Rules for Applicants for Projects in the Return Grant Competition

The grant competition for return grants is a competition to support projects implemented on the basis of the project CZ.02.01.01/00/24_037/0013841 Restart VSE and the call within No. 02_24_037 OP JAK Returns (hereinafter referred to as the "Return Grant Competition").

The responsibility for the organisation of the Return Grant Competition at the Prague University of Economics and Business lies within the Internal Grant Agency, which also organises the Internal Grant Competition for projects supported by funds for specific university research, subject to compliance with the conditions set out in No. 02_24_037 and in accordance with the Rules of the Return Grant Scheme of VSE (hereinafter referred to as the "Scheme").

1. Projects Supported in the Return Grant Competition

Applicants in the Return Grant Competition may apply for support under a return grant, which will help ensure that an interruption in the continuity of a research career due to a career break[1] does not result in a significant limitation or even termination of the research career of the employee concerned.

An application for the Return Grant Competition may be submitted by the researcher who meets the following conditions:

- the applicant is a doctoral student or a holder of a Ph.D. degree (or an equivalent thereof),
- the applicant is on **a career break**, or no more than **12 months** have elapsed since the end of the career break **until the date of submission of the application**. The researcher (hereinafter

[1] Definition of a career break

A career break is defined as a period of at least 180 calendar days during which the researcher could not perform research and development activities to the full extent due to:

- Maternity or parental leave; the terms maternity leave and parental leave are used in the sense of their use in the Labour Code.
- Long-term care for a close person, necessary long-term personal care provided to a child until the start of compulsory pre-school education, i.e., until the end of August of the calendar year in which the child reached the age of 5, or to a close person pursuant to Section 22(1) 1 of the Civil Code, who is in a long-term unfavourable state of health pursuant to Section 3(c) of Act No. 108/2006 Sb. on social services, as amended.
- Long-term illness, temporary incapacity for work pursuant to Act No. 187/2006 Sb., on sickness insurance, as amended, and the Labour Code.

During their career break, researchers may simultaneously perform R&D activities in an employment relationship with VSE for a maximum of 0.3 FTE per month, averaged over the number of months of performing this work. At the same time, however, the R&D workload of the researcher on a career break may not exceed 0.5 FTE in any month. The month in which the researcher commences R&D activities at VSE during the career break is taken into account for the purposes of calculating FTE from the date on which the researcher commences this type of work. The month in which the researcher terminates their R&D activities at VSE is taken into account until the date on which this type of work is terminated.

There is no maximum length for the career break.

The career break may be interrupted for a period during which the researcher's personal obstacles have temporarily ceased to exist. The duration of the career break immediately before and after the interruption is added up, provided that the interruption of the career break does not exceed a total of 30 calendar days. The minimum length of the career break of 180 calendar days is extended by the number of calendar days of its interruption (i.e., in the case of an interruption of 30 calendar days, the career break, including all interruptions, must last at least 210 days).

Co-funded by the European Union

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, YOUTH AND SPORTS

referred to also as the "applicant" and subsequently as the "main researcher") shall prove this fact by means of a statement in the application for a return grant,

- if the applicant for a return grant is not an employee of VSE, they shall document the duration of the career break with relevant documents attached to the application for a return grant.

The following applies to the research team for the Return Grant Competition:

- the team may have **a maximum of 5 members (**1 main researcher[2] + 1-4 members of the support expert team), **i.e., the team must have at least 2 members,**
- **the main researcher** must be involved in the return grant with a workload of **0.5-1.0 FTE** in each month of the project implementation,
- the total workload of other team members (excluding the main researcher) must not exceed **2 FTE**,
- the workload of other members (i.e., members of the support team) must correspond to the job description and overall nature of the return grant and may include the following positions: senior researcher, junior researcher (including doctoral students), technical staff (staff providing professional support/operation of the infrastructure used; their job description does not include conducting research), other specialists (staff involved in the implementation of the return grant; their job description does not include conducting research),
- members of the support team are not subject to the condition of returning from a career break.

In addition to the research team, the main researcher **may** use **the following support mechanisms**:

a) **Mentor** (*an employee at VSE who provides, in particular, professional supervision and methodological guidance in the implementation of research activities and the achievement of set objectives. Qualification requirements: the mentor has published several articles in Q1 journals in the field of FORD corresponding to the focus of the grant, has successfully led at least one research project financed from external sources as the main researcher. These may be national projects, such as GAČR or TAČR, or international projects, such as Horizon. Contract research projects are not counted.)*

---

[2] The main researcher is always researcher, either junior or senior:

Junior researcher:

- A researcher who has obtained a Ph.D. or its equivalent (ISCED 8) **no more** than **7 years** ago. This **period does not include** maternity and parental leave, long-term illness (90+ days), care for a family member (90+ days), pre-certification training or military service.
- Applicants must state these facts in their application for a return grant and provide relevant documentation in the event of an audit.
- **The 7-year time limit applies to the date of submission of the return grant application.**

Senior researcher:

- A researcher who has been awarded a PhD or equivalent (ISCED 8) more than 7 years ago.
- This period does not include maternity and parental leave, long-term illness (90+ days), care for a family member (90+ days), pre-certification training or military service.
- Applicants must state these facts in their application for a return grant and provide relevant documentation in the event of an audit.
- **The 7-year time limit applies to the date of submission of the return grant application.**

Ph.D. students may also be eligible to apply for a return grant, even for the entire duration of the project.

b) **Contribution for the care of a child or close relative** *(The purpose is to contribute to the anticipated expenses incurred by the main researcher of the return grant in connection with long-term personal care for a child who has not yet started compulsory pre-school education, or in connection with long-term personal care for a close relative for each calendar month commenced during the implementation of the return grant.)*

c) **Outgoing mobility**[3] *(Mobility must be materially and logically related to the research being carried out. In the host organisation where the mobility is carried out, only non-economic activities (i.e., activities defined in paragraph 20 of the R&D&I Framework) may be performed. No activities may be performed that would lead to an advantage for this organisation within the meaning of public support rules. For the purposes of this call, activities that do not lead to an advantage for the host organisation are considered to be, in particular: the implementation of the main researcher's own research under the return grant, i.e., the research plan defined in the return grant application, academic activities, improving skills and competences, etc. Travel to a foreign organisation is possible, for example, on the basis of a memorandum, letter of invitation or similar document between a Czech and foreign research organisation.*

d) **Professional training** *(This may be in the field of scientific work methods and professional areas related to the project topic, team leadership, managerial skills, grant application processing, orientation in grant competitions, etc., even outside the Czech Republic. Training in soft skills, for example, must take place in the Czech Republic. The course may be face-to-face or distance learning (synchronous online). Professional training such as certification, pre-certification preparation, bar exams or similar types of long-term professional training* ***cannot be planned****.*

2. Opening the Return Grant Competition call

The calls for the Return Grant Competition are launched by the Internal Grant Agency on behalf of the Rector. The calls include the schedule for the relevant round of the competition. The administration of the implementation process at the university level is ensured by the Research Office.

The documentation for the Return Grant Competition and other relevant information are published on SharePoint and the Research Office website.

3. Project Duration

The **implementation period for** the Return Grant Competition project is a minimum of 12 months and a maximum of 32 months, depending on the conditions of the respective call. The minimum

[3] The minimum duration of outgoing mobility is 1 month, the maximum is 6 months. Within one return grant, it is possible to carry out a maximum of two outgoing mobilities, or to divide the mobility into a maximum of two parts not exceeding the maximum duration of mobility in total. Mobility may be interrupted, provided that the planned end date of the mobility does not exceed the expected end date of the return grant.

project duration is set at least 860 productive hours (applies to 1.0 FTE – for lower workloads, this limit is reduced proportionally) and at least 180 calendar days.

The implementation of the grant project always begins on the first day of the month following the signing of the return grant agreement.

4. Grant application

The grant application must be submitted via InSIS - Contact Centre (https://insis.vse.cz/auth/kc/kc.pl?formular=49;zalozka=novy;centrum=81;lang=en) in pdf format, including all mandatory attachments.

Requirements for the Return Grant Application (Annex No. 1 to the Scheme):

- identification of the return grant applicant (including relevant experience in R&D), CV,
- information on the planned research, including a description of the objectives of the return grant and the planned activities resulting from them (e.g., research, mobility, education), research methods, results and outputs of these activities (the applicant must always select at least one of the following result indicators according to the scheme: 214 021 Publications from supported projects and/or 214 022 Professional publications – letters, reviews, articles in anthologies. At least one of the co-authors or authors of the publication must be the main researcher),
- budget information – structure and justification for the selection of specific units and their number, according to the data provided in the Return Grant Application Calculator (Annex No. 2 to the Scheme),
- concise description of how the principles of open science will be applied in the project at the concept stage, focusing in particular on the research data that will be used in the project, the data that will be generated during its implementation, and the options for sharing them (more details in Annex No. 5 to the Scheme),
- description of compliance with the RIS3 strategy (basic identification of whether the research project is in line with any thematic area or mission),
- gender dimension in the research content,
- identification of the workplace where the return grant should be implemented; the statement of the head of the workplace includes their consent granted through the Contact Centre,
- career plan (future plans in the field of study),
- applicant's declarations: - a declaration that return grant funds will not be used for activities that were completed or implemented before the date of submission of the return grant application and no other financial support will be used for the return grant activities; - a declaration that the topic of the return grant topic is not identical to the dissertation topic (if the applicant is a PhD student).

Mandatory attachments:

- Return Grant Application Calculator, which the applicant uses to prepare the individual items of the project budget. Overheads, which are generated only from the costs of the main researcher, not from the entire grant budget, are allocated 50% to university-wide overheads and 50% to the needs of the return grant project.
- Documents proving that the conditions for a career break have been met (if the applicant is not an employee / student of VSE).

Any other optional attachments supplementing the information in the return grant application.

The date of submission of the application is considered to be the date on which the application was entered into InSIS - Contact Centre and sent by clicking the "send" button.

The application for a return grant must be processed and submitted **in English**.
The amount allocated per grant application is not specified.

Funds may only be provided for applications declaring:

- the application of open science principles in accordance with the rules[4] ,
- addressing the topic of gender[5] .

The following activities cannot be financed from the return grant funds:

- new construction, building activities,
- purchase of real estate,
- economic activities involving the offering of goods and services on the market (contract research, provision of research services, etc.),
- outsourcing of grant activities (the implementation of the supported activity as a whole cannot be assigned to another entity),
- teaching within study programmes.

Funding for the Return Grant Competition project is provided on the basis of an agreement concluded between the main researcher and VSE. The agreement is drawn up in two originals and its mandatory attachment is the Return Grant Application Calculator.

5. Evaluation of Grant Proposals

Return Grant Competition projects are assessed for compliance with the conditions set out in project CZ.02.01.01/00/24_037/0013841 Restart VSE and Call No. 02_24_037 OP JAK Returns.

[4] https://opjak.cz/dokumenty/otevrena-veda/

[5] More detailed information on gender dimension is available in the document "Gender Dimension in OP JAK R&D Projects", which is available on the OP JAK website (https://opjak.cz/dokumenty/genderova-dimenze/). If relevant, and if the research organisation has the necessary documentation, it is possible to simply refer to this fact in the application for a return grant.

Project proposals are evaluated in two phases:
Phase 1: Checking eligibility and formal requirements:
The aim of the check is to verify the formal administrative requirements for return grant applications and to assess the basic parameters of the eligibility of the application.

If one or more criteria are not met at this phase, the applicant is asked to provide the missing information within five working days. After re-checking the eligibility and formal requirements, if one or more criteria are not met, the application is excluded from further administration.

The main researcher is notified in writing of the result of the eligibility and formal requirements check via the email address provided in the application using the Report on the Result of the Eligibility and Formal Requirements Check form (Annex 7 of the Scheme). The main researcher may appeal against the result of the first phase evaluation using the Appeal against the Evaluation Result form (Annex No. 8 to the Scheme) within three working days from the date of delivery of the result to the email address provided in the application. The result of the appeal evaluation is approved by the Vice-Rector for Research and Doctoral Studies within three working days from the date of delivery of the appeal to the Research Office.

An appeal cannot be submitted in cases where the mandatory parameters of the return grant application are not met, such as failure to meet the career break requirement.

Phase 2: Expert Evaluation
Only those applications that have met the conditions of the first phase of evaluation are forwarded for expert evaluation.
The aim of the expert evaluation is to assess the quality of the submitted applications. The proposal is assessed in terms of the project's potential, its contribution to scientific knowledge, an overview of the current state of knowledge in the field, the motivation of the eligible applicant, the quality of the methodology, the quality of project management, the level of expected publication outputs, the consistency of the application with the research plans/topics addressed at the applicant's workplace, the size and quality of the team, adequacy of financial requirements, justification of the budget in relation to research activities, plan, schedule, the main researcher's professional development in research at VSE, and statement on gender in research.

Two independent reviews are prepared for each return grant application. The reviews may be made available for inspection in anonymised form upon request.

The criteria for the evaluation of return grant applications by reviewers are published in the document Protocol for the Expert Evaluation of Return Grants (Appendix No. 10 to the Scheme).

The main researcher is notified in writing of the outcome of the return grant application evaluation via the email address provided in the application. If the grant is awarded, the notification also includes information on the amount of funds allocated and instructions for their use, or information on any required modifications to the project proposal. In the event of a difference between the

requested and allocated funds, the main researcher must amend the project proposal and its budget in accordance with the Grant Committee's instructions.

The decision of the Grant Committee is final and cannot be appealed. The results of the evaluation will be published on the OVV website.

6. Mandatory Reporting of Activities by Project Researchers

The main researcher responsible for the implementation of the respective return grant submits an Interim Activity Report (Annex No. 14 to the Scheme) every **6 months** of the project implementation, which is a key tool for monitoring the progress of the project and ensuring transparency in the use of funds.

The signed scan of the Interim Activity Report is submitted by the main researcher via InSIS - Contact Centre. Interim Activity Reports include statements in the following areas in particular:

- basic information about the return grant (duration, etc.),
- an overview of activities carried out during the period,
- information on the involvement of the main researcher and team members, including an overview of work capacities,
- evaluation of progress and outputs achieved,
- for each publication output, the following must be stated: title of the article/output, journal or publisher to which the contribution was sent, date of submission, status of the review process (submitted, under review, major revision, minor revision, accepted, etc.).

Mandatory attachments to the Interim Activity Report:

- updated Data Management Plan (Annex No. 15 of the Scheme),
- Return Grant Implementation Calculator (Annex No. 16 of the Scheme),
- Overview of Mentor Activities (Annex No. 17 to the Scheme; only if a mentor is involved),
- Overview of Activities Performed by the Support Expert Team (Annex No. 18 to the Scheme),
- the main researcher's declaration that the main researcher cares for a child until the start of compulsory pre-school education or a close relative (only in the case of drawing a contribution for the care of a child or close relative; to be submitted once together with the first Interim Activity Report),
- Report on the Course of Mobility (Annex No. 4 to the Scheme), this report shall include: a memorandum or other document proving participation in mobility, the main researcher's travel order to participate in mobility (only in the case of the main researcher's outgoing mobility). The report shall include, in particular, the following information:
  - basic information about the return grant
  - information on the main researcher's involvement
  - destination, name of the organisation, duration of mobility

- description of the objective of the mobility and information on whether this objective was achieved
- information on whether the main researcher performed only non-economic activities at the host organisation

- confirmation of completion of the main researcher's training (only if the main researcher's training is included), evidenced by:
  - the original certificate/confirmation of completion;
  - a screenshot or a printout of data generated from the communication platform used, clearly showing the presence of the main researcher of the return grant at the training event and displaying the bottom bar of the screen showing the date and time the screenshot was taken/the date of the training in the case of distance learning.

Activities that are not properly described and documented will not be accepted. In order for mobility to be recognised, it must meet the conditions defined in the Scheme (Section B).
After the Interim Activity Report has been submitted, the designated Research Office staff member will check the completeness and accuracy of the submitted documents. If any deficiencies are found, the main researcher will be asked to remedy them via the contact email address.

Interim Activity Reports are then submitted to the Board of Vice-Deans for Science and Research at the next scheduled meeting. The Board assesses the progress of the research in relation to the grant implementation process, the schedule and the budget utilisation specified in the Return Grant Implementation Calculator. The main researchers attend the Board meeting to defend the research progress to date.
The Board formulates any shortcomings and comments in its assessment:

- the Interim Activity Report was accepted,
- the Interim Activity Report was accepted with reservations – including information on what needs to be added or amended,
- the Interim Activity Report was not accepted – further discussion by the Grant Committee is recommended, including possible action in accordance with the Sanctions section).

The Board's assessment is entered by the Research Office staff member into the Protocol on the Results of the Review of the Interim Activity Report and sent to the main researcher's email address. If the interim report is not accepted, the Grant Committee may decide to impose sanctions, see point 12.

7. Changes in the Implementation of Return Grants

Any changes arising during the implementation of the project are subject to the established approval process.

Non-modifiable parameters of the return grant (they cannot be modified during the implementation of the return grant):

- change in the position of the main researcher, whose role is considered crucial to the professional management of the project,
- change in the objective and main research subject of the return grant,
- an increase in the total amount of funds allocated to the return grant, redistribution of the budget contrary to the limits set by the call,
- change in the version of the Return Grant Implementation Calculator.

Permissible changes during implementation of the return grant (the following adjustments may be made in justified cases):

- changes in mobility parameters, such as its duration, destination or organisation,
- adjustments to the composition of the research team, including changes in the number of members involved or of their working hours, provided that these changes do not affect the achievement of the planned outputs,
- modifications to research methods, provided that the original scientific intent of the grant is maintained,
- adjustments to the project implementation schedule, if necessary to achieve the set research objectives,
- early termination of the return grant, in which case the main researcher is required to submit the Final Activity Report and ensure the proper settlement of financial obligations,
- interruption of the return grant for objective reasons, provided that this step is in accordance with the conditions of the call and approved by the funding provider,
- adjustments to the planned outputs, provided these changes are properly justified and do not compromise the scientific contribution of the project,
- transfers between individual categories of unit costs in the Return Grant Implementation Calculator are possible up to a maximum of 100% of the original value of the unit to which the costs are being transferred.

Procedure for requesting a change:
Any intended change must be consulted in advance with the designated staff member of the Research Office and is subject to a formal approval process. The assessment of requests for changes is governed by the principles of professional excellence, effective use of funds and compliance with the methodological framework of the call.

Requests for changes must be submitted using the Request of Change of the Return Grant form (Annex 20 to the Scheme). This form must contain a detailed description of the requested change, its proper justification and its impact on the implementation of the project and its parameters.

The request for change is submitted by the main researcher as a signed original to the Research Office. After checking the legitimacy of the request and if the request for change is in accordance

with the permissible changes and has no impact on the implementation of the grant, the request is discussed at the next meeting of the Board of the Vice-Deans for Science and Research.

The decision of the Board of Vice-deans is valid if approved by a majority of the members present.

If the request for change is not approved, no appeal is possible.

The main researcher is informed of the outcome of the approval/rejection of the request for change by email by the designated staff member of the Research Office.

8. Interruption of the Return Grant

The return grant may be interrupted, with the interruption period not counting towards the total duration of the grant, provided that the planned end date of the return grant does not exceed 31 March 2029.

The main researcher requests the interruption of the return grant via the Request of Change of the Return Grant form (Annex No. 20 to the Scheme). The request for interruption of the return grant is submitted by the main researcher to the designated Research Office staff member who will ensure its assessment and subsequent approval/disapproval by the representative of the Board of Vice-Deans for Science and Research for the respective faculty. The designated Research Office staff member informs the Board of Vice-Deans for Science and Research and the Grant Committee of the outcome of the assessment of the request for interruption at the next meeting.

9. Project Completion

After the project has been completed, the main researcher is required to prepare the Final Activity Report (Annex No. 21 of the Scheme) within 15 working days of the end of the implementation period, which serves to provide an overall assessment of the course of the project and the results achieved.
The Final Activity Report submits the main researcher in electronic form via InSIS - Contact Centre. The date of submission of the report is considered to be the date on which the report was entered into InSIS - Contact Centre and sent by clicking the "send" button.

In the event of early termination of the project, the main researcher is required to submit the Final Activity Report summarising the results achieved to date and to settle the funds in accordance with the rules of the call.
The Final Activity Report shall include statements in the following areas in particular:

- basic information about the return grant,
- information on the involvement of the main researcher,
- description of activities and summary of the project implementation (an assessment of whether the set objective has been achieved for the last period and also for the entire grant as a whole),

- evaluation of the results and outputs achieved (the number and type of outputs must correspond to the outputs specified in the grant application), including training courses completed;
- final accounting of funds using the Return Grant Implementation Calculator;
- information on whether only non-economic activities were carried out under the return grant;
- plan for the further career development of the main researcher.

The annexes to the Final Activity Report include:

- updated Data Management Plan; (Annex No. 15 to the Scheme),
- Return Grant Implementation Calculator (Annex No. 16 to the Scheme),
- extract from the publication activity database,
- overview of grant applications already submitted or in preparation, both within national and international grant programmes,
- Overview of Mentor Activities (Annex 17 to the Scheme; only if a mentor is involved),
- Overview of Activities Performed by the Support Expert Team (Annex 18 to the Scheme),
- Report on the Course of Mobility, if relevant (Annex 4 to the Scheme).

10. Evaluation of the Completed Project

After the Final Activity Report has been submitted, the designated Research Office staff member will check the completeness and accuracy of the submitted documents. If any deficiencies are found, the main researcher will be asked to remedy them via the contact email address within 5 working days of the date of submission.

Final activity reports are then submitted to the Board of Vice-Deans for Science and Research at the next scheduled meeting. The Board assesses the progress of the research in relation to the grant implementation process, the schedule and the budget utilisation specified in the Return Grant Implementation Calculator. The main researchers attend the Board meeting to defend the research progress to date.

The Board formulates any shortcomings and comments in its assessment:

- the Final Activity Report was accepted and meets all conditions,
- the Final Activity Report was accepted with reservations – including information on what needs to be added or amended,
- the final activity report was not accepted – further discussion by the Grant Committee is recommended, including possible action in accordance with the Sanctions section.

The final evaluation of the return grant is carried out by the Grant Committee, which assesses the project on the basis of documents and outputs submitted by the main researcher and the statement of the Board of Vice-Deans. The evaluation is carried out according to the following scale:

- fulfilled,
- fulfilled with reservations on publication results,
- not fulfilled.

If the evaluation is fulfilled with reservations on publication results / not fulfilled, action is taken in accordance with the provision of Sanctions, see Point 12.
The main researcher is informed of the result at the contact email address provided in the return grant application. The main researcher is informed of the outcome via the contact email address stated in the Return Grant Application.

Each return grant project is required to result at least in one publication output that complies with the OP JAK rules and meets the criteria for scientific or professional dissemination of results.

Under OP JAK, the publication output must meet the following conditions:

- Open access – publications must be freely accessible in a trusted scientific repository, which must contain the full text (files) as well as metadata and enable clear identification of the published work (in the case of an AAM, this will be the URL of its location in the repository), which enables the final publication to be found.
- Types of publications - accepted outputs include books, book chapters, and articles indexed in Web of Science or Scopus. Contributions presented at professional events (conferences, congresses, workshops) are eligible, as well as scholarly works such as letters, reviews, and papers in proceedings. Non-publication results and specific types of publications such as conference papers, proceeding papers, or articles in special journal issues dedicated to conference contributions are also recognized.
- Data management – Research data must be stored and shared according to the FAIR principles (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable).
- At least one of the co-authors or authors of the publication must be the main researcher implementing the relevant return grant.
- The project from which the publication originated must be clearly and unambiguously stated in the publication.
- Publication outputs must state that the work was carried out with the financial support of the Return Grant Competition, specifying CZ.02.01.01/00/24_037/0013841 Restart VSE, No. 02_24_037 OP JAK Returns, and must list VSE as the affiliation (see 13. General Guidelines and Information).
- Publication outputs from projects must be recorded in the VSE Publications Database.
- Publications must be recommended for publication on the basis of a peer review process no earlier than the date of commencement of the physical implementation of the project.
- The condition for recognition of a publication output is its publication / completion of the peer review process with a positive recommendation for publication.

11. Grant Funds Management

The main researcher is responsible for sound and economic financial management of allocated funds. Funding for the project is provided on the basis of an agreement concluded between the main researcher and VSE.
Within the allocated funds, the main researcher also has access to a lump-sum portion of the budget.
The lump-sum portion is calculated as the difference between the total monthly financial amount under the unit cost "Return Grant – Main Researcher" and the minimum personnel costs (i.e., the researcher's monthly gross remuneration, including salary/wages, employer-paid social and health insurance, and all other employer-paid payroll-related contributions). The amount of the lump sum is displayed in the Return Grant Implementation Calculator, which is used to monitor project implementation and report activity units.
The lump-sum portion is not tied to specific items or activity units and does not require separate reporting. It serves to cover other costs associated with the implementation of the project.

The lump-sum portion will be used as follows:

- 50% of the lump-sum amount is automatically transferred to the university-wide overhead,
- 50% of the lump-sum amount is available to the main researcher to cover additional costs related to the implementation of the return grant.

Funds allocated to the project are recorded under a separate order at the faculty of the main researcher. Projects are registered under internal order numbers, which are assigned by Economic Department. The authorising officer and the budget administrator are defined in the Rules on Inspection (SR 07/2008), see VSE regulations. Information on the disbursement of funds is provided by the secretary of the faculty concerned, the Research Office staff member.

12. Sanctions

The main researcher is obliged to adhere to defined rules and conditions for project implementation. Non-compliance may result in sanctions imposed by VSE. Sanctions may apply, for example, for failure to fulfil the obligations specified in the grant application, breach of publicity requirements, failure to submit interim or final activity reports, or failure to deliver the project outputs.
Sanctions may be applied on the basis of findings made during the review of the Interim or Final Activity Report. The Grant Committee decides on the application of sanctions on the basis of the reports submitted and the statement of the Board of Vice-Deans for Science and Research. The Grant Committee may also adopt decisions outside the meeting (*per rollam*).

The Grant Committee decides on the amount of the sanction based on:

- the Interim Activity Reports or Final Activity Reports submitted,
- obvious breach of the return grant agreement.

Sanctions may be applied in particular on the basis of:

- low quality and failure to deliver outputs,
- failure to submit the Interim Activity Report or Final Activity Report by the specified deadline,
- non-compliance with publicity, affiliation, and intellectual property (IP) rules,
- non-compliance with open science principles;
- incomplete financial reporting of the allocated return grant funds,
- breach of the terms of the return grant agreement.

The Grant Committee will address the identified deficiencies and determine the extent of the sanction:

- in the case of a minor violation, the drawdown of funds will be suspended until the researcher remedies the deficiencies within the specified period,
- if the main researcher fails to remedy the deficiency within the specified period, this will constitute a serious breach of the main researcher's obligations,
- in the event of a serious breach of obligations, a decision will be made to terminate funding and stop the project,
- the main researcher will be informed of the Grant Committee's decision via the email address provided in the return grant application.

13. General Guidelines and Information

Projects must adhere to the rules governing publicity, proper affiliation, and intellectual property protection. All project outputs must be affiliated with VSE and the specific project. Members of the research team, including the main researcher, may not have any other affiliations outside VSE in connection with these outputs. At the same time, the project outputs may not be affiliated with any other project.

Part of the grant project is its presentation and promotion within VSE and externally.
The main researchers of return grant projects are required to ensure that all project outputs and results comply with the publicity rules set out by OP JAK, which means that all documents related to the project must include the logo link "Co-funded by the EU + MŠMT". The mandatory publicity rules are available here: https://opjak.cz/publicita/.

Czech version of the mandatory logo link:

English version of the mandatory logo link:

In addition to the logo link, publications and similar outputs must also include a statement that the project was co-financed by the European Union as part of the Restart VSE project.

Proper affiliation is crucial for identifying the beneficiary and confirming their participation in the project. This entails:

a) The obligation to include the following dedication in publications: *"This publication was produced with the financial support of the European Union and the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, under the Jan Amos Komenský Operational Programme, project Restart VSE (Reg. No CZ.02.01.01/00/24_037/0013841 Návraty VŠE)."*

b) The obligation to include the following dedication on documents, presentations and other materials created as part of the implementation of the return grant: "*This research (this work) was produced with the financial support of the European Union and the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, under the Jan Amos Komenský Operational Programme, project Restart VSE (Reg. No. CZ.02.01.01/00/24_037/0013841 Návraty VŠE)*."

The principles for handling grant matters are set out in the Administrative Procedures for the Preparation and Implementation of Research Projects at VSE directive (SR 1/2025).

By submitting an application, the main researcher and other investigators agree to the processing of personal data, in particular data provided through InSIS. This consent is granted for the period during which the competition will take place and, if the grant is awarded, also for the period during which the project will be carried out, but in both cases for the period of mandatory archiving of all documents at VSE from the date of the end of the competition or the end of the project.

The project or its parts must be completed in accordance with the binding deadlines set out in the grant application.

When ordering literature from grant funds, the main researcher must follow the instructions of the VSE library. The owner of property acquired from grant funds is VSE pursuant to Section 15 of Act 130/2002 Sb., on the support of research, experimental development and innovation from public funds and on the amendment to some related acts. Within the meaning of Section 16 of Act 130/2002 Sb., on the support of research, experimental development and innovation from public funds and on the amendment to some related acts, the rights to project results belong to VSE.

Co-funded by
the European Union

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION,
YOUTH AND SPORTS