

Statute of the SAS Return Project Scheme

for Parents Returning to Work after Maternity or/and Parental Leave

Preamble

In accordance with the SAS Gender Equality Plan and with the aim to support work-life balance, the Presidium of SAS (hereinafter referred to as "P SAS") offers a tool to facilitate the reintegration of scientists after maternity and/or parental leave (hereinafter referred to as "ML/PL").

Article I General Rules

1. An eligible applicant (hereinafter referred to as the "applicant") for support from the SAS Return Project Scheme for parents returning from maternity and/or parental leave (hereinafter referred to as the "return project scheme") is an SAS researcher with a third-level university education degree (PhD or equivalent) who has spent at least 12 months on ML/PL¹. Applications for funding of a scientific project can be submitted within one year after returning from ML/PL.
2. The applicant can submit a research project proposal (hereinafter referred to as the "project") even before returning from ML/PL under the condition that the applicant and the SAS host organization (hereinafter referred to as the "organization") guarantee that the project will start from the funding start date as specified in the call for project proposals and at the same time guarantee that ML/PL will last for at least 12 months (paragraph 1 of article I).

Article II Call for Proposals

The call for project proposals is launched twice a year, on 1 August with a deadline on 30 September of a common year and the start of funding on 1 January of the following year, and on 1 February with a deadline on 31 March and the start of funding on 1 July of a common year.

Article III Project Evaluation

Projects are evaluated by *ad hoc* committees, which are formed by Vice Presidents of SAS science departments (hereinafter referred to as SD), or by members of the P SAS assigned by Vice Presidents of SDs. The *ad hoc* committee is usually composed of members of P SAS and other experts depending on the topics of submitted projects. *Ad hoc* committees submit evaluation results to the SAS Committee for Equal Opportunities (hereinafter referred to as the Committee).

Article IV Selection of Projects

¹ For this criterion, the part of the ML/PL during which the applicant had a parallel part-time scientific post is not counted.

Projects are selected for funding by the Committee, which is an advisory body of the P SAS composed of representatives of all three SDs. The Committee selects projects based on their quality and priorities of the SAS. The results of the selection are submitted by the Committee to the P SAS for approval. The Committee will select usually 5 and up to 8 proposed projects in each call.

Article V Research Project Proposal

1. The applicant is the sole investigator of the project, the scheme is not intended for research teams.
2. The duration of the project is 1 year.
3. The proposal should be written in English.
4. The applicant fills out the project proposal on the prescribed form and will send it to the electronic address indicated in the call and also by post to the address of the chairperson of the SAS Committee for Equal Opportunities, Štefánikova 49, 814 38 Bratislava.
5. The required data and documents are precisely specified in the call and the form. The form requires the following information:
 - 5.1. applicant's name and surname
 - 5.2. name of SAS organization
 - 5.3. list of the most important publications in the last 5 years (the period is extended by the time spent on ML/PL).
 - 5.4. list of citations of publications listed in 5.3.
 - 5.5. participation in national and international projects
 - 5.6. list of patents and patent applications
 - 5.7. project proposal (no longer than two A4 pages)
 - The project proposal must include the following:
 - project title
 - project annotation (maximum of 1024 characters including spaces)
 - current state of research on the topic
 - project aims and significance
 - main methodological approaches
 - project timeline
 - project budget structured as: travel costs, materials, services, indirect costs
6. The maximum project budget is €5,000.
7. The research project proposal is submitted by the applicant, including a SAS host organization statement of support.
8. Project proposals that, after the submission deadline, do not contain all the requirements specified in this Statute of the Return Project Scheme and the call, will not be evaluated.

Article VI Financial Terms and Conditions

1. P SAS will adjust the amount of funds for goods and services (Category 630) in the institutional financial support (IFS) of an organization by drafting an amendment to the IFS Agreement in the amount of max. €5,000 on due dates according to the call (€5,000 in one financial operation from the 1 January or €5,000 in two operations, €2,500 each, from 1 July of a common year and from 1 January of the following year) to those organizations whose projects have been approved by P SAS. Funds are allocated to the project budget purposefully; a maximum of 20 % can be used for indirect costs.
2. If the project cannot start on the planned start date (1 January or 1 July based on the call), the organization shall immediately inform the Committee and the Economic and Technical Department of the SAS Office (hereinafter also ETO). The implementation of the project is postponed by a half year if it is possible the project will start as of this date. If there it is not possible that the project can start with a six-month delay, the grant of funding will be cancelled. If the project does not start even by the postponed date, the grant of funding will be cancelled. The organization's budget will be reduced by the total allocated amount, and P SAS will adjust the amount of IFS for the organization by drafting up an amendment to the IFS Agreement.
3. If the project is terminated while receiving financial support for any reason, the organization is obliged to report this fact without undue delay to the Committee and the ETO, which will adjust the amount of the IFS to the organization by drafting up an amendment to the IFS Agreement.
4. In the case of failure to comply with the obligation to notify of changes according to pars. 2 and 3 of this article, the organization is obliged to return the unlawfully used funds.

Article VII Concurrence with Other Projects

During the project funded by the Return Project Scheme, the investigator may engage in other projects within the SAS organization.

Article VIII Final Report

Within one month after the end of funding from the Return Project Scheme, the investigator shall submit a final report on the project results. The final report will be assessed by the SAS Committee for Equal Opportunities, possibly in cooperation with P SAS members for individual SDs, based mainly on the scientific contribution and compliance with the original project intent. The Committee informs the researcher and the organization about the assessment.

Article IX
Final Provisions

The Statute of the return project scheme was approved by the P SAS at the meeting on 15 December 2022. The Statute comes into force on the day after the day it is published on the SAS website.

Amendment No. 1 to the Statute of the Return Project Scheme was approved by Resolution No. 618 of the Presidium of the SAS on 23 May 2023. It shall enter into force on the day of its approval and shall apply from the day following the day of its publication on the SAS website.

Bratislava 5 June 2023

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