

Questions and answers regarding open call for proposals for the National Scientific Program "VIHREN"

06.10.2021

1. Question

1. Can researchers from other organizations (outside from the Basic Organization) to participate in the Project Team?

In the project description somewhere is mentioned that this is possible but in another place it is explicitly written that each person from the Team must conclude an employment contract with the Base Organization!
How is this resolved - with an additional employment contract, with citizen contract or otherwise?!?

2. Financial part of the Project.

2a. The application instructions state that the indirect institutional costs are 10% of all other planned (direct) costs.

Does this mean that that from the initial amount, for example 210 000 BGN 10% is deducted first, i.e. 21 000 BGN, and then the remaining 189 000 BGN are distributed for direct costs?!?

2b. The remuneration for scientific staff is well described in the instructions but the remuneration for the non-academic staff is not described.

What are the permissible remuneration limits for the technical and administrative staff?

2c. The indirect costs must include Financial Audit of the all periodic financial reports.

Does this Audit have to be performed by an external independent auditor or can be done by an accountant of the Basic Organization?!?

What percent from the indirect costs must be the audit cost?

Answer

1. Yes, they may be hired by additional employment contract.

2a. Yes.

2b. Those limits are not expected to be higher than that for the academic staff.

2c. As for the other projects, the financial audit has to be done by an expert accouter registered at the INSTITUTE OF CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS (<https://www.ides.bg/en/>). The audit cost should not be higher than 1% of the used indirect costs for the reporting period.

07.10.2021

2. Question

I would like to ask a question about the VIHREN-2021 program more specifically about: Project proposals of scientists who in the last two years have applied to the ERC with a Bulgarian university or scientific organization as a basic organization eligible for a beneficiary under the program and have been evaluated category A in the final evaluation, but not funded by the ERC, are funded directly without further evaluation.

In the last two years we have submitted a research project to the European Commission - H2020-SC1-PHE-CORONAVIRUS-2020-2-CNECT, which was evaluated with points above the ranking threshold, but was not funded. This project has been submitted in a consortium with partners from Europe. I am the leader of the Bulgarian team in this consortium, but I am not the coordinator. We participate in the consortium on behalf of an institute of BAS.

Is it possible through VIHREN-2021 to directly finance the Bulgarian participation in the ranked European project? Of course, this will be agreed with the project coordinator. The topic of our development will be: Development of virus sensors and the main attention will be focused on COVID 19. According to the ranked European project, this is a task only for our team. The tasks of the other teams are research, prevention and disinfection. Our task can be easily separated from the tasks of the others and it can be financed with the amount determined for the Bulgarian team in this European project.

Answer

This option is related only to projects submitted to ERC and have been evaluated category A in the final evaluation, but not to other calls of H2020 program or other programs of EC.

21.10.2021

3. Question

Could you give more detailed explanation for the term of 15 years for defending of PhD thesis before submitting the proposal. For example, if someone defeat his PhD thesis on 06.06.2006 is it means that in October 2021 he is not eligible for applying as Established researcher?

Answer

Yes, if the date of the official document for obtaining PhD degree is before Nov. 9th, 2006, the person is not eligible for the Established researcher call but may apply for the Leading researcher call.

26.10.2021

4. Question

1. Is it possible for a person who is on an employment contract with the basic organization to be designated as a technical person under the project, provided that he can combine the project activities with his labor commitments?
2. When applying, should biographies of the members of the research team of the researcher be attached?

Answer

1. Yes.
2. There is no such requirement, the page limit should be strictly respected.

27.10.2021

5. Question

I would like to address a question to the announced Vihren 2021 competition, concerning a funding scheme for leading researchers. On page 10 of the Guidelines for Applicants - Specific Conditions of the Leading Researcher Program, it is written "If the researcher is already employed and holds an academic position in the basic organization, during the project he/she retains this position, working on the project not less than 50% of the total working time for the procedure "Leading researcher".

Subsequently, in Part B2 for leading researcher (in English) at the bottom of page 2 it is written „Specify briefly your commitment to the project and how much time you are willing to devote to the proposed project in the resources section. Please note that you are expected to devote at least 60% of your total working time to the project.“

My question is which of the two values (50 or 60%) is correct? At least 50 or 60% of the total working time for the "Leading Researcher" Program the scientist is expected to devote on the project?

Answer

The value for minimal working time on the project for Leading researcher is 50%, as stated in the Guidelines. Note that in such case the payment for the researcher from the project has to be reduced proportionally.

29.10.2021

6. Question

It is unclear to me how exactly I should fill part B2, section (c) of the R3 proposal of VIHREN. In ERC proposals, section (c) is in an online form. However, the template Vihren_ER_2021_B2.rtf (Established researcher), does not specify this. I can see Sections (a), (b) & (c), so I suspect I should add the "resources" section (c) in that document? Nonetheless, if you look at "Vihren_LR_2021_B2.rtf" (Established researcher), there is written: "Sections (a) and (b) of Part B2 together with section (c) Resources present in the online submission form should not exceed 15 pages. Budget table and References do not count towards the page limits."

Would you please explain because this is extremely important for the correct assembly and proposal volume?

Answer

In VIHREN 2021 call Section c should be filled inside part B2 of the proposal in the section specified in the form: "Section c. Resources (including project costs)".