Republic of Latvia

Cabinet

Regulation No. 35

Adopted 9 January 2024

**Regulations Regarding the Implementation of Activity 1.1.1.9 “Post-doctoral Research” of the Specific Objective 1.1.1 “Strengthening of Research and Innovation Capacities and Introduction of Advanced Technologies in the Common R&D System” of the European Union’s Cohesion Policy Programme for 2021–2027**

*Issued pursuant to*

*Section 19, Clauses 6 and 13 of the Law on Management of European Union Funds for the 2021–2027 Programming Period*

**I. General Provisions**

1. The Regulation prescribes:

1.1. the procedures for the implementation of Activity 1.1.1.9 “Post-doctoral research” of Specific Objective 1.1.1 “Strengthening of research and innovation capacities and introduction of advanced technologies in the common R&D system” of the European Union’s Cohesion Policy Programme for 2021–2027 (hereinafter – the Activity);

1.2. the objective of the Activity;

1.3. the funding planned and available for the Activity;

1.4. the requirements for the project applicant and beneficiary of the European Regional Development Fund;

1.5. the provisions for the activities to be supported and the eligibility of costs;

1.6. the provisions and procedures for the application of simplified costs.

2. The following terms are used in the Regulation:

2.1. research application not related to economic activity – a research application which meets the following criteria:

2.1.1. the research application is implemented by a scientific institution which is registered in the Register of Scientific Institutions of the Republic of Latvia and corresponds to the definition of a research organisation referred to in Sub-paragraph 2.13 of this Regulation;

2.1.2. activities of non-economic nature are implemented in the research application;

2.2. research application related to economic activity – a research application which meets one or all of the following criteria:

2.2.1. the research application is implemented by a scientific institution that does not correspond to the definition of research organisation or by a micro, small, medium-sized, or large enterprise registered in the Enterprise Register of the Republic of Latvia;

2.2.2. economic activities are implemented in the research application;

2.3. activity of non-economic nature – activity of a research organisation which does not fall within the scope of activity specified in Article 107(1) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, including:

2.3.1. public education ensured within the scope of the State education system and mainly or completely funded and supervised by the State to increase and improve the skills of human resources;

2.3.2. independent research and development to acquire more knowledge and a better understanding, including joint research and development by the research organisation taking part in effective collaboration;

2.3.3. dissemination of research results without exclusivity and discrimination, including by using teaching, free access databases, open publications, or open source software;

2.3.4. activities related to the transfer of know-how and technology if the activities related to the transfer of know-how and technology are carried out by a division of the research organisation or a subsidiary of the research organisation (such commercial company in which the participation share of the parent undertaking exceeds 50 per cent or in which the parent undertaking has the majority of votes and which corresponds to the definition of a research organisation referred to in Sub-paragraph 2.13 of this Regulation), the research organisation together with other research organisations or the research organisation with third parties by concluding contracts for certain services in an open call for proposals and if all profit from such activity is re-invested in the principal activities of the research organisation;

2.4. transfer of know-how and technology – transfer of specific knowledge and technologies to a user, including alienation of the material rights to know-how and technologies in order to create new products or technologies;

2.5. effective collaboration – collaboration which corresponds to the definition laid down in Article 2(90) of Commission Regulation No 651/2014 of 17 June 2014 declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the internal market in application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty (hereinafter – Commission Regulation No 651/2014);

2.6. fundamental research – activities which conform to the definition laid down in Article 2(84) of Commission Regulation No 651/2014;

2.7. undertaking in difficulty which corresponds to the definition laid down in Article 2(18) of Commission Regulation No 651/2014;

2.8. worker with disabilities – a person who corresponds to the definition laid down in Article 2(3) of Commission Regulation No 651/2014;

2.9. disadvantaged worker – a person who corresponds to the definition laid down in Article 2(4) of Commission Regulation No 651/2014;

2.10. post-doctoral researcher – a Latvian or foreign researcher who has acquired doctoral degree not more than 10 years before the final date for the submission of a research application. This period may be extended if the person has a justified reason:

2.10.1. prenatal and maternity leave;

2.10.2. parental leave;

2.10.3. temporary incapacity for work;

2.11. international post-doctoral researcher – a Latvian or foreign scientist who has acquired a doctoral degree before the final date for the submission of an international research application or scientific staff with at least four years of full-time equivalent research experience before the final date for the submission of an international research application;

2.12. large enterprise – an enterprise which corresponds to the definition laid down in Article 2(24) of Commission Regulation No 651/2014;

2.13. research organisation – a research and knowledge-dissemination organisation which corresponds to the definition laid down in Article 2(83) of Commission Regulation No 651/2014;

2.14. research application – an individual aid project for research, training, and networking which is submitted and, by employing a post-doctoral researcher, implemented by a scientific institution or a small (micro), small, medium-sized or large enterprise registered with the Enterprise Register of the Republic of Latvia (hereinafter – the enterprise);

2.15. international research application – an individual aid project not related to economic activity for research, training, and networking which is submitted by a scientific institution in the selection of international research applications and implemented thereby and in which an international post-doctoral researcher is employed;

2.16. intensity of public funding – total amount of the funding from the European Regional Development Fund and the funding from the State budget in per cent of the total eligible costs of the project;

2.17. industrial research – research which corresponds to the definition laid down in Article 2(85) of Commission Regulation No 651/2014;

2.18. economic activity – any activity which includes the offering of goods or services on the market, including the lease of research infrastructure, services implemented upon assignment of enterprises, or contractual research;

2.19. micro, small and medium-sized enterprise – an enterprise which corresponds to the definitions laid down in Annex I to Commission Regulation No 651/2014;

2.20. technology rights – know-how and the rights referred to hereinafter or the combination thereof, including applications for the abovementioned rights or registration applications: patents, functional models, design rights, topographies of semiconductor products, supplementary protection certificates for medical products or other products in relation to which it is possible to receive such supplementary protection certificates, certificates of plant breeders, and software copyright;

2.21. scientific staff – a senior researcher, a researcher, and a scientific assistant;

2.22. scientific institution – a scientific institute (public agency, derived public entity, or legal person governed by private law) or a higher education institution registered in the Register of Scientific Institutions of the Republic of Latvia.

3. The purpose of the Activity is to develop the skills of new scientists and increase the scientific capacity by ensuring possibilities for new scientists to start a career in scientific institutions and enterprises, as well as broadening of research competences, renewal of human resources, and increase in the number of qualified specialists.

4. Research applications and international research applications which contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the Research and Innovation Strategy for Smart Specialization of Latvia or the development of specialisation fields, including interdisciplinary research applications which correspond to at least one of the defined areas of smart specialisation of Latvia, are supported within the scope of the Activity.

5. The target group of the Activity is scientific institutions, scientists, higher education institutions, enterprises registered with the Enterprise Register of the Republic of Latvia.

6. The following supervision indicators need to be achieved within the scope of the Activity:

6.1. by 31 December 2024, the following output indicators:

6.1.1. research organisations participating in joint research projects – 5;

6.1.2. undertakings collaborating with research organisations – 5;

6.2. by 31 December 2029, the following output indicators:

6.2.1. research organisations participating in joint research projects – 10;

6.2.2. undertakings collaborating with research organisations – 13;

6.3. by 31 December 2029, the following result indicators:

6.3.1. research workplaces created in the supported entities – 41;

6.3.2. private investments supplementing public aid (including grants and financial instruments) – EUR 628 142;

6.4. national indicators:

6.4.1. by 31 December 2024:

6.4.1.1. a project application has been developed and submitted in the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Action Co-funding of Regional, National and International Programmes (COFUND) (hereinafter – the COFUND project) of the European Union Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, Horizon Europe, and it has received a score above the quality threshold;

6.4.2. by 31 December 2029:

6.4.2.1. post-doctoral researchers who have received aid from the European Regional Development Fund – at least 165;

6.4.2.2. the number of scientific articles for the development and publishing of which in the journals or conference proceedings included in Web of Science and Scopus database aid has been provided within the scope of research applications;

6.4.2.3. the number of new products and technologies which can be marketed and for the development of which aid has been provided within the scope of a research application.

7. Within the scope of activities, a beneficiary must accumulate the following RIS3 indicators in the Cohesion Policy Funds Management Information System for each of the RIS3 areas in breakdown by the types of final beneficiaries:

7.1. public funding by the RIS3 areas (EUR);

7.2. private funding by the RIS3 areas (EUR);

7.3. fundamental research (EUR);

7.4. industrial (applied) research (EUR);

7.5. emerging technologies (number);

7.6. emerging products (number);

7.7. scientific staff involved (including new scientists, number);

7.8. scientific staff involved (including new scientists, full-time equivalent);

7.9. research technical staff involved (number);

7.10. research technical staff involved (full-time equivalent);

7.11. publications – WoS and SCOPUS (in total).

8. A beneficiary shall submit the information referred to in Paragraph 7 of this Regulation in the Cohesion Policy Funds Management Information System together with a payment request.

9. The Activity shall be implemented in the form of a limited selection of project applications.

10. Aid in the form of grants is intended for the Activity.

11. The functions of the responsible institution within the scope of the Activity shall be carried out by the Ministry of Education and Science (hereinafter – the responsible institution).

12. The total funding planned within the scope of the Activity is EUR 44 800 000 (including the flexibility funding in the amount of EUR 5 488 842), including the funding from the European Regional Development Fund in the amount of EUR 38 080 000 (including the flexibility funding in the amount of EUR 4 665 516), the co-funding from the State budget in the amount of EUR 5 149 646 (including the flexibility funding in the amount of EUR 823 326), and the private co-funding in the amount of EUR 1 570 354.

13. The total funding available for the implementation of the Activity shall be planned in the amount of not more than EUR 39 311 158, including the funding from the European Regional Development Fund in the amount of EUR 33 414 484, the co-funding from the State budget in the amount of EUR 4 326 320, and the private co-funding in the amount of EUR 1 570 354.

14. The responsible institution may, based on the decision of the European Commission on the mid-term review, propose to increase the total funding available for the Activity to the planned total amount of funding referred to in Paragraph 12 of this Regulation from 1 January 2026.

15. The Activity shall be implemented in one project application selection round for the whole funding available for the Activity.

16. The intermediate body shall take the decision to approve, conditionally approve, or reject a project application within three months from the final date for the submission of project applications which has been specified in the regulations for the selection of project application.

**II. Requirements for Project Applicant and Beneficiary**

17. Within the scope of the Activity, the project applicant is the Latvian Council of Science which, after approval of the project application, is the beneficiary of the European Regional Development Fund (hereinafter – the beneficiary).

18. The project applicant shall prepare a project application according to the requirements specified in the regulations for the selection of project applications and submit it in the Cohesion Policy Funds Management Information System. The following documents developed in cooperation with the Latvian Rector’s Council, the Latvian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Association of State Scientific Institutes, and the Latvian Association of Young Researchers and agreed upon with the Ministry of Education and Science shall be additionally appended to the project application:

18.1. the procedures and arrangements for selecting research applications;

18.2. the documents of the first research application selection round:

18.2.1. the regulations for the selection of research applications;

18.2.2. the criteria for the evaluation of research applications and the methodology for their application;

18.2.3. the sample form of the research application and the methodology for its completion.

19. The total funding planned for the implementation of research applications shall be planned in the amount of not less than EUR 31 407 079 (including the flexibility funding in the amount of EUR 5 488 842), including the funding from the European Regional Development Fund in the amount of EUR 26 696 017 (including the flexibility funding in the amount of EUR 4 665 516), the co-funding from the State budget in the amount of EUR 3 140 708 (including the flexibility funding in the amount of EUR 823 326), and the private co-funding in the amount of EUR 1 570 354.

20. The total funding available for the implementation of research applications shall be planned in the amount of not less than EUR 25 918 237, including the funding from the European Regional Development Fundin the amount of EUR 22 030 501, the co-funding from the State budget in the amount of EUR 2 317 382, and the private funding in the amount of EUR 1 570 354.

21. If the Research Executive Agency of the European Commission approves the COFUND project developed and submitted by the beneficiary referred to in Paragraph 17 of this Regulation and grants funding for its implementation, the total funding for the implementation of the COFUND project shall be planned in the amount of not more than EUR 10 000 000, including the funding from the European Regional Development Fund in the amount of EUR 8 500 000 and co-funding from the State budget in the amount of EUR 1 500 000.

22. The beneficiary:

22.1. shall announce the first call for the selection of research applications within two months after the agreement on project implementation has been entered into;

22.2. shall develop and, after agreement thereupon with the Ministry of Education and Science, approve the rules of procedures of the commission for the evaluation of research applications;

22.3. shall develop the regulations for the selection of research applications, including providing for the procedures in the selection regulations by which research applications shall be assessed if they have received the same number of points;

22.4. shall organise an international evaluation of the scientific merit of research applications, attracting experts included in the databases of scientific experts and applying the evaluation approach and principles of the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Action Postdoctoral Fellowships of the European Union Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, Horizon Europe;

22.5. shall evaluate research applications and take the decision to approve or reject research applications, including in the decision information on the procedures for appealing the decision;

22.6. shall accumulate data on research applications, including personal data, to record post-doctoral researchers who will have received aid both in Activity 1.1.1.2 “Post-doctoral Research Aid” of the Specific Objective 1.1.1 “To increase the research and innovative capacity of scientific institutions of Latvia and the ability to attract external financing by investing in human resources and infrastructure” of the Operational Programme “Growth and Employment” of the 2014–2020 programming period and in Activity 1.1.1.9;

22.7. upon request of the responsible institution, shall submit information to the responsible institution on research applications within 10 working days;

22.8. shall ensure compliance with the measures for the prevention of a conflict of interests and also ensure supervision of the provisions of Article 61 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, amending Regulations (EU) No 1296/2013, (EU) No 1301/2013, (EU) No 1303/2013, (EU) No 1304/2013, (EU) No 1309/2013, (EU) No 1316/2013, (EU) No 223/2014, (EU) No 283/2014, and Decision No 541/2014/EU and repealing Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012 (hereinafter – Regulation No 2018/1046) in relation to the specialists of the beneficiary who ensure the process of expert-examination, precluding the occurrence of the situations of a conflict of interests and managing risks in relation to the scope of the conflict of interests of Article 61 of Regulation No 2018/1046;

22.9. shall ensure that each specialist of the beneficiary who selects experts, evaluates research applications, and takes the decision to approve research applications, and also signs the certification on the non-existence of a conflict of interests (including a reference to Article 61 of Regulation No 2018/1046 in the certification);

22.10. shall select providers of goods and services in accordance with the laws and regulations in the field of public procurements, implementing an open, transparent, non-discriminating procedure that ensures competition.

23. The beneficiary shall enter into contracts with research applicants for the implementation of research applications. The following information shall be included in the contract:

23.1. the type of the research application (research application related to economic activity or research application not related to economic activity), supported activities, and the achievable values of the indicators referred to in Sub-paragraphs 6.2, 6.3, and 6.4.2 of this Regulation;

23.2. the planned amount of the total and public funding, the total eligible costs and their breakdown by the types of investments;

23.3. the procedures for controlling the quality of supported activities to be implemented by the research applicant and evaluating the scientific merit;

23.4. the procedures carrying out checks at the location where the research application is implemented, including by providing for a possibility for the intermediate body to perform checks at the location where the research application is implemented;

23.5. the rights, obligations, responsibility of the research applicant and the procedures for providing reports, including involvement in activities of scientific communication;

23.6. the procedures for granting an advance payment to the research applicant, as well as the procedures for the extinguishing and recovery of a disbursed advance payment;

23.7. the procedures by which the parties involved shall amend or terminate a contract on the implementation of a research application;

23.8. the dispute settlement procedures;

23.9. the term for the storage of the documents related to the implementation of the research application.

24. The beneficiary shall, prior to entry into contracts with research applicants, agree upon the draft contract referred to in Paragraph 23 of this Regulation with the Ministry of Education and Science.

25. The beneficiary shall plan funding for the research applicant within the scope of the project for the performance of the supported activities referred to in Paragraph 45 of this Regulation.

26. In order to assess the scientific merit of research applications, the beneficiary shall ensure the selection of corresponding foreign experts included in the database of scientific experts, using the following selection criteria:

26.1. the expert has a doctoral degree;

26.2. the scientific qualification of the expert conforms to the field or subfield of science of the particular research application;

26.3. the previous work experience of the expert conforms to the field or subfield of science of the particular research application;

26.4. the expert carries out evaluation independently, he or she does not represent the institutions of the research applicant, and his or her actions do not contain circumstances that could result in a conflict of interests.

27. The beneficiary shall ensure the evaluation of the scientific merit of the mid-term and final results of research applications for the supervision of the implementation of a research application in conformity with the following provisions:

27.1. the evaluations is carried out by experts included in the database of foreign scientific experts who meet the criteria referred to in Paragraph 26 of this Regulation;

27.2. the beneficiary develops standard forms of evaluation and agrees thereupon with the responsible institution, including therein the requirement for the expert to evaluate and justify the extent to which the planned results of research applications have been achieved (also expressing the evaluation as percentage);

27.3. the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation of mid-term results are evaluated by the beneficiary, the research applicant, and the responsible institution, if necessary, agreeing upon amendments to the working plan of the research application;

27.4. the evaluation of the scientific merit of final results are used for taking the decision on the achievement of the objective and planned results of the research application. On the basis of the final evaluation of the level of the achievement of the planned results of the research application, if applicable, the beneficiary takes the decision to recover the disbursed funding according to the contract on the implementation of the research application.

28. The beneficiary has the obligation to develop the internal control system for the prevention of the risks of corruption and conflict of interest in an authority of a public entity until the submission of the project application in accordance with the requirements of Cabinet Regulation No. 630 of 17 October 2017, Regulations Regarding the Basic Requirements for an Internal Control System for the Prevention of Corruption and Conflict of Interest in an Authority of a Public Entity, which also includes:

28.1. measures for controlling the risk of a conflict of interests in the procedure for granting aid and public procurements (preventive measures and establishment measures for controlling the risk of a conflict of interests, including the notification procedure, corrective measures), including information on the prevention of a conflict of interests in accordance with Section 61 of Regulation No 2018/1046;

28.2. mechanisms for the prevention of fraud and corruption risks;

28.3. measures for the circulation of internal information and communication measures regarding the prevention of a conflict of interests, fraud and corruption risk;

28.4. the code of conduct;

28.5. the procedures by which employees must act if they wish to report on possible violations (including possible acts of corruption), including measures to ensure anonymity and protection of the informant;

28.6. measures for controlling the risk of prohibited agreement;

28.7. the mechanism for the prevention of double funding, including against other sources of financing, including the European Union Cohesion Policy programme 2021–2027, the Operational Programme “Growth and Employment” of the European Union Structural Funds and Cohesion Fund for the 2014–2020 programming period, and other foreign financial instruments;

28.8. the whistleblowing system;

28.9. the procedure for the imposition of disciplinary liability;

28.10. the mechanism for the competent authorities to report on potential administrative or criminal offences.

**III. Requirements for Research Applicant**

29. A research applicant is a scientific institution or a micro, small, medium-sized or large enterprise registered with the Enterprise Register of the Republic of Latvia which establishes employment relationship with a post-doctoral researcher and ensures access to infrastructure, materials, and human resources for the implementation of the research necessary within the scope of the research application.

30. The research application may be implemented individually or in partnership with a scientific institution, higher education institution, or enterprise of a foreign country or Latvia (hereinafter – the cooperation partner) which hosts the post-doctoral researcher and ensures access to the infrastructure, materials, or human resources. The cooperation partner may gain economic advantages and intellectual property rights in proportion to the contribution of each cooperation partner in the implementation of the research application.

31. If a research application is implemented in partnership with the cooperation partner, the research applicant and the cooperation partner shall, after approval of the research application, enter into the cooperation contract, providing therein the provisions for the substantive, technical, and financial cooperation, the rights, obligations, and liability of the parties, and also the right to the results of the research application (including intellectual property rights) in proportion to the contribution of each cooperation partner in the implementation of the research application, and access to the infrastructure and other resources of the cooperation partner for the implementation of the research necessary within the scope of the research application.

32. The following requirements shall be brought forward for the research applicant and cooperation partner:

32.1. the outstanding recovery order referred to in Article 1(4)(a) of Commission Regulation No 651/2014 do not apply to them;

32.2. they are not considered as being in financial difficulty in accordance with Sub-paragraph 2.7 of this Regulation and a certification on conformity with Article 18(c) of Regulation No 651/2014 is submitted;

32.3. the conditions for exclusion laid down in Section 22 of the Law on Management of European Union Funds for the 2021–2027 Programming Period are not applicable to the research applicant;

32.4. if the research applicant performs both economic activities and activities of non-economic nature, it separates the types of activities and their costs, funding and revenues in order to efficiently prevent cross-subsidisation of economic activity.

33. A research applicant shall prepare a research application and, within the term specified in an open call for research applications, submit to the beneficiary a research application for one or several researches of post-doctoral researchers in accordance with the regulations for the selection of research applications, including submit a description of the scientific part and the curriculum vitae (CV) of the post-doctoral researcher in English.

34. A research applicant may submit one or several research applications within the scope of an open call for the selection of research applications.

35. A research applicant:

35.1. prior to the submission of research applications to the beneficiary, may develop procedures for the selection of the applications of post-doctoral researchers in accordance with the human resources development plan and research programme of the institution. If the research applicant implements the internal selection of applications, it has the obligation to ensure conformity with the measures for the prevention of a conflict of interests, precluding setting in of situations of a conflict of interests and managing risks in relation to the scope of the conflict of interests of Article 61 of Regulation No 2018/1046;

35.2. shall attract post-doctoral researcher(s) for the implementation of the research application within the scope of the regular working hours and account working hours for the functions fulfilled and time worked by the post-doctoral researcher;

35.3. shall submit a research application to the beneficiary and implement it in cooperation with a post-doctoral researcher(s), reaching a mutual agreement on the content of the research application, the provision for technical and financial cooperation, the rights, obligations, and liability of the parties, the provisions for the use, introduction, visual identity, and marketing of the results of the research application.

36. A research applicant may also submit, within the scope of the Activity, a project for the attraction of a foreign post-doctoral researcher which was submitted in the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Action Postdoctoral Fellowships of the European Union Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, Horizon Europe, and received a score above the quality threshold in the abovementioned evaluation of project applications, however, did not receive funding for project implementation. In such case, conformity with the following provisions must be ensured to apply for funding within the scope of the Activity:

36.1. the research application contributes to achievement of the objectives of the Research and Innovation Strategy for Smart Specialization of Latvia referred to in Paragraph 4 of this Regulation;

36.2. the total funding of the research application does not exceed the total maximum eligible amount of funding of the research application indicated in Paragraph 61 of this Regulation and the cost limitations referred to in Paragraph 62.

37. The experts included in the database of scientific experts shall not be attracted repeatedly for the evaluation of the scientific merit of the research applications and international research applications referred to in Paragraph 36 of this Regulation, but the evaluation of the scientific merit of the project made by experts within the scope of the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Action Postdoctoral Fellowships of the European Union Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, Horizon Europe, shall be used.

38. The research application and international research application referred to in Paragraph 36 of this Regulation shall be submitted based on the sample research application form referred to in Sub-paragraph 18.2.3 of this Regulation, the evaluation of the experts included in the database of scientific experts referred to in Paragraph 37 of this Regulation on the scientific merit of the project, the decision of the European Commission to approve the project, and a copy of the project application submitted within the scope of the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Action Postdoctoral Fellowships of the European Union Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, Horizon Europe, shall be appended thereto.

39. In order to ensure that the provisions referred to in Paragraphs 74 and 76 of this Regulation are fulfilled and to prevent the risk of double funding, a research applicant shall ensure the accounting of the total working time and the performed work of the employee involved in the research application according to the sample form for the accounting of working time developed by the beneficiary, in conformity with the following provisions for the accounting of working time:

39.1. information on all tasks carried out by the scientific employee involved in the research application in the institution of the research applicant and the cooperation partner (if applicable) is included in the accounting of working time;

39.2. the directly related category of research is indicated for each activity related to the research.

40. The post-doctoral researcher involved in the implementation of a research application and an international post-doctoral researcher involved in the implementation of an international research application shall provide a certification that he or she concurrently does not receive remuneration within the scope of this Activity and within the scope of a project of the second round “Consolidation and Implementation Grants for Governance Changes” of Investment 5.2.1.1.i “Research, development, and consolidation grants” of Reform 5.2.1.r “Higher education and science excellence and governance reform” of the reform and investment direction 5.2 “Ensuring the change of the higher education governance model” of the Recovery and Resilience Facility of Latvia in relation to post-doctoral support and within the scope of Activity 1.1.1.4 “Mobility, exchange of experience, and cooperation activity for the improvement of international competitiveness in science” of Specific Objective 1.1.1 “Strengthening of research and innovation capacities and introduction of advanced technologies in the common R&D system” of Priority 1.1. “Research and Skills” of the European Union’s Cohesion Policy Programme for 2021–2027, and also other State or foreign financial instruments.

41. In each selection round, a research applicant shall enter into a contract with the beneficiary for the implementation of the research application within 36 months, but for not longer than the end date for the implementation of the research application – 30 June 2029. The research applicant shall submit the final report for the evaluation of scientific merit to the beneficiary by 15 July 2029, but the final payment request – by 31 August 2029.

42. The research applicant shall commence the implementation of the research application within six months after taking of the decision to approve the research application.

**IV. Supported Activities**

43. Within the scope of the Activity, the beneficiary shall ensure the implementation of research support measures for post-doctoral researchers, selection and evaluation of research applications, and monitoring of the fulfilment of contractual obligations, implementing the following activities:

43.1. ensure the development and submission of a project application together with scientific institutions and enterprises in the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Action Co-funding of Regional, National and International Programmes (COFUND) of the European Union Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, Horizon Europe, in order to attract funding for research and development of training and career;

43.2. ensure surveying and attraction of foreign post-doctoral researchers to scientific institutions or enterprises of Latvia;

43.3. ensure activities for the promotion of the attraction and participation of enterprises;

43.4. draw up and implement a strategy for the involvement of supported post-doctoral researchers in activities of scientific communication;

43.5. ensure organisational support for the implementation of training measures for post-doctoral researchers;

43.6. ensure the selection and evaluation of research applications in accordance with Sub-paragraph 22.4 of this Regulation;

43.7. prior to granting aid, assess the conformity of research applications not related to economic activity to the criteria referred to in Sub-paragraph 2.1 of this Regulation or, if aid for commercial activity is granted, ensure the evaluation of the conformity to the provisions for controlling the aid for commercial activity in accordance with Commission Regulation No 651/2014;

43.8. prior to granting aid, check in accordance with Commission Regulation No 651/2014 whether the research applicant and the cooperation partner (if applicable), at the moment when the decision to grant aid is taken, is not in financial difficulty in accordance with Article 2(18) of Commission Regulation No 651/2014;

43.9. ensure advisory and methodological support to research applicants in all stages of the implementation of a research application:

43.9.1. in matters of employment and accounting of working time;

43.9.2. in matters related to financial and procurement procedures (provisions for a green public procurement, socially responsible public procurement, and innovative public procurement are planned to be imposed if possible);

43.9.3. in matters related to the preparation and implementation of a research application, including conformity with the Research and Innovation Strategy for Smart Specialization of Latvia;

43.10. ensure information and visual identity measures regarding the implementation of the project and research applications of the beneficiary;

43.11. ensure entry into contracts with research applicants for the implementation of research applications;

43.12. ensure the planning and granting of the funding necessary for the implementation of research applications;

43.13. ensure that the conditions of Article 61 of Regulation No 2018/1046 are met in the internal process for the selections of research applicants if the research applicant is implementing the internal selection of applications;

43.14. supervise the implementation of research applications, including:

43.14.1. check the conformity of research applications not related to economic activity with the criteria referred to in Sub-paragraph 2.1 of this Regulation;

43.14.2. ensure the evaluation of the scientific merit of the mid-term and final results of research applications, attracting experts included in the databases of scientific experts;

43.15. ensure the control of the implementation of research applications at the location where research applications are implemented during the periods of the implementation and post-monitoring of research applications;

43.16. make the necessary improvements for the operation of the electronic platform for the submission of research applications and reports;

43.17. ensure the management and implementation of projects.

44. The beneficiary shall ensure the supervision of the sustainability of Activity 1.1.1.2 “Post-doctoral Research Aid” of the Specific Objective 1.1.1 “To increase the research and innovative capacity of scientific institutions of Latvia and the ability to attract external financing by investing in human resources and infrastructure” of the Operational Programme “Growth and Employment”.

45. The following supported activities shall be implemented within the scope of a research application:

45.1. research which includes one of the following categories:

45.1.1. fundamental research;

45.1.2. industrial research;

45.2. acquisition, approval and defence of such technology rights (non-tangible assets) which arise from the activity carried out in Sub-paragraph 45.1 of this Regulation (hereinafter – the protection of technology rights), if applicable;

45.3. transfer of know-how and technology;

45.4. the following activities in relation to the post-doctoral researcher involved in the implementation of a research application:

45.4.1. broadening of competences (training);

45.4.2. international mobility (for at least two months) during the implementation of the research application in case of a research application not related to economic activity and networking;

45.5. guiding and reviewing of bachelorʼs, masterʼs and doctoral theses, participation in commissions of final theses;

45.6. preparation of research or innovation projects for submission in Latvian and international calls for project proposals;

45.7. involvement of the society in processes of the research application and raising their awareness of project results which are not related to the intellectual property rights.

46. The amount of funding planned for the implementation of the fundamental research referred to in Sub-paragraph 45.1.1 of this Regulation shall not exceed 20 per cent of the total amount of eligible funding referred to in Paragraph 13 of this Regulation that is provided for the implementation of research applications. After the decision of the European Commission on the mid-term review, the funding of the fundamental research may be increased up to 20 per cent of the planned funding indicated in Paragraph 12 of this Regulation for the implementation of research applications. If all funding planned within the scope of the relevant research application selection round is not used for the implementation of the fundamental research referred to in Sub-paragraph 45.1.1 of this Regulation, it shall be redirected to research applications within the scope of which the industrial research referred to in Sub-paragraph 45.1.2 of this Regulation is implemented.

47. The activities referred to in Paragraph 45 of this Regulation shall be eligible, if they are commenced:

47.1. within the scope of a research application not related to economic activity within six months after taking of the decision to approve the research application;

47.2. within the scope of a research application related to economic activity within six months after taking of the decision to approve the research application.

48. Such activities shall not be supported within the scope of the project which are specified in Article 1(2)(c) and (d) and Article 1(5) of Commission Regulation No 651/2014.

**V. Financing Conditions for the Beneficiary**

49. Within the scope of the Activity, the following types of costs shall be planned for the implementation of a project of the beneficiary:

49.1. direct eligible costs which are directly connected with the implementation of the project of the beneficiary and are necessary for the achievement of results, and this connection is clearly comprehensible and provable;

49.2. indirect eligible costs which are not directly connected with the achievement of project results of the beneficiary, however, support and ensure appropriate circumstances for the implementation of supported activities and achievement of results.

50. The direct eligible costs of a project of the beneficiary referred to in Sub-paragraph 49.1 of this Regulation shall include the following cost items:

50.1. direct eligible staff costs (costs of the remuneration of the project management and project implementation staff, including such experts who will select experts for the evaluation of the scientific merit of applications) (except for overtime hours) for the implementation of the supported activities referred to in Paragraph 43 of this Regulation which are eligible as actual costs until the approval of the methodology of simplified costs developed by the responsible institution and agreement upon with the managing authority, providing for the limitation of the part of the project management staff costs from the European Union funds as a fixed amount of up to EUR 84 787 per calendar year. If the involvement of staff in the project is ensured according to the principle of the part-time eligibility, load in the amount of not less than 30 per cent shall be eligible;

50.2. remuneration of the experts included in the database of scientific experts who will evaluate the scientific merit of the initial, mid-term, and final results of the research application;

50.3. costs of service (work performance) contracts for the implementation of the supported activity referred to in Sub-paragraph 43.16 of this Regulation which does not exceed five per cent of the total funding available to the beneficiary;

50.4. acquisition costs of the equipment (office furniture and hardware, software and licences) necessary for the creation of new workplaces or, if the equipment of existing workplaces has depreciated and is being written off, in the amount of not more than EUR 3000 per one workplace throughout the entire project implementation period. If the staff is employed for normal working hours, the acquisition costs of workplace equipment shall be eligible in the amount of 100 per cent. If the staff is employed for part-time or the principle of part-time eligibility is applied to remuneration of the staff, the costs of workplace equipment shall be eligible in proportion to the distribution of the workload in percentage. In turn, the involvement period of the employee versus the total duration of implementation is taken into account in case of the principle of part-time eligibility;

50.5. costs of translation and other services which are justified and connected with the project implementation;

50.6. costs related to the organisation and implementation of seminars, informative events, discussions, and conferences, including fee for the rental of premises (if premises need to be rented for implementing the activities of a project of the beneficiary outside of the legal and actual residence address of the beneficiary) and costs of handout materials;

50.7. costs for the implementation of activities of the horizontal principle “Equality, Inclusion, Non-discrimination, and Respect for Fundamental Rights”, including costs of the services of sign language interpretation, easy-to-read language translation, real-time transcription, provision of subtitles, costs of the lease of lifts, ramps, and induction loops if they are necessary to ensure environmental and information accessibility;

50.8. transport costs (charge for fuel, charge for the use of public transport) for the implementation of the supported activities referred to in Sub-paragraphs 43.5, 43.10, 43.15, and 43.17 of this Regulation according to the methodology developed by the managing authority “Methodology for the Calculation and Application of the Standard Rate of Unit Costs for Costs of 1 km for the Implementation of the Operational Programme “Growth and Employment” and the European Union’s Cohesion Policy Programme for 2021–2027”;

50.9. acquisition costs of transport services (lease of vehicles, acquisition of transport services) for the project management and implementation staff for the implementation of the supported activities referred to in Sub-paragraphs 43.5, 43.10, 43.15, and 43.17 of this Regulation;

50.10. costs of the development and publishing of informative and methodological materials;

50.11. costs of foreign official travels for the project manager and the project implementation staff in accordance with the laws and regulations laying down the procedures for reimbursing expenditures related to official travels;

50.12. costs of domestic official travels and work trips in accordance with the methodology developed by the managing authority “Methodology for the Calculation and Application of the Standard Rate of Unit Costs to Official Domestic Travel Costs for the Implementation of the Operational Programme “Growth and Employment” and the European Union Cohesion Policy Programme 2021–2027”;

50.13. costs of the information and visual identity measures of the project in accordance with the laws and regulations laying down the procedures by which the authorities involved in the management of European Union funds shall ensure the introduction of such funds in the 2021–2027 programming period;

50.14. the funding for the implementation of research applications;

50.15. the funding for the implementation of the COFUND project.

51. The indirect eligible costs referred to in Sub-paragraph 49.2 of this Regulation shall be planned as one cost item, applying the single rate of indirect costs in the amount of 15 per cent of the direct eligible staff costs referred to in Sub-paragraph 50.1 of this Regulation.

52. The costs of the beneficiary referred to in Paragraphs 50 (except for Sub-paragraphs 50.14 and 50.15) and 51 of this Regulation shall not exceed EUR 3 126 329.

53. The costs of the beneficiary referred to in Paragraph 44 of this Regulation shall not exceed EUR 266 592.

54. The maximum permissible amount of funding from the European Regional Development Fund shall be 85 per cent of the total amount of the eligible costs of beneficiaries. National funding in the amount of 15 per cent shall be ensured from the funds of the State budget.

**VI. General Funding Conditions for Research Applicants**

55. Within the scope of the Activity, a research applicant may implement:

55.1. a research application not related to economic activity;

55.2. a research application related to economic activity.

56. The maximum eligible amount of funding from the European Regional Development Fund for a research application not related to economic activity shall not exceed 85 per cent of the total eligible funding of the research application. The necessary co-funding in the amount of 15 per cent of the total eligible costs of the research application shall be ensured from one of the following resources:

56.1. from the State budget funding – in the amount of not more than 10 per cent;

56.2. from other funds at the disposal of the research organisation, including from its economic activity, credit resources, other financial resources, or funding which is granted in accordance with the laws and regulations regarding the procedures by which funds from the State budget shall be provided for the implementation of principal activities of a State scientific institution, or investments in kind the value of which can be audited independently and assessed in accordance with the conditions referred to in Paragraph 57 of this Regulation. The total investment in kind shall not exceed five per cent of the total eligible costs of the research application. The beneficiary shall check the conformity of the percentage restriction on investments in kind and record in the item of absolute figures when approving the research application. During the research application implementation period, the budget cost item of the research application in which investments in kind are included shall not be reduced in absolute figures, if the following occurs in other budget cost items of the research application:

56.2.1. savings occur, therefore the total eligible costs of the research application decrease, however, the objectives and indicators provided for in the research application are achieved;

56.2.2. inappropriately made costs are found due to ineligibility of which the total eligible costs of research application decrease.

57. Investments in kind for a research application not related to economic activity may consist of:

57.1. tangible assets:

57.1.1. fixed assets – technological equipment (installations, measuring equipment, regulation devices, laboratory and medical devices, motor transport) the total value of use of which is calculated by taking into account the minimum value of each fixed asset used within the scope of the research application (average costs of use for one working day throughout the period of useful life of the fixed asset) and the period in which the fixed asset is planned to be used for the performance of the activities intended in the research application. The total value of use of fixed assets shall be determined using the following formula:



, where

P – the total value of use of fixed assets (in EUR);

Vi – the initial value of i-fixed asset (acquisition costs or production cost price) (in EUR);

i – variation of the fixed asset (i = 1, 2, .., n; n – number of fixed assets);

ti – the period in which the fixed asset is planned to be used for the performance of the activities intended in the research application (in working days);

tki – the total period of useful life of the fixed asset (in working days);

57.1.2. the materials granted (physical, biological, chemical, and other materials, trial animals, agents, chemicals, laboratory vessels, medicinal products for research, land areas, components and modules of electronics) the value of which is calculated in proportion to the quantity of materials consumed within the scope of the research application and the market price of materials;

57.2. professional activities related to research within the scope of the research application:

57.2.1. which are performed by scientific staff or research technical staff;

57.2.2. if they are not performed during the period when the person carries out tasks not related to the research application according to the concluded contracts, and remuneration is not received for such tasks within the scope of the research application;

57.2.3. the value of which is determined by taking into account the time spent for research and the rates of remuneration and wage according to the remuneration and wage policy of the institution of the research applicant.

58. If a research application related to economic activity is implemented, regardless of the legal status (entity governed by public or private law) or economic type (profit or non-profit scientific institution), the research applicant shall be qualified as the performer of economic activity in accordance with the definition laid down in Article 2(24) of and Annex 1 to Commission Regulation No 651/2014.

59. For a research application related to economic activity:

59.1. aid shall be provided in the form of transparent aid categories (grant);

59.2. for the receipt of funding, the research applicant shall justify the incentive effect of the total public funding in the research application and submit a written aid application before the work on the research application starts in conformity with the definition of the start of works referred to in Article 2(23) and the requirement of the incentive effect referred to in Article 6(2) of Commission Regulation No 651/2014. When submitting a research application related to economic activity, all points specified in Article 6(2) of Commission Regulation No 651/2014 must be included. If works on the project are started before the submission of the research application to the beneficiary, the research application shall be rejected.

60. If the research applicant is a scientific institution or the enterprise which is implementing a research application related to economic activity, the amount of private co-funding shall be determined by taking into account the public funding determined in accordance with Paragraphs 64, 74, and 76 of this Regulation and Annex to this Regulation. Private co-funding shall be ensured from the funds at the disposal of the research applicant or from credit resources and other financial resources for which no public aid has been received, including no State or local government guarantee or State or local government credit on preferential conditions has been received.

61. The maximum total eligible funding of a research application within the scope of one round shall be EUR 191 700.

62. The following costs shall be eligible within the scope of a research application not related to economic activity:

62.1. the remuneration costs of a post-doctoral researcher (staff) shall be EUR 3860 and they shall not exceed EUR 46 320 per year, including the mandatory State social insurance contributions and other social guarantees which are specified in the laws and regulations in the field of labour rights and remuneration. The amount of the remuneration costs shall be determined and the costs shall be eligible in accordance with the methodology of simplified costs approved by the responsible institution which has been agreed upon with the managing authority;

62.2. unit cost according the standard rate specified by Marie Skłodowska-Curie Action Postdoctoral Fellowships of the European Union Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, Horizon Europe – EUR 1000 per month, which include:

62.2.1. research costs, including costs of the acquisition of materials, protection of technology rights, and external services;

62.2.2. publishing costs;

62.2.3. training costs;

62.2.4. costs of networking measures, including official travels, conference participation fee and involvement costs in outreach activities;

62.3. costs for administrative and infrastructure resources of the research applicant used for ensuring implementation of the research application – EUR 255 per month – in accordance with the methodology of unit cost. The costs shall include the following items of costs:

62.3.1. office supplies, stationery, and lease or purchase of office equipment;

62.3.2. lease or rental of premises, utility payments and maintenance costs of premises (including covering in proportion of the costs for the use of common-use premises of an institution and common-use resources);

62.3.3. costs of telecommunication, Internet and postal services;

62.3.4. maintenance costs of information technologies;

62.3.5. costs of the remuneration of the support and management staff of the research applicant;

62.3.6. costs which are not included in the costs referred to in Sub-paragraphs 62.1 and 62.2 of this Regulation, but are necessary for achieving the results of the research application;

62.4. costs of ensuring mobility according to the standard rate specified by Marie Skłodowska-Curie Action Postdoctoral Fellowships of the European Union Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, Horizon Europe – EUR 600 per month if the duration of mobility is six months or more;

62.5. costs of family benefits according to the standard rate specified by Marie Skłodowska-Curie Action Postdoctoral Fellowships of the European Union Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, Horizon Europe – EUR 660 per month if the duration of mobility is six months or more.

63. The costs referred to in Sub-paragraphs 62.4 and 62.5 of this Regulation may be paid to a post-doctoral researcher in the amount of a lump sum benefit to cover the expenditures related to moving to Latvia within the scope of the implementation of a research application.

64. The following costs specified in Commission Regulation No 651/2014 shall be eligible for a research application related to economic activity:

64.1. the research costs specified in Article 25(3)(a), (b), (d), and (e) in conformity with the permissible aid intensity of public funding specified in Paragraph 74 of this Regulation if aid is provided in accordance with Article 25 of Commission Regulation No 651/2014;

64.2. the costs of protection of technology rights specified in Article 28(2)(a) in conformity with the permissible aid intensity of public funding specified in Sub-paragraph 76.1 of this Regulation if aid is provided in accordance with Article 28 of Commission Regulation No 651/2014;

64.3. the costs of training aid specified in Article 31(3)(b) and (d) in conformity with the permissible aid intensity of public funding specified in Sub-paragraph 76.2 of this Regulation if aid is provided in accordance with Article 31 of Commission Regulation No 651/2014. Aid will not be provided for the training referred to in Article 31(2) of Commission Regulation No 651/2014.

65. The amount of public funding for a research application related to economic activity and the average weighted aid intensity of public funding shall be determined as follows:

65.1. the permissible amount of public funding for the research category referred to in Sub-paragraph 45.1.1 of this Regulation shall be determined separately according to the intensity of public funding referred to in Sub-paragraph 74.1 of this Regulation;

65.2. the permissible amount of public funding for the research category referred to in Sub-paragraph 45.1.2 of this Regulation shall be determined separately according to the intensity of public funding referred to in Sub-paragraphs 74.2 and 74.3 of this Regulation;

65.3. the permissible amount of public funding for the improvement of competences of a post-doctoral researcher referred to in Sub-paragraph 45.4.1 of this Regulation shall be determined separately according to the intensity of public funding referred to in Sub-paragraph 76.2 of this Regulation;

65.4. the permissible amount of public funding for the supported activity referred to in Sub-paragraph 45.2 of this Regulation shall be determined separately according to the provisions of Sub-paragraph 76.1 of this Regulation.

66. The public funding of a research application granted within the scope of the Activity may not be combined with aid for the same eligible costs which has been provided within the scope of another State or individual aid project.

67. The unjustifiably granted public funding shall be deducted from the total eligible costs of the research application and shall be refunded to the beneficiary.

68. If the norms for the control of aid for commercial activity laid down in Sub-paragraph 2.1 of this Regulation are violated during the implementation of the research application or five years after the end of the research application implementation term, the research applicant has the obligation to refund the unlawful aid for commercial activity received within the scope of the project to the beneficiary together with interest from the funds which are free from aid for commercial activity in accordance with the conditions of Chapter IV or V of the Law on Control of Aid for Commercial Activity.

69. In the event of a violation of the conditions of Commission Regulation No 651/2014, the research applicant has the obligation to refund the unlawful aid for commercial activity received within the scope of the project to the beneficiary together with interest from the funds which are free from aid for commercial activity in accordance with the provisions of Chapter IV or V of the Law on Control of Aid for Commercial Activity.

70. The following costs of a project of the beneficiary and research application shall not be eligible within the scope of the Activity:

70.1. the costs which have arisen after expiry of the project implementation term which is determined by the agreement on project implementation or the contract on the research application or payments for which have been made more than a month after expiry of the implementation term of the project of the beneficiary or research application;

70.2. the costs which are not directly related to the activities carried out within the scope of the project of the beneficiary or research application and are not justified by documents corroborating costs or have arisen as a result of non-conformity with the requirements of laws and regulations;

70.3. the costs which do not conform to the principles of justified financial management, particularly monetary value and cost-effectiveness;

70.4. the costs which exceed the restrictions specified for the cost items referred to in Paragraphs 50, 51, 61, and 62 of this Regulation;

70.5. payment for the examination, preparation, reservation, and servicing of a loan, payment for financial transactions, default interest, contractual fines, and costs of legal proceedings;

70.6. the costs of opening and maintaining the account necessary for implementation of the project of the beneficiary and research application.

71. Value added tax shall be eligible costs if it cannot be recovered in accordance with the laws and regulations in the field of tax policy.

72. The beneficiary and the research applicant shall cover the increase in costs arisen during the implementation of the project of the beneficiary and research application from their own funds for which no aid from public funds has been received. If it cannot be covered, savings from other funding items of the beneficiary and the research application shall be reallocated. The research applicant shall ensure that the total amount of funding allocated to a research application related to economic activity is not exceeded and the aid intensity referred to in Paragraphs 74 and 76 of this Regulation is conformed to.

73. Within the scope of the Activity, the project costs of the beneficiary shall be eligible if they correspond to the cost items referred to in this Regulation and have arisen not earlier than on the day when the agreement on project implementation was entered into, except for the costs referred to in Sub-paragraph 50.1 of this Regulation which have arisen as a result of the activities referred to in Sub-paragraphs 18.1, 18.2, and 22.2 of this Regulation and are eligible from 1 January 2024, and do not include completed activities.

**VII. Funding Conditions for Research**

74. The permissible aid intensity of public funding for the implementation of a research application related to economic activity in accordance with Article 25 of Commission Regulation No 651/2014 shall be as follows:

74.1. 85 per cent for the implementation of fundamental research;

74.2. for conducting industrial research:

74.2.1. 70 per cent for a research applicant which corresponds to the definition of a micro or small enterprise;

74.2.2. 60 per cent for a research applicant which corresponds to the definition of a medium-sized enterprise;

74.2.3. 50 per cent for a research applicant which corresponds to the definition of a large enterprise;

74.3. the aid intensity of public funding referred to in Sub-paragraph 74.2 of this Regulation may be increased by 15 points by per cent of the total eligible costs of the research application, without exceeding 80 per cent of the total eligible costs of the research application if public access to the results of industrial research is ensured in at least one of the following ways – distribution of research results in technical and scientific conferences and publicly accessible depositories (databases) or free-of-charge access to software.

**VIII. Funding Conditions for the Protection of Technology Rights and Training**

75. Funding for the protection of technology rights and training may be received by a research applicant which corresponds to:

75.1. the definition of a micro, small, or medium-sized enterprise if a research application related to economic activity is implemented;

75.2. the definition of the research organisation referred to in Sub-paragraph 2.13 of this Regulation if a research application not related to economic activity is implemented.

76. The permissible aid intensity of public funding for the implementation of a research application related to economic activity shall be as follows:

76.1. aid for the protection of technology rights, 50 per cent for the research applicant who corresponds to the definition of a micro, small or medium-sized enterprise in accordance with Article 28(2) of Commission Regulation No 651/2014;

76.2. training aid in accordance with Article 31(4) of Commission Regulation No 651/2014:

76.2.1. 50 per cent for a research applicant which corresponds to the definition of a large enterprise;

76.2.2. 60 per cent if the research applicant corresponds to the definition of a medium-sized enterprise or training is ensured to workers with disabilities or disadvantaged workers;

76.2.3. 70 per cent for a research applicant which corresponds to the definition of a micro or small enterprise.

**IX. Announcement of the Selection of Research Applications and Preparation and Submission of Research Applications**

77. The beneficiary shall announce an open selection of research applications, publishing a notice on the submission of research applications in the official gazette *Latvijas Vēstnesis*, in the portal of the European Commission Euraxess, and on the website of the Ministry of Education and Science (www.izm.gov.lv).

78. The following shall be indicated in the notice on the submission of research applications:

78.1. the total amount of public funding planned for the research application selection round and the amount of funding planned for the implementation of the fundamental research referred to in Sub-paragraph 45.1.1 of this Regulation;

78.2. the final date for the submission of research applications which shall not be less than 30 working days from the day of announcement;

78.3. the place and procedures for submitting research applications;

78.4. the website on which the documents to be used for the preparation of research applications are published.

79. A research applicant may resubmit a research application which was not supported within the scope of a research application selection round in the next selection of research applications, however, such applicant may not submit a research application identical to the application which was previously rejected due to low scientific merit.

**X. Conditions for Project Implementation**

80. The beneficiary shall implement a project not longer than until 31 December 2029.

81. The Ministry of Education and Science shall carry out a mid-term evaluation of the conditions for the implementation of the Activity and supported activities by 31 December 2025, including evaluate the conformity of the Activity with the most current provisions of the Research and Innovation Strategy for Smart Specialization of Latvia and, if necessary, prepare proposals for amendments to the conditions for the implementation of the Activity and aided activities.

82. For a research application the implementation period of which does not exceed 12 months, the scientific merit of mid-term results shall not be evaluated. The scientific merit of final results shall be evaluated in accordance with the conditions referred to in Paragraph 27 of this Regulation.

83. The territory of the Republic of Latvia is the place where the project is implemented.

84. The beneficiary shall ensure clear separation of the financial flow and types of activities of project implementation from other financial flows and types of activities of the beneficiary.

85. The beneficiary shall, not later than six months after commencement of the project, establish a council for the supervision of project implementation. Representatives from the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Economics, the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development, the Employers’ Confederation of Latvia, and the Latvian Chamber of Commerce and Industry shall be included in the composition of the council.

86. Upon receipt of a submission of a post-doctoral researcher with the request to extend the time limit for the implementation of the research application, the research applicant has the right, according to the contract on the implementation of the research application, to extend the time limit for the implementation of the research application for a period not exceeding the deadline for the implementation of the research application specified in Paragraph 41 of this Regulation if the post-doctoral researcher does not have the possibility to complete the implementation of the research application by the time limit specified in the research application due to the following objective reasons:

86.1. long-term temporary incapacity for work of the post-doctoral researcher which:

86.1.1. has lasted continuously for more than six months;

86.1.2. has had interruptions of one year within a period of three years, excluding a prenatal and maternity leave from this period;

86.2. the post-doctoral researcher is on prenatal and maternity leave;

86.3. the post-doctoral researcher is on parental leave.

87. Upon receipt of the submission of a post-doctoral researcher referred to in Paragraph 86 of this Regulation, the research applicant has the right, according to the contract on the implementation of the research application, to extend the time limit for the implementation of the research application for a period exceeding the deadline for the implementation of the research application specified in Paragraph 41 of this Regulation in conformity with the following conditions:

87.1. the post-doctoral researcher does not have the possibility to complete the implementation of the research application by the time limit specified in the research application due to the objective reasons referred to in Paragraph 86 of this Regulation;

87.2. the research applicant has assessed the relevance of the research application topic of the post-doctoral researcher and has taken one of the following decisions:

87.2.1. the research application has not lost its relevance, and the post-doctoral researcher may continue the implementation of the commenced research application;

87.2.2. the research application has lost its relevance, but the research applicant can provide the post-doctoral researcher with the position of a researcher or senior researcher for working on the research of another relevant topic;

87.3. in the cases referred to in Sub-paragraphs 87.2.1 and 87.2.2 of this Regulation, equal conditions for the implementation of the research application are retained for the post-doctoral researcher according to the schedule indicated in the research application of the post-doctoral researcher for a period equivalent to the duration of the unfinished research application of the post-doctoral researcher;

87.4. the costs related to the completion of the implementation of the research application are covered by the founder of the research applicant. If the research applicant is a State scientific institute, a State higher education institution, a scientific institute of a State higher education institution, including a scientific institute of a State founded university which is a derived public entity implementing a research application not related to economic activity, registered in the Register of Scientific Institutions then the arisen costs of the research application shall be covered from the State budget funds in accordance with the regulatory framework for the procedures for the allocation of financial reference amount of scientific activity. When implementing a research application related to economic activity, the costs related to the completion of the implementation of the research application shall be covered from the funds which are free from the aid for commercial activity.

88. If an advance payment is disbursed to a research applicant during the implementation of a research application, it may be disbursed in parts. The advance payment shall not exceed 30 per cent of the total amount of the public funding granted to the research application. After conclusion of the contract on the implementation of the research application, the beneficiary shall, on the basis of a written request of the research applicant for an advance payment, ensure the advance payment to the research applicant. The beneficiary may take the decision to grant the next advance payment after the previous advance payment has been fully used.

89. The beneficiary shall ensure that the activities included in the project, their implementation schedule and cost structure are organised so that the amount of payment requests submitted by the beneficiary is at least EUR 5 094 418 by 31 May 2025.

90. When implementing a project and research applications, the beneficiary and research applicants shall ensure communication and visual identity events in accordance with Articles 47 and 50 of Regulation (EU) 2021/1060 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 June 2021 laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund Plus, the Cohesion Fund, the Just Transition Fund and the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund and financial rules for those and for the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, the Internal Security Fund and the Instrument for Financial Support for Border Management and Visa Policy and the legal acts laying down the procedures by which the authorities involved in the management of European Union funds shall ensure the introduction of such funds in the 2021–2027 programming period and also comply with the Communication and Design Guidelines of the European Union Funds for the 2021–2027 Programming Period and the Recovery and Resilience Facility.

91. The beneficiary shall ensure publishing of information in accordance with Article 9(1) and (4) of Commission Regulation No 651/2014.

92. The beneficiary shall post current information on project implementation on its website not less than once every six months.

93. The beneficiary shall accumulate data on the indicator “number of women among recipients of aid” of the horizontal principle “Equality, Inclusion, Non-discrimination, and Respect for Fundamental Rights”.

94. The decision to grant public funding for research applications related to economic activity shall be taken by the time limit specified in Articles 58(4) and 59 of Commission Regulation No 651/2014.

95. The beneficiary shall grant aid to the submitter of a research application related to economic activity in accordance with Article 2(28) of Commission Regulation No 651/2014 from the day when the beneficiary and the submitter of the research application related to economic activity have entered into a contract on the implementation of the research application.

96. The beneficiary shall ensure availability of information for 10 years after granting of the last aid and research applicants shall ensure the availability of information for 10 years from the moment when aid was granted in accordance with Article 12 of Commission Regulation No 651/2014.

**XI. Requirements for a COFUND Project Applicant, an International Research Applicant and the Funding Conditions for the Implementation of International Research Applications**

97. International research applications shall be implemented if the beneficiary receives a positive evaluation for a COFUND project and the European Commission has granted co-funding for its implementation according to the contract on the implementation of a COFUND project.

98. The beneficiary shall prepare and submit for agreement thereupon to the Ministry of Education and Science the following documentation of the international research application selection round:

98.1. the regulations for the selection of international research applications;

98.2. the criteria for the evaluation of international research applications and methodology for their application.

99. In addition to the activities specified in Paragraph 43 of this Regulation, the beneficiary shall implement the following activities:

99.1. in conformity with Sub-paragraph 22.4 of this Regulation, at least once a year, while the funding is available, carry out selection and evaluation of international research applications in accordance with the evaluation approach and principles specified in the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Action Co-funding of Regional, National and International Programmes (COFUND) of the European Union Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, Horizon Europe;

99.2. organise information campaigns and measures of visual identity for the promotion of international research applications;

99.3. plan and grant the funding necessary for international research applications in accordance with the conditions of the COFUND project and enter into contracts or agreements with international research applicants on the implementation of international research applications;

99.4. implement supervision of international research applications, including monitoring of the implementation of international research applications;

99.5. provide reports to the European Commission on the implementation of the COFUND project.

100. An international research applicant is a scientific institution of Latvia which establishes employment relation with an international post-doctoral researcher and ensures access to the infrastructure and human resources for the implementation of the research necessary within the scope of the international research application. The scientific institution may implement the international research application individually or in partnership with a foreign scientific institution or a foreign higher education institution which hosts the international post-doctoral researcher and, if necessary, establishes employment relationship with the international post-doctoral researcher for the mobility period, ensuring access to the infrastructure and human resources (hereinafter – the host institution).

101. If an international research application is implemented in partnership with the host institution, the international research applicant and the host institution shall, after approval of the international research application in accordance with this Regulation, enter into a cooperation contract, providing therein conditions for the substantive, technical, and financial cooperation, the rights, obligations, and liability of the parties, and also the right to the results of the research application (including intellectual property rights) in proportion to the contribution of each cooperation partner in the implementation of the research application, and also access to the infrastructure and other resources of the host institution for the implementation of the research necessary within the scope of the international research application.

102. An international research applicant shall submit the international research application to the beneficiary in accordance with the procedures specified in the regulations for the selection of international research applications and implement it in cooperation with a post-doctoral researcher, with both parties reaching an agreement on the content of the international research application, the conditions for technical and financial cooperation, the rights, obligations, and liability of the parties, and also the conditions for the use, introduction, visual identity, and marketing of the results of the international research application.

103. An international research applicant shall perform the following supported activities:

103.1. attract an international post-doctoral researcher for full-time work and account working hours for the functions fulfilled by the post-doctoral researcher and the time worked thereby on implementing the international research application;

103.2. enter into a contract with the post-doctoral researcher on the implementation of the international research application for a period from 12 to 36 months;

103.3. provide advisory support to the international post-doctoral researcher in ensuring his or her training and stay needs, including a visa, place of residence, learning the language and culture, solving issues regarding the family allowance of the post-doctoral researcher if the international post-doctoral researcher is staying in Latvia or in a foreign country with the family.

104. An international research applicant shall attract an international post-doctoral researcher, ensuring one of the following possible employment mobilities of international post-doctoral researchers:

104.1. the foreign international post-doctoral researcher (including the post-doctoral researcher who has left Latvia for a foreign country) is hired for work in a scientific institution from 12 to 36 months for the period of implementation of the international research application. The international post-doctoral researcher may not stay or carry out principal activities (for example, work, training) in the country of the host institution for more than 12 months within the three years before the closing date for the submission of international research applications in a call for international research proposals;

104.2. from 12 to 36 months from which the international post-doctoral researcher who has left Latvia is hired for work in a foreign scientific institution or a foreign higher education institution for a period of up to 24 months. The return in Latvia for work in the scientific institution shall be planned in the amount of 50 per cent of the time for which the international post-doctoral researcher who has left Latvia was employed in the foreign scientific institution.

105. The international research applicant may implement a research application not related to economic activity which conforms to the activities referred to in Paragraph 45 of this Regulation.

106. Within the scope of the Activity, the following costs shall be eligible for the beneficiary for the implementation of a COFUND project:

106.1. the administrative unit costs of the COFUND project management and international research application specified by the European Commission in accordance with the standard rate specified by the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Action COFUND of the European Union Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, Horizon Europe – EUR 650 per month which is formed by co-funding from the European Union in the amount of EUR 325 per month in accordance with the rates specified by the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Action COFUND of the European Union Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, Horizon Europe, for the beneficiary, and co-funding from the State budget in the amount of EUR 325 per month to the international research applicant for each month of the international research application implemented by the international post-doctoral researcher. The breakdown of costs shall be as follows:

106.1.1. the costs of remuneration for the management and support staff of the international research applicant – EUR 325 per month;

106.1.2. the costs of remuneration for the management and support staff of the beneficiary – EUR 325 per month;

106.2. the costs of the coordination, implementation, and infrastructure of the COFUND project and international research application specified by the European Commission, in conformity with the unit cost rate specified in Sub-paragraphs 62.3.1, 62.3.2, 62.3.3, and 62.3.4 of this Regulation – EUR 341 per month which is formed by funding from the European Regional Development Fund in the amount of EUR 289.85 per month or 85 per cent, funding from the State budget in the amount of EUR 34.10 per month or 10 per cent, and funding from other resources at the disposal of the research organisation (including from own economic activity, credit resources, and other financial resources) in the amount of EUR 17.05 per month or five per cent. The breakdown of costs shall be as follows:

106.2.1. costs of the coordination, implementation, and infrastructure of the international research application – EUR 186 per month;

106.2.2. costs of the coordination, implementation, and infrastructure of the COFUND project of the beneficiary – EUR 155 per month for each month of the international research application implemented by the international post-doctoral researcher;

106.3. standard rate of remuneration for the international post-doctoral researcher according to the standard rate specified by Marie Skłodowska-Curie Action COFUND of the European Union Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, Horizon Europe – EUR 3980 per month;

106.4. mobility unit costs of the international post-doctoral researcher for the international research application in accordance with the standard rate specified by the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Action Postdoctoral Fellowships of the European Union Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, Horizon Europe – EUR 600 per month which is formed by funding from the European Regional Development Fund in the amount of EUR 510 per month or 85 per cent, funding from the State budget in the amount of EUR 60 per month or 10 per cent, and funding from other funds at the disposal of the research organisation (including from own economic activity, credit resources, and other financial resources) in the amount of EUR 30 per month or five per cent from outgoing mobilities which include:

106.4.1. mobility;

106.4.2. costs of networking activities, including official travels, conference participation fees and costs of involvement in outreach activities;

106.5. unit cost of the international research application in accordance with the standard rate specified by the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Action Postdoctoral Fellowships of the European Union Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, Horizon Europe – EUR 1000 per month which is formed by funding from the European Regional Development Fund in the amount of EUR 850 per month or 85 per cent, funding from the State budget in the amount of EUR 100 per month or 10 per cent, and funding from other funds at the disposal of the research organisation (including from own economic activity, credit resources, and other financial resources) in the amount of EUR 50 per month or five per cent which include research expenses, including costs pertaining to the acquisition of materials attributable to research, training costs, costs of the protection of technology rights and external services;

106.6. unit cost of the family allowance of the post-doctoral researcher – EUR 660 per month which is formed by funding from the European Regional Development Fund in the amount of EUR 561 per month or 85 per cent, funding from the State budget in the amount of EUR 66 per month or 10 per cent, and funding from other funds at the disposal of the research organisation (including from own economic activity, credit resources, and other financial resources) in the amount of EUR 33 per month or five per cent, if the international post-doctoral researcher is staying in Latvia or a foreign country together with his or her family, in accordance with the standard rate specified by the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Action Postdoctoral Fellowships of the European Union Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, Horizon Europe.

107. The total maximum eligible funding of the international research application shall not exceed EUR 260 316.

Prime Minister E. Siliņa

Minister for Education and Science A. Čakša

**Annex**

Cabinet Regulation No. 35

9 January 2024

**Calculation of the Average Weighted Aid Intensity of the Public Funding of a Research Application Related to Economic Activity of Activity 1.1.1.9 “Post-doctoral Research” of the Specific Objective 1.1.1 “Strengthening of Research and Innovation Capacities and Introduction of Advanced Technologies in the Common R&D System” of the European Union’s Cohesion Policy Programme for 2021–2027**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **No.** | **Part of the project** | **Submitter of the grant application** | **Activity of the grant application** | **Eligible costs (EUR)** | **Intensity of public funding (IP %)** |
| **category of the enterprise** | **name** | [A] | [B] |
| 1 | Research application related to economic activity | small enterprise | Research applicant No. 1 [*name*] | fundamental research |  | **85** |
| 2 | industrial research |  |  |
| 3 | aid for training |  |  |
| 4 | protection of technology rights |  | **50** |
| 5 | Project part No. 1 | **0** | **0.000** |

Note. The conditions of Paragraphs 60, 69, and 72 of Cabinet Regulation No. 35 of 9 January 2024, Regulations Regarding the Implementation of Activity 1.1.1.9 “Post-doctoral Research” of the Specific Objective 1.1.1 “Strengthening of Research and Innovation Capacities and Introduction of Advanced Technologies into the Common R&D System” of the European Union’s Cohesion Policy Programme for 2021–2027, shall be conformed to.