

# Call documentation

**17<sup>th</sup> Call for Proposals**  
**Programme SIGMA**  
**Sub-Objective 2: Early-Stage Researchers (Industrial Chairs)**

Funding Programme for Applied Research and Innovation

Ref. No.: TACR/3432-1/2026



# Focus and Conditions of the 17<sup>th</sup> Call for Proposals Under the Sigma Programme

## Sub-Objective 2 - Early-Stage Researchers (Industrial Chairs)

### What is the focus of the call for proposals?

- The call for proposals is focused on strengthening excellent applied research, fundamentally deepening the strategic cooperation between academia and industry, and systematically involving prominent personalities in the role of Industrial Chair in key strategic roles within research organisations. The objective is to co-create an institutional culture open to knowledge transfer and the practical application of results.
- Special emphasis is placed on creating functional synergies between the research background and the application sphere, establishing a stable innovation ecosystem around the Industrial Chair position.
- The target is to attract and long-term retain internationally recognized experts in applied research within Czech research organisations, in full compliance with the conditions of the SIGMA Programme, Sub-Objective 2.
- The Industrial Chair is expected to build and lead a dedicated team of early-stage researchers.
- Specific Conditions and Participation Rules
  - The project proposal and all its mandatory annexes must be submitted entirely **in the English language**.
  - The Principal Investigator must be a foreign researcher holding the position of **Industrial Chair**.
  - Involvement of **at least two** key researchers on the **main applicant's** side holding the status of **Early-Stage Researcher**, who must fulfill **one** of the following conditions:
    - an individual up to 35 years of age<sup>1</sup>;
    - a student in a master's or doctoral degree programme;
    - a graduate who completed their highest degree level a maximum of 5 years ago.
  - **The main applicant** can only be **a research organisation**.

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<sup>1</sup> This condition is met by a person up to and including 35 years of age who has not reached the age of 36 by the last day of the competition period, i.e. by 12 August 2026.

- **The project partner** can **only** be **an enterprise** (permitted legal forms are specified in Chapter 1 - Applicants in the Call for Proposals).
- At the end of 2030, the implemented projects will undergo **an interim evaluation**, during which a decision on the continuation of the project implementation will be made (see Chapter 7.2).
- Following the completion of the project, the host institution must retain **the position** of Industrial Chair for **a minimum of 3 years** as part of its organizational structure and management system, without this position being tied to a specific individual.

## Who can apply for funding?

To determine the maximum funding rate, **each applicant**<sup>2</sup> (main applicant, project partners) must classify itself as one of the following **types of applicants**:

- **Research organisation**;
- **Enterprise** (small, medium-sized, large);

**The main applicant** may only be **a research organisation** implementing the project in collaboration with one or more enterprises **in the role of project partner**. At least one enterprise must be part of the project proposal, additional enterprises may join during the project implementation.

## Important dates

**Call is open for submissions:** from 25 June 2026 until 12 August 2026

**Announcement of results:** 28 February 2027

**Start of project implementation:** January 2027 - October 2027 (please note the extended period for project commencement due to Contract deferral options)

**Project duration:** 60 – 84 months

**Deadline for completion of the project:** September 2034

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<sup>2</sup> A research organisation whose activities in the project proposal are not related to its economic activity may receive a funding rate of 90% within this call for proposals.

## Maximum amount and rate of funding

**Maximum amount of funding per project:** 42 mil. CZK

**Maximum rate of funding per project:** 60 %

## What documents are provided by the applicant? (TA CR will not ask for them)

### 1. Through the project proposal in SISTA:

- Mandatory annex to the project proposal – **Strategic Plan** in the English language;
- Mandatory annex for result types NmetA, NmetC, NmetS – **Form for the Nmet type of result** in the English language (the annex may be confirmed in Czech but must always be translated into English);
- Mandatory annex for result type P (patent) – **patent search** in the English language;
- Mandatory annex for result type O – patent application – **patent search** in the English language;
- The ownership structure for each applicant is filled out in section Applicants / list Ownership Structure.
- **In the event of the participation of another project partner from abroad:**
  - Information on the beneficial owner of the foreign applicant.

### 2. Other ways:

- Applicants to whom the Act imposes this obligation must be registered in the register of beneficial owners.

**In the event that you do not submit the above-mentioned documents and information, TA CR will not accept the project proposal for the call for proposals.** You cannot subsequently submit documents and information on the basis of a request pursuant to Section 21(9) of Act No. 130/2002 Coll., on support for research, experimental development, and innovation from public funds and on amendments to certain related acts, as amended (hereinafter referred to as the "ZPVV"), as this is an obligation laid down in Section 17(3) of the ZPVV.

## What documents are provided by the applicant? (TA CR will ask for them)

### 1. Through the data box:

- Sworn statement of the applicant - is submitted by each main applicant and project partners (a foreign partner shall submit it in paper form).

## 2. Through the project proposal in SISTA:

- In the case of a foreign partner, financial statements for the years 2022, 2023 and 2024. If they do not have them, they must attach a document in the form of a sworn statement to the project proposal, which contains the financial items for the years 2022, 2023, and 2024 necessary to determine an undertaking in difficulty. It shall be attached to the annexes of the project proposal in SISTA.

## 3. Other ways:

- Applicants must publish their financial statements in the public register in the event that the Act imposes this obligation on them. TA CR shall check the publication of financial statements for the years 2022, 2023 and 2024. In the event that the applicant has not published the required financial statements at the time of submitting the project proposal, they may be documented through the annexes of the project proposal in SISTA:
  - for the years 2022, 2023 and 2024 including confirmation of sending to the registry court;
  - for the year 2025, including confirmation of sending to the registry court, if it has not yet been published and if this financial statement is available for the purpose of assessing whether the applicant is not an undertaking in difficulty;
  - consolidated financial statements for the group of companies for the years 2022, 2023, and 2024, if the applicant is part of it, for the purpose of assessing whether it is not an undertaking in difficulty.

In the event that you do not provide the above-mentioned documents and information, TA CR will invite you to provide them pursuant to Article 21(9) of the Act on the Support of Research and Development.

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Questions about the call for proposals may be submitted via the [Helpdesk](#). You can contact our regional staff at the [contact points](#) for personal or telephone consultations.

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# Introductory Information

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

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

- [General Terms and Conditions of TA CR](#) (version 8), which lay down all the rights and obligations of beneficiaries, including the definition of important terms. Furthermore, individual cost categories are described in more detail here;
- [Frascati Manual](#), which describes the specifics of research and development projects, defines important terms, and should also serve as a guide for classifying research activities into the right categories (industrial research and experimental development); and
- Shared information system of the Technology Agency of the Czech Republic (hereinafter "[SISTA](#)"), which is used to submit project proposals.



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

## 1 Applicants in the Call for Proposals



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

- **Research organisation;**
- **Enterprise** – small, medium-sized, large.

### The main applicant:

- must be an **research organisation** that has its registered office, establishment, or branch in the Czech Republic;
- must implement the project in cooperation with at least one enterprise in the role of the project partner.
- may submit an unlimited number of project proposals (in order for a project proposal to be funded, it must meet the conditions set out in Chapter 3.4 Differentiation from similar projects).

## The project partner:

- must be **an enterprise** (small, medium-sized, large) with its registered office in a Member State of the European Union (including the Czech Republic), in another state forming the European Economic Area, or in the Swiss Confederation;
- must have **a legal form** based on Act No. 90/2012 Coll., on Commercial Companies and Cooperatives (hereinafter referred to as the "Commercial Corporations Act"):
  - **limited liability company;**
  - **joint-stock company;**
  - **limited partnership;**
  - **general partnership;**
  - **cooperative;**
  - **European Cooperative Society;**
  - **European Company;**
  - **European Economic Interest Grouping.**

Applicants established under a legal system other than the Czech legal system must have the legal form of a commercial company established for the purpose of carrying out economic activity under similar laws of the country of origin.

The correctness of the choice of applicant type is assessed during the evaluation period. In the event of non-compliance with the condition of mandatory involvement of the required type of applicant, TA CR will not accept the project proposal for the call for proposals.

**The accession of another enterprise** during project implementation is possible based on its relevance to the research topic, project needs, and the nature of the expected outputs/results, namely **through a change procedure** in accordance with Guideline SME-07 Project Change Procedures.

If the main applicant plans for another enterprise to join during project implementation, it must include the estimated costs of the joining enterprise in its budget and duly comment on this fact in SISTA section Applicants / list Budget / Justification of cost items. When the enterprise joins, the planned costs and the relevant part of the funding will be transferred from the budget of the research organisation to the budget of the enterprise.

**Branches** registered as such in the commercial register may also apply as project partners, as defined in Article 503(2) of Act No. 89/2012 Coll., (hereinafter referred to the Civil Code). The founder of the branch must be based in a Member State of the European Union (including the Czech Republic), in another state forming the European Economic Area, or in the Swiss Confederation.

## 2 Dates and Deadlines

Dates and deadlines related to the submission of project proposals and to the proof of the applicant's eligibility

<b>Call opening time</b> (from this time onwards, project proposals may be filled in and submitted in SISTA)	25 June 2026 at 9:00
<b>Call closing time</b> (deadline for the submission of project proposals through SISTA)	12 August 2026 at 16:29:59
<b>Deadline for the receipt of proof of eligibility documents</b> (except for documents that constitute a part of the project proposal) in the TA CR data box	12 August 2026 at 16:29:59

TA CR shall **publish the results of the call at the latest on 28 February 2027** on the website [www.tacr.cz](http://www.tacr.cz). Subsequently, TA CR shall send the **decision on the result of the call** to the main applicant through their data box.

Dates and deadlines related to the **project implementation**

<b>Start of the project</b>	January 2027 – October 2027
<b>Project duration</b>	60 – 84 months
<b>Deadline for completion of the project</b>	September 2034

## 3 Project Proposal

The **project proposal** is an application for funding, which applicants submit through SISTA. Applicants must include in the project proposal all the information that is necessary for its evaluation (directly in the fields provided in SISTA or in the annexes to the project proposal). If TA CR decides to support the project proposal and a project contract<sup>3</sup> is concluded, then the project proposal becomes a **project**.

<sup>3</sup> Where the call documentation refers to a **project contract**, this also includes a **decision on the provision of funding**, which the TA CR issues only if the applicant is an organisational unit of the state, or an organisational unit of a Ministry engaged in research and development.

The project proposal, as well as the annexes included in it, must be submitted **in English**. This means that all fields in the project proposal must be completed in English, unless otherwise specified.

## 3.1 Focus of the Call for Proposals

The call for proposals is announced under the SIGMA programme – Sub-objective 2 – Early-Stage Researchers and equal opportunities in applied research projects. It is specifically focused on the implementation of the internationally proven '**Industrial Chairs**' model into the Czech applied research environment. The main objective is to support the recruitment, long-term retention, and professional growth of internationally recognized experts who will bring top-tier foreign experience to domestic teams. This intervention strengthens research excellence and systematically supports talented researchers, which is essential for increasing the prestige and competitiveness of Czech science on a global level.

The Industrial Chair must be a research leader, as well as a key bridge between academic research and industrial practice. The purpose and core substance of the project proposal must be the proposal of systemic changes on the main applicant's side (in the institutional culture of the research organisation and knowledge transfer) and a fundamental deepening of their strategic cooperation with the application sphere. Project proposals should aim to create dynamic ecosystems around key personalities, who will act as a catalyst for efficient knowledge transfer and the practical application of research outputs/results. A key element is **the integration of the Industrial Chair position into the strategic decision-making of the main applicant** so that their involvement has a lasting transformative effect on internal processes and the professionalisation of knowledge transfer.

The expected benefit of supporting Industrial Chairs is not only the implementation of the project itself, but above all the creation of a long-term sustainable **innovation ecosystem built around the personality of the Industrial Chair** with the potential to develop new technological directions. At its core is a strategic partnership between the research organisation and the application sphere, based on a joint **development plan** for this **cooperation**, which is **defined in detail in the project proposal for Phase 1 of the project until 2030**, and which is part of the mandatory Strategic Plan annex. Within this partnership, the research objectives of the academic institution directly intersect with the long-term innovation strategy of the project partners from the industrial sphere, with the Industrial Chair providing professional leadership and strategic coherence to the entire cooperation. This cooperation also includes the systematic training of a new generation of researchers capable of moving seamlessly between academic and industrial environments.

### 3.1.1 Research Team

The research team consists of the individual holding the position of **Industrial Chair** and **early-stage researchers**, and potentially other members of the research team. Although the primary emphasis is placed on the quality and potential of the team as a whole, striving for a balanced representation of women and men within the research team is viewed

as a significant element in developing the institutional culture and quality of the research environment, which is welcomed and recommended by the provider.

### **Industrial Chair:**

- Within the framework of the **candidate's eligibility**, the following conditions must be met and adequately documented:
  - must be listed among the key persons in the role of **principal investigator** at the main applicant;
  - must have completed higher education (at least a bachelor's degree or an equivalent degree abroad);
  - must be in an employment relationship with the main applicant throughout the entire duration of the project implementation, and their workload on the project must be at least **50%** on average for the entire period;
    - individual workloads are stated in person-years in the project proposal, and it is therefore necessary to take this form of entry into account, especially for the initial and final year of implementation;
  - a **minimum of 5 years of professional experience abroad**, including at least **2 years as a team leader**;

fulfillment of this condition shall be described within the candidate's eligibility and documented by a curriculum vitae (CV), as well as, for example, a link to LinkedIn, if available, or other relevant annexes, such as an employment contract, a job description including the job title, a reference from a direct supervisor, or other documents from which the fulfillment of the given condition is evident;

- **must not have had an employment relationship with the main applicant** prior to the start of the project implementation;
  - this condition does not preclude the candidate from having studied at the main applicant in the past (at the bachelor's, master's, or doctoral level);
  - for the purposes of this call for proposals, membership in advisory, expert, or similar bodies of the main applicant, in particular the Commercialisation Board, Centre Board, etc., **is not considered** an employment relationship;
  - this condition is also deemed to be met if the candidate for the Industrial Chair position is in an employment relationship with the main applicant at the time of the project proposal submission, provided that this employment relationship was established no more than 9 months prior to the date of the announcement of the call for proposals (i.e. after 23 September 2025);

previous links with the main applicant (employment relationship and studies) must be described within the candidate's eligibility and documented by a CV, a link to LinkedIn if available, or by other relevant annexes, such as an employment contract, a certificate of employment, or other documents from which the fulfillment of the given condition is evident;

- must be **an internationally recognized expert** regardless of age and nationality, with provable experience in applied research and commercialisation, including cooperation with the application sphere;
  - may also be a Czech researcher returning from abroad, provided they meet all the conditions of the Industrial Chair position specified in the call documentation;
- **expertise** must be properly described and documented in the form of optional annexes under three aspects:
  - experience with knowledge transfer;
  - experience with talent development;
  - professional profile;
- must be involved in the strategic management of the research organisation (main applicant) – this fact shall be properly described in the mandatory Strategic Plan annex.

### Early-Stage Researcher:

- definition: an early-stage researcher is an individual who is listed among the key researchers and meets one of the following conditions, which is defined by a status in the application:
  - **an individual up to 35 years of age**<sup>4</sup>;
  - **a student** in a master's or doctoral degree programme over 35 years of age;
  - **a graduate** who completed their highest degree level a maximum of 5 years ago;
- in the event of taking **maternity leave, parental leave** (the maximum eligible period for the first child is 2 years, and **a maximum of 4 years** in the case of two or more children), or **sick leave, carer's leave, or long-term carer's leave** (all with a duration exceeding 6 months), **the time spent on care or medical treatment may be added to the aforementioned periods**<sup>5</sup>;
- the definition of an early-stage researcher must be fulfilled by the deadline of the competition period, i.e. by 12 August 2026;
- **at least 2 early-stage researchers** must be listed among the key persons of the project team at the main applicant.

Therefore, the project proposal must include an Industrial Chair (in the role of a principal investigator) and at least 2 early-stage researchers on the main applicant's side. Other individuals who do not necessarily meet the definition of an early-stage researcher but are crucial for the project implementation may also be involved in the research team among the key researchers. There may be more than 2 early-stage researchers in the project proposal (not only on the main applicant's side, but also on the side of the project partner); in which case, all these individuals must meet the definition of an early-stage researcher.

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<sup>4</sup> This condition is met by individuals (both students and non-students) born on 13 August 1990 or later. As of the final day of the competition period (12 August 2026), they must not have reached 36 years of age.

<sup>5</sup> The duration of care or medical treatment is added to the person's age for individuals under 35. For graduates, this period can be added to the 5 years elapsed since graduation.

In the event that it is discovered during **the evaluation process** that the condition of the early-stage researcher definition was not met for the two mandatory members of the research team, **the binary criterion** - Fulfillment of essential conditions for the Industrial Chair candidate and Early-Stage Researchers - **will be marked as unfulfilled** and the project proposal **cannot be recommended for funding**. For additional individuals beyond this condition, failure to meet the early-stage researcher definition will lead to a reduction in the scoring of the project proposal.

If a change of a key person in the research team in the position of an early-stage researcher occurs **during the project implementation**, this individual must also meet the definition of an early-stage researcher as of the deadline of the competition period, i.e., **by 12 August 2026**. If this condition is not complied with (concerning the minimum number of 2 early-stage researchers), the provider may withdraw from the Contract and may, in connection therewith, require the beneficiary to return up to 100% of the provided funding.

**At least one project team member** of the main applicant (the Industrial Chair, an early-stage researcher, or potentially another member of the research team) must, in addition to their workload at the main applicant, **concurrently hold a workload within the participating enterprise of at least 30%** on average for the entire project implementation period. It is necessary to rule out overlapping performance of work in the same period so that dual funding does not occur.

The project proposal will not be accepted into the call for proposals if the Industrial Chair candidate does not have a planned workload of at least 50% on average for the entire period and, at the same time, the condition for the involvement of at least one project team member at both the main applicant and the project partner of the enterprise type is not met, specifically with a workload of at least 30% on average for the entire project implementation period.

## 3.2 Application of Outputs and Results

In this call for proposals, great emphasis is placed on the application potential of outputs/results and their real-world practical use. For this reason, each project proposal must include at least one enterprise that declares its intention to practically use the project's outputs/results. The involvement of additional enterprises, whether at the time of project proposal submission or during the project implementation, is considered a significant factor strengthening the scope and impact of the application of the outputs/results.

The applicability of outputs/results should extend beyond a single specific entity and should possess high potential for transferability across the entire industry. It is desirable that the project proposal demonstrates a high systemic impact and has the potential to transform a broader industrial segment.

The application of outputs/results is described in SISTA in section Substantive part / list Impact of the project.

## 3.3 Mandatory Annexes to Project Proposal

Applicants must attach a **Strategic Plan in the English language** as a mandatory annex to the project proposal.

### **Strategic Plan**

The length of the annex shall be a **maximum of 20 pages**. In this document, the applicant shall describe the long-term vision of the project implementation and the plan for its fulfillment, the key pillars for developing partnerships with the application sphere, and the specific benefits of the individual's involvement in the Industrial Chair position and their team. The text **must obligatorily** adhere to the structure below:

#### **1. Vision and Strategy of the Industrial Chair**

- **Vision and motivation of the host research organisation:**
  - Strategic reasons for recruiting the Industrial Chair candidate. How the project proposal fits into the development strategy of the main applicant.
  - Vision of specific benefits expected from the Industrial Chair candidate during and after the project implementation.
  - Specific institutional benefits for the host research organisation: Involvement of the Industrial Chair candidate in the strategic management and internal structures of the organisation (e.g., roles on management or advisory boards, the scientific council, etc.) and their impact on internal processes and bringing positive changes to the organisation.
- **Strategic objectives of the Industrial Chair in cooperation with the application sphere:**
  - Main objectives of the cooperation between the Industrial Chair and the mandatory project partner – the application partner (or partners) in Phase 1 of the project until the end of 2030 (in detail).
  - Long-term vision for the entire project duration (in outline).

#### **2. Development of Partnerships with Enterprises**

- **Contribution to the field and the economy in the Czech Republic:**
  - Specific technological challenges or market opportunities that the Industrial Chair will address in partnership with industry.
  - Potential for the transfer of outputs/results across the entire industry or potential contribution to the transformation of a broader industrial segment (extending beyond a single specific entity).

- **Strategy for developing cooperation with enterprises:**
  - The manner in which the know-how of the Industrial Chair candidate is integrated into the long-term innovation strategy of project partners.
  - A plan for the potential accession of additional enterprises during the project implementation.
- **Connection and sharing of capacities:**
  - Practical operation of cooperation, e.g., mutual access to infrastructure, laboratories, data platforms, or testing facilities, etc.
- **Knowledge transfer and IP mechanism:**
  - Legal and methodological framework for intellectual property management.

### 3. Talent Development

- Work plan with early-stage researchers.

### 4. Project Implementation Plan

- **Logical phasing of the project implementation:**
  - Division of the project into logical time phases with clearly defined milestones that reflect the specifics of building a new Industrial Chair workplace. This includes a description of the involvement of the individual holding the Industrial Chair position in each phase of the project (and a justification for their workload level if the workload changes over time).
- **Detailed implementation plan for Phase 1 of the project (until the end of 2030):**
  - Detailed schedule of activities for the first phase.
  - Description of the planned applied research outputs/results (must be in compliance with the planned Main outputs/results stated in the relevant section in SISTA).
- **Implementation outlook for Phase 2 of the project (from 2031 until the end of the project implementation):**
  - Framework (more flexible) plan of activities for the second phase of the project, reflecting the expected development of the workplace and the team.

## 5. Performance Objectives and Success Indicators

In addition to outputs/results, applicants shall define their own measurable objectives and indicators for Phase 1 of the project implementation until the end of 2030, and in outline also for Phase 2 from 2031 until the end of the project implementation, which will demonstrate progress in team development, applied research, and the practical application of outputs/results. These values may combine:

- **Quantitative indicators:** E.g., the total volume of acquired contract research (in EUR/CZK), the number of industrial doctorates (PhD students supervised in direct cooperation with a company), the number of submitted international projects (Horizon Europe, ERC), or planned licensing revenues.
- **Qualitative indicators:** E.g., the introduction of new processes for international recruitment of researchers, the actual integration of the Industrial Chair position into the strategic boards of the institution, the transformation of the knowledge transfer process in the research organisation, or building a stable network of industrial partners in the given field.

Without the submission of the Strategic Plan, TA CR **will not accept** the project proposal into the call for proposals. This mandatory annex cannot be submitted additionally based on a request pursuant to Section 21, Paragraph 9 of the Act on the Support of Research and Development (ZPVV). If applicants do not comply with the maximum number of pages, the part of the text beyond the specified content limit will not be taken into account in the evaluation.

Insert the annexes into section Project Annexes in PDF format.

## 3.4 Differentiation from Similar Projects



The Technology Agency of the Czech Republic only supports project proposals, whose contents or part(s) thereof have not been or are not currently being addressed in another of their own projects<sup>6</sup>. Dual funding is not permitted.

In the event of a similar focus of the project proposal (in particular in the case of the agreement of a key person in the project team), applicants are obliged to state their own:

- **completed projects**, if the planned outputs/results of the project proposal are connected to them, and to describe this connection;
- **related ongoing projects** and describe the differences between these projects with the project proposal submitted to this call for proposals;
- **project proposals submitted both to this and another call for proposals**, where simultaneous funding would not result in dual funding. In this case, it is necessary to describe the differences between these projects;

<sup>6</sup> **Own projects** are any projects of any provider of state aid, in which an entity with the same ID number participates, regardless of whether it is the main applicant or the project partner.

- **project proposals submitted both to this and another call for proposals**, where simultaneous funding **would** result in dual funding. In this case, it is necessary to state that only one project contract will be concluded and that this commitment must be respected.

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

If there are no such projects to which the obligation of delimitation applies, then please **explicitly state this fact**.

Enter **the definition** for your own projects in section Substantive part / list Excellence. Describe **the novelty** compared to other known solutions in section Substantive part / list Excellence.

In order to verify the completeness of the list of related projects and demonstrate the novelty of the proposed solution, TA CR recommends using the [STARFOS](#) tool for searching for funded projects, or the Research, Experimental Development and Innovation Information System ([R&D IS](#)).

## 3.5 Thematic Classification of Project Proposals

Inclusion of the project proposal in the correct category of the given classification is used for statistical and analytical purposes and for the evaluation of the expenditure of public funds in the field of research, development, and innovation. Classification is a mandatory step in the proposal submission process and evaluation of project proposals. The correct classification of the project proposal also has an impact on the correctness of the evaluation process and evaluation of the project proposal. The objectives and fields that may be selected for the classification (defined based on the focus of the programme) are listed in the SISTA.

### Objectives of the National Priorities of Oriented Research

Applicants must select one main and between zero and two secondary objectives from the National Priorities of Oriented Research, Experimental Development and Innovation (**RDI priorities**) - an overview of the objectives is given in SISTA.

In this call for proposals, applicants cannot choose the main objective from Area 6 Safe Society. The applicant can choose a secondary objective or objectives from all areas of the RDI Priorities.

### Fields of CRP and FORD

Applicants must select one main, one secondary, and one other secondary field in the project proposal according to the Central Register of Projects (**CRP**) and Fields of Research and Development (**FORD**). The selected fields of CRP and FORD should be aligned with each other.

CRP and FORD secondary and other secondary fields may be selected from all the major fields without restriction.

In this public competition, applicants cannot choose CRP - KA field - Militarism as their main field of study. The secondary and other secondary CRP fields can be chosen from all fields without restriction.

The main, secondary and other secondary FORD fields can be chosen from all fields without restriction.

### **National RIS3 strategy**

Every project proposal must be in accordance with only one domain of specialisation. However, this fact will not be evaluated and serves solely for statistical purposes related to the implementation of the [National RIS3 Strategy](#).

All the above-mentioned details shall be completed in SISTA in section Identification details / list Project scope.

## **3.6 Outputs and Results**

In this call for proposals, TA CR is only able to support project proposals where it is assumed that the **outputs/results will be put into practice**.

Definitions and descriptions of the individual types of results may be found in [Annex Methodology for Evaluating Research Organisations and Research, Development and Innovation](#) (hereinafter referred to as "[Methodology 2025+](#)"). TA CR has specified its requirements for individual outputs/results of Methodology 2025+ in the methodological document MET-12 Specification of the Requirements of the Provider for R&D results (hereafter referred to as "[MET-12](#)"), which applicants are required to comply with. All the achieved outputs/results must meet the conditions and parameters set by both Methodology 2025+ specified by MET-12.

### **3.6.1 Main Outputs/Results and their mandatory annexes**

The planned outputs/results are defined and properly described in the mandatory Strategic Plan annex in section **4. Project Implementation Plan** (Detailed implementation plan for Phase 1 of the project until 2030) in connection with the planned project activities.

For the implementation period of Phase 1 of the project, i.e., until 31 December 2030, applicants must define at least 1 main output/result. During this period, the planned outputs/results will also be assessed against the planned costs for the given period. The planned outputs/results must form a logical whole, correspond in quality to the long-term focus of the call for proposals, and must demonstrate sufficient ambition.

For the implementation period of Phase 2 of the project, i.e., from 1 January 2031 until the end of the project implementation, it is sufficient to describe the planned direction of further activities in the project proposal within the mandatory Strategic Plan annex. A detailed plan of activities, including specific outputs/results for this period, will only be assessed within the interim evaluation at the end of 2030. The outputs/results for this subsequent period from 1 January

2031 will then be added collectively to SISTA via a change request pursuant to Directive SME-07 Project Change Procedures.

The main outputs/results are generated into binding parameters and are thereby part of the project contract. According to the General Terms and Conditions, all the main outputs/results must be achieved by the end date of the project implementation. The main outputs/results of the project proposal are central to the evaluation process; other outputs/results of the project proposal need not be taken into account.

If the planned output/result **does not correspond** to any description in [Methodology 2025+](#), then select **result type O**. If the result **corresponds** to several types of results according to Methodology 2025+ and is not permitted to be the main type of result in the Call Documentation, it is possible to list it in the project proposal in the **Other Outputs/Results** section.

An exception is the output/result of the type **Vsouhrn - Summary Research Report** and **V - Research Report with Classified Content**, which cannot be listed even as Other Outputs/Results.

If the applicant decides to choose a type O result – other results – as the main output/result of the project, they must describe in detail in the project proposal what the output/result of the project is and why it cannot be classified among the other defined results. The description must clearly state how its application in practice will be ensured and what impact it will have on society.

**Main type of output/result:**

**Fprum** – industrial design (Find);

**Fuzit** – utility model (Futil);

**Gfunk** – function sample (Gfunc);

**Gprot** – prototype;

**Nlec** – medical procedure (Nmed);

**Nmap** – specialised map with a technical content;

**O – patent application – patent search** is a **mandatory annex** in the English language;

**O** – establishment of a spin-off company;

**O** – other results;

**P** – patent – **patent search** is a **mandatory annex** in the English language;

**R** – software;

**S** – specialised public database;

**Zpolop** – pilot plant (Zpilot);

**Ztech** – validated technology.

### Main type of output/result only in combination with any of the above:

**NmetA** – methodology and procedures accredited by the authorised body - [Form for the Nmet type of result](#) is a **mandatory annex** in the English language (the annex may also be confirmed in the Czech language, however, it must always be translated into the English language);

**NmetC** – methodology certified by the authorised body - [Form for the Nmet type of result](#) is a **mandatory annex** in the English language (the annex may also be confirmed in the Czech language, however, it must always be translated into the English language);

**NmetS** – methodology approved by the appropriate state administration authority that is in charge of the issue in question - [Form for the Nmet type of result](#) is a **mandatory annex** in the English language (the annex may also be confirmed in the Czech language, however, it must always be translated into the English language).

## 3.6.2 Specification of mandatory annexes to the main outputs/results

Mandatory annexes must be prepared for certain types of main outputs/results. Without these mandatory annexes, TA CR shall not accept the project proposal for the call for proposals. Mandatory annexes must be part of the project proposal in SISTA and cannot be added based on request pursuant to Article 21(9) of the ASRD.

[Form for the Nmet type of result](#) - for all Nmet-type results, it is necessary to attach a **confirmation of the state administration body** to the project proposal, **or of an independent certification or accreditation body**, that it is ready to approve, accredit or certify the given result, and that it is authorised to do so. In the event that there is a materially competent state administration body, the applicant will choose a result of the type **NmetS**. It is only possible to choose NmetC or NmetA if there is no materially competent state administration body for the given theme (provided that the required annexes are submitted).

**Patent search** (state of the art search, technical solution search) – the annex must contain knowledge of the current state of the solution, the topicality of the issue and partly the need for the solution should, among other things, also be documented by the state of the art search, or product search and patent search (hereinafter referred to as the search). The search may be performed by any patent office (in the Czech Republic, the [Industrial Property Office](#)), a patent attorney, or it is possible to use a public database (e.g., EspaceNet) and others.

Applicants must provide in SISTA the mandatory annex for the relevant result as part of the project proposal in section Substantive part / list Impact of the project.

### 3.6.3 Open Access

Applicants are required to ensure open access to the project's research data and all outputs/results of the Nmet type in this call for proposals, regardless of whether they arise as planned results in the project proposal or not. In the case of other types of results that are technically easy to make available (journal articles, an article in proceedings, a chapter in a specialist book, etc.), making them available is particularly welcome and recommended.

Open access is generally understood to mean providing permanent, immediate, unbound, and free online access without any restrictions to the full texts of scientific publications (usually articles) and other research outputs/results and the related data.

The given output/result is achieved only if it meets all the requirements of open access listed in [Research Data and Open Access to Outputs/Results](#) of the Call Documentation and in the specific conditions of the project contract.

In the event that the project proposal is successful and a project contract is concluded with the main applicant, then the main beneficiary will be obliged to submit a "Data Management Plan" to the provider together with the first interim report, regularly update it and submit the updated version of the "Data Management Plan" to the provider as part of the interim and final report.

The main beneficiary shall also be obliged to disclose information to the provider during the project solution, based on which it will be able to verify that the results and research data are openly accessible in accordance with the conditions specified in the specific conditions of the project contract.

Any costs associated with publishing in open journals or publication platforms, or costs associated with the preparation and storage of data shall be eligible costs for the duration of the project.

## 4 Financial Rules

<b>Expected amount allocated to the call for proposals*</b>	500 million CZK
<b>Maximum amount of funding per project<sup>7</sup></b>	42 million CZK
<b>Maximum funding rate per project</b>	60 %

\* The estimated budget allocation for this call for proposals is subject to change depending on the state budget possibilities, the decision of the provider.

Beneficiaries shall cover the mandatory co-funding at a minimum rate of 40 % from other sources.

<sup>7</sup> The maximum amount of funding is set for the period of submission of the project proposal. During the implementation, the amount of total eligible costs and funding may change in accordance with Article 9(7) of the ASRD.

There is no legal entitlement to the funding.

The rules and limits set for the estimated budget allocation for the call for proposals, for specific allocations, and for the maximum amounts of support per project apply only to the period of project proposal submission and evaluation.

## 4.1 Funding Rate



**Two types of funding rate** must be observed in the project proposal:

- **Maximum funding rate per project** (the rate must always be observed for the entire project proposal and in the sum of all applicants listed in the project proposal);
- **Funding rate per applicant** (for individual applicants in the project proposal).

### Maximum funding rate per project

Applicants must comply with the **maximum funding rate for the project**. This funding rate is calculated as a share of the required funding and all costs of the project proposal for all applicants in the project proposal. The maximum funding rate for the project needs to be observed for the entire duration of the project as a whole (it is not mandatory to observe it every single year of the project implementation).

Due to compliance with the funding rate for the entire project proposal, it may not be possible for all applicants to reach the maximum funding rate according to the type of applicant. This depends on the distribution of costs between individual applicants and the representation of the type of applicants in the project proposal.

### Funding Rate Per Applicant

The funding rate for individual applicants is determined according to the type of applicant, the fulfilment of the conditions of effective collaboration, and with regard to the nature of the activities planned in a given year (ratio of industrial research and experimental development - IR/ED). The funding rate for individual applicants must be observed in each year of the project implementation, according to the amount of actual planned costs in a given year.

The amount of funding allowed for individual applicants is calculated in SISTA based on the filled-in applicant type and the IR/ED ratio in section Applicants / list Budget.

In the event that **an enterprise-type applicant** meets the conditions of effective cooperation according to Article 2(90) of the Commission Regulation (EU) No 651/2014 of 17 June 2014, declaring certain categories of support compatible with the internal market in application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty (hereinafter referred to as "the Regulation"), the maximum funding rate for the given entity may be increased according to the table below. **Effective cooperation is:**

- **between an enterprise and one or more research organisations**, if that organisation covers at least 10 % of the eligible costs and has the right to publish the outputs/results of its own research, or

- **between enterprises**, of which at least one is a small or medium-sized enterprise, and with no enterprise covering more than 70 % of the eligible costs, or
- **between enterprises**, where the cooperation takes place in at least two EU Member States or in an EU Member State and a state that is a party to the EEA Agreement, and with no enterprise covering more than 70 % of the eligible costs.

Applicants are not required to demonstrate their effective cooperation by any documentation. An enterprise-type applicant only needs to check the option in section Applicants / list Budget in SISTA that it requests an increase in its funding rate for meeting effective cooperation in its financial plan and SISTA will recalculate the funding rate itself. An assessment of whether the conditions of effective cooperation are met shall be part of the evaluation process.

**The maximum permitted funding rate** for individual types of applicants **must be observed in each year of the project implementation**, according to the amount of costs actually incurred in the given year. The maximum allowed funding rate is shown in the following table:

Types of applicant/ Categories of activities	Industrial research (IR)		Experimental development (ED)	
	Maximum funding rate	With effective cooperation	Maximum funding rate	With effective cooperation
Small enterprise	70 %	80 %	45 %	60 %
Medium-sized enterprise	60 %	75 %	35 %	50 %
Large enterprise	50 %	65 %	25 %	40 %
Research organisation	90 %			

## 4.2 Eligible Cost Categories



All cost categories are listed and detailed in Article 18 of the [General Terms and Conditions](#).

In this call, eligible cost categories include:

- **personnel costs**, including scholarships<sup>8</sup>, for example – for this call for proposal, TA CR sets a limit of **CZK 1.6 million** for the item "**Average personnel costs per FTE (full-time equivalent)**" for both the main applicant and the project partners:

<sup>8</sup> TA CR advises applicants that when reporting personnel costs in the form of **scholarships**, it is necessary to ensure that **the licensing conditions between the student and the university are adjusted**. TA CR's opinion on this cost can be found [here](#).

- Any applicant who, in their project proposal for individual years, states amounts **below the specified limit** in a given budget item may only provide a **general justification** for the calculation of these amounts for key researchers and other persons involved in the project. Amounts justified in this way **are not** grounds for reducing costs in the evaluation process, but may be grounds for reducing the score.
  - If **the limit** of CZK 1.6 million **is exceeded**, applicants are required to justify in detail in their project proposal the amount of personnel costs, particularly with regard to the importance of the positions of the persons involved, the way and extent of their involvement in the planned activities within the research team, and the necessity of their professional competencies for achieving the set objectives and planned outputs/results. Insufficient justification may be a reason for reducing the applicant's costs in the evaluation process (for each year in which the applicant exceeds the specified limit) and may also be a reason for reducing the score.
  - At the same time, personnel costs will be assessed in relation to the specified number of man-years.
- **costs of subcontracting;**
  - **other direct costs;** and
  - **indirect costs** – may be reported using the following methods:
    - **“full cost”** – the organisation must have an existing system for allocating indirect costs in the form of an internal regulation, or
    - **“flat rate” of up to 25%** of the sum of the personnel costs and other direct costs actually reported by the applicant in the given year.

Applicants must duly justify in detail all planned costs in the project proposal in section Applicants / list Budget / Justification of costs items.

The costs of implementing the project are eligible from the date of commencement of the project. If, in accordance with the project proposal, the project is commenced before the results of the call for proposal are announced (but no earlier than 01. 01. 2027) and the project proposal is approved, the costs of implementing the project will be eligible.

# 5 Proof of Eligibility and Project Proposal Submission

## 5.1 Proof of Eligibility and Other Requirements Stipulated by TA CR



Each applicant (main applicant as well as other partners in the project proposal) shall **demonstrate its eligibility** to implement the project separately in the following way:

### The Sworn Statement of the Applicant:

- must be sent by each applicant from its data box (each applicant for itself) to the TA CR data box (data box ID: afth9xp) on the prescribed form [Sworn Statement of the Applicant](#);
- does not need to be physically signed (the signature is replaced by it being sent from the appropriate data box);
- in the details of the message, state the “17th Call for Proposals, Programme SIGMA – Sub-objective 2: Industrial Chairs - Proof of Eligibility”.

### Financial statements:

- Applicants must comply with the obligation established by the Act 563/1991 Coll., on Accounting (hereinafter referred to as the "Accounting Act") to **publish financial statements for the years 2022, 2023, and 2024**, from which TA CR will check whether the applicant is not an undertaking in difficulty or the correct applicant type.

In the event that the applicant does not have the required financial statements for the above-mentioned years, as the entity was not established at that time, it shall document its fulfilment of the obligation with the financial statements that it is obliged to publish from the date of establishment .

In the event that the applicant has submitted its financial statements to the registry court, and they have not yet been published before the submission of the project proposal, the applicant shall attach the financial statements as an annex to the project proposal, including a confirmation of submission to the relevant registry court.

In the event that the relevant income tax administrator (e.g., tax office) has submitted the financial statements to the registry court on behalf of the applicant, and they have not yet been published before the submission of the project proposal, the applicant shall attach the financial statements as an annex to the project proposal, including a confirmation of submission to the income tax administrator.

## Undertaking in difficulty:

- Funding will not be provided to an **applicant** (main applicant, project partners) **who meets the definition of an undertaking in difficulty**. The Office for the Protection of Competition (ÚOHS) has defined individual criteria according to Article 2(18) of the Regulation, which are available [here](#).
- The evaluation of undertakings in difficulty applies in particular to limited liability companies, joint stock companies, cooperatives, European companies, European cooperative companies, public companies, limited partnerships, and others.
- An undertaking in difficulty is assessed according to the evaluation criteria both for individual entities and at the level of the entire group of interconnected entities between which there are control relationships in the sense of the definition of small and medium-sized enterprises according to Annex I of the Regulation. An undertaking shall be considered interconnected in the event that there are any of the relationships described in Article 3(3) of the Regulation between the undertaking and the applicant. For this reason, for subjects that belong to a group of companies, the criteria of an undertaking in difficulty must be monitored not only at the level of an individual subject but also at the level of the entire group. Therefore, data for parent, subsidiary, and sister companies, including foreign entities, are included in the assessment.
- TA CR checks this condition during the eligibility check. Before submitting a project proposal, it is up to the applicant to assess whether it meets the definition of an undertaking in difficulty or not. In the event that the applicant is assessed to be an undertaking in difficulty during the eligibility check, TA CR shall not accept the project proposal for the call for proposals from the given applicant.

The assessment of an undertaking in difficulty shall be conducted based on data from the last two closed accounting periods. For the assessment of an undertaking in difficulty, the financial statements required for the calculation must be published in a public register or must be supported by a confirmation of delivery to the relevant registration court or a confirmation of submission made to an income tax administrator in section Applicants / list Ownership structure.

For the assessment of an undertaking in difficulty, TA CR may request financial statements for the year 2025 from the applicant, or other documents required for the calculation.

Based on its own assessment prior to submitting the project proposal, if the applicant is assessed to be an undertaking in difficulty, it may compile and submit to the registration court extraordinary financial statements (by the end of the period when the call is open for submissions), which will, for example, prove an increase in equity and a change in the assessment of the entity as an undertaking in difficulty. Such extraordinary financial statements shall be taken into account when assessing the undertaking in difficulty.

Also, **if you are part of a group of companies** that are acting as an economic unit and within the assessment of the entire group you are not an undertaking in difficulty, then **state these facts in the comments** in SISTA in section Applicants / list Ownership structure. **Include a list of group members and consolidated financial statements for the entire group** or financial statements for individual members of the group in the project proposal annexes.

#### Records of beneficial owners:

- Applicants that legally fall under this obligation must **be registered in the register of beneficial owners**. If such an applicant is not registered in the register of beneficial owners by the end of the period for the submission of proposals, i.e., by 12. 08. 2026, **then TA CR will not accept the project proposal for the call for proposals**.

In the event that the applicant's organisation is not in this register, it shall submit a proposal for entry of data into the register of beneficial owners to the relevant registry court or a request for registration with a notary (including a certificate of registration). Please note that the applicant must be registered in the register of beneficial owners by the end of the period for the submission of proposals. More information may be found [here](#).

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

- **Professional qualifications to implement the project** – to be filled in for key persons in the research team in the "Curriculum Vitae" tab. The main applicant must have one person in the role of a principal investigator (Industrial Chair) in the project proposal and each potential project partner must have one person in the role of other researcher.
- **Authorization to perform the activities specified in the project proposal, if required by a specific legal regulation** – a copy is submitted with the project proposal (e.g., authorisation to perform biological testing, authorisation to perform research on human embryonic stem cells);
- **Ownership structure of each applicant** – each applicant must indicate all ultimate owners - natural persons with a share of at least 10% (if it follows from the legal form of an applicant that it does not have an ownership structure, this obligation shall not apply to it).

## 5.2 Method for Documenting the Eligibility of Foreign Partners

**Each other foreign project partner<sup>9</sup> demonstrates its eligibility** to solve the project separately in the following way:

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<sup>9</sup> **A foreign project partner** may be an entity based in a Member State of the European Union, in another state forming the European Economic Area, or in the Swiss Confederation.

### Sworn statement of the applicant:

- It sends the prescribed [Sworn statement of the applicant](#) form in paper form to the address of TA CR;
- The form must be physically signed by the statutory representative of the foreign partner and must be an original.

### Financial statements:

- **It shall provide financial statements for the years 2022, 2023, and 2024** in the annexes of the project proposal, from which the TA CR shall check whether the applicant is not an undertaking in difficulty or whether the type of applicant is correctly selected;
- In the event that the foreign partner, which is an enterprise **does not have** the required financial statements for the above-mentioned years, it must attach a **document in the form of a sworn statement** to the annexes of the project proposal, which will contain the **financial items needed to calculate an undertaking in difficulty for the years 2022, 2023, and 2024**;
  - Specifically, the document must contain the following information: share capital, share premium, other capital funds, funds created from net profit, the economic result of previous years, the economic result, and the amount of the advance payment of the profit share. The document must be signed by a person authorised to act on behalf of the foreign partner.
- The applicant shall provide a translation of this information into the Czech language.

### Information on a beneficial owner:

- **It shall provide information about its beneficial owner in the annexes of the project proposal:**
  - either by an extract from a foreign register similar to the register of beneficial owners;
  - or, if such a foreign register does not exist, it shall provide the identification of all persons who are the beneficial owners of the foreign legal entity in the annex to the project proposal, and submit documents showing the relationship of all persons to the foreign legal entity, in particular an extract from a foreign register similar to the commercial register, list of shareholders, decision of the statutory body on the payment of a share of the profit, partnership agreement, articles of association, or statute.
  - The applicant shall provide a translation of this information into the Czech language.
- **Without the submission of this information, TA CR will not accept the project proposal for the call for proposals.** Information about the beneficial owner cannot be

additionally provided on the basis of a request pursuant to Article 21(9) of the Act on the Support of Research and Development.

In the event that the other foreign project partner does not have a beneficial owner, then it shall state this fact in the SISTA in section Applicants / list Ownership Structure.

## 5.3 Project Proposal Submission

A project proposal must be submitted to the call in **an electronic form through SISTA** project administrator<sup>10</sup>. No other form of project proposal submission shall be permitted.

**Information and user instructions for the SISTA information system are available on the [TA CR website](#).**

During the period when the call is open for submissions, the applicant may modify or withdraw their project proposal (i.e., take it back). **The project proposal may only be taken back** (e.g., if a modification or addition is necessary) **by the project administrator in SISTA**. After submitting the project proposal, the project administrator will see a list of all projects in which he or she has a role in the My Projects tab. From the list, the required project proposal must be selected and opened, and then in the upper right part under the symbol of three vertical dots, the Withdraw project proposal option must be selected. This cancels the submission of the project proposal. For a project proposal to be duly submitted, it must be resubmitted in SISTA.

Once the call for proposals is closed, it will no longer be possible to modify the proposal.

## 5.4 Notification of Changes After the Submission of Project Proposals

As applicants, you are obliged to inform TA CR in writing about any and all **changes** that may take place **in the period from the submission of the project proposal until the possible conclusion of the project contract** and which concern your legal status or the details required to demonstrate eligibility (e.g., change in size, registered office, statutory representative, merger, or division of the enterprise), or which may affect the decision making of TA CR. However, any changes in **ownership structure** must only be notified if they result in a loss of eligibility for the project or that this change may affect the facts assessed in the call for proposal.

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

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<sup>10</sup> **Project administrator** is a role in SISTA. This is the person who created the project proposal and is the only one who has the right to submit the project proposal to the call for proposals through SISTA. The project administrator may assign and change permissions to edit the project proposal for anyone. The organisation under which the project administrator is registered automatically becomes the Main Applicant and this role cannot be changed after the project proposal has been created.

# 6 Evaluation

The evaluation will take place between 13 August 2026 and 28 February 2027 and its conditions described below shall apply only to this period. Immediately after the closing of the call for proposals, a formal check will begin to verify the basic requirements. Afterwards, TA CR will publish on its website the project proposals that will be further evaluated and those that will not be admitted to the call.

Details concerning individual evaluation steps, and a list of the evaluation criteria together with the aspects that will be evaluated under individual criteria are provided in the following [Annex No. 1 - Evaluation Process](#). General evaluation information, guidelines (primarily for individual experts), and terms are provided in the [General Guidelines for Experts](#).

## 6.1 Evaluation Process



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

- individual experts;
- the rapporteur;
- expert advisory body;
- the TA CR Board.

The TA CR Board will subsequently issue a final decision on the support or non-support of project proposals.

## 6.2 Binary Criteria

In the event that any binary criterion **is not met**, the project proposal **cannot** be recommended for funding.

List of binary criteria
1. Fulfillment of essential conditions for the Industrial Chair candidate and Early-Stage Researchers
2. R&D&I project (novelty, creativity, research uncertainty, systematicity, transferability and/or reproducibility)

## 6.3 Scored Criteria

If 0 points are awarded for a scored criterion, then the project proposal will not be recommended for funding regardless of the total number of points the project proposal receives in the evaluation.

Scored criteria	Point scale
1. Industrial Chair	0; 9; 18; 28 points
2. Strategic Plan and expected outputs/results	0; 7; 14; 21 points
3. Application potential	0; 7; 14; 21 points
4. Expertise of the project team, project organisation and technical facilities (risk analysis)	0; 5; 10; 15 points
5. Financial plan and incentive effect of funding	0; 5; 10; 15 points

## 6.4 Independence of the Evaluation Process

Independence and equal treatment are the basic principles applied by TA CR in the evaluation process. Therefore, none of the applicants or their authorised persons may contact the persons evaluating the project proposals with the intention of influencing them. Complaints concerning suspicions of corrupt practices or other unfair activities may be using the form available [here](#). Further information may be found on the [TA CR website](#).

# 7 Conclusion of the Project Contract and Project Implementation

A **Project Contract** shall be concluded with the main applicants of the funded project proposals in accordance with the Directive SME-13 Conclusion of a Contract/Issuing of a Decision on the Provision of Funding. A project proposal may be changed prior to concluding a Project Contract only if it is an administrative change or a change not caused by the applicant that is worthy of special consideration (in more detail [Stanovisko ke změnám před uzavřením smlouvy o poskytnutí podpory](#)).

A project contract will not be concluded with the main applicant if the applicants (main applicant, project partners) include:

- an enterprise in which the beneficial owner is a public official pursuant to Article 2(1)(c) of Act No. 159/2006 Coll., on conflicts of interest (hereinafter referred to as the "Conflict of Interest Act"),
- a public official or a person controlled by it owning a share representing at least 25 % of the partner's participation (Article 4c of Act on Conflicts of Interest); or

- the beneficial owner of the applicant will be listed among the persons on whom a sanction is imposed pursuant to Act 69/2006 Coll., on the Implementation of International Sanctions (hereinafter referred to as the "the Implementation of International Sanctions Act"),

A project contract will not be concluded with the main applicant if the main applicant include:

- an enterprise in which the beneficial owner is be a public official pursuant to Article 2(1)(c) of Act 159/2006 Coll., on Conflicts of Interest; or
- or a public official or a person controlled by him or her owning a share representing at least 25% of the shareholder's participation will be among the main applicant (Article 4(c) of Act 159/2006 Coll., on Conflicts of Interest), or
- the beneficial owner of the applicant will be listed among the persons on whom a sanction is imposed pursuant to Act 69/2006 Coll., on the Implementation of International Sanctions.



Before concluding the project contract, you shall be obliged to document all the facts set out in the decision on the result of the call for proposals. In this decision, TA CR will state everything it requires of the applicants and within what timeframe.

After concluding the project contract, the main applicant shall become the main beneficiary.

The **Project Contract** is generated in SISTA by the **project administrator**. The **Project Contract** can only be generated after the documents specified in the decision on the result of the call for proposals have been submitted. Firstly, an **Agreement on the Participation in a Project** must be concluded between the main applicant and the project partners, and only then the **Project Contract** between the main applicant and TA CR; at the same time, the Agreement on the Participation in Project must enter into force no later than the moment the **Project Contract** comes into force.

The Project Contract may provide for a **deferral of its entry into force**. This will allow for a later start of the project implementation, taking into account the involvement of researchers from abroad and the practical and administrative tasks associated with their relocation. The entry into force of the Project Contract can be deferred by a maximum of 4 months from its conclusion, i.e. from the signatures of both parties. **The project start date specified in the project proposal is decisive for determining when the Project Contract comes into force.**

## 7.1 Provision of Funding

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

- within 60 calendar days from the date of entry into force of the project contract and for multi-annual projects for the second and each subsequent year of the project within 60 calendar days from the beginning of the given calendar year;

- to a bank account established with the Czech National Bank, in the case of public universities, public research institutions, or other entities defined by Act No. 218/2000 Coll., on budgetary rules (hereinafter referred to as the "Budgetary Rules"), to a bank account established with the Czech National Bank.

## 7.2 Implementation

When planning **the start of project implementation**, applicants do not have to take into account when the project contract will be concluded. The project implementation may start before the conclusion of **the project contract**, but not before the date for the start of the project implementation according to the rules of the call of proposals.

In accordance with the above, the approved costs shall be eligible before the conclusion of the Project Contract, but only subject to its subsequent conclusion.

At the end of 2030, the implemented projects will undergo an interim evaluation, during which a decision on the continuation of the project implementation will be made. Projects will be evaluated primarily from the following aspects:

### 1. Contribution of the Industrial Chair to the host research organisation and team building

- To what extent has the Industrial Chair become an actual part of the strategic management of the host research organisation, and how successfully have new research directions been initiated?
- Is the built team stable, professionally strong, and does it actively involve early-stage researchers?

### 2. Industrial relevance and partnership

- Is there provable and functional cooperation with the application sphere (documented, for example, by contract research, joint projects, or shared infrastructure)?

### 3. Performance and outlook

- **Plan fulfillment:** Have the key objectives and outputs/results set for Phase 1 of the project implementation, i.e., for the period until the end of 2030, been achieved?
- **Plan for the next phase:** Is the plan for Phase 2 of the project implementation, i.e., from 2031 until the end of the project implementation (outputs/results and other specified indicators), sufficiently ambitious, realistic, and does it reflect the market/field development to date?

Until the decision on the continuation of the project implementation is made, the disbursement of funding for 2031 will be suspended. In the event of a positive decision on the continuation of the project implementation, the funding will be released and costs will be eligible even during the period of its suspension. Otherwise, the project will be terminated."

Most of the project implementation processes shall take place in English. TA ČR will inform the beneficiary about which processes these are before the start of the project solution.

**Most of the project implementation processes** shall take place **in English**. An overview of the processes that will be in English can be found in a document [Use of English and Czech During Project Implementation](#).

During the project implementation, TA CR shall monitor the project in several ways<sup>11</sup>:

- interim reports
- administrative and financial inspection,
- monitoring visit or
- interim project evaluation.

After completion of the project implementation, you will submit the **Final Report** and the **final project evaluation** will take place.

If any changes are made to the original project proposal during the course of the project, you must always inform us of these changes. The types of changes requiring supporting documents and the method of their notification may be found in guideline SME-07 Procedures for Changes in Projects. Furthermore, throughout the project implementation, all beneficiaries must comply with the obligation to publish their annual financial statements throughout the entire project implementation period.

The type of organisation is assessed only on the day of the provision of funding, i.e., on the date of the decision on the results of the call for proposals. Changes made after this date will no longer be reflected in the project and the applicant shall not provide notice of them. It is therefore sufficient to meet the conditions for the given type of organisation on the date of the provision of funding. If the applicant selects the wrong type of organisation in the project proposal, it shall be obliged to notify the provider of this fact even after the date of the decision on the provision of funding (according to the procedure in SME-07 Project Change Management).

Each beneficiary and other project partners participating in the implementation of a project funded by TA CR are obliged, in accordance with the General Terms and Conditions, to disclose that the project was implemented with the financial participation of TA CR. The rules for mandatory publicity can be found on the [TA CR website](#).

Upon completion of the project implementation, beneficiaries are required to submit two Reports on the Use of Results. The conditions are specified in SME-12.

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<sup>11</sup> More information can be found in the guidelines SME-03 Monitoring controls and in SME-22 Public control.

# 8 Legal Framework of the Call for Proposals

The SIGMA programme was originally approved by the Government of the Czech Republic by Resolution No. 414 of May 18, 2022, and subsequently updated and reapproved by Government Resolution No. 328 of May 7, 2025. TA CR is the programme provider. The programme text, call documentation, and other documents related to the call for proposals are published on the website [www.tacr.cz](http://www.tacr.cz). It is a one-stage call for proposals announced pursuant to the [Act on the Support of Research and Development](#) and in accordance with the [Framework](#) for State aid for research, development, and innovation 2022/C 414/01 (hereinafter referred to as the "Framework"), [Regulation](#), and [Budgetary rules](#).

The call for proposals is implemented in accordance with the updated National Research, Development and Innovation Policy of the Czech Republic for 2021+ as approved by the Resolution of the Government of the Czech Republic of 20 July 2020 No. 759, i.e., the National Research, Development and Innovation Policy of the Czech Republic 2021+, [National Priorities of Oriented Research, Experimental Development and Innovation](#) as adopted by Government Resolution No. 552 of 19 July 2012, and national and ministerial strategies.

The scope of data on project proposals and data on applicants to be published within the meaning of Article 17(6) of the ASRD is set out in the SISTA.

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

Guidelines and statutes provide the binding procedures of TA CR resulting from legislation and other regulations. The versions applicable to this call for proposals are given in the third column of the table below. A complete list of internal rules can be found on the [TA CR website](#).

Code	Name of the directives or statutes	Version
<a href="#">SME-06</a>	Admission of project proposals to a call for proposals	v10
<a href="#">SME-08</a>	Complaints within calls for proposals	v7
<a href="#">SME-10</a>	Cancellation of a call for proposals	v5
<a href="#">SME-11</a>	Call preparation and announcement	v12
<a href="#">SME-12</a>	Processing and submission of reports	v9
<a href="#">SME-17</a>	Helpdesk for applicants and beneficiaries	v5

<a href="#">SME-23</a>	Preparation of evaluation reports, opinions and expert assessments	v9
<a href="#">SME-34</a>	Evaluation of project proposals submitted to a call for proposals	v7
<a href="#">RAD-01</a>	Statutes and rules of procedure of the Committee for the admission of project proposals	v4
<a href="#">RAD-02</a>	Statutes and rules of procedure of an expert advisory body	v9
<a href="#">RAD-06</a>	Rules of procedure of the TA CR Board	v5
<a href="#">MET-12</a>	Specification of the requirements of the provider for R&D results	v3
<a href="#">POK-01_2025</a>	On the Transition to SISTA	v1

## 8.1 Legal Definition of Applicants

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

**Enterprises**<sup>12</sup> – generally legal persons and natural persons engaged in business activities pursuant to Annex I of the Regulation (in this call for proposals, only the specific legal forms defined in Chapter 1 Applicants in the Call for Proposals are permitted) .

## 8.2 Insufficient Differentiation and Duplication

If TA CR finds that a project proposal or part(s) thereof duplicates another project proposal and the applicants have not explained how their duplicate project proposal differs from that other project proposal, then the project proposal will not be funded on the grounds of a failure to meet the conditions of the call documentation or the project contract will not be concluded with the applicants. This shall also apply to similar project proposals submitted to this or another ongoing call for proposals, which have not been disclosed in the relevant part of the SISTA system.

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

## 8.3 Funding

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

<sup>12</sup> The [User Guide](#) to the SME definition from the European Commission can serve as a **guide for determining the size of the enterprise**. In light of the current jurisprudence of the Court of Justice of the European Union, we point out that the recommendations given in this manual are not legally binding, and the provisions of the Regulation, which are legally binding, must always be followed as a priority.

The conditions for effective cooperation are determined by Article 2(90) and Article 25(6), while the types of enterprises are defined in Article 3 of Annex 1 of the Regulation.

A research organisation whose activities in the project proposal are not related to its economic activity may receive a funding rate of 90% within this call for proposals.

The applicant must ensure that:

- unauthorised indirect state aid is avoided (in accordance with provisions 2.1 and 2.2 of the Framework);
- distribution of rights and access to outputs/results in the project proposal are in accordance with point 29 under provision 2.2.2. of the Framework;
- overlap with other state aid for the same eligible expenditure (double funding) is avoided.

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

Eligible costs are listed and broken down into individual categories in Article 18 of the General Terms and Conditions. The project contract stipulates the method by which the TA CR funding is provided. The specific terms of the project contract (Article 4) stipulate the particulars set out in the General Terms and Conditions.

## 8.4 Proof of the Applicant's Eligibility

Only applicants meeting the eligibility conditions laid down in Article 18 (2) (b) to (i) of the Act on the Support of Research and Development and given by the Regulation may receive funding. Each applicant shall demonstrate their eligibility separately pursuant to Article 18 of the Act on the Support of Research and Development.

Failure to meet the eligibility requirements or the obligation to demonstrate eligibility shall be grounds for not admitting a project proposal to the call for proposals.

Furthermore, applicants (main applicant, project partners) must comply with the obligation set forth in Section 21a et seq. of the Accounting Act, i.e., in particular, have published financial statements if required to do so by that Act. In the event of non-compliance, the applicant for support will not be admitted to the call for proposals, as the legal obligation of the applicant would not be fulfilled. The applicant must publish financial statements throughout the entire project implementation period. In the event that a new beneficiary joins the project during its implementation, the joining entity must have published its financial statements for the last three closed accounting periods in relation to the date of submission of a request for change.

The applicant (main applicant, other project partners) must not be an undertaking in difficulty as defined in Article 2(18) of the Regulation.

The definition and calculation established for the identification of an undertaking in difficulty is not based on a subjective evaluation of the management of the undertaking. In the currently effective regulations, the European Commission has defined an undertaking in difficulty in the interest of greater objectivity using so-called "hard" criteria, which should not allow subjective assessment), but are based on the Regulation.

Moreover, applicants (main applicant, project partners) must comply with the condition set out in Article 8 of Act 37/2021 Coll., on the Registration of Beneficial Owners (hereinafter referred to as the "Act on the Registration of Beneficial Owners), i.e. be registered in the register of beneficial owners. In the event of non-compliance, the applicant for support will not be admitted to the call for proposals, as the legal obligation of the applicant would not be fulfilled. The entities listed in Article 7 of Act on the Registration of Beneficial Owners, do not have a beneficial owner, so this obligation does not apply to the listed types of entities. The applicant must comply with the obligation to register itself in the register of beneficial owners throughout the entire project implementation period. In the event that a new beneficiary joins the project during its implementation, the joining entity must have registered no later than the date of submission of the request for change.

A project proposal may not contain classified information pursuant to Act 412/2005 Coll., on the Protection of Classified Information and Security Clearance.

## 8.5 Evaluation and Submission of Documents

The evaluation of project proposals is governed by SME-34 Guidelines for the evaluation of project proposals submitted to a call for proposals. Activities of the Expert Advisory Body are governed by RAD-02 Statutes and Rules of Procedure of an Expert Advisory Body and activities of the TA CR Board are governed by RAD-06 Rules of procedure of the TA CR Board.

No information related to a particular project proposal or to interim evaluation results shall be provided during the course of the evaluations.

Before the conclusion of the project contract, applicants are obliged to demonstrate their continuing eligibility in a manner laid down in Article 18(5) to (7) of the Act on the Support of Research and Development, or other facts laid down in the decision on the result of the call for proposals. In their decision, TA CR will state everything that needs to be documented by the applicants.

## 8.6 Reserved Rights of TA CR

In accordance with Article 24 of the Act on the Support of Research and Development, the provider reserves the right to:

- cancel an announced call for proposals and not support the project proposals submitted under that call for proposals, in accordance with SME-10 Guidelines for the Cancellation of a Call for Proposals; and/or
- restrict the number of project proposals to be funded.

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

In justified cases, the provider reserves the right to include in the decision on the result of the call for proposals additional conditions established on the basis of facts determined during the evaluation of the project proposal, with the provision that a project contract will be concluded

with the main beneficiary, or a decision on the provision of funding for the implementation of this project will be issued in its favour only after these conditions have been met. In case of doubt, TA CR may also request relevant documents to be submitted (for example, documents proving that the funding granted by the decision of an R&D provider was not used due to its withdrawal from the agreement).

In cases where among the applicants for the project proposal (main applicant, project partners) there will be an enterprise in which a public official pursuant to Article 2(1)(c) or a person controlled by it owns a share representing at least 25% of the partner's participation in the enterprise (Article 4c of Act on Conflicts of Interest), the provider reserves the right to not conclude a project contract with the main applicant.

Pursuant to Article 17(3) of the Act on the Support of Research and Development, the provider stipulates the condition that no beneficial owner of the applicant (main applicant, project partner) within the meaning of Act on the Registration of Beneficial Owners, shall be a public official pursuant to Article 2(1)(c) of Act on Conflicts of Interest, or that no such beneficial owner shall be listed among the persons on whom a sanction applicable under Act on the Implementation of International Sanctions has been imposed.

If the applicant does not have a beneficial owner, then the related parts shall not be relevant to the applicant.

In accordance with Article 32 of the Act on the Support of Research and Development, TA CR will publish project details through the Information System of Research, Development, and Innovation (RDI IS). After conclusion the project contract, the provider reserves the right to publish the information published through the RDI IS, and to keep it and provide access to it in the DAFOS system, in particular in its public component, the TA CR STARFOS search engine available at [www.starfos.tacr.cz](http://www.starfos.tacr.cz).

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

Information on project proposals that TA CR decides will not be funded is not published, except for the information published when announcing the results concerning compliance with conditions of the call for proposals and the results of proposal evaluations.

## 8.7 Appeal

The main applicant may file an appeal against the TA CR procedure to check compliance with the conditions of the call for proposals or the procedure to evaluate and select project proposals in the call for proposals. It may do so in accordance with the guideline SME-08 Guidelines for Complaints within Calls for Proposals.