

Call for researcher-initiated projects: enhanced funding with renewed terms

As of February 15, the NRDI Office published a call to invite researcher-initiated exploratory research projects, with funds of HUF 7 billion (exceeding EUR 22.5 million) in total, much over the budgets allocated for that purpose in the previous years. To enable more efficient use of the funds, several new terms have been introduced into the 2016 call for proposals aimed to encourage fundamental research.

Under the new call, applicants can apply for a funding of maximum HUF 1 million per month on the average, for a maximum period of 48 months. The new terms will enable a more flexible planning of funds to be spent on personnel expenses, assets and materials costs. These modifications aim to help researchers applying from different fields of science with varying funding needs, to develop their proposals with a cost-plan that is truly tailored to the specific research topic. Within the decision-making process, expert groups will put a particular focus on evaluating the feasibility of the cost-plan submitted as part of the research proposal.

Compared to previous years, the coordination of funding performed by the NRDI Office resulted in a 15 percent increase in grants allocated to fundamental researches in 2015, and the budget for researcher-initiated project proposals will be increased by further 17 percent this year. In addition to the improved grant intensity, another benefit is that the host institutions of the given research projects may have an easier and quicker access to the awarded funds.

Peer-reviews by anonymous experts, professional panels and disciplinary councils continue to take a responsible role in a transparent assessment process on the basis of scientific excellence, when public financing is awarded to researcher-initiated project proposals.

The funding programme portfolio of the NRDI Office includes further calls for proposals designed to encourage exploratory research to promote cooperation between research organisations engaging in fundamental researches, on the one hand, and industry players, on the other hand, in research, development and innovation projects, and to facilitate a more efficient utilization of research results as well as to provide special support, through a competitive system, to fields of sciences that have a particular national economic importance.