

Croatian Science Foundation  
Second Science and Technology Project (STP II)  
Loan No. 8258 -HR

**Unity through Knowledge Fund**

announces

**Call for Proposals**

**CONNECTIVITY PROGRAM  
Gaining Experience Grant (2A)**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

The Government of Croatia and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development signed the Loan Agreement for Second Science and Technology Project (further in text: STP II) on May 22, 2013. STP II goals are to support Croatia in the absorption of EU funds in the research and innovation sector by improving selected public sector organizations' capacity to qualify for and manage EU Funds in the area of research and innovation and to develop a pipeline of public and private R&D projects, including research groups, that could qualify for financing through EU structural funds.

**2. ABOUT UNITY THROUGH KNOWLEDGE FUND**

The Unity through Knowledge Fund (hereinafter: UKF or the Fund) has mission to unite scientific and professional potential in Croatia and Diaspora in development of the knowledge based society.

In order to achieve this task, UKF strives towards the following goals: fostering internationally competitive research, fostering research that provides new values to Croatian economy and supporting projects that help developing research infrastructure in Croatia.

This Call for Proposals (further in text: Call) sets out the terms and conditions under which the Gaining Experience Grant within Connectivity Program (further in text: Grant) shall be awarded together with the following documents:

*Connectivity Program, Gaining Experience Grant - Application Form 2018,  
Connectivity Program, Gaining Experience Grant - Curriculum Vitae Form 2018 –*

*Project leader, Connectivity Program, Gaining Experience Grant - Curriculum Vitae Form 2018 – Project co-leader, Connectivity Program, Gaining Experience Grant - Instructions for Applicants 2018 (<http://www.ukf.hr/default.aspx?id=116> ) and UKF Guidelines and Procedures - Second Science and Technology Project (STP II) 2018. (<http://www.ukf.hr/default.aspx?id=7> )*

### 3. ABOUT CONNECTIVITY PROGRAM

The program provides support for young or more experienced scientists and experts from either homeland or diaspora, for the visits to the prominent institutions abroad or for visits to Republic of Croatia with a goal to improve science and technology in Croatia.

Program supports the mobility of scientists and experts to create new values for Croatian science, technology and economy. The new value can be in the form of an important expert contribution: a) to increase international competitiveness of R&D in Croatia through attraction of foreign investment, b) innovative activities that stimulate the development and growth of the Croatian economy, c) participation in other activities needed to improve Croatian scientific and technological infrastructure.

### 4. ABOUT GAINING EXPERIENCE GRANT

The objective of the Gaining Experience Grant is to give an opportunity to outstanding scientists and experts to visit the best R&D centres abroad to establish cooperation and acquire new skills needed to improve science and technology in Croatia.

The visit must focus on: a) establishing or improving an international joint project with a goal to attract investment or prepare a grant application; b) the transfer of necessary knowledge that contributes to the strengthening of the market potential of a knowledge-based enterprise c); the transfer of the knowledge and skills necessary to create some other added values for science and technology.

### 5. GRANT AMOUNTS AND DURATION OF THE VISIT

This grant is awarded in the form of a fellowship for professional training and scientific research. **Proposed research visits are to last from 31 days at minimum up to 6 months. Research visits financed within this Call must be finalized until December 1., 2019.**

**Maximum amount requested from the Fund cannot be higher than 74,000 HRK. The maximum monthly amount of funds requested from the Fund for**

**accommodation and personal needs shall not exceed 11,000 HRK, while the maximum amount of funds requested from the Fund for travel cannot exceed 9,000 HRK.**

Total amount foreseen for this Call for proposals within Connectivity Program, Gaining Experience Grant equals 800,000 HRK. Total amount of funds awarded in this Call for proposals will depend on the quality of the applications.

## 6. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

### **WHO CAN APPLY?**

Applicants shall be outstanding scientists, who live and work in Croatia and have obtained a PhD up to 10 years from the date of opening of this Call for proposals. In case the applicant has obtained two PhD degrees, the period from obtaining the first PhD degree is counted. Period spent for maternity and parental leave is exempted.

Applicant must submit the application in cooperation with the outstanding and experienced scientist or expert who lives and works abroad (co-applicant).

Candidates (applicants) invited for negotiations on visit proposals will have to submit:

- a. PhD degree certificate
- b. In a case of above mentioned exemption Certificate of maternity and parental leave

Applicant shall be already employed at the Administering organization (Beneficiary). In addition, Beneficiary has to commit that the applicant will have employment contract for the whole time of project duration.

**At the time of opening** of this Call for proposals the applicant cannot be project leader or co-leader on any ongoing project of the Fund.

### **WHICH RESEARCH AREAS ARE ELIGIBLE?**

Proposed research in all scientific disciplines is eligible in accordance with "Ordinance on the scientific and artistic areas, fields and branches" ("Pravilnik o znanstvenim i umjetničkim područjima, poljima i granama" OG 118/2009, 82/12, 32/13). Proposed research project should clearly demonstrate the benefit to Croatian science, technology and economy.

### **WHICH LEGAL ENTITY SHOULD BE INVOLVED?**

The Beneficiary (Administering organization) is a legal entity registered in the

Republic of Croatia and included in the Register of scientific organizations.

Apart from the Beneficiary, Host organization (Partner organization from abroad) must be involved and all other legal entities from Croatia or abroad may be involved in the application.

The applicant and the co-applicant are responsible for proposing and agreeing suitable arrangements with all participating organizations.

#### **WHAT ARE THE BUDGET REQUIREMENTS?**

At the time of project application, **matching funding has to be secured and shall amount to at least 20% of the amount requested from the UKF. 20% of the matching funding of the amount requested from UKF shall be in form of financial contribution (cash contribution) and/or in form of in kind contributions (goods or services) needed for research. Please note that salaries of scientists employed at the Administering organization are not an allowable contribution.** Any existing or planned financial support from the Ministry of Science and Education, Croatian Science Foundation as well as other sources of financing from the State Budget which are intended for science and technology development are not eligible as matching funding for this Grant.

#### **THE APPLICATION SHOULD CONTAIN FOLLOWING LETTERS OF COMMITMENT:**

1. Letter of commitment of the Beneficiary (Administering organization) to accept and administer the proposed visit, which includes: administration of funds, engagement of their current employees and facilities, providing technical and other support according to proposed plan of the visit. The Administering organization should accept all responsibilities originating from and connected to the proposed research. The letter must confirm that the applicant will be employed for the whole duration of the visit.
2. Letter of commitment of a Partner organization from abroad (Host organization) to support the proposed visit, to accept all responsibilities originating from and connected to the proposed research including hosting the applicant and to support and allow the co-applicant's engagement on the proposed research for the whole duration of the visit.

The letter must also contain a plan of professional development in science of the applicant during his/her stay abroad.

3. Letter(s) of commitment of other partner organizations (if included) to participate in the implementation. Legal organizations involved must support and allow the collaborators' engagement in the proposed visit in accordance

with stated in the proposal and accept all responsibilities originating from and connected to the proposed research.

4. Letter(s) of financial commitment for matching funding in the amount of at least 20% of the amount requested from the UKF in form of in kind contributions (goods or services) and/or financial contributions (cash contributions) needed for research. The financial commitment can be given by any or more organizations involved in the project.

## 7. GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF HOW FUND WILL FINANCE PARTICULAR PROJECTS

General principle of how UKF will finance a project is that the project is co-financed by the Fund under the condition that minimum of 20% of the amount requested from UKF is secured from other sources.

The funds awarded through this Call to a beneficiary, who is legal or natural person and by engaging in economic activity participates in trade of goods and services (Article 2 of the State Aid Act (Official Gazette, No 47/14., 69/17.)) are considered to be de minimis aid and thus the beneficiary, who is the recipient of de minimis aid shall act in accordance with the national legislation on state aid and is obliged to declare the state aids granted to the Ministry of Finance in accordance with the provisions of the legislation governing this legal area.

As stated in Article 2 of the Law on State Aid (Official Gazette, no.47/14., 69/17), de minimis aid is regulated by existing European Commission Regulation, which regulates de minimis aid (EC no. 1407/2013 on the application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty on the functioning of the EU on de minimis aid) as aid which due to its amount does not distort or threaten to distort competition, does not affect trade between EU member states and does not constitute State aid under Article 107 paragraph 1 of the Treaty on the functioning of the European Union (TFEU). The total amount of de minimis aid to be granted by the Member State to a single enterprise shall not exceed 200,000 EUR over any period of three fiscal years.

## 8. EVALUATION CRITERIA

All proposals are evaluated against the fixed set of criteria stated in this Call (see below). The application should address all points stated in these criteria with measurable and provable information. In line with the *UKF Guidelines and Procedures - Second Science and Technology Project (STP II) 2018* the Steering Committee evaluates all applications, which are formally compliant with the Call propositions.

Specific assessment criteria for this Grant are described below:

- i. SCIENTIFIC/TECHNOLOGICAL NEED AND ADDED VALUE OF THE VISIT, ASSESSED BY ALL FOUR OF THE FOLLOWING:
  - a. Scientific/technological significance of the visit and included organizations
  - b. Feasibility of the goals, of the work plan and suitability of the financial plan
  - c. Expected quality of the mentorship at the Host organization
  - d. Potential contribution to Croatian science, technology and economy
  
- ii. INNOVATION POTENTIAL AND EXPERTISE OF THE VISITOR, ASSESSED BY ALL OF THE FOLLOWING:
  - a. Previous successes, achievements and overall career development
  - b. Potential for professional development and future scientific excellence of the applicant
  
- iii. VISIT'S SIGNIFICANCE FOR ACHIEVING FURTHER CO-FINANCING ASSESSED BY ONE OF FOLLOWING:
  - a. Prospect for starting or developing collaborations to compete for EU/international funds
  - b. Prospect for starting or developing collaborations with private sector

In calculation of the final mark, all criteria have equal importance.

## 9. GUIDELINES FOR VISIT PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Visit proposal should contain all filled-in forms and letters and there are additional guidelines for filling-in the forms in accompanying *Connectivity Program, Gaining Experience Grant - Instructions for Applicants 2018*. (<http://www.ukf.hr/default.aspx?id=116>).

**To be formally eligible to this Call, a visit proposal must fulfil the following:**

- must be submitted and locked by the deadline stipulated in this Call
- the visit may last from 31 days up to 6 months
- the single grant (amount of funds requested from UKF) cannot exceed 74,000 HRK
- must include the following filled-in forms (on the official forms, which are available on the Fund's website or on request):

1. *Connectivity program, Gaining Experience Grant- Application Form 2018* – must be signed by the applicant and co-applicant and the responsible person of the Beneficiary (Administering organization)
  2. *Connectivity program, Gaining Experience Grant - Curriculum Vitae Form 2018 - Project leader*
  3. *Connectivity program, Gaining Experience Grant - Curriculum Vitae Form 2018 - Project co-leader*
- must include the following letters which include all requested information stated in the chapter 6. Eligibility criteria of this Call and are signed by the authorized persons:
    1. Letter of commitment and support of the Beneficiary (Administering organization)
    2. Letter of commitment and support of the Host organization
    3. Letters of commitment and support of other partner organizations involved in the project (if any)
    4. Letter(s) of financial commitment for the matching funding
  - **the visit proposal (ALL forms and letters) must be submitted in English language or equally in both Croatian and English language**
  - if the visit proposal is submitted equally in both Croatian and English language, to be formally eligible in this Call it must include all forms and letters, according to the chapter 9. Guidelines for visit proposal submission of this Call, in both languages

Check list for the formal eligibility criteria for the Call is available at (<http://www.ukf.hr/default.aspx?id=116> ).

**The signed visit proposal (all forms and letters)** must be electronically submitted no later than **February 1, 2019 until midnight** using the web interface available at UKF website (<http://www.ukf.hr/default.aspx?id=39>).

The applicants will receive a notice on submittal of visit proposal **after they lock it**, by electronic mail to the e-mail address provided on applicant's registration.

**Important:** The notice on submittal of visit proposal indicates that the application is locked and not that it includes all required documents, which are listed above.

**By submitting this visit proposal applicant accepts to provide the information on the project to the Fund when requested and to be available**

**for subsequent updates, within the reasonable limits, for the purpose of evaluating the impact of the program.**

## 10. FURTHER INFORMATION

Letters of rejecting or accepting proposals, with marks, will be sent by electronic email to all applicants within three months after the Call for proposals deadline. The accepted visit proposals are subject of further negotiations and final approval procedure, according to the *UKF Guidelines and Procedures - Second Science and Technology Project (STP II) 2018*.

Applicants, who enter the negotiations will be notified on final decision on financing after the negotiations. The summaries of successful projects will be published on the UKF's website ([www.ukf.hr](http://www.ukf.hr)). All decisions of the UKF Steering Committee are final and are not subject to further revisions. Any claim or inquiry in a case of administrative error of the UKF Secretariat should be addressed to the contact persons at the Unity through Knowledge Fund (UKF): e-mail: [office@ukf.hr](mailto:office@ukf.hr); phone: +385 1 2352 685; address: Unity through Knowledge Fund, HRZZ, Ilica 24, HR-10000 Zagreb, Croatia within three weeks from the date of the Decision on incompliance with eligibility criteria.