

Call for Proposals

“Young Researchers' Career Development Project - Training of Doctoral Students”

Call Identifier: DOK-01-2018

Young Researchers' Career Development Programme

The Project is co-financed by the European Union from the European Social Fund, under the Operational Programme Efficient Human Resources, specific objective of the Operational Programme 10.II.3. “Improving the environment for Croatian researchers”.

This Call has been prepared in line with the regulations of the Croatian Science Foundation. You are accepting its terms by your application. The terms relating to the masculine gender are neutral and refer to persons of both genders.



About the programme

Future development of basic, applied and developmental research, transfer and application of new technologies, as well as creating conditions for innovation and their application, depends on the quality of postgraduate training of young researchers, planning and developing their careers and capabilities of the Republic of Croatia to retain the best young scientists and encourage their employment, not only in the scientific and academic sectors, but also in the economic sector. The strategic goal of the Croatian Science Foundation is to develop a comprehensive programme of funding career development of young researchers, from doctoral studies to post-doctoral specialisations in Croatia and abroad, as well as to actively encourage the mobility from academic to economic sector and vice versa.

Aim of the “Young researchers' career development project – training of doctoral students” Call for proposals

Croatian Science Foundation (hereinafter: Foundation) announces this Call in order to enable active and perspective researchers, dealing with internationally and/or nationally significant issues within their research projects, to include young researchers willing to participate in the scientific research of a mentor with the aim of directing their career towards cutting-edge science. The overall goal is to train new doctoral students who will continue developing their career in competitive research and/or contribute to the development of new technologies in the economy.

Also, this Call will build mentoring capacities within Croatian scientific organizations, encourage transfer and application of acquired knowledge as well as enhance the level of postgraduate education and scientific development of young researchers. The mentor must clearly explain the training and work methods, research tasks as well as the ways of application of acquired knowledge by doctoral student. The mentor is responsible for the scientific progress of doctoral student and he has to be an active researcher.

Eligible costs of the Call are doctoral students' gross salary, with the main aim of completing a doctorate thesis and acquisition of knowledge on basic principles of scientific work and research.

In order to ensure sustainability of this model, the Ministry of Science and Education along with the Foundation have prepared the Project for the new generation of young researchers to be co-financed by the European Social Fund (hereinafter: ESF) within the Operational Programme “Efficient Human Resources 2014-2020”. The project aims to encourage and support employment of young researchers at the early stage of career development (postgraduate level) within the system of science and higher education, which shall contribute to the improvement of young researchers' career development system.

Call goals

- Develop a stable doctoral students' (hereinafter: PhDs) financing system
- Encourage training of new PhDs
- Increase number of young researchers participating in research projects
- Increase doctoral students' competences
- Strengthen mentoring capacities within Croatian research organisations

- Create new and improve existing knowledge as well as strengthen human resources essential for social development based on knowledge and scientific achievements.

About the call

Call opening date: December 1st 2017

Call closing date: January 12th 2018 until 13:00 (CET)

Call is open to all scientific fields.

Mentor: scientist with internationally recognized achievements in science and/or technology.

Estimated number of doctoral students: 154

Single amount of funding: doctoral student's annual gross salary

Project funding duration: 4 years maximum

Estimated beginning of the project: September 2018



Call conditions

Applicants who are already being financed by other public sources may not apply for funding of those activities that are already being financed by public sources, i.e. double financing is not permitted. Financing under this Call is not considered as a state aid.

Mentor candidate

- A scientist with an academic or an academic-research title who obtained his PhD at least four years prior to the Call deadline.
- A scientist who is permanently employed at eligible organization (defined below)¹.
- A principal investigator or a team member of a research project financed by the Foundation, UKF, various EU (FP7, Horizon 2020) and other competitive international research projects with which will be a base for the scientific development of doctoral student. The project must last at least 18 months after the application deadline.
- Scientific activities (publications, projects, patents, international cooperation).
- Mentorship experience.
- A detailed plan for the development of doctoral student's career in scientific research (hereinafter: Plan).

¹ Regular members of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts who are not permanently employed submit forms signed by the Head of the Academy.

- A detailed plan for financing education costs and the scientific research work of doctoral student.
- Call is open to all scientific fields.
- Candidates for mentors can apply only for one doctoral student per Call.
- Per each Call candidate can apply for only one doctoral student per project.

Organization

- Eligible Organization: universities and their constituent colleges, public scientific institutes, scientific institutes, Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts as well as other legal entities and their organizational units or other legal entities performing scientific activity and registered in the Register of Scientific Organizations of the Ministry of Science and Education, meeting the minimum conditions prescribed by the Ordinance on Conditions for Issuing License for Scientific Activity, Conditions for Re-accreditation of Scientific Organizations and Content of License (OG 83/10) (hereinafter: Organization).
- The organization is obliged to provide actual and specific support to the mentor as well as to the doctoral student and secure pre-conditions for scientific development, which is confirmed by signing the Form C - Organization Support.

Further requirements for the Organization:

- a) a legal person registered in the Republic of Croatia,
- b) sufficient financial, professional, and other capacities essential for the project implementation,
- c) settled due tax obligations and obligations related to contributions in accordance with national legislation,
- d) not in the process of termination,
- e) not in the process of pre-bankruptcy settlement, bankruptcy, enforced collection or liquidation proceedings,
- f) no violation of provisions in usage of funds from the European Social Fund or other public sources,
- g) economic operations of the organization are solely auxiliary, i.e. correspond to indispensable activities directly related to the work of an organization or its research infrastructure or they are inseparable from its main non-economic operations, with negligible and limited scope; the annual capacity intended for these economic activities does not exceed 20% of the total annual capacities.

Non-eligible organizations for the Call are:

- a) legally charged and convicted organization or its legal representative of the crime of:
 - fraud, bribery, abuses of public procurement procedures, tax or customs evasion, subsidy fraud, money laundering, malfeasance, influence peddling;
 - conspiracy to commit a criminal offence, malfeasance while carrying out state authority duties, illegal intercession;²

² Criminal Law (OG 125/11, 144/12, 56/15, 61/15).

- b) organizations that delivered false data or evidence for the above stated requirements or other false information to the bodies responsible for managing European Union funds in the Republic of Croatia;
- c) if declared guilty of providing false information to the bodies responsible for managing European Union funds in the Republic of Croatia;
- d) if tried to obtain confidential information or accused of influence peddling with evaluators or bodies responsible for managing European Union funds in the Republic of Croatia during this or previous calls for proposals.

The Organization Declaration is signed for the purposes of attesting to the above mentioned requirements. In addition, the certificate of the Tax Administration Office must be enclosed serving as an evidence of settled obligations for public payments defined in national legislation.



Call procedure

Step 1 – Application and approval of mentor

Applications of mentors are submitted **only** through [Electronic Application and Assessment System](#) (EPP system) which is available on the HRZZ website.

The Foundation organizes the evaluation of project proposals and makes a decision on funding.

The list of approved mentors is published on the Foundation's website.

Step 2 – Public call for doctoral students

Organizations are obliged to conduct a public call for doctoral students in accordance with conditions established by the Foundation's Board. The selection of students should be consulted with the approved mentor. The public call must be released **no later than 2 months** after the notification of the approved mentors. The Organization is obliged to deliver written notice to the Foundation about the open call.

Organizations may set extra criteria for doctoral students, but only as an addition to the mandatory criteria established by the Foundation's Board.

Organizations that have released the public calls verify the eligibility of candidates and submit the proposal for the selection of PhDs to the Foundation along with the proof of eligibility for the final approval.

Doctoral students must be employed by November 1, 2018. Subsequent employment or prolongation of the project will not be possible because payments under the "Young Researchers' Career Development Project - Training of Doctoral Students" must end by December 31, 2022, according to the instructions of the Intermediary Bodies of the ESF.

Doctoral students (mandatory criteria)

- Finished appropriate graduate or integrated studies.
- Meets the criteria for the enrolment in doctoral studies³.
- Only candidates enrolling doctoral study in the academic year 2018/2019 can apply⁴, not later than the first semester of 2019.
- If a candidate is already a successful doctoral student, funding may be granted for the remaining time, i.e. a maximum of four years minus the years of completed studies.
- The candidates whose doctoral studies were financed by the Foundation and terminated before the completion are not eligible for this Call.

Additional criteria (not mandatory)

- Previous honors, awards, etc. for excellence in studying and/or research work.
- Participation in scientific research, published papers, personal presentations at scientific conferences.

Step 3

Upon signing the contract among Foundation, Organization and mentor, the Organization signs the employment contract with doctoral student. Doctoral student has to register in the EPP system of the Foundation and in the system of the Ministry of Labour and Pension System for monitoring of micro-data (<https://opulp.mrms.hr/>), in accordance with the guide – Implementation Indicators and monitoring of the ESF participants.



Funding

The Project is financed by the European Union from the European Social Fund under the Operational Programme “Efficient Human Resources”, specific objective 10.II.3. “Improving the environment for Croatian researchers” and by the State Budget of the Republic of Croatia.

The amount of single funding covers total cost of the doctoral student’s annual remuneration, which includes: gross salary, taxes, contributions and cost of public transportation to and from work as well as other pays and bonuses eligible for financing by the [Guides on eligibility of salary expenditure and work-related costs under the ESF in the Republic of Croatia 2014-2020](#).

The work place of doctoral student has to be within headquarter or subsidiary office of the Organization.

The Foundation transfers the funds to the account of the Organization which calculates and pays the salary to the doctoral student. Organizations are obliged to keep records of doctoral students

³ Does not apply to candidates who have already enrolled in doctoral studies.

⁴ Does not apply to candidates who have already enrolled in doctoral studies.

in line with regular internal procedures valid for other employees paid from Organizations' funds.



Application and submission procedure

Prior registering please read the Guide for Applicants and go through other forms and evaluation criteria. The before mentioned documents can be found on the [Foundation's website](#).

Application must be submitted in **electronic form only**, through [Electronic Application and Assessment System \(EPP\)](#) available on the Foundation's website.

Application must be written in Croatian language.

Applications have to be completed and submitted via the EPP system within the Call deadline.

Incomplete applications and applications submitted after the deadline will not be taken into consideration.

Application documentation (mandatory)

1. Form A – Mentor application

- Section a – mentor's CV.
- Section b - mentor's 5-year track-record.
- Section c – development plan for doctoral student's scientific and research career.
- Section d – a detailed plan for financing education and scientific research of the doctoral student.

2. Form B – Detailed plan for doctoral student's career development.

3. Form C – Organization Support

- Clearly outlined elements showing the intention of the Organization to secure adequate space, lab, equipment and other infrastructural requirements for scientific research of doctoral student. If the Organization covers the costs of doctoral study, it is necessary to specify the amount of the scholarship.

1. **Certificate of the Tax Administration Office** – it serves as a confirmation that the Organization has settled due tax obligations and obligations related to contributions in accordance with national legislation of the Republic of Croatia. The Certificate must not be older than 30 days on the submission date and it must have original stamp of the Tax Administration Office. This Certificate is mandatory for all applying Organizations.
2. **Organization Declaration** – by signing the Declaration the Organization confirms that it meets the mandatory requirements for the Organizations within this Call. The Declaration is a part of the Call documentation.

Additional documentation

- If the candidate for mentor is a team member on a project – the candidate must submit the evidence of his participation in the project stating his status in the project, duration and budget of the project which must be signed by the Principal Investigator and the Head of the organization where the project is being implemented. If the costs of doctoral study are to be covered from the project budget, it is necessary to specify the amount.
- If the doctoral study and/or research work of doctoral student is to be funded by the source other than the mentor's Organization - confirmation of payment of tuition and research work costs (with signature and stamp).



Evaluation

Proposals will be evaluated according to the evaluation criteria stated in the Evaluation Form – mentor candidate (available on the Foundation's website).

Evaluation scope:

1. Scientific activity

- Scientific activity for the last five years (e.g. publications in relevant journals and books, coordinated project and/or collaborations, patents, international visibility and collaborations).

2. Mentor excellence

- Status of a Principal Investigator or a team member on a research project lasting for at least 18 months after the Call deadline, in which the doctoral student would participate with his scientific research and which will secure funds for material costs of scientific research, education and dissemination costs.
- Previous success in managing the PhD's career development (number of successfully defended doctoral theses on time, the ratio of initiated and successfully completed mentorships with defended doctoral theses, etc.).
- Achievements and excellence of a candidate which guarantee the quality mentoring of the PhD, for the candidates who did not mentor young researchers until the Call.
- Number of PhDs that the candidate currently mentors.

3. Plan for doctoral student's career development

- A detailed plan of doctoral student's scientific development, with elaborated activities and measurable results to be implemented and achieved within the doctoral study as well as within the scientific research of the doctoral student for the time of a funding period.
- Compatibility of the planned doctoral thesis with the doctoral study, the topic and field of the mentor's research project and the proposed scientific research of the doctoral student.

- Clear overview of activities to be implemented as well as risk identification and risk mitigation measures.
- Doctoral student has to devote 100% of working time to the scientific research related to his doctoral dissertation.
- Plan for financing doctoral study, material costs of scientific research, dissemination and other costs and the expected sources of funding.

4. Organization Support

- Consent of the Head of the Organization to supporting the scientific development of the PhD, with clearly stated elements which show the readiness to secure adequate space and lab, equipment and other infrastructural requirements for the PhD's scientific research. If the Organization will be covering the cost of doctoral study, it is necessary to specify the amount.

The list of approved mentors will be published on the Foundation's website. Simultaneously, mentors and Heads of Organizations will be informed by the Foundation of the evaluation results after which they are obliged to organize and release the public call for doctoral students, not later than 2 months after the notification.



Project implementation and reporting

Reports

- After **18 months** of employment, the mentor and PhD are obliged to submit a periodic report to the Foundation on the implementation of Plan and planned activities. The continuation of funding will be approved if the report is positively evaluated; if the report is negatively evaluated, the funding will be suspended.
- Mentor and the doctoral student are obliged to submit the second periodic report after **36 months**, along with the evidence of final stage of doctoral thesis.
- **The final report** has to be submitted within 15 days after project closure. The candidate shall submit the evidence of successfully defended doctoral thesis.
- The mentor and the doctoral student are required to submit an additional report on the fulfilment of obligations with justifying documentation upon the Foundation's written request, regardless of the periodic reports' deadlines.

Other obligations

- Compliance with the approved doctoral student's career development plan, financial obligations (e.g. covering costs of doctoral studies) and other contractual obligations.
- Delivering additional reports for the occasional control of the doctoral students' progress by the Foundation.
- Registration of published papers, conference papers, posters, etc., and clearly stating that the project he is implementing is being co-financed by the European Union, with reference to the Operational Programme "Efficient Human Resources 2014-2020" and the ESF as well as with reference to the Foundation's support.

Failure to complete the Plan

- In case of difficulties in achieving aims defined in the doctoral student's career development plan, the mentor and the doctoral student or the Organization are required to promptly inform the Foundation in written.
- In case of a negative evaluation of periodic reports, i.e. if the doctoral student's career development plan was not implemented as foreseen in the contract, the mentor, the Organization and the doctoral student are responsible for the breach of contractual obligations. The Foundation will deliver a written notice of such breach requiring remedy within reasonable time.
- The Foundation has the right to immediately terminate the Contract by giving written notice of termination to that effect if the evaluation has shown serious failures in the implementation of the Plan or in case of non-compliance with the contract or other written notices of the Foundation.



Submission deadline

Submission deadline is **January 12th, 2018 until 13:00 CET**



Contact

All enquiries related to the Call can be submitted **only via the following e-mail address** doktorandi@hrzz.hr. Answers to the submitted questions will be published on the Foundation's web site twice a week under FAQ.