



## **Ministry of Education of Montenegro**

### **Higher Education and Research for Innovation and Competitiveness Project – HERIC**

## **CALL FOR PROPOSALS for Institutional Improvement Grants (IIG)**

### **I) Background**

The Government of Montenegro (GoM), through Ministry of Education (MoE) and Ministry of Science (MoS), is implementing the “Higher Education and Research for Innovation and Competitiveness” (HERIC) Project, financed from the World Bank loan. The anticipated duration of the project is from 2012 to 2017. The HERIC Project is placed within the overarching framework of the GoM strategies for European integration in the areas of science and research and its Strategy on the Development and Financing of Higher Education.

Significant reforms need to be implemented and investments made, including in the areas of quality and financing of higher education and research. Legislation and regulations have been developed and adopted in these areas, and the Project aims at helping to make some identified reforms a reality. In addition, the HERIC Project is helping the Montenegrin authorities to deepen ongoing reforms and align them with the broader EU integration agenda.

The HERIC Project Development Objective is to strengthen the quality and relevance of higher education and research in Montenegro through reforming the higher education finance and quality assurance systems and by strengthening research and development capabilities. The HERIC Project’s main beneficiaries are students, graduates and academic staff, who will benefit from implementing supports for Quality Assurance and finance reform in higher education, as well as internationalization efforts for human capital capacity building. Universities and research institutions will also benefit from financing higher education reforms and establishing a competitive research environment.

The HERIC Project is comprised of four distinct although interlinked components; the Institutional Improvement Grants scheme is defined under the Component 1: Higher Education Finance Reforms and Implementation of Quality Assurance Norms.

### **II) Scope of Call for Proposals**

The Montenegrin accredited and licensed higher education institution (HEI) registered under the Law on Higher Education of Montenegro are invited to apply for Institutional Improvement Grants (IIG) by submitting project proposals aiming to strengthen the administrative and operational capacities of higher education institutions, with particular focus on: i) organizational development and strengthening governance structures of the HEI; ii) strengthening educational and teaching services and development of capacities for services to other stakeholders and iii) improvement of educational infrastructure to facilitate quality teaching and learning at the HEI.

In line with the comprehensive aim of the grant scheme, applicants are invited to submit projects that fall under one or more of the following priority area:

Priority area 1: Reform, development and Improvement of teaching and learning processes;

Priority area 2: Enhancement of quality management of teaching and learning processes;

Priority area 3: Organizational development and strengthening governance structures of the HEI;

Priority area 4: Improvement of composition and strengthened functioning of governing bodies and governance structures of HEI;

Priority area 5: Development of human resources (educational and non-educational capacities) within HEIs;

Priority area 6: Improvement of internal and external communication of HEIs; and

Priority area 7: Improvement of educational infrastructure within higher education institutions.

### **III) Application Process**

#### **1. Who can apply – eligibility criteria**

Applicants eligible to submit the proposals under this grant scheme must be legal entities and accredited and licensed higher education institutions registered under the Law on Higher Education of Montenegro; they are ultimately responsible for preparing and submitting the application and implementing the project.

Universities, as legal entities composed of more faculties, are eligible/supposed to submit projects on behalf of faculties that are operating under the respective University (in practice this means that faculties that are part of University cannot be formal applicants, but University should submit the application on behalf of that faculty). Apart from applying for grants related to (and on behalf of) their faculties, universities may also apply with projects related to universities as a whole, i.e. to common topics. Individual faculties, as legal entities, that are not part of any university, are eligible to submit applications on their own behalf.

Grants can be awarded to projects that involve only one institution, as well as to projects that involve more than one institution (as partnerships) who will jointly implement proposed action. One of the institutions will act as the applicant (leading partner), while other institutions will be considered as co-applicants (partners). In order to be eligible to act as co-applicant, they must be legal entity and accredited and licensed higher education institution registered under the Law on Higher Education of Montenegro.

The applicant and co-applicants must sign a partnership agreement, in which the roles of the applicant (leading partner) and co-applicant (partner) should be recognized.

The HEI is ultimately responsible for the overall management/implementation of the project and a person responsible for the implementation of the project must be nominated. This person has to be full time employed at the institution applying for Institutional Improvement Grant.

#### **2. Duration and funding of Projects**

The foreseen duration of approved projects is up to 12 (twelve) months. The requested grant allocation has to be between €10,000.00 and €50,000.00.

### **3. Application process**

Project proposals are to be submitted in the IIG Application Format, which includes a Confirmation Letter of participating institution(s), confirming each institution's commitment to actively participate in the project.

In order to ensure higher degree of ownership and ensure that the project results continue after the completion of project, the applicant is required to provide own financial contribution (co-financing), which must not be less than 10% of the requested grant amount. This contribution is a prerequisite for transferring of grant funds to the grant recipient.

All eligible proposals will be evaluated by a three-member independent and professional Evaluation Committee. Members of the committee will be two external experts selected on a basis of competence, with academic and consultancy experience, and one delegated representative of the Ministry of Education.

Applicants whose proposals are short-listed will be invited to negotiate and to provide additional modifications to their proposal if needed, taking in consideration comments by the evaluators.

### **4. Criteria for evaluating project proposals**

- Capacities of applicants: measures technical and administrative capacities of the applicant, primarily focusing on capacities to implement development projects and ensure achievement and full utilization of results.
- Relevance and design of the project: shows if the application is in line with the overall and specific objectives of the grant scheme and the priority areas.
- Effectiveness of the project: measures the extent to which the actual results of the activities planned within a project will contribute to the specific result and address the key problem of the HEI.
- Efficiency (budget and finances) of the project: reflects if the project budget and the overall management approach of the project provide for rational use of resources/ inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc).
- Sustainability and Impact of the project: assesses if the positive results of the project are likely to continue after the end of the project and the actual influence of the project.

## **IV) Submission of proposals**

Proposals should be submitted in two (2) hard copies and in electronic form on two (2) CDs. The application material (both hard copies and CDs) shall contain:

- Annex 3a – Application form;
- Annex 3b – Budget plan;
- Annex 3c – Guarantee form;
- Gantt chart;
- Project abstract in Montenegrin language;
- Proof of registration/accreditation (for each institution in case of partnership);

Proposals submitted by e-mail will not be considered.

All documents on CDs shall be provided in PDF format, while annex 3a shall be additionally provided also in Word format, and annex 3b in Excel format.

All application material shall be submitted in English language. In addition, the short summary (maximum 2 pages) should be separately submitted in Montenegrin language.

Submission deadline: **30<sup>th</sup> of October 2015;**

Guidelines for Applicants (Grants Operational Manual) and all necessary details (requirements, procedures, application forms etc) are available on the websites of the Ministry of Education ([www.mps.gov.me](http://www.mps.gov.me)) and HERIC project ([www.heric.me](http://www.heric.me)).

Application material can be sent by post or delivered in person (from 9:00 to 17:00 h, Monday to Friday) at the following address:

Ministarstvo prosvjete Crne Gore (Ministry of Education of Montenegro)  
Directorate for higher education  
Archive (Office no.5), ground floor  
Vaka Đurovića bb, 81000 Podgorica, Montenegro

Subject Line: "IIG 2015 – ..... [*insert Project acronym*]"

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