

*CROATIAN SCIENCE FOUNDATION*  
***Unity through Knowledge Fund***

Guidelines and Procedures - Second Science  
and Technology Project (STP II)

**UNITY THROUGH  
KNOWLEDGE FUND**

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## Executive Summary

The Unity through Knowledge Fund (UKF) was established in 2007 by the Ministry of Science and Education on behalf of the government of the Republic of Croatia. The Fund operated within the Science and Technology Project I, which was financed by a loan of the World Bank Nr. 7320-HR. From its establishment until May 2011, the Fund financed 91 scientific and technological projects. A total of 7,8 million EUR has been invested in the activities of the Fund. The Ministry of Science and Education (through the World bank loan and from the State budget) ensured nearly 5,1 million Euro, i.e. 65% of the total necessary value for the implementation of the project, while the remaining funds have been ensured by international scientific-research institutions (1,2 million EUR), the private sector (756.526,43 EUR) and Croatian public scientific-research institutions (845.750,54 EUR).

Thanks to the use of systematic and transparent selection methodology, the Unity through Knowledge Fund supported high-quality scientific-research groups that have been additionally strengthened with the support of the Fund by receiving the necessary knowledge and competence to enable participation in very competitive call for proposals of the European and international scientific communities. Newly acquired knowledge and, skills as well as networking with excellent world scientific-research institutions, enabled scientist groups a far more competitive approach and herewith a favorable capacity for attracting European and other international financial sources, especially within the Seventh Framework Program of the European Union (FP7) for research and technological development.

The success of the projects financed by the Unity through Knowledge Fund was additionally confirmed by the publication of scientific articles in the most prestigious international scientific journals such as Nature, Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (USA), Nature Reviews Genetics, Journal of the American Chemical Society and Science. Other important aspect of UKF programs was significant transfer of knowledge and technology into the Croatian scientific-research and economic sectors that has been made possible due to cooperation with leading international scientific-research institutions. The transferred knowledge and technology are of vital importance for the further development of Croatian innovative potential, and with this, of a more competitive economy.

During the phase of Preparation Advance of Proposed Second Science and Technology Project, the Fund opened call for proposals for the Crossing border grant, "Cooperability program" and "Research in industry and academia" grant "Young researchers and professionals program". Within the Second Science and Technology Project (STP II) for which the Loan Agreement No. 8258-HR was signed on May, 22, 2013, 18 projects were contracted worth 2,95 million euro.

Starting February 19th 2014, the UKF is established within and administered by CSF pursuant to the Act on the Croatian Science Foundation (Official Gazette No. 117/2001, 46/2009, 92/2010, 78/2012) Article 19 that also regulated the transfer of the UKF from MSE to CSF.

The Fund will continue supporting excellent collaborative research with Croatian scientists living abroad and with leading international scientific institutions, fostering professional advancement of young researchers (at doctoral and postdoctoral level), fostering industry and academia collaboration as well as improving conditions in private and public R&D sector to raise absorption capacity for EU funds, especially Structural and Horizon 2020.

The Fund will maintain high quality and transparent selection procedure. This has been identified as one of crucial elements for significant results that UKF projects financed within STP I have accomplished in attracting resources from EU funds. The projects by UKF should exhibit excellence and a significant contribution to Croatian society and economy. They will be selected on the subject of recommendations of anonymous and internationally recognized experts-evaluators.

Special instruments that shall be financed within Second Science and Technology Project lead to achievement of UKF's goal. These instruments are: research project, post-doctorate research, doctorate research, training, industrial PhD, short-term visit, long-term visit, research equipment, conference, consulting, development of human resources in S&T and overhead. The UKF is co-financing projects, if a minimum of 20 percent is provided from other sources.

UKF programs are primarily oriented to human resources development. During the Second Science and Technology Project, UKF will modify its current programs and develop new to be financed from Structural funds.

Total funds envisioned for UKF component within Second Science and Technology Project are 4,77 million EUR.

## Abbreviations

AC	Approval Committee (the CSF Board)
CSF	Croatian Science Foundation
IPR	Intellectual Property Rights
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ESF	European Social Fund
IPR	Intellectual Property Rights
MSE	Ministry of Science and Education
PMU	Project Management Unit (which is named Project Implementation UNIT or PIU in other STPII documents, including STPII Loan Agreement)
PPA	Preparation Advance of Second Science and Technology Project
RDI	Research and Development Institution
R&D	Research and Development
S&T	Science and Technology
SC	Steering Committee
STP II	Second Science and Technology Project
SME	Small or Medium Enterprise
TA	Technical Assistance
UKF	Unity through Knowledge Fund

# 1 About Unity through Knowledge Fund

## 1.1 Mission

(i) The mission of the Unity through Knowledge Fund is to unite scientific and professional potential in Croatia and Diaspora in development of the knowledge based society”.

## 1.2 Goals

(i) Unity through Knowledge Fund accomplishes its mission through following goals:

• **Supporting research that is competitive on international level.**

The Fund encourages basic and applied scientific research that creates new knowledge and exhibits potential to compete on an international level. Two project types will be financed: those that attract experts and investments into Croatia and those that enable the cooperation/leading of European and other international projects. In particular, support will be given to collaborative projects with Diaspora that enable transfer of knowledge and technology from leading international research and scientific institutions to Croatian private and public sector.

• **Fostering research that creates new values in Croatian economy.**

The Fund supports projects that directly and indirectly strengthen the Croatian economy. The development of innovations, commercial and other application of scientific results will be financed. In particular, support will be given to the investments made by the business sector into scientific projects. In particular, support will be given to the investments made by the business sector into scientific projects. With the use of the resources of scientific and professional Diaspora, companies that apply new knowledge will be supported.

• **Supporting projects that help the development of research infrastructure in Croatia.**

The Fund supports all initiatives that contribute to the development of scientific system in Croatia. UKF supports and encourages the development that results in competitiveness on international level, supports education and scientific excellence in order to make Croatia a desirable place for top scientists from abroad (including those from Diaspora). Projects that are in accordance to the mission of UKF through the work in administrative, infrastructural and managing segment of science and technology will be financed.

## 1.3 Institutional Framework and Management

(i) Ministry of Science and Education (MSE) holds general responsibility for implementation and coordination of the Second Science and Technology Project (STPII).

(ii) UKF is STPII component and for the purpose of the implementation of STPII and UKF management, MSE has nominated members of the Steering Committee (SC), who were appointed by the CSF Board (Approval Committee (AC)).

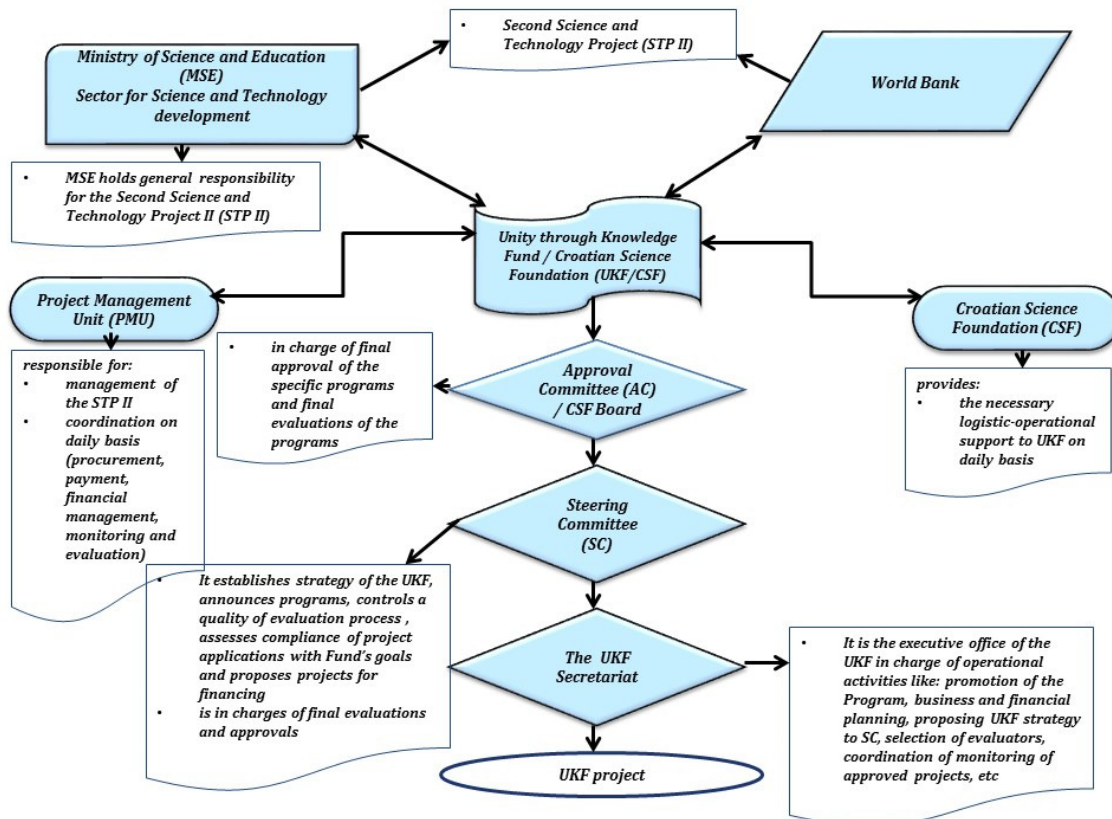
Steering Committee (SC) and Approval Committee (AC) are two committees with strictly separated duties:

(iii) **Steering Committee (SC)** is in charge of communications, objective-based initiations of individual UKF programs, final designs of individual proposals, and similar operational tasks. SC is also responsible for coordination and successful implementation of all UKF's programs and activities, in accordance with directions, plans and agreed procedures. SC establishes strategy of the UKF, proposes specific programs to Approval Committee and announces programs, controls a quality of evaluation process and assesses compliance of project applications with Fund's goals and is in charge of final evaluations and approvals of projects. The SC consists of prominent scientists from public and private sector.

(iv) **Approval Committee (AC)** is the CSF Board, which is in charge of final approval of the specific programs and final evaluations of the programs. The CSF Board is nominated by the Croatian Parliament at the recommendation of Government of the Republic of Croatia. The CSF Board consists of prominent scientists from universities, institutes and the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts.

(v) The **UKF Secretariat** is the executive office of the UKF in charge of operational activities like: promotion of the Program, business and financial planning, proposing UKF working strategy to SC, selection of evaluators, coordination of monitoring of approved projects, etc. The UKF Secretariat is run by the UKF Program Manager, as the principal executive. It also includes Program Analyst and Program Assistant, which administer the Program and report to the Program Manager.

(vi) The **other stakeholders** involved in operations of the UKF are CSF and MSE (PMU). CSF provides the necessary logistic-operational support (business premises, computers and network equipment, supply of office material, consultancy). The PMU is in charge of overall operational management of STPII in general<sup>1</sup>, like procurement i.e. compliance of sub projects' procurement procedures with "Extract 1. CSF – Procurement arrangements for sub-beneficiaries of UKF programs"<sup>2</sup>, financial management etc.



**Figure 1: Institutional Framework and management**

## 1.4 Principles

(i) Operational principles of the Fund help in the realization of the mission, forming a solid set of criteria for evaluating the Fund's activities.

### 1. Excellence

The Fund recognizes and supports scientific, technological and managerial excellence at the highest

<sup>1</sup> Second Science and Technology Project Operational Manual

<sup>2</sup> Document which describes methods and procedures for procurement of goods and selection of consultants to serve as guidelines to UKF projects financed within the Second Science and Technology Project.

level.

#### *2. Transparency*

The Fund's activities, decision-making and financing are fully transparent and public.

#### *3. Equality*

All project proposals are equally and justly evaluated during evaluation, and objectively and anonymously assessed.

#### *4. Measurability*

Impact and results of the financed projects must be measurable at least at the capacity adequate for evaluation.

#### *5. Competence*

The Fund's decisions are brought about solely on the basis of objective and professional arguments.

#### *6. Individual approach*

The Fund fosters individual approach towards persons, projects and ideas and insists on individual responsibility of project leaders.

#### *7. Care for projects*

The Fund fosters a “motherly” approach towards projects, evaluates projects and looks after their success.

#### *8. Finality*

Decisions made by managing bodies of the Fund, according to prescribed procedures, are final and cannot be changed retrospectively.

#### *9. Avoiding conflicts of interest*

All operations and decisions made avoid direct or indirect conflict of interest of all persons involved in procedures.

#### *10. Ethical and other good practice in research*

The Fund supports ethical and other good research practice in the sense of The European Charter for Research and subject to approval of Consent of project leader to ensure responsible conduct of research and scientific integrity (cf. *Annex 1*). Projects that shall be financed within Second Science and Technology Project shall comply with Environmental Management Framework<sup>3</sup>.

#### *11. Confidentiality*

Project application contents, names of evaluators and results of evaluation will be kept confidential.

All actors of the evaluation process have to guarantee that the privacy and confidentiality of all applications and documents submitted will be maintained.

## **2 Operational Instruments of the Fund**

(i) The operational instruments of the Fund are activities carried out individually or combined in order for a project to be successfully realized. They build up programs – sets of projects with a clearly defined objective.

### **1. Research project costs**

How? The Fund participates in financing of research project costs which are in accordance with the mission and the goals of the Fund. The Fund may finance specific aspect of some already existing project that is necessary for achieving the level of competitiveness for external investments. Fund can also finance launching of new, independent research projects that have potential to create new

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<sup>3</sup> Environmental Management Framework- document which serves as a tool to screen the sub projects financed and based on the screening guides on the environmental due diligence procedures

scientific results.

WHY? The Fund will promote research projects as a basic instrument of cooperation between scientists and experts from Croatia and Diaspora. As a necessary condition for support, the presence of clear benefits for Croatian society is required, in the sense of the UKF goals.

## **2. Advancement of young researcher – Post-doctorate research**

HOW? Financing and including young researchers at post-doctorate level in research projects that realize the goals of the Fund.

WHY? Fund will encourage post-doctorate projects that foster young researchers and professionals from Croatia within all aspects of their professional advancement as they are recognized to be one of the key elements for S&T development.

## **3. Advancement of young researcher – Early-stage (PhD students)**

HOW? Fund subsidizes early-stage researchers on projects that create new scientific results according to the goals. These also include work on projects led by members of Diaspora resulting in a system of mentorship and transfer of knowledge to Croatia. Special emphasis is on supporting the work of young researchers on projects in the industry.

WHY? Early-stage researchers' work is basic strength of S&T system and has to be used more extensively in Croatia. The Fund supports the work of early-stage researchers on the prosperous scientific and industry projects, thus contributing to lower "brain drain".

## **4. Short-term visit – Short term mobility**

HOW? The Fund enables short-term visits (up to 6 months) that will be used for knowledge transfer and that fit in the research projects working towards the Fund's goals. The Fund will in particular support visits of young researchers (doctoral students and postdocs) to foreign institutions connected to the needs of the supported project. Visits of both early-stage and experienced researchers from Diaspora will be supported if they contribute to the development of local projects/firms or serve as mentors

WHY? Short-term visits are way for transferring knowledge in modern S&T systems. Visits of young scientists working on Croatian projects to centers of excellence abroad enable fast acquisition of experience. Visits of researchers from Diaspora enable leading and participating in local projects without necessity of permanent relocation to Croatian institutions.

## **5. Long-term visit – Long term mobility**

HOW? The Fund supports long-term visits of scientists/experts from Diaspora on projects that realize the goals of the Fund as well as long-term visits of young scientists from Croatia to the scientist/expert from Diaspora. This instrument supports long term visits of Diaspora experts to Croatian R&D companies, to universities and R&D institutes and long term visits of young scientists to the experienced scientists from Diaspora in their institutions abroad.

WHY? Long-term visits serve for including Diaspora members in Croatian projects and can help as a preparation for their return to Croatia. Long-term visits of young scientists to scientists from Diaspora serve for the transfer of knowledge from international institutions to Croatia.

## **6. Research equipment**

HOW? Research equipment is financed only partly, and only as part of projects that fulfill conditions outlined in the Fund's goals. The Fund will support a new, more economical usage of equipment through cooperation and renting.

WHY? Research equipment is necessary condition for scientific work, but for the realization of Fund's goals new models will be developed in order to ensure better return on investment than presently.

## **7. Conference / Lecture**

HOW? The Fund supports participations at conferences where this is necessary for the transfer of knowledge to projects that seek international and/or economic affirmation.

WHY? Participation at local conferences and lectures of participants from Diaspora enable an efficient way of cooperation and knowledge-transfer. Also, attending conferences abroad as a part of supported projects facilitates their development.



## 8. Consulting

**How?** The Fund finances specific consulting services that are necessary for the realization of supported UKF projects goals and transfer of knowledge. Knowledge and skills, which are not available within the project team may be provided by scientists and experts, who are not part of the project team. This may include scientific studies or analysis of scientific results, consulting on commercialization of scientific results etc.

**Why?** For the success of R&D projects the transfer of knowledge is essential, but also education and outsourcing of some scientific and non-scientific components (legal issues, intellectual property), which are important and still underdeveloped in Croatia.

## 9. Overhead

**How?** Support is provided for some activities to Administering organization (Croatian organization responsible for the implementation of a project) that include non scientific staff, other non specific utilities, office services and overall support of Administering organization to UKF project team in project implementation as well as in other activities necessary for further sustainability of projects (e.g. provide support in project application for international funds):

**Why?** In order to raise institutional capacity in S&T system for attracting and implementing EU and international funds, there is a need to further develop procedures at institutional level as well as knowledge and skills of non-scientific staff responsible for implementation of EU funds and international funds.

## 10. Development of human resources in S&T

**How?** Support is provided for employment of new scientific personnel, especially early stage and young researchers as well as training in scientific and non-scientific skills like entrepreneurial.

**Why?** Human capital, especially in S&T, is of growing importance for innovation and technology-led economic growth. Croatia in that respect confronts a certain number of challenges. This gap could be bridged only through well-judged investments in the human resources.

# 3 Programs

(i) Programs of the Unity through knowledge Fund are sets of financed projects that include one or more Fund's instruments, defined by the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee defines the goal and set out the reasons for launching, duration and financial framework of the program. The Fund's resources can be assigned solely through programs, with the exception of operational costs and institutional development.

(ii) Projects within a certain program are selected on a public call for proposals and in accordance with the procedures described here. For each program, the following is defined ahead of time: common goal, common set of criteria, the same application conditions and same selection procedure. All projects within the program are evaluated with the same measurable key performance indicators.

(iii) A general overview of programs to be financed within Second Science and Technology Project is presented here. Their financial volumes, dynamics of announcements of calls for grants and other details are going to be specified by the SC during the development of particular program.

(iv) Projects are evaluated according to sets of criteria which are common to each program. They are developed by the SC according to the goals of a particular program. Nevertheless, there exists a general set of criteria that will be used in all programs:

- scientific/technological quality and innovativeness of research, originality and feasibility of project
- scientific track record of project leader and other coworkers on the project, their research and management potential (key publications and other results, necessary expertise, previous achievements, cooperation)
- project's future potential to achieve EU/international co-financing

- project's future potential to achieve co-funding from industry (for commercial-domain projects)
- project's potential for creating added values in Croatian economy (potential applications, innovations, patents, new products or processes...)
- guarantee for the co-funding of project (at least 20 percent)
- potential contribution to knowledge and technology transfer to Croatia contributed by project
- quality of infrastructure/facilities and practical (institutional) arrangements for the implementation and management of the project

These and other specified criteria will be evaluated quantitatively by the evaluators and the SC.

*During STP I, the following programs were developed and implemented by UKF: Research Cooperability Program, Connectivity Program and Young Researcher and Professionals Program.*

*During STP II, the implementation of Research Cooperability Program and Connectivity Program will continue.*

### **3.1 Research Cooperability Program<sup>4</sup>**

*Research Cooperability Program* supports small and medium-scale collaborative research projects in Croatia with involvement of scientific and professional Croatian Diaspora. The program includes all of UKF's instruments.

**Program goal:** To attract promising research projects to Croatian companies and institutions together with international/private financing, their accompanying knowledge, technologies and potential research results.

**Instruments:** research project, early-stage research, post-doc, short-term visit, long-term visits, consulting, conference, equipment, human resources in S&T and overhead. It may be applied for more than one instrument in scope of this program.

**Grant size:** min 25.000 EUR, max 200.000 EUR

#### **1A. "Homeward" Grant**

**Objective:** To offer a Diaspora member a possibility to return home and establish research collaboration at Croatian institution in order to enhance Croatia's competitiveness. It gives a possibility to create a research team of researchers in Croatian institution.

**Who can apply:** Outstanding scientist/professional from abroad of Croatian nationality or origin may apply if she/he can demonstrate the ability to lead and mentor a team of coworkers. The grant may include application of more than one instrument, as research project, early-stage research, post-doc, short-term visit, long-term visits, consulting, conference, human resources in S&T, equipment and overhead.

#### **1B. "Crossing borders" Grant**

**Objective:** To foster scientific collaboration between expatriate Croatians (scientists and professionals) and Croatian scientific public institutions and R&D companies. It aims at experienced researchers living and working in Croatia from both industrial and academic sectors who want to develop their productivity and participate in bigger, international project through partner abroad (Diaspora), without necessarily relocating abroad.

**Who can apply:** Experienced Croatian or foreign citizen living and working in Croatia or a

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<sup>4</sup> This is applicable to the Research Cooperability Program financed from the World Bank loan No. 8258-HR

researcher from Diaspora may apply if she/he can demonstrate potential for project leadership. The grant may cover research project, early-stage research, post-doc, short-term visit, long-term visits, consulting, conference, equipment, human resources in S&T and overhead.

### **1C. "My first collaboration" Grant**

**Objective:** The grant is aimed for scientists in Croatia at postdoctoral level, from business and academic sector, to unlock their innovation potential through lead of scientific and technological projects in collaboration with experienced scientists or experts from Diaspora and to increase their professional experience and boost career in science or industrial research and development.

**Who can apply:** Outstanding scientists (Croatian and foreign) who live and work in Croatia who have gained a PhD from at least 2 years up to 7 years from the date of the opening of the call.

The grant may cover research project, post-doc research, short-term visit, long-term visits, consulting, conference, equipment and overhead.

## **3.2 Connectivity Program**

*Connectivity Program* develops opportunities to exchange experts and knowledge between Croatia and Diaspora.

**Program goal:** To support a permanent knowledge and skills flow towards Croatia through enabling mobility of researchers and professionals within outstanding projects.

**Instruments:** short-term visit

**Grant Size:** max 10.000 EUR

### **2A. "Gaining experience" grant**

**Objective:** is to open opportunities for outstanding young scientists and professionals from Croatia to visit the excellent research and development facilities abroad in order to establish cooperation and/or acquire new skills necessary for advancing S&T competitiveness in Croatia.

**Who can apply:** Talented young researchers who work on projects that strive towards the UKF's Goals may apply. The grant is awarded, in the form of **fellowship for professional trainings and scientific research**, to researchers, who can prove the clear goals and outcomes of the visit (introducing technology, establishing of cooperation...). Prerequisite for successful application is a professional development plan approved by applicant's host, with clear benefit for Croatia from hers/his staying abroad.

### **2B. "Homeland visit" grant**

**Objective:** To provide opportunity to prominent Diaspora members to support their visits to Croatian companies and institutions in order to contribute to research cooperation or to provide knowledge transfer to R&D projects in Croatia.

**Who can apply:** The Diaspora member or Croatian host may apply for this grant if they can prove an apparent need and benefits of the visit for their research project and knowledge transfer. Additionally, all supported visitors are obliged to deliver at least one lecture to the general public. Grant may subsidize the allowance for the researcher during his staying in Croatia.

## **3.3 Young Researcher and Professionals Program**

*Young Researcher and Professionals Program* fosters early stage researchers and professionals, from Croatia, in all aspects of their professional advancement, especially by performing projects in cooperation with prominent Croatian and international research and scientific institutions and industry.

**Program goal:** To unlock the young researcher's and professional's potential by allowing them to autonomously lead research projects.

*Instruments:* research project, post-doc, early-stage research, short-term visit, conferences, consulting, equipment, human resources in S&T and overhead. Within a proposal, it may be applied for one or more instruments.

*Grant Size:* max 50.000 EUR

### **3A. "My first research topic" grant**

*Objective:* To give an opportunity to early-stage researchers and professionals to start and lead hers/his first research topic

*Who can apply:* Excellent early stage Croatian researcher or professionals or foreign citizen living and working in Croatia who wants to lead his/her own project may apply. The coworkers on the project may include member from Diaspora, industry or research and scientific institutions. It may be applied for research project, early-stage research, post-doc, short-term visit, long-term visits, consulting, conference, human resources in S&T, equipment and overhead.

### **3C. "Research in Industry and Academia" Grant**

*Objective:* is to increase mobility of young scientists and experts between academia and Croatian industry as well as to strengthen long-term cooperation between two sectors. The grant supports engagement of excellent young researchers and professionals in Croatian enterprises, or academic entrepreneurship. In addition, grant supports temporary engagement of excellent young researchers and professionals from private sector in Croatian public scientific institutions.

*Who can apply:* Grant is aimed for co-financing of salaries of young researchers and professionals, who will work on research and developmental projects in Croatian companies or in public scientific institutions.

## **4 Beneficiaries of the Fund**

(i) Beneficiaries of the Fund's support are legal entities registered in the Republic of Croatia and also are in the Register of scientific organizations. However, individuals are always appointed as leaders of an approved project and they carry the main responsibilities for the project implementation. Responsible person for the Beneficiary signs the UKF Grant Agreement with CSF and MSE. A project leader co-signs the contract and carries a part of responsibility for project execution. The contract also regulates the relationships between the legal person and individuals who carry out the project, and defines a distribution of responsibilities.

(ii) Individuals responsible for implementation of project should be: (a) Croatian citizens, living abroad or in Croatia, (b) foreign citizens of Croatian origin who are interested in contributing to the development of Croatian society and science c) foreign citizens living and working in Croatia.

(iii) All individuals with real or possible conflict of interests are excluded from the competition for Fund's support. The individuals who take part in the process of evaluation (including members of UKF Secretariat, committees, evaluators and consultants) cannot apply for Fund's support. Also, all applicants who try to influence the process of evaluation will be excluded from the process.

(iv) All applicants should be able to prove – prior to signing of contracts – that they operate in accordance with laws of the Republic of Croatia. In case when contractors have their affairs administered by the courts, are bankrupt or have suspended business activities, are the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or are in any analogous situation provided for in Croatian legislation or regulations, they will be withdrawn from the evaluation or financing. Similarly, if potential contractors have been declared to be in serious violation of any other contract with state administration, they will be withdrawn from evaluation or financing by the Fund.

(v) Any contractor having been found in misrepresentation in supplying the information required as a condition for participation in the contract or failing to supply such information shall be excluded from participation in evaluation or financing by the Fund.

## 5 Project proposal procedure

(i) The Fund's financial resources are assigned under the terms set out in calls for proposals and through programs. One program can have more calls published at different times. The decision to open a call for proposals and its conditions is under the authority of SC and is executed by UKF Secretariat. It is necessary to announce a call on the Fund's web-page; and it can be additionally announced in daily papers, public internet portals and other web pages or public media.

(ii) Calls for proposals for the Fund's programs consist of:

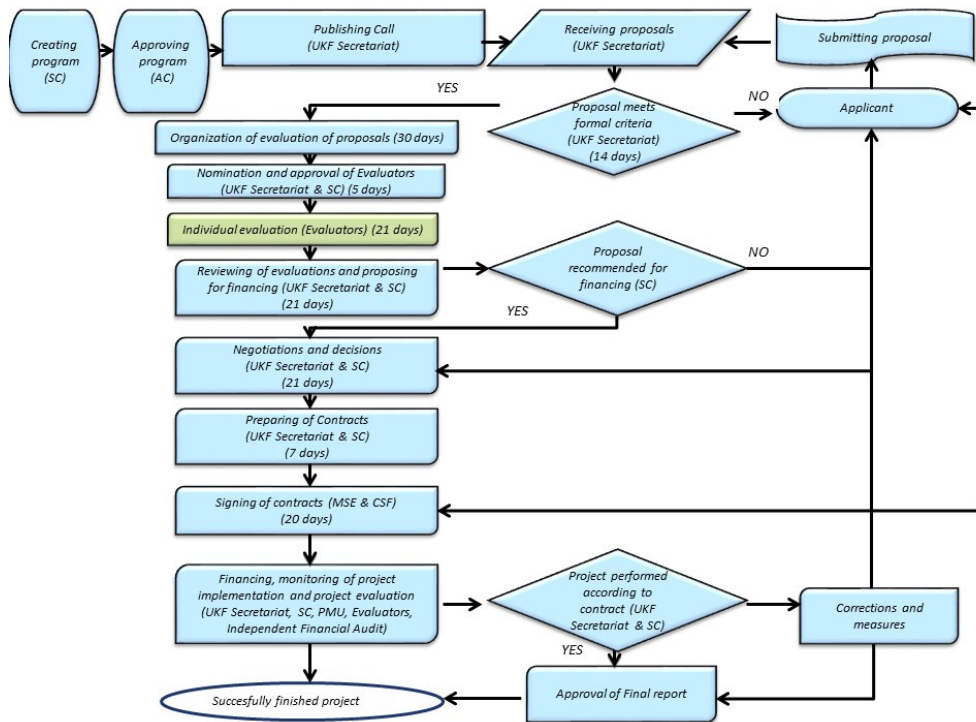
- name of the program within the call has been announced
- total amount of funds foreseen for the program
- mandatory and optional content of the proposal
- mandatory and optional additional materials, documents and evidence
- explicit evaluation criteria for the proposals
- time period (deadline) for submitting of the proposals
- procedure and time for announcing decisions
- requirements for all applicants to provide information to be used in the evaluation of the impact of the referred program

(iii) Proposals have to be submitted in electronic form through the Fund's web-page. Project proposal forms will be available on the Fund's web pages or can be requested by e-mail. Upon receipt of proposals, the automatic web system records the date of receipt and subsequently sends automatic message of receipt by e-mail.

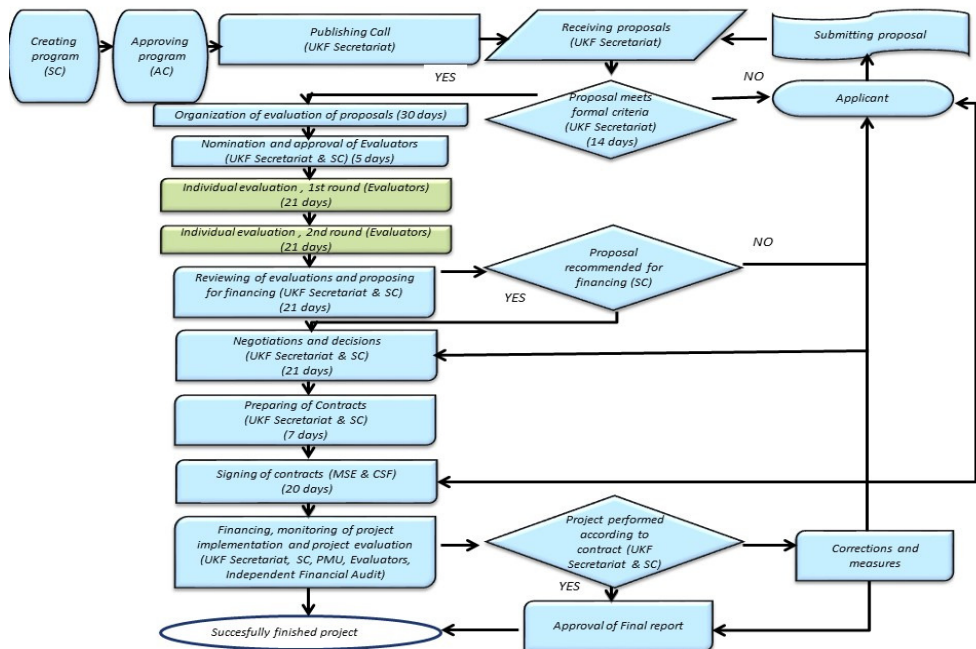
(iv) Proposals must include all components as defined in call, including the following:

- name and address of the legal persons applying, including names and duties of responsible persons
- name and address of the project leader and all partners in the realization of the project
- resumes/profiles of the project leader and partners on the project who will be taking part in the implementation of the project, including publications and achievements relevant for the project implementation
- legal agreements (where necessary)
- detailed business plan, i.e. project plan that includes: preconditions and conditions for successful implementation of the project, expected results and outputs of the project according to the implementation plan, impact assessment, milestones (key performance indicators according to the plan), expected impact of the project, clearly structured needs for human, financial and other resources and the assessment of the project risks
- financial plan for the project with income and expectations of income from other sources including documents of evidence (or intention) about co-financing of project
- owner structure, intellectual property rights and obligations related to the project
- signed Consent of project leader to ensure responsible conduct of research and scientific integrity (cf. *Annex 1*)

## 6 Evaluation Procedure



**Figure 2a: Flow chart from proposal to finished project (applicable for Cooperability Program)**



**Figure 2b: Flow chart from proposal to finished project in case of two rounds evaluation (applicable for Cooperability Program)**

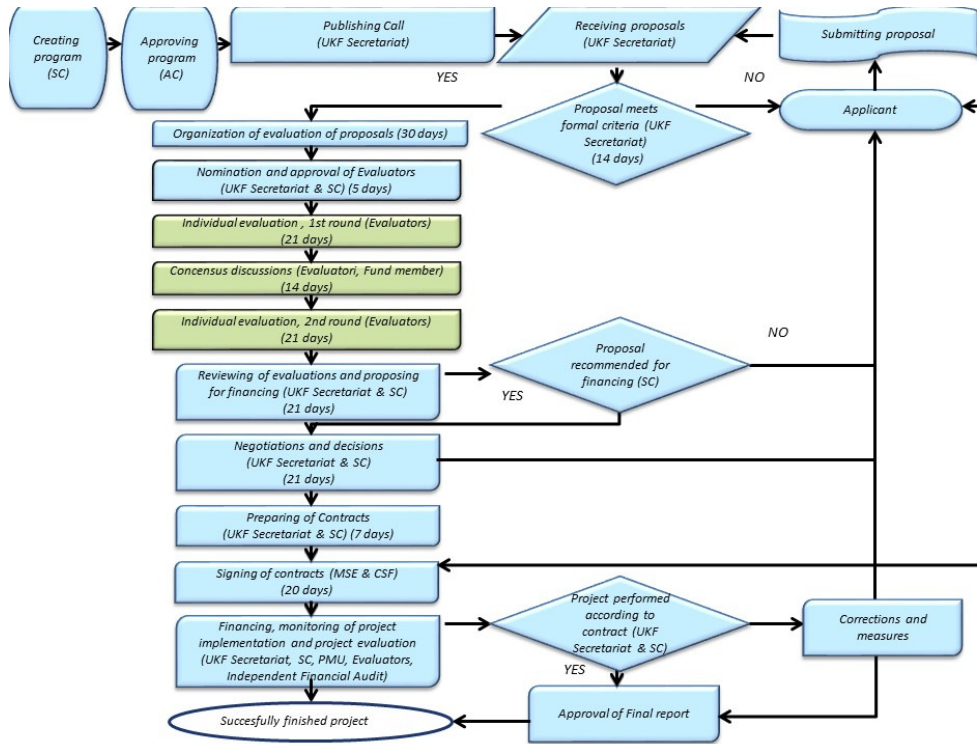


Figure 2c: Flow chart from proposal to finished project in case of two rounds evaluation with evaluators' discussion (applicable for Cooperability Program)

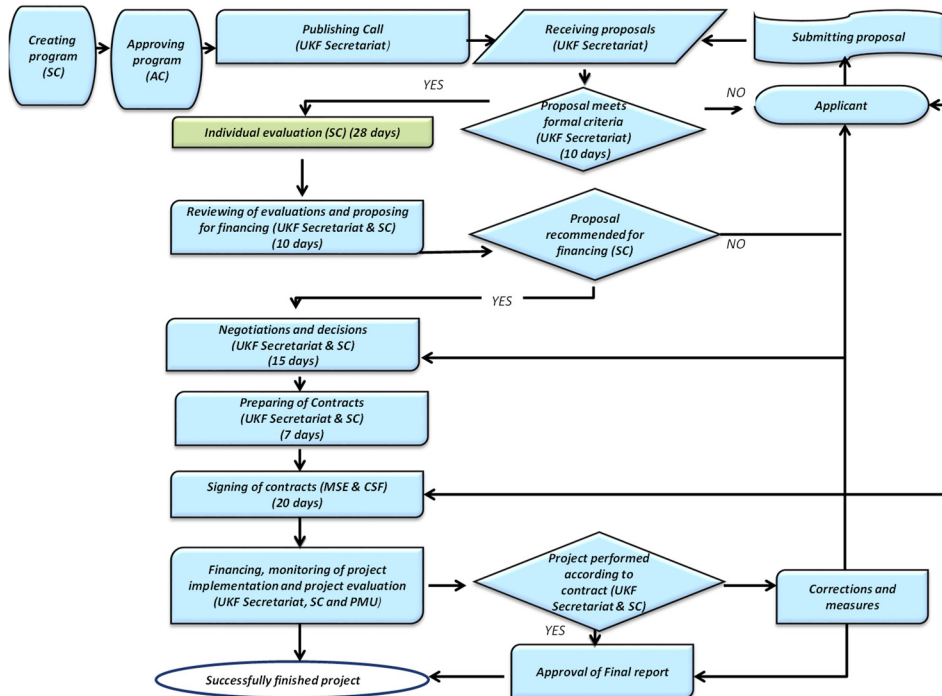


Figure 2d: Flow chart from proposal to finished project for Connectivity Program

## **6.1 Evaluation procedure for Cooperability Program**

(i) The Fund's support is designated on the basis of evaluation of proposals that have been properly received. Potential users of funds need to justify their interest and the need for support. The evaluation procedure should operate in accordance with the Fund's Principles and it has to be confidential.

(ii) The evaluation of proposals is carried out in line with the defined procedure, which follows the tasks of receiving of proposals, evaluation and selection of proposals by Steering Committee.

(iii) Basic procedure for the evaluation of proposals (cf. Figure 2a):

1. Receiving of proposal (UKF Secretariat)
2. Eligibility check - reviewing formal compliance with call propositions (UKF Secretariat, duration: 14 days)
3. Organization of evaluation of proposals, selection of evaluators for each project (UKF Secretariat, duration: 30 days)
4. Nomination and approval of Evaluators (UKF Secretariat and SC, duration: 5 days). SC may not approve an evaluator if conflict of interest occurred.
5. Individual evaluation of proposals by independent evaluators, peer review (Evaluators, duration: 21 days) (cf. Figure 2a)

*In case the evaluation is done in two rounds –instead of 5, activities 6 and 7 will be performed:*

6. First round of individual evaluation of proposals (Evaluators, duration 21 days), which may be followed by evaluators' discussion (Evaluators, Fund member, duration: 14 days). (cf. Figure 2b and 2c)
7. Second round of individual evaluation of proposals by independent evaluators (Evaluators, duration 21 days) (cf. Figure 2b and 2c)
8. Reviewing evaluations and recommending proposals for financing (UKF Secretariat and Steering Committee, duration: 21 days)
9. Additional negotiations about selected proposals and decisions (UKF Secretariat and SC, duration: 21 days)
10. Preparing of contracts (UKF Secretariat and Steering Committee duration: 7 days)
11. Signing of contracts (MSE and CSF duration: 20 days)
12. Financing and monitoring of project implementation (UKF Secretariat, SC, PMU, Independent financial audit, Evaluators)

(iv) The entire period for the completion of the evaluation process from the closing of the call to the approval of proposals can last up to six months at the most.

## **6.2 Evaluation procedure for Connectivity Program**

(i) The Fund's support is designated on the basis of evaluation of proposals that have been properly received. Potential users of funds need to justify their interest and the need for support. The evaluation procedure should operate in accordance with the Fund's Principles and it has to be confidential.

(ii) The evaluation of proposals for Connectivity Program is carried out in line with the defined procedure which follows the tasks of receiving of proposals, evaluation and selection of proposals by Steering Committee.

(iii) Basic procedure for the evaluation of proposals (cf. Figure 2d):

1. Receiving of proposal (UKF Secretariat)
2. Eligibility check - reviewing formal compliance with call propositions (UKF Secretariat, duration: 10 days)
3. Evaluation of proposals (Steering Committee, duration: 28 days)
4. Recommending proposals for financing (UKF Secretariat and Steering Committee, duration: 10 days)



days)

5. Additional negotiations about selected proposals and decisions (UKF Secretariat and SC, duration: 15 days)

6. Preparing of contracts (UKF Secretariat and Steering Committee duration: 7 days)

7. Signing of contracts (MSE and CSF duration: 20 days)

8. Financing and monitoring of project implementation (UKF Secretariat, SC, PMU)

(iv) The entire period for the completion of the evaluation process from the closing of the call to the approval of proposals can last up to 3 months at the most.

For the Connectivity Program the procedures described in items 6.3, 6.5, 6.6 and 6.7 are not applicable as the Steering Committee evaluates projects proposals according to the criteria set in Call for proposals and based on their evaluation proposals are recommend for financing.

### 6.3 Evaluators

(i) The evaluators are independent (i.e. not representing any involved organization) experts that assist in the evaluation of formally eligible proposals. The UKF Secretariat selects evaluators from highly qualified and ethical individuals from Croatia or abroad. They can come from the fields of science, industry or innovation with the highest level of expertise in the field. The evaluators are internationally recognized authorities in the relevant specialist area. They are expected to have knowledge and skills appropriate to their areas of work.

(ii) The names of the independent experts that take part in any particular evaluation process are not made public.

(iii) In the case of all eligible proposals in a call, the UKF Secretariat chooses up to three anonymous evaluators per project proposal after consultation with SC, ensuring that persons with possible conflict of interest in no way participate in the process of evaluation.

(iv) An Invitation letter is sent to each independent expert containing a description of their duties. The evaluators are asked to accept this letter as a confirmation of accepting their duties and the general rules governing the duties. They are also asked to accept the Code of conduct for evaluators (cf. Annex 2).

(v) In the case that an individual who participates in evaluation has a *direct conflict of interest* – i.e. a person who is employed by the same institution (department) and works in collaboration with any of the persons involved in proposal; or a person who is involved in preparation of proposal, closely related to any of the persons involved in proposal through financial interests, kinship or friendship, present, past or future business connections – he/she cannot serve in the evaluation process. In case that an individual who participates in evaluation has *indirect conflict of interest* – a person who is employed by a legal entity (faculty) involved in proposal, would directly benefit from the proposal being funded or not funded in the context of own professional activities, having any other relationship affecting his/her impartiality – he/she may take part in evaluations but cannot evaluate such proposal and cannot take part in related discussion.

(vi) The evaluators are rewarded for their service according to the guidelines set out by the Steering Committee and respectively, their travel costs are reimbursed in case they are invited to participate in evaluation discussion (see Figure 2).

### 6.4 Eligibility check

(i) The UKF Secretariat verifies that proposals meet the eligibility criteria referred to in the call. These criteria are rigorously applied and any proposal found to be ineligible is excluded from evaluation. The eligibility check is carried out before the beginning of the evaluation process, however it is continued during the evaluation process.

(ii) The decision to exclude a proposal for failing one or more eligibility criteria is taken by the UKF Secretariat. This decision may be taken at any appropriate moment before, during or after the evaluation sessions, when ineligibility has been proven. This decision is final and cannot be subject to dispute, except in a case of administrative error. Complaints shall be sent by e-mail to the UKF Secretariat at the following address: [ured@ukf.hr](mailto:ured@ukf.hr).

### **6.5 Individual evaluation by independent experts**

- (i) All eligible proposals are evaluated in peer review by independent experts to examine their conformity with the evaluation criteria relevant for the call. The UKF Secretariat nominates up to three evaluators per project.
- (ii) All independent experts are briefed before the evaluation by the UKF Secretariat in order to inform them on the general evaluation guidelines and the objectives of the program under consideration.
- (iii) Each proposal is evaluated against the applicable criteria independently by up to three experts who fill in individual evaluation forms developed for the particular call giving marks and providing comments. The individual evaluation is performed remotely, i.e. evaluators examine proposals which are forwarded to them at their own place.
- (iv) Evaluators examine the individual issues comprising each evaluation criteria and mark the issues on a five-point scale from 1 to 5. In this scheme, the scores indicate the following: 1 – poor; 2 – fair; 3 – good; 4 – very good; 5 – excellent.
- (v) Evaluators are required to provide comments to accompany each of their marks in a form suitable for providing feedback to the applicants and/or to serve as an input to consensus discussion (see 6.5 "Discussion of evaluators").
- (vi) The submission of the individual evaluation form (by post and/or electronically) signed by an independent expert closes his/her individual assessment. His/her evaluation form may not subsequently be changed.
- (vii) Projects of max 10 000 EUR may be evaluated by SC.

### **6.6 Discussion of evaluators**

- (i) UKF Secretariat and SC may introduce an additional, pre-evaluation procedure in case of big number of applications are received to a call in order to facilitate the evaluation of proposals, so the evaluation procedure will be carried out in two rounds.  
After remote individual evaluations in the first round of evaluation, the UKF Secretariat may organise an evaluation discussion, i.e. consensus discussion. (cf. Figure 2c). The consensus discussion is a meeting (or teleconference) where all evaluators examine together their individual evaluations in the presence of Steering Committee members and the representative of UKF Secretariat acting as moderator. The UKF representatives are not allowed to influence on the experts' opinions. In some cases arriving at a consensus may be carried out without a meeting.
- (ii) The experts attempt to agree on a consensus mark for each of the criteria and on an overall consensus report, which they then confirm. The evaluators have to explain their opinions to the UKF representatives who may ask questions regarding their consensus evaluation report.
- (iii) The outcome of the first round of evaluation are evaluators reports and the list where project proposals are ranked, and only the proposals with final mark greater than 4,0 (on the scale 1 - 5) were recommended for the second round of evaluation. Those proposals are forwarded into the peer review evaluation procedure, as described in Figures 2b and 2c.

### **6.7 Recommendation for financing by Steering Committee**

- (i) Steering Committee reviews written evaluation reports provided by independent experts in order to take the final decision about recommendation of proposals for financing, about conditional recommendations requiring prior negotiations and about rejections of proposals.
- (ii) Independent evaluators assess the scientific and technological excellence of proposals together with innovation leadership potential of the applicant by giving marks and explanations to specific criteria. Relative importance of each specific criteria assessed by evaluators is under the authority of SC. In case evaluators' opinions (marks) vary significantly in a particular criterion, this mark is given the smaller relative importance. SC decides separately in the cases where fewer evaluations were received for various reasons; if conflict of interest occurred, the evaluation is incomplete or

inadequate etc.

Apart from evaluators' marks, another mark is given by SC to each proposal assessing the contribution of the project to at least one of the Fund's goals – international competitiveness, potential to provide benefits to Croatian society and economy and/or contribution to development of scientific infrastructure in Croatia.

In accordance with the general mark which is obtained by incorporating all criteria from the average mark given by evaluators and mark given by SC, the final ranking of proposals is generated and SC recommends projects that should receive financial support. In some cases (conflict of interest, inadequate or incomplete evaluation) Steering Committee may decide to request a new evaluation by other independent experts.

(iii) The result of the Steering Committee's decision is a shortlist of proposals which are recommended for financing, a list of proposals requiring additional negotiations and a list of proposals not recommended for financing. SC also provides a written explanation about strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of the each proposed project.

## ***6.8 Negotiations with proposers and final decisions***

(i) The UKF Secretariat with assistance and under guidance of Steering Committee performs negotiations with proposers whose proposals are conditionally recommended. The purpose of these negotiations is to solve all ambiguities that came out during evaluation and to obtain all possibly required revisions of proposals. The outcome of negotiations is information that helps Steering Committee to decide on recommendation for financing of ambiguous proposals.

(ii) Negotiation may cover any scientific, legal or financial aspects of the proposal, based on the comments of the independent experts and opinions of the Steering Committee. The scientific aspects would cover, in particular, revisions to the project plan and adjustments to it. The legal aspects would cover, in particular, review of any special contractual clauses or conditions required for the project. The financial aspects would cover negotiation of the amount of the UKF contribution and revisions of financial plan.

(iii) During negotiations, the Steering Committee will encourage basic and applied scientific projects that show potential to compete on an international level to apply for EU funds/international funds, especially to Horizon 2020. In that way, the Steering Committee wants to ensure the sustainability and visibility of results, networks and knowledge created within UKF projects as well as to increase participation of Croatian scientists and other bodies in EU's programs.

Projects that show pre-commercial/commercial potential will be encouraged to find partners from private sector, to protect IPR created within supported projects and/or to commercialize results of their research.

(iv) After finishing negotiations and revisions of the involved project proposals, the Steering Committee issues final lists of recommended and not recommended project proposals, accompanied with relevant evaluation reports and negotiation outcomes. The decision of SC is final and cannot be subject to further objections.

(v) After SC finishes its approvals, the UKF Secretariat forwards all decision notices with explanations and evaluation reports to applicants. At that time the applicants with approved proposals are invited to sign the contract.

## ***6.9 Selection Criteria***

(i) All UKF programs share general criteria and all accepted projects have to confer those criteria. Those criteria should serve to potential users when designing the project proposal. They should also serve to evaluators in assessment of proposals, and should enable them to evaluate the proposal both by a quantitative mark and descriptively.

(ii) A special set of criteria is provided by the Steering Committee for each program and is highlighted in Calls for proposals. The evaluators will use the unique set of criteria within one call to evaluate all proposals on a quantitative basis (with marks). SC decides independently which relative importance it would assign to which criteria and in accordance with the general mark

(obtained by incorporating all criteria) recommends projects which should receive financial support. Relative importance of each criterion will be published in a call for proposals.

## 7 Financing of Projects

(i) The Fund never finances the total cost of a project. The project is co-financed by the Fund under the condition that minimum of 20% of the amount requested from UKF is secured from one or different sources (administering organization, partner organization, partner from industry or any other institution interested in the project results...). Any existing or planned financial supports from the MSE, from other CSF programs or supports from other sources of the State budget allocated for science and technology development are not eligible as matching funding for UKF grant.

(ii) Before the start of financing of the approved project, the project leader and all other responsible persons sign Contract on financing with the authorized representative of the MSE and CSF. The Contract obliges the legal entities and the project leader to implement the project according to the framework given by the project's plan and schedule of work. The Contract obliges the MSE and CSF to provide financial funds according to the contract. The Contract defines the rights and obligations of the contract parties, including the intellectual property rights as well as other rights deriving from results of a project. The contract is being designed by UKF Secretariat and approved by Steering Committee.

(iii) A special annex which determines financial regulations is added to the Contract. The financial regulations include the following: an accepted total amount of financial plan cannot be increased afterwards; an accepted financial plan may be subject of 10% change within individual entries without UKF permission; maximum overhead paid to the Beneficiary where the project is performed cannot be less than 5% and higher than 15% of the total UKF funds; costs for remuneration and salaries of researchers on the project cannot exceed 50% of the total approved funds.

(iv) Payments to the UKF's beneficiaries will be performed on half-yearly basis by UKF Secretariat, MSE and PMU, if not otherwise specified in UKF Grant Agreement.

(v) The Fund will support only a part of total project costs, while the remaining part of costs must be covered from other sources. Institutions have to prove their commitment to the project by participation in financing. The amount of share of the Fund's support is decided by the Steering Committee according to specific program and call.

(vi) General principles of how Fund will finance particular projects for state aid beneficiaries:

The beneficiaries of state aid are legal and natural persons who perform in economic activity and thereby participate in the trade of goods and services and who receive some form of state aid.

Projects within UKF programs were financed in accordance with the official Decision on the UKF programs issued by Croatian Competition Agency (Class: UP/I 430-01/12-02/008; Ur.No: 580-09-01/89-2012-005) and de minimis rule in accordance European Commission Regulation, which regulates de minimis aid (EC no. 1407/2013).

(vii) The financing is based on an approved business plan and financial plan of a particular project. The financing scheme is determined on a case-by-case basis for each project and is stated in the contract. The first installment is made after the signing of the contract. Other payments are made according to conditions described in mechanisms of care and supervision. To the projects financed within Connectivity Program the full grant amount is made as one installment after the signing of the contract.

(viii) Except for the projects financed within Connectivity Program, procurement within Second Science and Technology Project (STP II) shall be done in accordance with methodology and procedures described in the "Extract 1 (from the Second Science and Technology Project - Project Operational manual): CSF – Procurement arrangements for sub-beneficiaries of UKF programs" which is available on the Fund's web-page.

## 8 Supervision and Evaluation of Projects

(i) Supervision and care for projects relates to the general relationship between the Fund and the approved project after the financing has started. The Fund is looking after projects through its mechanisms of care, supervision and control. The Fund, without affecting the subsidiarity of the project leader, keeps certain mechanisms of controlling a project, which are regulated by the UKF Grant agreement in order to ensure the success of the project.

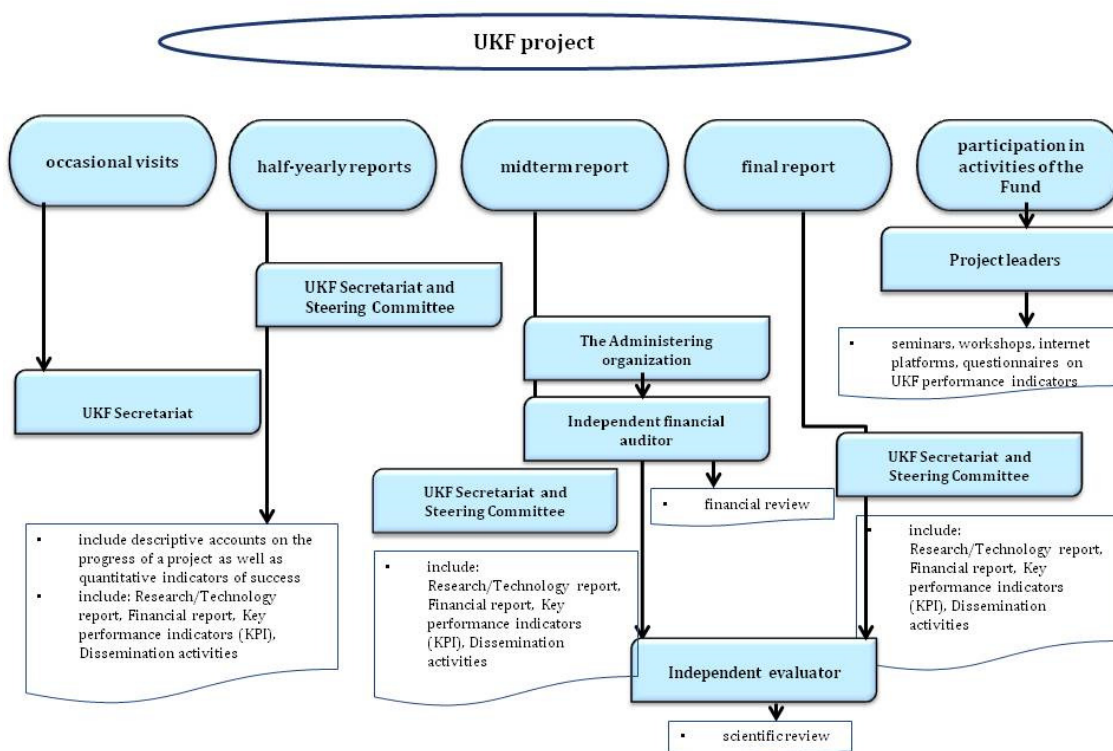
(ii) The mechanisms of care and supervision may include:

- supervision through half-yearly reports provided by the project leader that include descriptive accounts on the progress of a project as well as quantitative indicators of success
- occasional visits by the UKF Secretariat representatives
- evaluation of the project by the UKF Secretariat and Steering Committee, including scientific supervision performed by independent evaluators after the half of the period of implementation has passed
- financial review by an independent auditor organized by the Administering organization
- final evaluation of the project by the UKF Secretariat and Steering Committee (including final scientific evaluation done by independent evaluators)
- final evaluation of the project by the UKF Secretariat and Steering Committee after the full period of implementation has passed (applicable only to the Connectivity program)
- participation in public presentations of the Fund
- obligatory participation in activities of the Fund (seminars, workshops, internet platforms, questionnaires on UKF performance indicators ...)

(iii) The evaluation of approved projects within programs will be realized in accordance to the previously defined implementation indicators. These indicators must be measurable, separately defined for every program and set out in the contract.

(iv) The complete set of measurable indicators that will apply to programs depending of program and instruments is following:

- key publications in which the project participants were the lead authors
- newly developed products and processes and other applications of research
- applications to international funds and foundations
- amount of funds received from private sources and etc.



**Figure 3: Instruments of monitoring**

(v) For the purpose of assessing the impact produced by UKF programs, each program will establish before the issue of any call a basic questionnaire for the collection of baseline information and subsequent update from the projects supported by UKF as well as of those, which did not receive UKF support.

## 9 Publication and Intellectual Property Rights

(i) An acknowledgement of support by the Unity through Knowledge Fund must be included in all publications resulting from work carried out under the supported project.

(ii) An acknowledgement of support by the Unity through Knowledge Fund must be included in all public presentation, publications in print and electronic media.

(iii) The project leader or Administering institution (beneficiary) must ensure the inclusion of the UKF logo in all advertisements relating to the project.

(iv) Foreground Intellectual Property shall be owned during the duration of the project by CSF if not otherwise regulated by UKF Grant Agreement.

(v) After the project completion and if not otherwise regulated by UKF Grant Agreement, CSF shall transfer Foreground Intellectual Property developed by the activities and/or intellectual contributions of the persons financed by the UKF to Croatian organization, Croatian company or Croatian branch office of an international company which has to ensure that the ownership of Foreground Intellectual Property will remain within Croatian organization, Croatian company or Croatian branch office of an international company by signing a Collaboration agreement with partner organizations.

(vi) In a case of possible commercialization of Foreground Intellectual Property transferred to Croatian organization, Croatian organization has to make reasonable efforts to sell primarily Foreground Intellectual Property to Croatian company or to Croatian branch office of an

international company.

(vii) IPR arrangements may include: requirements about diffusion of information such as disclosure and methods of publication, and requirements regarding ownership and exploitation of the results arising from the project.

## 10 Performance indicators

(i) The success of the UKF can be judged mainly on success of the particular projects that were financed and supported through the Fund. Essential parts of a project proposal are key performance indicators (KPI) and an assessment of their achievements. Special attention will be given to KPIs in the project evaluation stage, and they will also play an important role in the monitoring of the accepted projects.

(ii) A set of common KPIs which assesses future performance of UKF in are the following. They serve as orientation for the overall success of the UKF programs.

<i>Indicator Name</i>	<i>Baseline</i>	<i>End Target</i>
<b>Indicator Five:</b> Total value of projects in the pipeline for funding by EU Funds originated from UKF funded projects (in million Euro)	EUR 0 million	24.00
<b>Indicator Six:</b> Total value of projects funded by UKF and HAMAG-BICRO under the Project sub-financing (in million Euro)	EUR 2.5 million	19.50
<i>Intermediate Indicator Name</i>	<i>Baseline</i>	<i>End Target</i>
<b>Intermediate Result indicator Five:</b> Number of foreign research institutions collaborated with by UKF projects	0	49.00
<b>Intermediate Result indicator Six:</b> Total value of projects committed and financed by UKF (in million Euros)	0	4.60
<b>Intermediate Result indicator Seven:</b> Number of projects financed by Young Researcher and Professionals program by UKF	0	0
<b>Intermediate Result indicator Eight:</b> Number of collaboration projects between Diaspora and homeland researchers by UKF	0	32
<b>Intermediate Result indicator Eleven:</b> The share of UKF grants submitted by female applicants and the share of HAMAG-BICRO's projects submitted by female applicants (in %)	20% <sup>5</sup>	

<sup>5</sup> (\*) STP II does not have explicit gender goals. The suggested indicators will allow the monitoring the results of the project from a gender perspective. However, no gender-oriented targets are proposed.

<b>Intermediate Result indicator Twelve:</b> The share of UKF grants assigned to female researchers and the share of HAMAG-BICRO's projects assigned to female applicants (in %)	10% <sup>6</sup>	
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**Figure 4: Key Performance Indicators for UKF**

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<sup>6</sup> (\*) STP II does not have explicit gender goals. The suggested indicators will allow the monitoring the results of the project from a gender perspective. However, no gender-oriented targets are proposed.



## 11 Financials

- (i) As specified in the Paragraph 7 of these Guidelines, the UKF's approved projects will be financed according to the signed UKF Grant Agreement between the Beneficiary, project leader, CSF and MSE. Payments are approved by the UKF Program Manager and by STPII Coordinator and carried out by PMU. Payment modality will be regulated by UKF Grant Agreement and will depend on type of grant received.
- (ii) The resources envisioned within Second Science and Technology Project for UKF programs are 4,37 million EUR. The sub-financing expenses are based on the estimation of the average costs per individual grants and their anticipated duration. The allocation of expenses between programs will depend on the quality of projects received within single call for proposal.
- (iii) In September 2016, additional allocation of 400.000 EUR has been ensured for the new grant "My first collaboration" within "Cooperability program". Financial resources for projects within "My first collaboration" Grant will be available upon successful second restructuring of the Second Science and Technology Project (STP II).
- (iv) In 2018, unspent funds from Cooperability program have been allocated from Cooperability program to Connectivity program.

	<i>Maximum Grant size (EUR)</i>	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	<i>Total UKF contribution (EUR)</i>
Grant		Amount disbursed	Amount disbursed	Amount disbursed	Amount disbursed	Amount disbursed	Amount disbursed	Amount on disposal		No of projects/ Amount
Crossing Borders - <b>Cooperability Program</b>	200.000	815.652	1.292.192	509.251	1.106.563	502.703				26 4.226.360
My First Collaboration - <b>Cooperability Program</b>	40.000					288.561	133.008			12 421.568
Research in Industry and Academia - <b>Young Researchers and Professionals Program</b>	25.000	2.625	5.259	2.648						1 10.532
Gaining Experience - <b>Connectivity Program</b>	10.000							108.000*		10* 108.000
<b>TOTAL sub-financing EUR</b>		<b>818.277</b>	<b>1.297.451</b>	<b>511.899</b>	<b>1.106.563</b>	<b>791.263</b>	<b>133.008</b>	<b>108.000</b>		<b>4.766.460</b>

\*The amount that will be on disposal for the projects as well as the number of projects that will be financed within Connectivity program will depend on the undisbursed funds and funds returned by the projects financed within Cooperability program.

**Figure 5: UKF Sub-financing component within Second Science and Technology Project**

## **Annex 1: Consent of project leader to ensure responsible conduct of research and scientific integrity<sup>7</sup>**

For distribution of funds of Unity through Knowledge Fund (UKF)) only those research project applications that conform to the highest international standards of scientific integrity and personal and institutional responsibility in conduct of research and comply with positive regulations of the Republic of Croatia will be taken into consideration.

Responsible person of Administering institution and project leader guarantee the implementation and conformity of the research with the stated above in accordance with the UKF Grant Agreement with the MSE and CSF, as well as by the project leader signing both the Project Proposal Form and the Consent of Project Leader document.

Only research that meets all the listed criteria of scientific integrity, collegiality, protection of human subjects, protection and care of research animals, integrity toward institution, and social responsibility is considered responsibly conducted research.

### **1. Scientific integrity**

- a) All researchers on the project are competent in the field of research, as validly substantiated by relevant evidence (letters of reference and curriculum vitae) whose authenticity and validity is guaranteed by the signature of the project leader.
- b) The right to research results, intellectual, proprietary and other rights to the amount or to the relative proportion in which the Ministry funds or participates in funding the research project shall be regulated by the Contract on Financing.
- c) Analysis of the data resulting from the project is correct and in accordance with scientific methodology
- d) Research results in whatever form presented consistently correspond to the research conducted and there is no fabrication, correction or plagiarizing of data, results, ideas, procedures or words in the procedures of proposing, conducting, revising or presenting the research. Research idea and aim stated in the project application are the original work and do not contain in whole or in any part unauthorized appropriation of another person's ideas, data, results or words.
- e) Only original copyright work in direct connection with the research shall be considered a research report resulting from the research/project, which excludes any form of scientific misconduct, such as auto-plagiarizing and duplicate publications.

### **2. Collegiality**

- a) Authors and co-authors of all research reports and published work resulting from the research/project fulfil the following criteria: (i) development of research idea and substantial contribution to the concept and design of the research; (ii) data collection, data analysis, or interpretation of research results; and (iii) writing and designing a research report and published work or providing critical revision and final approval of the research report and published work. Authors should fulfill at least one condition from each (i), (ii), or (iii) category.
- b) Exchange of information is free, as is use of equipment which is publicly funded.

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<sup>7</sup> Prepared according to international documents and regulations by Vedran Katavić from the Zagreb University School of Medicine, Lidija Bilić-Zulle from the Rijeka University School of Medicine, and Mladen Petrovečki from the Ministry of Science and Education (MSE), approved by the National Council for Science.

- c) Mentor relationships arising from the research/project and respective obligations of the mentors and mentees rest on mutual respect and agreement on intellectual ownership of results, procedures, patents, and similar.

### 3. Protection of human subjects

Where possible, every research/project should be approved by a relevant body – institutional ethics committees or similar – where adherence to all relevant international and local laws, regulations, and directives on protection of human subjects is required. In addition to the approvals from competent ethics committees, by this Consent the project leader on the project/research guarantees as follows:

- a) voluntary participation of all human subjects
- b) informed consent from human subjects
- c) confidentiality, secrecy, and anonymity of information on human subjects
- d) cost/benefit ratio favorable to human subjects

### 4. Protection/Care of research animals

If experimental animals are used in the research/project, the project leader guarantees the strict abidance to the Animal Protection Act (Narodne novine, No. 135/06) and explicitly describes and confirms the abidance to the Act along with all relevant documentation on procedures, protocols, institution, animal enclosures, manner, and competency in keeping live experimental animals and certificates of competent institutions (ethics committees, authorized veterinarian, and similar).

### 5. Integrity in relation to institution

By signing this Consent, the project leaders guarantees as follows:

- a) absence of financial or proprietary conflict of interest and absence of conflict of interest in relation to the parent institution
- b) absence of conflict of loyalty/commitment to parent institution while conducting the research/project, absence of research conducted for private or public institution the scope of which is broader than the scope of regular work or completely prevents the project leader from performing regular work;
- c) familiarity with rules/directions/statutes of the institution proposed as the research site.

### 6. Social Responsibility

By signing this Consent, the project leader assumes the social responsibility and:

- a) guarantees adherence to the highest ecological norms and provides a detailed description of environmental (and social) impact and treatment of toxic and other waste produced during research
- b) guarantees that all procedures and materials used in the research/project are pursuant to the positive regulations of the Republic of Croatia

I, (name of the project leader), the project leader understand all instructions, obligations, and responsibilities relating to public funding of the proposed research project and hereby oblige myself to conduct the proposed research/project adhering to the highest professional standards of which only some are stated above as well as to all positive legislation, rules, and regulations relating to the area and field and subjects/objects of the stated research.

By signing this agreement I confirm that I have read, understood, and accepted everything stated above and that the proposed research/project is in accordance with the obligations, duties, and responsibilities stated, for which I accept full moral, material, and criminal liability.

## Annex 2: Code of conduct for Evaluators

(i) The task of an evaluator is to participate in a confidential, fair and unbiased evaluation of each proposal according to the procedures described in the UKF Operations Manual and in conditions of specific UKF program. He/she must use his/her best endeavors to achieve this and deliver a high quality of work.

(ii) The evaluator works as an independent person. He/she is deemed to work in a personal capacity and, in performing the work, does not represent any organisation.

(iii) The evaluator commits him/herself to strict confidentiality and impartiality concerning his/her tasks. If an evaluator has a direct or indirect connection with a proposal, or any other interest in some way connected with a proposal, or has any other allegiance which may impair his/her neutrality with respect to a proposal, he/she must declare such facts to UKF Secretariat as soon as he/she becomes aware of this. UKF Steering Committee ensures that, where the nature of any connection is such that it could threaten the neutrality of the evaluator, he/she does not participate in the evaluation of that proposal, and, if necessary, competing proposals.

(iv) Evaluators may not discuss any proposal with others, including other evaluators except during the formal discussion at the meetings moderated by UKF Secretariat personnel.

(v) Evaluators may not communicate with proposers. No proposal may be modified during the evaluation session. Evaluators' advice to the UKF Steering Committee on any proposal may be communicated only to the UKF personnel, and in no way to the proposers or to any other person.

(vi) Evaluators are not allowed to disclose the names of other evaluators participating in the evaluation. The UKF Steering Committee makes public lists of names of appointed evaluators at regular intervals without indicating which proposals they have evaluated.

(vii) The evaluator will be held personally responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of any documents or electronic files sent and returning, erasing or destroying all confidential documents or files upon completing the evaluation as instructed. Evaluators may look for further information (for example through the internet, specialised databases, etc.) in order to allow them to complete their examination of the proposals. Evaluators must not show the contents of proposals or information on proposers to third parties (e.g. colleagues, students, etc.). Above all, evaluators must not make contact with proposers.

(viii) Evaluators are required to comply strictly with any rules defined by the UKF personnel for ensuring the confidentiality of the evaluation. Failure to fulfill these rules may result in exclusion from the immediate and future evaluation processes.

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I, confirm that I have read, understood and accepted the Code of Conduct for Evaluators related to the performance of the evaluation tasks.

I declare that I have not submitted, nor am I, to my knowledge, directly or indirectly involved in any proposal submitted for evaluation under the currently open UKF Calls for Proposals.

I will inform UKF Secretariat immediately if I discover any conflict of interest, direct or indirect, with any proposal that I am asked to evaluate or which is the subject of discussion in any evaluation meeting at which I am present.

I declare that I will not disclose any detail of the evaluation process and its outcomes or of any proposal submitted for evaluation. I understand that I will be held personally responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of any documents or electronic files sent and for returning, erasing or destroying all confidential documents or files upon completing the evaluation, unless otherwise instructed.