

REPUBLIC OF CROATIA
Ministry of Science, Education and Sports
Science and Technology Project
Loan Nr. 7320-HR

Unity through Knowledge Fund

Announces

Call for Proposals

YOUNG RESEARCHERS AND PROFESSIONALS PROGRAM Research in Industry and Academia Grant (3C)

1. INTRODUCTION

The Republic of Croatia received funds through the World Bank for the Science and Technology Project (World Bank Loan Nr. 7320-HR). The Ministry of Science, Education and Sports has an ultimate objective to improve business infrastructural environment for science & technology through the Project. Within this framework, the Ministry has established the Unity through Knowledge Fund (UKF) for promotion of professional exchanges and contacts and joint projects between Croatian scientists and researchers working abroad with their Croatian colleagues.

2. ABOUT UNITY THROUGH KNOWLEDGE FUND

Under the motto Connectivity – Cooperability – Creativity, the Unity through knowledge Fund has mission to unite scientific and professional potential in Croatia and Diaspora in the 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 develop science and technology infrastructure.

This *Call for Proposals* together with *Young Researchers Program, 3C Grant – Application Form 2009*, *Young Researchers Cooperability Program, 3C Grant – Curriculum Vitae Form 2009*, *Young Researchers Cooperability Program, 3C Grant – Instructions for Applicants 2009* and the *UKF Guidelines and Procedures 2007* (www.ukf.hr), sets out the terms and conditions on which the Grant is awarded.

3. ABOUT YOUNG RESEARCHERS AND PROFESSIONALS PROGRAM

Young Researchers and Professionals Program foster young researchers and professionals both from Croatia and Diaspora within all aspects of their professional advancement. Program is committed to support “brain-gain” to Croatian innovative small and medium enterprises, universities and research institutions.

The program goal is to unlock the innovation potential by allowing young scientists and experts to lead projects autonomously. Program encompasses projects of researchers and professionals at postgraduate and post doctorate level, up to 5 years after doctorate. Program supports: (a) post-doctorate advancement of top young scientists and experts in order to become future research leaders, (b) excellent young scientists and experts of Croatian origin from abroad to start independent projects in Croatia, and (c) scientific and developmental projects, of young scientists



and professionals, which incorporate cooperation between academia and industry or industry and Diaspora. Projects should enable transfer of knowledge, skills and investments into Croatia.

Fund supports research and development projects from all area of sciences, medicine, engineering, and humanities on competitive basis, according to the below stated criteria. The total amount foreseen for this support in 2009 is 1.277.500, 00 HRK (cca. 175.000,00 EUR).

4. ABOUT "RESEARCH IN INDUSTRY AND ACADEMIA" GRANT (3C)

The objective of the "Research in Industry and Academia" Grant 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. Eligible candidates shall come from Croatian public scientific institutions or Diaspora and have MSc. or PhD degree. In addition, grant supports engagement of excellent young researchers and professionals in Croatian public scientific institutions. Eligible candidates shall come from Croatian industry and have MSc. or PhD degree.

The 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 research institutions.

The projects should contribute to:

(1) creating/improving of the new product/process/service;

(2) increase of competitiveness of Croatian economy through development of new hi-tech solutions;

(3) joint participation of industry and academia in international or European R&D projects.

All companies with head office in Croatia and public scientific research institutions may apply if they fulfill requirements from this Call. **Guarantee for co financing shall be provided by a company.**

Total individual grant cannot be higher than 280 000 HRK (cca. 33.000 EUR) and proposed projects can last between 6 and 24 months.

This grant is opening new opportunities for cooperation between academia and industry, foster the exchange of people and ideas, advance innovations within industrial R&D projects and develop highly skilled professionals.

5. INSTRUMENTS THAT CAN BE FINANCED

The salary expenses in the amount of 70 % of gross salary during the first year of the project and 50 % of gross salary during the second year of the project. The highest possible salary co financed by the Fund will be in the amount of 10,000 HRK net per month.

If the candidate's salary should be higher than 10.000 HRK net per month, the interested companies must, besides the mandatory co financing in the amount of 30 % of gross salary during the first year of the project and 50 % of gross salary during the second year of the project ensure additional co financing in order to achieve salary raise.

6. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA AND ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS TO BE SUMMITTED

ELIGIBLE CANDIDATES? For this grant a company may nominate the candidates who are excellent young researchers or professionals who have achieved their master in science or doctoral degree



within last 5 years (2004 at earliest), or will achieve it before the start of the support. Candidates should not be more than 36 years old at the time of the application (allowance can be made for compulsory military service and childcare).

The eligible candidate has to show hers/his potential as a future research leader by his excellence, innovativeness, commitment and previous success. She/he should be able to develop hi-tech solutions in industry and in public scientific institutions.

1. Croatian candidates who wish to participate in industrial projects during the period of application for this Grant, must be employed in Croatian public scientific research institutions (public institutes, universities and polytechnics)

2. Candidates from abroad who wish to participate in industrial projects in Croatia during the period of application for this grant can be employed either in academic institutions or in industry and must be of Croatian origin (they do not have to hold Croatian citizenship)

Candidates (listed under item 1 and 2) **cannot apply** if they are in any employment relationship with a company, or have, after obtaining a MSc. degree or doctorate been employed for a period longer than six months in the Croatian industry or have received an employment offer in a company requesting a grant for them which is not conditioned by the Fund's grant.

3. Croatian candidates who wish to participate in projects in public scientific research institutions in Croatia during the period of application for this grant must be employed in Croatian industry. After this project has been concluded the candidates must return to their mother -company.

The candidate (listed under item 1, 2 and 3) cannot be the project leader on any other project of the Unity through Knowledge Fund or cannot be involved within any other application submitted to the currently open calls of the Young Researchers Program.

ELIGIBLE TECHNOLOGY AREAS? All technology areas are eligible. Proposed visit must clearly demonstrate benefit for Croatian economy, natural environment, cultural heritage and society.

ELIGIBLE COMPANIES? For this support may apply companies and Croatian public scientific research institutions, which will administer the project. The company should provide all necessary conditions for implementation of all proposed research and development activities.

The eligible company should be registered in Croatia according to law. Company should be at least 50% in private ownership, must not have outstanding debts to the state, should not be in financial difficulties (according to the definition by the state subventions legislation), its account must not be blocked for more then 30 days in the last 6 months, and should fulfill the criteria of solvency.

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS TO BE SUBMITTED?

1) If a candidate from public scientific research institution in Croatia or a candidate from the Diaspora wishes to join a company in Croatia for an undetermined period of time:

- a separately written commitment of the administering company to host the candidate, to co-finance the candidate (with amount), to administer the proposed project, to report towards the Fund, and specifying the type of the support (technical, administrative and other). The company (**applicant**) should accept all legal and other responsibilities originating from and connected to the



proposed research project. The authorized person of the administering company applies for the grant and is responsible for proposing and agreeing suitable arrangements with the candidate.

A company may apply separately for more than one candidate, and also for part-time employed candidates.

2) If a candidate from public scientific research institution in Croatia or a candidate from the Diaspora wishes to join a company for a determined period of time and has taken a sabbatical during the grant period, in this way retaining his/her previous employment:

- a letter of commitment of the candidate's main employer (in Croatia or abroad) stating the support for the candidate's employment in company with an explanation of the candidate's status during the implementation of the project and after its' conclusion.
- a separately written commitment of the administering company to host the candidate, to co-finance the candidate (with amount), to administer the proposed project, to report towards the Fund, and specifying the type of the support (technical, administrative and other). The company (**applicant**) should accept all legal and other responsibilities originating from and connected to the proposed research project. The authorized person of the administering company applies for the grant and is responsible for proposing and agreeing suitable arrangements with the candidate.

A company may apply separately for more than one candidate, and also for part-time employed candidates.

- a joint letter of the main employer and the company relating to the candidate's professional and personal development plan

3) If the candidate from Croatian industry wishes to join a public scientific research institution in Croatia for a determined period of time:

- a letter of commitment from the company containing the support for the candidate's employment at the scientific research institution as well as the financial support (stating the amount of co-financing), with the explanation of the candidate's status during the implementation of the project and its' conclusion
- a separately written commitment of the administering public scientific research institution to host the candidate to administer the proposed project, to report towards the Fund, and specifying the type of the support (technical, administrative and other). The institution (**applicant**) should accept all legal and other responsibilities originating from and connected to the proposed research project. The authorized person of the administering institution applies for the grant and is responsible for proposing and agreeing suitable arrangements with the candidate.

An institution may apply separately for more than one candidate, and also for part-time employed candidates.

- a joint letter of the public scientific research institute and the mother- company



relating to the candidate's plan of professional and personal development

WHAT ARE THE FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS? The total UKF contribution for the salary of a candidate amounts max. 168.000 HRK yearly. The proposed project should have an additional support (matching funding) provided by other sources in amount of 30 % of gross salary during the first year of project and 50% of gross salary during the second year of project.

This support is approved for one year, and can be prolonged for another year, subject to positive report evaluation.

The amount of the company's matching funding is one of the evaluation criteria, and **the proposals with the higher amount of the matching contribution are valued positively** (cf. Evaluation criteria). In addition the minimum obligatory contribution to the salary, as matching funding other financial commitments for the candidate are valued as well, i.e. training costs, insurance, other benefits...

Approved grants are paid in six-month installments in advance.

7. ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

All proposals are evaluated against the fixed set of criteria stated bellow. The proposal should address the points stated in these criteria with measurable and provable information. The UKF Steering Committee will review the proposals and recommend the projects for financing. Steering committee will nominate anonymous, internationally recognized and independent experts to evaluate every eligible proposal. The Steering Committee will assure that its members and evaluators are neither in direct nor in indirect conflict of interest (cf. *The UKF Steering Committee's Procedures for Evaluations of Proposals*). The Approval Committee will finally approve or reject the recommendations of the Steering Committee. The evaluation procedure is described in detail in the enclosed *UKF Procedures and Guidelines 2007*.

The scientific/technological excellence of the proposal and the innovation potential of the candidate are prerequisites for awarding the grant. The contribution to the Fund's goals – international competitiveness, and potential to provide benefit to Croatian society – is a cornerstone of the assessment.

Specific assessment criteria for this Grant are described below and they are to be assessed by independent experts. The relative importance of the each criterion is under the authority of the Steering Committee.

- i. TECHNOLOGICAL/ECONOMIC MERIT OF THE PROJECT, ASSESSED BY ALL OF THE FOLLOWING:
 - a. Technological significance of the proposed project
 - b. Clarity and measurability of the goals and feasibility of the work plan
 - c. Potential contribution for raising the company's competitiveness
- ii. MERIT OF THE CANDIDATE, ASSESSED BY ALL OF THE FOLLOWING:
 - a. Previous successes, demonstrated innovativeness and overall career development
 - b. Potential for professional development of the applicant in the company
 - d. Contribution of the candidate to the competitiveness and innovativeness of the company
- iii. FINANCIAL COMMITMENT OF THE COMPANY FOR THE CANDIDATE:
 - a. Contribution to the candidate's salary and other financial support



8. GUIDELINES FOR APPLICATION

Proposal shall be submitted on the official forms: *UKF 3C Research in Industry Grant - Application Form 2009* and *UKF 3C Research in Industry Grant – Curriculum Vitae Form 2009* which are available on the Fund's website or on request. Proposal should contain all details and annexes as described there and in accompanying *UKF 3C Research in Industry Grant – Instructions for Applicants 2007*. The proposal must be written in English and must be electronically signed by the project applicant and the responsible persons of the legal entity involved.

The proposal must be submitted in electronic format (rtf, doc, odt or pdf format) using the UKF web application, which can be accessed through the UKF website www.ukf.hr, together with all relevant electronically signed annexes.

The call for proposals will be open till the revocation by the UKF Steering Committee.

9. FURTHER INFORMATION

Letters rejecting or accepting proposals, with statements of opinion, will be sent to all applicants within three months after the application (excluding the periods from 15 July and 31 August and from 20 December and 7 January, according to law). The accepted proposals are subject of further negotiations and final approval

The Unity through Knowledge Fund regards all received proposals and information as confidential, and therefore announces only names of successful candidates and summaries of successful projects, after the signing of contracts. None of proposals are publicly announced during the evaluation, but the information collected may be passed to third parties for assessment purposes, who are obliged to accept the *Code of conduct for independent experts* (www.ukf.hr).

Please note that the submission of project proposal does not establish any form of legal claim or responsibility of Ministry of Science, Education and Sports. All decisions of the UKF Committees are final and are not subject to further claims or revisions, with exception of administrative mistakes.

Any inquiries should be addressed to the UKF Secretariat; e-mail: office@ukf.hr; phone: +385 1 23 52 685; address: UKF, Planinska 1, HR-10000 Zagreb, Croatia.