

## Rules of the Visegrad Scholarship Program

Under Articles 1 and 2 of the Statute of the International Visegrad Fund (hereinafter the “Fund”), the Council of Ambassadors is issuing these conditions to determine the Rules of the Visegrad Scholarship Program (hereinafter “Visegrad Scholarships”).

### Chapter I—Aim and Scope

#### Article 1

Visegrad Scholarships facilitate academic exchanges by providing financial support to scholars who are citizens of V4 countries: Czechia, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia (hereinafter the “Member States”) and for citizens of countries specified in Chapter II Article 4 to study in the Member States. All Higher Education Institutions recognized by the state (i.e., by the government, relevant ministry, etc.) and institutes of Academies of Sciences (hereinafter jointly “the Host”) are eligible to host scholars.

### Chapter II—Eligibility

#### Article 2

The scholarships are provided for study/research projects specified in the submitted application form. Each applicant can submit only a single application form per deadline. If more than one application is submitted by the same applicant within a deadline, the Fund shall consider the first submitted and disregard all other applications.

#### Article 3

Applicants are eligible to apply for Visegrad Scholarships for a maximum term of support of **2 semesters** at master’s or post-Master’s (doctoral, postdoc) degree levels. Re-applying is possible, but no specific preference is given to consecutive applications. The minimum length of supported period of study/research is 5 months (the equivalent of 1 semester). The following conditions apply for the degree levels:

- **master’s degree level:** The applicant must have completed at least six semesters of university studies when starting the scholarship and/or hold a bachelor’s degree,
- **post-master’s degree level** (doctoral, postdoc programs or independent research): The applicant must hold a master’s degree or equivalent at minimum.

#### Article 4

The country of an applicant’s citizenship must differ from that of the proposed host country. The following three schemes are supported within the Visegrad Scholarships:

A. **Intra-Visegrad Scholarships:**

For scholars within the territory of the Member States at the master’s and post-master’s degree levels;

B. **Out-Going Scholarships:**

For scholars from the Member States for studies at accredited Hosts in *Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kosovo\**, *Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia* and *Ukraine* on master’s and post-master’s degree levels;

C. **In-Coming Scholarships:**

For scholars who are citizens of the Western Balkans—*Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina,*

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\* This designation is without prejudice to positions on status and is in line with UNSCR1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

*Kosovo\**, *Montenegro*, *North Macedonia*, and *Serbia*—or of the Eastern Partnership countries—*Armenia*, *Azerbaijan*, *Belarus*, *Georgia*, *Moldova*, and *Ukraine*—wishing to study/conduct research in the Member States at master’s and post-master’s degree levels.

## Chapter III—Application Process

### Article 5

Applying for a Visegrad Scholarship is possible only via the My Visegrad on-line application form (“on-line system”) which must be accompanied by the following scans of documents that must be uploaded before the form’s submission:

- A scan of a **valid identification document** (photo ID card for EU citizens, passport for non-EU citizens);
- Scanned **diploma with diploma supplement** (where available) covering the highest obtained degree (or scanned **transcript of records** in English covering the last two duly terminated semesters at the least, when no previous diploma is available);
- Scanned proof of **full-time enrollment** at the host or a **letter of acceptance to a full-time program** issued by the host; for post-master’s applicants, such document must additionally include a **detailed work plan** (no older than 4 months) issued by the host indicating the full-time character of the intended research and explicating its length (starting and end month) of the research.

## Chapter IV—Selection and Approval

### Article 6

Deadline for submitting the on-line applications is **April 15 at 11:59:59 CET** (noon) each year, unless stipulated otherwise on the Fund’s website. The earliest date for commencement of the study/research is September of the respective year.

### Article 7

The Fund reviews the eligibility of each application and recommends the eligible applications to the Evaluation Committee (“Committee”).

### Article 8

The Committee shall consist of at least four representatives of the academia (one representing each Member State) nominated by the relevant state institutions responsible for higher education.

### Article 9

The Committee members evaluate all eligible applications based on the applicant’s **qualification** (academic merit), **relevance** of the Host, and on the applicant’s **motivation**. The final score is based on the average value given by all Committee members. The Fund summarizes the records from all selection sessions and makes the final list of recommendations to the Council of Ambassadors for the formal approval. The recommendation is based primarily on the overall score but takes into consideration the balance among academic disciplines as well as countries of citizenship. The Committee members get remunerated by the Fund and the size of the remuneration reflects the overall number of reviewed applications.

### Article 10

At its regular session, the Council of Ambassadors approves the final lists of successful applicants together with a list of substitutes. The decision made by the Council of Ambassadors is final, requires no detailed reasoning, and shall present no grounds for appeals.

### **Article 11**

The Fund informs the applicants of the approval or rejection of their applications by the Council of Ambassadors by June 30 of the respective year.

## **Chapter V—Contracting the Scholarship and the Lump Sum, Disbursements of Funds**

### **Article 12**

Once the approved scholars are informed about the results, they are instructed by the Fund to confirm all contractual data in the on-line system (personal data, correspondence address). Once the data is confirmed, the Fund prepares two copies of the contract and sends them together with a written confirmation of scholarship to the scholar. The scholars are then obligated to return a signed copy of the contract to the Fund.

### **Article 13**

The disbursement of the first part of the scholarship is conditioned by the scholar's confirmation of his/her bank account in the on-line system and an upload in the on-line system of a document issued by the Host that officially confirms the scholar's **commencement of the studies/research**. Such confirmation must be printed on an official letterhead paper, be signed/stamped by relevant representative of the Host, and include the date of arrival/start of the studies/research and its planned duration. The disbursement of the subsequent part of the scholarship (where relevant) is conditioned by the scholar's upload in the on-line system of a document issued by the Host proving the successful completion of the first semester (transcript of records documenting 30 ECTS and the continuation of studies, where relevant) or a report issued by the Host with brief assessment of the scholar's work and the approximate date of its planned completion.

### **Article 14**

The Fund supports the Host with a lump sum paid for each semester of studies/research hosting the Visegrad Scholarship holder. In case of the master's degree level, the lump sum is intended as a flat contribution to the Host to cover potential tuition fees. In case of the post-master's degree level, the lump sum is intended as a contribution to relevant material and personal assistance to the scholar during his/her studies/research.

The Fund concludes a lump sum contract with the Host preferably at the onset of the scholarship period but no later than by the end of the scholarship period of the respective scholar. The lump sum is disbursed upon the receipt of the signed contract and upon a written confirmation stating the date of the start of the study/research of the scholar (as detailed in Article 13).

## **Chapter VI—Concluding the Scholarship**

### **Article 15**

The scholar is obliged to fill out a Final Questionnaire in the on-line system no later than 30 calendar days after the termination of the studies/research. Additionally, the following documents are to be uploaded with the questionnaire:

- master's degree level: Scanned transcript of records with at least 30 credits (ECTS) obtained for the last semester covered by the Visegrad Scholarship or scanned diploma with diploma transcript, if obtained
- post-master's studies: Scan of a written assessment summarizing the results of the studies/research confirmed by the relevant representative of the host (e.g., supervisor)

- **Visegrad Fund**



**Article 16**

In case the scholar fails to fulfill her/his duties toward the host, through her/his own fault, or voluntarily terminates the studies or research, she/he shall be obliged to return to the Fund all the funding already paid within the scholarship in accordance with the relevant provisions of the contract concluded between the scholar and the Fund.

**Article 17**

These Rules shall enter into force on the day of their approval by the Council of Ambassadors.