

Thematic Call for Research Projects

“Health, Economic and Educational Aspects of the COVID-19 Pandemic”

IP-CORONA-2020-12

This Call was drawn up on the basis of the Croatian Science Foundation's general acts. By applying to the Call, the applicants shall consent to becoming subject to these acts. Words and phrases used in the Call in the masculine form shall be considered gender-neutral and shall apply to persons of both genders.

The Call

The objective of the Call is to finance fundamental and applied scientific research that creates new and improves existing knowledge about the COVID-19 pandemic and enhancing society's resilience to emergency situations, with an emphasis on the protection of health of the population, sustainable economic recovery and growth and strengthening high-quality and inclusive educational system in the Republic of Croatia.

Research topics include: the biology and pathogenesis of the COVID-19 infection, clinical and epidemiological characterization of the disease, recovery and growth of the economy and entrepreneurship and improving teaching methods and educational curriculum for achieving optimal educational outcomes at all levels of education, including special focus on vulnerable groups.

Projects selected for funding through this Call should be based on innovative research ideas and strong research teams that will conduct their research in Croatian scientific institutions. Principal Investigators should be **internationally acclaimed scientists**. National and international networking of research teams and pooling of equipment and other research capacities is strongly encouraged.

HRZZ will fund fundamental and applied research that show the potential to **make a significant contribution to the research problem in a limited time period of 18 months**.

Call in brief:

Call objectives: Better understanding of the COVID-19 disease and new knowledge about the economic and legal aspects of the pandemic and the impact of the pandemic on the educational system

Call opening date: 11 November 2020

Application deadline: 21 December 2020 @ 13.00 (CET)

Budget: c. HRK 10,000,000.00; funding per project: between HRK 600,000.00 and 1,500,000.00 for Research Topic 1, between HRK 400,000.00 and 750,000.00 for Research Topics 2 and 3.

Project funding period: 18 months

Estimated start of projects: April 2021

1. Health aspects of the pandemic

- 1.1. Biology and pathogenesis of COVID-19
- 1.2. Development of new approaches to therapy and diagnostics of COVID-19
- 1.3. Clinical characterization and management of the COVID-19 disease
- 1.4. Epidemiological research (e.g. forecasting the spread of the epidemic, assessment of the effect of public health measures, management of the healthcare system)

2. Economic and legal aspects of the pandemic

- 2.1. Role of pandemic-induced public and economic policies in the recovery and increase of resilience of the entrepreneurship and non-profit sectors
- 2.2. Effects of the pandemic and guidelines for sustainable recovery of the services and tourism sectors
- 2.3. Legislative framework of economic and social measures adopted for health protection during the pandemic and guidelines for their improvement

3. Educational and pedagogic aspects of the pandemic

- 3.1. Reducing social interactions during distance learning and outcomes of the educational process
- 3.2. Educational priorities, adjustment of teaching methods and school curriculum and support at all education levels for achieving optimal educational outcomes during the pandemic
- 3.3. Education and care for especially vulnerable groups during the pandemic

Evaluation

Basic funding criteria:

- Scientific quality of the project proposal and the research team and potential for making a significant contribution to the research problem within a limited period of 18 months.

Evaluation procedure:

- Applications will be assessed through a two-stage evaluation process.
- The first round of evaluation will include evaluation panels. Panels will assess whether project proposals fall under the scope of the research topic of the Call as well as the Applicant's and the research team's track record.
- The second round of evaluation will include international peer review. Two reviews will be provided for each project proposal. Final ranking will be done by the evaluation panels.

The Applicant

- Internationally acclaimed scientists, active in the proposed research area, responsible for project implementation and managing the research team;
- Scientists employed at a public university, public research institute in the Republic of Croatia and other legal entities authorised for conducting scientific activity¹, as well as full members of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts;
- Principal Investigators funded through the Call IP-CORONA-2020-04 may not apply to the present Call.

Funding

Funding per project will be in the range between HRK 600,000.00 and HRK 1,500,000.00 for Research Topic 1, or between HRK 400,000.00 and HRK 750,000.00 for Research Topics 2 and 3 for a period of 18 months.

HRZZ will disburse the funds to the bank account of the scientific institution at which the Principal Investigator is employed.

Categories of eligible costs:

- research costs,
- costs of purchasing equipment and equipment maintenance,
- dissemination and collaboration costs (max HRK 150,000.00),
- indirect costs – eligible in the maximum amount of 5% of total amount of requested funds.

Elements of the application and submission

The application entails the submission of a project proposal on official application forms, **in electronic format only**, via HRZZ's EPP system.

¹ Organizations entered in the Register of Scientific Organisations managed by the Ministry of Science and Education that meet the minimum requirements as defined in the Regulation on the Conditions for Issuing a Permit for Performing Scientific Activity, Conditions for Re-accreditation of Scientific Organisations and the Content of the Permit (OG 83/10). The Applicant can submit a project proposal only in the area for which the scientific organisation in which they are employed and where the project will be implemented has been accredited:

Call documentation:

- **Application Form** – summary of the project, project proposal (research goals, methodology, expected results), list of the Principal Investigator's track record, research team members
- **Financial Plan**
- **Institutional Support Form** – electronic declaration of the Head of the institution expressing support for the project
- **Letters of Intent** – letters by team members from other scientific institutions expressing their intention to participate in the project

Ethical Approval Form shall be submitted at a later stage, upon HRZZ's request.

Application deadline

The deadline for submitting applications is Monday, **21 December 2020 @13.00 (CET)**.

We appeal to all applicants to make sure they submit their applications on time.

All queries regarding the Call should be sent via email to the following address: ip-corona@hrzz.hr.

The questions received and their answers will be published twice a week in the Q&A section of the HRZZ website.