



Danube Rectors' Conference¹

15. 02. 2022

Subject: Notification on the possibility to obtain financial means for doctoral students

Danube Rectors' Conference (DRC) supports the realisation of the European Union Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR), especially in the field of priority area Knowledge society, and therefore invites students of doctoral study programmes at DRC member universities to apply for the obtaining of targeted means for support for following targets of EUSDR²:

1. Increase the number of innovations, official inventions or EPO and PCT patent applications;
2. Increase cooperation and mobility in the field of research and education;
3. Increase the number of joint publications on research results.

DRC notifies that in the »DRC Initiative Fund« framework, there are means for the development of applicant projects/solutions/prototypes by doctoral students from DRC members³.

Applications will be accepted until 31. 03. 2022 to the address <https://forms.office.com/r/j9TzdgQj2q> or by scanning the QR code:



Results will be sent to applicants via e-mail by 30. 04. 2022.

Based on the criteria in Appendix 1 (Application Evaluation Criteria), an expert committee shall evaluate the applications. Applications obtaining the highest scores shall be selected. In case of a draw, the application shall be selected according to the arrival time.

¹ <https://www.drc-danube.org/>

² Target 2, 3 and 4 EUSDR PA7: <https://knowledgesociety.danube-region.eu/priority-area-7/>

³ DRC members: <https://www.drc-danube.org/members/list-of-members-1/>

Financial means are dedicated to the following activities:

1. Material costs – financing material costs needed to prove or develop an applicative aspect of knowledge or technology (e. g., parts for the development of a prototype or consumables) but not intended for the purchase of equipment;
2. Cost of use of research equipment at other DRC member institutions (e. g., hours of use or costs of laboratory staff);
3. Service costs (e. g., patent attorney for verification of state-of-the-art status of technology or for drafting patent application, excluding official fees).
4. Travel costs and costs of stay for the student and his or her family members (e. g. travel costs and rent of an apartment for 4 persons).

Value of financial means by DRC for financing the **»DRC Initiative Fund«** in line with this notification amount to **50.000,00 EUR**, whilst a **maximum of 25 applications shall be accepted or a maximum of 5.000,00 EUR shall be allocated to one application. An applicant may receive a maximum of 2.000,00 EUR for the following targets 1 or 3 and 1.000,00 EUR for the following target 2. Applicants may apply to all three targets and thus obtain of a maximum of 5.000,00 EUR.**

The named amounts encompass all ⁴taxes and payments (e. g., VAT, tolls, customs).

The expert committee is composed of the presidency of DRC Prof. Dr. Zdravko Kačič (president), Prof. Dr. Ivanka Popović (vice-president), Mag. Friedrich Faulhammer (vice-president), and Prof. Dr. Miroslav Vesković (honorary president).

Incurred costs are eligible only after the selection date. The proposed project/solution/prototype named in the application must be completed by 31. 12. 2022. Beneficiaries file a short report on performed activities to the DRC secretariat until 31. 1. 2023 in the form of a textual report and a short presentation (power-point).

We will be at your disposal for additional information and support under info@drc-danube.eu.

DRC Presidency

⁴ In line with VAT reverse charge, VAT outside Belgium is calculated by a standard level of 21% VAT.
https://www.belgium.be/en/economy/business/taxation_and_accounting/tva

Appendix 1: APPLICATION EVALUATION CRITERIA

Every application shall be evaluated according to the following criteria:

Demonstration of applicability of obtained knowledge and skills of the student:	Evaluation criteria (score from 1 to 5): Presented application/activity is: 0 – not connected to the study; 1 – a regular study obligation; 2 – an independent upgrade of completed study obligations; 3 – an upgrade of completed study obligations with the inclusion of a mentor (researcher or senior student or tutor, respectively); 4 – an independent upgrade of research activities*; 5 – an independent upgrade of research activities* with the inclusion of a mentor (researcher or senior student or tutor, mentor of a final thesis). (*) Preparation of applicant's final thesis (e. g. doctoral thesis).
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1. Increase the number of innovations, official inventions or EPO and PCT patent applications:

Innovation potential of application:	Evaluation criteria (score 0, 1, 3 or 5): 0 – no comparable solution identified; 1 – one comparable solution identified; 3 – one comparable solution with a comparison of innovation potential with applied solution identified; 5 – at least three comparable solutions with a comparison of innovation potential with applied solution identified.
Identification of eventual users (cases of companies with a used case):	Evaluation criteria (score from 0 to 5): 0 – no example of a company noted; 1 – one case of a company noted; 2 – two different cases of companies from the same branch noted; 3 – two cases of two companies from different branches noted; 4 – more than two cases of companies from at least two different branches noted; 5 – more than three cases of companies from at least three different branches noted.
Number of relevant patent applications or granted patents from the field of application (state-of-the-art overview)	Evaluation criteria (score 1, 2, 3 or 5) 1 – one patent application or granted patent listed; 2 – three or more patent applications or granted patent listed; 3 – one patent application or granted patent listed with a comparison of differences; 5 – three or more patent applications or granted patent listed with a comparison of differences.
References of the mentor	Evaluation criteria (score 1, 2, 3 or 5) 1 – mentor is co-inventor in 1 patent application; 2 – mentor is co-inventor in 3 patent applications; 3 – mentor is co-inventor in 5 or more patent applications; 5 – mentor is co-inventor in 5 or more EPO or PCT patent applications.

2. Increase cooperation and mobility in the field of research and education:

Planned duration of mobility	Evaluation criteria (score 1, 2, 3 or 5) 1 – 1 week; 2 – 1 month; 3 – 2 months; 5 – 3 months or more.
Mobility is connected to cooperation between institutions	Evaluation criteria (score 1, 3 or 5) 1 – existing informal cooperation; 3 – existing formal cooperation; 5 – existing formal cooperation and joint research in the field of the doctoral student.
Soft skills development at host institution	Evaluation criteria (score from 1 to 3) 1 – containing one soft skills course; 2 – containing two soft skills courses; 3 – containing three or more soft skills courses.
Use of research equipment	Evaluation criteria (score from 1, 3 or 5) 1 – use of equipment at host institutions that is available also at the domestic institution; 3 – use of equipment not available at the domestic institution and known to the student; 5 – use of equipment not available at the domestic institution and unknown to the student.
Use of means of travel	Evaluation criteria (score from 1, 2 or 5) 1 – airplane; 2 – car; 5 – public transport (bus, train).

3. Increase of the number of joint publications on research results:

Multi-disciplinarity	Evaluation criteria (score 1, 3 or 5) 1 – one discipline covered; 3 – two or more related disciplines covered; 5 – two or more unrelated disciplines covered.
Applicant's experience	Evaluation criteria (score 1, 3 or 5) 1 – applicant is author in 2 or more scientific publications; 3 – applicant is author or co-author in 1 scientific publication; 5 – applicant was not yet author or co-author of any scientific publication.
Mentor's past references	Evaluation criteria (score from 1, 3 or 5) 1 – mentor was a mentor to more than 5 doctorate students; 3 – mentor was a mentor to more than 3 and up to 5 doctorate students; 5 – mentor was a mentor to up to 3 doctorate students.
Mentor's present availability/capacity	Evaluation criteria (score from 1, 3 or 5) 1 – mentor is currently a mentor to more than 5 doctorate students; 3 – mentor is currently a mentor to more than 3 and up to 5 doctorate students; 5 – mentor is currently a mentor to not more than 3 doctorate students.