



**Ministry of Education
Youth and Sports (MEYS)
Czech Republic**



**Ministry of Innovation,
Science & Technology**

**Ministry of Innovation, Science
And Technology (MOST)
Israel**

**Czech-Israeli Scientific Research Program
CALL FOR JOINT PROJECT PROPOSALS
For the Years 2024-2027**

Deadline for Submissions: 15/1/2024

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Within the framework of the Czech-Israel agreement on scientific cooperation, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic (MEYS), and the Ministry of Innovation, Science and Technology of the State of Israel (MOST) have decided to provide financial support and are glad to invite researchers and scientists to submit joint proposals for research projects carried out jointly by researchers from both countries.

The aim of this program is to support the development of scientific and technological cooperation between Czech and Israeli researchers and to strengthen the scientific partnership between research groups from both countries, by establishing bilateral research networks, enhancing research cooperation and promoting the exchange of knowledge between Czech and Israeli scientists.

The joint research shall focus on one of the main areas of cooperation and its subtopics as detailed in Section A and concentrate on applied research which could lead to technological applicability and the development of new products (Technology Readiness Level [TRL] 2-4).

Qualifying scientific applicants in this framework may receive research grants from MEYS and MOST, respectively, according to the applicable national funding procedures, regulations, and the requirements as detailed in this Call.

A. MAIN AREAS OF COOPERATION

Czech-Israeli research teams are hereby invited to submit joint proposals for applied research projects in any of the following areas:

1. Health and Medicine:

- drug design and development

2. Sustainability and Environmental Protection:

- climate change, clean energy, desert research, water

3. Data Science:

- artificial intelligence applications

B. MODE OF COOPERATION

Cooperation will take the form of planning and performing joint research as well as conducting mutual visits between laboratories, research centers and/or scientific institutes for the purpose of facilitating the research. Each joint research team may submit only one project within this program.

Cooperation may also take the form of:

- a) Joint research activities in which interdependent subprojects of a single project are conducted in Czech and Israeli laboratories/research centers/scientific institutes;

- b) Complementary methodological approaches to a common problem;
- c) Joint use of research facilities, materials, equipment and/or services by cooperating scientists;
- d) Mutual visits between laboratories/research centers/scientific institutes for the purpose of facilitating the research.

C. LEVEL OF FUNDING AND DURATION OF PROJECTS

It is the intention of the Parties to fund research proposals selected hereunder for a term of **three (3) years** and contracts will be signed accordingly. However, funding shall be approved annually, with the funding for each consecutive year to be approved in accordance with the provisions of the research contracts and protocols in each country.

The Parties intend to support **up to nine (9) joint projects**. The final number of projects to be funded will be determined based on such factors as merits of the proposals upon scientific evaluation, and budgetary considerations.

The total maximum funding for all research projects approved under this Call is 3,420,000 ILS for the Israeli side (equivalent to 900,000 Euros), for a three-year period. On the Czech side, the total maximum funding for all research projects approved under this Call is 900,000 Euros, for a three-year period.

The maximum funding for each single project will be up to 380,000 ILS for the Israeli side (equivalent to 100,000 Euros, the Euro value is 3.8 ILS for this call), for a three-year period. On the Czech side, the maximum funding for each single project will be up to 100,000 Euros, for a three-year period.

In accordance, research projects should be planned on a three-year basis beginning in 1. 8. 2024. Contracts will be signed accordingly in each country.

Funding for the approved projects depends on the availability of funds and the approval of the State budget in each country.

D. ELIGIBILITY

Proposals must meet the following preconditions. Proposals not meeting the preconditions will be automatically rejected and will not be passed on to the evaluation.

1. Projects must be conducted by collaborating Czech and Israeli scientific research teams.
2. Proposals must be for research projects in one of the main areas of cooperation and its subtopics as detailed in Section A, as well as meet the required Technology Readiness Level (TRL2-4).
3. Each joint research team must be led by a Principal Investigator (PI) from each country.
4. The PI on each side must be affiliated with an academic institution or a research institute ("Affiliated Institution"), or be a professor emeritus who continues working on research in affiliation with the Affiliated Institution. An Affiliated Institution is determined in each country as follows:

In Israel:

- a) An accredited Institution of Higher Education, according to the Council for Higher Education Law, 5718-1958; or
- b) A Research Institute which is a nonprofit organization, a government company or a governmental unit. For the purposes of this Call, a "Research Institute" in Israel is a research institute whose main activity is the advancement of cutting-edge scientific knowledge, which possesses appropriate infrastructure and equipment, which employs researchers who, inter alia, publish articles related to their research in leading scientific journals, and who present their research at international symposia.

In the Czech Republic:

- a) A Research Organization in terms of the Commission Regulation (EU) No. 651/2014 of 17 June 2014, Official Journal of the EU L 187, 26 June 2014, declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the internal market in application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty (L187/24, Article 2 (83)).
- b) In the Czech Republic "Affiliated institution" represents the Applicant according to § 2 Act No. 130/2002 Sb.

Special eligibility provisions for Israeli Researchers:

- 1. In compliance with MOST's Procedures Regarding Scientific Projects Funded by MOST ("[MOST Regulations](#)"), an Israeli PI that has or will have an active grant from any of MOST's international cooperation programs, whose funding will be concurrent to the funding of this program, is not eligible to apply. No parallel funding is allowed in the international cooperation program. A researcher who is not eligible to submit a proposal as PI due to an active grant may submit one additional proposal in the international cooperation program as Associated -PI, if he does not have an active grant in the international program in which he acts as Associated-PI.
- 2. A researcher who has submitted a proposal for any MOST international cooperation call for funding in the 2024 calendar year, **may not submit another proposal for any other MOST international cooperation call for funding in 2024.**
- 3. Researchers should be advised that after a proposal has been submitted, the status of the members of the research team as Principal Investigator-PI and/ or Associated-PI may not be changed for the purpose of compliance with the eligibility requirements listed above.

Special eligibility provisions for Czech teams:

- 1. Applicant on the Czech side must comply with all eligibility provisions according to § 18 Act No. 130/2002 Sb., INTER-EXCELLENCE II Programme and Public tender LUAIZ24. MEYS will publish all eligibility provisions for Czech applicants in the **public tender documentation** (INTER-EXCELLENCE II Programme, INTER-ACTION sub-programme; public tender **LUAIZ24**).
- 2. An applicant having submitted the application to the Czech-Israeli Joint Call can participate in other international calls of MEYS, however the FTE of each member of the research team in all projects in INTER-EXCELLENCE (I) and INTER-EXCELLENCE II Programme together must not exceed **1,0**.

E. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS

Project proposals must be prepared and carried out jointly by the Israeli and the Czech project partners and should be submitted simultaneously to MEYS in the Czech Republic and to MOST in Israel (in Israel by PI, in the Czech Republic by Affiliated institution).

Each project proposal will include the **joint research part** (as detailed in part H) that must be **identical** for both project partners and should be written **in English**.

Deadline for applications: 15/1/2024;

- **in Israel until 15:00**
- **in the Czech Republic until 23:59**
(Local time in each country)

Proposals will not be accepted under any circumstances after the said date.

Further submission instructions for Israeli research teams:

- a) The Israeli PI shall submit the proposal through the Science Forefront system, at <https://kf.most.gov.il>
In order to apply for the first time, the applicant needs to fill an "account request" at the Science Forefront system. The request should be approved by the Research Authority of the Affiliated Institution. Once approved, the applicant will be notified by email that the account is active. The approval process may take time and therefore should be done well in advance of the application deadline.
- b) **Deadline for researchers' submission**: The PI must submit the proposal in English via the Science Forefront system **by 8/11/2023 at 15:00 local time (Israel). The online system will be closed for submissions after the said date and hour and no pre-submissions will be accepted after that time. Israeli researchers who have not submitted their proposals by 8/11/2023 at 15:00 local time (Israel) will not be allowed to submit their proposal.**
- c) A proposal that has been submitted can be edited by the PI, in coordination with the Affiliated Institution, until the final joint submission deadline.
- d) The Affiliated Institution must submit the proposal not later than by the final deadline on, **15/1/2024 at 15:00 local time (Israel time)**. Proposals that are not submitted by the Affiliated Institution through the Science Forefront system by this time, **will not be accepted.**
- e) Please be advised that as technical problems are possible, and the submission process may take a significant amount of time, **Therefore, it is strongly recommended to fulfil the above steps well in advance of the applications deadlines.**

Further submission instructions for Czech research teams:

- a) The Czech applicants shall elaborate the project proposals in the information system of the INTER-EXCELLENCE II Programme – ISIX System, at <https://isix.msmt.cz/> and using the forms published by MEYS for this Call. The applicants applying for the first time need to register to ISIX System before the creation of the project proposal. The

Czech applicants shall submit the project proposals only in electronic form (e.g., MEYS data box: vidaawt).

- b) Joint research part of the project proposal (see Section H) is the mandatory part of project proposal of the Czech Affiliated institution in the ISIX-System – Chapt. **No. 3**. Other parts of the application in ISIX-System will be created **in Czech** (in compliance with the data in the joint project proposal).
- c) The Affiliated Institution must submit the proposal not later than by the final submission date **[15.1.2024]**.

For both countries:

A valid project application consists of the appropriated application form **duly filled in and signed**, together with all the necessary application documents required from each side of a joint research team as detailed above, submitted respectively to MEYS in the Czech Republic and to MOST in Israel. **If the applications are not duly received both in the Czech Republic and in Israel by the dates indicated above and in accordance with the submission instructions, the proposal will be rejected in both countries.**

F. FUNDED EXPENSES

Funding provided by this Call is intended to enhance joint collaboration between Czech and Israeli researchers. Therefore, funding may be assigned to costs related to support of the collaboration vectors, such as costs related to the bilateral nature of the project (travel expenses of the researchers, scientific meetings, etc.) as well as to defray costs incurred by the approved research projects (personal costs, disposables, publication costs, etc.). In any case, each budget item or expenditure for which reimbursement is requested must conform to the respective national rules of each applicant.

Participating researchers are encouraged to plan visits to their counterparts' institutions and labs, given that such visits are an integral part of the research collaboration. International travel costs and in-country living expenses of visiting scientists, including accommodation, per diem and any other relevant expenses for each visiting scientist, should be included in their project's budget. In this regard when preparing the budget for each team, please note that each side funds their own travel expenses and should budget accordingly. Funding provided under this Call may only be used for visits taking place in the Czech Republic or Israel; visits to third countries are not eligible for financing by project funds.

Further funding provisions for the Israeli side:

Please see full funding provisions on MOST [Procedures Regarding Scientific Projects](#) Funded by MOST ("[MOST Regulations](#)"). All activities and funding pursuant to this Call must be in accordance with MOST Regulations unless otherwise specified.

Further funding provisions for the Czech side:

Funding will be provided in accordance with the provisions of the Act No. 130/2002 Sb. and according to the public tender documentation LUAIZ24 (Chapt. No. 6). Details of

funding for the beneficiaries will be given in the standard support-granting contract (template available as the supplement of the public tender documentation LUAIZ24).

G. RENEWAL OF FUNDING

Renewal of project funding for a subsequent year is subject to the submission of the relevant documents and reports, separately by the Czech and Israeli project partners. These documents must be submitted to MEYS and to MOST (by PI in Israel and by affiliated institution in the Czech Republic) within the deadlines set by each country's regulations.

H. INSTRUCTIONS FOR WRITING PROJECT PROPOSALS

Joint research part of each project proposal should be written **in English** and must be **identical** in both countries. This part should be submitted using a unified form, available at each side's websites.

Font: Times New Roman 11; line spacing: 1.5.

1. **Joint research part** of the project proposal should be up to 10 pages, including figures (not including bibliography) and should include the following sections:
 - a) Abstract (max 1500 characters including spaces)
 - b) Scientific background and state of the art: Scientific background, including an overview of the field of research around the world, noting the relative advantage of the proposed research;
 - c) Research objectives and specific aims: The purpose of the research;
 - d) Detailed description of the proposed research: Working hypothesis, research program and methods, and preliminary results;
 - e) Significance, importance, innovation, and potential benefits of the proposed research;
 - f) Applicability: Expected uses and future technological development;
 - g) Cooperation vectors between the research groups: Proposed modes of cooperation, their benefits and how they contribute to the research;
 - h) Work plan and Gantt: The work plan will be summarized in a schedule diagram. A verbal description of the work steps must be included. Each stage will be defined by a start time and an end time.

Joint research part of the project proposal will be accompanied by the mandatory documents. These **attachments** will be **in English** and be as follows:

2. **Bibliography**: A complete bibliographic list should be attached to the proposed research. The five most relevant items for the proposed research should be marked with an asterisk.
3. **CV**: A short CV for each researcher involved in the research of up to 2 pages each, including: personal statement (brief description of why the investigator is well-suited for the role on the proposed project); list of ongoing and completed research projects from the last three years that the investigator wishes to highlight; citation of up to five publications or research products that highlight the investigator's experience and

- qualifications for the proposed project; positions, scientific appointments, and honors.
4. **Letter of intent** from the project partners in both countries affirming their intent to collaborate on the proposed research.
 5. **Additional authorizations needed depending on the type of research** (e.g. Helsinki Committee, animal experiments) shall be submitted along with the proposal. In case the required authorization is still not available at the time of submission, a statement in free text should be attached including the researcher's commitment that if their proposal is approved, the required authorization will be submitted as soon as possible.
 6. **In Israel only** (Additional data for the Science Forefront system):
 - a) Short abstract (up to 1500 characters in Hebrew and English).
 - b) Applicability up to 1000 characters in Hebrew.
 - c) Importance of the research up to 500 characters in Hebrew/English
 - d) **Budget request** - enter the requested budget in ILS.
 - e) The budget of the researcher from abroad must be entered in a general way in the section designated for this purpose.
 - f) Please specify 5 researchers from Israel with expertise in the field of the proposal, who could serve as potential external reviewers.
 - g) Do not add additional documents beyond what is specified above and in the attached guidelines for submission to the Science Forefront system.
 7. **In Czech Republic only** (Additional data for the ISIX-System):
 - a) Identification data (in Czech and English)
 - b) Foreign partner identification (in Czech)
 - c) Project team CZ – additional data (in Czech)
 - d) **Budget request** – requested budget in CZK
 - e) Mandatory annexes
 - f) Non-mandatory annexes

I. PROPOSALS REVIEW

In each country national evaluation of the project proposals will be conducted. The national evaluation will be carried out according to the national regulation by the national experts that will evaluate the project proposals based on the common evaluation criteria that are as follows:

The proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. **Scientific level (20%)**: scientific and technological excellence, the scientific basis of research;
2. **Innovation (20%)**: the degree of innovation and originality of the proposed research in comparison to the state of the art;
3. **Methodology (20%)**: the extent to which the proposed method of conducting the research is qualitative, feasible and consistent with the proposed objectives;

4. Applicability potential (30%): the research contribution to the development of new applied scientific and technological advancement in the field;
5. Capability of the researcher and level of bi-national cooperation (10%): based on the experience, previous achievements and skills of the researchers and level of collaboration and compatible skills of partners.

Afterwards, MEYS and MOST will establish a Joint Czech-Israeli Scientific Committee, composed of 3-7 expert scientists from the academia and industry from each country ("The Committee"). After the national evaluation the Committee will consider the results of the national evaluation and on their basis will formulate recommendations as to which proposals will be funded.

J. CONTRACTS, PAYMENTS AND REPORTS

1. Contracts:

Upon approval of a particular project proposal, separate contracts will be signed in the Czech Republic and Israel, between MEYS and the Affiliated Institution of the Czech PI and between MOST and the Affiliated Institution of the Israeli PI.

2. Payments:

Payments will be made by MEYS and MOST to the Affiliated Institution of each Principal Investigator, respectively, in keeping with the provisions of the contracts referred to above, according to the regulations and practices in force in each country.

3. Final reports:

Within three months of the conclusion of the project, Israeli PIs must submit a final report in English to MOST at Reports@most.gov.il or through the Science Forefront system. It should include a final scientific and financial report covering the work and cooperation carried out during the entire three-year project period, in accordance with the contract's requirements.

Czech Affiliated institution (beneficiary) must submit a final report via data box of MEYS respecting the rules published by MEYS, no more than 30 days after the end of the project.

Each PI and each Affiliated Institution is accountable to MOST or MEYS, respectively, for the execution of the project.

K. MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

For both sides:

It is strongly recommended that the Czech and Israeli research teams and their Institutions enter into an agreement regarding Intellectual Property rights from the output of the financed project prior to the commencement of the collaborative activities.

For Israeli Applicants:

All procedures and activities under this Call or the projects approved hereinafter, including the eligibility of Affiliated Institutions via which applications must be filed and the eligibility of PI's and Associated-PI's, are subject to MOST Regulations and to MOST Standard Contract for Scientific Projects ("[Standard Terms](#)").

Applicants are required to familiarize themselves with the Standard Terms before filing an application under this Call. Filing an application constitutes a declaration that the applicant has done so and agrees to be bound by the Standard Terms' provisions thereof. Please note any updates made to the standard terms made before the final submission date will apply to proposals submitted to this Call.

For Czech applicants:

All procedures and activities under this Call or the projects approved hereunder, including the eligibility of applicants, are subject to Act No. 130/2002 Sb., INTER-EXCELLENCE II Programme; public tender documentation of the public tender in RDI **LUAIZ24** (INTER-ACTION sub-programme) and to MEYS Granting Contract. Applicants are required to familiarize themselves with these documents before an application under this Call.

L. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Additional information can be obtained as follows:

ISRAEL:

On administrative matters:

Israeli researchers should consult administrative matters directly with the Research Authority at their Affiliated Institution. The Institution will contact the Ministry in case of necessity.

On scientific matters:

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