> Costs or expenses for the simple renovation of equipment or other assets are not eligible for the programme. The new quality can, for example, also consist in the saving of energy, water resources or waste, and fulfilling other aspects of DNSH.

<sup>79</sup> Regulation (EU) 2020/852, Communication Notice Technical guidance on the application of 'do no significant harm' under the Recovery and Resilience Facility Regulation (2021/C 58/01).

<sup>80</sup> Supply means the delivery or sub-delivery of goods, products or services from a supplier (legal or natural person) other than the beneficiary or another project participant.

<sup>81</sup> Act No. 134/2016 Coll. and Directive (EU) 2014/24/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 February 2014 on public procurement and repealing Directive 2004/18/EC.

- b) the **operation and maintenance of** tangible and intangible fixed assets not acquired within the project but the use of which is necessary for the project. Depreciation and amortisation costs and expenses corresponding only to the extent and duration of the use of these assets for the research activities described in the project or calculated using established accounting practices are considered eligible costs. The eligibility of costs must be demonstrably supported by the operating logbook of the equipment used or other similar means.
  - c) the **acquisition, operation and maintenance of** tangible and intangible fixed assets<sup>82</sup>.
  - d) **publicity of the project, presentation, publication and dissemination of results in open access mode.**
  - e) **securing the rights to the project results and** their application (in particular, securing the protection of intellectual property and rights to R&D&I results or the acquisition and recognition of industrial property rights, including registration fees, translations, etc.).
  - f) **sharing and protecting the scientific information and data generated by the project.**
  - g) **travel allowances** for members of the research team incurred in direct connection with the project.
- 7) **Additional overheads or expenses (indirect costs or expenses)**<sup>83</sup> **up to 20% of** the eligible non-investment costs of the project per year for the accounting period and overall, incurred as a direct result of the project.

It is expected that the cost or expenditure for the acquisition, renovation and modernisation of research facilities, equipment and other research infrastructure will amount to at least **20%** of the project support granted.

The grantor reserves the right to count and recognise as eligible only expenditure generated after the date of the registered submission of the project proposal to the grantor's mailroom, and no earlier than the date of the written notification of the commencement of the project to the grantor, that has been demonstrably used, reported and duly justified in direct connection with the implementation of the project activities approved by the grantor, has been duly recorded in the accounting records of the beneficiary or other project participant, and which they are able to substantiate with proper accounting documents. Otherwise, the expenditure cannot be recognised by the grantor.

In case the beneficiary or other project participant implements tenders in the project, these must comply with Act No. 134/2016 Coll., as well as Directive (EU) 2014/24/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 February 2014 on public procurement and repealing Directive 2004/18/EC and

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<sup>82</sup> The applicant/beneficiary and any other participant in the project are obliged to justify any acquisition of short-term assets for the first year of the project in relation to the project goals and specific planned research activities already in the project proposal, and to indicate in the justification to what extent and for what period the assets will be used by the research team for the purposes of the project.

<sup>83</sup> Additional overhead costs or expenses are indirect costs or expenses incurred by the applicant/beneficiary or other project participant as a direct result of the project (e.g. administrative costs related to accounting and reporting, management, support staff and infrastructure, energy, security systems and security services, etc.), unless they are already part of other eligible cost items listed above, and cannot be reported as direct costs. They must always relate to the project, they must always be quantified and they must always be reported in accordance with the applicable and commonly used, internally approved methodology for reporting actual indirect costs applied by the final beneficiary.

Article 61 of Regulation (EU) 2018/1046<sup>84</sup>. At the same time, it is essential to respect the principles of transparency and proportionality. It must also respect the principle of equal treatment and non-discrimination in relation to suppliers. The public tender must always be properly documented and data from the public tender subject to Article 22 of Regulation (EU) 2021/241 must be reported to the MIT's unified system set up for the NRP, according to the current instructions of the grantor. The obligation to follow the above guidelines applies to all project activities funded by the EU and national budgets. In the event of non-compliance with these obligations, the cost cannot be included in the project's eligible costs. The Office for the Protection of Competition (ÚOHS) supervises the principles of public tendering in the Czech Republic.

In case the project activities include educational or presentation events aimed at target groups, the expenditure for this activity drawn from the support must be evidenced by an attendance list and a document with an anonymised categorisation of the participants (at least in the following structure: age 18-29 and 30+, pertinence to a national/ethnic group, health disadvantage, gender), otherwise it cannot be recognised as eligible.

### 7.3. Definition of ineligible costs and expenditure in the programme

In particular, the following are considered ineligible costs or expenses in the EXCELES programme:

- 1) Costs or expenses incurred or expended prior to the date of receipt of the project proposal in the EXCELES programme public tender or prior to the date of commencement of the project as notified in writing to the grantor.
- 2) Costs or expenses incurred or to be incurred after the date of completion of the project or after 15. 12. 2025.
- 3) Costs or expenditure for which the actual final beneficiary of the support (including suppliers of products and services)<sup>85</sup> is not known, i.e. documented and verified, or was not known at the time of implementation, or its ownership or ownership structure is unknown, or any of its owners with a shareholding of at least 25% is a public official, or any of which are headed to countries with a non-cooperating jurisdiction<sup>86</sup>
- 4) Project costs or expenses that have not been used, reported or properly documented and justified in relation to a specifically approved and implemented project activity in order to fulfil a project goal, in accordance with the applicable methodology for the use of the RRF and NRP funds or other applicable legal and methodological documents or with the commonly used

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<sup>84</sup> Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, amending Regulations (EU) No 1296/2013, (EU) No 1301/2013, (EU) No 1303/2013, (EU) No 1304/2013, (EU) No 1309/2013, (EU) No 1316/2013, (EU) No 223/2014, (EU) No 283/2014, and Decision No 541/2014/EU and repealing Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012.

<sup>85</sup> The final beneficiary is a person (legal or natural) which is granted funding from the RRF on the basis of a legal act. The final beneficiary does not redistribute the funds but "consumes" them on securing the necessary project activities. The final beneficiary is both the support beneficiary or other project participant as defined in Act No. 130/2002 Coll. and any of their suppliers of services or products.

<sup>86</sup> Act No. 37/2021, EPR Directive 2015/849 of 20 May 2015 on the prevention of the use of the financial system for the purposes of money laundering or terrorist financing. Commission Recommendation (EU) 2020/1039 of 14 July 2020 on making State financial support to undertakings in the Union conditional on the absence of links to non-cooperative jurisdictions. Methodological instruction of the "RED FLAGS" warning system for the National Recovery Plan for the programme period 2021-26, published by the MIT as amended.

internally approved methodology of the applicant/beneficiary or other project participant for reporting actual costs or expenses.

- 5) Costs or expenditure for the simple replacement or maintenance and repair of existing property or equipment, i.e. acquired without justified qualitative added value (so-called 'recurrent expenditure').
- 6) Costs or expenditure for activities, property, or facilities that do not comply with DNSH requirements or significantly impair<sup>87</sup> any of the areas listed in Chap. 6.3.2. paragraph 9.
- 7) Costs and expenses for the renewal, maintenance or repair of common office equipment and IT (HW and portable computing and electronics such as common personal computers, laptops, tablets, mobile phones, iBooks, iPads, etc., as well as photocopiers, printers, plotters, projection or other imaging and telecommunications equipment, television and radio receivers, etc.) and common office software regardless of the manufacturer (incl. SW applications, Internet browsers, virus protection, security, backup, economic-administrative and general-purpose information systems, etc.).

In specific cases, the grantor may allow the eligibility of a specific cost and recognise the reimbursement of specially manufactured or modified HW and SW which is directly instrumental or the subject of research in the project or which is an integral part of the experimental equipment acquired by the project and exclusively used for the needs of the project. The eligibility of such costs will be assessed by the grantor on the basis of a specific written justification in relation to the subject of support and the specific research activities in the project of this programme. There is no legal entitlement to eligibility and recognition of specific costs.

- 8) Costs or expenses for the operation of and access to internet and other networks, including the internal networks of the applicant/beneficiary or other project participant and upgrades to these networks, unless they are specific, international professional scientific networks and platforms necessary for sharing the scientific information and data produced by the project. The eligibility of such costs will be assessed by the grantor on the basis of a specific written justification in relation to the subject of support, the specific research activities and the project outputs intended to fulfil the project's stated goals and programme goals. There is no legal entitlement to allow eligibility and recognition of such a specific cost.
- 9) Costs or expenses for the acquisition, operation and maintenance of common office furniture and other standard office and laboratory equipment (desks, shelving, cabinets, lighting, air conditioning, fume hoods, fridges, cookers, etc.).
- 10) Costs and expenses for the acquisition of cars and other types of transport equipment, unless it is a specialised mobile research facility, i.e. a specially designed or otherwise permanently modified transport vehicle equipped with a research device which is an integral part of the equipment and which is necessary for the purposes of the project. The eligibility of such costs, if any, must be decided in advance in writing by the grantor on the basis of a request and detailed justification by the beneficiary.

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<sup>87</sup> meant and assessed in the light of the Commission's Notice Technical guidance on the application of 'do no significant harm' under the Recovery and Resilience Facility Regulation, (2021/C 58/01) and other currently applicable RRF and NRP guidance documents.



- 11) Costs or expenses for the acquisition, operation and lease of immovable property, leases and rentals of individual premises or depreciation of buildings, with the possible exception of the temporary lease of specific laboratory space or facilities for the research activities of the project, subject, however, to the prior written approval of the grantor.

In specific cases, the grantor may authorise the eligibility of the temporary rental of a specially equipped laboratory or part thereof, or of machine time of specialised research facilities and infrastructures where project research activities will be carried out in order to meet the project goals, or of conference rooms, exhibition and display areas, or a stand for the purpose of mandatory publicity or for the dissemination, presentation and popularisation of the project results. The eligibility of such costs will be assessed by the grantor on the basis of a specific written justification in relation to the subject of support, the specific research activities and the project outputs to meet the applicant's stated goals and programme goals, including ensuring sustainability. There is no legal entitlement to allow eligibility and recognition of such a specific cost.

- 12) Personal and other costs or expenses incurred in direct connection with the exercise of medical or healthcare practice, medical, rehabilitation or other healthcare for patients or acts reported to health insurance companies.
- 13) Personal costs or expenses of public officials or persons who have been involved in the preparation of the EXCELES programme, in the evaluation of project proposals, or who are or will be involved in the evaluation of projects or the EXCELES programme.
- 14) Personnel costs or expenditure that, on a per FTE basis, exceeds the limit established by this programme of 166,660 CZK/FTE, or that exceed the 1 FTE hourly capacity established by specific legislation<sup>88</sup>
- 15) Indirect, ancillary or overhead costs or expenditure that exceed the maximum allowable limit of 20% of the eligible non-investment costs of the project set for this programme, both annually and overall for the entire project period.
- 16) Identifiable indirect taxes and duties, customs duties and other customs charges.
- 17) VAT where the final applicant/beneficiary claims a deduction. If the beneficiary does not apply the deduction, it is an eligible project expenditure but not **eligible for RRF support**.
- 18) Debts and debt service charges, interest owed.
- 19) Financial provisions for possible future losses or expenses.
- 20) Exchange rate losses.
- 21) Costs or expenses associated with a capital gain.
- 22) Costs and expenses planned, declared, incurred or paid in connection with another project of another support programme or supported in another way from public funds of the Czech Republic or the EU.
- 23) Costs or expenses of any litigation.

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<sup>88</sup> Act No. 262/2002 Coll., Directive 2003/88/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 4 November 2003 concerning certain aspects of the organisation of working time.

- 24) Excessive or disproportionate costs, expenditure that is unusual and reckless for the time and place, or costs incurred outside the project or already paid once from public funds (i.e. double funding of the same expenditure – this is without prejudice to the possibility of permitted cross and multi-source funding in a complementary manner).
- 25) Costs that are not related to the achievement of the project goals and to approved project activities carried out in direct connection with the achievement of the project goals, or that cannot be classified under the item categories defined in Chapter 7.2 and that have not been approved and recognised by the grantor.

## 8. Support – the amount and method of provision

### 8.1. Provision of support

The grantor will provide targeted support to successful applicants for selected projects in the EXCELES programme public tender. The support is provided in the form of a direct subsidy to legal entities on the basis of a contract for the provision of support<sup>89</sup>. Support will be provided to the beneficiary within the terms and conditions set out in this contract<sup>90</sup>. The provision of support in the EXCELES programme, including the limits for aid intensity, is governed by Act No. 130/2002 Coll., the R&D Framework or Regulation (EU) No. 651/2014.

If another participant is involved in the project, the grantor shall provide the beneficiary with the targeted support, including the part intended for the other participant, except where the other participant in the project is an organisational unit of the State or an organisational unit of the Ministry engaged in research and development, in which case the relevant part of the support shall be provided by the grantor. The beneficiary is obliged to transfer the specified part of the targeted support to the bank account of the other project participant immediately after receiving it, but within 15 working days at the latest. Suspension of the transfer of the specified part of the targeted support to another participant must be notified to the grantor and justified.

According to the specification of eligible project costs, which is an annex to each contract for the provision of support, the grantor will provide the support in two instalments for a given calendar year. Unless the budgetary stopgap pursuant to Act No 218/2000 Coll. results in the regulation of budget spending, the grantor will commence provision of support to the beneficiary as follows:

- a) In the first year of the project, the beneficiary will start receiving support within 60 calendar days from the effective date of the contract for the provision of support in the amount of 50% of its annual allocation approved by the grantor. The remaining part of the support will be granted to the beneficiary after acceptance of the documented copies of the contracts concluded with all other project participants, copies of the documents establishing the ISAB, and copies of the legal act concluded with its members. If this has already been done before the

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<sup>89</sup> Pursuant to Section 9 of Act No. 130/2002 Coll.

<sup>90</sup> The model contract is published together with the tender documentation on the programme website:

<https://www.msmt.cz/vyzkum-a-vyvoj-2/program-exceles-komponenta-5-1-narodniho-planu-obnovy> / [Programme EXCELES - implementation tool of component 5.1 of the National Recovery Plan, Ministry of Education of the Czech Republic \(msmt.cz\)](#) and also on the website of the National Recovery Plan operated by the grantor: <http://www.edu.cz/npo>.



conclusion of the contract for the provision of support between the beneficiary and the grantor, the support will be granted in full in the first payment.

- b) In the second and each subsequent year, the beneficiary will be granted 50% of the amount of support set out in the contract for that calendar year within 60 calendar days of its commencement. The remaining part of the support will be provided to the beneficiary after the completion of the grantor's audit of the project for the past calendar year, i.e. especially after the following has occurred:
1. the receipt and acceptance of the interim project report including the resolution of any discrepancies (financial and factual) in the interim report and the addressing of any comments made by the grantor on the interim report.;
  2. an evaluation of the project's implementation over the past calendar year by the grantor's expert advisory body,
  3. the execution and completion of the audit of the use of the support by the grantor;
  4. the inclusion and update of project data in the IS VaVal<sup>91</sup>;
  5. the fulfilment of other conditions of the contract for support;

## 8.2. Limits on the amount of support

The amount of support for an individual project in the case of support for economic activities under the programme must not exceed the limits set by Regulation (EU) No 651/2014<sup>92</sup>. The limits are set for each category of research and apply to 1 project and to each individual applicant/beneficiary or other project participant, and correspond to the crown equivalent<sup>93</sup> on the date of the announcement of the public tender for this programme in the amount of:

- a) 40 mil. € for a basic research project;
- b) 20 mil. € for an industrial research project;
- c) 15 mil. € for an experimental development project.

These limits also apply in cases of the cumulation of support, permitted cross-funding or co-funding of projects from other public sources.

## 8.3. Aid intensity

Aid intensity is determined according to the type of applicant and the nature of the activities planned for the year. The amount of support in the project can reach up to 100% of the total eligible costs of the project<sup>94</sup>. In the event that the support is granted under the state aid scheme, the aid intensity will

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<sup>91</sup> In accordance with Act No. 130/2002 Coll. and Act No. 106/1999 Coll., on Free Access to Information, as amended.

<sup>92</sup> Regulation (EU) No 651/2014, Article 4(1)(i).

<sup>93</sup> In the case of conversion into CZK, the official CZK to € exchange rate of the Czech National Bank current on the date of publication of the tender documentation for the announced public tender of this programme must be used.

<sup>94</sup> 100% of the support can only be granted to the beneficiary in the case of pure basic research projects or independent research carried out by research organisations as a non-economic activity which does not give rise to an obligation to grant support under the state aid regime under European legislation.

always be calculated for each beneficiary and for each other participant in the project, and for each project individually according to the proportions of the categories of research to be supported in the project in accordance with Regulation (EU) No 651/2014.

Where the final beneficiary of support (which is the applicant/beneficiary or other participant in the project) is considered as an enterprise, the aid intensity limits are governed by Regulation (EU) No 651/2014 and Articles 25 and 26 of this Regulation will be applied for the calculation of the aid intensity in the EXCELES project.

The aid intensity for any of the final beneficiaries to whom the provisions of Article 25 in Chap. III, Section 4 of Regulation (EU) No 651/2014 are applied shall **not** exceed:

- a) 100% of eligible costs for basic research;
- b) 50% of eligible costs for industrial research;
- c) 25% of eligible costs for experimental development.

In case of the participation of several participants in the project, it is necessary to quantify the aid intensity (in accordance with the above) individually, i.e. for each participant who will benefit from the support. The aid intensity for individual industrial research projects or experimental development activities may be increased in accordance with the provisions of Article 25(6) and (7) in Chap. III, Section 4 of Regulation (EU) No 651/2014.

In case of the application of the provisions of Article 26 in Chap. III, Section 4 of Regulation (EU) No 651/2014, the support **may not** exceed 50% of the cost or expenditure of the investment carried out in the project.

The applicant shall quantify the aid intensity in the relevant project proposal form. When calculating the total amount of support, any funds contributed to the project from other public sources (e.g. when cross-financing recurrent expenditure from institutional support) are also included in the limit.

The calculation of the requested amount of support must be presented in a clear and transparent manner and must be made and identified in relation to the specific eligible costs of the specific project activities listed in the project proposal in order to meet the specific partial goals of the project, otherwise the applicant runs the risk of a reduction in the requested amount of support for reasons of legal certainty.

The final determination of the aid intensity for a given project and for the final beneficiary, and the total amount of support per project shall be decided by the grantor on the basis of the results of the evaluation of the project proposals in the public tender. The aid intensity may be changed during the course of the project, e.g. on the basis of the results of the interim evaluation of the projects or when auditing the actual expenditure of the project and its eligibility according to the conditions of the programme and the above-mentioned European regulation.

The grantor reserves the right to review and check whether the authorised aid intensity has been respected and whether any double funding of the same R&D&I activities from public funds occurred at any time during the project and up to 10 years after its termination.

#### 8.4. Multi-source project funding

In the case of multi-source funding, it will be necessary to clearly identify the source of funding down to the level of the specific expenditure shown in the beneficiary's accounting records. No project

expenditure may be funded twice or be reimbursed from two different financial sources<sup>95</sup> The aid intensity limits, cumulation conditions and incentive effect under European rules must always be respected<sup>96</sup> Other financial sources used for project co-financing (e.g. for VAT) must be clearly identified and documented by the beneficiary in the interim project report.

In order to effectively assess and control the sources of funding, to eliminate the risk of overlaps and the double funding of identical activities of the beneficiary and other project participants, and to eliminate those cases where the total aid intensity could exceed the permitted limit of support, the grantor reserves the right to allow other grantors of support access to data on submitted project proposals, projects under the programme and to data on the actual expenditure of these projects in accordance with applicable legislation<sup>97</sup> The grantor reserves the right to use any other appropriate, legitimate and mutually agreed form of cooperation with other R&D&I support grantors.

## 8.5. Use of the support and reporting of eligible costs

The purpose of the support may not be changed. The subject of support may be changed only in accordance with Act No. 130/2002 Coll. and the provisions of the contract for the provision of support. The subject of support is a project selected in the EXCELES programme public tender, as defined by the project's goals. Modifications to the amount of eligible costs, their specification, or the amount of support granted, while respecting the legal limit, are not considered to be project modifications.<sup>98</sup>

The use of support must be in accordance with Section 8 and other related provisions of Act No. 130/2002 Coll., the R&D Framework and Regulation (EU) No. 651/2014. The allocated targeted support may be used to cover such eligible project costs or project expenses incurred by the beneficiary or other project participant under the terms of the EXCELES programme as set out in this tender documentation and the contract for the provision of support directly and exclusively for the project solution, that have been approved and accepted by the grantor on the basis of the facts and justification set out in the project proposal or in the interim project report and that are defined in the contract for the provision of support concluded with the grantor (hereinafter referred to as "eligible project costs"). The targeted support granted may only be used to cover the eligible costs of the project. The eligibility of costs is limited in time to the day following the date of receipt of the project proposal for the public tender, but no earlier than 1. 1. 2022, and ending on the date of completion of the project, but no later than 15. 12. 2025.

Support granted for an EXCELES project **cannot be used** to pay ineligible costs or expenses as defined in Article 7.3.

The beneficiary is obliged to financially settle the granted support in accordance with Section 75 of Act No.218/2000 Coll., within the deadlines and in accordance with the principles set by the Ministry of Finance by decree, to submit the financial settlement of the support to the grantor in the prescribed form, and to transfer any refund to the grantor's foreign funds account no. 6015-821001/0710, unless

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<sup>95</sup> One invoice or tax document must correspond to one financial source for the payment of the full amount shown on the invoice or tax document, excluding VAT.

<sup>96</sup> in particular, Articles 4.4 and 4.5 of the R&D Framework; Articles 6 and 8 of Regulation (EU) No 651/2014.

<sup>97</sup> Act No. 148/1998 Coll., on Protection of Classified Information and Amending Certain Acts, as amended, Act No. 101/2000 Coll., on the Protection of Personal Data and on Amendment to Some Acts, as amended, Act No. 106/1999 Coll., Act No. 121/2000 Coll., on Copyright and Related Rights and on Amendments to Certain Acts (Copyright Act), Act No. 89/2012 Coll., Civil Code, as amended).

<sup>98</sup> Section 9(7) of Act No. 130/2002 Coll.

the grantor currently provides otherwise. For the purposes of the financial settlement of relations with the state budget, the date of termination of project funding means the date of the due completion of the project, which shall not exceed 15. 12. 2025. This obligation of the beneficiary also applies to the provision of supporting documents for the financial settlement of the support for all other project participants. Violation of the obligation set out in this paragraph or failure to comply with the purpose and subject of support is always considered a breach of budgetary discipline within the meaning of Section 44 of Act No. 218/2000 Coll. Failure to comply with these obligations will be subject to a levy for the breach of budgetary discipline.

The beneficiary of the support is also obliged to

- a) keep separate records of all project expenditure and costs incurred in accordance with Act No. 563/1991 Coll., and in accordance with Act No 218/2000 Coll.; within this separate accounting record, to track the total expenditure or costs of the project and, at the same time, the expenditure or costs covered by the support provided for the project. The beneficiary will keep separate accounting records of the expenditure and costs of the total eligible project costs that are covered by other public sources, also in accordance with the requirements of the relevant grantors. The method of recording the costs or expenses of the project shall be determined by the beneficiary in accordance with the provisions of Act No. 563/1991 Coll., in accordance with Act No. 218/2000 Coll. and the applicable internal regulations of the beneficiary. Each cost or expenditure drawn from the support must be recorded under a unique identifier and be unambiguously linked to the project identification code assigned by the grantor in the IS VaVal (LX22NPO51--). At the same time, each expenditure must be correlated in the receipts and disbursements with the instrument number "17051", established by the Ministry of Finance for Component 5.1 in the NRP.
- b) keep accounting entries in the accounting records and accounting documents on all project expenditure and costs incurred during and after the project is completed for the period specified by Act No. 563/1991 Coll. and Act No. 130/2002 Coll., but at least for 10 years after the end of the EXCELES programme support, i.e. until 15. 12. 2035 inclusive. Furthermore, the identification of the final beneficiaries of the support (including suppliers/subcontractors of products, goods and services) and other entities involved in the project, together with the amount of payment and supporting documentation (e.g. on the tenders carried out or documents needed for an adequate audit trail) must be made available to the grantor and subsequent other audits.
- c) for the purposes of monitoring the fulfilment of the project goals, carry out an accounting of the eligible project costs and the use of support for each calendar year and after the project has been completed, in accordance with the instructions of the grantor on forms prescribed by the grantor.
- d) repay any funds not definitely drawn from the support granted in the calendar year in question, preferably by November 30 and no later than December 31 of the calendar year in question, to the grantor's expenditure account number 821001/0710 (unless otherwise currently specified) and inform the grantor of the refund of the amount of unspent support funds via a notice which must be delivered by email to aviza@msmt.cz and copied to the programme administrator designated by the grantor so that the grantor receives the notice no later than the date the refund is credited to the account.
- e) no later than 15 November of the calendar year in question, notify and justify in writing the amount of the underspent project support funds that will be transferred to the earmarked fund,

if its use by the beneficiary of support or other project participants is permitted by specific legislation.<sup>99</sup> The funds transferred may be used only for the purpose for which they were granted.

- f) to return the unspent funds of the earmarked fund according to the special legal regulation referred to in point e) to the grantor's revenue account no. 19-821001/0710 (unless otherwise specified at the time), during settlement with the state budget, i.e. by 15 February of the calendar year following the year in which the earmarked fund should have been spent at the latest.

## 8.6. Change in the amount of support and eligible project costs

Changes to the amount of eligible costs or the amount of support proposed by the beneficiary are made via written amendments to the contract for the provision of support and are limited to the limit set out in Section 9(7) of Act No 130/2002 Coll. Changes in the specification of the eligible project costs are subject to the assessment and written approval of the grantor, unless otherwise expressly stated in the contract for the provision of support.

A change in the amount of support and the eligible costs of the project is not considered to be a change if, after the evaluation of the project for the previous calendar year, the grantor reduces the initially granted amount of support or, in accordance with Section 14f of Act No. 218/2000 Coll., requires the refund of part thereof due to the ascertained discrepancies, following the result of the evaluation and the audit of the actual use of support and the total recognised project expenditure according to the documented bills and accounting documents, and the result of the review of their eligibility.

## 9. Communication and publicity

### 9.1. Mandatory publicity

Each individual beneficiary and any other participant in an EXCELES project is obliged to comply with the rules on uniform publicity as laid down in Article 34 of Regulation (EU) 2021/241. Depending on the nature of the activities, each of them must always ensure that the source of EU funding is visibly identified.

The beneficiary and any other participant in the project shall, as part of all its information and communication measures, ensure the visibility of the origin of the funding as described above at all times when promoting the project, implementing and publicising individual project activities or promoting its results and outputs, by providing comprehensive, effective and appropriate information to the various target groups, including the media and the public, always by displaying the project identification code (as defined in the IS VaVal, hereinafter referred to as the "project ID"), the MEYS logo, the NRP logo, the EU logo for the RRF or the statement "Funded by the European Union – Next Generation EU<sup>100</sup>". The EU logo for the RRF (hereinafter the "EU logo") shall be used in accordance with these rules:

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<sup>99</sup> e.g. Act No. 111/1998 Coll. or Act No. 341/2005 Coll.

<sup>100</sup> Alternatively, it is possible to use the short version "Funded by the EU – Next Generation EU". The logo manual will be available on the National Recovery Plan website: [www.planobnovy.cz](http://www.planobnovy.cz).

- a) The emblem must remain distinct and separate and cannot be modified by the addition of other visual marks, signs or text. If the EU emblem is displayed in conjunction with another logo (MEYS and the NRP), it must be displayed at least as prominently as the other logos.
- b) Graphic standards shall be used according to the guidelines published at [https://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/en/information/logos\\_downloadcenter/](https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/information/logos_downloadcenter/), where an online template generator and a download centre for the funding statement will also be made available.
- c) Apart from the general logo, i.e. the EU emblem and the logos of the NRP of the Czech Republic and the grantor, logos of other entities (e.g. suppliers, subcontractors) are not used throughout the NRP and EXCELES programme.
- d) The logos shall always be placed in such a way that they are clearly visible. Their location and size must be proportional to the dimensions of the material or document used.
- e) In accordance with the Implementing Regulation, logos displayed on websites shall always be in colour; in all other cases colour shall be used whenever possible. The monochrome version may only be used in justified cases<sup>101</sup>.
- f) The acquisition of a black and white copy of a colour original shall not be considered as non-compliance with the rules of publicity.
- g) The obligation to provide a link to the fund does not apply to small items where it is not technically feasible to display the full version. The recommended minimum dimensions of the EU logo are defined in the guidelines mentioned under b) above.

During the EXCELES project, the beneficiary and any other participant in the project are obliged to inform the public about the support received from the RRF by:

1. publishing a brief description of the project, including its goals and results, on the project's website, if one exists, and highlight that it receives funding from the EU with the statement/logo "Funded by the European Union – Next Generation EU";
2. placing at least one poster of at least A3 size with information about the project and the EU logo for the RRF in a clearly visible place at the workplaces supported by the project after its replacement, to be replaced by a permanent plaque by the end of 2023 at the latest. In the case where it is not possible to place a poster/plaque at the project site, the publicity of the support can be placed at the beneficiary's headquarters;
3. ensuring that those involved in the project are informed of the RRF funding. Any document relating to the project that is used to inform the public or the target group, including any acknowledgement of participation or other confirmation, must include a statement that the project has been supported by the RRF. This obligation is fully met by the beneficiary referring to the supported project or its activity by displaying the EU logo for the RRF and the project ID. This method is the recommended simplest option;
4. in the case of employment support activities financed by the RRF, the beneficiary shall ensure that the entities involved in the operation are explicitly informed about support through the RRF.

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<sup>101</sup> The use of a monochrome logo can be considered justified in cases where the materials are printed on conventional office printers and in other cases where the material does not allow for a colour version or where the use of a colour version of the logos would not be economical, ecological or aesthetic.



Figure 1: Logo of the MEYS.  
Republic<sup>102</sup>



Figure 2: Logo of the National Recovery Plan of the Czech



Figure 3: The EU logo used for funding from NextGeneration EU.



The beneficiary is obliged to inform the grantor about the fulfilment of mandatory publicity in each interim and final report. The information must include at least

- i. the objectives of communication with the public,
- ii. the target groups addressed,
- iii. the communication tools used,
- iv. a list of the activities carried out and their scope (including presentations, publicity, dissemination of results and outputs of the project, indicating by whom, when and where they were carried out).

## 9.2. Definition of data to be disclosed

For the purposes of the public tender R&D&I of the EXCELES programme, the grantor is entitled to collect the necessary data on project proposals and applicants, including personal data in both written and electronic form, in accordance with Act No.130/2002 Coll.<sup>103</sup> This data is not publicly available information according to a specific legal regulation<sup>104</sup>. The grantor is obliged to comply with specific legislation<sup>105</sup> when collecting, disclosing or otherwise processing this information, if applicable.

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<sup>102</sup> website of the National Recovery Plan of the Czech Republic <https://www.planobnovy.cz/>

<sup>103</sup> Section 17(6) of Act No. 130/2002 Coll.

<sup>104</sup> of Act No. 106/1999 Coll.

<sup>105</sup> of Act No. 148/1998 Coll.

The grantor is entitled to provide and publish data on supported projects only in the scope and manner according to Act No. 130/2002 Coll.<sup>106</sup> The following are published, in particular:

- a) name of the project;
- b) subject of the project;
- c) beneficiary of the support;
- d) principal investigator;
- e) project duration;
- f) total eligible costs;
- g) breakdown of recognised costs;
- h) amount of support;
- i) degree of confidentiality of the data;
- j) result of the post-project evaluation.

Of the personal data, the grantor may only disclose the name, surname and, if applicable, academic titles and scientific ranks of the principal investigator, collaborating investigators and other staff involved in the supported project. During the tender and evaluation period, all information provided in the project proposal is considered confidential.

According to Act No. 130/2002 Coll.<sup>107</sup> and Government Regulation No. 397/2009 Coll., on the Information System for Research, Experimental Development and Innovation, the beneficiary is obliged to annually submit data on the project and its results to the grantor, who will transfer them to the IS VaVal. For the first time, the beneficiary shall provide data on the project before signing the contract for the provision of support in accordance with the instructions of the grantor. The beneficiary is obliged to submit data on the project and its expenditure continuously in accordance with the instructions of the grantor, which follows the methodological guidelines of the managing authority of the NRP and the EC on the RRF.

The beneficiary and other participants in the support must ensure that the project data and, where possible, the scientific data generated by the support in the project are also provided in accordance with the requirements of Act No. 106/1999 Coll. and Directive (EU) 2019/1024 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 June 2019 on open data and the re-use of public sector information<sup>108</sup> Following these obligations, the beneficiary will submit to the grantor in each interim and final project report its plan for sharing the scientific data generated by the project ("data management plan")<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> Sections 30 to 32 of Act No. 130/2002 Coll.

<sup>107</sup> Section 31(3) of Act No. 130/2002 Coll.

<sup>108</sup> Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/cs/LSU/?uri=CELEX:32019L1024>

<sup>109</sup> Information on the "data management plan" and FAIR principles of scientific data sharing e.g.

[https://www.lib.cas.cz/podpora/data/asep/pro\\_autory/DMP\\_2018.pdf](https://www.lib.cas.cz/podpora/data/asep/pro_autory/DMP_2018.pdf),

[https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/docs/h2020-funding-guide/cross-cutting-issues/open-access-data-management/data-management\\_en.htm](https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/docs/h2020-funding-guide/cross-cutting-issues/open-access-data-management/data-management_en.htm), <https://openscience.cuni.cz/>, <https://openscience.muni.cz/fair-a-open-data>,



### 9.3. Information support for applicants

The grantor will organise informative one-day seminars for the applicants on 16 December 2021 and 18 January 2022 at 10:30 a.m. in the meeting room 081 of Building C of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, Karmelitská 7, Prague 1. In case of increased health risk, the seminar will be conducted online. The seminar is scheduled to end at 2pm.

The grantor may change the form, dates and location of the seminars and publish the change at least 3 working days before the date of the seminar on the EXCELES website at <https://www.msmt.cz/vyzkum-a-vyvoj-2/program-exceles-komponenta-5-1-narodniho-planu-obnovy>.

At the seminar, the applicant's representative will receive general information on the announcement of the public tender to the programme, and questions relating to the preparation and submission of a project proposal in the EXCELES programme sent to the grantor electronically in advance will be answered in a general form. In order to ensure a level playing field for all interested parties, any questions and answers will be published on the EXCELES programme website.

Only technical and formal questions will be answered by the contact person throughout the tender period. The grantor will not provide answers to other questions. If an applicant does not make use of the information and technical assistance, it cannot claim disadvantage in the public tender on that basis.

Interested persons may attend the above seminars only on the basis of prior registration, which is necessary due to limited space.

Registration will be closed by the grantor when the capacity of the hall is full and no later than two working days before the seminar. At the same time, the grantor reserves the right to limit the participation of interested persons to two persons from one consortium in case of exceeding the capacity of the meeting room, or to set an alternative date for repeating the seminar for those already registered. In such a case, these registered candidates will be informed directly by e-mail.

Applicants register for the seminar by sending an electronic message to the e-mail address of the contact person for the EXCELES programme public tender indicated above, with the subject "LX - VES1". The message will include the full name of the seconded person with titles if applicable, his/her current e-mail address and telephone number in case of a change of venue or date of the workshop, the name of his/her employer and the name of the consortium he/she represents, and any questions related to the preparation and submission of the EXCELES project proposal.

If the applicant does not electronically deliver the required registration and any questions no later than 2 calendar days prior to the seminar or does not include the prescribed title in the subject line of the e-mail, it may not be identified in a timely manner and the grantor does not guarantee the attendance of the seconded person at the seminar or the answering of questions.

## 10. Selection method and evaluation criteria for project proposals

### 10.1. Selection method for project proposals

The method of selecting projects in the public tender is regulated by Section 21 of Act No. 130/2002 Coll. The subject of evaluation in the selection of projects in the public tender is the project proposal

submitted by the applicant within the tender period, including all its annexes and documents demonstrating the applicant's eligibility.

The grantor appoints a committee to receive project proposals, which checks the project proposals for compliance with the conditions of the public tender. Failure to comply with the conditions set out in the tender documentation in Chap. 5 will result in the non-inclusion of the project proposal in the public tender pursuant to Section 21(2) of Act No. 130/2002 Coll. In the event that the eligibility of the application is insufficiently documented, the grantor will invite the applicant to complete the relevant document within **five calendar days**. The invitation is sent by data mailbox. The decision on whether or not to accept a project proposal in the public tender is made by the grantor on the basis of a protocol prepared by the project proposal acceptance committee.

Project proposals accepted into the tender will be referred to the grantor's Expert Advisory Body (hereinafter referred to as "EAB") for evaluation. The manner of the meeting of the EAB established for this programme, its composition, the way of handling the data contained in the project proposals and other rules of the activity of the grantor's expert advisory body are regulated by the statutes and rules of procedure, which are published on the programme's website<sup>110</sup>. The expert advisory body will prepare an evaluation report<sup>111</sup> for each **evaluated project proposal**,

For each project proposal accepted for the public tender, the grantor shall secure the expert opinions of at least two independent opponents who, in accordance with Act No 130/2002 Coll. and Article 61 of Regulation (EU) 2018/1046, must not be biased or have a conflict of interest in relation to the subject of the public tender or to the applicants, in particular, they must not be involved in the processing of the project, must not have a personal interest in the decision to grant support to a particular project, and must not be linked to the applicants via a personal or employment or other similar relationship<sup>112</sup>

In the event that the grantor, on the proposal of the committee for the acceptance of project proposals, decides, pursuant to Act No. 130/2002 Coll., that the project proposal has not met the conditions of the public tender set out in the tender documentation or decides, on the basis of a reasoned recommendation of the grantor's expert advisory body, that the project proposal will not be further evaluated for fundamental reasons<sup>113</sup>, the project proposal will be eliminated from the public tender and no opponents' opinions will be provided for this project proposal.

The grantor's expert advisory body and independent expert opponents shall evaluate project proposals objectively and impartially in accordance with the rules set out in Article 10.2.

The grantor's expert advisory body is obliged to take into account the opinions of independent opponents in its evaluation. The final score of each evaluated project will be calculated as the sum of the average of the scores assigned by the members of the EAB and the average of the scores assigned to the project by independent opponents. The ranking of the projects will be obtained by a simple descending order according to the resulting sum of points, separately for each individual R&D&I priority area. The final ranking of the evaluated project proposals will be decided on by the grantor. Only one project can be supported in a given R&D&I priority area<sup>114</sup>

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<sup>110</sup> <https://www.msmt.cz/vyzkum-a-vyvoj-2/program-exceles-komponenta-5-1-narodniho-planu-obnovy>

<sup>111</sup> In accordance with Section 21(6) of Act No. 130/2002 Coll.

<sup>112</sup> Within the meaning of Article 21(4) of Act No 130/2002 Coll. and Article 61 of Regulation (EU) 2018/1046

<sup>113</sup> Pursuant to Section 21(5) of Act No. 130/2002 Coll.

<sup>114</sup> The grantor will proceed in accordance with Section 21(7) of Act No. 130/2002 Coll.

The grantor will decide on the result of the tender. The result of the tender will be announced to the applicant on the programme website<sup>115</sup>. Successful applicants will also be invited to demonstrate their eligibility in accordance with the tender documentation and to conclude a contract for the provision of support via the programme website.

## 10.2. Criteria for the evaluation of project proposals in the public tender

The evaluated criteria/sub-criteria are scored on a four-point scale:

Verbal evaluation	Points
Fulfilled without reservations	5
Fulfilled with minor reservations	3
Fulfilled with serious reservations	1
Not fulfilled	0

Where the criterion being evaluated contains separate sub-criteria, the final mark is the sum of the scores of the individual sub-criteria. A project scoring 0 points in any of the criteria listed below will be excluded from the competition. The criteria to be applied in the evaluation of project proposals are:

### 10.2.1. Ability of the applicant and other project participants to successfully implement the project

The material and technical prerequisites of the applicant and other project participants for implementing the project in the chosen R&D&I priority area and the possibilities of their use for the project solution will be assessed. Emphasis is also placed on the applicant's ability to organisationally and administratively implement and manage the consortium project under the conditions given by the consortium and internal organisation of the applicant and other project participants (see Chap. 6.3) .....max. 10 points.

- a) **Relevant material and technical equipment** – The subject of the evaluation is whether the applicant and other participants are adequately technically equipped for the project. Plans for the renewal of equipment and renovation of premises are also subject to evaluation.
- b) **Organizational and management structure proposal** – The proposal for the organizational and management structure for the operation of the consortium grouping is assessed. The effectiveness and appropriateness of the proposed processes for the quality functioning of the consortium grouping is assessed.

### 10.2.2. Professional and personnel assurance

The applicant will be assessed on whether it is able to demonstrate the assurance of staffing and expertise for the project's research team according to the programme requirements, i.e. professional

<sup>115</sup> <https://www.msmt.cz/vyzkum-a-vyvoj-2/program-exceles-komponenta-5-1-narodniho-planu-obnovy>

qualifications and experience of the principal investigator, collaborating investigators and research team, excellence and balance in the composition of the research team, representation of internationally recognised personalities, equal representation of men and women, and the involvement of young and early-career researchers for the chosen R&D&I priority area..max. 20 points.

Human resource development plans and their implementation (e.g. targeted activities aimed at internal transformation to obtain an HR Award or to implement a gender equality plan) may also be subject to evaluation in all sub-criteria of professional and personnel assurance. The fulfilment of the proposed goals in the field of human resources development will be obligatorily evaluated in the interim evaluation of the project.

Points will be awarded in the following sub-criteria:

- a) **Expertise and experience of the research team** – The expertise and experience of the research team<sup>116</sup> is evaluated in relation to the prerequisites to achieve the set goals. An important criterion is the representation of internationally renowned individuals in the research team.
- b) **Representation of foreign experts in the research team** – The internationalisation of the research team is evaluated. The evaluation also includes strategies for recruiting foreign researchers that will be implemented as part of the project.
- c) **Involvement of young and early career scientists** – The participation of young and early career scientists in the project is also an assessed criterion. The evaluation will assess how their involvement in the project will be supported and how quality science education will be promoted.
- d) **Preference for gender balance of the research team** – This sub-criterion can only be assessed as ***not fulfilled/fulfilled without reservations***. A fulfilled without reservations rating can only be awarded if both genders are represented in the team by at least 40%.

### 10.2.3. Quality of the proposed project solution

The quality of the project proposal is assessed, in particular, how the applicant intends to achieve the set goals, including the feasibility of achieving them in time and in the material, technical and organisational economic conditions of the applicant and other project participants, or the link of the project to existing strategic documents in the field of population health.....max. 40 points.

Points will be awarded in the following sub-criteria:

- a) **Relevance to the programme** – The consistency of the defined project approach with the programme goals and its partial goals and with the priorities defined in other strategic documents in the field of public health is evaluated, i.e. the expected benefit of the project activities:
  1. to fulfilling the objectives of the Innovation Strategy of the Czech Republic 2019-2030 for the area "Innovation and Research Centres", i.e. to increasing the quality and internationalisation of research carried out in the Czech Republic in the state-selected priority areas of R&D&I with the aim of achieving European or global excellence and the

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<sup>116</sup> The fulfilment of the threshold criteria for demonstrating the eligibility of the applicant and other project participants regarding the composition of the research team is the subject of the formal evaluation of the application for support by the project proposal acceptance committee.

position of an equal and respected player in the European Research Area, which participates in the creation of trends of excellent European research;

2. to fulfilling the priorities formulated in the National Priorities for Oriented Research, Experimental Development and Innovation in the area of "Population Health", not only in terms of thematic focus on key diseases, but also in terms of emphasis on the need to include social science research alongside medical research;
3. to strengthen the knowledge base and application potential in strategically important topics defined in the domain "Advanced Medicine and Pharmaceuticals" of the National Research and Innovation Strategy for Smart Specialization of the Czech Republic 2021-2027;
4. to meeting one of the three strategic objectives of the Health 2030 Strategic Framework;
5. to eliminating some partial or systemic weaknesses in health research as identified in the Concept of Health Research until 2022 or a subsequent relevant document.

If the project proposal does not clearly and comprehensibly describe the consistency of the defined project design with the goals of the EXCELES programme and point 1) and at least one of points 2) to 5), the sub-criterion will **be scored 0 points** and no further sub-criteria will be evaluated.

- b) **Design of the project solution** – The plan for the fulfilment of the set goals, the rationality of the partial goals is assessed. Furthermore, the suitability of the chosen methodology and the relevance of the substantive scope of the project activities to the project goals and the potential to achieve new breakthrough knowledge and knowledge with high added value, and application potential using cutting-edge scientific procedures and technologies are evaluated. The degree of the multi- or interdisciplinarity of the chosen approach is also evaluated.
- c) **Analysis of the current state** – This sub-criterion evaluates the quality and relevance of the presented conclusions of the analysis of the "**baseline**" and the level of knowledge in the chosen R&D&I priority area. The evaluation is based on whether the 'baseline' has been set appropriately and will have sufficient incentive effect in relation to the expected results and outputs of the project.
- d) **Risk analysis** – This sub-criterion focuses on the evaluation of the risk analysis performed in terms of correct identification of the project risks. Emphasis is placed on the quality and feasibility of planned measures to prevent the identified risks.
- e) **Realistic achievement of the set goals** – The subject of the evaluation is the realistic achievement of the set goals, or partial goals, in accordance with the project schedule and in the conditions of the applicant and other project participants. The prerequisites for meeting the schedule are evaluated with respect to the complexity of the chosen goals and the necessary intermediate steps required to meet them, the size of the research team and the principle of uncertainty in R&D.
- f) **Consideration of gender aspects of research** – How the project will take into consideration gender aspects in the research content is evaluated<sup>117</sup>. The ability to identify the gender context

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<sup>117</sup> For more information on gender mainstreaming in research, see e.g. [http://www.geecco-project.eu/resources\\_results/additional\\_material/](http://www.geecco-project.eu/resources_results/additional_material/) or <https://www.tacr.cz/wp->

of the issue under study or the current state of knowledge, its consideration in the research methodology, the method of evaluating the results and in the application are also assessed.

- g) **Method of knowledge sharing and knowledge transfer** – Dissemination of project results and scientific data is assessed based on FAIR<sup>118</sup> principles. A plan for protecting intellectual property and rights to results, identifying opportunities for applying an "open access" regime in publishing results, and sharing validated scientific data to the maximum extent possible are assessed.<sup>119</sup>
- h) **Sustainability** – This sub-criterion focuses on assessing the sustainability of the consortium cooperation after the termination of support under the EXCELES programme for at least another 3 years. Any planned changes in the consortium's organisational and management structure related to continued operation after the end of the support are also evaluated.

#### 10.2.4. Results and outputs

The relevance of the expected results and outputs for addressing known or expected, current or future societal needs in the chosen R&D&I priority area is assessed..... max. 15 points.

Points will be awarded in the following sub-criteria:

- a) **Number and type of results** – The quantity and type of planned production of excellent results and other outputs of the project are assessed in relation to the size of the research team. The feasibility of achieving the expected volume of production of scientific results and outputs is also evaluated.
- b) **Relevance of the expected results and outputs to the project goals** – It is evaluated whether the expected results have the potential to meet the goals supported by the programme.
- c) **Usability of expected results** – This sub-criterion evaluates the extent to which the results and outputs are usable by public authorities and other users of the results and their contribution to increasing the resilience of the healthcare system in chosen priority areas. The potential to strengthen the influence of the "evidence-based" approach on public authorities' decision-making will be assessed. These aspects are considered in particular, with regard to addressing national population health needs or major societal health crises such as the Covid-19 pandemic.

#### 10.2.5. Degree of national cooperation within the consortium and international cooperation

The degree of cooperation of top teams and experts from the Czech Republic and abroad is assessed. Involvement of domestic and foreign departments in the project, mutual use of facilities, sharing of knowledge and scientific data .....max. 25 points.

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[content/uploads/documents/2020/09/01/1598961612\\_Genderová\\_dimenze\\_v\\_obsahu\\_výzkumukdy\\_a\\_jak\\_ji\\_v\\_projektech\\_zohledňovat.pdf](https://content/uploads/documents/2020/09/01/1598961612_Genderová_dimenze_v_obsahu_výzkumukdy_a_jak_ji_v_projektech_zohledňovat.pdf)

<sup>118</sup> FAIR principles mean Findability, Accessibility, Interoperability and Reusability in line with European Open Access and EOSC policies (European Commission, 2021. European Open Science Cloud (EOSC) [online]. 25. 6. 2021 [cit. 23. 7. 2021]. Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/info/research-and-innovation/strategy/goals-research-and-innovation-policy/open-science/european-open-science-cloud-eosc\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/research-and-innovation/strategy/goals-research-and-innovation-policy/open-science/european-open-science-cloud-eosc_en)).

<sup>119</sup> Subject to compliance with all applicable regulations for the protection of personal data, sensitive data and intellectual property.



Points will be awarded in the following sub-criteria:

- a) **Representation of the relevant top teams across the Czech Republic;**
- b) **Representation of the relevant top teams and experts from abroad;**
- c) **Utilisation rate of large research infrastructures in relevant R&D&I areas;**
- d) **Sharing of research infrastructure within a consortium;**
- e) **Sharing of knowledge and scientific data among participating teams.**

#### 10.2.6. Composition of the "International Supervisory and Advisory Board - ISAB"

A proposal for the composition of an international expert board of the project is being considered, which will professionally supervise the scientific research project activities.....max. 15 points.

The criterion is subject to meeting the threshold requirements, i.e. the presence **of more than half of the foreign experts in the ISAB, the presence of a legal expert, an economic expert and a representative of the application sphere in the relevant sector.**

Points will be awarded in the following sub-criteria:

- a) **Professional competence of ISAB members**<sup>120</sup> – The subject of evaluation is the professional competence of individual ISAB members.
- b) **Relevance of the panel composition to the focus of the project and planned research activities** – The ISAB as a whole is evaluated. The evaluators will focus on whether all scientific areas addressed by the project are adequately covered.
- c) **ISAB Gender Balance Preference** – This sub-criterion can only be rated as *not fulfilled/fulfilled without reservations*. A rating of *fulfilled without reservations* can only be given if both genders are represented in the ISAB by at least 40%.

#### 10.2.7. Efficiency and cost-effectiveness of the project

Both the efficiency and economic intensity of the project and whether the condition of the incentive effect of the support provided will be fulfilled are assessed, as well as the correct categorisation of research activities.....max. 15 points.

Points will be awarded in the following sub-criteria:

- a) **Efficiency and cost-effectiveness** – The proposed project costs are assessed to ensure that they are reasonable in relation to the selected project goals, project activities, project results and expected benefits to the programme goals.
- b) **Incentive effect** – The fulfilment of the condition of the incentive effect of the support is evaluated, i.e. whether the support will enable to carry out R&D&I activities that the applicant would otherwise not be able to perform or would perform only to a very limited extent.

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<sup>120</sup> Supported by the professional characterisation of an ISAB member.



- c) **Categorization of project activities** – It is evaluated whether the applicant has correctly categorised the planned project activities within the categories of applied research (Basic Research, Industrial Research, Experimental Development and Innovation).

Based on the evaluation of the EAB, the grantor reserves the right to adjust the amount of the proposed eligible costs if it finds that the proposed financial costs are disproportionate to the project.

## 11. The interim and final evaluations of supported projects

The implementation of a project that has been granted special-purpose support from the state budget is monitored annually on the basis of an interim report prepared by the beneficiary in accordance with the grantor's instructions or other documents required by the grantor. The beneficiary shall include in the interim report an evaluation of the project's focus and results carried out by ISAB members. Monitoring of the project by the grantor will be carried out with the participation of members of the grantor's expert advisory body.

In-depth control and substantive evaluation of the fulfilment of the project goals will be carried out by the grantor in accordance with Act No.130/2002 Coll.<sup>121</sup> once during the project (interim evaluation, i.e. after the end of the second calendar year of the project in 2024), after the termination of the project (2025-2026), and whenever non-compliance is detected during the monitoring of the project. The evaluation is carried out with the participation of members of the grantor's expert advisory body, on the basis of two independent reviews and in cooperation with members of the ISAB. The evaluation includes an on-site inspection or an adversarial procedure.

On the basis of the interim reports, the monitoring of the project's goals / partial goals includes in particular:

- Achievement of the set goals / partial goals in relation to the project schedule.
- Quality of the research carried out, year-on-year production and quality of results and outputs.
- Cooperation with public authorities.
- Compliance of the use of the funds provided with the planned budget and the funding rules laid down by the programme.
- Level of cooperation in R&D&I at national / interregional and international level.
- Protection and application of R&D&I results obtained in the project, sharing of scientific information, including scientific data, and dissemination based on FAIR principles.
- Adherence to DNSH principles.
- Implementation of personnel policies in line with programme requirements and project design (gender equality, the involvement of young and early career scientists, internationalisation).

In case of failure to meet the goals / partial goals of the project, the grantor cannot provide support for follow-up activities for the following calendar year and therefore, the corresponding part of support may be reduced. At the same time, a call for reimbursement of part of the support for unfulfilled activities may be made. The grantor will proceed here in accordance with Act No. 218/2000

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<sup>121</sup> Section 13(1) and (2).

Coll. The results of the evaluation of the projects based on the interim and final evaluation will be sorted into categories according to the IS VaVal:

- **Excellent "V":** the project fulfils / fulfilled the set goals in an excellent manner and achieves/achieved outstanding internationally recognised results, significantly excellent in comparison not only within the projects of this programme but also in international comparison (for scientific results at least at the level of "top 10" according to the bibliometric analyses in the WoS or Scopus citation databases). At the same time, the project fulfils / fulfilled all contractual conditions and, in addition, exhibits / exhibited an effective and efficient increase in the contractually defined sub-target values of the monitored indicators for the past period.
- **Successful "U":** the project successfully fulfils / fulfilled the set goals according to the contract, achieves internationally recognised results (as required in Article 11.2 of the TD) and the quality of the solution corresponds to the conditions of the contract and this programme.
- **Failed – contract complied with:** the project does/did not fulfil the stated project goals or does not achieve the quality of the solution for reasons that could not have been foreseen by the grantor or the beneficiary. The support will not be reduced, but the beneficiary will be given a deadline by which it must achieve progress and the required quality level of the solution. If the contractual obligations are not fulfilled or are only partially fulfilled due to other unforeseen reasons on the part of the beneficiary, the further progress of the project will be dealt with at the level of contractual relations between the beneficiary and the grantor. This result may be reflected for a transitional period in the amount of project support provided for the next stage of the solution and gives the grantor the possibility to temporarily penalise the inactivity or insufficient efforts of the beneficiary by reducing the support for this or the following stage of the solution by up to 50%, unless otherwise agreed between the grantor and the beneficiary.
- **Failed – Contractual penalty:** the project does / did not meet the set goals and must be sanctioned according to the contract. Non-fulfilment or only partial fulfilment of contractual obligations will be dealt with at the level of the contractual relationship between the beneficiary and the grantor. This result will always be reflected in the amount of project support provided for the next stage of the solution, when the amount of support will be reduced or a reimbursement of part of the support may be required in accordance with the conditions set out in Act No. 130/2002 Coll. and Act No. 218/2000 Coll., or the project may be abandoned and terminated prematurely. In the case of projects that have already been completed, the outcome of the evaluation in this category may be dealt with by a contractual penalty, which will take the form of the reimbursement of support or part thereof.

### 11.1. Set of evaluation criteria for supported projects

The criteria for monitoring and evaluation of projects include a number of socio-economic aspects. Their monitoring is mandatory for each project, even if, due to the nature of the project, the target values for some indicators may be zero.

For all the project evaluation criteria, the applicant itself shall set non-zero target values in the project proposal in relation to the project success threshold conditions and the initial status with which it will enter the project.

Each beneficiary of support is obliged to report to the grantor the fulfilment of the criteria for the monitoring and evaluation of projects continuously at annual intervals throughout the entire duration

of the project. The relevant criteria will also be reported in the framework of the ex-post evaluation of the programme, i.e. up to three years after the termination of project support, in the manner and according to the instructions of the grantor.

#### **11.1.1. Monitored indicators for project evaluation**

The monitored indicators are set identically for all levels of evaluation (EAB, Opponents, ISAB). The evaluation of the project proposal assesses the initial status at the time of submission of the application to the public tender and the ambition for the future. The interim and final evaluations then focus on assessing the achievement of the goals and ambition set out in the project proposal. Relevant indicators will be used to assess sustainability.

INDICATORS MONITORED FOR PROJECT EVALUATION			
Area of evaluation	no.	Indicator	Specifications <sup>122</sup>
Qualitative criteria	1	Consistency of the project goals with the EXCELES goals. Including the contribution of project activities to:	fulfilling the objectives of the Innovation Strategy for the area "Innovation and Research Centres", i.e. increasing the quality and internationalisation of research in the Czech Republic in the state-chosen priority areas of R&D&I with the aim of achieving European or world excellence and the position of an equal and respected player in the European Research Area, which participates in the creation of trends of excellent European research.
			fulfilling the priorities formulated in the National Priorities for Oriented Research, Experimental Development and Innovation in the area of "Population Health", not only in terms of its thematic focus on key diseases, but also in terms of its emphasis on the need to include social science research alongside medical research;
			strengthening the knowledge base and application potential in strategically important topics defined in the domain "Advanced Medicine and Pharmaceuticals" of the National Research and Innovation Strategy for Smart Specialization of the Czech Republic 2021-2027;

<sup>122</sup> In the case of quantitative criteria, the proportion of women is also reported in all relevant cases. In the case of a project proposal, the proposed values of the quantitative criteria are also assessed for ambition.

			meeting one of the three strategic objectives of the Health 2030 Strategic Framework;
			the elimination of some partial or systemic weaknesses in health research as identified in the Concept of Health Research until 2022.
	2	Breakdown of project goals into partial goals,	including the rationality of the division in relation to their fulfilment and the project schedule.
	3	Categorisation of project activities.	The correctness of categorisation in relation to the results and outputs defined by the applicant / beneficiary.
	4	Compliance with the planned schedule.	The feasibility of the project proposal is assessed.
	5	Compliance with the planned budget.	The feasibility of the project proposal is assessed.
	6	Adequacy of the planned project costs	in relation to the expected results and outputs and how these will be achieved by the indicated project activities.
	7	Analysis of the state of knowledge as of 2021 and the definition of a "baseline".	Identification of the progress made. For the project proposal, a definition of the state of knowledge as of 1. 1. 2021 and the ambition.
	8	Analysis of the risks associated with the project and how to manage them.	The feasibility of the chosen risk management method and its implementation.
	9	Protection of intellectual property, know-how and scientific data and their sharing (data management plan, application of an open access regime based on FAIR	The method and effectiveness of data protection and sharing.

		principles in relation to project results and outputs).	
	10	Setting up mechanisms for sustainability (consortium cooperation, sharing and use of upgraded or renovated research capacities, organisational and management structure including the definition of the roles of individual participants).	Sustainability of the project and sustainability after the end of the project, possible changes in the organisational and management structure in terms of project sustainability.
	11	ISAB Professional Competence	Composition of ISAB, sectoral coverage in relation to the chosen R&D&I priority area.
	12	ISAB Gender Balance.	Proportion of female representation and its justification.
<b>Results and outputs</b> <sup>123</sup>	13	New project results reported in the IS VaVal by the beneficiary or other project participants created within the framework of research cooperation using domestic large research infrastructure (listed in the Roadmap of the Czech Republic), for which co-authorship is granted to at least one member of the research team.	Absolute number and quality (broken down by types of results defined in the IS VaVal)
	14	New project results reported in the IS VaVal by the beneficiary or other project participants created in the framework of	Absolute number and quality (broken down by types of results defined in the IS VaVal)

<sup>123</sup> Results must be correctly identified according to the IS VaVal codebook. The codes of the types of results may change according to the currently valid IS VaVal codebook.

		other research cooperation with entities outside the consortium project, which have not been counted in the indicator mentioned above under no. 13 and for which co-authorship is granted to at least one member of the research team of the consortium project.	
	15	New project results reported in the IS VaVal by the beneficiary or other project participants, whose authors are exclusively supported members of the consortium project's research team.	Absolute number and quality (per FTE researcher and by type of results defined in IS VaVal. This shall always include the number of results recorded and counted in point no. 14, if any.)
	16	Patents of members of the research team registered under the PCT (Patents Cooperation Treaty).	Patent applications filed under the PCT / of which the number of successful registrations.
	17	Other project results and outputs of applied research.	The following is evaluated in particular:  Identification and number of certifications of newly introduced and accepted treatments, medical devices and products / of which the number of internationally certified.  Identification and number of new technological processes, widely applicable in innovative goods and services with high added value supported by a valid contract on the use of project results / others according to the types of results defined in IS VaVal



	18	Other types of new results and outputs of the project (also outside R&D&I) not mentioned elsewhere, including secondary ones.	Absolute number and quality / per FTE.
	19	Results and outputs aimed at presenting the gender perspective of the research conducted.	Absolute number broken down by types of results defined in the IS VaVal
	20	Outcomes and outputs aimed at enhancing the relevance of or complementing existing knowledge by taking into account the gender perspective.	Absolute number broken down by types of results defined in the R&D&I IS
<b>Benefits and impacts</b>	21	Application of results	Utilisation by the application sphere, the beneficiary of the support, the extent and manner of utilisation, expected further potential and the manner of its fulfilment. For the project proposal, the expected use and ambitions of the applicant are evaluated.
	22	Relevance of the project results and outputs to the project and programme goals.	The impact on the achievement of goals, including those set by other strategic documents in the public health sector, national priorities in R&D&I, and innovation strategy are assessed.
	23	Benefits of the project.	For beneficiaries and other participants
	24	Socio-economic benefits and impacts of project results and outputs.	At the national level, at the regional level, in the health sector, other societal ones.

<b>Excellence<sup>124</sup></b> <b>Internationalisation</b> <b>and regional</b> <b>cooperation</b>	25	Excellence in the composition of the consortium project team.	Identification and (absolute) number of key experts, internationally renowned personalities addressing the project (i.e. scientific or technical personalities meeting the conditions of expertise as defined in chapter <b>6.3</b> ).
	26	Quality of publication outputs.	Number and proportion of articles published in Q1 and Q2 of world-renowned peer-reviewed journals in the field dedicated to the project in the total production of articles published in recognised peer-reviewed journals and their change in the field over time (also after the termination of the project).
	27	Publication results of the project.	Number of citations / change in the reporting period
	28	Projects of international cooperation in R&D&I of the members of the research team which are funded from foreign sources.	Number of submitted projects / of which number of prestigious ERC or "Seal of Excellence" projects / of which proportion of successful <sup>125</sup> / of which proportion of supported and overlapping project periods
	29	Funds from abroad obtained by the beneficiary or another project participant from international cooperation thanks to the activity of a member of the research team.	The volume of funding in thousands of CZK is evaluated

<sup>124</sup> The excellence criteria monitor both the eligibility of the applicants and the ambition of the project and its change over time, i.e. they are assessed over a period of 3 years prior to the start of the project as part of the assessment of the eligibility of the applicant, as well as continuously during the project and after its completion.

<sup>125</sup> Successfully initiated project or A-rated project.

	30	Awards in the R&D&I priority area.	Number
	31	Participation of foreign experts in the results and outputs of the project.	Number and share of results (as classified by the IS VaVal) and outputs co-authored with foreign experts in relation to the total number, ambition or change compared to the baseline.
	32	Results and outputs of the project that have been produced through interregional cooperation.	Number and share of results (as broken down by the IS VaVal) and outputs co-authored by experts from different regions of the Czech Republic in relation to the total number, ambition or change compared to the baseline.
	33	Participation of foreign researchers in the project with a cumulative stay longer than 3 months.	Absolute number / FTE / share of total number of researchers involved
	34	Participation of members of the research team in international professional networks, R&D&I organizations and foreign evaluation panels and committees.	Number of persons and identification of entities
	35	Sharing scientific data in international scientific networks and structures.	Field structure, identification of sharing entities and type of data shared.
<b>Development of human resources, support for the young generation of researchers</b>	36	Participation of students involved in the project.	Absolute number of students in master's and doctoral programmes involved in the project, broken down by age categories min. 18-29 and 30+ and, where data protection principles allow, the number of people with disabilities and belonging to national/ethnic groups  / number per 1 FTE

	37	Participation of junior members of the research team not classified above in the project.	Absolute numbers by age categories min. 18-29 and 30+ and, where data protection principles allow, the number of people with disabilities and belonging to national/ethnic groups  / per 1 FTE
	38	Opposed theses of junior members of the research team developed within the project.	Absolute number / calculated as the number of junior members of the project team involved in the project
	39	Projects of junior members of the research team whose duration exceeds the duration of the project in this programme.	Number of projects initiated / of which number financed from abroad.
	40	Participation of researchers with R&D&I experience from abroad in the consortium's research team.	Percentage of such researchers per FTE with an employment relationship of more than 6 months / of which the number of researchers involved in the sustainability of the consortium for at least 6 months
	41	Implementation of the conditions for obtaining the HR AWARD.	Quality of the implementation plan / implementation progress.
	42	Implementation of the Gender Equality Plan.	Quality of the implementation plan / implementation progress.
	43	Gender balance in the research team.	Absolute number of women in the research team broken down by M.Sc., Ph.D. students, other junior team members / change in the composition of the team in terms of gender equality preference within the period under review.

<b>Collaboration, application potential and sustainability</b>	44	Use of large research infrastructures.	Identification and number of large research infrastructures / of which on the roadmap of the Czech Republic
	45	Cooperation with research organisations outside the project consortium.	Identification, number, sectoral definition, region of activity
	46	Cooperation with companies and public organizations from the application sphere outside the project consortium.	Identification, number, sectoral definition, region of activity
	47	Funds from the sale of licences following the exercise of rights to the results obtained from the project.	Estimated volume of funds raised in thous. of CZK / actual income
	48	Contract research carried out by one of the members of the research team within the project, specifying the R&D&I areas involved (if different from the R&D&I priority area supported by the project).	Number and type of legal acts, of which the number extending beyond the project period, and the volume of funds received from them (expected and actual income).
	49	Other types of cooperation with the application sphere based on the activity of a member of the research team.	Identification of the type of cooperation and the amount of funding received / of which from private sources (expected and actual income)
	50	Sustainability of research activities.	Number, identification and volume of funds of R&D&I projects (other than those mentioned above) exceeding the project period by at least 6 months.

	51	Professional and information support provided to public authorities.	Specification of outputs and identification of public authorities using them, type of cooperation and use by public authorities
<b>Material and technical equipment, modernisation and renovation</b>	52	Material and technical security of the project.	Baseline, identification and quality of the capacity provided by the applicant and other project participants, including information security
	53	Modernization and renovation of space capacities.	Qualitative and quantitative (number of m <sup>2</sup> of floor space used) change in capacity provided by the applicant/beneficiary and other project participants compared to the baseline
	54	Modernisation of research equipment and instruments.	Identification of number and type, change from baseline
	55	Modernization of research information and digitization infrastructure.	Identification of number and type, change from baseline.
	56	The results and outputs of the project, which would not have been possible without the modernisation and renovation of research capacities, facilities and information and digitisation infrastructure.	Identification of the number, type and justification
<b>Incentive effect Adequacy and need for support</b>	57	Adequacy and need for support	The justification of the incentive effect of the support from the perspective of the beneficiary and other project participants and its fulfilment is assessed, i.e. whether the support will enable the performance of R&D&I activities that otherwise could not be

			performed by the beneficiary and other project participants or would be performed only to a very limited extent. <sup>126</sup>
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<sup>126</sup> A statement of the reasons with regard to the factual description, scope and quality of the project activities, including the locations and timing of their implementation, as well as a clear identification of all other entities benefiting from the support provided, so that their size, the amount of support drawn in relation to each of them, is evident. A list of the specific eligible project costs that have been paid from the project funds in the period under evaluation and that will be paid in the following project period, in particular, investments and other costs for research equipment and instruments (a minimum of 20% share of the cost of research equipment is expected in the total costs).



## 11.2. Threshold conditions for project success

The success of the project in this programme, in order to be evaluated in the CEP IS VaVal with the mark "fulfilled according to the assignment", requires the commitment of the applicant and other participants to demonstrably fulfil all these requirements:

- a) establish a national scientific authority in the chosen R&D&I priority area, whose structure and activities will be regulated in writing (e.g. by a consortium agreement) for a minimum period of three years after the end of the project, while the following will continue:
  1. cooperation of the supported institutions with the aim of maintaining the level of scientific results achieved and interinstitutional and interregional cooperation in the chosen R&D&I priority area;
  2. providing expert and information support for "evidence-based" decision-making by public authorities;
  3. production of internationally competitive R&D&I results, i.e. results that are demonstrably accepted abroad (e.g. by publication by foreign producers of professional journals);
- b) the utilization (at least once) of the available capacities of large research infrastructures listed on the Roadmap of the Czech Republic or other top research capacities abroad available in open access mode for the project activities and fulfilment of the project goals, and the demonstration of this utilization for the project;
- c) the creation (and immediate application in the IS VaVal) of at least five results or measurable outputs per 1 FTE researcher paid by the project for the entire duration of the project;
- d) the achievement of at least a 30% share of publication results evaluated at least in Q1 in the WoK or Scopus citation databases in the total number of publication results; in social sciences it is acceptable to achieve 50% of the share of publications in Q1 and Q2 combined;
- e) the production of a minimum of ten outputs by 31. 12. 2023;
- f) the production of at least one result of applied research protected under special legal regulations, in particular, a registered patent under the PCT, a certified new medical procedure, a medical/healthcare aid or medical material, or a specialised map with specialised content, or a specialised public database with specialised scientific content, applying the result by translating it into a standard or regulation;
- g) apply, except for the priority area defined in Chap. 3(e) of the TD, at least one patent, medical procedure, medical or healthcare device or formulation, license, or other result that will bring financial benefit to the beneficiary or other project participant after the project is completed;
- h) involve during the project duration at least 30% of the members of the research team as researchers with experience in R&D&I from abroad;
- i) be successful in applying for an international R&D&I cooperation project, which will extend beyond the duration of the project in this programme, with a topic that is identical or related to a foreign R&D&I support grantor;
- j) succeed in applying for a project with one of the R&D&I support grantors with at least one identical or disciplinary or interdisciplinary R&D&I topic (different from the project under the

- previous point), of which a junior member of the research team will be the principal investigator or collaborating investigator;
- k) to annually produce, from the second year of the project, at least one thematically relevant reviewed student work per 1 FTE of students involved in the project, but at least four reviewed student works in absolute numbers over the entire project period;
  - l) produce at least two outputs focused on the presentation of the gender dimension of the research carried out within the supported project during the project period;
  - m) produce at least two deliverables in the context of professional and informational support for the "evidence based" decision making of public authorities<sup>127</sup>;
  - n) prepare and submit to the grantor a "data management plan" containing in particular, the method of handling the scientific data obtained, including the categories and the way of providing open data to other interested parties, the method of protecting the results and the plan for their further sharing and use. The beneficiary is obliged to evidence the effective implementation of the plan to the grantor during the project duration and at least 3 years after the termination of support .

## 12. Tender documentation annexes

The project proposal forms and the EXCELES model contract for the provision of support are available on the grantor's website<sup>128</sup>.

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<sup>127</sup> The grantor is entitled to request information from the competent public authority on compliance with the required quality of the result for the purposes of the acceptability of such a result.

<sup>128</sup> <https://www.msmt.cz/vyzkum-a-vyvoj-2/program-exceles-komponenta-5-1-narodniho-planu-obnovy>