

Memorandum of Understanding
between the
Slovenian Research Agency (ARRS)
and the
Croatian Science Foundation (HRZZ)
(referred to as “Partner Organizations”)

on a

Lead Agency Procedure
for

**the unilateral administration of the evaluation procedure and the
mutual recognition of the evaluation results concerning Slovenian-
Croatian Joint Bilateral Projects**

1. Preamble

ARRS and HRZZ agree in the future for Slovenian-Croatian joint bilateral projects (hereinafter: “Bilateral Projects”) to conduct a unilaterally administered evaluation procedure (hereinafter: “Evaluation Procedure”), the result of which will be mutually recognized by the ARRS and the HRZZ subject to the approval of their respective decision-making bodies.

The present agreement aims to:

- make applications for Bilateral Projects easier;
- simplify the evaluation procedure of the Bilateral Projects;
- decrease the workload of the scientific community in peer review procedures;
- increase scientific added value;
- strengthen Slovenian-Croatian joint bilateral co-operations;
- develop mutually recognized quality standards.

2. Evaluation of Bilateral Projects

The Evaluation Procedure applies only to Bilateral Projects that promise a scientific added value as a result of the cross-border cooperation, whose individual parts for the countries therefore do not represent a separate project and therefore cannot be funded alone.

The Evaluation Procedure is guided by the following principles:

- 1.) The Partner Organization in charge of the Evaluation Procedure acts as Lead Agency. The Partner Organizations take turns as Lead Agencies on a yearly basis. The Lead Agency proposes for funding as many Bilateral Projects as can be financed from the available budget.
- 2.) The individual responsible for a Bilateral Project submits the overall application according to the application guidelines of the Lead Agency.
- 3.) The application consists of a joint scientific description of the project, delineating the scientific contributions of the respective partners. Cost calculations must be stated separately for each national part of the project and must follow the guidelines of the respective national funding agency.
- 4.) Once the application is submitted, the Lead Agency informs the Partner Organization of the application and asks for a formal check of the respective national project part. If the formal criteria of either of the two funding agencies are not met, the application is considered as being rejected by both funding agencies.
- 5.) The Lead Agency conducts the Evaluation Procedure in accordance with its standard procedures that apply for the respective funding instrument. The Lead Agency informs the external reviewers that their names and reviews may be communicated to the Partner Organization. The Partner Organization assures the confidential treatment of this information. The partner agencies agree on an international peer review procedure.
- 6.) The Lead Agency forwards the result of the review process to the Partner Organization (funding / not funding), including the complete, non-anonymized reviews. The Partner Organization assures the confidential treatment of this information.
- 7.) In case of a positive funding decision, the Partner Organization presents the result of the review process and the decision of the Lead Agency to its decision-making body and asks for the confirmation of the Lead Agency's decision. The Partner Organization does not conduct its own evaluation, but confirms the decision of the Lead Agency.
- 8.) If exceptional circumstances prevent the Partner Organization from following the decision of the Lead Agency, it has to provide an explanation to the Lead Agency. If no agreement can be reached between the Lead Agency and the Partner Organization, the proposal is considered as being rejected.
- 9.) The Lead Agency informs the applicants of the result of the evaluation and the funding decision first. Then the Partner Organization also informs the applicants in its country.
- 10.) In case of a positive funding decision, each Partner Organization provides the amount of its contribution according to its applicable rules.
- 11.) Both Partner Organizations require interim and final reports on the project according to their applicable rules.

Further administrative details will be agreed upon in the course of implementation of the Lead Agency procedure. The Memorandum of Understanding will enter into force upon its signing by both

parties and has duration of three years. Its validity will be extended automatically, unless either of the parties decides to terminate the co-operation. A termination has to be forwarded in written form at least six months before the desired date of termination to the partner agency. The parties agree to evaluate the co-operation regularly.

HRZZ

ARRS

Signature:



Akad. Prof. Dr. Dario Vretenar
President of the Board

Date:

14/3/2019

Signature:



Prof. Dr. József Györkös
Director

Date:

18.3.2019

