**REGULATIONS on the Open Project Competition “Creation of Experimental Laboratories in the Natural Sciences from February 1, 2022 until December 31, 2026 at National Research University Higher School of Economics”**

1. **General Provisions**
	1. These Regulations on the Open Project Competition “Creation of Experimental Laboratories in the Natural Sciences from February 1, 2022 until December 31, 2026 at National Research University Higher School of Economics” (hereinafter the “Regulations”, “projects”, “HSE University”, or the “University”, respectively) set forth the criteria and procedures for organizing and holding an open international competition at HSE University for experimental lab projects in the natural sciences in the period from February 1, 2022 until December 31, 2026 (hereinafter the “Competition”).
	2. The purpose of the Competition is the establishment, provision of support to, and development of excellent academic fields and schools at HSE University, along with the development of advanced infrastructure for the University’s natural sciences cluster, as a key element in the University’s involvement in the global academic process. The Competition aims at building experimental laboratories at HSE University (hereinafter “Laboratories”) in Moscow as per established procedure at the University.
	3. HSE University is the Organizer of the Competition (hereinafter the “Organizer”). Acting on behalf of HSE University, the Competition will be supported by the Support Centre for International Laboratories (hereinafter the “Support Centre”).
	4. The Competition is intended to provide support to research in the following fields:

1.4.1 1.4.1. Biophotonics;

* + 1. Ageing: biology, physiology, biomedicine, biostatistics, bioinformatics.
	1. The Competition is not a tender for the procurement of goods, works and services for the needs of HSE University, nor is it affected by the provisions of Federal Law No. 223-FZ “On Procurement of Goods, Works and Services by Individual Types of Legal Entities”, dated July 18, 2011, Federal Law No. 44-FZ “On the Contract System for the Procurement of Goods, Works and Services for State and Municipal Needs”, dated April 5, 2013, as well as Chapter 57 of the Russian Civil Code.
	2. Competition timeframe: from August 1, 2021 until December 25, 2021, inclusive.
	3. Information about the terms of the Competition, the criteria and procedures for assessing submitted competition applications, the time, place and procedures for submitting competition works, amount and types of support, procedures and timeframes for announcing Competition results shall be posted on the HSE University portal at: <https://www.hse.ru/ru/interlabs/>.
	4. The Support Centre shall provide organizational and administrative support to the Laboratories created following the tallying of the Competition’s results.
	5. These Regulations and any amendments thereto shall be verified by an HSE University directive.
1. **Competition Participants**
	1. Scientific teams under the supervision of leading researchers in the fields specified in p. 1.4 of the Regulations may take part in the Competition (hereinafter “Head of the Laboratory”), with a Candidate of Sciences/Doctor of Sciences/PhD degree and the h-index of no less than 7 on the Web of Science Core collection without the Emerging Sources Citation Index (hereinafter “ESCI”), as well as at least 5 (five) years of experience, at least 15 articles in periodicals, indexed in the WoS database without ESCI over the past 5 (five) years.
	2. The Head of the Laboratory and key members of its research teams shall have the right to take part in the same application, submitted to the Competition.
	3. If a participant violates the terms of the Regulations, or if unbecoming conduct is identified within the framework of the Competition, the Organizer shall have the right to not admit the participant to the Competition/remove them from taking part in the Competition/project.
2. **Laboratory activities funding**
	1. Based on the final Competition results, a Laboratory shall be created as a subdivision under an HSE University faculty/institute with a similar specialization to that of the Laboratory as per procedures in place at the University. The Laboratory shall receive funding for the period until December 31, 2026.
	2. The Laboratory’s activities may be extended on the basis of international independent expert review, which shall be conducted every 5 (five) years.
	3. Total financing of each project that won the Competition should not exceed:
		1. a total of 90,000,000 (ninety million) roubles shall go to acquiring equipment in 2022, so that the Laboratory can carry out its research activities, including overheads and customs costs, delivery and instalment expenditures[[1]](#footnote-1);
		2. a total of 90,000,000 (ninety million) roubles shall go to acquiring equipment for the Laboratory’s research activities in 2023, including overheads and customs costs, delivery and instalment expenditures;
		3. in 2022 – 2023, 13,000,000 (thirteen million) roubles a year, out of which 10,000,000 (ten million) roubles a year shall go to paying the remuneration of the Laboratory’s staff (including its head), including transfers to non-budgetary funds, and 3,000,000 (three million) roubles a year, respectively, earmarked for academic mobility, lab supplies, equipment maintenance costs and other expenditures;
		4. in 2024 – 2026, 17,000,000 (seventeen million) roubles a year, out of which 12,00,000 (twelve million) roubles a year will cover the remuneration of the Laboratory’s staff (including its head), including transfers to non-budgetary funds, and 5,000,000 (five million) roubles a year, respectively, will be earmarked for academic mobility, expendable materials, equipment maintenance costs and other expenditures.
	4. Procurement of the equipment specified in the application shall be carried out by the Laboratory independently with the support of the faculty/institute whose scholarly focus is aligned with the Laboratory’s specialization and the University’s Office of Corporate Procurement and Tenders.
	5. If, following the results of the Competition, in their applications, different Laboratories request for the acquisition of the same type of special equipment, the University shall have the right to acquire 1 (one) piece of this equipment available for collective use in order to ensure reasonable and sustainable use of such equipment.
	6. Each Laboratory, which has been opened based on the Competition’s results, shall be obliged to attract additional financing to its research activities, in particular, extra budgetary funds generated from conducting R&D work, e.g., granting rights to third parties to use the equipment, in the following amounts:

* + 1. in 2023 – at least 15,000,000 (fifteen million) roubles;
		2. in 2024 – at least 15,000,000 (fifteen million) roubles;
		3. in 2025 – at least 20,000,000 (twenty million) roubles;
		4. in 2026 – at least 20,000,000 (twenty million) roubles.
	1. If a Laboratory fails to meet its annual performance targets, as specified in its application, the University shall have the right to reduce financing for the Laboratory, or terminate its financing altogether.
1. **Criteria and Terms for Conducting Research**
	1. The proposed research should not be a repetition of research carried out as part of other research projects, currently or previously conducted at HSE University or outside thereof, either financed from the budget of the Russian Federation at various levels or other sources.
	2. The Laboratory’s Head shall bear the following responsibilities:
		1. putting together a research team to carry out research activities;
		2. drawing up the Laboratory’s research agenda; overseeing the execution of research and other operations at the Laboratory, as well as getting personally involved in the Laboratory’s key activities;
		3. ensuring that the Laboratory meets its stated performance goals and research outcomes;
		4. carrying out the functions of the direct management of the Laboratory, organizing the activities of its research team, e.g., drawing up a research design and preparing budget estimates for research activities, implementing annual project estimates, including the effective spending of allocated funds, submitting reports in line with the University’s internal bylaws;
		5. working in partnership with staff members of the relevant faculty/institute/subdivision at HSE University with respect to the procurement of applied for equipment and making sure premises are prepared for such equipment’s installation;
		6. ensuring the effective use of procured equipment, as well as determining the Laboratory’s requirements for supplementary equipment, supplies and other resources; organizing the Laboratory’s access to such resources;
		7. ensuring necessary grant activity of the Laboratory and raising funds from outside sources from the relevant sector;
		8. ensuring the Laboratory’s integration in the educational process and recruiting students/doctoral students from HSE University to work there;
		9. organizing cooperation between the Laboratory and other HSE University subdivisions, e.g., RAS joint institutes’ labs engaged in similar research fields at the relevant faculty/institute at the University, as well as with other academic and educational institutions.
		10. If a given application is declared the winner, the Head of the Laboratory should be appointed as a full-time staff member with this position as their main place of work.
	3. Criteria for laboratory team composition for the entire duration of the project’s implementation:
		1. the Laboratory’s team should include at least 2 (two) holders of a Doctor of Sciences/Candidate of Sciences/PhD degree, who are working full-time at the University as their main place for work, as well as at least 3 (three) HSE University doctoral students/undergrads;
		2. the number of members of the research team, who will be employed on the band not below Researcher at the Laboratory as their main place of work (if the application is declared the winner) should be at least 2 (two) team members (not including the Laboratory Head);
		3. the replacement of key members of the team, information for whom was previously included in the application for the competition, shall be permitted in extraordinary instances with the approval of the respective line manager;
		4. the share of team members under or of the age of 39 on the team should come to at least 60% during the entire period of the project’s implementation.
	4. In order to carry out organizational functions to process Laboratory documentation and to represent the project at HSE University subdivisions as per HSE University’s bylaws, an English-speaking project manager shall be hired to the Laboratory. At the same time, salary of the project manager, including personal income tax payments and transfers to non-budgetary funds, should not exceed 1.85 million roubles a year at a 1.0 FTE rate. The hiring of a manager to oversee the Laboratory project shall be possible after his/her candidacy is approved by the Support Centre.
	5. Drawing upon the outcomes of their work, the Laboratory’s team should publish a certain number of articles[[2]](#footnote-2), as specified in their application, in the given field of research, listing their affiliation with HSE University and stating the sources of financing for research[[3]](#footnote-3) therein, but at least the following:
* in 2022– 4 articles;
* in 2023 – 5 articles;
* in 2024 – 8 articles;
* in 2025 – 10 articles;
* in 2026 – 10 articles.
	1. As a result of their work, the Laboratory team shall file as many applications for patents and/or registration of databases (software) as is specified in the Competition application provided that HSE University becomes an owner of the respective rights thereto – at least 1 (one) application per year
	2. If an application is declared the winner of the Competition, an experimental laboratory shall be created as per established procedures at HSE University as a subdivision of the respective University faculty/institute with a similar research focus to that of the new Laboratory, located at the premises of this faculty/institute. The application should include a letter of intent/support letter from the dean of the respective faculty/director of the respective institute on the allocation of necessary premises at the Laboratory should the application be declared the winner.
	3. Solutions undertaken to organize the Laboratory’s activities shall be made by the Committee for the Organization of International Research Projects, with the hiring of leading foreign and Russian academics and those at the HSE University’s “Mirror Laboratories” project as supervisors.
1. **Laboratory performance assessment**
	1. Ongoing monitoring of the Laboratory’s activities shall be carried out by the scientific committee of the respective HSE University faculty/institute pursuing the relevant academic field, including the employment of international independent experts on the subject of the Laboratories’ operations.
	2. The Laboratory shall submit its annual report on its operations, which shall be considered and approved by the scientific committee of the relevant faculty/institute at HSE University.
	3. The results of the Laboratory for the 2022-2026 period will be assessed by international independent experts with due consideration of the attained results and set annual performance indicators. Independent experts in the field of the Laboratory’s specialization shall take part in this assessment. The laboratory’s research outcomes shall be reviewed by the HSE University’s Advisory Committee for Research.
2. **Procedures for Participation in Competition**
	1. Applications that meet the set criteria, as specified in Section 8 of these Regulations, shall be accepted for the Competition.
	2. Applications to take part in the Competition should be drafted and submitted in English and Russian. If there are any discrepancies between the two versions of the application, the Russian version shall prevail.
	3. The requested total financing for conducting research must be specified in the application to take part in the Competition in Russian roubles and should not exceed the amount specified in p. 3.3 of the Regulations.
	4. Application documentation with contradictions in the information provided therein shall be considered as failing to meet the criteria in place for competition documentation.
	5. If an application submitted for participation in the Competition does not include the documents, specified in the competition documents, or if the documents submitted are not put in set templates, or do not feature required information as per set forms, they shall be deemed as failing to meet the criteria in place for Competition documentation.
	6. Applications to take part in the Competition shall be sent via e-mail at 2konkurs@hse.ru; by 11.59pm, September 30, 2021 (Moscow time) and should include the following documents:
		1. application in Russian in word;
		2. application in Russian in pdf, featuring a scan of the proposed Laboratory Head’s signature;
		3. application in English in word;
		4. application in English in pdf, featuring a scan of the proposed laboratory Head’s signature;
		5. guarantee letter/letter of support from the dean of the relevant HSE University faculty/institute about the allocation of necessary space for the Laboratory should the project proposal be declared the Competition winner.
	7. Applications to take part in the Competition that have been received after the deadline set by these Regulations shall not be accepted for review.
	8. Submitted applications shall be reviewed to check their adherence to the formal criteria set out by these Regulations. Incomplete or incorrectly filled in applications to the Competition shall be discarded.
	9. Technical expert reviews to check whether applications meet the specifications of these Regulations shall be carried out by the Support Centre. The results of such expert reviews shall be forwarded to the members of the Competition Committee, the membership of which shall be stated in a directive issued by the HSE University Rector. Decisions as to accept submitted applications for the Competition shall be made by the Competition Committee.
	10. Applications accepted for the Competition shall be forwarded to expert review in line with the set criteria. Independent experts shall be involved in the expert review process.
	11. Applications submitted by participants to take part in the Competition (including individual documents attached to the application) shall not be subject to peer review, nor shall they be returned to competition participants. Expenditures for the submission of application to the Completion shall be borne by participants on their own.
	12. The results of the Competition shall be tallied no later than December 25, 2021 at a meeting of the Competition Committee and published on the University’s web portal.
3. **Content of Competition Applications**
	1. An application to take part in the Competition (Annexes 1-6) should include:
		1. Completed Form 1 “Key Information for Participation in the Competition”;
		2. Completed Form 2 “Laboratory Head’s CV”;
		3. Completed Form 3 “Research Proposal”;
		4. Completed Form 4 “Research Plan”;
		5. Completed Form 5 “The Laboratory’s Performance Indicators”;
		6. Completed Form 6 “Equipment for Procurement”
		7. Completed Form 7 “Estimate of Payroll Budget for Laboratory Staff Members”.
		8. Guarantee letter/letter of support from the dean/director of the relevant HSE University faculty/institute for the allocation of necessary premises for the Laboratory should the application be declared the winner.
4. **Criteria for Assessing Applications (maximum points – 100)**

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| No. | Criterion | Content of criteria  |
| Academic achievements and work experience of the Laboratory Head (up to 20 points)  |
| 1. | Quality of academic publications | Due consideration is given to the average impact factor of those journals, which have published articles authored by the Laboratory Head, as well as the extent to which his/her research output and citation index are relevant to those of global leaders in the relevant field of study  |
| 2. | Experience in experimental research  | The following is to be assessed: the extent to which the research topic and experimental research methods in the Laboratory Head’s published works in 2017-2021 correlate with the intended fields of research; how much his/her experience in experimental work can serve as a fundamental core for setting tasks and securing equipment necessary for the Laboratory; total number of patents and applications for the issue of patents, for which the Laboratory head is the author, for the 2017-2021 period; rate for patented solutions (solutions for which patent applications have been submitted) |
| 3. | Laboratory Head’s experience managing research teams  | The following is to be assessed: Laboratory Head’s administrative experience in putting together research teams and effective management of their works; candidate’s experience in training research personnel  |
| 4. | Experience in educational activities  | The following is to be assessed: experience in the academic supervision for doctoral students; experience in applying research outcomes to educational processes; teaching experience  |
| Academic achievements and work experience of team members (up to 20 points)  |
| 5. | Quality of academic publications of team members | Due consideration is given to the average impact factor of those journals, which have published articles authored by members of the lab team between 2017 and 2021; their research performance and citation index shall be compared against those of leading scholars in the specific field of research;  |
| 6. | Team’s experience in experimental research  | The following is to be assessed: the extent to which the research topic and experimental research methods in team members’ published works in 2017-2021 correlate with the intended fields of research; how much the team members’ experience in experimental works can serve as the fundamental core for setting tasks and securing equipment necessary for the Laboratory; total number of patents and applications for the issue of patents, whereby team members are authors, for the 2017-2021 period; patent solutions (solutions for which patent applications have been submitted) |
| Laboratory’s Research Potential (up to 50 points) |
| 7. | Information on team members  | The following is to be assessed: team personnel, including the involvement of young academics, students, doctoral students; team’s ability to deal with complex academic and organizational issues, carry out research work and generate world-class research results; experience in joint works with fellow team members and foreign academics (joint research works, writing articles, preparing joint presentations for international conferences) |
| 8. | Relevance and innovative character of planned research at the Laboratory  | The following is to be assessed: relevance of planned research and its importance with respect to current academic trends; opportunities for generating new, innovative and world-class research outcomes |
| 9. | Attainment of intended results within the proposed timeframe and using methods specified  | The following is to be assessed: feasibility of achieving set research objectives and appropriateness of the research plan for such objectives  |
| 10. | Innovative activity of team members  | The following is to be assessed: planned number of solutions to be patented; level of protection  |
| 11. | Correlation of request equipment to set objectives  | The following is to be assessed: appropriateness and sufficiency of requested equipment for the Laboratory to carry out its scientific objectives in full measure  |
| Conclusions of the HSE University Relevant Faculty/Institute (up to 10 points) |
| 12.  | Effectiveness in developing educational programmes and objectives, reputational risks to the relevant faculty stemming from the Laboratory’s organization  | The following is to be assessed: importance of the Laboratory’s creation for the strategic development of the relevant HSE University faculty/institute; feasibility of the Laboratory’s ability to carry out specified tasks from its application, extent of academic partnership with other HSE University subdivisions, e.g., joint departments with RAS institutes with a relevant research focus at the respective HSE University’s faculty / institute, availability of options for using the Laboratory’s unique equipment in partnership with said institute staff and for joint experimental works; involvement of students and doctoral students in the Laboratory’s operations; involvement of lab staff in educational processes |

1. If necessary, it is possible to request a different distribution of funds to acquire equipment between 2022 and 2023 within the total allocated amount. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Hereinafter, articles shall refer to documents of the “articles” and “reviews” type (with the exception of book review) including the List of Eligible Journals for the 3rd Tier Bonus, as well as reports included in the core programmes for conferences from the List of Conferences in Computer Science, considered for the 3rd Tier bonus, and monographs, put out by publishers on the List of Eligible Publishers for the 3rd Tier Bonus (for monographs), posted on the HSE University Scientometrics Centre’s website at: <https://scientometrics.hse.ru/evaluation> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The source of research financing will be made known to the winner of the Competition. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)