

Approved by the protocol of the Rector's Council No. 01/22 of January 17, 2022

Amendment by the Rector's Council's minutes of January 23, 2023, N 03/23

provision

About the university grant competition for scientific research projects of the University of Georgia

Article 1. General Provisions

1.1. This provision regulates the University of Georgia (hereinafter - "University") holding a university grant competition (hereinafter - "Competition") for scientific research projects, participating in the competition, evaluating competitive projects (hereinafter - "Project"), issuing grants and monitoring the implementation of approved projects and the final performance rules.

1.2. The purpose of the competition is to promote:

a) creation of a competitive research environment in the university, development of research of outstanding quality, internationalization of research and approach to international standards, integration of the research process in the educational process of the university, and growth of the scientific potential of young scientists;

b) creation of new knowledge in the university, theoretical and experimental study-analysis of new ideas and concepts, events and facts, theories and models, which in the long term will contribute to the socio-political, economic, public, cultural, and information-technological progress in the country;

c) the development of fundamental and applied research by the university and the dissemination of the results of research carried out according to international standards;

d) publication of fundamental and applied research results (scientific articles, publications) by university academic staff and scientists on local and international scientific bases ("Elsevier" and "Web of Science", etc.) and increasing the university's research potential and success index;

e) by organizing and conducting local and international conferences, symposia, congresses, and forums, encouraging university cooperation at the national and international level, sharing experience between researchers of different generations and different research centers, strengthening local scientific potential as a result of information exchange and experience sharing;

1.3. The competition is financed in the form of tranches from the budget of the Scientific Research Institute of the University (hereinafter "Institute"). It is possible to use other sources of funding from national and foreign scientific foundations or other donor organizations.

1.4. It is possible to obtain a grant only through a competition, which is held in two sectoral clusters ("grant clusters"):

a) Exact, natural, engineering, and life sciences;

b) humanitarian, social, economic, and legal sciences. The total competition amount will be distributed among the clusters in proportion to the good projects presented in each.

Article 2. Definition of terms

a) Young scientist - master's degree, doctorate, or a person with an academic degree equal to them, no more than 7 years have passed from the date of award of the academic degree to the date of the announcement of the competition; Also, master's degree, residency, doctoral student;

b) Grant recipient – affiliated academic staff of the University of Georgia (main staff);

c) Support staff – a natural person who helps the main staff in solving technical tasks;

d) sectoral grant commission – a group of internal and external experts evaluating the projects registered for the grant competition;

e) Co-sponsor – a legal or physical entity registered in Georgia or abroad, which finances a part of the costs determined by the project budget;

f) Participating organization – an entrepreneurial (commercial) or non-entrepreneurial (non-commercial) legal entity of private law registered in Georgia or abroad or a legal entity of public law, the purpose of which is determined by the statutes/regulations (or does not conflict with it) is the implementation or promotion of scientific research, as well as a higher educational institution.

g) individual grant project - a competitive application submitted with the participation of only one person, by the form approved by this regulation, to obtain funding;

h) Monitoring - the procedure of substantive and financial monitoring of the project provided for by the grant project

i) Project – competitive application submitted to the Institute to obtain funding, by the form approved by this regulation;

j) Project budget – the total amount of funding required for project implementation according to spending categories;

k) project co-leader – a citizen of Georgia and/or a foreign country, who is a representative of a participating organization and coordinates the preparation and implementation of the project together with the project leader;

l) Project leader - a Georgian or foreign citizen with a doctorate or an equivalent academic degree from the main staff of the project, who will implement the project at the University of Georgia, coordinates the drafting of the project, and is responsible for both the scientific results of the project and the reporting of activities provided for by the project;

m) reporting period – the period of the project implementation, during which the grantee performs the tasks described in the project, spends the grant funds, and submits a report to the Institute after completion;

n) Grant competition – the procedure administered by the Scientific Research Institute and Research Development Service to obtain the funding stipulated by this regulation;

- o) tranche - funds to be transferred/transferred, determined by the project budget;
- p) financial monitoring - within the framework of the grant agreement, determining the compliance of the funds transferred by the university's finance department with the cost accounting provided for in the same agreement;
- q) content monitoring - determining the compliance of the research process and scientific results achieved by the grantee with the research process and planned results provided for in the same grant agreement.
- r) Interim/final report – the interim report includes the content and financial report submitted to the institute by the grantee at the end of each reporting period. The final report includes the final content and financial report submitted to the institute by the grant recipient after the end of the project;
- s) Key personnel – affiliated academic personnel of the university, doctoral, master's or residency students, doctor, master or natural person/persons with an academic degree equivalent to them, who perform the main tasks planned by the project;

Article 3. Competition administration

3.1. The competition is announced and administered by the Institute and the University's Education and Research Development Service (hereinafter - the "Service"), according to the procedures provided for in this regulation.

3.2. Institute and service:

- a) determines the deadlines for accepting projects, terms of the grant competition, project forms, forms of documentation attached to the project, and intermediate and final reports of project execution and submits them to the scientific council of the university for approval;
- b) announces the competition;
- c) carries out the technical examination of the projects registered in the competition, which means determining the compliance of the submitted project documentation with the conditions of the competition;
- d) determines and implements necessary procedures for project evaluation;
- e) creates sectoral grant commissions and submits them to the scientific council of the university for approval;
- f) ensures consideration of the projects by the sectoral grant commission by the evaluation criteria, as well as, if necessary, making changes to the project, establishing a ranked list based on the received evaluations, identifying the winning projects, and submitting them to the scientific council of the university for approval;
- g) provides financing for the winning project;
- h) monitors the intermediate and final performance of the approved project;
- i) advises contestants. Among them, is to eliminate the gaps found in the project at the stage of project submission, which does not involve providing consultation regarding the relevance, methodology, and expected results of the research provided by the project.

3.3. The competition consists of the following stages:

- a) announcement of competition;
- b) submission of projects;
- c) evaluation of projects;
- d) identification and approval of winning projects;
- e) conclusion of agreements with the participants of the winning projects.

Article 4. Announcement of competition

4.1. The competition is announced once a year, in the first quarter of each calendar year.

Article 5. Participation in the competition

5.1. The following are eligible to participate in the competition: affiliated academic staff of the university (main staff) and the participating organization (in the case of a joint project). In the case of a joint project, the project may have a co-leader. The participating organization, together with the university, provides the project leader, co-leader, other key project staff, and support staff with the material and technical base provided for by the project, and fulfills other obligations provided for by the grant project; A participating organization can also be a legal entity registered abroad, which participates in the performance of certain tasks of the project;

5.2. The duration of the project should not exceed 12 months. During the last reporting period of the project or within 10 calendar days after its completion, in case of the presentation of a reasoned appeal, the scientific council of the university, in agreement with the rector and the vice-rector in the academic and scientific field, is authorized to decide to extend the duration of the project for no more than 6 months, without additional funding.

5.3. The funding requested from the university for the project submitted within the competition should not exceed 20,000 (twenty thousand) GEL per year. In addition, the salary of the main personnel provided by the project should not exceed 50% of the total budget of the project.

5.4. In an individual grant project, only one person is allowed to participate in the grant project.

5.5. Participation of the same person in several grant projects is allowed, while a person can be the head of only one scientific project.

5.6. The project must have a core staff consisting of a project leader, a co-leader (in case of a joint project), and other persons who are responsible for the implementation of the main tasks and related activities of the project. It is possible to use support personnel for the implementation of the project.

5.7. At least one young scientist should be included in the main staff (except for the individual grant project) during the entire period of project implementation.

5.8. The approved project must be implemented on behalf of the university and using its material and technical base or that of a partner organization.

Article 6. Project presentation and budget

6.1. To participate in the competition, the project will be submitted to the institute. Submission of the project to the institute is carried out by the established deadlines and form. Projects submitted in violation of the established deadlines will not be accepted for review.

6.2. The institute has the right to remove the project from the competition at any stage of the competition:

- a) which does not meet the requirements of this provision;
- b) which does not correspond to the form of the approved project;
- c) to which no mandatory attachments are attached.
- d) which contains false information.

6.3. The project budget within the funding requested from the university may include the following items/expenditure categories:

- a) grant funding of key personnel;
- b) remuneration of support staff;
- c) business trip;
- d) goods and services;
- e) non-financial assets;
- f) overhead costs.

6.4. In case of holding an international scientific event, a part of the project budget will be transferred to the grant recipient in the form of an advance (1/4 of the amount requested from the project budget minus the grant funding of the main staff and the salary of the support staff). The final settlement will be made based on the submission of financial and content reports to the institute and the drawing up of the appropriate review act by the institute.

6.5. Grant funds are not allowed to buy real estate, lease real estate, capital repair/reconstruction of buildings, buy a car, etc.

6.6. Grant financing of the project is carried out in the form of tranches.

Article 7. Project evaluation

7.1. The evaluation of the competition is carried out in two stages. The project is evaluated on a scale of 100 (one hundred) points.

7.2. The first stage of project evaluation involves the evaluation of the grant project by two independent external experts. An encrypted project is sent to an external expert, without reference to the project leader and participants. The external expert is obliged to evaluate in detail the scientific value of the project (relevance and novelty of the research topic, research objective, expected results of the research project, their practical value, estimated plan-schedule of project implementation, significance of expected results). The total maximum assessment of external experts is no more than 40 (forty) points.

7.3. Project evaluation criteria at the first stage:

Criteria and sub-criteria	weak	medium	good
Scientific value of the project (maximum 40 points)			
Relevance and novelty of the research topic	1-4	5-7	8-10
The purpose of the study	1-4	5-7	8-10
Expected results of the research project, their practical value, estimated project implementation plan-schedule	1-4	5-7	8-10
Significance of expected results	1-4	5-7	8-10

7.4. The second stage of the project evaluation involves the evaluation of the grant project by sectoral grant commissions (internal experts), the composition of which is approved by the scientific council of the university with a qualified (2/3) majority of votes.

7.5. Commissions are composed of field experts according to grant clusters. The commissions evaluate the human potential of the project (maximum 20 points), the project budget (maximum 20 points), and the compliance of the project with the strategic goals of the university's research (20 points). The total maximum assessment of internal experts is no more than 60 (sixty) points.

Human potential of the project (maximum 20 points)			
Correspondence of the qualifications and scientific potential of the researchers/performers with the project goals (the scientific knowledge, experience, and results of the project leader and researchers about the project topic are evaluated)	1-4	5-7	8-10
Foreign researchers and partner institutions are involved in the research topic (project).	1-2	3-4	5
Doctoral students and young scientists involved in the research topic (if any)	1-2	3-4	5
Project budget (maximum 20 points)			
Compliance of the project plan and budget with the project objectives	1-6	7-14	15-20
Compliance of the project with the strategic goals of university research (maximum 20 points)			
Compliance of the project with the strategic goals of the university	1-4	5-7	8-10
Appropriateness of resources to project objectives, methodology, and expected results	1-2	3-4	5
Compliance of the budget with the project objectives, methodology, and expected results	1-2	3-4	5

7.6. Summing up the points received by external and internal experts, deriving the weighted average score, and ranking the projects is done by the Scientific Research Institute and submitted to the Scientific Council of the University for approval.

7.7. In the case of equal points, priority will be given to projects that will increase the university's scientific potential and success index in the short term.

Article 8. Conflict of interest

8.1. It is not allowed to be an external or internal expert who may receive direct financial or other personal benefits in case of financing or non-financing of the project, as well as a person:

- a) who is a participant in the same competition;
- b) who is an interested party - a participant in the project or a relative of the participant.

8.2. For this provision, the following shall be considered relatives:

- a) direct line relative;
- b) Spouse, spouse's siblings, and direct line relatives;
- c) siblings of a direct relative of the ascending line;
- d) siblings, their spouses and children.

8.3. The external and/or internal expert is obliged to officially inform the relevant commission and/or institute about the circumstances and self-exclusion mentioned in this article.

8.4. An external and/or internal expert is entitled to declare self-exclusion if he believes that he cannot be objective because the evaluated project competes with his scientific work or he may see personal scientific benefit from the evaluation of this project.

8.5. The institute and the service are authorized to discuss the cancellation of the assessment made by the commission member and/or expert (if any) if information about the conflict of interest of the commission member and/or independent expert (if any) becomes known to the institute and service.

8.6. At the stage of implementation of the approved project, if the conflict of interest of the commission member and/or independent expert (if any) is confirmed, the approved project will be canceled and the received tranche will be returned to the institute.

8.7. The winning projects are identified and approved based on the examination and analysis of the results of the ranking submitted by the scientific council of the university. The relevant decision is sent to the rector of the university.

8.8. The rector of the university, with the approval of the presidents of the university, issues an order on the financing of the winning projects

8.9. Based on the Rector's order, a corresponding contract is signed with the heads of the winning projects.

Article 9. Project monitoring

9.1. The University will pay the tranches provided by the project as an advance based on the submission of relevant reports by the grant recipient. The Scientific Research Institute, Service (Substantive Monitoring), and Finance Department (Financial Monitoring) carry out substantive and financial monitoring of the project.

9.2. Content monitoring of the project involves checking the documents confirming the fulfillment of the tasks planned by the grant agreement.

9.3. Financial monitoring involves determining the compliance of the expenditure of the consents transferred by the university within the framework of the grant agreement with the cost accounting provided for in the same agreement.

Article 10. Termination and termination of the project

10.1. The University, by the legislation of Georgia, will terminate the funding of the grantee (accordingly, the project will be terminated) if the grantee has not fulfilled the obligations provided for by the project and/or submitted in the report

false information.

10.2. In case of suspension or termination of the grant, the relations between the grant recipient and the university will be regulated by the legislation of Georgia.

10.3. The project will be considered complete if:

a) Within the framework of the project, relevant financial and content reports and comparison acts have been submitted to the institute for all tranches transferred as an advance.

b) The institute and service have drawn up the grant project implementation review act.