Issues with our public Agencies (HRZZ, AZVO, MSEY)

These slides were not presented nor discussed during the CROHEP meeting due to lack of time

CROHEP Meeting 2025

PMF, Zagreb, February 18 2025

Funding: CERN specific

The Ministry of Science, Education and Youth (MSEY) funds directly:

- Membership in some CERN collaborations (through MoUs)
  - Covers our share in maintenance and operation costs of experiments

- Support to cover travel and subsistence at CERN (~5-20 kEUR/yr by group)
  - Allows regular short trips to CERN (meetings, shifts, …)
  - Not sufficient for long-term (several months or longer) stays at CERN

This support has allowed us to actively participate in some of the best and most challenging scientific projects in our field, thanks!

The typical national research grant from CSF

- Characteristics of Croatian Science Foundation research grants:
  - Up to 4 years (3 years for the last 2 calls)
  - Total budget up to 200 kEUR
- The good:
  - International peer review
  - 7 calls in the period (2014-2024), 1 open now
  - Supported the basic needs of many of our groups in the last 10 years
- The challenge:
  - Irregular and unpredictable calls and review times, with longer breaks (~ 2 years w/o call 2020-2022)

CSF Calls
IP-2014-09
IP-2016-06
IP-2018-01
IP-2019-04
IP-2020-02
IP-2022-10
IP-2024-05
IP-2025-02 (open)

Issues with Croatian Science Foundation Funding

- Since 2018 CSF calls exclude funding for

  ”research that is carried out as part of cooperation in international collaborations, as a part international (longitudinal) research or as part of long-term research”

  Fortunately not strictly enforced
- All 3 (in red) restrictions scientifically make no sense
- What should be required from every project, including those working in a collaboration: specific recognizable scientific new contribution

- Request from HRZZ: drop this condition

Other Issues with CSF Funding

- Drop 2 years limit on postdoc employment
- Drop or increase funding limit for equipment in grants (60k EUR):
  - Very discouraging for instrumentation research
- Include doctoral grants in CSF projects:
  - Otherwise Doctoral student schedule out of synch with project
- Drop requirement on submission in English+Croatian
  - Not sure it's worth the battle and AI helps us anwyay

Priority scale

VERY IMPORTANT

IMPORTANT

RELEVANT

NICE TO HAVE

More issues with CSF

- Free projects from VAT payment
  - We receive public money to pay taxes ☺
  - The Swiss NSF does this
  - Probably a legal nightmare battle
- Allow larger grants for bigger groups
  - We often stress the importance of focus and strengthening groups, not realistic with current funding limits
  - Allow co-Pis on such larger grants

- Priority scale

VERY IMPORTANT

IMPORTANT

RELEVANT

NICE TO HAVE

Even More issues with CSF: 2 correlated issues

- Drop requirement that the PI should have at least one team member from a Croatian institution:
  - Penalizing people who have only foreighn collaborators (e.g. because no one else specializes in this topic in Croatia) or creating a new group in a new research direction
  - Especially absurd for starting grants (UIP)
- Drop requirement on max. number of projects someone can be on:
  - We are a small community
  - Change this to the max. amount of time you are allowed to commit (100%)
  - Less important if first requirement dropped

Priority scale

VERY IMPORTANT

IMPORTANT

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NICE TO HAVE

Especially deal breakers in theory

AZVO – Difficulties with bringing in foreign colleagues

- Drop requirement of full official degree for AZVO degree recognition
  - Recognition of foreign degrees by AZVO is a condition to get hired
  - AZVO requires the formal diploma degree, often given a year or longer after graduation
  - They do not accept the degree confirmation given by most university right after obtaining the degree (Master or PhD)
  - This slows down and has some time stopped some candidates to apply

- Priority scale

VERY IMPORTANT

IMPORTANT

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NICE TO HAVE

THANK YOU!

HVALA!