CALL FOR PROPOSALS

POSTDOC-ARMENIA 2024/2

Program for Foreign Researchers in Scientific Organizations of the Republic of Armenia
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CALL FOR PROPOSALS
“PROGRAM FOR FOREIGN RESEARCHERS IN SCIENTIFIC ORGANIZATIONS OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA
(POSTDOC-ARMENIA 2024/2)"

I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. The Call for Proposals

1.1. The Call for Proposals “Program for Foreign Researchers in Scientific Organizations of the Republic of Armenia (PostDoc-Armenia 2024/2)”, (hereinafter ‘Call for Proposals’) is carried out in accordance with the Order № 242-U/2 dated February 19, 2024, issued by the Minister of Education, Science, Culture, and Sports of the Republic of Armenia (hereinafter ‘Minister’).

1.2. The Call for Proposals is organized by the Higher Education and Science Committee of the Ministry of Science, Education, Culture, and Sports of the Republic of Armenia (hereinafter ‘Committee’), being guided by the Order for Contractual (Thematic) Funding of Scientific and Technical Activity established by the RA Government Decision №1122 dated November 17, 2001.

1.3. The Call for Proposals aims to create new prospective and competitive areas of research with the involvement of foreign researchers under the umbrella of the organizations carrying out a program within the framework of basic funding for scientific and technical activities from the state budget of the Republic of Armenia (hereinafter ‘Organization’).

1.4. The Call for Proposals covers all research fields of scientific and technical activities (listed in Annex №2.1).

1.5. The procedure of the present Call implies submitting an application (hereinafter ‘Application’), which shall include the description of the scientific project (hereinafter ‘Project’) and other supporting documents/data.

1.6. The submitted Project (Annex №2.2) shall be ambitious, promising, and feasible.

1.7. The publications presented within the current Call for Proposals shall be indexed in international scientific databases (“Science Citation Index Expanded (SCIE)”, “Social Sciences Citation Index (SSCI)”, “Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI)”, “Arts & Humanities Citation Index (AHCI)”), or published as a book chapter/paper in a scientific periodical issued by a publisher indexed in the Web of Science Book Citation Index, or published in periodicals listed in the portal “SCImago Journal & Country Ranking” with an at
least Q4 index, and an equivalent of an at least Q2 SJR (SCImago Journal Rank) indicator (hereinafter ‘International Scientific Database’ or ‘ISD’) for conference proceedings. As for the Monograph/Collective Monograph/ Scientific Work (hereinafter ‘Monograph’), it shall consist of at least 5 author’s sheets and be issued by one of the publishers included in the “Web of Science Book Citation Index”.

18. The terms of the Call for Proposals shall define the application procedure, the stages, and criteria of Application evaluation, as well as funding and reporting procedures for the selected Projects.

2. Purpose
2.1. The purposes of the present Call for Proposals are as follows:
   • Foster international collaboration in the field of science;
   • Increase the capacity of the respective hosting Organization;
   • Involve researchers from overseas;
   • Consolidate the capacity of researchers from the Diaspora;
   • Improve the scientific environment;
   • Pave the ground for the creation of innovative, competitive, and prospective areas of research.

3. Timeframes
3.1. The Projects approved for funding shall be carried out within 24 months.
3.2. The submission deadline for the Call for Proposals via the Online Application System is June 14, 2024, 18:00, Yerevan time (GMT+4).
3.3. The deadline for the submission of the paper-based documents to the Committee is June 21, 2024.
3.4. Contracts shall be signed within 10 days after the announcement of the results of the Call.
3.5. Implementation Reports shall be submitted by the last working day of every 12th month since the commencement of the Project.
3.6. The Project shall commence and be implemented within the timeframes specified in the Contract.

4. The Applicant
4.1. The Application shall be submitted by the Applicant.
4.2. The Project is developed and implemented the Applicant who shall be either a citizen or resident of the Republic of Armenia and reside in Armenia during the whole implementation of the Project.
4.3. The Applicant shall:
• be born after January 1, 1984;
• have received a scientific degree after January 1, 2010;
• neither have studied nor worked in the Republic of Armenia for a cumulative period of 12 months during the last 4 years by the announcement of the Call.

4.4. The age threshold established in Subparagraph 4.3. can be extended in the following cases:
• in the case of military service - for 2 years;
• in the case of parental leave - for 1 year for each child.

4.5. The Applicant cannot submit more than one Application to the present Call.

4.6. The publications of the Applicant published during the last 5 years (2019-2024) shall meet the following criteria:
   For research fields #1-5 (NS, ET, MS, AS, and SS) listed in Annex 2.1:
   • 4 ISD-indexed publications;
   For research field #6 (AH) listed in Annex 2.1:
   • 2 ISD-indexed publications;
   • or 1 Monograph.

For the specialties included in Research Field #6, 1 Monograph is tantamount to 4 ISD-indexed publications.

4.7. If any of the submitted publications are included in Beall’s list (https://beallslist.net/) of predatory and fraud publications or journals, the Professional Expertise Board established for the evaluation of the Applications (hereinafter ‘Board’) shall decide on further admissibility of the Application for scientific expertise.

4.8. During the implementation of the Project, the Applicant shall be assisted by an employee of the Organization (hereinafter ‘Mentor’) in research and organizational matters.

5. The Mentor
5.1. The Mentor shall:
• hold a scientific degree;
• be employed at the Organization under an employment contract.

5.2. No remuneration shall be envisaged for the Mentor’s activities.

5.3. The Mentor shall provide the Applicant with their academic CV and a Confirmation Letter restating their awareness of the Project content, the scope of their responsibilities, as well as the requirements envisaged under the “Expected Results” of the Call.

6. Organization Eligibility
6.1. The Organization shall be among those implementing the program funded within the basic funding of scientific and technical activities from the state budget of the Republic of Armenia.

6.2. The Organization shall provide access to its infrastructure and equipment.

6.3. The Organization shall support the implementation of the Project.
6.4. The **Organization** must provide the **Applicant** with the scientific board conclusion of the **Organization** (or, in the case of higher education institutions, that of a particular department) regarding the **Project's** relevance, importance, and correspondence to the **Organization's** scope of activities.

6.5. By the 6th month of the implementation of the **Project**, the **Organization** shall include the **Applicant** in a program of basic funding of scientific and technical activities at least for the entire period of **Project** implementation.

6.6. The Head of the **Organization** provides the **Applicant** with a reference letter confirming their awareness of the conditions of the **Call**, non-objection to the involvement of the **Mentor** therein, and expressing their readiness to allocate the financial resources from the basic funding of the **Organization** to comply with the provisions specified in Subparagraph 6.5. of the present **Call**.

6.7. The Head of the **Organization** covers the expenses aimed at creating necessary conditions for the implementation of the **Project** at the expense of financial resources envisaged in the “Overhead Costs” subsection of the “Other Expenses” section of the Financial Estimate (hereinafter ‘**Estimate**’).

6.8. The equipment, materials, and services necessary for the implementation of the **Project** shall be purchased in the manner prescribed by the RA Law “On Procurements” in conformity with the regulations of public-needs-oriented procurements.

6.9. The right of disposal of the equipment and devices purchased shall belong to the **Organization**, including the right of subsequent use thereof for statutory purposes, i.e., for carrying out research activities.

6.10. A **Contract** shall be signed between the **Organization**, the **Committee**, and the selected **Applicant** on the use of the amounts of financial assistance provided as a state grant for the implementation of contractual projects of scientific and technical activities (hereinafter ‘**Contract**’).

7. **Expected Results**

7.1. After the completion of the **Project**, the **Applicant** shall present the following publications:

- A minimum of 2 **scientific** publications in journals having an equivalent of at least Q2 **SJR** (SCImago Journal Rank) indicator. At least one of the publications shall involve the **Mentor** as a co-author.

7.2. All publications produced as an output of the **Project** shall contain an indication of the **Organization** as the author's affiliation and an acknowledgment statement mentioning that the funding was received from the **Committee**: This work was supported by the Higher Education and Science Committee of RA (Research **Project № _____**)
Attention: Without the aforementioned notes, the publication shall not be considered as a Project Output and, therefore, shall not be included in the report.

7.3. Within the frames of the Project's implementation, the Applicant is expected to ensure the creation and dissemination of popular science materials about the Project or their particular field of science (interviews, publications in popular science journals, creation, and distribution of video materials, organization of discussions for general audience, etc.). The Board shall consider these dissemination efforts when evaluating and accepting the Project's final report.

7.4. Both successful compliance and noncompliance with the provisions of Subparagraph 7.1, shall respectively affect the evaluation score of the future applications with the participation of the Applicant and the Mentor to the upcoming Call for Proposals announced by the Committee. Particularly, the amount of 5 percent of the maximum evaluation score under the relevant call shall be subtracted from (in the case of noncompliance) or added to (in the case of compliance) the evaluation score of the future applications. The reduction of the final expertise score of the applications submitted to the future calls for proposals shall cease to apply once the Committee is duly notified about the compliance with the provisions of Subparagraph 7.1.

II. PROCEDURE FOR COMPLETION AND SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS

8. Submission of the Application and Supporting Documents

8.1. The Application shall be filled in and submitted by the Applicant via the Online Application System https://postdoc-armenia-2024.hesc.am/. The Application deadline for the Call for Proposals is June 14, 2024, 18:00, Yerevan time (GMT+4).

8.2. The following paper-based documents shall be presented to the Organization after online submission thereof via the Online Application System:

- Applicant's application letter (Annex 2.3);
- Estimate;
- the scientific board’s conclusion of the host Organization (or the university faculty), which shall contain information regarding the Project's relevance, importance, feasibility and correspondence to the Organization's scope of activities;
- a letter by the Head of the host Organization envisaged under Subparagraph 6.5. of the present Call;
- the academic CV and the Confirmation Letter of the Mentor;
- the academic CV of the Applicant.

8.3. Other documents may be required if necessary.

8.4. By June 21, 2024, a representative of the Organization (Scientific Secretary or another authorized person) shall submit the hard copies of the Applications’ supporting documents
from their respective Organization to the Committee (address: 22 Orbeli Brothers St., 9th floor, 906 room) in one package, accompanied with a letter by the Head of the Organization as specified in Annex 2.4.

8.5. Should there be any further inquiries regarding the Call for Proposals, please contact the relevant department of the Committee at scexpert@hesc.am or by dialing +37410210140-108.

Attention: The Committee shall consider only those applications that are submitted via the online system. The applications that have not been submitted in compliance with the aforementioned procedure or deadlines shall not be considered.

9. **Estimate**

9.1. The **Estimate** consists of two sections: “Remuneration” and “Other Costs”. The “Other Costs” section includes “Equipment, Materials and Services”, “Travel Costs”, and “Overhead Costs” subsections.

9.2. The maximum amount of funding for the whole duration of Project implementation shall be AMD 12,600,000 (twelve million six hundred thousand), and in the case of the Applicant’s relocation to the Republic of Armenia with family member(s) - AMD 16,200,000 (sixteen million two hundred thousand).

9.3. For the “Remuneration” section of the **Estimate**, the maximum monthly salary for the Applicant shall be AMD 400,000 (four hundred thousand) gross, and in the case of their relocation to the Republic of Armenia with family member(s) - AMD 550,000 (five hundred fifty thousand) gross.

9.4. If the total remuneration is less than the above-mentioned amount, the surplus can be used in the “Other Costs” section of the **Estimate**.

9.5. For the “Equipment, Materials, and Services”, “Travel Costs”, and “Overhead Costs” subsections of the “Other Costs” section of the **Estimate**, an amount of AMD 3,000,000 (three million) may be envisaged for a total of 24 months. The amount of funding envisaged for those costs can be increased at the expense of the surplus mentioned in Subparagraph 9.3 of the present Call.

9.6. The expenses for purchasing scientific equipment, materials, and services necessary for the research may be envisaged under the “Equipment, Materials, and Services” subsection of the “Other Costs” section of the **Estimate**. A contract for services may be signed only with legal entities upon the consent of the Committee.

9.7. The costs for the implementation process and presentation of the proceedings of the Project at international conferences and mutual visits of the Collaborator and the Group Members may be envisaged under the “Travel Costs” subsection of the “Other Costs” section of the **Estimate**.

9.8. Up to AMD 200,000 (two hundred thousand) may be requested under the “Overhead Costs” subsection of the “Other Costs” section of the **Estimate**.
9.9. When calculating daily and accommodation costs of the study visits, it is necessary to be guided by the Decree of the Government of the Republic of Armenia №2335-Ն dated December 29, 2005.

9.10. All of the subsections of the Estimate shall be justified in the Budget Estimate Narrative.

9.11. Justification and distribution of the Estimate may be amended upon the recommendation of the Board and the consent of the Applicant.

III. APPLICATION CONSIDERATION AND EVALUATION

10. Conformity of Applications to the Terms of the Call

10.1. The Committee shall consider the following circumstances:
   - Compliance of the submitted Applications with the terms of the Call;
   - Whether the Application contains publications included in Beall’s list (https://beallslist.net/) of fake and predatory publishers or journals.

10.2. The Application shall not be considered if:
   - it does not contain all the required documentation;
   - it does not meet the Call’s criteria;
   - its content is identical to one of the research projects funded, currently or previously, from the state budget of the Republic of Armenia.

10.3. The results of the examination shall be provided to the Board.

10.4. The Board shall consider and approve the list of Applications subject to Scientific Expertise.

11. Scientific Expertise

11.1. The Board, in cooperation with the Committee, shall design and approve the evaluation sheets and the procedure for the first and second stages of Scientific Expertise of Applications.

11.2. At the 1st stage of Scientific Expertise, the Board shall assess the Extensive Summary of the Application, and at the 2nd stage of Scientific Expertise, the experts shall assess the Application, and the Board shall conduct an interview with each Applicant.

11.3. Pursuant to the provisions of the RA Law “On Scientific and Technical Expertise”, the Committee, the Board, or the experts shall be prohibited from providing any information regarding the Applications’ content, Scientific Expertise process, and the results thereof to a third party.
12. The 1st Stage of Scientific Expertise (Extensive Summary Evaluation)

12.1. During the 1st Stage of Scientific Expertise, the Board shall consider the Extensive Summary (Annex 2.5) of the Project, the Applicant's track record, their academic CVs, and the Organization's and Mentor's compatibility with the Project's purposes. Subsequently, based on the Board members' consensus, the shortlist of eligible applications for the 2nd stage of Scientific Expertise shall be formed.

12.2. The Applicants that have not been shortlisted for the 2nd Stage of Scientific Expertise shall be duly notified.

13. The 2nd Stage of Scientific Expertise (Expert Evaluation)

13.1. At the 2nd Stage of Scientific Expertise, the following aspects of the Application shall be evaluated by the Experts: the Project (Annex №2.2), the current state of research on the topic, relevance and prospects, the validity of the scope and timespan of the Project, the implementation feasibility at the Organization, compatibility with the research trends in the particular area, significance of the collaboration, the qualifications and professional compliance of the Applicant in terms of the Project objectives, the Applicant's previous background in international cooperation, Estimate justification, as well as other issues related to the peculiarities of the current Call.

13.2. The Application shall be reviewed by at least 2 independent experts. A Board Member is also entitled to act as an independent expert.

13.3. For each Application, the expert shall fill out the Expert Evaluation Sheet.

13.4. The maximum score of the Interview shall not exceed 50% of the maximum evaluation score of the Application.

13.5. If the scores of two experts differ by 30 percent or more from the maximum evaluation score of scientific expertise, the Application shall be subject to further examination by a third expert.

14. The 2nd Stage of Scientific Expertise (Interview)

14.1. The Board shall conduct interviews with the Applicants.

14.2. Each member of the Board shall fill out an Interview Evaluation Sheet for each Application.

14.3. The maximum score for the Interview amounts to 50% of the maximum evaluation score for the Application.

15. Evaluations Results

15.1. The total score of scientific expertise shall be calculated as the sum of the arithmetic mean of the Evaluation Scores of 2 experts and the arithmetic mean of the Interview Scores. If the Application has been evaluated by 3 experts, the final Application score shall be calculated as the sum of the arithmetic mean of two of the closest scores submitted by 3 experts (in the
case of equal difference between 3 experts’ scores - the arithmetic mean of two higher scores) and the arithmetic mean of the Interview scores.

15.2. Based on the final evaluation results of the Applications shortlisted for the 2nd Stage of Scientific Expertise, the Committee shall form the Application Ranking List in descending order and further submit it to the Board for consideration.

15.3. The Board approves the Application Ranking List and presents the recommended threshold score for each research field for the consideration of the Chairman of the Committee.

15.4. Based on the volume of allocations from the Republic of Armenia’s state budget for the contractual (thematic) funding of scientific and technical activities, the Committee shall determine the threshold score for each of the research fields and shall submit the draft order listing the Applications eligible for funding and the amount of funding to the Minister’s approval.

15.5. The list of Applications eligible for funding and the amount of funding thereof shall be approved by the Order of the Minister.

15.6. The list of Applications eligible for funding as a result of the Call shall be published on the official website of the Committee.

15.7. The Committee shall duly provide each Head of the Organization with the Approved Applications List for their respective Organization.

15.8. The Committee shall provide the Applicants with the Expertise results and the threshold score.

IV. OTHER PROVISIONS

16. Contract Signing

16.1. The Committee, the Organization, and the Applicant of the approved Application shall sign a Contract.

16.2. The copies of the relevant contracts signed with the Applicant within the Call shall be submitted to the Committee.

16.3. The Contracts shall be signed within 10 days after the publication of the results of the present Call.

16.4. The Projects shall commence and be implemented within the timeframes outlined in the Contract.

17. Reporting

17.1. The Applicant shall submit an Implementation Report (Interim/Final) to the Committee every 12th month (by the last working day) since the commencement of the Project. Based on the reports, the Board shall decide on the continuation of funding of the Project or the acceptability of the final report.
17.2. During the implementation of the Project, the Committee is entitled to initiate monitoring of the Project and present the results to the Board.

17.3. While deciding on the continuation of funding of the Project, the Board shall take into consideration the results of the monitoring.

17.4. Funding of the Project shall be terminated in the case of failure to submit the interim report within the established timeframe.

17.5. The Committee reserves the right to publish the abstracts and reports of the funded Projects either in a paper-based or electronic format.

18. Additional Information

18.1. Should the submitted Project and the reports based thereon include intellectual property or patent rights objects, the Applicant shall comply with the Laws of the Republic of Armenia “On Copyright and Related Rights” and “On Inventions, Utility Models and Industrial Designs.”

18.2. The Applicant shall be allowed to redistribute the financial means envisaged in the “Other Costs” section of the Estimate by submitting an appropriate justification and receiving the Committee’s written permission thereto.

18.3. The absence of the Applicant from the Republic of Armenia for 2 or more months annually must be agreed upon in writing with the Committee.

18.4. After the successful completion of the Project, the Applicant shall be entitled to apply to the “Incoming Research Fellowship Program (Integration Grant)”.

19. Termination of the Project Funding

The Committee is entitled to terminate the funding of the Project in the following cases:

- Interim report has not been submitted within the established timeframe, or the Board has issued a negative conclusion on the acceptance of the report;
- A redistribution of financial means has been made in the “Other Costs” section of the Estimate without the Committee’s written permission thereto;
- The absence of the Applicant from the Republic of Armenia for a period of two months or more annually without the Committee’s written permission thereto;
- The provisions of Subparagraph 6.5 of the present Call failed to be fulfilled. Moreover, such noncompliance shall also affect further Applications from the Organization in the amount determined in the conclusion of the Board formed for the next Calls for Proposals.
## RESEARCH FIELDS BY CLASSIFIERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Natural Sciences</th>
<th>4. Agricultural Sciences</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1. Mathematics</td>
<td>4.1. Animal Agriculture and Veterinary Science</td>
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<td>1.2. Computer and Information Sciences</td>
<td>4.2. Crop Science</td>
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<td>1.4. Chemical Sciences</td>
<td>4.4. Agricultural Biotechnology</td>
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<td>1.5. Earth and Related Environmental Sciences</td>
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<td>1.6. Biological Sciences</td>
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<th>2. Engineering and Technology</th>
<th>5. Social Sciences</th>
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<tr>
<td>2.1. Civil Engineering and Architecture</td>
<td>5.1. Psychology</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.2. Electrical Engineering, Electronic Engineering, Energy Engineering, Computing and Information Technologies</td>
<td>5.2. Economics and Business Administration</td>
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<td>2.3. Mechanics</td>
<td>5.3. Education</td>
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<td>2.4. Mechanical Science and Mechanical Engineering</td>
<td>5.4. Sociology</td>
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<td>2.5. Chemical Technologies</td>
<td>5.5. Law</td>
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<td>2.6. Material Studies</td>
<td>5.6. Political Science</td>
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<td>2.7. Medical Engineering</td>
<td>5.7. Social and Economic Geography</td>
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<td>2.8. Environmental Studies</td>
<td>5.8. Media and Communications</td>
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<td>2.9. Biotechnology</td>
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<tr>
<th>3. Medical and Health Sciences</th>
<th>6. Armenian Studies and Humanities</th>
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<td>3.1. Basic Medicine</td>
<td>6.1. History and Archaeology</td>
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<td>3.2. Clinical Medicine</td>
<td>6.2. Languages and Literature Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.3. Medical Biotechnology</td>
<td>6.3. Philosophy and Ethics</td>
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5. Social Sciences

5.1. Psychology
5.2. Economics and Business Administration
5.3. Education
5.4. Sociology
5.5. Law
5.6. Political Science
5.7. Social and Economic Geography
5.8. Media and Communications

6. Armenian Studies and Humanities

6.1. History and Archaeology
6.2. Languages and Literature Studies
6.3. Philosophy and Ethics
6.4. Theology and Religious Studies
6.5. Arts
**Project**

To be filled out in English, on up to 12 pages, including graphs, tables, images, and references.

1. **Annotation**


3. **Project Aims and Objectives**

4. **Research Project**

5. **Scientific Methods of Project Implementation**

6. **Calendar Plan (by quarters or Gantt Chart)**

7. **Prerequisites for International Cooperation**

8. **Quantitative and Qualitative Indicators for the Expected Results** (publications, conference proceedings, use of innovative methods, such as technological investment, demonstration, sample, prototype, etc., management of intellectual property (patent, copyright, etc., fostering international cooperation, prospects for collaboration)

9. **References**
Annex №2.3
to the Call for Proposals

TO THE ATTENTION OF

MR. LEVON FARMANYAN
SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE
RA HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENCE COMMITTEE

From ______________________________
(Name, Surname)
______________________________________
______________________________________
(Postal Address)
______________________________________
(Phone Number)

Application Letter

Kindly find enclosed herewith the Application entitled _____________________ submitted for consideration under the Call for Proposals “Program for Foreign Researchers in Scientific Organizations of the Republic of Armenia (PostDoc-Armenia 2024)”.

Applicant _____________________
_________ 2024
(Name, Surname)
Annex №2.4

to the Call for Proposals
“Program for Foreign Researchers in Scientific Organizations of the Republic of Armenia (PostDoc-Armenia 2024)"

TO THE ATTENTION OF

MR. SARGIS HAYOTSYAN

CHAIRMAN OF THE RA HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENCE COMMITTEE

Application Letter

Kindly find enclosed herewith the Applications submitted by the ____________________________ (name of the Organization) entitled ________________________________ for consideration under the Call for Proposals “Program for Foreign Researchers in Scientific Organizations of the Republic of Armenia (PostDoc-Armenia 2024)” within the framework of contractual (thematic) funding of scientific and technical activities.

Head of the Organization ____________________________ (_________________________)

(Signature) (Name, Surname)

«____» ________________ 2024
Project Title

Extensive Summary

The Extensive Summary is evaluated at the 1st Stage of Scientific Expertise. It should be written in English (maximum 2 pages).

The Extensive Summary should concisely describe the Project, outlining the relevance and expediency of the research.