ANNEX 2 – ASSESSMENT PROCEDURE AND CRITERIA

Part A

Project Draft Assessment Procedure under Public Call SK-CN 2026

1. The Office of the Slovak Research and Development Agency (hereinafter referred to as the "Agency" or "APVV"), through the applications Committee appointed by the Director of the Agency, will evaluate the submitted applications for compliance with the technical and formal requirements (hereinafter referred to as "the technical requirements") specified in the SK-CN 2026 Public Call.

2. The APVV will request the Applicant to remedy the deficiencies within 14 days if the application does not meet the technical requirements or application shall not be subject of the evaluation process and will be rejected if does not comply with the rules form the Consolidated Version of the Call.

3. If the deficiencies in the application are not remedied in accordance with paragraph 2, the APVV shall decide to reject the application for non-compliance with the technical requirements and shall notify the Applicant of the decision to reject the application. The decision to reject the application shall include the specific reasons for the non-compliance of the application with the technical requirements.

4. Council of the Agency (hereinafter referred to as the "Council), shall appoint one of its members to be a rapporteur for each evaluated application.

5. The agency shall provide three independent reviews prepared by national and foreign expert in the given field for each application complying with the technical and formal requirements. The reviews may be prepared in Slovak, Czech or English languages. The reviews are the basis for the application evaluation by the Council. The Council may set up a working group in the evaluation of applications pursuant to §15 sect. 11 of Act No. 172/2005 Coll. as amended.

6. Assessing the project quality is the basic principle for assessing the application for project funding.

7. Application assessment shall be done based on the assessment criteria set in Part B of this Annex.

8. The evaluator shall provide a verbal evaluation of compliance with the criterion. At the same time, the evaluator shall allocate points to the given criterion from the range of points set for each criterion. The maximum number of points for the application evaluation from one evaluator is 30 points. The scoring scale is set at 1 point.

9. Weighted average median rounded to a whole number shall be calculated from the scores given by the evaluators. The score thus obtained shall be considered the weighted average median score of the project given by the evaluators. To calculate the weighted average median of the scores, following formula shall be used:

$$Weighted\ average\ median = \frac{B - \left\{\frac{[10 - k(B - A)]}{10} \times (B - A)\right\} + B + B + \left\{\frac{[10 - k(C - B)]}{10} \times (C - B)\right\}}{3}$$

where:
A is the lowest given score
B is the medium given score
C is the highest given score
k is the coefficient; k = 2/5

10. The sum of the weighted average of the scores of all the criteria determined under point 9 shall be considered as the weighted average score of the application proposal by the reviewers.

11. Projects that do not meet any of the following conditions will not proceed to the next evaluation stage due to lack of quality:

    a) The weighted average of the scores for each criterion determined in accordance with point 9 must be at least 6 points;

    b) The weighted average score of the application proposal as determined by the assessors in accordance with point 10 shall be at least 22 points.

    Projects that do not meet either of the above conditions will not be supported for lack of quality.

12. The weighted average score of the application of the individual criteria under point 10 shall be considered as the final score of the application proposal by the reviewers.

13. Based on an assessment of project proposals, the Council may adjust, downward or upward, the average score of project reviewers by up to **± 3 points**.

14. The Council shall prepare ranking of the projects according to the final number of points obtained under point 13, and identify the projects recommended for funding.

15. Subsequently, an international assessment shall be carried out by a joint committee.

16. The Ministry of Education, Research, Development and Youth of the Slovak Republic organizes the evaluation of the joint commission within the terms agreed with the partner country. Rules for selecting the projects in an international joint commission are as follows:

    - the projects not submitted or unrated on both sides will be excluded due to non-compliance with the terms of the Call;
    - two-sided highly rated projects at national levels will benefit against the projects that are assessed differently;
    - differences in project assessment on both sides will be addressed in discussion, taking mutual interest into the account.

    Final number of the projects selected to be supported by the joint committee depends on the amount of funds allocated to the Call in all the participating countries.

17. The Council of the Agency issues a draft decision on funding for individual projects taking into account the projects evaluation as well as the amount of available funds allocated for the applications in the given Call.

18. The draft decision on funding for all submitted applications shall be submitted by the Council to the director of the Agency.

Part B

Project Assessment Criteria

(A) ASSESSMENT OF THE ELIGIBILITY OF APPLICATIONS IN RELATION TO EXCLUDED AREAS OF CO-OPERATION

(fully/not at all)

In case the project is *not at all* relevant to the priorities of the Call a detailed justification is required, and the project is not further assessed

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1. Excellence (0-10 points)

- The relevance of the project and the contribution of its implementation to the objective of the Call
- Quality of the processing of the thematic focus of the project which is the subject of the application
- The degree of topicality of the project in the given field of science and technology and the degree of originality of the research objective
- The justification for bilateral cooperation and the need for specific foreign partners to participate in the research objective
- The quality of the scientific outputs and the professional quality of the Principal Investigator and the individual members of the research team

2. Impact (0-10 points)

- The degree of social or economic benefit of bilateral cooperation for the Slovak Republic, or for the Slovak institution and the research team
- The expected joint outputs of the bilateral cooperation and the way in which the international partner will be involved (joint project, joint publications, joint participation in conferences and other scientific and professional events, organisation of workshops, etc.)
- Measures for dissemination and exploitation of the results with regard to the involvement of an international partner
- The extent to which Ph.D. students and/or young R&D personnel are involved in the project and their potential for professional development resulting from their participation in the project
- The extent to which international cooperation creates opportunities for sustaining and developing further cooperation

3. Implementation (0-10 points)

- The objectives and timeline of the project with regard to the logical continuity of the solution procedures and the fulfilment of the stated objectives
- The type, purpose and timing of the mobility activities for each stage of the project and the involvement of the research team in the mobility activities
- The type and purpose of foreign partners' stay at the Slovak institution
- The adequacy of the requested funding in the context of the planned mobility activities
- Other sources (project, institutional support, private sector, etc.) supporting the research part of the project

In the relevant criteria, the reviewers and the Agency Council take into account the time of the active professional life of the Principal Investigator and the research team members, especially with regard to the maternity and parental leave.