

Statute
of the Stefan Schwarz Support Fund
for the creation of postdoctoral positions in the
SAS

full version

as follows from the amendments

as amended by Amendment No. 1, Amendment No. 2 and Amendment No. 3

Preamble

Doctoral studies (DS) ensure the education and continuous renewal of academic researchers. ***The Stefan Schwarz Support Fund for the creation of postdoctoral positions in the Slovak Academy of Sciences*** (hereinafter referred to as the Fund) creates the opportunity to employ outstanding postdoctoral fellows and postdoctoral researchers¹ from Slovakia and abroad through a contribution to the salary fund of the organization that employs the graduate. Graduates of doctoral studies are eligible to apply if, by the date of opening of the call for applications, a maximum of 60 months have passed since the date of defence of their dissertation. This timeframe excludes any duration associated with maternity or parental leave.

The support is not primarily intended for graduates shortly after completing their PhD. During the support period, recipients are expected to transition towards independence from their dissertation supervisor by achieving milestones such as securing grants to fund research as Principal Investigators or publishing without co-authorship from their supervisor. For applicants from Slovakia, the scholarship is conditional on successfully completing international study residences of at least 6 months in total. In addition, at least one of these residences must last at least 3 months. In exceptional cases, the Council of the SAS for Education and Doctoral Studies may grant an exception to this rule. Candidates cannot be researchers who have already been awarded the IIa scientific qualification.

Article I
Candidate selection

1. The selection of candidates for the Fund is entrusted to the Council for Education and Doctoral Studies of the SAS (hereinafter referred to as the Council) as an advisory body to the Presidium of the SAS, which is composed of representatives of all three departments of the SAS (hereinafter referred to as the OV).
2. The Council conducts auditions in which it rigorously evaluates submitted proposals based on their alignment with the quality standards and strategic priorities of the SAS. The auditions include in-person (or videoconference) evaluation sessions for the candidates, organised by the relevant OVs with the participation of Council members from the OVs. Auditions are also open to graduates of DS from other research institutes and

¹ 1 To simplify the wording, the statute hereafter uses only the masculine form of certain nouns, e.g. candidate, postdoctoral fellow, etc.; however, such a designation always includes men as well as women

universities in Slovakia and abroad. The Council presents the audition outcomes to the Presidium of the SAS (referred to as P SAS) for formal endorsement. The competition is conducted annually, with submissions closing on September 30th each year.

Article II

Proposal for audition

1. The proposal for audition with justification shall be submitted by the director of the SAV organization which already employs or recruits the doctoral graduate in the manner specified in the call.
2. Candidates must complete their registration in the electronic system on the Fund's website. They are requested to input all relevant data and upload the necessary documentation for proposal evaluation through this platform. After the deadline, the system will close, and it will no longer be possible to enter or modify data and documents. Proposals that fail to meet all the stipulated requirements outlined in the Statute of the Stefan Schwarz Support Fund for the creation of postdoctoral positions within the Academy of Sciences will be excluded from consideration for the current application round.
3. The required details and documents are following:
 - 3.1. name and surname of the candidate
 - 3.2. organization name
 - 3.3. link to the ORCID profile of the candidate. The applicant should ensure their profile includes a complete list of publications, references, national and international project participation, presentations at professional events, and any patents or patent applications.
 - 3.4. application of results
 - 3.5. study stay/residency completed
 - 3.6. a project plan for the next 3 years in a maximum of 5 400 characters. The project plan should briefly summarize:
 - research objectives
 - originality of the project
 - main methodological approaches
 - expected benefits
 - assumed sources of funding for the research
 - 3.7. CV of the candidate
 - 3.8. degree certificate (scanned and uploaded into the electronic system)
 - 3.9. two publications of the highest quality (pdf format; for monographs only pages with relevant bibliographic data)

The documents in Articles 3.6. - 3.9. will not be generally accessible.

Article III
Proposal evaluation

1. The Council will generally select 20 candidates per year. A candidate proposal submitted under Article II of the Statute which has not yet been accepted may be resubmitted. Each proposal will be evaluated a maximum of two times.

2. Applications from candidates who are unable to attend the OV session, even via videoconference, for legitimate reasons, will not be accepted on the date designated for auditions.

Article IV
Financing terms

1. The P SAS shall increase the payroll from January 1 of the current year for those organizations that recruit successful candidates nominated by the Council. The payroll fund shall be increased by 1,1 times the tariff salary corresponding to grade T8 (on the special salary scale for university and research and development staff - Act No. 553/2003 Coll., as amended) and salary grade 4. The funds are assigned for the purpose of covering the functional salary of the concerned selected candidate and their personal allowance. It is required that the candidate maintains a 100% full-time employment status within the SAS organization through the duration of support from the Fund and external employment may not exceed 50% of the full-time commitment. In instances where the candidate's start date is later than January 1, the funding support will conclude on December 31 of the subsequent year.

2. In case of the termination of the employment of the selected candidate by organization during the support period, change of the employment arrangement to a reduced weekly working time below the established norm, or if the candidate opts for unpaid leave, maternity, or parental leave, the organization must promptly notify the Council and the Economic and Technical Department of the Office of the SAS. This notification will trigger necessary adjustments to the organization's Implementation Financing Plan (IFP), leading to a proportional reduction in salary funds.

3. Periods of maternity and parental leave, as well as continuous sick leave exceeding three months, are excluded from the calculation of the support period.

4. Should the organization fail to comply with the obligation to report changes as stipulated in paragraph 2 of this Article, it will be required to reimburse any wage funds that were improperly disbursed.

5. Organizations whose candidates are selected by the Council and successfully recruited are required to augment the monthly salary of these candidates by a personal bonus equivalent to no less than one-third of the growth in the organization's payroll fund, as stipulated in paragraph 1 of this Article.

6. If, during the funding period from the Stefan Schwarz Support Fund designated for

creating postdoctoral positions within the SAS, an employee transitions to another organization within the SAS (hereinafter referred to as the "new organization") while maintaining the required weekly working hours, and the new organization offers suitable conditions for the project, all associated rights and obligations pertaining to the utilization of the funding will be transferred to the new organization. Any modifications to the support framework require prior approval through a resolution by the P SAS.

7. The initial support period is set for two years, with an option for a one-year extension. To request an extension, an application on the designated form must be submitted three months prior to the conclusion of the current support period from the Fund. It is essential that the justification for the extension request is detailed and comprehensive. In evaluating the extension request, the Council will place specific emphasis on the quality of the applicant's deliverables produced during the support period. This includes metrics such as the impact and quality of scientific publications, monographs, patent applications, and other relevant outputs pertinent to the scientific discipline (major collaborations, conferences of informatics societies, exhibitions, etc.). When evaluating the outputs, the Council retains the option to obtain additional insights from external experts if needed.

Article V Final report

1. Beneficiaries are required to submit a comprehensive final report using the prescribed template available on the Fund's website within one month following the conclusion of the Fund's support period. The extension requests pursuant to Article IV, paragraph 6 shall replace the final report after 2 years of support. The evaluation of the reports will be conducted by the Chairperson of the Council, in conjunction with the OVs of the SAS. This assessment will focus on the scientific rigor of the reports and their alignment with the initial project proposal.

Final provisions

1. This Statute was approved by the Presidium of the Slovak Academy of Sciences at its meeting on 2/14/2025
2. It enters into force on the day following its publication on the SAS website.
3. The Statute of the Stefan Schwarz Support Fund for the Creation of Postdoctoral Positions at the Slovak Academy of Sciences of August 10, 2023, as amended, is hereby repealed.

The English translation of the Statute has been provided for reference only. Discrepancies in meaning may occur and the English translations are non-binding. In case of any ambiguity between the language versions, the Slovak language shall prevail.

In Bratislava, February 27, 2025

prof. RNDr. Pavol Šajgalík, DrSc.
President of SAS