

MATEJ BEL UNIVERSITY IN BANSKÁ BYSTRICA



THE STATUTE OF THE UNIVERSITY GRANT AGENCY OF MATEJ BEL UNIVERSITY IN BANSKÁ BYSTRICA

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Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica (hereinafter also referred to as "MBU" or "the University"), after the approval by the Rector's Board of MBU dated 9 November 2023, in accordance with Article 3(8) of the MBU Statute, issues this Statute of the University Grant Agency of Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica (hereinafter also referred to as "the University Grant Agency of MBU" or "UGA MBU"):

Article 1 Preliminary provisions

1. Institutional grant system is an instrument of institutional financial support for scientific research activities at Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica. It contributes to strengthening its internal integrity and increases its competitiveness.
2. It supports the improvement of the quality and the level of creative scientific and research activities at the University, as well as the University's priority directions and trends in accordance with the European research trends.
3. The University Grant Agency of MBU has been established in order to support research, development and artistic activities by providing funds for the solution of the University research projects.
4. The mission of UGA MBU is to support scientific, artistic and other creative activities of university teachers at an early stage of their career, researchers and doctoral students in full-time doctoral study programmes at MBU Faculties. This financial support is implemented in the form of special purpose subsidies for individual grant projects.
5. The Council of UGA MBU has been established in order to support activities organised by UGA MBU, which are organisationally and administratively supervised by the Department of the Vice-Rector for Science and Research of MBU.

Article 2 Projects supported by UGA MBU

1. The University Grant Agency of Matej Bel University supports the following scientific research projects:
 - (a) projects supporting university teachers and researchers at an early stage of their career, and doctoral students (Annex 1),
 - (b) thematically focused projects announced by Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica.
2. The sequence of steps related to the preparation of calls for proposals and evaluation of projects include the following activities:
 - (a) issuing calls for project proposals (on the MBU website),
 - (b) evaluation of projects submitted under the call,
 - (c) the decision on the allocation of funds,
 - (d) evaluation of interim evaluation reports,
 - (e) evaluation of final reports.

3. The details concerning the preparation, duration and evaluation of approved projects, as well as details concerning eligibility of the use of funds and target group of researchers shall be specified separately for each call.

4. The publication of each call for project proposals and the topics of the thematic projects shall be approved by the Rector's Board of MBU.

Article 3 Eligible applicants

1. An applicant for UGA MBU grant may be a university teacher or a researcher at an early stage of his/her career (within 5 years from obtaining PhD. academic degree)¹, without the academic degree of associate professor or professor, employed at MBU for a fixed weekly working time, who has not reached the age of 35 years as of the date of submitting the application, and/or a full-time doctoral student at MBU (with no age limitation), with the exception of the doctoral student in the final year of his/her studies.

2. The responsible investigator is the person who submits the application on his/her own behalf or on behalf of a team of investigators.

3. A full-time doctoral student may submit an application only on his/her own behalf.

4. An application for financial support under UMB UGA grant can only be submitted with the consent of the head of department (institute, department of MBU Faculty). If the principal investigator of the project is a doctoral student, the consent of his/her supervisor is required.

5. One researcher may be the principal investigator of no more than one project and one researcher may participate in no more than one project of the institutional grant system.

Article 4 Submission and approval of projects

1. The grant application shall be submitted by completing the prescribed form (Annex 1). The application in one hard copy and in electronic form shall be submitted to the Office of the Vice-Rector for Science and Research of MBU, the Department for Science and Research, by the deadline published in the relevant call.

2. Grant applications that do not meet the required formal requirements are excluded from the approval process.

3. Applications for financial support may be submitted for a one or two-year project. If the project has more investigators, the principal investigator is responsible for the use of allocated funds.

4. Allocated funds are intended for the direct implementation of research (field, laboratory, archival, etc.), for the support of active participation in conferences, for the purchase of professional literature, for the support of quality publication outputs, for the purchase of instruments directly related to the project and other necessary equipment.

¹ Notice: *The applicant's maternity or parental leave does not count towards this period.*

5. Each approved project must have planned outputs (publications in journals, proceedings, monographs, conference abstracts, etc.).
6. The evaluation of the substantive plan will be carried out by the Council of UGA MBU within a set time limit, which may, if necessary, request the opinion of an external assessor. When selecting the submitted applications, the Council of UGA MBU assesses in particular the originality, scientific aims and objectives of the project, the expected contribution to the scientific field and community practice, the quality of the scientific part of the project, the adequacy and justification of the amount of the planned financial costs for the entire period of the project solution.
7. The Council of UGA MBU submits a proposal for project funding to the MBU Rector for approval.
8. Once the grant application is approved, the project is assigned a registration number, which will be sent to the grant applicant in printed and electronic form.
9. The list of approved projects is published on the MBU website, in the section "Science and Research of MBU, indicating at least title of the project, principal investigator and the amount of funds allocated for the project.

Article 5

Provision of financial resources

1. The basic source of funding for projects within UGA MBU is a subsidy from MBU state budget, intended to support institutional research.
2. Each year the proposal for allocation of funds for UGA MBU is submitted to the MBU Rector by the Vice-Rector for Science and Research of MBU in the budgetary process well in advance.
3. The funds allocated for UGA UMB grant may not be used for any purpose other than the intended purpose in compliance with the approved project budget. The maximum financial support per project is set for each call and is based on the current possibilities of the University in a given year. This amount is determined for the entire duration of the project.
4. Funds allocated to the project from the state budget subsidy may only be used to finance expenditure exclusively in category 630 Goods and services (in particular, travel expenses related to research, active participation in conferences, quality publication outputs, materials, professional literature, fees related to open access publishing, translations, software). All publications that are the output of projects supported by UGA MBU funds allocated from the university budget are obliged to declare this support, i.e. they shall state the registration number of the grant and the name of the support scheme "The University Grant Agency of Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica" in the acknowledgement.
5. The principal investigator is responsible for effective use of funds for the solution of UGA MBU projects.

Article 6

Evaluation of projects

1. Annually, the principal investigator shall submit a written evaluation report on the project, its results and the use of allocated funds. The report shall be submitted in one hard copy and in electronic form for each year of the project by completing the prescribed form (Annex 2). Interim evaluation reports after the first year of the project (for two-year projects) shall be submitted to the Office of the Vice-Rector for Science and Research of MBU, the Department for Science and Research, by the deadline set by the call for proposals. Interim evaluation reports shall include copies of published outputs and an accounting of allocated funds.
2. Evaluation reports of the projects are reviewed by the Council of UGA MBU. The results of evaluation shall be taken into account in the allocation of funds for the following year.
3. The final report shall be submitted by the principal investigator to the Department of the Vice-Rector for Science and Research of MBU, the Department for Science and Research, within the deadline set by the call. The final evaluation report of two-year projects must be accompanied by two opinions written by opponents. Evaluation reports of one-year projects shall be accompanied by one opponent's opinion. Opponents shall be appointed by the Council of UGA MBU. The approval of the opponent requires the consent of a supermajority of the permanent members of the Council of UGA MBU and the consent of a representative of the relevant research area within which the project proposal is submitted. Completed projects are evaluated from the point of view of fulfilment of scientific objectives, methodological elaboration, contribution to practice, originality and quality of results and publications, as well as efficiency of the use of funds. Furthermore, the final report includes copies of published outputs and clearance of allocated funds.
4. The accomplishment of project objectives is evaluated in three levels of assessment:
 - (a) excellent,
 - (b) pass,
 - (c) fail.
5. After the evaluation of project results, the principal investigator shall obtain a project evaluation certificate signed by the Chairman of the Council of UGA MBU.
6. An unsatisfactory evaluation of the grant shall result in exclusion of investigator/researcher from the possibility to apply for grant in the next call.
7. Amendments in the course of the project:
 - (a) termination of the solution and funding before the planned date of completion of the project solution is possible on the basis of a proposal of the principal investigator to the Chairman of the Council of UGA MBU. In the request for termination of the project, the reason for termination shall be stated and the evaluation report shall be attached. In the case of early termination of the doctoral student's project, for example due to the completion of his/her doctoral studies, the supervisor is responsible for submitting the evaluation report;
 - (b) change of principal investigator may be proposed in cases of maternity leave, long-term sick leave, long-term absence of the principal investigator, change of workplace or termination of employment/termination of studies of the principal investigator.

The proposal is submitted by the head of institute/department of the relevant MBU Faculty to the Chairman of the Council of UGA MBU in the request for a change of the principal investigator.

Article 7

The Chairman of the Council of UGA MBU

1. Activities of UGA MBU are managed by the Chairman of the Council of UGA MBU, who is responsible for all activities. By virtue of his/her position, the Chairman of the Council of UGA MBU is the Vice-Rector for Science and Research of MBU.
2. The Chairman of the Council of UGA MBU is responsible for:
 - (a) management and control of the activities of UGA MBU,
 - (b) publishing information on allocation of funding for projects and evaluation of completed projects on the MBU website,
 - (c) issuing a certificate on the fulfilment of project objectives to the principal investigator,
 - (d) convening meetings of the Council of UGA MBU.

Article 8

The Council of UGA MBU

1. The Council of UGA MBU is the supreme body of UGA MBU. The Council of UGA MBU has nine permanent members (chairman, vice-chairman, vice-deans for science and research of MBU Faculties) and non-permanent members.
2. The Vice-Chair of the Council of UGA MBU is the director of the University Centre for International Projects ("UCIP").
3. Permanent members of the Council of UGA MBU are vice-deans for science and research of MBU Faculties.
4. Permanent members of the Council of UGA MBU are approved by the Rector's Board of MBU.
5. Non-permanent members are invited representatives of individual scientific disciplines, who are approved by a supermajority of votes of the permanent members of the Council of UGA MBU.
6. Representatives of individual research areas are invited from the list of persons provided by each MBU Faculty for individual scientific disciplines. The Faculty shall nominate at least two representatives for each scientific discipline. Representatives for each scientific discipline shall be nominated from among respected experts from MBU Faculties.
7. Membership in the Council of UGA MBU is irreplaceable.
8. A member of the Council of UGA MBU may resign from his/her position in writing by notifying the Chairman of the Council of UGA MBU of his/her resignation.

9. The members' term of office in the Council of UGA MBU shall be four years and the same person may be the member of the Council of UGA MBU for no more than two consecutive terms. The Council of UGA MBU may, in a serious case, propose a cancellation of membership in the Council of UGA MBU before the end of the term of office.

10. The Council of UGA MBU is responsible for:

- (a) allocation of funds for projects,
- (b) discussing and approving proposals for the appointment and dismissal of invited representatives of individual scientific disciplines.

11. On the basis of previous discussion, The Council of UGA MBU assigns opponents of new projects for elaborating reviews. As a rule, the project opponent shall not be from the department of MBU Faculty identical with the applicant's department/MBU Faculty.

12. In the evaluation of projects in the Council of UGA MBU, the decisive criteria are the scientific intent of the project and its expected contribution in a particular field of study.

13. The final verdict of the Council of UGA MBU shall contain an unequivocal recommendation to support or not to support the submitted project.

14. The evaluation of continuing projects shall be based on the submitted reports. The conclusion must include one of the following options:

- (a) continued funding,
- (b) continue funding in amended amount,
- (c) stop funding.

15. In the case of a proposal to terminate funding earlier, the reason for this should be stated as follows: failure to meet scientific objectives of the project, the use of allocated funds contradicts to the budget, etc.

16. The Chairman of the Council of UGA MBU is responsible for observing whether all activities are in compliance with the rules of academic ethics. A member of the Council of UGA MBU may not be at the same time an applicant for UGA MBU grant or a co-investigator of UGA MBU grant.

Article 9

Administrative support of UGA MBU agenda

1. The activities of UGA MBU are administratively provided by the Office of the Vice-Rector for Science and Research of MBU, the Department for Science and Research and the scope of their responsibilities include:

- (a) preparation of materials for the professional, methodological and conceptual activities of UGA MBU,
- (b) organisation of the meetings of the Council of UGA MBU,
- (c) issuing of calls for project proposals,
- (d) keeping records and archiving the list of applicants and materials related to the activities of UGA MBU,
- (e) ensuring publishing the list of approved scientific projects, as well as evaluations of completed projects on the MBU website.

Article 10
Repeal and final provisions

1. The Statute of the University Grant Agency of MBU, which was approved on 14 November 2011, is repealed.
2. The Statute of the University Grant Agency of Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica comes into force and effect on the day of its approval by the Rector's Board of MBU.
3. This Statute of the University Grant Agency of Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica may be amended in the form of numbered written amendments, which are subject to approval by the Rector's Board of MBU.
4. This Statute of the University Grant Agency of Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica was approved by the Rector's Board of MBU at its meeting on 9 November 2023.

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doc. Ing. Vladimír Hiadlovský, PhD.
MBU Rector

Annexes

Annex No 1 Grant Application UGA MBU
Annex No 2 Evaluation Report UGA MBU