Methodology for submitters of project proposals, other researchers and mentors in the Start programme

This methodology is binding for applicants, researchers and mentors in the Start programme.

Applicant/head researcher

- **Only head researchers who are enrolled for doctoral studies at a faculty of Charles University at the time of submission can submit a project proposal**. If a head researcher completes the standard period of study during the period for possible submission of a project proposal (from 15. 9. 2020 to 30. 10. 2020), then he/she must submit the project proposal before the day on which he/she completes the standard study period. Note - do not confuse the standard period of study with the period during which tuition fees are not payable!
- **Head researcher in the project proposal phase:**
  a) ensure the participation of a mentor in the project,
  b) sets up a research team,
  c) reaches agreement with other researchers on their involvement and work capacity in the project,
  d) in agreement with other researchers and mentors, determines the topic and research goal of the project (scientific hypothesis), procedures for its achievement and expected outputs,
  e) sets his/her own educational goal,
  f) reaches agreement with the workplace at which the project will be implemented,
  g) draws up a project budget,
  h) determines the place of his/her internship abroad (country or workplace),
  i) submits a project proposal and ensures that other researchers and mentors complete their data within the IS Věda information system,
  j) sends the amended project proposal by 12.00 on 30.10.2020.
- **The research team** is set up by the head researcher. The research team comprises the head researcher and up to four other researchers. All researchers must be students in doctoral studies at CU for the entire period of their involvement in the project. No researcher may participate in more than one project at the same time, nor may they be listed in more than one project proposal.

- **Mentor.** Every research team has a mentor, who provides methodological and professional support, helps with planning individual steps in the project, and at the end of the project evaluates its implementation (summary of mentored activities, including assessment of project implementation, acquired knowledge and outputs, recommendations for further/future research activities of each researcher). The minimum qualification for a mentor is the successful completion of a doctoral study programme or an equivalent qualification. Mentors are generally holders of a Ph.D., Th.D., CSc., DrSc., or equivalent title. A mentor can also be an **external employee** on the basis of a DPP/DPČ. One person can be a mentor in only one Start programme project.
- **The topic of the project** must not be identical with the topic of the dissertation of any member of the team, but the outputs of the project can be used for dissertation work.
- **Work capacities of members of the research team.** The main researcher must have a dedicated work capacity for the project corresponding to 0.5 FTE(for students who are employed at the relevant faculty for the project, this is the extent of the FTE, and for students who will not work on the project as employees, but through a scholarship, this is an adequate part of their time capacity). Other researchers must have a dedicated work capacity for the project corresponding to a workload of 0.1–0.5, whereby the sum of work capacities of all members of the research team must be expressed in full tenths. The total amount of work capacity of individual researchers at Charles University (sum of all parallel employment contracts, DPP, DPČ and planned work capacity within the project) must not exceed 1.2. The project proposal must specify the planned participation of individual members of the research team, while the head researcher must be in place for the entire period of project implementation. For other researchers, participation in the project can be shorter in justified cases, but must be stated in whole months in the project proposal. In the event that another researcher joins the project later, it is necessary to identify the person of the future additional researcher in the submitted project application - for further information, see the procedure described in the Manual for Applicants. In principle, if the amount of work capacity and duration of work in the project is not already planned in the application, it cannot be additionally included in the project - it is not possible to increase the total project budget!
- **Internship abroad.** Every researcher with a work capacity corresponding to a workload of 0.3 or more must complete educational/research activities abroad[1] (e.g. internship, summer school, research/educational stay) for a minimum total duration of 3 months[2] (min. 85 days; this limit does not include the day of arrival and the day of departure). If this minimum mandatory length of activity abroad is not realised by a single internship abroad, it can be replaced by several internships abroad, the minimum length of which is 3 weeks. Internships abroad can be completed in both EU and non-EU countries. Researchers arrange internships abroad themselves in agreement with the mentor and the faculty clerk. Researchers must document the completion of internships abroad in an Internship Report. If the total length of the internship is divided into several stays, an Internship Report is submitted for each individual stay.
- **Project proposals** shall be submitted in English only and must include:
  a) project name,
  b) brief annotation of the project,
  c) research goal of the project (scientific hypothesis) and procedures to achieve it,
  d) data on the members of the research team,

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[1]CU prefers partners in the 4EU+ Alliance and CU's strategic partnerships as destinations for activities abroad.
[2]For an exception to this provision, see Changes in the research team

e) CVs of all researchers and mentors,
f) the educational goal of each researcher, which will be met during the implementation of the project,
g) expected project outputs,
h) topic of each researcher's dissertation,
i) naming of the faculty of the head researcher, or a list of faculties at which the project will proceed,
j) a statement by each researcher that the topic of the project is not identical to the topic of their dissertation,
k) project budget data, incl. justification.

- The basic **structure of the budget** shall consist of:
  a) personnel costs (salary costs of researchers, including all contributions and employer contributions) and scholarship costs ("personnel costs"),
  b) remuneration for mentors,
  c) travel costs,
  d) education costs,
  e) costs of non-investment equipment, materials, services, etc.
  f) faculty overhead costs in the amount of at least 15% of the total project budget.

- **Head researcher of successful project proposal:** in the course of March 2021 he/she will conclude an Agreement on the Allocation of Funds with Charles University and the Faculty.

- **Head researcher in the project implementation phase:** The head researcher is responsible for compliance with these Principles and for the proper claiming and economic use of the allocated funds and for compliance with the terms of the Agreement. He/she shall use the allocated funds exclusively in connection with the implemented project. Implements any changes in accordance with the Principles of the Start Programme, Article VII.

  Submits a monthly activity report in IS Věda no later than the 14th day of the following month (this also applies to the last month of project implementation). The monthly report must contain in particular:
  a) description of activities in the given month,
  b) description of the progress of work on outputs,
  c) plan of activities for the next month
  d) summary of the work of the entire team in the given month, including any changes made to the project,
  e) if relevant, attach appendices (scan - Internship Report, Attestation/Certificate of Completion). The original of the Internship Report and the original/officially certified copy of the Attestation/Certificate are submitted to the faculty clerk.

  The sent report is made available to the mentor for confirmation, then it is made available to the faculty clerk for approval. The approved report is then made available to the university clerk, who can return it for completion in the event of deficiencies.

- **Head researcher after the completion of the project:** participates in the preparation of the Final Report in IS Věda, signs the hard copy of final version of the Final Report (which also includes the final evaluation and assessment of the overall implementation of the project by the mentor) and obtains the signatures of other current team members and the mentor. The signed Final Report is submitted to the Research Support

Office of the Rectorate of Charles University within one month of completion of the project.

Other researcher

- **Other researcher in the project proposal submission phase**: participates in determining the topic and research goal of the project, the procedures for achieving it and the expected outputs. Sets personal educational goals and enters his/her data in the project proposal in IS Věda.
- **Other researcher in the project solution phase**: cooperates on the project solution according to the instructions of the head researcher and within his/her proposed work capacity. All possible changes concerning his/her person and related to the project are discussed together with the main researcher. Submits a monthly activity report in IS Věda no later than the 14th day of the following month (this also applies to the last month of project implementation).

  The monthly report must contain in particular:
  a) description of activities in the given month,
  b) description of the progress of work on outputs,
  c) plan of activities for the next month
  d) if relevant, attach appendices (scan - Internship Report, Attestation/Certificate of Completion). The original of the Internship Report and the original/officially certified copy of the Attestation/Certificate are submitted to the faculty clerk.

  The sent report is made available to the mentor for confirmation, then it is made available to the faculty clerk for approval. The approved report is then made available to the university clerk, who can return it for completion in the event of deficiencies.

- **Other researcher after the completion of the project:** participates in the preparation of and signs the Final Report.

Mentor

Mentoring

A mentor is neither the project leader, nor do they evaluate the project. Mentoring is an effective way of passing on and developing not only professional, but also soft skills. It is a professional relationship between two people based on trust - the mentor and the mentee (researcher), where the mentor passes on his/her experience and knowledge and can act as a guide for the mentee in the topic - provides methodological and professional support. Thanks to the natural sharing of knowledge and skills, which usually takes place in practice in the workplace, the mentor helps to find the the right direction or solution for the mentee. The researcher determines what he/she wants to learn and the mentor supports him/her in doing so. The mentor helps the researcher to set a goal, map out his/her initial situation and find a way to achieve the goal. Part of such a process is the planning of individual steps and joint evaluation of whether they had any meaning and benefit for the researcher. The mentor definitely does not evaluate the work of the researcher. In the mentor-researcher relationship, only the researcher has the right to evaluate his/her own work. The researcher's mentor mainly leads him/her to self-reflection, provides him/her with descriptive feedback, summarises, paraphrases and offers a reflection on the whole process during the interview. However, the basis of

cooperation between the researcher and the mentor is an interview and feedback linked to the researcher's self-reflection and observation outputs. It builds on what the researcher already knows and what he/she can do.

Mentoring phases:

contracting, which encompasses data collection and setting the researcher's goals and development plan (research and educational goals). This phase also includes setting the rules of mentoring, and the rights and obligations of the mentor and the researcher. A further important point of this phase is the establishment of a positive relationship between the mentor and the mentee.

procedural, i.e. direct support in the form of consultations, self-education, listening, etc.

evaluation, i.e. evaluation of the process and determination of further steps for the contracting phase

- **Mentor in the project proposal submission phase:** participates in determining the topic and research goal of the project (scientific hypothesis), procedures for its achievement and expected outputs. Enters his/her data in the project proposal in IS Věda.
- **Mentor in the project solution phase:** provides methodological and professional support, helps with planning individual steps during the project. Confirms monthly reports of all members of the research team in IS Věda.
- **Mentor after the end of the project:** adds an evaluation of project implementation (summary of mentored activities, including assessment of project implementation, acquired knowledge and outputs, recommendations for further/future research activities of each researcher) to the Final Report prepared by researchers in IS Věda. Signs the hard copy of the final version of the Final Report.

Changes in the project

- **Change request**: Change requests are submitted to the faculty clerk via IS Věda. Applications must include a description of the change, the justification for the change and the expected date from which the change is to take effect. The approved change is described by the head researcher in the Monthly Report in the month in which the change tooks effect, in the section "Summary of teamwork", with the exception of changes to the planned destination or date of the internship abroad - such a change is described by the head researcher/researcher whose internship abroad the change concerns in the section "description of activities in the given month".
- **Change of head researcher**: changes less than four calendar months before the end of the project are possible only in serious cases (long-term illness, termination/interruption of studies, etc.). The new head researcher must complete an internship of proportionate length (one internship day for every eight days of involvement in project implementation) and have time for the proper completion of the project.
- **Change of other researcher**: if they have a work capacity corresponding to a workload of 0.3 or more, he/she is always obliged to complete the internship in full, irrespective of the duration of this increase in work capacity.

Final Report

- **Final Report. The Final Report is prepared by the research team under the leadership of the head researcher within one month after the end of project implementation:** It must contain in particular:
  a) summary of project implementation,
  b) summary of achieved outputs, or their documentation,
  c) summary of research or educational internships abroad,
  d) evaluation of the fulfillment of the research goal of the project,
  e) evaluation of the fulfillment of the educational goals of all members of the research team.
  The report is subsequently made available to the mentor for final evaluation and assessment of the overall implementation of the project. **The hard copy of the final version of the Final Report must be signed by all current researchers and mentors and submitted to the Research Support Office of the Rectorate of CU within one month of completion of the project.** Every Final Report will then be evaluated by the Review Commission, which will focus in particular on the fulfilment of set objectives and the corresponding outputs. Minutes shall be taken of the meetings of the Commission, which shall be published in the usual manner.

Ineligible expenditure

In the cases listed below, the funds for the last month of implementation of the entire project are ineligible in all cases (the amount of the budget of the entire project for one month). If the funds are provided to researchers in advance, the researchers must return these funds in full, irrespective of whether they have already been used in the implementation of the project or not.

- a researcher has not fulfilled the obligation of the internship abroad, or has not fulfilled it to the specified extent (applies to any member of the team, if he/she had this obligation),
- defined project outputs were not fulfilled and/or documented
- no monthly report has been processed/sent (applies to any team member),
- The Final Report was not processed/sent on time.

Recommendations

- **Recommendations for setting up a research team:** the research team must be set up with regard to the topic of the project and other conditions of project implementation (changes of persons involved in the project, termination of the project in the case of an individual researcher, etc.). We therefore recommend setting up a multi-member research team. At the same time the research team should be set up as a stable research team for the entire period of project implementation, including the planned work capacities.
- **Recommendations for planned work capacities:** the maximum number of hours worked in a given month must be observed. The total work capacity of each researcher at CU (sum of all concurrent employment contracts, DPP, DPČ and work capacity in the project) must therefore not exceed 1.2 in each individual month. This fact must be taken into account especially in cases where a researcher is in an employment relationship with CU (outside the Start programme) in

the form of an agreement to complete a job (DPP) or contract for work (DPČ).

Calculation of hours worked:

Amount of work	No. of hours
0.1	16
0.2	32
0.3	48
0.4	64
0.5	80

- **Recommendations for internships abroad:** CU prefers the implementation of internships abroad with partners in the 4EU+ alliance; however, this is only a recommendations, which does not affect the evaluation of the grant project.
- **Recommendations for drawing up a budget**: it is advisable to draw up a balanced budget and toset aside a financial reserve in optional items, such as travel or material costs. In the case of individual projects (head researcher = individual researcher), it is necessary to consider the total allocation of the project in relation to the costs of the mandatory internship abroad.
- **Recommendations for the internship:** the internship should be planned in cooperation with the faculty clerk as soon as possible. If the duration of the internship is less than 85 days[3], this is in breach of the conditions of the Start programme, the internship is considered unfulfilled, and the funds allocated to the **entire project** for the last month of implementation are deducted (these funds will not be eligible).
- **Recommendations for budget changes:** during the implementation of the project, such changes can be made in which researchers use funds from the overhead costs item while maintaining the rule that overhead costs for the faculty do not fall below 15% of the total grant budget.
- **Recommendations for changes in the research team:** changes in the research team are in many cases accompanied by changes in the project budget. The administration of these changes by the faculty and researchers will therefore require a lot of administration (changes in employment contracts, DPP/DPČ, changes in awarded scholarships, changes in the project budget and any necessary return of funds, etc.). Therefore, such changes should be requested well in advance (changes take effect on the first day of the month in all cases).
- **Recommendations for further changes:** changes during project implementation must always be made in sufficient time and in cooperation with the faculty clerk. When making changes to the research team, it should be borne in mind that, in the event of a reduction in the team's total work capacity, the overall project budget will decrease and it will be necessary to return part of the allocated funds (e.g. scholarship paid in advance).
- **Recommendations for reported costs:** it is always necessary to consult with the faculty clerk so that there is no breach of the faculty's internal regulations.
- **Recommended types of outputs**: achieved results of professional research, professional articles or publications in the phase of submission to review proceedings, proposed methods or methodologies, active participation in professional conferences e.g. as poster, improvement of communication and language skills during internships, training in working with new devices or a method usable in further professional activity, certificates of acquired education or training, and others.

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[3]If shorter than according to the exception when replacing the head researcher, see Changes in the research team

- **Recommendations for output planning**: in the event of failure to achieve the planned outputs, the situation is assessed as not fulfilled and the funds allocated for the entire project for the last month of implementation will be deducted (these funds will not be eligible). Therefore, it is advisable to consider which outputs, and at which stage of processing, will be defined in the application.

Timetable

15. 09. 2020 12:00 – 30. 10. 2020 12:00: submission of project proposals in IS Věda (head researchers)
02. 11. 2020 – 06. 11. 2020: First round of evaluation - formal aspect (university clerk)
From 02. 11. 2020 14 calendar days, no later than 20. 11. 2020:
- corrections of formal deficiencies (head researchers)
23. 11. 2020 – 06. 12. 2020: Second round of evaluation (external evaluators)
14. 12. 2020 – 12. 1. 2021: Third round of evaluation - acquaintance with project proposals and their assessments, proposal of further point evaluation of assigned project proposals (reviewers)
13. 01. 2021 – 19. 01. 2021: Third round of evaluation - meeting of the Review Commission
by 26. 02 2021: announcement of results - evaluation of project proposals made available to main researchers in IS Věda (university clerk)

01. 03. 2021 – 31. 03. 2021: signing of Agreements on the Allocation of Funds (head researchers, deans, Rector)
01. 04. 2021 – 31. 03. 2023: project implementation
01. 04. 2023 – 30. 04. 2023: submission of final reports (head researchers)