FRIPRO
Terminology and framework for the scheme

The purpose of this document is to contribute to a common understanding of the words and expressions used in the FRIPRO funding scheme, and the framework that exists for the scheme and the allocations.

1. Portfolio board

The Research Council has divided its research funding work into 11 portfolios. Each portfolio has a board responsible for funding projects within its portfolio area. They also have an advisory responsibility and reports to the Research Council's board.

The Portfolio Board for Ground-breaking Research has decision-making authority for FRIPRO. This means that they decide how FRIPRO will work and which applications will be granted. They also decide how the funds under item 52 of the letter of allocation from the Ministry of Education and Research to the Research Council – in which funding for FRIPRO is included – are to be used, and thus the size of available funding for new projects in FRIPRO each year.

2. Application types and application type variants

FRIPRO is announcing funding for two application types: Researcher Project and Coordination and Support Activity (KOS). Within KOS, FRIPRO is part of the *Funding for Research Stays Abroad for Doctoral and Postdoctoral Fellows* call. Under Researcher Projects, FRIPRO is announcing funding for applications of three application type variants: Researcher Projects for Experienced Researchers (*Experienced Researchers*), Researcher Projects for Early Career Scientists (*Early Career*) and Three-Year Researcher Project with International Mobility (*Mobility*).

The processing of applications for stays abroad is carried out jointly for the entire Research Council, regardless of funding scheme, with a short application processing time (a few weeks) and a purely administrative processing (the Research Council's staff carry out the assessment). The principle is that if the application meets the formal requirements in the call, it will be granted.

The rest of this document describes the administrative procedures for application processing of Researcher Project applications.

In the calls for proposals, the Research Council specifies an estimated amount available for the year for each of the three Researcher Project calls. The distribution is an estimate based on previous years, but the distribution may change depending on the quality of the applications and the number of applications.

3. Research domains and peer reviewer

Researcher Project applications to FRIPRO are assessed by peer review. The Research Council recruits reviewers both independently of and in connection with submitted applications. The reviewers normally commit for three years and are registered in a peer reviewer database. The goal is to have a database that covers the breadth of applications we normally receive for FRIPRO, so that applications can quickly be assigned to suitable reviewers and assessed.

Each reviewer is registered as belonging to one of eight peer reviewer groups. The eight groups broadly cover the subjects in the group names (see table below) for the most appropriate application processing. Many peer reviewers work interdisciplinarily, and may therefore fit in several groups. The reviewers are placed in the group where the bulk of their research belongs.

When the Research Council receives an application, it is linked to peers in the database, and the application is, with the help of artificial intelligence, placed in the peer group where the expertise fits best. The Research Council's staff will check the placement and move the application to a different group if necessary. Sometimes the most suitable peer reviewers belong to different groups, and sometimes the reviewer with the best expertise for the application is in a different peer reviewer group than the application's or the applicant's field. The application is placed where the expertise is best, and uses the available and impartial reviewers who best cover the application – regardless of which peer reviewer group they belong to. The name of the peer reviewer group in which an application is placed is *not* of importance for the assessment and is only included to provide a rough description of the fields covered by each group. What *is* important are the peer reviewers who assess the application.

The peer reviewer groups are clustered into three research domains: humanities and social sciences, medicine, biology and health and mathematics, natural sciences and technology. This clustering is related to the budget allocation in the application processing. See also the document *FRIPRO – Allocation principles and rules.*

No.	Peer reviewer groups	Research domains
1	Humanities	Humanities and social sciences
2	Social sciences	Humanities and social sciences
3	Neuroscience and mental health	Medicine, biology and health
4	Human life sciences	Medicine, biology and health
5	Biology	Medicine, biology and health
6	Physics	Mathematics, natural sciences and technology
7	Geoscience and engineering science	Mathematics, natural sciences and technology
8	Mathematics and information and communications technology	Mathematics, natural sciences and technology

4. Decision rounds

For each full calendar year, there are six decision rounds in which applications for consideration are granted or rejected. The decision rounds are normally in even-numbered months, and the results are announced on the Research Council's website after each round.

The budget for new Researcher Projects is divided into six equal parts – one for each decision round. If FRIPRO's budget is increased or decreased in the national budget, the allocation amount for the decision rounds is adjusted further as quickly as possible. This means that the amounts awarded over the course of a year will not necessarily be the same as those stated in the calls for proposals when you submit an application. If there are any remaining funds left after an allocation one round (for example, because there are not enough funds left for an entire project), this will be added to the following round.

5. *En bloc* decisions

En bloc decisions mean that a group of applications are granted or rejected together instead of one by one. This is done when groups of applications have common characteristics in the applications (e.g. marks and the gender of the project manager) that mean that all of them should either be granted or rejected.

6. Waiting period and submission restriction period

The competition in FRIPRO is very tough. Until 2023, FRIPRO's calls had an application deadline once a year, and between five and ten percent of the grant applications where funded. On behalf of the Ministry of Education and Research, several measures were developed to change this situation so that a higher proportion of those who submit an application receive funding. Without an increase in the budget or a reduction in the amount of support per project, this can only happen by fewer applications being submitted. We chose to transition to an open-ended call, in addition to the introduction of a waiting period and submission restriction period for project managers of FRIPRO applications. The intention is that strong applicants will be able to apply as often as before, but have time to properly complete the applications before submitting them, and that applicants who receive weaker assessments will take longer to improve their applications before submitting them again.

The waiting period is one year from the date the application is submitted until the next time the application's project manager can be the project manager for another FRIPRO application. The waiting period means that you can apply a maximum of once a year.

The high level of competition means that many very good applications are rejected. Even applications with the marks "very good" (5) are far from receiving funding. Applicants who receive average grades below given limits are therefore given a submission restriction period for one or two years in addition to the waiting period. *Whether* they are granted a submission restriction period and *the length* of their submission restriction period depends on which application type variant the application belongs to. The submission restriction period limits are stated in the announcements. The purpose of submission restriction period is for such applicants to spend a little extra time on their application before submitting it again.

The waiting period and the submission restriction period do not impose any restrictions on being the project manager for other calls under the Research Council, nor on being a project participant in other FRIPRO applications.