

## **THE DECISION made by SASPRO2 Programme Appeal Committee**

The SASPRO2 Programme Appeal Committee assembling of Prof. PhDr. Darina Malová, PhD., Prof. RNDr. Jozef Masarik, DrSc., doc. Ing. Maximilián Strémy, PhD., Prof. PhDr. Matúš Porubjak, PhD. and JUDr. Juraj Varga, PhD., being as appealing body versus a decision having been made by SASPRO2 Programme Evaluation Committee (hereinafter refers as 'the decision'), upon the base of an appeal filed by the applicant [REDACTED], *application number 3301/03/03* (hereinafter refers as „the proceeding participant“), delivered on 21 June 2022, has investigated the impugned decision to its full extent and a relevant documentation and has decided within the prescribed deadline as follows:

### **The decision is being confirmed and the appeal has been rejected**

#### **Justification:**

#### **I. Factual circumstances resulting from the basis for the decision**

1. On June 21, 2022, the proceeding participant filed to the Slovak Academy of Sciences an appeal against the decision made by the SASPRO2 Programme Evaluation Committee, which rejected the participant's application for the SASPRO2 fellowship programme being implemented as part of the Horizon 2020 Marie Skłodowska - Curie Actions - COFUND programme.
2. The project evaluators under the "EXCELLENCE" criterion are mainly referring to the writing style, which is unclear, and to the absence of an academic structure. They further state that some proposals in the project are not supported by empirical evidence. A breakdown of the literature is also absent. Some of the references used are not suitable for the proposed project. According to the evaluators, there are many questions raised relating to the methods used. In his appeal, the participant points out that the scope of the project was limited and that he used the references and methods he had considered appropriate. In the proceeding participant's opinion there exists also academic freedom in the European Union in the sense that it is up to the scientist what approach he chooses when solving problems. He considers his proposal to be innovative, since almost nothing has been written about the researched area. In the

participant's opinion it is exactly this originality that justifies its implementation, as well as the lack of studies relating to the project.

3. The project evaluators under the "IMPACT" criterion are pointing out that the scope and location of the publications is not clear. The evaluation also includes the conclusion that the objectives and the scope of outputs are conceived in too broad terms, which results in ambiguity. In his appeal filed, the proceeding participant points out that it is not possible to predict in advance where the outputs will be published. His claims are based on "*open access*", which is characteristic of research being funded by H2020 resources. At the same time, the proceeding participant describes how he intends to disseminate the knowledge obtained in the presented research framework.
4. Within the "QUALITY AND EFFICIENCY OF THE IMPLEMENTATION" criterion, the evaluators identified a very weak connection between excellence and implementation. According to the evaluators, some milestones are planned in the project, but not being explained. The participant believes that the given research cannot be specified in advance. If it was possible, in the proceeding party's opinion, the research would have no foundation.
5. Within the frame of the appeal process, the commission was dealing with the weak aspects of the project mainly, which are objected to by the evaluators, and which are important for the overall assessment of the validity of the filed appeal. The Appeals Committee reviewed the claims of the proceeding party, as well as the challenged decision, and states that the its decision is formulated without prejudice, is not arbitrary, and thus does not establish a reason for re-examining the project of the proceeding participant.

## **II. Conclusion**

With respect of the above, the Appeal Committee has decided as being stated in the statement of this decision.

This decision was adopted by the Appeal Committee by a vote ratio of 3:2 / for : against.

## **III. Advice of remedies**

There is no admissible remedy against this decision.

Bratislava dated 1 July 2022

  
**JUDr. Juraj Varga, PhD.**

The Chairperson of the Committee

**Sent to:**

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