

1st Progress Review Conference of the Universities participating in the “Excellence Initiative – Research University” programme

PRE-EVENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Uniwersytet Pedagogiczny im. KEN w Krakowie / Pedagogical University of Krakow

- 1) Which of your university’s original objectives (when applying for a 10% increase in funding) have been chosen to retain having received a lower funding level? How is progress being reviewed?

Increasing the impact of the university’s research activity on the development of world science expressed in quality of publications and other means of dissemination of obtained results goes parallel to PUC preparations to the evaluation of science work quality planned for 2022. The activities are monitored by the Research Office (which has been substantially strengthened as planned in the A8 action).

Enhancing research collaboration with research institutions of high international reputation is carried out as planned (with the exception of A1 action: creation of ICAS). Additional funds have been obtained e.g. from the NAWA agency within the PROM program and have been applied for e.g. by the NAWA agency in the STER and ULAM programs. Individual collaborations of researchers are strongly supported by the PUC authorities.

Improving quality of education provision for students and doctoral training is best reflected in the creation of the Doctoral School and its novel structure oriented for internationalization and training excellence.

Professional development starts at the comprehensive review of the staff, identifying their status in their scientific development, and identifying their specific goals. New staff evaluation schemes have been prepared and will be implemented in the academic year 2020/21.

Quality of university governance and management has improved by creating a complete catalogue of all administrative procedures. This is a basis for further analysis.

- 2) Which measures have been added, deleted or modified following the recommendation of the reviewers? What changes to university strategy and policy have been made in the light of evaluation and the outcome of the funding competition?

The negative outcome of the competition has triggered substantial discussion at the PUC community regarding future steps and directions. The new authorities support changes process of changes started with the project and understand that they are inevitable.

Out of planned activities A1 (Interdisciplinary Center for Advanced Studies) and A9 (Extending laboratory and technical resources) have been abandoned as not feasible without the 10% increase. As a consequence, there is increased focus on the traditional mission of PUC, namely the training of teachers.

As a new measure, the concept of postgraduate studies has been completely reworked, orienting in an increased way on demands of contemporary schools. There are visible activities around objective of the proposal (STEM education) and new offer responding for better preparation of teachers for remote and hybrid learning.

Following advice of the reviewers PUC will focus on the excellence of future and present teacher's education. Specific measures will be worked out and implemented by the new university authorities.

3) Did the university change/reduce the Priority Research Areas (POBs)? What is the scope of such change?

The reviewers criticized the number of 7 POBs identified in the application as too high and suggested more focused approach taking into account the mission of PUC in the area of education and teacher training.

As consequence POB 2 (AR/MR/VR Technology) and 7 (Mater and materials - physics, engineering and technology) also as relying on the most expensive and sophisticated laboratories are postponed. POB 5 (Forced migrations and crimes against humanity. Memory and post-memory in the educational process) is carried out financed from different sources.

All other POBs are directly related to education. These POBs not only address actual societal and economy demand but also show outstanding research performance.

4) What concrete measures has the university taken to encourage cutting edge research? What evidence can you provide of continuing promotion of research excellence at the highest levels of the university? Has this been achieved using alternative sources of funding, apart from the 2% subvention increase?

PUC has rethought and restructured system of distribution of internal research funds (part of the regular and increased subvention). In accordance with the IDUB application, the implemented system is more competitive. The founding is assigned in terms of internal grants. The proposals are collegially evaluated. The whole process is fully transparent. The management of the associated data flow has been moved almost completely online which is major progress compared to paper routines before.

Humanities play an important role in training of future teachers. They obtain additional support, through the Research Office and the Vice-Rector for Research e.g. for publication of monographies.

PUC supports also, on the individual case basis, publication of best articles, regardless of the discipline, in open access journals. The journals published by PUC itself have been evaluated. In result some of them have been discontinued. Some journals are qualified to the Web of Science and Scopus bases. These journals achieve additional support, necessary in view of increased submission numbers and the necessity to maintain refereeing process at the highest level.

5) What progress has been made regarding establishment of a federation or merging with other institutions from the region, particularly in case of universities which received relevant recommendations?

The reviewers suggested local collaboration with other high caliber research and teaching institutions in the interest of facility sharing, collaboration in research and international visibility. Whereas this recommendation was surely good meant, it is pretty unrealistic, as was already explained during the interview with the panel. Two universities in Cracow: UJ and AGH qualified for the research university status. It would be natural, in collaboration with UJ, to share obligations to the society and for example to move teaching training more (or completely) to PUC, whereas UJ might focus on research and invite researchers from PUC to be part of it. A new “super-university” could monopolize higher education market in Cracow. In such circumstances any partnership is more likely to end in a predator and prey relation rather than bringing benefits for partners.

PUC joined in an active way the project “Interdisciplinary Centre for Human Resources Development – think tank for the development of key competences of Polish future science personnel” launched by the University of Silesia in Katowice. Its purpose is to formulate an integral model for the development of key competences of the university’s research and administrative employees who are responsible for implementation of a science development strategy.

6) What steps is your university taking in order to increase the likelihood of enhanced levels of funding being secured in future rounds of the IDUB programme?

Collaboration with the University of Silesia in the frame of the project devoted to the development of key competences is in full accordance with PUC own efforts to increase efficiency of administrative processes and motivating its support for research activities of all science disciplines. This is regarded as a key step in preparations for the second round of IDUM program.

Similarly, the new, more transparent and competitive (peer review based) system of assigning research money to specific project should result in better performance measured, in particular, by values of the indicators used in the IDUB program.

- 7) The worldwide impact of measures and limitations introduced as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic should be taken into account in the implementation planning, and institutions should be driven by the will to maintain strategic development as planned. The good use of digital means of communication has a crucial role to play. Thus, universities should see to it that they are up to this challenge. What actions have been taken by your university in order to reduce the negative impact of the pandemic on the implementation of the university development strategy?**

The COVID19 had limited impact on actions planned in the IDUB proposal. A1 (Interdisciplinary Centre for Advanced Studies) is impossible to implement without the 10% increase. A2 (Conferences of Excellence) and A3 (Schools of Excellence) require in fact less funding as the events have been moved online and/or are postponed. For that reason, the creation of the Service Office for Conferences and Schools (part of A8) has been postponed. A4 (mobility of Excellence) is postponed, however PUC obtained substantial funding from NAWA for this action. A5 (Awards for grants) is considered as part of the bigger move of changes in the assignment of research part of subvention.

An electronic document circulation system is being implemented at the university, it includes, among others, the already operating digital system of applying for funds for scientific research. Internal electronic communication systems have been implemented to cover research, teaching and administrative processes. The IT infrastructure is systematically modified. Work schedules have been optimized.