

Republika e Kosovës

Republika Kosova-Republic of Kosovo

*Qeveria –Vlada-Government*

*Ministria e Arsimit, e Shkencës ,Teknologjisë dhe Inovacionit- Ministarstva za Obrazovanje Nauku,Tehnologiju i Inovacije-Ministry of Education Science,Technology and Innovation*

*Research Based Teaching Programme for Kosovo Universities*

Guidelines for Grant Applicants

Deadline for submission of applications:

06/05/2022 at 16:00

The Research-Based Teaching Programme has been developed and will be implemented with the support of the Quality, Accountability, Integrity, and Transparency in Higher Education (QAINT) project in consultation and close coordination with representatives of the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology, and Innovation (MESTI) and representatives of public universities in Kosovo.

The QAINT project is funded by the Austrian Development Agency (ADA), with a contribution from MESTI, and is implemented by three partner organization – Kosova Education Center (KEC), Organization for Improvement of the Quality of Education (ORCA), and Center for Social Innovation (ZSI). The long-term impact of this project is to improve the quality and competitiveness of the higher education sector with the aim of contributing to social and economic development of the country.

DISCLAIMER: This document has been produced with the financial assistance of the Austrian Development Agency. The views and opinions expressed herein can in no way reflect the official opinion of the Austrian Development Agency.

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# 1. BACKGROUND

Most university courses introduce students to research methods and results, whereas state of the art methodologies and practical results of research activities are used in fewer cases. The current academic culture has developed over time, but direct involvement of students in the practical research process is still limited. A closer insight in the research processes and especially the practical involvement in research would allow hands-on experiences, which cannot be acquired by students in other settings.

Research-based teaching means that students carry out research in their courses independently and with an open outcome. This helps to internalize and practice research conducts and methods, skills such as formulating a precise question and processing and monitoring a research process. On the student end, research-based teaching can contribute to (a) the development of competences as critical attitude, (b) independent thinking, (c) transferable knowledge as problem solving, (d) team-work; furthermore, (e) it gives orientation for the future plans of students with regard to their research career.

Gradually the research-teaching nexus can be put on a fourfold scale: research led-teaching; research-oriented teaching; research-tutored teaching; research-based teaching. This scale reflects on the relationship between teaching and research and embeds students as consumers of content in lectures on one end, and considering students as knowledge producers on the other end. Moreover, a teaching practice that embeds practical research comprises an experience, which students cannot get in any other setting.

To help introduce research-based teaching practices in the Kosovo higher education institutions, the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI), with technical assistance from the Austrian Government funded project “Quality, Accountability, Integrity and Transparency in Higher Education (QAINT)”, developed the support scheme named “Research Based Teaching Programme for Kosovo Universities”. This support scheme is fully funded from the Republic of Kosovo Budget.

Note that the Research Based Teaching Programme for Kosovo Universities and subsequently the “Guidelines for Grant Applicants” follows the *Decision of the Minister of MESTI 01b, 337 from 01/12/2021 For setting the rules, criteria, requirements and procedures for implementing the program to support research-based teaching*

The document can be accessed on https://masht.rks-gov.net/uploads/2021/12/decision-no-337-01b.pdf

The Austrian Development Agency – ADA and subsequently the QAINT project are committed to respect social standards and the related recommendations of the Social Standards Appraisal. Similarly, the development cooperation standards on environmental protection, cultural heritage protection have to be respected or potentially addressed in an application. Mitigation measures set by applicants or specific topics addressing those challenges as a working field of the research-based teaching are encouraged.

# 2. PROGRAMME DESCRIPTION

The core objective of the “Research Based Teaching Programme for Kosovo Universities” is to facilitate research-based teaching by

(1) recognising already established good practice, or successful pilots, with individual awards provided for a successful teaching practice, which includes a mainly research focused approach in teaching (ex-post recognition awards for lecturers, who already actively applied research-based teaching);

(2) funding of research-based teaching actions which are proposed by university teachers for specific courses to renew current teaching agendas (ex –ante competition).

Consequently, the Programme provides two types of awards

Type 1: Awards for research-based teaching (ex-post recognition);

The objective is to award university lecturers for exceptional demonstrations of research-based approaches in their teaching practice.

Type 2: Grants for implementation of research-based teaching projects (ex-ante competition).

The grants are available on competitive basis to university lecturers who demonstrate they have viable plans to introduce research-based teaching in their courses.

MESTI intends to award:

Type 1: Each award amounts to 1,500 EUR.

Type 2: The maximum amount per grant is 6,000 EUR.

MESTI reserves the right not to award all available funds, or re-allocate funds between the two types of awards.

# 3. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

There are three sets of eligibility criteria relating to:

1. Applicants who may participate in the Call for proposals;
2. Activities for which the awards or grants may be received;
3. Types of cost eligible for funding.

## 3.1. Eligibility of applicants

In order to be eligible for an award of the “Research Based Teaching Programme for Kosovo Universities” the lead applicant must be:

* a full-time academic staff member of an accredited public university in Kosovo;
* directly responsible for implementation of research-based approaches in his/her teaching practice.

In case of group application, all applicants must satisfy the eligibility criteria as applicable to the lead applicant himself/herself, and be affiliated with the same university.

The award for research-based teaching (ex-post recognition, Type 1) may not be awarded to an applicant who has previously received support to introduce research-based practices in teaching from the grant for implementation of research-based teaching projects (ex-ante competition, Type 2). The same applies to group applications provided that at least one of the applicants within a group of applicants has previously received support to introduce research-based practices in teaching from the grant for implementation of research-based teaching projects (ex-ante competition, Type 2).

The following are not eligible to apply for awards of “Research Based Teaching Programme for Kosovo Universities”:

* Members of the National Research Council;
* Members of the Scientific Council and field scientific councils at MESTI;
* Members of the Programme Jury;
* Members of boards, rectors and vice-rectors of public universities.

## 3.2. Eligible activities

Type 1: Awards for research-based teaching (ex-post recognition)

The ex-post recognition awardsare available to eligible applicants, who demonstrate to have successfully implemented research-based teaching approaches in their home institutions, by involving students in any type of research-based learning activities.

Applicant must demonstrate that the implementation took place on, or after, the academic year 2015/2016.

Type 2: Grants for implementation of research-based teaching projects (ex-ante competition)

The ex-ante competition grants are available to eligible applicants, who submit proposals to implement research-based teaching approaches in their home institutions, by involving students in any type of research-based learning activities.

The projects must be implemented during the year 2022.

A non-exhaustive list of research-based learning activities for both types of awards include:

* Literature review,
* Setting and testing hypotheses,
* Data collection and processing,
* Field work,
* Laboratory work,
* Writing research reports, etc.

## 3.3. Eligibility of costs

Type 1: Awards for research-based teaching (ex-post recognition)

The ex-post recognition award is awarded to an eligible applicant or group of applicants and is a non–repayable award. Its use and spending is not regulated and the awardee(s) may freely decide how to spend it.

Type 2: Grants for implementation of research-based teaching projects (ex-ante competition)

The ex-ante competition grant is awarded to an eligible applicant, or group of applicants, who become grant beneficiaries together with an identified academic host organisation

At least 50% of the grant amount shall be used for eligible direct costs of the project. Eligible direct costs are actual costs incurred by the beneficiary(ies), which meet all the following criteria:

1. they are incurred during the implementation of the project:
2. they are indicated in the estimated overall budget for the project;
3. they do not include any type of remuneration or cash award;
4. they are necessary for the implementation of the project;
5. they are identifiable and verifiable, in particular, are recorded in the accounting records of the beneficiary (ies) and are determined according to the accounting standards and the usual cost accounting practices applicable to the beneficiary (ies);
6. they comply with the requirements of applicable tax and social legislation;
7. they are reasonable, justified and comply with the requirements of sound financial management, in particular, regarding economy and efficiency.

The remainder of the grant funding may be used for other costs, including staff remuneration and cash awards, in compliance with internal regulations of the beneficiary’s home institution.

## 3.4. Limiting the number of applications

No applicant may submit more than one application for Type 1 awards under this call for proposals.

No applicant may submit more than one application for Type 2 grants under this call for proposals.

# 4. APPLICATION PROCEDURE

## 4.1. Preparation of application

Type 1: Awards for research-based teaching (ex-post recognition)

The application must be prepared using the application form RBTP-T1.

Type 2: Grants for implementation of research-based teaching projects (ex-ante competition)

The application must be prepared using the application form RBTP-T2.

Applicants must apply in English.

Please complete the application form carefully and as clearly as possible so that it can be assessed properly.

Hand-written applications will not be accepted.

The application form must be signed by the lead applicant and the authorised signatory of the applicant’s home institution.

In case of group application, all applicants must sign declarations using the format provided in the respective application form.

The applicant must comply with all instructions provided in the respective application form separately available for Type 1 and Type 2. Any failure to do so may lead to rejection of the application.

## 4.2. Further information about the application process

MESTI will organise an information session for all interested parties.

Questions may be sent by e-mail no later than 15 days before the deadline for the submission of application to the e-mail address below:

Fidan.Kozhani@rks-gov.net

MESTI has no obligation to provide clarifications to questions received after this date.

Replies will be given no later than 7 days before the deadline for submission of applications.

No individual replies will be given to questions. All questions and answers, as well as other important notices to applicants during the course of the evaluation procedure, will be published on the MESTI web-site. Therefore, it is advisable to consult the abovementioned website regularly for information about the questions and/or answers published.

## 4.3. Submission of application

Applications are submitted in the following way:

* Registration at the following link (**not later than 5 days before the deadline**):

[https://survey3.zsi.at/index.php/182157?lang=en](https://survey3.zsi.at/index.php/182157?lang=en" \t "_blank)

Within 24 hours (one working day) a protected access code to a cloud space will be distributed to applicants’ e-mail(s) indicated in the registration.

* Applicants can drag and drop files or folders to the dedicated cloud space area. At the time of call closure, the content will be frozen and cannot be changed anymore.
* In addition, and as a back-up, applicants send their application, not exceeding 10 MB in a ZIP file to: Fidan.Kozhani@rks-gov.net

Applications sent by any other means (e.g., by fax, paper or any electronic data) will be rejected.

Applicants can access their own applications also after submission.

The application´s content will be available to the technical administrators of the call, the jury members and the invited evaluators. All persons receiving access after the call closure will sign a self-declaration to safeguard data protection issues and confidentiality with content submitted in applications.

# 5. EVALUATION

## 5.1. Administrative Check

Administrative Check is carried out by the responsible officer at MESTI and the Chair of the Jury or his/her representative with the purpose to determine the compliance with formal requirements of the Call for Proposals

During the administrative check the following will be assessed:

* + - If the deadline has been met. Otherwise, the application will be automatically rejected;
		- If the applicant(s) meet the eligibility criteria as specified in section 3.1 of the Guidelines;
		- If the application has been prepared in accordance with the instructions provided in section 4.1 of the Guidelines and the respective application forms;
		- If limitations on number of applications from section 3.4 of the Guidelines have been observed.

In case of non-compliance or if any of the requested information is missing or is incorrect, the application may be rejected on that **sole** basis and the application will not be evaluated further.

The applications that pass the administrative check will be evaluated.

## 5.2. Evaluation criteria

The evaluation criteria help to assess the quality of the applications in relation to the objectives set forth in the Guidelines, and to award proposals which maximise the overall effectiveness of the call for proposals. For each type of award, the evaluation criteria are summarised in tables. Each criterion will be given a score between 1 and 5 as follows: 1 = very poor; 2 = poor; 3 = adequate; 4 = good; 5 = very good.

Type 1: Awards for research-based teaching (ex-post recognition)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Criterion** | **Maximum score** |
| Quality of planning and implementation of the research-based teaching activity | 5 x 2\* |
| Extent and quality of the involvement of students in research during the activity implementation | 5 x 2\* |
| Extent to which students applied their knowledge in practice or had active interaction with societal and/or economic problems during the activity implementation[[1]](#footnote-1) | 5 x 2\* |
| Replication of the activity or potential for replication in the future | 5 |
| Cooperation with colleagues during planning and implementation of the activity | 5 |
| Consideration of gender aspects during planning and implementation of the activity | 5 |
| Activity was led by an academic staff member younger than 40 years or female academic staff member | 5 |
| **Total** | **50** |

\*: this score is multiplied by 2 because of its importance

Type 2: Grants for implementation of research-based teaching projects (ex-ante competition)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Criterion** | **Maximum score** |
| Quality, coherence and feasibility of planned research-based teaching activities | 5 x 3\*\* |
| Extent and quality of the involvement of students in research during the activity implementation | 5 x 2\* |
| Possibility for students to apply their knowledge in practice or have active interaction with societal and/or economic problems during the activity implementation[[2]](#footnote-2) | 5 x 2\* |
| Sustainability – potential for replication in the future | 5 x 2\* |
| Cooperation with colleagues during planning and implementation of the activity | 5 |
| Consideration of gender aspects during planning and implementation of the activity | 5 |
| Activity was led by an academic staff member younger than 40 years, or female academic staff member | 5 |
| **Total** | **60** |

\*: this score is multiplied by 2 because of its importance

\*\*: this score is multiplied by 3 because of its importance

## 5.3. Evaluation process

Evaluation of applications will be carried out based on the Decision of the Minister of MESTI 01b, 337 from 01/12/2021 *For setting the rules, criteria, requirements and procedures for implementing the program to support research-based teaching* that can be accessed on
: https://masht.rks-gov.net/uploads/2021/12/decision-no-337-01b.pdf .

Each application will be assessed by three evaluators and scored according to the respective evaluation grid from section 5.2. The scores from the three evaluators will be added forming **the total score** of the application.

Once all applications have been assessed, for each type a list will be drawn up with the applications ranked according to their total score. Only applications having scored at least 40% of the maximum total score[[3]](#footnote-3) from three evaluators (minimum 60 points for Type 1 and minimum 72 points for Type 2 awards) will be considered.

For each type, the highest scoring applications will be provisionally selected until the available budget for this call for proposals is reached. In addition, a reserve list will be drawn up including applications that have not been provisionally selected but have scored at least 50% of the maximum total score from three evaluators (minimum 75 points for Type 1 and minimum 90 points for Type 2 awards). This list will be used if more funds become available during the validity period of the reserve list.

The lead applicants will be informed in writing of the MESTI decision concerning their application and, if rejected, the reasons for the negative decision. The Evaluation Summary Report is based on the evaluation results and established by the Jury will be integral part of this letter that will be sent by e-mail to each applicant.

An applicant believing that s/he has been affected by an error or irregularity during the award process may file a complaint within 15 days as stated under Point 16. in the Decision of the Minister of MESTI 01b, 337 from 01/12/2021 *For setting the rules, criteria, requirements and procedures for implementing the program to support research-based teaching* that can be accessed on <https://masht.rks-gov.net/uploads/2021/12/decision-no-337-01b.pdf>

CONTACT PERSONS FOR THE CALL:

MESTI – Fidan.Kozhani@rks-gov.net

QAINT Project – gajdusek@zsi.at

1. This criterion includes also activities addressing issues of minorities, vulnerable groups or specific social groups in danger. Similarly environmental impact of activities can be included. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. This criterion includes also activities addressing issues of minorities, vulnerable groups or specific social groups in danger. Similarly environmental impact of activities can be included. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The maximum total score is for Type 1 and involving three evaluators 150 points. The maximum total score is for Type 2 and involving three evaluators 180 points. The maximum total score is used to calculate the 40% minimum points threshold. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)