Approved by Rector's directive No 1 of 12 January 2026

In force from: 01.01.2026

Rules for the Management and Use of the Grant Fund, the Teaching and Learning Development Fund, the Development Fund, the Real Estate Fund, and the IT Development Fund

1. **General provisions**

1.1. These Rules (hereinafter referred to as "the Rules") establish the terms and procedures for the internal management and use of the funds specified in clauses 10.4.2, 10.5.2, 10.6.2, 10.10, and 10.19 of the Financial Regulation of Tallinn University of Technology (hereinafter referred to as "the university"), as well as the Development Fund not covered by the Financial Regulation, which comprises the Tenure Fund and the Research Equipment Fund. The annual volumes of the funds shall be determined in accordance with the Financial Regulation during the budget preparation.
1.2. The purpose of the Rules to ensure transparency and legal certainty in the university's internal funding. To this end, eligibility and evaluation criteria will be established, and funding will be allocated based on the relevance of activities to the university's Strategic Plan 2026 – 2035. Relevant decisions and outcomes will be made public, and measurability and monitoring will be ensured to a reasonable degree.
1.3. All projects financed from the funds governed by the Rules shall comply with the agreed quality and project management principles, as well as the Quality Concept of Tallinn University of Technology.
1.4. The funding principles and application rules shall be published on the university's intranet.

2. **Grant Fund**

2.1. The purpose of the Grant Fund is to mitigate the risks associated with applying for competitive research funding, enhance the sustainability of research, maintain the research potential of a group, and allow researchers to concentrate on pursuing international projects with greater responsibility and impact.
2.2. The following grants are financed from the Grant Fund:
2.2.1. Activity 1 grants – awarded based on applications submitted for international competitive funding programmes.
2.2.2. Activity 2 grants – awarded based on applications submitted for research grants from the Estonian Research Council (hereinafter referred to as "ETAG").
2.3. A principal investigator of the university is eligible for a grant from the Grant Fund if:
2.3.1. the principal investigator has submitted a project application for a competitive international funding programme in which the university acts as the consortium coordinator, where the funding applied for the university is at least 300,000 euros, and the application met the evaluation threshold and all other quality criteria required for eligibility set out by the funding programme, but was not awarded funding due to budgetary constraints (Activity 1);
2.3.2. the principal investigator has submitted a project application for an ETAG research grant that met the evaluation threshold and all other quality criteria required for eligibility set out by the relevant ETAG measure, but was not awarded funding due to budgetary constraints (Activity 2);
2.3.3. at the time of submitting the project application and the award of the grant, the principal investigator holds a valid employment contract with the university in an academic position (with a workload of at least 0.8), a doctoral degree, and has not been granted emeritus status.
2.4. Project applications that have been timely and correctly registered in the university's information system in accordance with the university's Rules for Project Administration, and that involve research, development, or innovation activities, are eligible for a grant.
2.5. Tenders submitted in a procurement procedure, as defined by the public procurement legislation of Estonia or any other country, shall not be considered competitive funding.
2.6. Each grant awarded from the Grant Fund is 55,000 euros, of which 10% is automatically allocated to the structural unit specified in the grant recipient's employment contract.
2.7. The Grant Fund budget is generally distributed equally between grants for Activity 1 and grants for Activity 2.

2.8. If, at the time the results of ETAG research grants are announced, it appears that funds allocated to Activity 1 will remain unused, they may, if necessary, be reallocated to Activity 2 grants within the same financial year. The Rector makes the relevant decision based on the recommendation of the Vice-Rector for Research.

2.9. If, in a financial year, the number of eligible applications exceeds the available funds, applications that were not supported due to exhaustion of the fund shall be given priority in the following financial year, provided that allocations to these applications do not exceed one third of the fund available in the following financial year.

2.10. A principal investigator may receive a maximum of three grants from the Grant Fund, provided that each subsequent grant is awarded based on a negative funding decision on an eligible application issued at least 24 months after the date of the previous such decision. For Activity 2, the interval may be shorter if at least one ETAG research grant application round takes place between the awarding of consecutive grants from the Grant Fund.

2.11. Awarding grants

2.11.1. Awarding Activity 1 grants

2.11.1.1. The Research Administration Office processes grant applications on an ongoing basis until the available budget is exhausted.

2.11.1.2. The Research Administration Office makes a proposal to award a grant to the principal investigator of an eligible project application, in accordance with the Rules and based on the evaluation results of the relevant funding programme.

2.11.1.3. The Vice-Rector for Research shall decide on the award of a grant within 14 days based on the results of evaluation of the proposal.

2.11.2. Awarding Activity 2 grants

2.11.2.1. The Committee for Research shall consider grant awards at the meeting following the announcement of ETAG funding decisions, provided that there is a minimum interval of two weeks between the announcement of the funding decisions and the meeting. If the interval between the announcement of funding decisions and the next meeting of the Committee for Research is less than two weeks, grant awards shall be considered at the following meeting.

2.11.2.2. The Committee for Research reviews all Activity 2 grant applications and submits a proposal for their award to the Vice-Rector for Research, within the limits of the funds allocated for this purpose.

2.11.2.3. If the number of project applications eligible for a grant exceeds the funds allocated for the activity, the Vice-Dean for Research of each School shall submit a list of potential grant recipients, ranked by priority, for their School, accompanied by a reasoned opinion approved by the Departments.

2.11.2.4. The Vice-Rector for Research shall award grants by taking into account diversity both within the field and across structural units.

2.11.3. At the initiative of the Research Administration Office, the Finance Office shall open a funding account for the grant recipient, transfer the grant funds to it, and designate the grant recipient as the authorising officer of the funding account.

2.12. Reporting and use

2.12.1. Grants from the Grand Fund may be used to support the submission of new competitive project applications.

2.12.2. The grant recipient shall submit a free-format activity report within 24 months after receiving the grant.

2.12.3. The Research Administration Office is responsible for monitoring the use of grant funds and evaluating the impact of the measures.

2.13. Recovery of funds and special provisions

2.13.1. In cases of misuse or breach of research ethics or good scientific practice, the Vice-Rector for Research may, with the Rector's approval, require full or partial recovery of the grant.

2.13.2. The grant recipient shall attend counselling organized by the Research Administration Office within one month of the grant award. The content and format of counselling shall be determined by the Research Administration Office.

2.13.3. If the grant recipient's employment contract ends less than one year after the grant is awarded, an assessment will be made to determine whether any unused funds must be repaid. The Research Administration Office shall determine the content and format of the assessment.

2.13.4. The accounting period for the Grant Fund shall correspond to the financial year (from 1 January to 31 December).

2.13.5. Grants from the Grant Fund are allocated by order of the Vice-Rector for Research. The Grant Fund is managed by the Research Administration Office.

2.14. Transitional provision

2.14.1. All applications submitted in 2025 that are eligible for a research grant for young scientists shall be funded in the order in which responses are received, under the same conditions and in the same amount, in accordance with the rules in effect at the time of submission.

3. **Teaching and Learning Development Fund**

3.1. The purpose of the of the Teaching and Learning Development Fund is to support improvements in teaching and learning and to facilitate the implementation of teaching and learning development projects in line with the university's Strategic Plan 2026–2035.

3.2. The Teaching and Learning Development Fund is divided into two sub-funds:

3.2.1. the Fund for Teaching and Learning Projects Defined in the Strategic Plan,

3.2.2. the TalTech Academy Fund.

3.3. The purpose of the Fund for Teaching and Learning Projects Defined in the Strategic Plan is to support the achievement of the objectives and implementation of the activities set out in the Strategic Plan. The Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs shall allocate the funds according to the budget.

3.4. The purpose of the TalTech Academy Fund is to promote the development of teaching and learning and enhance their effectiveness each academic year. The amount of a school's project grant is determined by the Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs, and the duration of a project is 12 months. The application round is held once a year. The Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs may determine a priority topic for each application round and agree with the school on the expected project outcomes.

3.5. The substantive assessment of applications for funding from the TalTech Academy Fund is conducted by the Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs, generally following consultation with the Committee for Academic Affairs. When assessing applications, the following factors are considered: the applicant's academic collaboration, the feasibility and risks of the proposed activities, and the potential positive impact, sustainability, schedules and budget, as well as the applicant's prior experience in the development of teaching and competence to carry out the proposed activities.

3.6. When evaluating an application, additional materials may be requested from the applicant in justified cases.

3.7. Applications failing to meet the fund's objectives will not be evaluated, regardless of the availability of sufficient funds.

3.8. Based on the substantive evaluation of applications for funding from the funds described in clause 3.2.2 and considering the opinion of the Committee for Academic Affairs, the Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs shall decide which applications will be funded and approve the funding decisions by order. In justified cases, the Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs may cancel the award of grant or discontinue its payment after it has been awarded.

3.9. A separate funding account is established for the recipient to manage the grant.

3.10. With the approval of the Committee for Academic Affairs, the Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs may establish limits for Schools in awarding a grant.

3.11. If funding is available, the Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs may conduct additional application rounds using a simplified procedure.

3.12. If there is a surplus in the Teaching and Learning Development Fund, the Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs shall determine how the surplus is to be used. The progress of projects funded by the Fund shall be monitored by the persons appointed by the Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs.

4. **Development Fund (to be implemented in 2026)**

4.1. The Development Fund comprises the Tenure Fund and the Research Equipment Fund.

4.2. The **purpose of the Tenure Fund** is to:

4.2.1. partially finance filled tenure positions from the university's central funds;

4.2.2. enhance the salary security of tenured professors;

4.2.3. support structural units in increasing the number of tenured professors; and

4.2.4. improve the quality, competitiveness, and scope of research and business collaboration.

4.3. The Tenure Fund applies to professors who have been appointed to tenured positions.

4.4. The amount of the grant depends on the funding available, and the number of tenured positions filled as of October 31 of the previous year.

4.5. The grant is allocated annually to the tenured professor's funding account.

4.6. The purpose of the **Research Equipment Fund** is to modernize the university's research equipment through investment in fixed assets, enhance the quality, competitiveness, and scope of research, expand business collaboration, and optimize equipment utilization through shared use.

4.7. For the purposes of these Rules, research equipment means equipment, or a set of equipment, recorded as fixed assets by the university and used for research, development, and innovation.

4.8. For the purposes of these Rules, a project means the procurement of equipment for a designated purpose within a defined budget and period, carried out in accordance with the university's procurement procedures.

4.9. The fund's resources are not intended to cover operating expenses, fixed costs, salaries, membership fees, license fees, or similar expenditures.

4.10. The fund's resources are not intended to cover self-financing or VAT for research equipment purchased under national or international programmes and projects, including the Just Transition Fund, ASTRA+, and the Research Infrastructure Roadmap.

4.11. The estimated amount of funding per project is 25,000 – 150,000 euros (including VAT) from central sources, plus self-financing. Projects of a larger scale may be funded if at least three Departments are interested in purchasing the equipment.

4.12. The equipment procurement outlined in the project must be completed and the grant fully utilized no later than the end of the current financial year.

4.13. If it is necessary to extend the project deadline due to unforeseen circumstances, a written request must be submitted to the Head of Research Infrastructure at least two months before the deadline for the completion of the project. Changes to the project deadline must be approved by the Vice-Rector for Research.

4.14. Applying for and Awarding the Research Equipment Fund

4.14.1. The application round will be held during the first two months of the current financial year. Academic staff will be informed of the opening and closing dates of the application round via a separate notification, and all employees will receive the information through the university newsletter.

4.14.2. The applicant shall submit the research equipment application using the fund form, digitally signed by the Head of the Department or College, electronically to the Head of Research Infrastructure by the announced deadline. Joint applications may be submitted only with the consent of the relevant heads of units.

4.14.3. The Head of Research Infrastructure reviews the applications for technical compliance. Any incomplete application shall be returned to the responsible person specified in the application for correction, and the corrections must be completed within three working days.

4.14.4. The applications are evaluated by an Evaluation Committee, established by the Vice-Rector for Research, which prepares a ranking of projects and a funding proposal for the Rector. The Rector shall make the final funding decision based on the proposal of the Evaluation Committee.

4.14.5. The evaluation criteria are as follows: project objectives; viability and cost-effectiveness of the budget; impact on research volume and quality; contribution to doctoral and master's programmes; impact on business collaboration; cross-department collaboration and shared resource use; the number of departments benefiting.

4.15. Management of and reporting on the Research Equipment Fund

4.15.1. Based on the final funding decision, a Research Equipment Fund account will be established to receive allocations from the university's General Research Fund, and the authorising officer of the account shall be the Vice-Rector for Research.

4.15.2. When payment is made for equipment supplied under a procurement contract, the share covered by the fund shall be transferred from the Research Equipment Fund account.

4.15.3. Projects shall be implemented in accordance with the university's Procurement Rules, Accounting Policies and Procedures, and applicable legislation. Any justified changes to equipment listed in the application shall be approved in advance by the Head of Research Infrastructure.

4.15.4. No later than two months after the end of the project, the principal investigator of the grant recipient shall submit a brief report to the Head of Research Infrastructure on the implementation of the project, including a list of purchased equipment and an overview of the budget used (the principal investigator receives the report form once the project is completed).

4.16. Other provisions

4.16.1. Unused development resources, or those not used in accordance with the approved application, may, at the recommendation of the Vice-Rector for Research and by order of the Rector, be retained in the Research Equipment Fund for use in the subsequent period.

4.16.2. If the principal investigator's employment contract ends before the project is completed, the Head of Department shall appoint a new principal investigator and notify the Head of Research Infrastructure at least two weeks prior to the change.

5. **Real Estate Fund**

5.1. The purpose of the Real Estate Fund is to preserve the value of the university's real estate, promote its sustainable management, and provide an environment that supports teaching and research.

5.2. The Real Estate Fund supports activities and improvements related to the university's real estate and its use. The Real Estate Fund does not cover staff costs or a unit's operating expenses, except for project management expenses related to large-scale projects specified in the budgetary strategy.

5.3. The Real Estate Fund is managed by the Real Estate Office.

5.4. The heads of structural units and the heads of the divisions of the Real Estate Office submit proposals for improvement projects and related work.

5.5. Proposals shall be submitted via the university's Help Centre (managed by the Real Estate Office) or by e-mail to the Director for Administration or the Real Estate Development Director.

5.6. Proposals shall be recorded in the Register of Real Estate Development and Improvement Works, maintained by the Real Estate Office.

5.7. The Real Estate Office prioritizes work in the register based on urgency, risk level, and cost, and coordinates the schedule of work with the units that submitted the proposals.

5.8. The Real Estate Office prepares a work plan and budget, informs the relevant unit of the budget, and initiates work and procurements according to the agreed schedule.

5.9. The Director for Administration shall provide the Rector with an overview of activities financed by the Real Estate Fund at least twice per financial year.

6. **IT Development Fund**

6.1. The purpose of the IT Development Fund is to support the digitalization of business processes in line with the goals of the university's Strategic Plan, to ensure the development of the university's central information systems, and to keep all information systems up to date. The overarching principles are to provide a unified user experience, ensure cost-effectiveness, and maintain security and accessibility.

6.2. The IT Development Fund is used to finance development work carried out by external procurement partners, as well as the acquisition of related software and hardware. The fund shall not cover staff costs or operating expenses (e.g., maintaining information systems) of the units (e.g., the IT Services Office).

6.3. To apply for funding from the IT Development Fund, process managers of the support units, together with the business project managers, shall prepare development orders and terms of reference for applications within their areas of responsibility.

6.4. IT development orders (incl. small-scale IT developments and IT development projects as defined in the Rules for Information Technology Development Work), for which proper terms of reference have been prepared and which have been approved by the IT Development Manager, are eligible for funding. The requirements for IT development orders and their terms of reference are set out in the Rules for Information Technology Development Work".

6.5. The IT Development Manager collects all IT development orders and, together with the process managers, reviews their priorities, feasibility, schedules, and estimated costs; adjustments are made if needed.

6.6. The IT Development Manager prepares a budget proposal and submits it to the IT Development Steering Group. The IT Development Steering Group shall submit the budget to the Director for Administration for approval.

6.7. A budget shall be prepared for each financial year. The IT Development Steering Group shall review the budgetary results twice a year and propose adjustments if necessary.

6.8. The IT Project Manager responsible for development work is accountable for the use of financial resources from the IT Development Fund.

6.9. Business Project Managers schedule IT development work in collaboration with IT Project Managers and the IT Development Manager, taking into account ongoing developments and the capacity of

partners to carry out the work. The priority, schedule, and budget may be adjusted, if necessary, with the approval of the IT Development Manager and the Head of the IT Services Office.

6.10. The IT Development Steering Group shall monitor the progress and outcomes of IT development orders and IT projects. The report on the budget and its implementation shall be made available to the IT Development Steering Group, the Rectorate, process managers, and business and IT project managers.

7. **Implementing provisions**

7.1. If a specific form is required for applications, it will be published on the university's intranet, and applications must be submitted in accordance with the published procedure.