

Minutes of meeting with Head of Panel of Experts

Date: 8 February 2016

Time: 9.30 - 17.00 (12:30 – 13:30 Lunch break)

Meeting place: SAS Presidium meeting room, 49 Štefánikova Street, Bratislava

Participants: Prof. M. Makarow, Head of Panel of Experts
Prof. P. Šajgalík, President of SAS
Dr. E. Majková, Vice-President (VP) for Research
Dr. D. Gálik, Scientific Secretary
Dr. M. Omastová, Head of Accreditation Committee (AC)
Dr. K. Frohlich, Section I VP and AC member
Prof. K. Marhold, Section II VP and AC member
Prof. E. Višňovský, Section III VP and AC member
Dr. K. Gmucová, Head of Assembly and AC member
Dr. L. Lacinová, AC member
Dr. Z. Kusá, AC member

Programme

- Opening and introduction, purpose and consequences of the assessment. (P. Šajgalík, the President of the SAS)
- Slovak Academy of Sciences in the 21st century. The SAS role in the country's research ecosystem. (E. Majková, the VP for Research)
- Structure of the SAS, including details of all 3 Sections. (M. Omastová)
- Structure and creation of the Panel of Experts (PE). The role of an invited expert reviewer for institute evaluation
- Terms of reference of the PE
- Timeline of assessment
- Documents for evaluation: Questionnaire structure
Reviewer Report structure
PE report structure
- Communication strategy
- Any other business
- Concluding remarks

Course of the session:

- **Opening and introduction, purpose and consequences of the assessment. P. Šajgalík, the President of the SAS**

Prof. Šajgalík welcomed participants to the introductory meeting for the SAS assessment process, briefly informed Prof. Makarow on the SAS structure and thanked Prof. Makarow for accepting the position of the Head of the PE to evaluate the SAS institutes. Prof. Šajgalík informed participants in the session that the aim of the assessment was to identify

the top institutes. The SAS expects to find extra financial funds for the best research institutes and groups as a consequence of the final report elaborated by the PE. The ambition is also, according to comments and reference to weaker areas, to encourage the development of advanced research topics.

- ***Slovak Academy of Sciences in the 21th century. The SAS role in the country's research ecosystem. E. Majková, Vice-President for Research***

Details (see the presentation- attachment No.1 to MOM)

Discussed topics:

- one of the SAS's aims is to improve its position among the Visegrad Group academies
- the relation between the SAS and Slovak universities is sufficient with space for improvement; the number of Slovak universities cooperating with the SAS: 7 out of 36
- the need to encourage private sector investment in the SAS organisations
- the SAS is attractive for postgraduate students
- the Slovak education system has recently faced a problem with a smaller number of postgraduate and university students (best students leaving to study in other countries and not returning)
- the goal of the SAS is to change the negative society view of SAS employees teaching in parallel at universities
- the need for a sustainable programme to support cooperation between the SAS and universities
- better SAS medical research with space for patients expected thanks to the new Biomedical Center built recently in the SAS campus in Bratislava (there are existing direct agreements and joint projects between researchers and hospitals)
- no need to deal with gender in SAS institutes (there is sufficient gender balance)

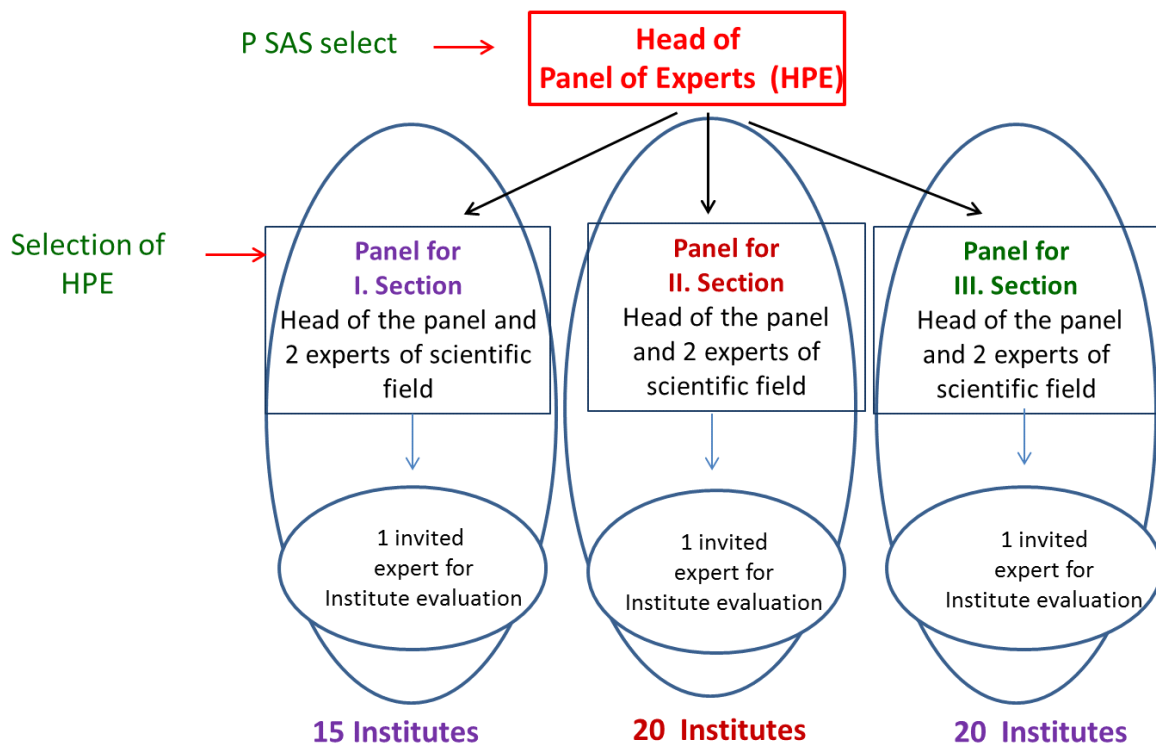
- **Structure of the SAS including details of all 3 Sections, M. Omastová**

Details (see the presentation – attachment No. 2 to MOM and 3)

- **Structure and creation of the PE. The role of an invited expert reviewer for institute evaluation**

Structure of the PE: one PE for each SAS scientific section + Meta Panel cooperating with the PE Heads.

The primary basis for the evaluation will be the questionnaire of the individual SAS institutes evaluated by the PE. On this basis experts prepare draft proposals and side visits to the individual institutes.



Assessment FINAL DECISION

First draft suggested by SAS

Institute accredited in category A

Institute in which certain individuals or teams or researchers achieved scientific results at the level exceeding European standards.

Institute accredited in category B

Institute achieved results at the level of European standards.

Institute accredited in category C

Institute did not achieve results at the level of European standards.

Assessment of adopted decision after discussion

Quality and Productivity

A: Excellent

B: Very good

C: Good

D: Poor

Output to Society

A: Excellent

B: Very good

C: Good

D: Poor

Potential development

A: Excellent

B: Very good

C: Good

D: Poor

Comments by Prof. Makarow:

- SAS scientific sections are not to be compared with each other within the evaluation procedure
- suggestion to negotiate a different number of experts per section due to different size of sections
- recommendation for the SAS to describe in detail the future plans of SAS institutes
- the following shall be taken into account by the Head of the PE when proposing the Panel chairs: experts with understanding of and experience in evaluation from different countries, experts to be critical in a constructive way, experts with empathy for good effort, gender issue balance
- recommendation to the SAS to initiate, in cooperation with the universities and the Ministry of Education, elaboration of a Slovak research roadmap for 20-30 years that would attract foreign researchers
- additional information to be included in documents for the PE regarding the number of postgraduate students who went abroad after completing their postgraduate studies
- SAS strategy document to be included in documents for the PE as well
- organization of visits to SAS institutes/labs: dynamic interaction needed between the PE and SAS headquarters. The SAS shall select the institutes to be visited by the Panel; the heads (representatives with the best knowledge of institute) of institutes not visited shall meet the PE personally in Bratislava - interview (45 min- 1 hour) – scope of the interview: brief comments, highlights, future plans of institutes.
- regular system of quality management to be set after the report is elaborated, in order to check fulfilment of Panel's recommendations.
- recommendation to the SAS to elaborate programme on SAS/universities sustainable cooperation

Comments by the SAS representatives:

- request for possibility to ask other experts to elaborate an independent review in case of need during the evaluation procedure.
- exceptional groups of researchers at the institutes should be taken into account when carrying out an evaluation.

- presidents of the institutes have to be clearly instructed on which part of questionnaire to focus
- the PE shall decide on the weight of set parameters
- members of the individual Panels cooperating closely with the Head of PE have to be scientists from outside of Slovakia and the Czech Republic. The majority of experts in the PE will be from Western Europe (to assure wide acceptance of the Final Report; Czech members of the Panel have to be excluded due to general close relations between Slovakia and the Czech Republic). An expert understanding Slovak environment is required for the Scientific section 3
- the PE shall elaborate a report but has no power regarding consequences of the report
- existing different evaluation systems for the SAS and universities in the Slovak Republic with current attempt to unify them are to be taken into account
- the evaluation should be targeted at Slovak decision-makers
- the evaluation of the institutes shall target not only scientific output within the evaluated period but also the impact beyond scientific research and the institute's future plans and perspective
- 1 day visit of the PE to Košice is essential
- the SAS requires the PE to prepare a general statement on adequacy of the SAS output in comparison with the budget received; comments on personal capacity, funding and infrastructure shall be appreciated
- the SAS requires the PE to prepare a general statement on SAS status within the international academic environment independent of financial funding

- **Terms of reference of PE** -to be completed by Dr. Omastová

- **Timeline of assessment**

Preliminary schedule of the assessment procedure

Approval of final version of Questionnaire	March 2016
Deadline for sending Questionnaire to SAS institutes	April 2016
Questionnaires completed by SAS institutes	beginning of July 2016
Selection of heads of Panels by Prof. Makarow	March 2016
Visit by Prof. Makarow and Heads of the panels to the SAS headquarters in Bratislava	end of June 2016/ July 2016
Visits of PE to the SAS Institute's + interviews	October 2016
Meta-Panel creation	June 2016
Meta-Panel meeting	June/July 2016
PE final report elaboration	December 2016

- **Documents for evaluation : Questionnaire structure**

- Reviewer Report structure**

- PE Report structure**

Comments on the Questionnaire by Prof. Makarow:

- to remove the H index for employees
- to remove the list of most important projects - Centres of Excellence
- the SAS to check the structure and provide correction of the wording of all documents for the PE by a native speaker

- **Communication strategy**

Communication between the PE and SAS institutes must be clear and transparent. Assistance to the PE from headquarters is needed. The PE shall receive information on the SAS ecosystem and research system in Slovakia (structure of SAS institutes to be submitted to members of the PE).

Transparency of the evaluation procedures is a priority. Timeline of the evaluation procedure together with information on the PE members shall be published on the SAS website. All SAS institutes have to be informed of the evaluation procedure.

- **Any other business**

- **Concluding remarks**

The Head of the PE, Prof. Makarow, expressed her confidence in the contribution of the results of the assessment to the quality of research in SAS institutes and in its positive effect not only for the SAS but also for the national research space and the Innovation and Research Area of the European Union.

The President of the SAS, Prof. Pavol Šajgalík, emphasised the independent view of the external evaluators, which will help raise the SAS's credit domestically and internationally, and thanked all the participants for their participation and cooperation.

Resolutions:

1. Timeline of the assessment procedure to be fixed by the SAS and published on the SAS website

Deadline: April 2016

Responsible: SAS headquarters

2. Nomination of PE chairs

Deadline: end of March

Responsible: Prof. Makarow

3. List of SAS institutes for side visits by PE has to be prepared by SAS and sent for approval to Prof. Makarow

Deadline: May 2016

Responsible: SAS headquarters

Recorded by: Eva Krištofová / SAS

Verified by: Dr. Mária Omastová / SAS

Approved by:

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Prof. Pavol Šajgalík
President, SAS

Bratislava, 8 February 2016

Attachment No. 1

presentation of Dr. Eva Majková, SAS VP

Attachment No. 2

presentation of Dr. Mária Omastová

Attachment No. 3

Excel table of SAS Institutes capacities