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**European Union Cohesion Policy Programme for 2021–2027 under the specific aid objective 1.1.1 “Strengthening research and innovation capacity and transfer of advanced technologies to the R&D system”, measure 1.1.1.9 “Postdoctoral research”:**

**REGULATIONS FOR THE FOURTH SELECTION ROUND OF RESEARCH APPLICATIONS**

**FOR RESEARCH APPLICATIONS RELATED TO An ECONOMIC ACTIVITY**

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| --- | --- |
| **The Cabinet Regulations governing the implementation of the specific aid objective measure:** | Cabinet Regulation No. 35 of 9 January 2024 “European Union Cohesion Policy Programme for 2021–2027 under the specific aid objective 1.1.1 “Strengthening research and innovation capacity and transfer of advanced technologies to the R&D system”, measure 1.1.1.9 “Postdoctoral research” implementing regulations” (hereinafter – “the Cabinet Regulation for the measure”) |
| **Amount of funding:** | The total funding available under the measure is EUR 44,440,611, including EUR 37,774,519 from the European Regional Development Fund, EUR 4,797,862 from the state budget and EUR 1,868,230 from private co-financing.  The total eligible funding available for the fourth round of selection of research applications is EUR 1,923,600.  **The fourth round of selection of research applications supports only implementation of industrial research applications related to economic activity.** |
| **Method of implementation of the selection of research applications:** | Open selection of research applications |
| **Deadline for submission of research applications:** | The period for submission of applications is from **9 February 2026 to 31 May 2026**. Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis and will be evaluated in four intermediate stages or until the funding allocated to the selection round is exhausted:  Intermediate stage 1: 28 February 2026  Intermediate stage 2: 31 March 2026  Intermediate stage 3: 30 April 2026  Intermediate stage 4: 31 May 2026.  The Latvian Council of Science (hereinafter referred to as LCS) reserves the right to stop accepting applications before 31 May 2026 if the funding for the selection is exhausted. |
| **Research applicant:** | Research application is implemented by:   * **A tiny (micro), small, medium-sized or large merchant registered in the Register of Enterprises of the Republic of Latvia**; or * **a scientific institution that does not meet the definition of a research organisation**, or * **a scientific institution that meets the definition of a research organisation** and submits a research application related to an economic activity as part of the economic activity of the research organisation. In this case, the research application is accounted for by the scientific institution as an economic activity of the scientific institution. Economic activities are pursued within the research application. |
| **Type of research application:** | Research application related to economic activity |
| **Category of research application:** | Industrial research application |

1. **CONDITIONS**

1.1 The total funding available under the measure is EUR 44,440,611, including EUR 37,774,519 from the European Regional Development Fund, EUR 4,797,862 from the state budget and EUR 1,868,230 from private co-financing.

1.2 The total eligible funding available for the fourth round of selection of research applications is EUR 1,923,600.

1.3 The fourth selection round of industrial research applications shall only support research applications related to economic activities (hereinafter referred to as 'research application') carried out by a tiny (micro), small, medium-sized or large merchant registered in the Register of Enterprises of the Republic of Latvia, or by a scientific institution that does not meet the definition of a research organisation, or by a scientific institution that meets the definition of a research organisation, submitting a research application related to economic activity as part of the economic activities of the research organisation. In this case, the research application is accounted for by the scientific institution as an economic activity of the scientific institution.

1.4 Research applications related to economic activity are implemented in the fourth selection round of the research applications. Implementation of research applications not related to economic activity are not supported.

1.5 If the funding available for implementation of research applications related to economic activity within the framework of the fourth round of selection is not used it may be redirected for the next rounds of selection.

1.6The maximum total eligible funding of a research application is EUR 192,360 and the maximum implementation period is 36 months, up to 30 June 2029. The research applicant shall ensure the sustainability of the results achieved for at least one year after the end of implementation of the research application, including the development of the research direction and the sustainability of the workplace created by the research application (if applicable).

1.7 The research applicant shall start the implementation of the research application no later than six months after the decision approving the research application.

1.8 Costs of a research application related to economic activity shall include the following items of eligible costs of the research application:

1.8.1. personnel costs: researchers, technical and other auxiliary staff, in so far as they are employed in the implementation of the research application, within the limits of the aid intensities allowed for public funding;

* + 1. the costs of tools and equipment, in so far as and for how long they are used in the implementation of the research application, which includes the costs of scientific equipment and machinery (fixed assets). If the period of use of the equipment and machinery in the research application does not cover the entire depreciation period, only the depreciation costs covering the period of use of the equipment and machinery in the research application, calculated in accordance with good accounting practice, shall be eligible;
    2. costs of contract research, know-how and patents acquired or licensed from external sources under conditions of fair competition, as well as costs of consultancy and equivalent services used solely for the purpose of implementing the research application;
    3. additional indirect costs and other operating expenses, including the costs of materials, supplies and similar products incurred as a direct result of the research application, such as chemicals, laboratory utensils, medicines, in so far as and for how long they are used in the project, as well as the costs of their acquisition and supply, which are accounted for in accordance with the laws and regulations governing accounting and are directly attributable to the implementation of the research application;
    4. costs of obtaining, validating and defending patents and other intangible assets (except for large merchants);
    5. the costs of training staff and trainees directly linked to the implementation of the research application (post-doctoral study costs);
    6. the cost of the trainee staff and general indirect costs (administrative costs, rent, ancillary costs) for the hours during which the trainees participate in the training (for example, post-doctoral official travel costs).
  1. Intensity of public funding for conducting industrial research related to economic activity:
     1. 70 per cent for a research applicant that meets the definition of a tiny (micro) or small enterprise;
     2. 60 per cent for a research applicant that meets the definition of a medium-sized enterprise;
     3. 50 per cent for a research applicant that meets the definition of a large enterprise;
  2. The intensity of public aid for implementation of industrial research applications may be increased by 15 percentage points of the total eligible costs of the research application, not exceeding 80 per cent of the total eligible costs of the research application, if research results of industrial research applications are made publicly available in at least one of the following ways: dissemination of research results at technical and scientific conferences and in publicly accessible repositories (databases), availability of free software.
  3. Costs related to the protection of technology rights may be received by a research applicant that meets the definition of a tiny (micro), small or medium-sized enterprise when carrying out a research application related to an economic activity. The allowable public aid intensity for support for protection of technology rights is 50 per cent;
  4. Costs related to training may be received:
     1. in the amount of 70 per cent if the research applicant meets the definition of a tiny (micro) or small enterprise;
     2. in the amount of 60 % if the research applicant meets the definition of a medium-sized enterprise and the training is provided to disabled persons or disadvantaged employees;
     3. in the amount of 50 per cent if the research applicant meets the definition of a large enterprise;
  5. The costs of a research application are eligible at the earliest from the start of implementation of the research application.

1. **REQUIREMENTS FOR THE RESEARCH APPLICANT AND CO-OPERATION PARTNERS** 
   1. The research applicant shall be a tiny (micro), small, medium-sized or large enterprise registered in the Register of Enterprises of the Republic of Latvia, or a scientific institution that does not meet the definition of a research organisation, or a scientific institution that meets the definition of a research organisation but submits a research application related to an economic activity as part of the economic activity of the research organisation, which establishes an employment relationship with a post-doctoral researcher whose doctorate degree/doctorate in science degree was obtained not more than 10 years before the deadline for the submission of the research application (hereinafter referred to as the post-doctoral researcher), and provides access to infrastructure and human resources for the research required by the research application.
   2. The research application may be carried out individually or in partnership with a foreign or Latvian scientific institution, university or business (hereinafter – “co-operation partner”), which hosts the postdoctoral researcher and provides access to infrastructure or human resources. The co-operation partner may benefit from economic advantages and intellectual property rights in proportion to each co-operation partner's contribution to the research application.
   3. Where the research application is implemented in partnership with a co-operation partner, the research applicant and the co-operation partner shall, after approval of the research application, conclude a cooperation agreement setting out the conditions for substantive, technical and financial cooperation, the rights, obligations and responsibilities of the parties, as well as the rights to the results of the research application (including intellectual property rights) in proportion to the contribution of each co-operation partner to the implementation of the research application, and access to the infrastructure and other resources of the co-operation partner for the research required for the implementation of the research application.
   4. The following requirements apply to the research applicant and the co-operation partner (if it is a merchant and benefits from the collaboration):
      1. order of funds recovery for aid schemes of which individual aid payments to a company to which unfulfilled order of funds recovery applies in line with a previous decision of the European Commission does not apply to these, whereby the aid shall be recognised illegal or incompatible with the domestic market, except aid schemes for compensation of certain losses caused by natural disasters and evaluated at the level of the company of the group (in accordance with Article 1(4)(a) of the Commission Regulation No. 651/2014);
      2. they are not considered to be in financial difficulties within the meaning of Paragraph 2.7 of the Measure's Cabinet Regulation, and proof of compliance with Article 2(18)(c) of Commission Regulation No 651/2014 (Annex No. 11), which is assessed at the level of the group of the company (not applicable if the aid is granted in accordance with European Commission Regulation (EU) No. 2023/2831 of 13 December 2023 on the application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union to *de minimis* aid (hereinafter referred to as Commission Regulation No 2023/2831);

2.4.3 where the research applicant carries out both economic and non-economic activities, it shall separate the types of activities and their costs, funding and revenues in such a way as to effectively prevent cross-subsidisation of economic activities;

2.4.4 the research applicant is not subject to application of the exclusion rules laid down in Article 22 of the Law on the Management of the European Union Funds for the programming period 2021–2027.

* 1. For a research application related to an economic activity, the aid shall take the form of transparent categories of aid (grant) and shall be granted:

2.5.1 by LCS under Commission Regulation (EC) No [2023/2831](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2023/2831/oj/?locale=LV) and the laws and regulations on the procedures for registration and granting of *de minimis*aid, or

2.5.2 The Central Finance and Contracting Agency, in accordance with Commission Regulation (EC) No [651/2014](http://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2014/651/oj/?locale=LV).

1. **SUPPORTED ACTIVITIES AND COSTS**

3.1 Within the framework of a research application, the activities defined in Paragraph 45 of the Cabinet Regulation of the measure are supported and only research applications that contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the [Latvian Smart Specialisation Strategy](https://www.izm.gov.lv/sites/izm/files/ekosist_kopsavilkums_ris31.pdf) or to the development of specialisation areas, including interdisciplinary research applications corresponding to at least one of the defined Latvian Smart Specialisation areas, are supported:

3.1.1 A knowledge-intensive bioeconomy;

3.1.2 Biomedicine, medical technology, pharmaceuticals ;

3.1.3 Photonics and smart materials, technologies and engineering systems ;

3.1.4 Smart energy and mobility ;

3.1.5 Information and communication technologies.

3.2 In the research application, plan the costs in accordance with the provisions of Paragraphs 74 – 76 of the Cabinet Regulation of the measure.

1. **PROCEDURE FOR THE PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION OF THE PROJECT APPLICATION**

4.1 A research application consists of a research application form to be filled in electronically and submitted via the Postdoctoral research information system (hereinafter referred to as Postdoc information system), and its annexes:

* + 1. Annex 1: “Statement by the research applicant” (in accordance with the form in Annex 1 to the selection regulations “Research application form completion methodology”);
    2. Annex 2: “Copy of the postdoctoral researcher's doctorate/PhD degree diploma *(obtained no more than 10 years before the deadline for submission of the research application)*”;
    3. Annex 3: “Curriculum Vitae (CV) of the postdoctoral researcher (to be prepared in English)”;
    4. Annex 4: “Scientific description/Research project proposal” (to be completed in English) (in accordance with the form in Annex 2 to the selection regulations “Research application completion methodology”);
    5. Annex 5: Agreement/memorandum of understanding between the postdoctoral researcher and the organisation in free form, confirming the planned cooperation between the postdoctoral researcher and the organisation in the framework of the research application, if approved, indicating the planned workload of 1 FTE, the duration of the employment contract and other conditions agreed between the research applicant and the postdoctoral researcher (e.g., content of the research application, conditions for technical and financial collaboration, rights, duties and responsibilities of the parties, and conditions for exploitation, implementation and commercialisation of the research application results, etc.);
    6. Annex 6: declaration of the commercial company's eligibility as a small (tiny) or medium-sized commercial company and its annex if the applying commercial company has at least one partner commercial company or related commercial company (in accordance with the form in Annex 4 and Annex 4.1 to the selection rules "Research application completion methodology");
    7. Annex 7, depending on the type of aid:
       1. Annex 7.a: justification of the incentive effect of the public aid planned as part of the research application in accordance with the requirements of Article 6(2) and (3) of Commission Regulation No 651/2014 (in accordance with the form in Annex 5 to the selection rules "Research application form and its annexes") *(if commercial aid under EC Regulation 651/2014 is chosen);*
       2. Annex 7.b: printout of the *de minimis*accounting form *(if de minimis aid is opted for)* prepared in the electronic database of the SRS EDS;
    8. Annex 8: the most recent annual report submitted in accordance with the requirements of laws and regulations (applicable if the research application is submitted by a private legal entity with an economic activity) or an operational interim report not older than one month before the date of submission of the research application, certified by a sworn auditor (applicable if the research application is submitted by a private legal entity with an economic activity which does not have access to the most recent annual report);
    9. Annex 9: the research applicant's financial management and accounting policy;
    10. Annex 10: “Postdoctoral researcher's statement on double funding” (in accordance with the form in Annex 3 to the selection regulations “Research application completion methodology”);
    11. power of attorney or an internal regulatory act of the organisation attesting the authority to sign the research application (applicable if the research application is signed by a person other than the head or deputy head of the organisation) *(if applicable)*;
    12. translation of documents, including doctorate/PhD degree diploma if not issued in Latvian or English *(if applicable)*.
  1. Submission of research applications is done in two parts:

4.2.1 “Part I – initial research application”;

Only the information necessary to assess the administrative criteria not to be supplemented and the scientific quality of the Research application shall be submitted, which is:

4.2.1.1 In the Postdoc information system, you can find the sections “Application”, “State aid” and “Annexes”;

4.2.1.2 Annexes to the research application form:

* Annex 1: “Statement by the research applicant” (in accordance with the form in Annex 1 to the selection regulations “Research application form completion methodology”);
* Annex 2: “Copy of the post-doctoral researcher's doctorate/PhD degree diploma *(obtained no more than 10 years before the deadline for submission of the research application)*”;
* Annex 3: “Curriculum Vitae (CV) of the post-doctoral researcher (to be prepared in English)”;
* Annex 4: “Scientific description/Research project proposal” (to be completed in English) (in accordance with the form in Annex 2 to the selection regulations “Research application completion methodology”);
* Annex 5: Agreement/memorandum of understanding between the postdoctoral researcher and the organisation in free form, confirming the planned cooperation between the postdoctoral researcher and the organisation in the framework of the research application, if approved, indicating the planned workload of 1 FTE, the duration of the employment contract and other conditions agreed between the research applicant and the postdoctoral researcher (e.g., content of the research application, conditions for technical and financial collaboration, rights, duties and responsibilities of the parties, and conditions for exploitation, implementation and commercialisation of the research application results, etc.);
* Annex 6: declaration of the commercial company's eligibility as a small (tiny) or medium-sized commercial company and its annex if the applying commercial company has at least one partner commercial company or related commercial company (in accordance with the form in Annex 4 and Annex 4.1 to the selection rules "Research application completion methodology");
* Annex 7, depending on the type of aid (Annex 7a or 7b to be added):

Annex 7.a: justification of the incentive effect of the public aid planned as part of the research application in accordance with the requirements of Article 6(2) and (3) of Commission Regulation No 651/2014 (in accordance with the form in Annex 5 to the selection rules "Research application form and its annexes") (if commercial aid under EC Regulation 651/2014 is chosen);

Annex 7.b: printout of completed de minimis accounting form (if de minimis aid is opted for) prepared in the electronic database of the SRS EDS;

* Annex 8: the most recent annual report submitted in accordance with the requirements of laws and regulations (applicable if the research application is submitted by a private legal entity with an economic activity) or an operational interim report not older than one month before the date of submission of the research application, certified by a sworn auditor (applicable if the research application is submitted by a private legal entity with an economic activity which does not have access to the most recent annual report).

4.2.2 If the non- amendable criteria of administrative criteria and eligibility quality assessment requirements are met, the LCS will forward the research application for scientific quality assessment. If these criteria are not fulfilled, the LCS shall not forward the research application for scientific quality assessment and shall decide on its rejection.

4.2.3 If a research application has received insufficient score for approval in the scientific quality evaluation (see paragraph 7.5.1 of the Regulations), the LCS will take a decision to reject the research application.

4.2.4 If the research application has received sufficient score for support in the scientific quality evaluation (see paragraph 7.2.2 of the Regulations) and there is sufficient funding in the selection round, the LCS will take a decision to approve the research application with conditions and invite the research applicant to prepare and submit Part II of the research application – the full research application.

4.2.5 If a research application has received sufficient score for approval in the scientific quality evaluation but is underfunded in the selection round, the LCS shall decide to reject the research application but at the same time include it in the reserve list of research applications (in accordance with paragraphs 7.6, 7.12 and 7.13 of the Regulations).

4.2.6 “Part II - full research application”

If the research application meets the non-amendable administrative criteria, receives a sufficient score in the scientific quality evaluation, and sufficient funding is available under the selection round, the research applicant must complete all sections of the research application in the Postdoc Information System within **30 calendar days.** This should be done in accordance with Annex 4, *“Scientific Description/Research Project Proposal”*, and using Annex 1, *“Research Application Completion Methodology”*, of the Regulations;

4.2.6.1 The research application shall be accompanied by the annexes necessary for the evaluation of the specified criteria and for the conclusion of the contract.

* Annex 9: the research applicant's financial management and accounting policy;
* Annex 10: “Postdoctoral researcher's statement on double funding” (in accordance with the form in Annex 3 to the selection regulations “Research application completion methodology”);
* power of attorney or an internal regulatory act of the organisation attesting the authority to sign the research application (applicable if the research application is signed by a person other than the head or deputy head of the organisation) (if applicable);
* translation of documents, including doctorate/PhD degree diploma if not issued in Latvian or English (if applicable).
* Certificate of academic recognition of a foreign educational document and academic degree issued by the Academic Information Centre, if the diploma for a doctoral degree/doctorate in science was issued outside Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, the Netherlands, Luxembourg and Belgium.
  + 1. If the amendable criteria of administrative criteria and eligibility quality assessment requirements of the full research application are met, the LCS will take a decision to approve the research application.

4.2.8 If the amendable criteria of administrative criteria and eligibility quality assessment requirements of the full research application are not met, the LCS shall decide to approve the research application with conditions in accordance with the procedures set out in Paragraphs 7.7 and 7.8 of these Regulations.

* 1. To ensure the quality of the research application form, the methodology for completing the research application form (Annex 1 of the selection regulations) shall be used*.*
  2. The research applicant shall submit the research application to the Postdoc Information System between 9 February 2026 and 31 May 2026 following the two-stage submission procedure (Part I, Part II) set out in paragraph 4.2 of these Regulations.
  3. Applications are evaluated after the submission of Part I documents, without waiting for the end of the submission period for all research applications.
  4. The availability of funding under the selection round is verified at set evaluation intermediate stages on 28 February 2026, 31 March 2026 and 30 April, 31 May 2026. If the available funding is found to be insufficient in these rounds, all research applications rated above the threshold are then compared against each other, with funding being awarded to those applications that have received the highest scientific quality rating.
  5. The research application and its annexes shall be approved by the responsible person of the research applicant or his/her authorised representative who has been granted access to the Postdoc information system in accordance with the procedures laid down in Regulation 5.2.
  6. The annexes to the research application shall be signed by the responsible official of the research applicant or his/her authorised person with a secure electronic signature (edoc, pdf) containing a time stamp (except for CVs and other documents which do not require a secure electronic signature of the authorised signatory). Post-doctoral statements shall be signed by the post-doctoral researcher with a secure electronic signature (edoc, pdf) containing a time stamp.
  7. The signatory's signature rights must be established in accordance with the legal and regulatory framework. If the research application is signed by a person authorised by the research applicant, the authorisation of that person shall be accompanied by the relevant document.
  8. The research application shall be prepared in Latvian, except for Annex 4 “Research project proposal” and Annex 3 “Curriculum Vitae (CV) of the postdoctoral researcher”, which shall be prepared in English.
  9. In the research application submission, the amounts shall be expressed in *EUR* to 2 decimal places.
  10. In case Artificial Intelligence (AI) has been used in the development of the content of the research application, the research applicant is obliged to indicate this in the "Scientific description/Research project proposal", including a description of the AI tools used in the development of the content of the project proposal and the extent and context in which it is used.
  11. The research applicant is responsible for the use of the generative AI content used in the preparation of the research application, including the research questions put forward, the methodology developed, the structuring of the content, as well as the interpretation and evaluation of the results.
  12. The research applicant is responsible for ensuring the reliability of the scientific research and claims, and is responsible for the originality and factual accuracy of the content of the research application.
  13. When using AI solutions, the research applicant is responsible for the following:
      1. ensuring that no personal data, sensitive and/or confidential information is provided to third party AI systems;
      2. the absence of biased and stereotyped, and/or offensive information in the content created by AI;
      3. the reliability of content created by AI.

**5 PROCEDURE FOR THE SUBMISSION OF THE RESEARCH APPLICATION**

5.1 The Latvian Council of Science (hereinafter – the LCS) announces the fourth round of selection of research applications by publishing a call for research applications in the official publication “Latvijas Vēstnesis”, on the European Commission portal "Euraxess" and on the website of the Ministry of Education and Science (www.izm.gov.lv).

5.2 The research application shall be submitted through the Postdoc information system: [https://Postdoc.lzp.gov.lv](https://postdoc.lzp.gov.lv). **The person responsible for the submission of the research application, or his/her authorised person, shall conclude a contract for the use of the POSTDOC information system preferably at least 2 weeks before the deadline for the submission of the research application.** To conclude the agreement, the research applicant shall complete the contract form available on the LCS website [www.lzp.gov.lv](http://www.lzp.gov.lv) and send it signed with an electronic signature to [pasts@lzp.gov.lv](mailto:pasts@lzp.gov.lv) with the subject “Agreement for the use of the Postdoc information system”.

5.3 The research application shall be submitted during the period from 09.02.2026 to 31.05.2026. The evaluation of applications is carried out continuously in the following intermediate stages:

Intermediate stage 1: 09 February 2026 – 28 February 2026;

Intermediate stage 2: 01 March 2026 – 31 March 2026;

Intermediate stage 3: 01 April 2026 – 30 April 2026;

Intermediate stage 4: 1 May 2026 – 31 May 2026.

5.4 If the number of applications meeting the administrative and eligibility requirements and the scientific quality assessment requirements in a given submission intermediate stage does not exceed the amount of funding available for the fourth selection round, the LCS will approve all Part I “Initial Research Application” documents in that intermediate stage and invite the submission of Part II “Full Research Application” documents. If the number of applications for Part I “Initial Research Application” exceeds the amount of funding available for the fourth selection round at the relevant intermediate submission stage, the LCS shall award funding to those research applications that have received the highest scientific quality rating.

5.5 The LCS is entitled to close the call for research applications before the deadline set out in the Regulations if the funding for the selection round has been exhausted.

5.6 If a research application is submitted after the deadline of the fourth selection round for submission of research applications, it will not be evaluated and the research applicant will receive a notification from the LCS refusing to evaluate the research application.

5.7 Once the responsible official has submitted the research application in the Postdoc information system, changes to the research application are no longer allowed.

***6.* PROCEDURE FOR THE EVALUATION OF RESEARCH APPLICATIONS**

* 1. For the evaluation of research applications, the LCS shall set up a Research Application Evaluation Committee (hereinafter – “Evaluation Committee”).
  2. The Evaluation Committee is composed of seven members. The Evaluation Committee shall include representatives of the Ministry of Education and Science and representatives of the sectoral ministries.
  3. The Evaluation Committee shall operate in accordance with the rules of procedure of the research application Evaluation Committee, which shall be approved by the LCS in agreement with the Ministry of Education and Science.
  4. The members of the Evaluation Committee shall comply with the laws and regulations of the Republic of Latvia and the European Union and shall be responsible for the timely, objective and thorough evaluation of research applications in accordance with the evaluation criteria for research applications set out in Annex 2.2 to the “Methodology for the evaluation of the administrative, eligibility and output indicator quality of research applications”, as well as for respecting confidentiality. The composition of the Evaluation Committee shall respect the provisions of the Law on Prevention of Conflict of Interest in Actions of Public Officials and Article 61 of Regulation 2018/1046[[1]](#footnote-2).
  5. The evaluation of the administrative, eligibility and output indicator quality of research applications shall be carried out by the LCS staff and the Evaluation committee using Annex 2.2 of the selection regulations “Methodology for the evaluation of the administrative, eligibility and output indicator quality of research applications”. The evaluation of Part I “Initial Research Application” shall be carried out according to the criteria not to be supplemented of the administrative criteria.
  6. If a research application meets the criteria not to be supplemented of the administrative criteria, it will be forwarded for scientific quality evaluation.
  7. To assess the scientific quality of research applications, the LCS organises an international assessment of the scientific quality of research applications, involving experts from foreign scientific expert databases and applying the approach and principles of the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Postdoctoral Fellowships programme of the European Union's Horizon Europe research and innovation framework programme. For the evaluation, the foreign experts use Annex 2.3 of the selection regulations “Guidelines and criteria for the evaluation of the scientific quality of research applications”, providing a score and comments in support of the score.
  8. The maximum total score for the scientific quality evaluation for the research application, after conversion of the coefficients, is 5 points.
  9. The Evaluation Commission shall evaluate the research application and take a decision on whether the research application meets the criteria not to be supplemented of the administrative criteria and on the scientific quality. The Evaluation Commission will issue an opinion on the rejection or conditional approval of the research proposal and invite the submission of Part II “Full Research Proposal”.
  10. The LCS staff and the Evaluation Commission shall assess Part II “Full Research Application” of the research application and shall decide on the compliance of the research application with the criteria to be supplemented of the administrative criteria, providing a score for each criterion and giving reasons for the score in cases where the criterion is “No” or “Yes with conditions”.
  11. The opinion of the Evaluation Committee is reflected in the decision of the LCS.
  12. After evaluation, the Evaluation Committee will validate the results of the evaluation, which will be summarised in the lists of research applications to be recommended:
      1. granted research applications;
      2. studies of the reserve research applications (if applicable);
      3. research applications to be rejected (if applicable).
  13. If the research application is to be approved subject to conditions, the deadline for the fulfilment of the conditions shall be specified in the decision of the LCS.
  14. Upon receipt of the updates to the research application, the Evaluation Committee will evaluate the updated research applications against the criteria for which the additional conditions were set and complete the evaluation section of the research application in the Postdoc information system.
  15. If the research applicant fails to comply with the conditions set out in the decision of the LCS to conditionally approve the research application, or fails to comply with them within the time limit set in the LCS decision, the Evaluation Committee shall reissue its opinion on the conditional approval of the research application in accordance with the procedure set out in the selection regulations. If any of the conditions specified in the repeated LCS decision are not met or are not met within the time limit set in the LCS decision, the research application shall be considered rejected.

1. **THE DECISION TO APPROVE, APPROVE WITH CONDITIONS, OR REJECT A RESEARCH APPLICATION AND THE NOTIFICATION PROCEDURE**
   1. On the basis of the opinion of the Evaluation Committee, the LCS shall issue a decision (hereinafter – “decision”) on:
      1. approval of a research application;
      2. conditional approval of a research application;
      3. rejection of the research application.
   2. A decision to approve a research application shall be taken if the research application fulfils the following conditions:

7.2.1. the research application (Part I and Part II) meets the administrative and eligibility criteria for quality assessment;

7.2.2 the research application has obtained a consolidated score of at least 3 points before conversion of coefficients for each of the scientific quality criteria and a total score of at least 3 points after conversion of coefficients for the scientific quality criteria from the foreign experts;

7.2.3 it has sufficient funding to be approved in the relevant selection round.

* 1. A decision on conditional approval of a research application is taken if:

7.3.1 Part I “Initial Research Application” meets the non- amendable criteria of administrative criteria and eligibility quality assessment requirements of the research application and has received a score of at least 3 points before conversion of coefficients for each of the scientific quality evaluation criteria and a total score of at least 3 points after conversion of coefficients for the scientific quality of the research application in the evaluation of the scientific quality of the research application by the external experts;

7.3.2 Part II “Full Research Application” does not comply with one of the administrative and eligibility quality amendable evaluation criteria of the research application.

7.3.3 sufficient funding is available for approval in the relevant selection round.

* 1. The applicant must make the clarifications and additions requested by the LCS in the decision to conditionally approve the research application within the time limit set in order for the research application to fully meet the quality assessment criteria for the administrative, and eligibility indicators of the research application.
  2. A decision to reject a research application shall be taken if:
     1. A score of less than 3 points in any of the scientific quality criteria before conversion of coefficients have been received or a total of less than 3 points after conversion of coefficients have been received;
     2. the research application is not relevant to the objectives of the Latvian Smart Specialisation Strategy or to the development of the areas of specialisation;
     3. does not meet the administrative and eligibility criteria of the research application for quality assessment;
     4. there is insufficient funding to approve the research application in the relevant selection round.
  3. If a research application is rejected due to insufficient funding in a given round of selection of research applications, the research application shall be placed on the reserve list of resarch applications.
  4. If the research application is conditionally approved, the Evaluation Committee will evaluate the criteria that were identified by the LCS as needing to be clarified/added after the submission of the full research application or the clarifications. The LCS takes its decision on the basis of the opinion of the Evaluation Committee:

7.7.1 that the conditions of the research application have been fulfilled, provided that the updates to the research application meet all the conditions set out in the decision;

7.7.2 re-adopt the decision to approve the research application with conditions if the conditions contained in the decision to approve the research application with conditions are not fulfilled.

7.8 After submitting repeated clarifications in the research application, the Evaluation Committee evaluates them according to the criteria for the fulfilment of which additional conditions were set, and gives an opinion on the fulfilment of the conditions. The LCS takes its decision on the basis of the opinion of the Evaluation Committee on:

7.8.1 the conditions of the research application have been fulfilled, provided that the updates to the research application meet all the conditions set out in the decision;

7.8.2 failure to fulfil the conditions of the research application and rejection of the research application if the research applicant fails to fulfil the conditions set or fails to fulfil them within the time limit set. (For a research application, the applicant may fulfil the conditions a maximum of two times).

7.9 The decision on the approval, conditional approval, rejection and the opinion on the fulfilment or non-fulfilment of the conditions of the research application shall be prepared by the LCS in the form of an electronic document and notified to the research applicant in accordance with the procedure established by laws and regulations. The decision on the approval of the research application includes information on the contracting procedure.

7.10 Funding of the selection round is not divided into intermediate stages. All those research applications are approved in each intermediate stage which have received at least 3 points before conversion of coefficients for each of the scientific quality criteria and a total of at least 3 points after conversion of coefficients until the available funding. If there are several research applications within an intermediate stage which have reached the minimum score, the research applications with the highest overall score in the scientific quality assessment within the available funding will be approved.

7.11 In the event of several research applications receiving the same number of points, those research applications which have received the highest number of points in the scientific quality evaluation criterion “Impact” will be approved. If they have obtained the same score in the scientific quality evaluation criterion “Impact”, the research applications which have obtained the higher score in the scientific quality evaluation criterion “Excellence” will be approved. If they have also obtained the same score in the scientific quality evaluation criterion “Excellence”, the research application providing for international mobility and/or initiation of its implementation earlier is intended will be approved.

* 1. If, after the approval of Part I “Initial Research Application”, one of the research applicants withdraws or fails to submit Part II “Full Research Application” within the deadline set, the Evaluation Commission shall select from the reserve list the research application with the next highest overall score in the relevant list.
  2. If one of the research applicants withdraws its research application after Part II “Full Research Application”, does not submit the clarification by the due deadline, or does not sign the contract for the implementation of the research application, the Evaluation Committee shall select from the reserve list the research application with the next highest overall score in the list and propose its approval.
  3. Information on the approved research application shall be published on the LCS website [www.lzp.gov.lv](http://www.lzp.gov.lv).

1. **FURTHER INFORMATION:**

8.1 Questions related to the preparation of research application and its submission must be sent to the following e-mail address: [pasts@lzp.gov.lv](mailto:pasts@lzp.gov.lv). Replies to questions sent by research applicants are sent electronically. Questions must be submitted no later than 2 working days before the deadline for submission of the research application.

8.2 The draft contractual text for the implementation of the research application may be updated during the contracting process (Annex 4 to the Regulations for the Fourth Selection Round of Research Applications).

Annexes:

Annex 1. Research application completion methodology with eight annexes;

Annex 2. Methodology for assessing the administrative, and compliance indicator quality of research applications;

Annex 3. Guidelines and criteria for the evaluation of the scientific quality of research applications with annexes;

Annex 4. Draft contract for the implementation of the research application.

1. 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 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)