

The following is a translation from Estonian. In case of disputes, the Estonian text shall prevail.

Conditions and Procedure for Starting Grants

Chapter 1 GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. Scope of Application

- 1.1. This directive establishes the conditions and procedure for applying for, evaluating, awarding, allocating, and reporting on starting grants (hereinafter also *grant*).
- 1.2. The Estonian Research Council (hereinafter *Council*) is entitled to make well-considered decisions and consult experts where necessary in relation to matters not covered by this directive.

2. Goal

- 2.1. The starting grant is aimed at supporting researchers with research experience in building their own research team and educating the next generation of researchers (incl. doctoral students).
- 2.2. The starting grant is awarded for the implementation of an independent research project and it is not intended for covering the own contribution of other research projects.
- 2.3. In awarding the grants, the Council is entitled to prioritise research and development (R&D) fields for each year.

3. Starting Grant Project

A starting grant project (hereinafter also *project*) is a description of a scientific study with a clearly defined research problem and a plan for conducting fundamental or applied research to address this problem.

4. Applicant of the Starting Grant

- 4.1. A person (hereinafter also *applicant*) can apply for the grant upon receiving consent from a positively evaluated Estonian R&D institution (hereinafter *institution*). The institution will give the consent for submitting the application and for fulfilling its obligations by confirming the application.
- 4.2. A person can apply for the grant if he/she:
 - 4.2.1. has obtained his/her first doctoral degree or equivalent qualification in the research field in which the application is to be processed no less than two and no more than seven years prior to 1 January of the year the project is scheduled to begin. If the applicant has been on parental leave, in compulsory military service, or there have been other exceptional circumstances (e.g., serious illness) after obtaining his/her first doctoral degree or equivalent qualification in the research field in which the application is to be processed, the period of qualification is extended by the corresponding period in full months and is rounded up to the higher number of months;

- 4.2.2. has acquired research experience (e.g., as a postdoctoral fellow, researcher at an R&D institution or at a research-intensive enterprise, etc.) after obtaining his/her doctoral degree in a different country than the one he/she has obtained the doctoral degree from or outside an R&D institution as a researcher at a research-intensive enterprise in the same country. Based on the respective application, the Evaluation Committee may deem an applicant to meet the requirements if, stemming from the specifics of the research, e.g., in case of healthcare practitioners, it has not been possible to fulfil the aforementioned mobility requirements;
 - 4.2.3. has not previously been the Principal Investigator (hereinafter also *P/I*) of a starting grant, exploratory or team project, or the *P/I* of an institutional research funding topic.
- 4.3. An applicant can simultaneously apply for one postdoctoral, starting, or team grant. The applicant cannot simultaneously be listed as a member of the senior research staff in a starting or team grant application.
- 4.4. A person cannot apply for the grant if:
 - 4.4.1. his/her postdoctoral, starting, and/or team grant applications submitted during the two previous consecutive calls did not pass the qualification threshold set by the Council in at least one evaluation criterion;
 - 4.4.2. his/her postdoctoral, starting, and/or team grant application submitted during the previous call did not pass the qualification threshold set by the Council in at least two evaluation criteria;
 - 4.4.3. he/she has, during the three years before applying for the grant, failed to submit the report on a previous project funded by the Council by the deadline without a valid reason or the report has not been accepted by the Council;
 - 4.4.4. a serious breach of contract, intentional false information, plagiarism, or fraudulent activities have become evident in the previous grant application submitted by him/her to the Council or in his/her activities in the previous project funded by the Council and if less than three years have passed since the discovery of the breach of contract by 1 January of the year of the call.
- 4.5. The applicant must be the *P/I* of the project for which the grant is applied for.

5. Processing Grant Applications

- 5.1. The Council is responsible for processing grant applications.
- 5.2. The application process takes place in the Estonian Research Information System (hereinafter *ETIS*). The submission of the application and the communication with the applicant is conducted via *ETIS*. The decisions made during the stages of the application process, incl. the decision to approve or not to approve the application, will be announced via *ETIS*. The applicant is required to monitor the messages sent via *ETIS* regularly and keep the contact information up to date.

Chapter 2

CONDITIONS FOR APPLYING FOR THE GRANT

6. Applying for the Starting Grant

- 6.1. The period of the annual call for applications is established and announced by the Council.
- 6.2. The applicant is to submit the application, which has been approved by the institution, to the Council via ETIS.
- 6.3. The application must be written in English.
- 6.4. The application shall specify the following:
 - 6.4.1. the applicant;
 - 6.4.2. the title of the project in Estonian and in English;
 - 6.4.3. a summary of the project in Estonian and in English;
 - 6.4.4. the grant period;
 - 6.4.5. the scientific background of the project, incl. the interdisciplinarity of the project (if applicable);
 - 6.4.6. the main objectives of the project, research questions and/or (excl. justified exceptional cases) hypotheses, methods, and the work plan, incl. tentative annual work plans, the availability of the infrastructure necessary for achieving the objectives of the project, and risk reduction measures and a back-up plan;
 - 6.4.7. the expected results of the project, their scientific importance and importance outside academia as well as the potential impact, and possible directions for future research, and risk reduction measures and a back-up plan;
 - 6.4.8. an explanation about how the research and the results of the project will be disseminated to the wider public;
 - 6.4.9. an explanation about how the compliance with the principles of research ethics will be secured during the implementation of the project and a comment on whether the project requires a licence from a specific ethics committee or the licence has already been obtained, or, if the project necessitates compliance with the Nagoya Protocol, an explanation about which genetic resources will be used and whether the project requires the due diligence declaration or the due diligence declaration has already been submitted;
 - 6.4.10. a summary, which is optional, of the grant application(s) on the same subject matter that has/have been submitted during the previous call(s) describing the changes made compared to the previous application(s) and explaining if the changes stem from the feedback given by the reviewers;
 - 6.4.11. an explanation about which data will be generated during the implementation of the project and how the data will be managed;
 - 6.4.12. the grant amount applied for pursuant to the fixed grant amounts set out in the

- “Guidelines for Budgeting Grant Applications” (hereinafter *budget guidelines*) as well as the justification for the budget, incl. the distribution of direct costs;
- 6.4.13. a description of the applicant’s R&D activities during the past 10 years, indicating his/her contribution to the publications, industrial property item(s), and to the projects of great relevance for the implementation of the proposed project that have been linked to the application as well as the supervision experience of students;
 - 6.4.14. if present, the three most noteworthy results of the latest or ongoing research project funded by the Council and led by the applicant, which are relevant in the context of the application;
 - 6.4.15. information on the involvement of partners and experts as well as on the R&D cooperation necessary for the implementation of the project;
 - 6.4.16. the member(s) of the (senior) research staff who are involved in the project, their role and the distribution of their tasks. A member of the senior research staff cannot simultaneously be listed as a member of the (senior) research staff in another team or starting grant application and cannot participate in a starting grant or team project in such a way that the participation periods coincide;
 - 6.4.17. if necessary, additional documents, incl. the application for making an exception stipulated in clause 4.2.2;
 - 6.4.18. a confirmation that the principles of research ethics and good research practice will be adhered to during the conception and implementation of the project.
- 6.5. The Council is entitled to demand additional information and documents from the applicant and the institution.

7. Principal Investigator of the Starting Grant Project

- 7.1. If the grant application will be approved, then at the time of implementing the project the PI of the starting grant project has to be employed full-time at the institution on the basis of an employment contract with a place of work in Estonia, and shall be fully or partially remunerated from the grant. The PI, in agreement with the Council, does not have to be employed full-time at the institution if he/she simultaneously works part-time for another employer in Estonia to achieve the objectives of the project (e.g., working simultaneously as a healthcare practitioner).
- 7.2. During the grant period, the PI of the starting grant project cannot be any of the following:
 - 7.2.1. the recipient of the postdoctoral grant awarded by the Council;
 - 7.2.2. the PI or the member of the (senior) research staff of a team project;
 - 7.2.3. the PI or the member of the (senior) research staff of another starting grant project;
 - 7.2.4. a member of the (senior) research staff of the same starting grant project;
 - 7.2.5. the recipient of the returning researcher grant.
- 7.3. The PI of the starting grant project cannot be replaced after the submission of the application or during the grant period. If the employment contract between the PI and the institution will be suspended or terminated, the rights and obligations of the PI will not be transferred to the other members of the project.

8. Participants of the Starting Grant Project

8.1. In addition to the PI, the following people may participate in the implementation of the project:

- 8.1.1. members of the senior research staff. The member of the senior research staff is a person with a doctoral degree or equivalent qualification, or a doctoral student. The member of the senior research staff has to be employed or study at the same institution during the implementation of the project and shall be fully or partially remunerated from the grant (excl. the salary of a doctoral student working as a junior researcher);
 - 8.1.2. other members of the research staff. The other member of the research staff is a person whose work is intrinsically related to the project presented in the application and who does not meet the requirements of the member of the senior research staff. The other member of the research staff has to be employed or study at the same institution during the implementation of the project.
- 8.2. The member of the senior research staff cannot simultaneously be any of the following:
- 8.2.1. the PI or one of the other members of the research staff of the same project;
 - 8.2.2. the recipient of the postdoctoral grant awarded by the Council, the PI or the member of the (senior) research staff of a team project or of another starting grant project;
 - 8.2.3. the recipient of the returning researcher grant.

9. Amount of the Starting Grant

- 9.1. The starting grant contains costs directly related to the implementation of the project and overhead costs.
- 9.2. Direct costs consist of staff costs and research costs.
 - 9.2.1. Staff costs consist of the salary along with any and all state taxes, contributions, compensations arising from law, and scholarships for students.
 - 9.2.2. Research costs are direct costs that are necessary for conducting research and stem from the characteristics of the project.
 - 9.2.3. Overhead costs are incurred by the institution and are related to the management of the grant by the institution in order to provide a high-quality research environment for the participants of the project.
- 9.3. The Council may establish the maximum amounts for various types of costs.
- 9.4. Depending on the specifics of the research field, the methods used in the project (incl. experimental research), and the number of the participants, the grant amounts are divided into four fixed grant amounts (I-IV) that the Council establishes each year.
- 9.5. The grant amounts III and IV can only be applied for the projects that meet all the following requirements:
 - 9.5.1. in addition to the PI, the research team includes at least one member of the senior research staff who is employed at the institution with the workload of at least 0.2 during the entire period of the project,
 - 9.5.2. a detailed calculation of the budget has been provided in the application.

- 9.6. The applicant is entitled to request a smaller amount than the fixed grant amount.
- 9.7. Pursuant to clause 11, the Council is entitled to reject the application if it becomes evident while checking its technical details that the justification for the grant amount applied for is inadequate.

10. Funding Period of the Starting Grant

The funding period of the starting grant is up to five full years. As a rule, the grant period begins on 1 January following the year of the call. In justified cases, it is possible to request a later start date of the project, but in this case the end date of the project will not be extended.

Chapter 3

EVALUATION OF APPLICATIONS AND AWARD OF GRANTS

11. Checking the Technical Details of the Applications

- 11.1. The Council is responsible for checking the technical details of the applications.
- 11.2. When checking the technical details of the applications, it will be determined if:
 - 11.2.1 the application, the applicant, and the institution meet the requirements and
 - 11.2.2. the grant amount applied for meets the requirements.
- 11.3. The content of the applications will not be evaluated.
- 11.4. In case formal inaccuracies which can be corrected without changing the content of the application are present, the Council will set a deadline of up to ten working days for correcting the mistakes.
- 11.5. The Council will reject the application without processing it if:
 - 11.5.1. the applicant, the institution, the application, or the grant amount applied for does not meet the requirements and it has been impossible to correct the inaccuracies stipulated in clause 11.4;
 - 11.5.2. the applicant did not correct the inaccuracies within the time limit established by the Council, or
 - 11.5.3. the applicant has made changes in the application that are unrelated to the correction of formal inaccuracies specified by the Council.

12. Evaluation of the Applications

- 12.1. The applications are evaluated on the basis of the “Guidelines for Evaluating Starting Grant Applications” (hereinafter *evaluation guidelines*) established by the Council.
- 12.2. The Council shall set a qualification in the evaluation guidelines for evaluating the applications. If the application does not pass the quality threshold, or the qualification threshold in at least one evaluation criterion, then the application will not be approved. The application will also not be approved if it receives less than 80% of the maximum final score.
- 12.3. After the technical details of the applications have been checked, the Evaluation Committee will decide which Expert Panel will process which application. On the basis of §7 of the Regulation No.

74 "The Procedure for the Formation and the Rules of Procedure of the Evaluation Committee of the Estonian Research Council" issued by the Minister of Education and Research on 27 February 2011, the Evaluation Committee shall form the Expert Panels for ensuring the expertise necessary for evaluating the applications and the composition of the Expert Panel shall be concluded by a directive of the Management of the Council.

- 12.4. The Expert Panel will confirm the preliminary final evaluation of each application. In order to compile the preliminary final evaluation, each application will be reviewed by at least three independent experts.
- 12.5. The Council will make the preliminary final evaluation and the position of the applicant in the ranking list known to the applicant and to the institution. The names of the experts who have reviewed the application will not be disclosed to the applicant.
- 12.6. The applicant and the institution are entitled to submit a written joint opinion and make objections regarding the preliminary final evaluation within the time limit established by the Council (hearing). At the hearing, attention will be paid to the assessment of the adherence to procedural rules and to the correction of possible factual errors. The scientific evaluation given in the preliminary final evaluation will not be re-evaluated. The information submitted during the hearing that has not been included in the application will not be taken into account.
- 12.7. Based on the preliminary final evaluations and on the results of the hearing, the Evaluation Committee will approve the final evaluations of the applications as well as the final ranking lists of the applications.
- 12.8. The Council is entitled to reject the application without processing it if intentional false information, plagiarism, or fraudulent activities, or circumstances due to which the applicant, the institution, the application or the grant amount applied for no longer meet the requirements become evident.

13. Award of the Grant

- 13.1. The Evaluation Committee will submit a justified proposal to the Management of the Council:
 - 13.1.1. to approve the application and award the grant (funding proposal);
 - 13.1.2. not to approve the application.
- 13.2. The proposal will be made for each R&D field. In the field of Natural Sciences, separate proposals will be made for Exact Sciences and for Biological and Environmental Sciences.
- 13.3. When making the funding proposal, the Evaluation Committee will take into account the funding allocated for the call and its distribution between the fields to be funded as stipulated in clause 13.2. When distributing the funding between the starting and team grants of the respective field to be funded, then the Evaluation Committee will adhere to the principle that the funding proposal shall be made to at least one starting and one team grant application, provided that there is at least one application among both grant types which qualifies for funding.
- 13.4. When making the funding proposal, the Evaluation Committee will take into account the position of the application in the ranking list of starting grant applications without skipping a single application.

- 13.5. If there are several ranking lists in one field to be funded, then these ranking lists will not be combined into one. The Evaluation Committee will first make a funding proposal to the highest-ranking application of each ranking list. If there is not enough funding allocated for approving all the highest-ranking applications of the ranking lists, and also for making the funding proposals to the next applications in the ranking list, then the Evaluation Committee will take the following aspects into account:
- 13.5.1. not a single application will be skipped within the same ranking list;
 - 13.5.2. the diversity of the sub-fields among the research projects has to be encouraged;
 - 13.5.3. the inclusion of different institutions has to be encouraged;
 - 13.5.4. the gender balance among the PIs whose applications receive funding proposals has to be encouraged;
 - 13.5.5. the age balance among the PIs whose applications receive funding proposals has to be encouraged.
- 13.6. When making the proposal, the Evaluation Committee may compile a waiting list of the applications to be approved in case some applicants waive the grant.
- 13.7. The Evaluation Committee may prescribe certain conditions that the PI and the institution are required to fulfil upon receiving the grant.
- 13.8. The applications that have received the funding proposal shall be forwarded to be evaluated by the Expert Panel on Research Ethics and Data Management.
- 13.9. Before making the decision to approve the application, the Council will ask a confirmation from the applicant and the institution regarding the acceptance of the grant. If the Evaluation Committee has prescribed certain conditions that must be fulfilled in order to receive the grant, then the applicant and the institution have to submit a consent to ensure the compliance with these conditions.
- 13.10. The decision to approve the application and award the grant or not to approve the application is concluded by a directive of the Management of the Council.
- 13.11. If the applicant whose application was to be approved by the Management of the Council based on the proposal made by the Evaluation Committee, or who has been awarded the grant by the Management of the Council waives the grant before the beginning of the new call, then the starting grant will be awarded to the next applicant in the waiting list of starting grant applications in the same field to be funded. In justified cases, the Evaluation Committee may propose to award the grant to the next applicant in the waiting list of team grant applications in the same field to be funded or to the next applicant in the waiting list of starting or team grant applications in another field to be funded.

Chapter 4

ALLOCATION OF GRANTS AND CONTINUATION OF FUNDING

14. Allocation of the Grant

- 14.1. The grant is allocated to the institution based on a tripartite contract (*hereinafter grant contract*) entered into by the Council, the institution, and the PI that is signed annually via ETIS. The grant contract entails the rights, obligations, and responsibilities of the parties.
- 14.2. The grant contract shall be entered into after the decision stipulated in clause 13.10 has been made. In case of multi-annual projects, a new grant contract is concluded each year.
- 14.3. If it becomes evident before entering into the grant contract that the applicant, the institution, the application, or the grant amount applied for no longer meet the requirements, then the Council is entitled not to enter into the grant contract and to award the grant to the next applicant pursuant to clause 13.11.
- 14.4. The institution shall enter into an employment contract with the PI and the member(s) of the senior research staff, if such a contractual relationship did not already exist before the allocation of the grant, within one month after signing the grant contract.
- 14.5. During the first six months of the project, the PI shall submit the data management plan to the Council that has been approved by the institution. The suggestions made by the Expert Panel on Research Ethics and Data Management have to be considered in the data management plan.

15. Continuation of Funding

- 15.1. In order to continue receiving funding, the PI has to submit the following information, which has been approved by the institution, via ETIS within the time limit established by the Council:
 - 15.1.1. changes in the composition of the members of the (senior) research staff;
 - 15.1.2. a summary of the research conducted during the previous contractual period, incl. the activities which required consultation with or a licence from a specific ethics committee, and significant changes in the research plan, compared to what has been initially envisaged;
 - 15.1.3. a licence from a specific ethics committee (if applicable);
 - 15.1.4. the distribution of the direct costs financed with the grant;
 - 15.1.5. the fulfilment of the conditions prescribed upon receiving the grant.
- 15.2. The PI of the starting grant project lasting for four years shall prepare, in Estonian, an interim report during the third year on the preceding period of the project. The interim report can be submitted in English if the PI and/or the member(s) of the research team have no knowledge of Estonian. The interim report, after having been approved by the institution, has to be submitted to the Council via ETIS by 28 February. The interim report shall include the following:
 - 15.2.1. a summary of the results of the project and of the research that has been conducted thus far, incl. the activities which required consultation with or a licence from a specific ethics committee;
 - 15.2.2. an overview of the public outreach activities undertaken to introduce the research related to this project to the wider public;
 - 15.2.3. information on significant changes in the project, incl. changes in the composition of the members of the (senior) research staff, significant changes in the research plan, compared to what has been initially envisaged, and explanations concerning the

- sustainability of the project;
- 15.2.4. the fulfilment of the conditions prescribed upon receiving the grant.
- 15.3. The Council is entitled to demand additional information from the PI and the institution.
- 15.4. If the Council does not identify significant changes concerning the sustainability of the project or in the fulfilment of other conditions established by this directive, the new grant contract will be signed to continue funding at the requested rate, but no more than at the rate of the fixed grant amount of this grant type.
- 15.5. If it is necessary to ensure the sustainability of the project or the fulfilment of other conditions established by this directive, the Council is entitled to prescribe certain conditions in the grant contract that the PI and the institution are required to fulfil to continue receiving funding.
- 15.6. The Council is entitled to make a proposal to the PI and to the institution to continue funding the projects with the grant amounts III and IV at a lower rate than requested if there have been changes in the composition of the members of the (senior) research staff and it no longer meets the requirements for applying for this particular grant amount, in the research plan, or other circumstances have become evident, due to which continuing the project with the respective requested grant amount is no longer appropriate.
- 15.7. The Council is entitled to make the decision not to continue funding with a directive of the Management of the Council if:
- 15.7.1. the conditions stipulated in clauses 13.7, 13.9, or 15.5 have not been fulfilled;
- 15.7.2. the sustainability the project has significantly decreased or is insufficient;
- 15.7.3. the PI has not submitted the data management plan stipulated in clause 14.5 or the information stipulated in clauses 15.1 or 15.2 within the prescribed time limit, incl. a licence from a specific ethics committee (if applicable);
- 15.7.4. the PI has failed to submit the report on the previous project funded by the Council by the deadline without a valid reason or the report has not been accepted by the Council;
- 15.7.5. the PI and/or the institution did not agree with the conditions stipulated in clause 15.5 or with the proposal stipulated in clause 15.6;
- 15.7.6. there are other adverse and justified circumstances.
- 15.8. Before making the decision stipulated in clause 15.7, the PI and the institution are entitled to submit a written joint opinion and make objections within the time limit established by the Council.

16. Changing the Institution

- 16.1. The PI of the starting grant project is entitled to change the institution. In order to do that, the PI shall submit a request to the Council along with the consent of the new institution and a confirmation stating that the previous institution has been informed about this change.
- 16.2. The Evaluation Committee shall evaluate the quality and sufficiency of the research environment of the new institution for achieving the objectives of the project, and if members of the senior research staff are involved in the project, the sustainability of the project. In case of
- 16.2.1. approval, the Council shall enter into a new grant contract with the PI and the new

- institution that has to enter into an employment contract with the PI within one month. The Council shall terminate the grant contract entered into with the PI and the previous institution;
- 16.2.2. disapproval, a new grant contract will not be entered into.
- 16.3. The new grant contract shall be entered into no later than during three months. Until the new grant contract is concluded, the Council shall suspend the payments.
- 16.4. After the termination of the grant contract, the previous institution is required to refund the unused grant money along with a proportional fee of overhead expenses to the Council's bank account no later than seven calendar days upon receiving the corresponding claim for refund from the Council.

Chapter 5

TEMPORARY SUSPENSION AND TERMINATION OF THE PROJECT

17. Temporary Suspension of the Project

- 17.1. The PI may request the temporary suspension of the project in case of maternity or parental leave, compulsory military service, serious illness, or other exceptional circumstances, due to which the implementation of the project will become impossible or significantly more difficult.
- 17.2. The request for the temporary suspension of the project has to be submitted prior to the beginning of the suspension period in agreement with the institution to the Management of the Council.
- 17.3. The PI may request the temporary suspension of the project for up to three years. The end date of the project will be extended by the suspension period.
- 17.4. The grant contract will be suspended for the temporary suspension period of the project.

18. Termination of the Project

- 18.1. The project will end on the end date of the grant period.
- 18.2. All the activities financed with the grant have to be carried out and all the costs of the activities must be paid by the end date of the project. The only exception is that in justified cases, carrying out and paying for the activities necessary for achieving the objectives of the project, incl. mainly public outreach activities, is allowed within the two months after the end date of the project.
- 18.3. The institution is required to refund the unused grant money along with a proportional fee of overhead costs to the Council's bank account no later than seven calendar days upon receiving the corresponding claim for refund from the Council. The PI and the institution are required to submit the final report of the project pursuant to clause 19.

19. Submission of the Final Report

- 19.1. The PI shall prepare the final report of the project in Estonian. The final report can be submitted in English if the PI and/or the member(s) of the research team have no knowledge of Estonian.

The final report, after having been approved by the institution, has to be submitted via ETIS within the time limit established by the Council.

19.2. The final report shall include the following:

- 19.2.1. the results (incl. the main results of the project in the form of a popular science summary both in Estonian and in English, the full texts of the publications that have been published as a result of implementing the project that also contain a reference to the grant, and the industrial property items) in accordance with the objectives set in the application. Pursuant to clause 20.1, the publications that do not contain a reference to the grant must not be included in the final report;
 - 19.2.2. the scientific importance of the results and their importance outside academia as well as the potential impact, incl. the potential applicability of the results and possible directions for future research (if applicable);
 - 19.2.3. public outreach activities;
 - 19.2.4. a report on the usage of the grant in accordance with the accounting records of the institution;
 - 19.2.5. the realisation of the data management plan;
 - 19.2.6. the fulfilment of the conditions stipulated in clauses 13.7, 13.9, or 15.5 in case such conditions were prescribed;
 - 19.2.7. if the project necessitated compliance with the Nagoya Protocol, the due diligence declaration;
 - 19.2.8. additional information directly related to the project that the PI or the institution deem relevant;
 - 19.2.9. other materials necessary for introducing the project requested by the Council in the ETIS form.
- 19.3. If the PI fails to submit the final report by the deadline, then the final report shall be prepared and submitted by the institution.
 - 19.4. The Council will either approve or not approve the final report. The Council will not approve the report if the report does not meet the requirements established by this directive and the inaccuracies have not been corrected within the time limit established by the Council. Neither will the final report be approved if the requirements for the use of the grant have been violated, especially if the circumstances described in clauses 21.1.4-21.1.9 have occurred. The decision and its justification will be made available to the PI and to the institution via ETIS.

20. Making the Results of the Project Public

- 20.1. Upon the publication of the results of the project, a reference to the grant that was used for funding the project must be included.
- 20.2. The full texts of the publications that have been published as a result of implementing the project that also contain a reference to the grant will be made freely available by the institution via ETIS, unless limited by publishing restrictions, copyright, or other intellectual property laws.
- 20.3. If a publishing house restricts access to the articles temporarily, then the institution will make the

full texts of the articles published as a result of implementing the project freely available via ETIS once the restriction has expired.

- 20.4. The main results of the project in the form of a popular science summary both in Estonian and in English will be made available to the public by the Council via ETIS.

Chapter 6

PREMATURE TERMINATION OF THE GRANT AND RECLAMATION OF THE GRANT

21. Premature Termination of the Grant

- 21.1. The Council is entitled to terminate the awarded grant if:
 - 21.1.1. the PI or the institution have submitted the respective request;
 - 21.1.2. during the implementation of the project, the PI or the research team no longer meet the requirements stipulated in clause 7.2;
 - 21.1.3. the PI is unable to lead the project (the death of the PI, serious illness, transitioning to other employment, moving to another country, or other substantial and justified circumstances);
 - 21.1.4. the PI, the participant(s) of the project, or the institution have fundamentally violated the requirements stipulated in this directive or by the legislation;
 - 21.1.5. the licence from a specific ethics committee has not been submitted prior to the beginning of human or animal experiments or it has become evident that the due diligence declaration stemming from the Nagoya Protocol has been disregarded;
 - 21.1.6. the PI has failed to submit the data management plan on time;
 - 21.1.7. the PI and the institution have failed to fulfil the conditions stipulated in clauses 13.7 or 15.5 within the prescribed time limit;
 - 21.1.8. the PI or the institution have intentionally presented false information, or plagiarism or fraudulent activities have become evident in the project-related activities of the PI;
 - 21.1.9. there are other adverse and justified circumstances.
- 21.2. After the revocation of the decision to award the grant or to continue funding the project and after the premature termination of the grant contract, the institution is required to refund the unused grant money along with a proportional fee of overhead costs to the Council's bank account no later than seven calendar days upon receiving the corresponding claim for refund from the Council. The PI and the institution are required to submit the final report pursuant to clause 19.
- 21.3. If the decision of awarding the grant or the decision to continue funding is repealed retrospectively, then the Council may reclaim the grant from the institution.

22. Audit and Reclamation of the Grant

- 22.1. The institution is required to allow the Council or a person authorised by the Council to audit the use of the grant and provide necessary assistance, including allowing access to the premises and the territory of the institution and submitting all the requested documents for the purpose of

verifying the correctness of the information provided.

- 22.2. A grant not used for the intended purpose may be reclaimed by the Council from the institution along with a proportional fee of overhead costs.