**

**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 Program for public universities of Kosovo

Application Guidelines

Application deadline:

The call will be open during 2024 until the number of grants to be awarded has been met

The Research-Based Teaching Program has been developed and will be implemented with the support of the Higher Education Interventions 2025 (HEI'25) project in close consultation and coordination with representatives of the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology, and Innovation (MESTI) and representatives of public universities in Kosovo.

The HEI'25 project is financed by the Austrian Development Agency (ADA), with the contribution of MESTI and the Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA) and is implemented by two partner organizations - Kosova Education Center (KEC) and the Organization for Improvement of the Quality in Education (ORCA). The long-term impact of this project is to improve the quality, effectiveness and competitiveness of the higher education sector by assisting in key actions and processes directly related to quality, such as accountability, transparency, academic integrity, digitalization and student activism, through technical assistance, support for the academic staff and the implementation of relevant monitoring activities in cooperation with the partners and beneficiaries of the project.

DISCLAIMER: This document has been compiled with financial assistance from 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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# BACKGROUND

Most university courses teach and present students with research methods and research results, in fewer cases, they teach and present the newest methodologies and practical results of lecturers' research activities. The current academic culture has developed over time, however the direct involvement of students and PhD students in the practical research process is limited. A closer look at research processes and, especially, practical involvement in research, enable students to gain practical experiences that they cannot gain in other settings.

Research-based teaching means that students in their subjects carry out research work independently and with public results. This helps to acquire and practice research directions and methods, skills such as formulating a precise question and developing and monitoring a research process. From the students' point of view, inquiry-based teaching can contribute to (a) the development of competencies such as critical thinking, (b) independent thinking, (c) transferable knowledge, such as problem solving, (d) group work; moreover, (e) it guides students' plans for their future research careers.

Gradually, the research-teaching connection can be established on a four-level scale: research-guided teaching; research-oriented teaching; teaching supported by research work; and research-based teaching. This scope reflects the relationship between teaching and research and includes students, on the one hand, as consumers of content during lectures and, on the other, considers students as producers of knowledge. Furthermore, a teaching practice that includes practical research constitutes an experience that students cannot get in any other setting.

To help introduce research-based teaching practices in higher education institutions of Kosovo, the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology, and Innovation (MESTI), with technical assistance from the project funded by the Austrian Government Higher Education Interventions 2025 (HEI'25) has developed the support scheme called "Research-Based Teaching Program for Public Universities of Kosovo." This support scheme is financed by the Budget of the Republic of Kosovo and the HEI'25 Project.

Note that the "Research-Based Teaching Program for Public Universities of Kosovo" and therefore the "Guidelines for Grant Applicants" are based on the Decision of the Minister of Education, Science, Technology, and Innovation 01B, 018, dated 28.02.2024, for determining the rules, criteria, requirements, and procedures for the implementation of the program to support research-based teaching.

The document can be found at https://masht.rks-gov.net

MESTI, the Austrian Development Agency (ADA), and the HEI'25 project are committed to respecting social standards and the relevant recommendations of the Social Standards Assessment. Similarly, development cooperation standards for environmental protection, cultural heritage protection should be respected or potentially addressed in an application. Applicant-proposed mitigation measures or specific topics that address these challenges in research-based teaching are encouraged.

# 2. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The main objective of the "Research-Based Teaching Program for Public Universities of Kosovo" is to support research-based teaching by funding research-based teaching actions, which are proposed by university lecturers for specific subjects to update their current teaching agendas.

Consequently, the Program is implemented through the subprogram:

- Grants for the implementation of educational projects based on research work.

Grants are available on a competitive basis to university lecturers who demonstrate that they have viable plans to integrate research-based teaching into their courses.

The amount of the grant allowed is 6,000 EUR from the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology, and Innovation. The HEI'25 project will contribute another 4,000 EUR for each grant.

# 3. CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION

There are three sets of conditions for participation related to:

1. Applicants who can participate in the competition;
2. Activities for which grants can be obtained;
3. Types of expenses eligible for financing.

## 3.1. Applicants

To qualify for the "Research-Based Teaching Program for Public Universities of Kosovo" grant the main applicant must be:

* Full-time academic staff member of an accredited public university in Kosovo;
* Directly responsible for the implementation of learning based on research work in their teaching practice.

In case of group application, all applicants must meet the conditions for participation as the main applicant and must work at the same university.

The following are not eligible to apply for the "Research-Based Teaching Program for public universities of Kosovo" grants:

* Members of the Scientific Council and external scientific advisors in MESTI;
* Jury members of the program.

## 3.2. Activities

##

## Grants for the implementation of learning projects based on research work.

## Grants are available to qualified applicants who submit proposals to practice research-based teaching at the institutions where they are employed, including students in any type of research-based teaching activity.

## The projects must be carried out during the academic year 2023 - 2024 and at the latest 2024 - 2025.

## A non-exhaustive list of research-based learning activities includes:

## • Literature review

## • Establishing and testing hypotheses

## • Data collection and processing

## • Field work

## • Laboratory work

## • Writing research reports, etc.

## 3.3. Expenses

The grant is awarded to a qualified applicant, or a group of applicants, who become a grant recipient, together with an identified academic institution.

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

a) Appear during the implementation of the project:

b) Are presented in the estimated general budget for the project;

c) Do not include any type of reward or cash prize;

d) Are necessary for the implementation of the project;

e) Are identifiable and verifiable, in particular, are recorded in the accounting records of the beneficiary(ies) and determined according to accounting standards and common cost accounting practices applicable to the beneficiary(ies);

f) Are in accordance with the requirements of tax and social legislation in force;

g) Are reasonable, justified and in accordance with the requirements of sound financial management, in particular in terms of economy and efficiency.

The remainder of the grant funding may be used for other costs, including equipment for staff and cash awards, in accordance with the internal regulations of the recipient's employing institution.

## 3.4. Restrictions on the Number of Applications

# An applicant may **not** submit more than one grant application under this call for proposals.

# 4. APPLICATION PROCEDURE

## 4.1. Preparation of Application

Grants for the implementation of learning projects based on research work:

* The application must be prepared using the RBTP-T1 application form.
* Applicants must apply in English.
* Please complete the application form carefully and as clearly as possible so that it can be properly evaluated.
* Handwritten applications will not be accepted.
* The application form must be signed by the lead applicant and the authorized signatory of the applicant's institution.
* In case of group application, all applicants must sign the declarations using the format given in the relevant application form.
* The applicant must comply with all instructions given in the relevant application form available. Any failure to do so may result in the application being rejected.

## 4.2. Additional Information about the Application Process

##

## MESTI will organize an information session for all those interested.

## Questions can be sent within 15 days from the date of submission of the application to the email: projekte@hei25.org.

## MESTI has no obligation to provide clarifications for questions received after this date. Answers will be given 7-10 days from the date of receipt of the question.

## 4.3. Application Submission

Applications must be submitted as follows:

• In the email:**projekte@hei25.org**

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

Applicants can also access their applications after submission.

The content of the application will be available to the technical administrators of the competition, jury members, and invited evaluators. All persons who will have access to the applications will sign a self-declaration for data protection and confidentiality of the content presented in the applications.

# 5. EVALUATION

## 5.1. Administrative Check

Administrative check is carried out by the responsible official in MESTI and the chairman of the commission or its representative, to determine compliance with the formal requirements of the call for proposals.

The following will be evaluated during the administrative check:

* If the deadline has been met. Otherwise, the application will be automatically rejected;
* If the applicant(s) meet the conditions of participation as specified in section 3.1 of the Guidelines;
* If the application has been prepared in accordance with the instructions given in section 4.1 of the Guidelines and the relevant application forms;
* If the restrictions on the number of applications from section 3.4 of the Guidelines have been respected.

In the event of a discrepancy, or if any of the required information is missing or incorrect, the application may be rejected **on that basis alone** and, in that case, the application will not be evaluated further.

Applications that pass the administrative check will be evaluated.

## 5.2. Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation criteria help to assess the quality of applications in relation to the objectives set out in the Guidelines and to provide proposals that maximize the overall effectiveness of the competition. The evaluation criteria are summarized in the tables. Each criterion will be given a score between 1 and 5, as follows: 1 = poor; 2 = unsatisfactory; 3 = satisfactory; 4 = good; 5 = very good.

Grants for the implementation of learning projects based on research work.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Criterion | Total Score |
| Quality, coherence, and feasibility of planned learning activities based on research work | 5 x 3 \*\* |
| The extent and quality of students' involvement in research work during the realization of the activity | 5 x 2\* |
| The possibility for students to apply their knowledge in practice or to have active interaction with social and/or economic problems during the implementation of the activity[[1]](#footnote-1) | 5 x 2\* |
| Sustainability – potential for future replication | 5 x 2\* |
| Cooperation with colleagues during the planning and implementation of the activity | 5 |
| Taking gender aspects into account during the planning and implementation of the activity | 5 |
| The activity is led by a member of academic staff under the age of 40 or a female member of academic staff | 5 |
| Total | 60 |

## \*: this score is multiplied by 2 due to its significance

## \*\*: this score is multiplied by 3 due to its significance

## 5.3. Evaluation Process

The evaluation of the applications will be based on the Decision of the Minister of Education, Science, Technology, and Innovation 01B, 018 dated 28.02.2024, for the establishment of rules, criteria, requirements and procedures for the implementation of the program in support of teaching based on research work that can to be found at https://masht.rks-gov.net

Each application will be evaluated by three evaluators and will receive points according to the relevant evaluation table from section 5.2. The points from the three assessors will be added together to form the total application score.

After all the applications have been evaluated, a list will be drawn up with the applications ranked according to their total points. Only applications that have scored at least 40% of the maximum total score from three assessors (minimum 72 points) will be considered.

Applications with the highest scores will be provisionally selected until the available budget for this call for proposals is reached. In addition, a reserve list will be drawn up that includes applications that have not been provisionally selected but have received at least 50% of the maximum total points from three assessors (minimum 90 points). This list will be used if more funds become available during the validity period of the waiting list.

Main applicants will be informed in writing of MESTI's decision regarding their application and, if rejected, of the reasons for the negative decision. The summary evaluation report, drawn up by the evaluators and confirmed by the jury, will be an integral part of this letter that will be sent by e-mail to all applicants.

The applicant who believes that s/he has been harmed by any error or irregularity during the process of awarding the grant, can submit a complaint within 15 days as stated in point 16. in the Decision of the Minister of MESTI 01B, 018, dated 28.02.2024 for the establishment of rules, criteria, requirements, and procedures for the implementation of the program that supports research-based teaching that can be found at https://masht.rks-gov.net/uploads

CONTACT PERSONS FOR THE CALL:

MASHTI – Fidan.Kozhani@rks-gov.net

1. This criterion also includes activities that deal with the issues of minorities, sensitive groups or special social groups at risk. Similarly, the environmental impact of activities can be included. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)