

REGULATION ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE "U INNOVATE" PROGRAM

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Art. 1. Vision

The "U InnoVaTe" program (abbreviated UIVT) provides the framework, tools, and resources necessary to stimulate the UVT community to develop applied and experimental research projects, as well as innovation relevant to the socio-economic environment in line with the university's mission.

Art. 2. Framework and context

The UIVT program is subordinated to the Research-Development-Innovation Strategy of the West University of Timișoara for the period 2021-2027, with a direct impact on the measures provided for Pillar II - Strategic Development-Innovation Domains and Technology Transfer, and an indirect impact on the measures provided for Pillar I - Competitive International Research (fundamental and excellent) and Pillar III - Support and Research Capacity Development Activities.

Art. 3. Terms and Definitions

For the purposes of these regulation, the following terms will be defined as follows:

- **Technology Transfer:** The process of transferring knowledge, technologies, production methods, or other expertise between different individuals, entities, organizations, enterprises, etc.
- **Open Governance:** The concept whereby an entity/institution opens its decision-making processes and institutional activities to the participation and transparency of the members of the community it belongs to, involving citizens, civil society, and other relevant actors in its decision-making and action monitoring.
- **Internal UVT Researcher-Innovators:** Members of the UVT community, represented by academic, administrative staff, and PhD students, who carry out research, development, and innovation activities within UVT.

Art. 4. Roles and Responsibilities

The main processes associated with the UIVT program refer to (a) internal communication procedures (b) risk management (c) process and task management (d) decision and problem management (e) changes to the program (f) document management (g) quality management (h) evaluation and delivery of deliverables (i) financial management of the program (j) partnership management (k) program reporting. Depending on the targeted processes, some roles (according to the RASCI model described below) may be suppressed (e.g., DEF will not be involved in internal communication procedures with a support role but with an information role) or incremented (e.g., DEF will have a consultation role in processes targeting the financial management of the program).

Stakeholder	WUT Senate	WUT BoA	WUT BoD	Vice-recotr CDI	CTT-UVT	DCSC U	Vice-deans CDI	Director s CCDI	Reaserc ehers
Associated processes	C/A	C/A	C/A	A	R	C/I	C	C	C/I

Stakeholder	Professors	Students	GPS-UVT	Entrepreneurs UVT	DEF UVT	DRU UVT	Legal Office UVT	UEFISCDI	MCDI
Procese asociate programului UIVT	I	I	C	I	S	S	S	I	I
Responsabil: coordonează operațional			R						
Aprobator: aprobă			A						
Suport: oferă suport operațional			S						
Consultat: participă activ la consultări			C						
Informat: este informat asupra proceselor			I						

Table 1 -Roles and responsibilities associated with the UIVT programme

Art. 5. Performance indicators

Art. 6. Documents required for launching the funding competition within the UIVT Project

- (1) The general budget of the UIVT project, the budget allocated to each individual research project, the number of selected projects, the types of eligible expenses, the funding application templates, the evaluation criteria template, the self-declaration template of the project manager, and the funding agreement template, etc., will be communicated during the opening of each call for proposals following their approval by the UVT Board of Directors.
- (2) The budget benefits from flexible allocation, determined based on the specific demands and needs of UVT's internal community of researcher-innovators. In this regard, the committee may propose a reallocation of resources by increasing the number of grants offered and minimizing their amounts, etc. This reallocation will be approved after the committee's proposal by the UVT Board of Directors.

Art. 7. Action Directions

The "U InnoVaTe" program is structured into five action directions detailed below.



Figure 1 - Action directions of the U InnoVaTe programme

Art. 8. AD1. Open Governance (UIVT Governance)

- (1) Targeting internal UVT researcher-innovators (including PhD students) to stimulate active participation in governance processes related to the implementation of measures included in the West University of Timișoara's Research-Development-Innovation Strategy for the period 2021-2027.
- (2) This action involves recognizing the researchers' activities as members of the community of good practices in the open governance of UVT's RDI (Research, Development, and Innovation) processes by actively and consistently integrating them into the development and innovation ecosystem orchestrated at the regional level in the Western part of Romania.
- (3) This direction involves Actions such as:
 - a) Participation of the researcher-innovator community in public consultations and debates on the UVT RDI Strategy;
 - b) Contribution of the researcher-innovator community to the development of the framework documents for the implementation of the UVT RDI Strategy;
 - c) Continuous collection of proposals from the researcher-innovator community for improving internal processes, infrastructure, institutional partnerships, and UVT's presence in the community to stimulate research-development-innovation;
 - d) Involvement in the internal evaluation processes of the quality of research-development-innovation projects;
 - e) Contribution to mapping the research-development-innovation interests within UVT and their maturity level (technological, societal, business, public policies, etc.) to facilitate the technological and cognitive transfer from UVT to economic and social operators;
 - f) Encouraging the participation of researcher-innovators in open governance actions by recognizing efforts and awarding the "UVT Innovator" badge;
 - g) Use of digital tools to inventory the RDI supply and demand in the UVT ecosystem, by:
 - i. Mapping UVT's applied and experimental research fields to evaluate the expertise and/or services/products that can be offered to the socio-economic environment;
 - ii. Collecting RDI challenges/needs for solutions from the socio-economic environment.
 - h) Contribution of researcher-innovators to student mentorship programs, especially regarding mentoring student research teams supported within the MyUVT project.

Art. 9. AD2. Continuous Training (UIVT Training)

- (1) This action direction involves recognizing the involvement and efforts of researcher-innovators in the context of innovation, research, and development, especially those who have applied and been selected under the StartGrant and DevelopGrant programs.
- (2) It targets the internal UVT researcher-innovator groups (including PhD students) and includes the following concrete actions:
- a) Training sessions in fields such as, but not limited to: Technology Readiness Level (TRL) scale, intellectual property management, open innovation and living labs, innovative entrepreneurship, CDI project management, sustainable development, business models based on CDI. The training sessions may be assimilated into micro-credentials, with a stackable nature, as soon as national legislation and institutional procedures allow. Until that time, records of the work volumes associated with the delivered training sessions will be kept to facilitate equivalency with ECTS;
 - b) Sessions/events that lead to non-formal/informal education in the CDI field, such as, but not limited to:
 - i. Open day events for identifying CDI partners, opportunities, and funding conditions for CDI;
 - ii. Sessions for facilitating contacts and creating partnerships for the development of collaborative research-development-innovation projects based on real needs;
 - iii. Conferences on technology transfer and innovation, as well as on synergies between national and regional smart specialization strategies (undergoing updates at the time of this document's drafting);
 - iv. Workshops on the levels of technological/societal/economic maturity/public policy maturity in the CDI field, the resilience of CDI projects and innovative businesses in relation to forecasts made at the national, European, and global market levels (e.g., with tools provided by the World Economic Forum);
 - v. Workshops for connecting the results of fundamental research to community needs;
 - c) Mentorship provided to target groups for generating/maturing CDI solutions;
 - d) Mentorship provided by the target groups of DA2 to assigned teams of young researchers for generating/maturing CDI solutions, especially concerning student teams formed or matured under the MyUVT program.

Art. 10. AD3. Collaborative Approach (UIVT Collaborative)

- (1) It addresses internal UVT researchers-innovators (including PhD students) and provides for the granting of vouchers for carrying out R&D projects starting from real needs of the socio-economic environment to advance from TRL 1-2 to TRL 3-4, which are addressed through the development of products/services created within teams:
- a) Interdisciplinary teams of internal UVT researchers and/or
 - b) Mixed teams, composed of internal UVT researchers and researchers/individuals from the public or private sector and/or
 - c) International teams, leveraging UVT's membership in the UNITA consortium – Universitas

- Montium and the resources provided in UNITA Research & Innovation Hubs, and in the projects of the UNITA constellation.
- (2) R&D projects carried out within teams formed based on the requirements of "DA3. Collaborative Approach" must target at least one of the priority R&D areas defined at UVT, namely:
 - a) Artificial Intelligence, digital solutions, and other cutting-edge IT applications;
 - b) Environment, green transition, and energy efficiency;
 - c) Health, quality of life, and social inclusion.
 - (3) The vouchers are valid for 12 months from the date of signing the Funding Agreement, and their use is conditioned by the advancement of technological maturity from TRL 1/2 to TRL 3/4, through a collaborative approach with the relevant socio-economic environment.
 - (4) The amount and number of vouchers granted in each call of the UIVT program, under the action direction DA3. Collaborative Approach, will be approved by the UVT Board of Administration, as part of the specific document package for each call within the UIVT program.
 - (5) The vouchers can be used to cover expenses that fall within the eligible categories mentioned in the specific document package for each call within the UIVT program, approved by the UVT Board of Administration.

Art. 11. AD4. Mature Innovation (UIVT Mature)

- (1) It is addressed to internal UVT researcher-innovators (including PhD students) and aims to annually fund at least three research grants from the funding sources mentioned in Article 14. These grants are intended to achieve TRL 5-6 (preferably TRL 6, prototype validation) in the UVT-defined priority applied R&D areas, namely:
 - a) Artificial Intelligence, digital solutions, and other cutting-edge IT applications;
 - b) Environment, green transition, and energy efficiency;
 - c) Health, quality of life, and social inclusion.
- (2) The grants are awarded for a maximum period of 12 months from the date of signing the Funding Agreement, in accordance with the information on eligible expenses, which will be decided by approval from the Board of Administration (CA), through specific documents for each call.
- (3) The use of the grant is conditional upon meeting the result indicators, which stipulate advancing technological maturity from TRL 3/4 to TRL 5/6 within a maximum of 12 months from the date of signing the Funding Agreement, with a requirement to increase by at least 2 TRL levels compared to the level at the start of the grant competition (i.e., from TRL 3 to at least TRL 5, or from TRL 4 to at least TRL 6).
- (4) The grant will be used according to the eligible expenses incurred, in accordance with the specific document package for each call within the UIVT program, approved by the UVT Board of Administration.

Art. 12. AD5. Commercialisation (UIVT Commercial)

- (1) It is addressed to internal UVT researcher-innovators (including PhD students) and focuses on actions such as:

- a) Commercializing products or services through UVT, in accordance with UVT's right to generate revenue from economic activities (e.g., education and training, research);
- b) Commercialization/Licensing as a result of the intellectual property rights held by UVT;
- c) Creating start-ups and spin-offs associated with UVT, as a result of incubation/acceleration activities (including internationalization) of businesses, including those that integrate research results.

Art. 13. Rights and Obligations of beneficiaries of funding through the UIVT Program

(1) Beneficiaries of the UIVT program have the following rights:

- a) The right to be supported in administrative procedures related to the management of the research project funded by the UIVT program;
- b) The right to be provided with all necessary framework documents required to fulfill the obligations arising from the UIVT program;
- c) The right to access the assistance and consultancy services of the UVT Innovation and Technology Transfer Center concerning the research project for which they were selected under the UIVT program.

(2) Beneficiaries of the UIVT program have the following obligations:

- a) The obligation to manage the research project for which they are selected under the UIVT program, particularly regarding participation in conferences and completing the usual formalities related to these activities, publishing articles, managing their own website or other dissemination channels used by the beneficiary for communicating research results, and disseminating information about securing funding through the UIVT program;
- b) The obligation to use the visual identity of the program and UVT in disseminating the results of the research project funded by the UIVT program.

Art. 14. Funding sources and budget allocation for the UIVT Program's Action Directions

- (1) The funding source for the UIVT program is the scientific research funding from universities. Where necessary, the UIVT program may also be funded from other sources, including UVT's own revenues or revenues attracted from other external sources or generated through the activities of the CITT.
- (2) All expenses associated with the UIVT program are subject to ceilings specified in the budget allocated for each action direction, as well as in the total budget of the program, as outlined in the "UIVT Program Budget" approved by a subsequent decision of the UVT Board of Administration, in accordance with Article 15 of the UIVT Program Regulation.
- (3) The schedule for organizing competitions (for each action direction) will be published on the UVT website, under the "Research" section. Unless otherwise stated in the open call, open calls within the UIVT program have continuous submission periods, applying the "First Come, First Served" principle, in compliance with the criteria and with the approval of the selection committee involved in the process. An exception is the action direction DA4. Mature Innovation (UIVT Mature), for which the schedule and evaluation criteria are described in Article 8 of this regulation.

Art. 15. **Validity of the Regulation**

- (1) This regulation comes into force on, the date of its approval by the UVT Senate Resolution.
- (2) The U InnoVaTe (UIVT) program regulation is approved as a multi-year framework. For the purposes of this regulation, a year is considered a full financial year.