

**LENDÜLET (“MOMENTUM”) PROGRAMME
of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (MTA)**

**CALL FOR APPLICATIONS
to establish new Lendület (“Momentum”) research teams
2015–2020**

Objectives

The President of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, henceforth: MTA) calls for applications to establish research teams from 2015 at MTA research centres and institutes (hereafter: MTA research institutions) as well as at Hungarian universities (hereafter termed together as research institutions). The MTA Lendület (“Momentum”) Programme (henceforth named as Lendület Programme) aims at a dynamic renewal of Hungarian research institutions (both within the MTA research network and attached to universities) via attracting as many internationally acclaimed scientists as possible, either by hiring them from abroad or keeping them in Hungary. The mission of the Lendület Programme is to support excellence and mobility. Its aim is to establish research teams in host institutions to work on new research themes rather than to promote existing ones. The HUF 400 million allocated for new Lendület projects in 2014 2015 will allow for approximately 8-12 new Lendület research teams. Lendület financial funding, as described in this call and in the forthcoming contract, may extend to a maximum of 5 years.

Who can apply?

1. Depending on their respective age-groups and achievements, researchers with a scientific degree are invited to submit applications to head new Lendület research teams in the two categories below:

Lendület I – Those at the outset of their independent research careers: promising young, under-38 researchers with an outstanding and steadily increasing achievement, who may successfully apply to the European Research Council (ERC) for research funding in the „Starting” or „Consolidator” categories.

Lendület II – Those whose independent research careers are in progress: 35-45 years old, internationally acclaimed leading researchers with an outstanding and still growing achievement, who may successfully apply to the European Research Council (ERC) for research funding in the „Consolidator” or „Advanced” categories.

Both Lendület categories are open to both the MTA research institute network and institutions attached to Hungarian universities (as host institution). Those uncertain whether to apply for categories Lendület I or II should make their choice in consultations with the head of the host research institution targeted by the Applicant. For possible extension of the age limits see MTA’ affirmative action framework programme.

2. Applications are to be submitted in agreement with the head of the host MTA research institution, or in the case of a university, in agreement with the university’s rector (president/chancellor).

3. The minimum amount of financial funding is HUF 20 million per year, the maximum amount of financial funding is HUF 50 million per year in Lendület I and HUF 60 million per year in Lendület II.
4. Only new research themes, or ones pursued for no longer than during the last 5 years at the host institution, can be proposed in the application. The specific themes must be in strategic alignment with promising research directions of considerable international interest, i.e. directions showing gradually growing effectiveness internationally over the last five years. A detailed description of the international standing of the proposed topic must be given in the application. While considering theoretical applications in the natural, engineering, and life sciences, we shall prefer applications envisaging an experimental approach.
5. Would-be research team leaders must demonstrate an ability to lead research and raise competitive funds for that research in the next 10-15 years. They should be committed already in the first three years or by the end of their research period to raise funds from ERC (or other relevant organisations) or to become principal investigators of a H2020 collaborative project. The planned research should be suitable to increase the research institution's competitiveness, both in terms of scientific authority and fundraising capability.
6. Conditions that are mandatory in category Lendület II and recommended in category Lendület I are as follows:
 - a) Those applying should possess a scientific degree, post-doctoral research experience, a research job or lectureship from/with internationally highly acclaimed scientific institutions of their respective fields.
 - b) They should have regularly published their independent scientific findings in leading science journals of their respective fields; they should have repeatedly been invited to present their results at scientific conferences; and they should have personally won research grants at least once.
7. Applications submitted by researchers working at the host institution shall be accepted only in exceptional cases and only for starting a new research project.
8. Full time university professors or full time researchers who head departments or institutes cannot apply for a Lendület project that is to be hosted by their own research unit.

Submitting applications

Applications in English (in social sciences and humanities: in English or in Hungarian) must be submitted via the Lendület 2015 website (<https://palyazat.mta.hu/lendulet>). The deadline for electronic submission is **12:00 CET, 13rd January, 2015**.

Declaration by the Head of the host research institution and its Chief Financial Officer (the form can be downloaded from the website) is to be mailed to the Department of Research Institutions, Secretariat of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, 7. Nádor utca, H-1051 Budapest, with the postage stamp marked 6th January 2015 at the latest). Please, write „Lendület 2015 application” on your postage envelope. Information regarding the full application procedure is provided by MTA officers (e-mail: lendulet@titkarsag.mta.hu, phone: +36 1 411 6262).

The Lendület 2015 website can be entered by using the username and password to the MTA Akadémiai Adattár (AAT). The website automatically uses the data given on the website of AAT so these data can be only modified on the website of AAT. For submitting an application, the data in AAT must be updated.

In case the Applicant has no AAT username, registration can be done by using the following manual (manual 1). In case the Applicant has an AAT username (and/or after registration) obligatory data on AAT website can be filled by using the manual beginning from the 4th point. The following manual helps submitting the application via Lendület 2015 website (manual 2).

Applications must include:

On the website:

1. Application data,
2. Applicant's data,
3. Brief summary of the proposed project (according to the template which can be downloaded from the website),
4. Short description of the five-year research programme (according to the template which can be downloaded from the website),
5. Detailed work plan for the first three-year phase of the programme including a description of each year's round of duties to be undertaken (according to the template which can be downloaded from the website),
6. A five-year budget estimate of the resources with a description of each year's round of duties (according to the template which can be downloaded from the website);
7. Personal and institutional background of the research programme:
 - a) CV, list of publications, scientometric data of the head and main participants of the programme;
 - b) A declaration of the host institute describing the relationship of the planned research to the strategic plans of the research centre/research institute/university, and why the hosts support the aim of the research (according to the template which can be downloaded from the website). In the case of Lendület applications submitted by researchers working at the host institution an explanation of the motivation is needed.
 - c) An introduction of the host institute regarding research facilities, scientific capacities, and allocated support planned to use for completing the project (in case of allocation of financial resources financial data shall be given),
8. References from 3 recognised scientists not employed by the host research institution,
9. Information on recent and/or previous ERC project applications (title, subject, evaluating category, year of submission, duration) if relevant.

In the form of original documents:

Signed declaration by the Head of the host research institution and its Chief Financial Officer (the form can be downloaded from the website)

Applications will be filed and tagged by the Research Institute Department of MTA Secretariat after checking that they meet the above formal requirements. Should the application prove deficient, the Applicant will be notified at the e-mail address given by him/her within five working days. The Applicant then should eliminate the deficiency revealed within another five working days. Only once can such a round occur.

All applications arriving after the arrival deadline, or arriving with deficiencies that fail to be eliminated before the deadline, or fail to meet any other formal requirements prescribed will be excluded from consideration.

Evaluation of the applications

In both Lendület categories preference will be given to scientists presently active abroad but wishing to return to Hungary. Own resources from the host institution are not required, however further preference will be given to applications in which the host research institution undertakes a written obligation to match up prospective MTA support with funding from its own economic and human resources (e.g. by re-allocating the resources from less successful projects, or by promising to purchase a specific instrument indicated by the Applicant, etc.).

The evaluation of the applications proceeds in two stages. In stage one, formally admissible applications are reviewed anonymously by at least three experts invited by the President of MTA. The reviews render a descriptive assessment as well as a scoring of the applications along the guidelines previously determined. In their verbal evaluation, reviewers must make it clear whether or not they recommend the applications for support, and also whether or not they think the funds requested are realistic. If they do not think the funds requested are realistic, they may recommend that the funds be reduced. Verbal evaluations and scorings should be in sync with each other. Reviewers are obliged to endorse the conditions for preference set out in the call for applications, as are members of the jury at a later stage.

Scoring

- A) The novelty, international competitiveness, and feasibility of the research programme will be scored in keeping with Point 4 of the *Who can apply* section? The potential usefulness (economic impact or social relevance or national cultural heritage impact, respectively) of the programme will also be considered. A maximum of 40 points can be given.
 - B) The Applicant's scientific achievement will be scored against the background of his/her entire career with special regard to his/her major achievements, the number of citations to his/her work, structure of his/her publication activity and number of his/her number of publication (in this order of importance). A maximum of 10 points can be given.
 - C) Along the above lines, the Applicant's last five years (2010-2014) will be separately evaluated, as it stands in B). A maximum of 20 points can be given.
 - D) An evaluation of the Applicant's independent competitive activity over the last five years. A maximum of 10 points can be given.
 - E) An evaluation of the Applicant's former scientific and competitive activities as liable to increase the research unit's future competitiveness by the success of the research programme. A maximum of 10 points can be given.
 - F) An evaluation of the extent to which the human and technical resources promised by the research institution can promote the success of the research programme. A maximum of 10 points can be given.
- Maximum points must be separately justified on each count.

Total of maximum points: 100

Verbal evaluation

- G) A verbal evaluation, limited to 1500 characters and in sync with the scoring points given in A) – F).
- H) A yes/no statement about whether support should or should not be given.
- I) A statement by the reviewer whether he/she thinks the annual budget estimates are realistic. If not, but the application seems to be otherwise worthy of support, he/she can suggest more realistic annual amounts.

Reviews will be collated by the Research Institute Department of MTA Secretariat. In stage two a public jury invited and headed by the President of MTA will survey all anonymous verbal evaluations and score averages and ranges with special regard to the preferences envisaged by the conditions of application, and come to a decision concerning support within 90 days. The jury will rank a 30 per cent higher number of applications than the number of applications likely to exhaust the sum total of possible support. The jury may also relegate non-winning Lendület II applications to winning positions in the Lendület I category. Support intensity falls between 60-100%, which means that the funds received should cover app. 60-100% of the entire Lendület project.

Applicants will be personally informed (via e-mail) on their application outcomes within 10 working days after decision. Applicants will receive the anonymous evaluations made of their own applications within 10 working days after public announcement of winners. A list of the winners and the titles of their research programmes will be made public on the MTA website.

Conditions of support for winning Applicants

The budget allocation is not to be reimbursed, and is submitted yearly. Yearly financial support will be allocated by the MTA in view of the allowance of the budget addressed for Lendület program.

Conditions of how to make use of a Lendület support are set out in yearly contracts to be made out with the host research institutions. On the whole, the ways in which support can be used and the way in which unauthorised use of support calls for reimbursement are laid out in the support contracts.

Contracts with winning Applicants targeting MTA research institutions will be signed by MTA's Secretariat, and with those targeting university-bound research units, by MTA's Office of Subsidised Research Groups (in Hungarian: Támogatott Kutatócsoportok Irodája, TKI). First years contracts must be signed in 5 months after announcement of winners.

Support can be used for personnel and operational expenditures as well. Lendület support for winning applicants to both MTA institutions and university-affiliated research teams includes gross remuneration for the research team's head. In MTA research institutions, unless the research team's new head had been employed by the host research institution previously, he/she is appointed to serve as a civil servant for a maximum of 4 years, a fixed term that can be prolonged for 1 more years on the basis of an evaluation discussed below. In universities, unless the research team's new head had been employed by the host university previously, he/she is appointed to serve as a civil servant of the MTA Támogatott Kutatócsoportok Irodája (MTA TKI) for a maximum of 4 years, a fixed term that can be prolonged for 1 more years on the basis of an evaluation discussed below.

The gross remuneration of the new research team's head amounts to HUF 656 000/month in Lendület I, and HUF 875 000/month in Lendület II (1.5 and 2 times the amount of the regular remuneration of the "scientific advisor 1" category, respectively). Also, winning Lendület Applicants must terminate their other MTA grants (e.g. their Bolyai Grant) when entering into their Lendület contract. Those employed by the host research institution or university, may only receive a supplementary Lendület support, i.e. with their regular remuneration first deducted from the total. This monthly support is given to acknowledge their excess work (in the case of universities for a maximum period of 5 years).

Support may also cover the gross remuneration of at least one or more researchers, material and overhead expenses, and the purchase of new instruments needed for the research.

The leader of the Lendület research team must prepare a progress report each year on the team's work to the President of MTA who will forward the report to experts and to the relevant special committee of the Council of Academic Research Institutions for evaluation, following the procedures and conditions regulated by MTA's President

Should the team not attain the appropriate results within 3 years, as indicated by experts MTA's special support for the project must be discontinued at a point of time set by the President of MTA (usually from 1st January of the year following the evaluation). This, *in the case of MTA research institutions*, from this data until the end of the 4th project year, means that the remuneration of the team's head returns to a regular employment level, while support envisaged for material, overhead, and purchasing expenses is cut to *half* its previous amount. *In the case of university-bound research units*, failure to get the appropriate research results leads to a discontinuation of the *entire* support at a point of time set by the President of MTA. From the 4th project year support for the research group is to be dissolved so that it may spend only the phaseout amount, i.e. an amount which is absolutely needed for the termination.

At the end of the five-year support period, the President of MTA will ask experts to evaluate the scientific performance of the Lendület team and its head. If endorsed, the head of the Lendület team *in an MTA research institution* is appointed on a long-term basis. All further possible support will be decided upon by the President, taking into account the scientific achievements of the Lendület team and the resource rearrangements of the host research institution. If the team's operation is deemed to have been unsuccessful, the host research institution may lose all support.

As to Lendület research teams active for five years *in university-bound research units*, their special MTA support is discontinued after five years irrespective of the expert evaluation of their performance.

While enjoying special support, Lendület teams are expected to perform their independent research programmes, act as tutors of students preparing their MA and PhD dissertations, and take part successfully in Hungarian and international competitions.

If the head of the Lendület team wins an ERC grant, the contract with the MTA might be modified.

Appeal

The refusal of applications deemed formally invalid can be appealed within 3 workdays of the refusal's receipt with a documented remonstration attached. Appeals can be lodged with the Research Institute Department of MTA's Secretariat via e-mail (lendulet@titkarsag.mta.hu) identifying the person, the application tag, and the documented grounds for remonstration. Appeals will be considered and decided upon by the Department within 3 workdays of receiving the appeal. If an application is refused on material grounds, no appeal can be lodged.

Budapest, November 2014.


Signed by László LOVÁSZ

