

**Rules of procedure on post-award
management and monitoring,
see Article 2 of the Regulation for the University of Iceland no. 569/2009**

1. Introduction

- 1.1. These rules of procedure are designed to ensure professional post-award management and monitoring of research grants in accordance with laws and regulations, requirements set by grant providers and other existing rules of procedure and protocols at the University of Iceland.
- 1.2. These rules of procedure do not apply to grants awarded for teaching and learning development or grants awarded from University of Iceland funds.

2. Definitions

- 2.1. The definitions of terms used in these rules of procedure are as follows:

Research project: A research project defined comprehensively or in part in a grant proposal by a current or prospective employee of the University of Iceland, or a previously defined project in which the employee is invited to participate.

Principal Investigator (PI): A current or prospective employee who is awarded a grant in order to complete a defined research project, whether the grant is awarded in their name or the name of the University of Iceland.

International research grants - A: International research grants awarded to the University of Iceland or a current/prospective UI employee, for which the University of Iceland is responsible. A-grants are grants awarded under the EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation and related programmes (e.g. Horizon Europe and Digital Europe) and grants from international funds, companies, institutions and organisations (e.g. NIH, NSF, NASA, Carlsberg Foundation etc.). The Division of Science and Innovation and school research directors keep a register of grants and how they are categorised.

International research grants - B: International research grants and collaboration grants awarded to the University of Iceland or a current/prospective UI employee, for which the University of Iceland is responsible. B-grants are grants awarded under the European Union's Erasmus+ programme and similar regional programmes, e.g. NordForsk, Interreg NPA and EEA Norway grants. The Division of Science and Innovation and research directors keep a register of grants and how they are categorised.

Domestic research grants: Grants awarded by Icelandic funds, companies, institutions and organisations.

Financial management: This involves monitoring the costs of the project and the status of the work in real time, e.g. by asking for time reports.

3. Involvement in research projects

- 3.1. All grant proposals submitted in the name of the University of Iceland involve some level of commitment from the University, whether that be providing matching grants, dedicating employees' work hours, or providing facilities and resources for a particular project. Employees shall inform the research director or, as appropriate, the school dean, in accordance with protocols at the relevant school, of their intention to take part in a grant proposal, e.g. with reference to matching grants or other commitments. Employees should do this as soon as work begins on writing the grant proposal or a decision about participation is taken. An employee's contribution to a research project may not exceed their FTE at the University of Iceland. Employees must seek approval from the Division of Science and Innovation, acting under the authority of the rector, when the matching grant from the University of Iceland will exceed ISK 50 million over the course of the project.
- 3.2. If an employee decides to apply for a grant or take part in a research project, the proposal must be written in consultation with the school research director. Care must be taken to ensure that the proposal outlines all costs and that all information about the University and financial considerations, including wage tables, is correct. The Division of Science and Innovation will regularly set reference figures for grant proposal budgets.
- 3.3. The principal investigator must examine all the rules and obligations included in the grant agreement, e.g. regarding ownership of results, data and deliverables created in the course of the research project. The principal investigator must ensure that funding is used in accordance with the provisions of the grant agreement and collaborative agreement. The Division of Science and Innovation will examine agreements about grants and research collaborations in consultation with research directors.
- 3.4. The principal investigator must comply with the rules, standards and guidelines approved by the University Council or set by central administration regarding the quality of research, management of research projects and handling of finances. This includes the University of Iceland Code of Ethics, the Code of Research Ethics for Public Higher Education Institutions, procurement rules, data protection policies and the operational rules of the Intellectual Property Committee of the University of Iceland and Landspítali University Hospital.

4. Authority to sign agreements

- 4.1. The director of the Division of Science and Innovation, or alternatively the deputy director or the UI head of finance, are authorised to sign international grant agreements and collaborative agreements for research projects.

- 4.2. Agreements regarding domestic grants are signed within the school in accordance with school rules and the requirements of the grant provider.
- 4.3. School deans or others acting under their authority are authorised to sign letters of intent, committing to participation in research projects and grant proposals.
- 4.4. The UI head of finance will sign financial reports for research grants in accordance with the requirements of the grant provider.

5. Management and supervision of research projects

- 5.1. The principal investigator is accountable for the finances and progress of the research project. The principal investigator must ensure that everyone working on the project is aware of the responsibilities and obligations involved in participating in sponsored research.
- 5.2. Schools will approve the costs for sponsored research projects and be accountable in accordance with the rules of procedure on the creation, management and settlement of research accounts, as well as other financial rules of procedure at the University of Iceland.
- 5.3. School research directors oversee sponsored research projects at the school. This involves keeping records of proposals and agreements for all research grants at the school and following up the commitments made to grant providers.
- 5.4. School research directors manage and are responsible for finances and the settling of accounts for international research grants - B and domestic research grants, in accordance with the grant agreement and current accounting rules and protocols at the UI Division of Finance and Payroll Office. Support services at the school are responsible for submitting financial statements and reports to the Division of Science and Innovation for review and approval by the UI head of finance in accordance with the requirements of the grant provider, no later than two weeks before the deadline for submitting to the grant provider.
- 5.5. The Grants Office at the Division of Science and Innovation manages and is responsible for finances and the settling of accounts for international research grants - A, in accordance with the grant agreement and current accounting rules and protocols at the UI Division of Finance and Payroll Office. The Division of Science and Innovation is also authorised to oversee other research grants in cases where central administration is responsible for signing financial statements. The Division of Science and Innovation and the UI head of finance are authorised to reject financial statements if the supporting documentation is not satisfactory.

6. Auditing of sponsored research projects

- 6.1. External review may involve certification of financial statements or deliverables, or a formal audit by the grant provider. The Division of Science and Innovation executes and is

responsible for preparations for external review of international research projects - A and B. The Division of Science and Innovation is also responsible for coordinating responses to audits and handling communications with auditors. Researchers and school research directors must assist the Division of Science and Innovation as far as possible and provide the information necessary for auditing.

7. Consultation and collaboration

- 7.1. The rector appoints a consultation group of employees from central administration and the schools, which operates under the authority of the Division of Science and Innovation. The role of the consultation group is to guarantee professional management of grants and an effective flow of information about procedures related to research grants.
- 7.2. When more than one school collaborates on a research project, the school research directors shall ensure that they come to an collaborative research agreement which will apply for the duration of the project and after its conclusion. This agreement must cover, for example, ownership of deliverables, intellectual property rights and division of matching grant funds between the schools, where applicable.

8. Entry into force

- 8.1. These rules of procedure are established on the basis of Article 2 of the Regulation for the University of Iceland no. 569/2009 and shall enter into force 1 January 2024 after being approved by the University Council. At the same time, the rules of procedure on the obligations of research grant recipients and post-award services, approved by the University Council 8 December 2016, are repealed. These rules of procedure shall be reviewed following an evaluation of procedures and the division of responsibilities related to the management of international grants within two years of entering into force.

Exposition for proposed new rules of procedure on post-award management and monitoring, see Article 2 of the Regulation for the University of Iceland no. 569/2009

I. Introduction

These rules of procedure are based on a proposal discussed by the University Council 1 June 2023 and statements on the proposal by the school. Before the matter was discussed by the University Council, it had been regularly discussed at meetings between the rector and the school deans.

In accordance with Paragraph 3, Article 2 of the Regulation for the University of Iceland no. 569/2009, the University's central administration, under the authority of the rector and the University Council, shall manage the University's accounting, including accounting procedures, monitoring of operations, and settlement of collaborative agreements and research grants that entail the handling of funds and financial obligations for the University. The University Council will set, as appropriate, specific rules of procedure for the handling of individual projects. The current rules of procedure on the obligations of research grant recipients and post-award services, see Article 2 of the Regulation for the University of Iceland no. 569/2009, were approved by the University Council 8 December 2016. The creation of these rules of procedure in 2016 was a positive step, but in practice they have proven to lack clarity regarding the division of responsibilities and working procedures. When a grant agreement is signed, the University of Iceland takes on financial and academic commitments, e.g., delivery of certain information and data in a standardised way. Rules of procedure must therefore clearly define the division of responsibilities between parties involved with research grants at the University, in order to ensure professional management and monitoring of grants. In recent years, there has also been a growing emphasis on streamlining the management of research projects.

Considering the above, the Division of Science and Innovation submitted a proposal for new rules of procedure on post-award management and monitoring. The proposal was based on the Strategy of the University of Iceland 2021–2026, which commits to improving pre- and post-award services for researchers to help them win international grants. These rules also adjust the division of responsibilities between the Division of Science and Innovation and the schools in connection with post-award services for international grants. On 20 June 2023, the Division of Science and Innovation requested statements and comments on the proposal. A total of five statements were submitted. The statements from the schools were generally positive, although they pointed out that the proposal could be improved by explaining in more detail the main terms used and what the division of responsibilities involved. Both of these suggestions were taken on board. The main terms are now defined in the rules of procedure and, in consultation with school research directors, a document has been created providing a detailed explanation of the division of responsibilities. It should be noted that these rules of procedure were prepared in close consultation with the research directors.

Preparations for adjusting the division of responsibilities are already underway and the new rules are expected to enter into force 1 January 2024.

II. On individual articles of the rules of procedure

About Article 1

Objectives

This Article describes the objectives of the rules of procedure. The rules of procedure were designed to ensure professional post-award management and monitoring of research grants in accordance with general laws and regulations, requirements set by grant providers and existing rules of procedure and protocols at the University of Iceland. The rules do not apply to grants awarded for teaching and learning development unless the project involves research. The rules do not apply to grants awarded from University of Iceland funds.

About Article 2

Definitions

This Article defines the terms used in detail. It is proposed that international grants should be divided into two categories – A and B – with a separate category for domestic grants. When the rules are reviewed after two years, the decision may be taken to further adjust the division of responsibilities between the schools and the Division of Science and Innovation. In the first stage, the Division of Science and Innovation will manage international grants in category A and in the next stage, all international grants. Special consideration will then be given as to whether responsibility for domestic grants should also be transferred to the Division of Science and Innovation. The rules of procedure will need to be amended before each stage is implemented. Other definitions are self explanatory.

About Article 3

Involvement in research projects

The first paragraph discusses the required procedures when a University of Iceland employee decides to take part in a research project. Employees shall inform the research director or, as appropriate, the school dean, in accordance with protocols at the relevant school, of their intention to take part in a grant proposal. Employees should do this as soon as work begins on writing the grant proposal or a decision about involvement is taken, e.g. regarding matching grants or other commitments. The paragraph emphasises that an employee's contribution to a research project may not exceed their FTE at the University of Iceland – this is consistent with EU regulations. We also suggest that employees be required to seek approval from the Division of Science and Innovation, acting under the authority of the rector, when the matching grant will exceed ISK 50 million over the course of the project. This provision is intended to ensure that the University is able to fulfil the financial commitments involved in the grant agreement, as well as providing the Office of the Rector with oversight of all major agreements requiring such matching grants.

The second paragraph discusses consultation with the employee during the grant application process. It is important that grant proposals are written in consultation with the school research director to ensure that it outlines all costs and that all information about the University and financial considerations, including wage tables, is correct.

The third paragraph discusses the responsibilities and obligations of employees who are awarded grants. To ensure responsible management of grant funds, employees must be familiar with the commitments involved in signing a grant agreement or cooperative agreement. Everyone involved must be aware that grants are awarded on the condition that the University of Iceland is accountable for the project. This means that the University has professional and financial responsibility for, e.g., exchange rate differences, additional expenses, matching grants, and reimbursement following audits, as well as administrative services such as calculation and payment of wages, payment of invoices, accounting, advertisements and recruiting, advice regarding intellectual property rights, and management of the project. It is therefore important that the Division of Science and Innovation examines agreements about grants and research collaborations in consultation with research directors.

The fourth paragraph reiterates the responsibilities of the University of Iceland and the employee's obligation to comply with the rules, standards and guidelines approved by the University Council or set by central administration regarding the quality of research, management of research projects and handling of finances.

About Article 4

Authority to sign agreements

This article discusses which parties have the authority to sign documents related to grant proposals, grant agreements, and financial statements.

About Article 5

Management and supervision of research projects

This article defines the working procedures used once a grant has been accepted. Specialised, systematic services must be provided and the quality of data submitted in the name of the University of Iceland must be monitored.

The first paragraph describes the role of the principal investigator. In order to allow full oversight and provision of satisfactory services, the principal investigator is accountable for the finances and progress of the research project. The principle investigator shall also ensure that other employees participating in a sponsored research project sign a statement to ensure that they commit to the obligations involved in the grant agreement.

The second paragraph discusses the responsibilities of the school in accordance with the rules of procedure on the creation, management and settlement of research accounts.

The third paragraph discusses the role of the research director, emphasising that the school research director oversees sponsored research projects at that school. Research directors help write grant proposals, so it is appropriate for them to handle the filing of proposals and related agreements to ensure a comprehensive record is kept. School research directors also follow up commitments regarding deliverables, since they are familiar with the commitments outlined in the grant proposal and in close communication with the applicants.

The fourth and fifth paragraphs propose that responsibility for management and supervision of projects be divided between school research directors and the Division of Science and Innovation, depending on the category of research grant. As outlined in the 'Definitions' section, it is proposed that international research grants be divided into two categories: A and B. Research directors and the Division of Science and Innovation must have the authority and understanding from UI administrators to allow them to call for cooperation and the documents required to meet the commitments outlined in grant agreements, e.g. to ensure that financial reports are completed on time. The Division of Science and Innovation must also have the authority to monitor other research grants where in cases where central administration is responsible for signing financial statements, but in other cases the school research director will monitor the grant. The Division of Science and Innovation must also have the authority to reject financial statements if the underlying documentation is considered unsatisfactory – this is essential to prevent reimbursement of grant money following an audit.

About Article 6

Auditing of sponsored research projects

This article explains the procedures related to auditing of sponsored research projects. The Division of Science and Innovation is responsible for external review of international research projects in categories A and B. The Division of Science and Innovation is also responsible for coordinating responses to audits and handling all communications with auditors. To ensure the quality of the information supplied, researchers and school research directors must assist the Division of Science and Innovation as far as possible and provide the information necessary for auditing.

About Article 7

Consultation and collaboration

The first paragraph discusses the appointment of a consultation group of employees from central administration and the schools. The rector will appoint the group, which is intended to guarantee professional management of grants and an effective flow of information about procedures related to research grants.

The second paragraph discusses cases where schools collaborate on research projects. The school research directors shall then ensure that they come to an collaborative research agreement which will apply for the duration of the project and after its conclusion. This agreement must cover, for example, ownership of deliverables, intellectual property rights and division of matching funds

between the schools, where applicable. The agreement is made in order to facilitate communications and managements of the research project.

About Article 8

Entry into force

This article discusses the entry into force of these rules of procedure. As they enter into force, the rules of procedure on the obligations of research grant recipients and services to them, approved by the University Council 8 December 2016, will be repealed. These rules of procedure will be reviewed following an evaluation of procedures and the division of responsibilities related to the management of international grants within two years of entering into force.