

Palacký University Olomouc

PALACKÝ UNIVERSITY OLOMOUC POLICY

R-B-22/10-ÚZ04

Palacký University Young Researcher Grant Policy

(Consolidated Version No. 4)

Responsibility: Vice-Rector for Legislation and Organization
Date the policy comes into force: 28 April 2025
Date the policy comes into effect: 5 May 2025

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Article 1

Introductory Provisions

1. This policy of Palacký University Olomouc (hereinafter referred to as “UP”) defines the rules of the Palacký University Young Researcher Grant Competition (hereinafter referred to as “Young Research Grant”, “Grant” or “Project”) in line with the research-related objectives laid down in the 2021+ Strategic Plan for Education and Creative Activities at Palacký University Olomouc.
2. This grant competition aims to support young researchers or members of academic staff below the age of 37, with international experience, in establishing new research teams and laboratories, as well as developing their independent research agenda in order to support the preparation of a high-quality international projects including the HORIZON EUROPE programme, which is available until the end of 2027, and thereafter the 10th Framework Programme, which is to be the follow-up EU Research and Innovation programme to commence in 2028.
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3. The fact that references to any persons are in generic masculine herein is in compliance with drafting rules without being discriminatory or implying any gender imbalance.

Article 2

Basic Rules

1. The project proposals may be submitted in one of the following research areas:
 - a) natural sciences, mathematics and information science;
 - b) medicine and biomedicine;
 - c) humanities and social sciences.
2. The funding allocated to each of these areas is determined by the Rector. An average of 1-3 grants, but not more than 5 grants, per area is awarded. It is possible that no grant is awarded.
3. The research period of the Young Researcher Grants equals 36 months. The period begins on 1 January of the year following the year when the proposal was submitted. The period ends on 31 December of the third year of the research period.
4. A maximum of one project proposal may be submitted per researcher in one calendar year. The person submitting the proposal must be identical to the principal researcher.
5. Anyone meeting the criteria defined below may submit a project proposal; the person submitting the proposal need not be employed by UP at the time the proposal is submitted.
6. The person submitting the proposal agrees to submit a HORIZON EUROPE project application not later than in the third year of the research period, or an application for a project within the 10th Framework Programme if the application is filed in or after 2028.
7. Project proposals will be rejected without consideration if
 - a) the principal researcher does not meet the conditions defined herein (Article 3), or, as the case may be, by the Call for proposals;
 - b) the person submitting the proposal has been awarded the Young Researcher Grant before.

Article 3

Call for Proposals and Requirements for Project Proposals

1. The Rector shall publish a call for proposals (hereinafter the “Call”) for the Young Researcher Grant

- Competition not later than by the end of May of the year preceding the start of the Grant. The Rector will issue the 2025 Call within 30 days after Amendment No. 4 hereto comes into effect. The Call will define, inter alia, a binding schedule for submitting project proposals and individual evaluation stages.
2. A list of the projects is submitted to the UP Grant Board (hereinafter the “Board”) in an electronic form through the UP Project Service (hereinafter the “Project Service”).
 3. The project team will be comprised of:
 - a) principal researcher who must meet all of the following criteria:
 - i. the principal researcher is employed at UP as a member of academic staff or a researcher upon start of the project as well as throughout the entire project period unless an exception under Paragraph 4 applies;
 - ii. the principal researcher is younger than 38 years of age at the moment the project proposal is submitted;
 - iii. the principal researcher holds the PhD degree at the moment the project proposal is submitted;
 - iv. a maximum of 8 years have elapsed since he or she was awarded the PhD degree (maternity leave, parental leave or long-term sick leave is not included in the period);
 - v. the principal researcher achieves excellent results in the respective field and is engaged in international cooperation;
 - vi. the principal researcher has completed a stay abroad not shorter than 3 months;
 - b) other members of academic staff or researchers employed at UP;
 - c) students of UP;
 - d) non-research employees of UP.
 4. The principal researcher need not be employed by UP at the moment the project proposal is submitted. However, the principal researcher must be employed by UP as a member of academic staff or a researcher by the commencement of the research period. If the principal researcher fails to be employed by UP as a member of academic staff or a researcher by the commencement of the research period in situations including cases where the principal researcher fails to be recruited under the Academic Staff Recruitment Policy of Palacký University Olomouc, the proposal submitted under Article 4 is deemed as if not submitted. The principal researcher must be employed by UP at least on a half-time basis (i.e. a minimum of one half of the weekly working hours) for the purposes of the Young Researcher Grant.
 5. The project team may be modified by the principal researcher even during the research period.

Article 4

Project Proposal

1. The project proposal must be submitted in English in an electronic form and must include the following:
 - a) Project title;
 - b) the following details related to the principal researcher:
 - i. identification details (name, surname, date of birth, address of the current workplace, phone number and e-mail address);
 - ii. a structured CV;
 - iii. a list of a minimum of five major publications related to the proposed project authored or co-authored by the principal researcher;
 - iv. WOS/Scopus scientometric indicators (number of publications, number of citations);
 - v. a complete list of publications, or other research output, as the case may be;
 - vi. details of the completed stay abroad;
 - c) details of other members of the research team or a description of vacant positions if the specific names are not known at the moment the proposal is submitted;
 - d) a short abstract of the project (a maximum of 1 000 characters);
 - e) a project description, amount of funding required and the explanation of funding for each year of the research period (a maximum of 5 pages including relevant citations and figures);

- f) project aims;
- g) a description of the proposed procedure, including the time schedule to achieve the aims of the project, including the compatibility with the focus and infrastructure of the faculty or university institute at which the project is to be implemented;
- h) a consent with the project granted on behalf of the department (constituent part) at which the project is to be implemented attached as a separate annex.

Article 5

Evaluation of Project Proposals, Grant Award

1. The evaluation committee of the respective faculty or university institute (hereinafter the "Committee") shall issue a resolution to appoint a rapporteur for each project; the rapporteur should work at the faculty or university institute at which the project is to be implemented. Unless the rapporteur is a member of the Committee by virtue of Paragraph 3, the rapporteur becomes a member of the Committee upon appointment.
2. The project proposals will be first evaluated by two independent external evaluators appointed by the Committee; the Committee will rely on the evaluations to draw up a list of the project proposals for funding allocation reflecting their priority.
3. Members of the Committees and their Presidents at the faculties or university institutes will be appointed by the Deans of the respective faculties, or the Directors of the university institutes. Members of Committees may not be substituted for by other persons.
4. Meetings of the Committees are convened by the respective Presidents, and
 - a) the meetings are not open to the public; if invited by the President of the Committee, external evaluators may attend the meetings;
 - b) minutes of the meetings are drawn up;
 - c) two thirds of the members of the Committee constitute quorum;
 - d) for a resolution to be adopted, it must be approved by a majority of the members present;
 - e) in the case of a tie, the President has a casting vote.
5. The rapporteurs prepare, subject to their consensus, a list of project proposals depending on the ranking of the projects under Paragraph 2 for the award of the Grant in individual areas defined in Article II(1) together with reasoning and a proposal for the allocation of the funds, and submit it to the Board for approval. The Board must provide justification for any decisions deviating from the rapporteur's recommendations.
6. Each proposal is evaluated with respect to its quality, i.e. its scientific excellence, and
 - a) whether the research aims of the project are clearly defined;
 - b) how ambitious the project is;
 - c) whether the person submitting the proposal acts in an original, independent and autonomous way;
 - d) the research activities of the applicant with focus on excellent results and international cooperation.
7. The Rector of UP decides on the award of the Grant subject to a recommendation by the Board. No remedy is admissible against the decision.
8. If the applicant was not employed by UP at the time the project proposal was submitted, and is later awarded the Grant, UP shall provide such an applicant with any cooperation necessary to meet the condition of employment by UP under Article 3(4).

Article 6

Funding

1. The funding may range from CZK 1 million to 4 million per project; 70% the funds will be allocated from the institutional funds for strategic development of a research institution and 30% will be allocated from the budget of the respective faculty or university institute. If the requirement under Article 2(6) hereof is not met, the proportion changes as follows with retrospective effect for the entire

project period: 50% of the funds will be allocated from the institutional funds for strategic development of a research institution and 50% will be allocated from the budget of the respective faculty or university institute.

2. The funding is allocated separately for each calendar year of the research period.
3. The breakdown of the funding allocated for the project:
 - a) staff costs that include salaries, statutory levies and social and health insurance contributions and scholarships; the monthly gross salary of the principal researcher determined in compliance with UP policies must not exceed CZK 70,000¹;
 - b) other costs including operating costs, acquisition costs of small tangible assets (not exceeding CZK 80,000 per item), small intangible assets (not exceeding CZK 80,000 per item), travel expenses and payments for services.
4. The principal researcher may transfer funds between the above categories if such transfer does not exceed 25% of the volume of the budget for each category. Otherwise, the principal researcher must apply for a prior approval of the Board through the Project Service.

Article 7

Management of the Allocated Funds, Interim Report, Final Report and Publication of Results

1. The principal researcher is responsible for due and economical use of the allocated funds in compliance with the applicable laws and regulations and the policies and regulation of UP, the Rector's Call issued under Article 3(1) as well as the terms of the competition defined by the Young Researcher Grant Competition Policy or by the agreement executed with the principal researcher.
2. The principal researcher of the Grant shall
 - a) use any intellectual property and property rights to the research and science results in accordance with the applicable laws and regulations as well as applicable UP policies;
 - b) produce, if requested to do so by the Project Service, any documents evidencing the use of funds; and submit them to the Board through the Project Service;
 - c) return the allocated funding that cannot be used back to UP by the set deadline (keep the funds on a UP account), but not later than 31 days after the end of the accounting period or the termination of the Grant; the unused funding is returned to the research institution development fund and the faculty or university institute in proportion to their contributions.
3. The funding for the project may be suspended as long as necessary if serious grounds related to the principal researcher exists or if he or she requests so. Such a suspension must be approved by the Rector upon proposal of the Board. The period of suspension is not included in the project period, and the project termination date is postponed accordingly.
4. If the principal researcher is transferred to another department (unit) of UP, such a department takes over any obligations arising from such a transfer. The Project Service must be informed in advance of the extent and the details of such a transfer and must be provided with the consent of both of the departments (units) involved.
5. The Grant is not transferable outside UP. The use of the funds allocated under the Grant is conditioned by the employment of the principal researcher under Article 3(3)(a)(i) and its duration throughout the research period.
6. Upon proposal of the Board, the Rector may suspend the Grant with immediate effect and demand, in compliance with the terms of the Grant, that the unused funds be returned if the rules of the grant competition are violated.
7. On an annual basis the principal researcher shall provide the Committee with an interim report on the project and an overview of the funds used not later than by 15 January; the report must not be longer

¹ The threshold is defined for a full-time employee, i.e. FTE of 1, and will be adjusted accordingly for part-time employees.

than 5 pages (including figures). The overview will also include a draft budget for the following calendar year. If the project receives positive feedback, the Committee will recommend that the funding be provided in the following year as well (until the end of the research period) within 1 month of the receipt of the interim report. The Rector will decide on the funding for the following year.

8. The principal researcher shall draw up a final report (not exceeding 5 pages including figures) which includes the description of the project activities, a list of publications and overall evaluation of the project output, and shall submit the report to the Board through the Project Service within 31 days of the end of the project. The Board approves the report at its meeting; the principal researcher may attend the meeting and deliver a short presentation with a summary of the project results.
9. The principal researcher is responsible for:
 - a) incorporating a reference to the project in a publication or any other project outcome, including the affiliation of the authors to UP and the respective department (unit);
 - b) entering information on the achieved results into the internal record system of UP (OBD).

Article 8 Transitory Provisions (of the Unamended Policy)

1. Unless expressly agreed otherwise with the principal researchers, Grants awarded while the previous policies were in effect are governed by such policies.
2. The Rector will issue the 2022 Call under Article 3(1) within 30 days after this policy comes into effect.

Article 9 Final and Repealing Provision (of the Unamended Policy)

1. This policy comes into force on the date it is published and comes into effect on 1 June 2022.
2. Palacký University Young Researcher Grant Policy, UP Policy No. R-B-18/10, as amended, is hereby repealed.

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Amendment No. 1 comes into force on 26 August 2022 and comes into effect on 29 August 2022.

Amendment No. 2 comes into force on 23 March 2023 and comes into effect on 24 March 2023.

Amendment No. 3 comes into force on 19 March 2024 and comes into effect on 20 March 2024.

Amendment No. 4 comes into force on 28 April 2025 and comes into effect on 5 May 2025.

Temporary Provisions of Amendment No. 1

The policy as amended by Amendment No. 1 will apply to proposals submitted in 2022 under the unamended policy.

Temporary Provisions of Amendment No. 2

1. The policy as amended by Amendment No. 2 will apply to the Second edition of the competition in the extent of Articles 7(8) with the exception of the 31-day time limit that will not apply.
2. The policy as amended by Amendment No. 3 will apply to the Third edition of the competition in full.

This consolidated version incorporating Amendment No. 4, i.e. effective of 5 March 2023, has been compiled by Mgr. Andrea Pučálková, Legal Officer.

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Vice-Rector for Legislation and Organization