

Institute of Vertebrate Biology of Czech Academy of Sciences
Director's Directive No. 2/2026
Internal Implementation of the Programme <i>Academy of the Future</i>
Effective from: 13 March, 2026
Addressed to: All employees of the Institute

Article I

Purpose and Scope

This Director's Directive sets out the internal rules for the implementation, submission, evaluation, and selection of projects under the *Academy of the Future* Programme (hereinafter the "Programme") at the Institute of Vertebrate Biology of the Czech Academy of Sciences, v. v. i. (hereinafter the "Institute").

The Directive unifies the principles defined by the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic with the Institute's internal evaluation procedures into a single binding framework.

This Directive applies to all Institute employees submitting or evaluating proposals within Subprogrammes A, B, C, of Priority Axis 1 (Stays) and Subprogramme E of Priority Axis 2 (Returns and Acquisitions) of the Programme. With the announcement of further calls under additional Priority Axes and Subprogrammes of the Programme, this Directive will be updated accordingly.

Article II

Overview of Subprogrammes and Eligibility Conditions

From 1 January 2026, the following subprogrammes of the *Academy of the Future* Programme are financed through institutional allocation:

Subprogramme A – Support of Early-Career Researcher Mobilities

- Target group: researchers (PhD students, post-docs, research assistants) up to 8 years after the award of the PhD degree, for whom it is assumed that the internship will contribute to the development of their personal competencies and will continue to be employees of the CAS after its completion.

- Objective: medium-term research secondments at top foreign institutions aimed at acquiring cutting-edge know-how and establishing long-term scientific cooperation
- Duration: 180 days
- Eligible costs: travel-related costs (see more details in a separate file Staze_cestovni_nahrady_uznatelne_naklady.pdf)
- Maximum budget: CZK 300,000 per mobility

Subprogramme B – Support of Researcher Mobilities

- Target group: Researchers or Senior Researchers, 9 or more years after the award of the PhD degree
- Objective: short- and medium-term research secondments strengthening international collaboration and preparing joint international projects
- Maximum duration: 180 days
- Eligible costs: travel-related costs (see more details in a separate file Staze_cestovni_nahrady_uznatelne_naklady.pdf)
- Maximum budget: CZK 300,000 per mobility

Subprogramme C – Support for the Transfer of Good Practice in Excellence Funding

- Target group: research staff (post-docs, research assistants, researchers, senior researchers) and project / research management staff
- Objective: transfer of know-how related to success in highly competitive international grant schemes (e.g. ERC)
- Maximum duration:
 - research staff: up to 30 days
 - project or research management staff: up to 7 days
- Eligible costs: travel-related costs (see more details in a separate file Staze_cestovni_nahrady_uznatelne_naklady.pdf)
- Researchers that will be supported in this subprogramme are obliged to submit ERC (or similar) proposal within 18 month after end of mobility. If this does not happen, their group will have their contribution to "internal tasks" reduced accordingly in the following year.
- Maximum budget: CZK 50,000 per mobility

Subprogramme E – Support for Returns from Career Breaks

- Target group: research staff (post-docs, research assistants, researchers, senior researchers) returning from maternity, parental, or caregiving career breaks since 1 January 2020
- Objective: facilitation of smooth reintegration into research activities and prevention of loss of human capital
- Maximum workload: 0.6 FTE
- Maximum duration: two calendar years
- Eligible costs: personnel costs
- Maximum subsidy: CZK 500,000 per calendar year at 0.6 FTE (proportionally reduced for lower workloads)

Article III

Submission and Evaluation Forms

1. Project submission and evaluation are conducted using a single integrated document entitled “**Submission and Evaluation Form.**”
2. Separate forms are prescribed for Subprogrammes A+B, C, and E.
3. The same document serves both as the application form (completed by the applicant) and as the evaluation form (completed by the evaluator).
4. Applications must be submitted electronically in parallel as a **signed PDF file** and an editable **WORD file** using the prescribed form.

Article IV

Call Announcement

1. Calls are announced internally via the Institute’s intranet and institutional e-mail distribution.
2. Each call specifies: (a) eligibility of applicants in particular Subprogrammes, (b) available budget allocation, (c) submission deadline, (d) evaluation criteria, (e) composition of the Evaluation Committee.
3. The minimum duration of each call is 21 calendar days.

Article V

Eligibility Check

1. Formal eligibility and completeness of applications are verified by the administrative coordinator.
2. Applications that do not meet formal requirements are excluded from further evaluation.
3. Applicants are informed in writing if their application is deemed ineligible.

Article VI

Evaluation Procedure

1. Eligible applications are evaluated by the Evaluation Committee in accordance with published evaluation criteria.
2. Evaluation is based exclusively on merit and includes assessment of: (a) quality and feasibility of the proposed activity, (b) relevance for the applicant’s career

development, (c) institutional benefit and strategic relevance, (d) cost-effectiveness of the requested budget.

3. Each application receives numerical scores and in a case of rejection also written justification.

Article VII

Evaluation Committee

1. The Evaluation Committee consists of 5–7 members appointed by the Institute's management (i.e. Director and Institute's Board).
2. The composition of the Committee ensures gender balance and representation of different research groups.
3. In a case of conflicts of interest (e.g. the applicant and member of the Evaluation Committee belong to the same research group), the evaluator does not provide feedback to the particular application and the final overall score is calculated only from reviews without conflict of interest.
4. Committee members sign declarations of confidentiality and no conflict of interest.
5. The Committee ranks applications (using numerical scores as auxiliary criterion) and provides a funding recommendation to the Institute's management.

Article VIII

Decision and Announcement of Results

1. Final funding decisions are approved by the Director or a delegated member of the Institute's management within 30 days after the submission deadline.
2. All applicants are informed in writing of the evaluation outcome and unsuccessful applicants receive written justification.

Article IX

Transparency, Ethics, and HR Award Compliance

1. The entire process is conducted in accordance with the principles of: (a) equal opportunities, (b) non-discrimination, (c) transparency, (d) merit-based evaluation.
 2. All documentation related to the selection process is archived for audit purposes and HRS4R reporting.
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Article X

Final Provisions

This Director's Directive enters into force on the date specified above.

In Brno, 13 March, 2026

prof. Mgr. et Mgr. Josef Bryja, Ph.D.

Director of the Institute of Vertebrate Biology CAS