

**No. 3 from 3 February 2003**  
**Act on Public Support for Scientific Research No. 3/2003**

Entered into effect 7 February 2003

**CHAPTER I Objectives**

▪ **Article 1**

The objective of this Act is to strengthen scientific research and graduate education in Iceland by supporting basic research and applied research and to encourage co-operation among parties working on scientific research, as well as ensuring the reliability and quality of information on science and research in Iceland.

**CHAPTER II Award funds**

▪ **Article 2** *Research Fund and Equipment Fund*

The role of the Research Fund shall be to support scholarly research in Iceland. To this end, the Fund supports clearly defined research projects of individuals, research groups, universities, research institutes and private enterprises. The Research Fund shall make grants in accordance with the general emphases of the Science and Technology Policy Council and on the basis of an expert assessment of the quality of research projects, the capability of the individuals carrying out the research and their ability to devote time and effort to the project. A decision on a grant allocation must be based on the expert assessment.

The role of the Equipment Fund is to provide grants to research institutes for purchase of costly machinery and equipment for research. In making grants from the Equipment Fund, regard shall be had for the Research Fund's current grant allocation policy.

The Research Fund shall assume the role of the Science Fund and Technology Fund, which currently operate in accordance with the Act on the Icelandic Research Council, No. 61/1994, while the Equipment Fund shall assume the role of the Building and Equipment Fund provided for by the same Act. All assets and obligations of the Science Fund and Technology Fund shall be assumed by the Research Fund, while the assets and obligations of the Building and Equipment Fund shall be assumed by the Equipment Fund.

▪ **Article 3** *Income of the Research Fund and Equipment Fund*

The Research Fund's income shall consist of:

1. annual budget allocations,
2. donations from individuals or enterprises,
3. other contributions.

The income of the Equipment Fund shall consist of:

1. the concession fee payable for the operation of cash prize lotteries or other similar income,
2. other contributions.

▪ **Article 4** *Board of Directors of the Research Fund and Equipment Fund*

The Minister of Education, Science and Culture shall appoint a five-person Board for the Research Fund for a three-year term. The Board shall be comprised of the following persons: the Chairman of the Science Committee of the Science and Technology Policy Council, who shall furthermore serve as Chairman of the Board, four individuals with experience or knowledge of scientific research, in accordance with nominations by the Science Committee of the Science and Technology Policy Council, and five alternates. The Chairman shall select the Vice-chairman from among the other Board members.

The Board of the Research Fund shall at the same time serve as the Board of the Equipment Fund.

The Board shall evaluate applications for grants from the Research Fund after receiving the opinions of expert councils appointed as provided for in Article 5. The Board shall seek additional expert advice, in addition to that provided by the Fund's expert councils, if such is considered necessary. An expert council, comprised of the heads of the Research Fund's expert councils, shall evaluate applications made to the Equipment Fund before the Fund's Board of Directors deals with them.

In the case of a tie vote by the Board of the Research Fund, the Chairman shall cast the deciding vote.

Decisions by the Board of the Research Fund and Equipment Fund on grant allocations as provided for in this Act may not be referred to a higher administrative authority.

The cost of evaluation of applications and the work of the Board of the Research Fund and Equipment Fund shall be paid out of the Funds' annual disposable income.

The Board of the Research Fund may, acting on a proposal from the Science Committee of the Science and Technology Policy Council, award recognition for exceptional achievement in the field of scientific research from the Research Fund's disposable income.

▪ **Article 5** *The Research Fund's Expert Councils*

The Science Committee of the Science and Technology Policy Council shall appoint expert councils for two-year terms in the principal scientific fields, for the purpose of advising the Board of the Research Fund in making allocations from the Fund. The Science Committee shall appoint the Chairmen of the expert councils specifically; they shall also serve as consultants for the Board of the Equipment Fund as provided for in the third paragraph of Article 4. Expert councils shall also advise the Science and Technology Policy Council and its sub-committees on matters requiring professional expertise as requested.

The expert councils shall be comprised of as many as seven individuals with extensive research experience. They may not be members of either the Science and Technology Policy Council or of the Board of the Research Fund. An expert council shall assess applications based on the applicants' qualifications to carry out the project and their situation and facilities for doing so. At the same time, the scientific value of the research shall be assessed in an international context, or the likelihood of it resulting in a patent or intellectual property rights as applicable.

▪ **Article 6** *Graduate Study Fund*

The role of the Graduate Study Fund is to provide grants for graduate study and research following undergraduate university study. The Minister of Education shall set rules<sup>1)</sup> on the Fund's activities.

The Minister of Education, Science and Culture shall appoint a three-person Board for the Fund for a three-year term. The Fund's Board of Directors shall be comprised of one representative nominated by the Co-operation Committee for University Level Study, one representative nominated by the Science Committee of the Science and Technology Policy Council and one representative appointed by the Minister without nomination, who shall in addition serve as the Chairman of the Fund's Board. Alternates shall be appointed in the same manner.

Decisions by the Board of the Graduate Study Fund may not be referred to a higher administrative authority.

▪ **Article 7** *Income of the Graduate Study Fund*

The income of the Graduate Study Fund shall be comprised of allocations in the annual budget and contributions from co-operating partners for graduate study and research. The Board of the Graduate Study Fund may co-operate with individuals, enterprises and institutions in financing

special grants for graduate study involving research in specific fields of research.

▪ **Article 8** *Rules on grant allocations*

The Science Committee of the Science and Technology Policy Council shall define the policy of the Research Fund and Equipment Fund on allocations. The Board of the Research Fund shall publish rules on applications, their processing and allocations no later than six weeks prior to the deadline for application. They must specify the conditions for applications and the emphases of the Science and Technology Policy Council.

The Board of Directors of the Graduate Study Fund shall publish rules on allocations from the Fund no later than six weeks prior to the deadline for application.

The results of research funded by grants from the Research Fund and Graduate Study Fund must be made public and be available to everyone, unless otherwise agreed.

▪ **Article 9** *Other tasks*

The Minister of Education, Science and Culture may assign the Boards of the Research Fund and Graduate Study Fund the task of making allocations from other funds in accordance with a specific decision thereto.

### CHAPTER III Iceland Centre for Research

▪ **Article 10** *Role*

The Iceland Centre for Research is a state institute under the direction of the Minister of Education, Science and Culture. Its role shall be to provide expert assistance and service in preparing and implementing the science and technology policy of the Science and Technology Policy Council. This shall include:

1. handling the administration of the Research Fund, Technology Fund and Graduate Study Fund, which are under the auspices of the Minister of Education, Science and Culture;
2. handling the administration of the Technological Development Fund, which is under the auspices of the Minister of Industry;
3. handling the administration of other funds, in accordance with a specific decision of the Minister of Education, Science and Culture;
4. providing services to the expert councils and Boards of the above-mentioned Funds;
5. handling data collection and dissemination of information for the Science and Technology Policy Council and its

- committees on scientific research, technological development and innovation in Iceland, as well as collecting information and data concerning scientific and technological development internationally;
6. arranging evaluation of the success of research, development and innovation work in Iceland on a regular basis and participating in international comparative studies in this regard on behalf of Iceland as requested;
  7. handling the presentation of research activities in Iceland to the general public;
  8. handling information provision to and advice for individuals, institutions and enterprises on the possibility of obtaining grants and encouraging co-operation on research projects domestically and abroad;
  9. co-operating with similar institutions or offices abroad and following Icelandic participation in international scientific efforts;
  10. looking after other tasks assigned to the institute by the Minister of Education, Science and Culture. The institute may co-operate with and undertake projects in the field of science and technology on behalf of other Ministries in accordance with a specific agreement.

▪ **Article 11** *Director*

The Minister of Education, Science and Culture shall appoint the director of the Iceland Centre for Research for a five-year term. He/She must have a university degree and expertise in the institute's field of responsibility. The director shall look after the institute's routine activities, serve as its spokesman and be responsible for its operations and for ensuring they comply with laws and administrative provisions. In addition, the director shall be responsible for hiring the institute's other personnel. The Minister of Education, Science and Culture shall provide the director with a formal statement of his/her duties.

**CHAPTER IV Miscellaneous provisions**

▪ **Article 12** *Entry into force*

This Act shall enter into force at once.

▪ **Article 13**

**Temporary provisions**

Notwithstanding the provisions of Article 12 of this Act, the following shall apply:

Persons who have received a grant under Act No. 61/1994, on the Iceland Research Council, shall retain the rights and obligations provided for by such grants without change.

The Iceland Research Council, as provided for in Act No. 61/1994, shall handle allocations of grants from the funds in the Council's custody in 2003, while at the same time preparing proposals for allocation rules as referred to in Article 8 of this Act, on grant allocations in 2004, although no longer than until 30 March 2003. Appointment shall be made to the Board of the Research Fund provided for in this Act no later than 1 April 2003.

The current Board of the Graduate Study Fund, which was appointed as provided for in Act No. 61/1994, shall retain its mandate and operate in accordance with the provisions of this Act for the remainder of its term of appointment.

Contracts concluded with those individuals appointed to term positions as research professors, as provided for by Act No. 61/1994, shall continue to be valid as provided for by that Act.

Office personnel of the Iceland Research Council shall become employees of the Iceland Centre for Research. The position of Managing Director of the Iceland Research Council shall be abolished as of the date appointment is made to the position of Director of the Iceland Centre for Research. The Director of the Iceland Centre for Research shall be appointed no later than 1 April 2003.