

## **Appendix No. 1 – Rules of the Grant Agency of Masaryk University**

## Content

1. Acronyms and definitions .....	4
2. GAMU structure .....	5
3. Aim and basic parameters of the Student Research Support Programme .....	6
3.1. Support of Excellent Master's Theses .....	6
3.2. Criteria .....	6
Eligibility criteria .....	6
Evaluation criteria .....	6
3.3. Tentative schedule .....	7
4. Aim and basic parameters of the Research Support Programme .....	8
4.1. Funding .....	8
4.2. Programme Board .....	8
4.3. Consultative bodies .....	8
Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) .....	9
GAMU guarantors .....	9
International Scientific Advisory Board (ISAB) .....	9
4.4. Final GAMU conference .....	9
4.5. Types of support .....	9
5. HORIZONS – Support for preparation of international research projects .....	11
5.1. Description and aim of grant support .....	11
5.2. Criteria .....	11
5.3. Tentative schedule .....	11
6. INTERDISCIPLINARY – Interdisciplinary research projects .....	12
6.1. Description and aim of grant support .....	12
6.2. Criteria .....	12
Eligibility criteria .....	12
Evaluation criteria .....	12
6.3. Tentative schedule .....	13
7. MASH – MUNI Award in Science and Humanities .....	14
7.1. Description and aim of grant support .....	14
7.2. Criteria .....	14
Eligibility criteria .....	14
Evaluation criteria .....	15
7.3. Tentative schedule .....	15
8. MASH JUNIOR – MUNI Award in Science and Humanities JUNIOR .....	16
8.1. Description and aim of grant support .....	16

8.2.	Criteria.....	16
	Eligibility criteria.....	16
	Evaluation criteria.....	17
8.3.	Tentative schedule.....	17
9.	CAREER RESTART.....	18
9.1.	Description and aim of grant support.....	18
9.2.	Criteria.....	18
	Eligibility criteria.....	18
	Evaluation criteria.....	18
9.3.	Parameters.....	18
9.4.	Tentative schedule.....	18
10.	MUNI Scientist – Award for outstanding research results.....	20
10.1.	Description and aim of grant support.....	20
10.2.	Tentative schedule.....	20
11.	Ethics.....	21
11.1.	Code of Ethics for evaluators of the Grant Agency of Masaryk University.....	21
11.2.	Code of Ethics for investigators of GAMU projects.....	22

# 1. Acronyms and definitions

ERC – European Research Council

GAMU – Grant Agency of Masaryk University

ECU – Economic unit

ISAB – International Scientific Advisory Board

MASH – MUNI Award in Science and Humanities

MU – Masaryk University

OV – Rector's Office of Masaryk University

RSP – Research Support Programme

RMU – Rector's Office of Masaryk University

SAB – Scientific Advisory Board

Vice-Rector for Research – MU Vice-Rector for Research and Doctoral Studies

Project applicant – a person applying for project funding (through a project proposal) in the category: HORIZONS, INTERDISCIPLINARY. Principal applicant for INTERDISCIPLINARY – applicant for the ECU that coordinates the entire interdisciplinary research project.

Applicant – a person applying for a grant (through an application) in competitions MASH JUNIOR, MASH and CAREER RESTART.

## 2. GAMU structure

### **Student Research Support Programme**

- Support of Excellent Master's Theses

### **Research Support Programme**

- HORIZONS – Support for preparation of international grant projects
- INTERDISCIPLINARY – Interdisciplinary research projects
- MASH – MUNI Award in Science and Humanities
- MASH JUNIOR – MUNI Award in Science and Humanities JUNIOR
- CAREER RESTART – Support for integration of researchers after a career break into MU research teams
- MUNI SCIENTIST – Award for outstanding research results

## 3. Aim and basic parameters of the Student Research Support Programme

### 3.1. Support of Excellent Master's Theses

The aim of the Support of Excellent Master's Theses programme is to support creative activities of students in Master's degree programmes. It is implemented in the form of student projects aiming at the preparation of Master's theses. Projects are focused on the achievement of above-standard Master's theses. An individual project of a Medical Faculty student may also be considered a Master's thesis.

### 3.2. Criteria

#### Eligibility criteria

The below students are eligible for the support:

- a. Students of Master's degree programmes enrolled in the seventh semester of their Master's studies or in the eighth semester of their Master's studies in case they began the studies in the spring semester , or
- b. students of follow-up Master's degree programmes enrolled in the first semester of their follow-up Master's studies or in the second semester of their Master's studies in case they began the studies in the spring semester.

A proposal may only be submitted by a student whose Bachelor's thesis was graded with an "A" in case it was a part of previous successfully completed studies. In case a Bachelor's thesis was not a part of previous successfully completed studies, the proposal may be submitted by a student ranging within the first 15 % of the best students in the programme according to the grade point average achieved.

#### Evaluation criteria

Projects are evaluated by the **MU board**.

The MU evaluation board consists of deans of each faculty involved (i.e. faculty whose students apply for the support), or as the case may be, vice-deans authorized by the deans. The board is chaired by the Vice-Rector for Research. The board decides on the proposal for awarding financial support and its recommended amount.

#### Criteria for the evaluation of project proposals in particular include:

- professional level of the applicant's results in the Bachelor's thesis if it was a part of previous studies; in case the Bachelor's thesis was not a part of previous studies of the project applicant, this criterion is substituted with grade point average in previous semesters;
- Professional level of the expected project results including the possibility of their presentation and dissemination;
- above-standard level of the planned outcomes if compared with the usual outcomes of Master's theses;
- adequacy of the overall budget and financial planning to the planned results of the project;
- professional level of the thesis supervisor.

Project proposals may be subject to an assessment by one independent expert who is not employed by MU (hereinafter referred to as “reviewer”). The Vice-Rector for Research shall decide on the performance of an external review.

### **3.3. Tentative schedule**

The below schedule is approximate and is subject to the approval by the Rector of MU.

- Competition announcement: November
- Deadline for applications: December
- Evaluation period: January of next year
- Announcement of results: January of next year
- Start of implementation: February of next year
- Deadline for interim report: end of June next year
- Deadline for final report: end of January of the calendar year immediately following the year of project implementation

## 4. Aim and basic parameters of the Research Support Programme

The aim of the Research Support Programme (hereinafter referred to as “RSP”) is to strengthen the quality and prestige of research work at MU, to enhance the success rate of the university in obtaining prestigious international grants, and to stimulate innovative interdisciplinary research with high added value. The research support has several forms. The main selection criterion in all types of support schemes is the project applicant’s research excellence and quality of the submitted proposal. Support is primarily intended for MU faculty engaged in research,<sup>1</sup> in the second place also for external applicants (MASH and MASH JUNIOR).

### 4.1. Funding

The source of Research Support Programme funding is the institutional support toward long-term conceptual development of a research organisation. MU management approves the announcement of new calls as well as impact on future budgets and acknowledges the budgets of all projects in progress.

The MU Rector is entitled to restrict or stop the funding of projects in progress in the event of an unpredictable development of the university funding.

Double funding of costs is not permitted.

### 4.2. Programme Board

The Research Support Programme is managed by the Programme Board. The Programme Board consists of vice-dean of faculties responsible for the research, directors of university institutes, Vice-Rector for Research, Vice-Rector for Development, Vice-Rector for Personnel and Academic Affairs, Vice-Rector for Internationalisation, and the bursar. The Programme Board is chaired by the Vice-Rector for Research. The Programme Board adopts its decisions by the show of hands; minutes are taken from Programme Board sessions. An external consultant without a voting right may be invited to a session upon a proposal of the chairperson or any member of the Programme Board. Administrative support to the MU Programme Board is provided by the RMU Research Office.

#### **Programme Board:**

- Supervises the transparency of evaluation procedure and selection of projects as defined in the programme rules for individual categories.
- Supervises the efficient disbursement of the programme funds.
- Approves annual reports of the programme. Participates in the final project evaluation.
- Constitutes a quorum if 2/3 of members are present; adopts decisions by the absolute majority of all present members.

### 4.3. Consultative bodies

Research Support Programme consultative bodies:

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<sup>1</sup> An MU employee engaged in research for the purposes hereof means an academic (within the meaning of Act No. 111/1998 Coll.) or non-academic employee working in research who has a larger than a half-workload at MU (more than 20 hours per week).

- Scientific Advisory Board
- Guarantors of domains concerned
- International Scientific Advisory Board

### **Scientific Advisory Board (SAB)**

SAB is an advisory body of the Vice-Rector for Research. It consists of excellent scientists who have previous experience with the evaluation of research project proposals in various national and international schemes, and as the case may be, also with the GAMU as an evaluator or applicant. The SAB members are primarily experts from Masaryk University, on behalf of individual ECUs nominated by vice-deans in charge of research , or by the Vice-Rector for Research. Evaluators for individual competitions are selected from among the SAB members. In the event that MU experts cannot be consulted regarding project proposals for any reason, an external expert shall be invited.

### **GAMU guarantors**

Guarantors of the GAMU are appointed to evaluate the submitted proposals in three domains: Physical Sciences and Computer Science, Life Sciences, Social Sciences and Humanities.

The guarantors are appointed by vice-deans in charge of research, or by the Vice-Rector for Research. The final decision shall be made by the Vice-Rector for Research.

The guarantors are excellent scientists who have previous experience with the evaluation of research project proposals in various national and international schemes.

All guarantors and evaluators shall declare they are not in a conflict of interest.<sup>2</sup>

### **International Scientific Advisory Board (ISAB)**

ISAB is an international Scientific Advisory Board of the Rector, who is regularly informed about the course of competitions implemented within the GAMU. The ISAB members may initiate changes to the Research Support Programme in line with international good practice.

## **4.4. Final GAMU conference**

The final GAMU conference is held annually. The results of projects completed since the last final conference of GAMU are presented to the members of the MU Programme Board, evaluators, guarantors and investigators. The projects that commenced in the year concerned are also introduced at the conference. MUNI Scientist Awards are announced and awarded at the conference.

## **4.5. Types of support**

The announcement of competitions for individual categories of the Research Support Programme is decided by the Rector of MU. The Rector has the right not to announce the competitions in the given year. The Rector has the right to determine financial limits and other additional requirements for individual competitions.

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<sup>2</sup> The Code of Ethics of investigators and GAMU evaluators forms an annex hereto.

Calls in the Research Support Programme are announced in the following categories:

- HORIZONS – Support for preparation of international grant projects.
- INTERDISCIPLINARY – Interdisciplinary research projects.
- MASH – MUNI Award in Science and Humanities.
- MASH JUNIOR – MUNI Award in Science and Humanities JUNIOR.
- CAREER RESTART – Support for integration of researchers after a career break into MU research teams.
- MUNI SCIENTIST – Award for outstanding research results.

## 5. HORIZONS – Support for preparation of international research projects

### 5.1. Description and aim of grant support

The aim is to strengthen the quality and prestige of research work at MU, to enhance the success rate of the university in obtaining prestigious international grants, and to stimulate innovative interdisciplinary research with high added value.

The support is intended to cover costs related to the preparation of projects for international funding bodies (e.g. European Union programmes).

The approved proposals are expected to be submitted within 12 months of obtaining the support.

The awarded funds may be used toward the settlement of travel expenses and organizational costs: costs of organization/travel to the consortium meeting, proofreading, external consultancy services etc.

The support shall be awarded in two categories which differ in the amount of funding:

- Preparation of projects where an MU employee engaged in research is the main project applicant.
- Preparation of projects where an MU employee engaged in research is the co-applicant.

Projects of the European Research Council (ERC) are not part of the rules for awarding support toward costs related to the preparation of international projects; such projects are supported at MU within a specific support scheme for ERC projects. This in particular concerns the settlement of costs of external consultancy in case the intent is notified early (6 months before the deadline); fees and travel expenses connected with the ERC interview preparation training.

Detailed rules of support are stated in the document "[ERC Support Scheme](#)".

### 5.2. Criteria

Support may be granted only to proposals that meet the following criteria:

- The grant proposal for which support is sought must be submitted to an international grant agency.
- The grant proposal for which support is sought must be research-oriented (basic, applied or a combination of both).
- The project applicant/co-applicant must be an employee of MU engaged in research.
- MU must be the applying/co-applying institution for the project.
- In the case of a consortium project (MU as the principal applicant or MU as a co-applicant), the co-applicants and the deadline of the international call must be specified in the application.
- The project for which support is sought must have clearly formulated objectives, an investigation strategy and plan of dissemination of results.
- A project for which support is sought must have a preliminary budget.

### 5.3. Tentative schedule

The below schedule is approximate and is subject to the approval by the Rector of MU.

- Deadline for submitting applications for support: continuously throughout the year
- Evaluation period: maximum 1 month of the submission of application
- Start of implementation: after the approval of the application

## 6. INTERDISCIPLINARY – Interdisciplinary research projects

### 6.1. Description and aim of grant support

Support is intended for research teams composed of academic and research staff, covering a topic across at least two research domains of the three possible: Physical Sciences and Computer Science, Life Sciences, Social Sciences and Humanities.

Individuals from institutions outside MU can participate in the research but shall not be settled the costs. Research topics must be interdisciplinary, innovative and with high added value and such as are usually not supported from other sources and have not yet been investigated at MU.

The aim is to initiate interdisciplinary cooperation on new topics; to create preliminary results aiming at the verification of the feasibility of ambitious interdisciplinary projects; and to prepare the groundwork for external grant applications (ERC Synergy etc.).

### 6.2. Criteria

#### Eligibility criteria

A prerequisite to further evaluation is the fulfilment of the following eligibility criterion:

Interdisciplinarity – cooperation of researchers working in at least two research domains of the three possible: Physical Sciences and Computer Science, Life Sciences, Social Sciences and Humanities. At the same time, according to the evaluation system of the European Research Council (ERC), it must be demonstrated that it is a balanced partnership, not provision of services.

#### Evaluation criteria

Criterion	Weighting in %
Originality, innovation and scientific quality of the project	40
Potential for achievement of excellent results	20
Feasibility	20
Sustainability of cooperation for further funding of research after the end of the interdisciplinary project funded by GAMU	10
Level of hitherto research of the applicants with regard to the submitted project	10

### 6.3. Tentative schedule

The competition is announced annually in accordance with the below schedule, which may however differ year by year depending on the current situation. Therefore, the schedule is approximate and is subject to the approval by the Rector of MU.

- Competition announcement: September
- Deadline for applications: October
- Evaluation period: November to February of next year
- Announcement of results: February of next year
- Start of implementation: March of next year
- Deadline for interim report: by the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> month after the start of investigation
- Deadline for final report: within 3 months after the project completion

## 7. MASH – MUNI Award in Science and Humanities

### 7.1. Description and aim of grant support

The main aim of MUNI Award in Science and Humanities (hereinafter referred to as “MASH”) is to bring excellent and successful external researchers to Masaryk University<sup>3</sup> and to offer them such conditions that they are motivated to stay, work for Masaryk University and to attain exceptionally high-quality research results on the long-term basis.

Top research teams shall become a stable part of MU thanks to the employment of persons with transformation potential.

A MASH holder shall be employed full-time at Masaryk University. The workload shall also contain active promotion of science through one event per year, focused on the communication of science to general public (e.g. a lecture), organized at MU. The holder of this prestigious grant shall also be expected to represent Masaryk University and proactively contribute to the future direction of research conducted at MU for the entire duration of the grant holder’s engagement at MU, i.e. also after the completion of the MASH grant project.

### 7.2. Criteria

#### Eligibility criteria

MASH is intended for applicants who were not employed by MU in their main employment for the period of 5 years preceding the deadline of the call.

An applicant is the ERC grant holder or a leading researcher in the R4 career stage.

- The applicant has an established reputation based on excellent research in his field;
- The applicant contributes to the enhancement of research and development through collaborative approach;
- The applicant identifies research challenges and opportunities in his/her area of expertise;
- The applicant conducts research independently;<sup>4</sup>
- The applicant is qualified to lead and implement projects of collaborative research in cooperation with colleagues and project partners;
- The applicant publishes papers as the main author; organizes workshops and conferences;
- The applicant establishes cooperation with the relevant industrial groups;
- The applicant effectively communicates his/her research to the research community and general public;
- The applicant’s approach to research is innovative;
- The applicant is qualified to build research consortia;
- The applicant is committed to the professional development of his/her career;
- The applicant works as a mentor to junior researchers.

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<sup>3</sup> MASH is intended for applicants who were not employed by MU in their main employment for the period of 5 years preceding the latest deadline for applications in this call.

<sup>4</sup> For instance publishes independently of his supervisor, has experience in leading a team

## Evaluation criteria

Criterion	Weighting in %
Professional profile of the applicant based on the submitted CV (an ERC application is taken into account)	60
Research plan and its coherence with MU research	20
Potential asset for Masaryk University based on the submitted motivation letter	20

### 7.3. Tentative schedule

The competition is announced in accordance with the below schedule, which may however differ year by year depending on the current situation. Therefore, the schedule is approximate and is subject to the approval by the Rector of MU.

- Competition announcement: November – February
- Evaluation: March – June
- Announcement of results: June
- Final report: in the third year according to deadline determined by the GAMU

## 8. MASH JUNIOR – MUNI Award in Science and Humanities JUNIOR

### 8.1. Description and aim of grant support

The main aim of MUNI Award in Science and Humanities JUNIOR (hereinafter referred to as “MASH JUNIOR”) is to create conditions for timely achievement of research autonomy of highly promising researchers shortly after Ph.D. acceleration of career advancement of talented scholars; easier preparation of prestigious grant proposals, enhancement of “brain circulation”.

Successful project applicants must have clear potential to succeed in the ERC competition. A significant aspect of this type of grant support is the motivation of workplaces to invest in extraordinary research talents, whose hitherto research history may but need not be connected with MU.

A MASH JUNIOR holder shall be employed full-time at Masaryk University. The holder shall submit an application to the ERC within 2 years of the MASH JUNIOR award.

The workload shall also contain active promotion of science through one event per year, focused on the communication of science to general public (e.g. a lecture), organized at MU. The holder of this prestigious grant shall also be expected to represent Masaryk University and proactively contribute to the future direction of research conducted at MU for the entire duration of the grant holder’s engagement at MU, i.e. also after the completion of the MASH JUNIOR grant project.

### 8.2. Criteria

#### Eligibility criteria

The competition is open to internal as well as external applicants; an important prerequisite in both cases is their sufficient international experience. A junior researcher is a scholar of up to 40 years of age inclusive (~10 years after Ph.D.), taking into account career breaks.

Upon the announcement of the competition on the GAMU website, the applicant sends the application to the e-mail address [gamu@muni.cz](mailto:gamu@muni.cz); the subject shall be MASH JUNIOR + first name and surname.

The application shall include:

- The MASH JUNIOR form with a description of the research plan (in accordance with MU research focus, taking into account the career stage of the applicant).
- Current CV including Researcher ID of the applicant.
- Declaration of the ECU of its readiness to hire the applicant and create conditions for independent research.
- Evidence of career breaks if applicable.
- The application shall not contain the budget – the applicant shall obtain a predetermined amount in this competition.

## Evaluation criteria

Criterion	Weighting in %
Quality of the hitherto research of the applicant with regard to his/her career stage as documented in the submitted CV	40
Applicant's potential of research growth based on the submitted research plan (potential for obtaining a ERC grant)	40
Feasibility of the research plan and its coherence with MU research	20

### 8.3. Tentative schedule

The competition is announced in accordance with the below schedule, which may however differ year by year depending on the current situation. Therefore, the schedule is approximate and is subject to the approval by the Rector of MU.

- Competition announcement: November– February
- Evaluation: March – June
- Announcement of results: June
- Final report: in the third year according to deadline determined by the GAMU

## 9. CAREER RESTART

### 9.1. Description and aim of grant support

Support for integration of researchers after a career break, for instance due to parental leave, into Masaryk University research teams. The programme shall facilitate and speed up the return of young talented researchers to the productive academic career and increase their share in independent / leading research posts.

### 9.2. Criteria

#### Eligibility criteria

An eligible applicant is a researcher:

- Whose last employer before the career interruption was MU;
- Whose career was interrupted, for instance due to parental leave;
- Evidences the completion of Ph.D. studies;
- Is the principal or corresponding author of at least one research publication indexed in a journal in the first quartile of the field in accordance with the impact factor of the Web of Science or of a comparable scientific performance in those scientific fields not dominant in publishing indexed in the Web of Science.

#### Evaluation criteria

Criterion	Weighting in %
Applicant's potential to attain independence and leading position in research	50
Asset of the applicant for the host workplace	50

### 9.3. Parameters

Allocation: CZK 3 million / year

Expected number of grants awarded: 6

Annual budget: CZK 500 thousand

Duration of funding: 2 years

### 9.4. Tentative schedule

The competition is announced in accordance with the below schedule, which may however differ year by year depending on the current situation. Therefore, the schedule is approximate and is subject to the approval by the Rector of MU.

- Competition announcement: September
- Deadline for applications: October – November

- Evaluation period: December – February
- Announcement of results: March
- Start of implementation: April
- Deadline for final report: within 3 months after the project completion

## **10. MUNI Scientist – Award for outstanding research results**

### **10.1. Description and aim of grant support**

The programme awards prizes to researchers for their outstanding results and important deeds in research at Masaryk University. The aim is to strengthen the motivation of excellent researchers at the university and promotion of MU reputation in the academic community and in the public.

### **10.2. Tentative schedule**

- Beginning of nomination: upon a call of the RMU Research Office
- End of nomination: October of the calendar year concerned
- Announcement and award of prizes shall be part of the GAMU final conference to be held annually before the end of the calendar year

## 11. Ethics

The principal duty of scientific community is to formulate research principles, define the criteria of correct research conduct, maximize the quality of research and adequately respond to the violation of integrity of research.

### 11.1. Code of Ethics for evaluators of the Grant Agency of Masaryk University

Main values to be observed and respected by each evaluator are in particular legality, transparency, equal treatment of all natural persons and legal entities, impartiality, professionalism and decency. The aim is to support desirable standards of evaluators' behaviour and to inform professional public of evaluators' expected conduct.

#### Principles

##### Confidentiality

Evaluators shall maintain confidentiality of personal data and all facts learnt or disclosed to them in the process of evaluation. The information and documents obtained may be used by evaluators solely for evaluation purposes and must not be provided to third parties.

Evaluators are obliged to treat any personal data, information and documents with due care, adopt adequate security measures and protect them in the maximal possible extent corresponding to the technological level of available facilities.

Obligation of confidentiality shall not apply to facts ensuing from fraudulent or corrupt practices. Such practices must be reported to the coordinator of the Grant Agency of Masaryk University.

##### Impartiality

Evaluators shall not act to the detriment or benefit of any natural person or legal entity or a group of persons; they act and make decisions objectively and impartially and solely on the basis of the project proposal. At the same time, evaluators are obliged to report any breach of impartiality.

##### Professionalism

Evaluators perform their work at a high expert and professional level, with the highest degree of decency, understanding and to the best of their knowledge.

##### Equal treatment

Evaluators treat everyone equally, considerately, adequately and in a manner respecting his/her personality and reputation.

##### Decency

Evaluators adhere to the principles of good behaviour, actively promote ethical conduct, and thus contribute to a fair and impartial environment.

##### Transparency

Evaluators perform their evaluation activities and decision-making in a transparent and credible manner and shall not yield to any external pressure.

**Conflict of interest**

If there is a suspicion of a conflict of interest, the evaluator shall consult the situation with the GAMU. Evaluators are obliged to refuse their participation in the project proposal evaluation in case there is a conflict of interest.

**11.2. Code of Ethics for investigators of GAMU projects**

Freedom of research, openness and responsibility, respect for the diversity of opinion and tolerance, respect for human dignity and autonomy in research, transparency, solidarity and cooperation in research, and usefulness are fundamental ethical principles of research that must be observed by every researcher, who shall thus create a basis for building and maintaining trust in science and research.

Investigators of research projects supported by the GAMU are bound by the Masaryk University Code of Ethics. Each investigator is obliged to become acquainted with the MU Code of Ethics and strictly adhere thereto.