

Rules for the Preparation, Approval and Implementation of the Visegrad University Studies Grant Financed by the International Visegrad Fund

Under Article 20 of the Statute of the International Visegrad Fund (hereinafter the “Fund”), the Council of Ambassadors is issuing these conditions to outline the rules of procedure for the preparation, approval and implementation of Visegrad University Studies Grant program (hereinafter “the Rules”) in areas determined by the Statute.

Chapter I—Eligibility and Preparation

Article 1

Applicants shall prepare each proposal according to the Rules and the on-line application form for “Visegrad University Studies Grant” (hereinafter only “Grant”) available on the website of the Fund. If necessary, additional information about the proposal can be enclosed with the hard-copy version of the application form and delivered to the Fund within the deadline. The amount of financial support is based on individual needs of the applicant, described in budget breakdown (part of the application form), nevertheless the Fund is entitled to decrease the requested amount of support. Approximate support for course within the Grant is EUR 10,000. Approximate support for program within the Grant is EUR 40,000.

Article 2

All relevant information and instructions for Grant are available on the Fund's website (www.visegradfund.org)

Article 3

The Grant is a program of the International Visegrad Fund established to promote and support the development and launching of outstanding University courses or degree programs (further “course/program”) thematically related to the Visegrad Group (V4) countries. The Grant is intended as one-time Grant awarded to selected University departments, schools or faculties (hereinafter only “University”) that can document the ready syllabus/curriculum of such a course/program and confirm its planned long-term enrollment in their curriculum. The course/program shall be long-term oriented.

Article 4

Any public or private University worldwide is eligible for the Grant, provided that the nature of the submitted proposal is relevant to or related to the Visegrad Group countries. The course/program can be taught in any language. The course is expected to secure for each semester of its enrollment at least 2 relevant guest lecturers from two different countries of the Visegrad Group (other than that of the applicant). The program is expected to secure for each semester of its enrollment at least 3 relevant guest lecturers from three different countries of the Visegrad Group (other than that of the applicant).

Article 5

Every applicant (University department for a course and University faculty for a program) is entitled to only one support package for either a program or a course within the Grant. If a support package is applied for a course, further applications can only be made for a program (provided that the Fund received and approved the Final Report related to the Grant—see Article 35). If a support package is applied for a program, further applications for a program from the same faculty will not be accepted. The Grant is not mutually exclusive with but is independent of other programs of the Fund, like Grant Schemes and the Visegrad Scholarship Program.

Article 6

The course/program needs to thematically relate to the four Visegrad countries and needs to explicitly mention “Visegrad” or “V4” in its title. If applying for support for a degree program, the term “Visegrad” in the subtitle is also accepted.

Article 7

The course/program needs to start/be opened to students within 24 months of the date on which the Grant was approved (in exceptional cases the University may request in writing changes in the timeline of the approved course/program. The Council may decide on such request in a summary written procedure). The start of the course/program is confirmed to the Fund by the statutory representative of the University in writing (the confirmation shall be received by post).

Article 8

The Grant is intended to support the development and launching of outstanding University courses/programs dealing with specific phenomena explicitly related to Visegrad Group countries. The University needs to secure the long-term enrollment of the course/program in its curriculum. The supported course/program shall be enrolled in University’s curriculum no less than 3 times.

Article 9

The University is obligated to use the resources in an efficient and cost-effective way and to organize works in the implementation of the course/program in such a way that the goals are achieved in the planned form and time.

Article 10

The University can use the financial resources provided by the Fund for payment of:

- fees for experts (guest lecturers)accommodation and board
- transportation costs
- translations and interpreting costs
- promotional material and publications
- preparation and publishing of scriptum, reader
- website design and update
- building a library related to the course/program
- field trips, excursions and workshops for students and experts

- other materials connected with implementation of course/ program (i.e. art supplies, music sheets, software)
- overhead costs—max. 5% of the Grant (overhead costs refer to any indirect or operating costs linked to the course/program, e.g. coordination, accounting or running expenses.)

Article 11

The University cannot use the financial resources provided by the Fund for payment of:

- capital investments
- one's own indirect costs (such as utilities or phone bills)
- internal costs (e.g. renting one's own premises)
- VAT refunds
- salaries or financial remuneration of employees (or any expenses related to employment based on the labor code, including allowances and part-time work)
- overhead costs exceeding 5% of the Grant

Article 12

The criteria for the selection are as follows:

- topic and content of the course/program, its originality and relevance in regard to Visegrad Group region
- relevance and contribution of guest lecturers from (other) Visegrad Group countries
- transparency and accuracy of the budget
- increase in awareness and knowledge about Visegrad Group region
- multiplicative effect
- continuity and sustainability of the course/program
- previous experience with the applicant (where applicable)

Chapter II—Application Form/Proposal

Article 13

The applicant applies by registering and submitting the application in the on-line system, accessible at www.visegradfund.org and accompanies the application form with the compulsory annexes. Compulsory annexes to the application form are as follows:

1. Professional CVs of the course/program coordinator, and its teachers.
2. Extended syllabus of the course (or curriculum of the program) in English, including detailed annotations of classes/modules and lists of required and additional readings (also possible to annex the course reader).
3. Tentative letters of agreement and the CVs of the guest lecturers.
4. Letter from the Dean/Rector (statutory representative of the University) confirming the long-term enrollment of the course in the curriculum/study program. In the case of study programs, accreditation (issued by the respective Education Ministry) of the program is required (if not possible at the time of application, it may be submitted later, before the signing of the contract).

5. Copy of Identification Documents of the Applying Institution (these documents must contain the following: the name of the statutory representative, the registered seat of the organization, identification number of the organization (e.g. tax ID number)
6. Course Description—applicable only if applying for support for a degree program; the applicant shall enclose/attach a separate Course Description for each course within the program. The Course Description form to be filled in is available at www.visegradfund.org

Article 11

The application form shall be filled out in the on-line system in English. All formal communication with the Fund must be also conducted in English. All compulsory annexes shall be uploaded in the on-line system in English. Nevertheless, the ID documents of V4 applicants are accepted in the original languages; non-V4 applicants attach an English translation of such documents.

Article 12

The deadline for applying (date of post stamp or personal delivery) is November 10 of each year.

The application shall be submitted on-line as well as sent by post (duly signed and stamped) or delivered personally along with the additional required documents to the following address by the deadline (as per postmark):

International Visegrad Fund
Kráľovské údolie 8
811 02 Bratislava
Slovak Republic

Article 13

Applicants will be sent written confirmation (via e-mail) of the receipt of their on-line applications.

Chapter III—Selection and Approval

Article 14

The evaluation procedure may last up to 60 working days after the deadline. Applicants shall take this fact into account when preparing their applications. The Grant may cover only course/program-related costs incurred after the request for financing is approved and contract signed.

Article 15

The Fund shall review application forms according to their compliance with the Fund's formal requirements and has the right to verify any data provided by the applicant or to request additional information, if necessary.

Article 16

The proposals will be assessed on the basis of the elements included in the application and compulsory annexes only. Applicants can include web site references in the application, but

the assessment of the proposal will not be based on additional information found on a web site and not contained within the application.

Article 17

The Executive Director of the Fund (“the Executive Director”)—in cooperation with the Deputy Executive Director and the respective Program Manager—prepares a written statement in which he/she presents to the Council of Ambassadors (hereinafter “the Council”) his/her position on the eligibility of each applicant. The Fund shall provide the complete list of received applications and their documentation to the Council.

Article 18

At its session the Council shall either accept or reject proposals. The Council can also accept a proposal with reservations, in which case the applicant shall make the necessary changes. Decisions made by the Council are final and shall present no grounds for any form of appeal and require no detailed reasoning. If the applicant refuses to make the necessary changes, the grant is terminated.

Article 19

The Fund informs all applicants of results in writing. The Fund is under no obligation to justify any decision, nor is it obligated to return application forms or any of their parts to respective applicants.

Article 20

The Executive Director is authorized to sign a contract once a proposal is approved by the Council.

Chapter IV—Contractual Terms

Article 21

The University is obligated to set up a website or a separate sub-site within an existing University website dedicated to the course/program. Each course/program website shall have its own URL, shall visibly contain the Fund’s logo with a direct hyperlink to www.visegradfund.org. The URL of the course/program website shall be indicated in the written confirmation on the start of the course/program, issued by the statutory representative of the University.

Article 22

Contracts are made available to Universities via the on-line system. The University (coordinator) will be automatically informed about it by on-line system via e-mail. The University is obligated to check all data in the contract and approve it via the on-line system within 60 working days of its posting in the on-line system.

Article 23

The contractual period starts the day the contract—approved by the University—is signed by the Executive Director. The Fund shall inform the University of the signing in writing (via e-mail) and subsequently shall prepare the contract and send it to the University by post. The

University is obligated to return the signed contract to the Fund within 40 working days of its delivery.

Article 24

Failing to fulfill the conditions stipulated in Articles 21, 22 and 23 may result in financial penalty in the amount of 20% of the approved budget or in termination of the Grant. The decision shall be made by the Executive Director and approved by the nearest Council of Ambassadors.

Chapter V—Implementation

Article 25

The University is obligated to start/open the course/program to its students within 24 months of the deadline on which the Grant was approved. The University needs to secure the long-term enrollment of the course/program in its curriculum. The supported course/program shall be enrolled in University's curriculum no less than 3 times.

Article 26

The University is obligated to acknowledge the Fund's support of the course/program (1) in public space within its premises, (2) in all printed materials distributed as part of the course/program and resulting from it, (3) in all books and periodicals purchased from the Grant and (4) on all websites connected with the course/program, including the University website (see Article 21). All acknowledgements must carry the visible logo of the Fund and, if on-line, must include direct hyperlink to www.visegradfund.org. Acknowledgements within the University premises and those on-line must remain active for the entire enrollment of the course/program in the University's curriculum.

Article 27

The University is obligated to submit to the Fund an up-to-date timetable of the course/program for each semester of its enrollment in the beginning of the respective semester. Any change in the dates, venues of the lectures/seminars and names of (guest) lecturers originally stipulated in the application form and/or received timetable for the respective semester must be communicated to the Fund via e-mail to the respective Program Manager at least 10 working days prior to the planned date.

Article 28

The University shall immediately notify the Fund of any changes in contractual conditions (e.g. changes of the budget, guest lecturers, opening of the course/program to students) in a letter signed by the University's statutory representative or a person legally authorized by the statutory representative (e.g. project coordinator).

Article 29

The Fund reserves the right to carry out monitoring visits of supported courses/programs and, if necessary, to request additional documentation regarding each course/program. The University is obligated to allow visits from the staff of the Fund or from personnel authorized to do so by the Fund and to provide any materials related to the course/program upon request.

Article 30

Failure to fulfill the conditions stipulated in Articles 25, 26, 27, 28 and 29 may result in financial penalty in the amount of 20% of the approved budget or in termination of the Grant. The decision shall be made by the Executive Director and approved by the nearest Council of Ambassadors.

Chapter VI—Grant Disbursement**Article 31**

Grants shall be disbursed in four tranches. The amount of the tranches is specified in the contract. The first tranche shall be transferred within 15 working days of the Fund's receipt of the confirmation of the start/opening of the course/program (see Articles 7 and 21). The second tranche can be disbursed upon the approval of the Interim Report (financial overview) after first academic year and receipt of the timetable for the next semester). The third tranche can be disbursed upon the approval of the Interim Report (financial overview) after second academic year and receipt of the timetable for the next semester). The fourth (final) tranche shall be set to 10% of the approved sum and can be disbursed upon the approval of the Final Report. The lectures of the guest lecturers shall be highlighted in the received timetable. There shall be secured at least 2 relevant guest lecturers from two different Visegrad Group countries (other than that of the University) in each semester of the enrollment of the course, and at least 3 relevant guest lecturers from three different Visegrad Group countries (other than that of the University) in each semester of the enrollment of the program.

Article 32

The University shall secure long-term enrollment of the course/program in its curriculum. The Grant shall support its launching and development.

Article 33

All financial documents (receipts, bills, contracts and invoices) related to the course/program must be kept and upon request made available to the Fund for a period of not less than 6 years from the utilization of the Grant.

Article 34

Up to 5% of the approved sum may be used to cover overhead costs (operating costs directly linked to the course/program).

Article 35

The Interim Report shall inform the Fund about the activity and financial point of view (financial overview form is available at www.visegradfund.org) so that the Fund is informed of the level of consumption of the Grant and activities covered. The Interim and Final reports shall contain the list of students enrolled within the course/program in the respective semester. The Final Report shall consist of a narrative and a financial report, in addition to this; it shall contain the final summary of the experience of running the course/program and further perspectives of its enrollment at the University. All narrative and financial reports must be separately signed by the University's statutory representative.

Article 36

Failure to fulfill the conditions stipulated in Articles 31, 32, 33 and 34 may result in financial penalty in the amount of 20% of the approved budget or in termination of the Grant. The decision shall be made by the Executive Director and approved by the nearest Council of Ambassadors.

Article 37

Requirements for the preparation of the Interim and Final Report, all additional instructions, as well as relevant forms are available on the Fund's website.

Article 38

All disputes that may occur during the enrollment of the course/program should be submitted to consultation between the Executive Director and the University.

Article 39

These Rules shall enter into force on the day of their approval by the Conference of Ministers of Foreign Affairs.

CA/CM Budapest, 26 July 2011