



PUBLIC CALL FOR AWARDING A FINANCIAL INCENTIVE TO TALENTED INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS FROM THE FIELD OF STEM AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MARIBOR – TALENT:UM 2024

1. SUBJECT OF THE PUBLIC CALL AND GROUNDS FOR THE CALL

The University of Maribor (hereinafter: UM) has acquired financial means from the Development Pillar of Financing 2021–2024 (hereinafter: RSF 2.0 2021–2024), through which, among other things, we implement various measures to encourage young people to enrol in the field of STE(A)M for the professions of the future, the internationalization of study activities and activities to promote the development of talented students.

The TALENT:UM financial incentives awarded by the UM through this public call are intended for talented international students who are enrolling in 1st-cycle study programmes in the field of STEM (*science, technology, engineering, and mathematics*) at the UM.

The purpose of the financial incentives is, on the one hand, to encourage young people to study in the STEM field, as the field has excellent growth potential and is the basis for the long-term development and competitiveness of Slovenia and Europe. At the same time, the UM wants to attract more talented international students who demonstrate exceptional academic achievements and research potential to help them obtain a quality higher education in the field of STEM in Slovenia (EU) and to develop their talents during their studies. Financial incentives are primarily intended for additional activities related to the development of talent and enabling the further achievement of exceptional achievements.

The aforementioned will have multiplicative positive effects on society and the integration of the Republic of Slovenia internationally.

2. AMOUNT OF FUNDS AND AMOUNT OF INCENTIVE IN THE PUBLIC CALL

As part of this call, **12.000,00 EUR** is available **for the academic year 2024/2025**.

The financial incentive is awarded for the first year of study in the academic year 2024/2025 and will be paid **no later than 2 December 2024**. The amount of the individual financial incentive is **3.000,00 EUR**.

3. BASIC CONDITIONS FOR APPLYING

An international student first time enrolled at the UM in the first year of a 1st-cycle professional or academic study programme, an integrated master's 2nd-cycle study programme, or a 2nd-cycle master's study programme in the academic year for which the financial incentives are awarded can apply to the call and has to show exceptional achievements, defined in more detail in the next point.

Entitled to the financial incentive are students who meet the conditions from the first paragraph of this article and:

- are citizens of non-EU countries,
- have not completed their previous education (1st-cycle of study or secondary school) in the Republic of Slovenia unless they were first enrolled in the international baccalaureate programme in Slovenia,
- have during their previous education as pupils or as students achieved exceptional academic achievements in the international arena and demonstrated research potential.

Enrolment in a study programme is not a condition for submitting an application but for granting the financial incentive.

4. SPECIAL CONDITIONS FOR OBTAINING THE FINANCIAL INCENTIVE

4.1. Outstanding academic achievements in the international arena

Outstanding academic achievements in the international arena are:

- participation and achievements in international knowledge, research competitions, innovation, or entrepreneurship in the STEM field,
- other awards and recognitions for achievements in knowledge, research, innovation or entrepreneurship in the STEM field in an international environment,
- publication of a scientific paper in an international scientific or professional publication, a confirmed patent or a patent accepted for confirmation at the international level.

In order to obtain the financial incentive, the applicant can claim an exceptional achievement from a previous level of education, whereas an individual achievement can only be claimed once.

The international competition must meet the following conditions:

- comes from knowledge, research, innovation or entrepreneurship in the STEM field,
- is intended for pupils or students, as a rule, in separate competition groups,
- is organized by an international professional association, a research or educational institution that implements programmes in the field of competition, a recognized international corporation or institution,
- the rules are publicly published and ensure equal opportunities for participation at the international level,
- participants from at least five countries take part in the competition,
- the competition has a multi-year tradition, i.e., it has been organized at least five times before the publication of the public call for an individual school or academic year, whereby achievements from the fifth or later competition count,
- the ranking of competitors in the competition itself is decided by a reference international commission of experts or scientists from the relevant discipline,
- no more than 20% of competitors or competition groups receive prizes.

The applicant can claim an individual outstanding achievement, or an outstanding achievement achieved in a group of no more than three members.

Participation in the competition is evaluated only in cases where it is a multi-level competition with qualifications.

Exceptionally, participation in international symposia, scientific or professional conferences, festivals, or comparable events, within which the competition takes place, can also be considered, whereby fewer points can be collected (see the scoreboard in point 5 of this call).

The certificate of the competition organizer, the proceedings of the competition, other publicly available evidence or the official website address is considered proof.

In the case of international publications, the quality and type of publication and the student's role in such publication are considered.

4.2 Motivation letter and recommendations

The motivation of the applicant is demonstrated through a motivation letter, in which the applicant describes his interest regarding the chosen field of study, goals, vision and areas he intends to develop with the help of the financial incentive, as well as **recommendations** based on letters of recommendation from professors, researchers, supervisors or other eminent persons who know the applicant and they can confirm his talent, motivation, academic potential and the talent areas he is developing. An individual applicant can attach a maximum of three recommendations to the application. A letter of motivation is a mandatory attachment to the application for obtaining a financial incentive.

5. APPLICATION EVALUATION PROCEDURE AND SELECTION OF FINANCIAL INCENTIVE RECIPIENTS

The procedure for the selection of applicants for the allocation of funds will be led by the commission for evaluating received applications (hereinafter: the commission), consisting of higher education teachers appointed by the decision of the rector of the University of Maribor. The commission determines whether the applicant meets the conditions for candidacy at the public call. The commission evaluates the applications of applicants who meet the conditions, considering the above-mentioned basic conditions, the special conditions and evaluations listed below, and if the conditions are met by more applicants than the available financial resources, it selects those who they will be given a financial incentive.

1. International successes from competitions are evaluated according to table 1:

Table 1: Evaluation of an achievement in an international competition

achievement	value
1 st place	20 points
2 nd place	15 points
3 rd place	10 points
attendance at a competition	5 points

participation in competitions within the framework of international symposia, scientific or professional conferences, festivals or comparable events	2,5 points
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2. International scientific research achievements are evaluated according to table 2:

Table 2: Evaluation of the achievement of international publication and/or patent

type of work	value
Original scientific article, published or accepted for publication in an international peer-reviewed scientific publications with impact factor (IF) – 1 st author	10 points
Original scientific article, published or accepted for publication in an international peer-reviewed scientific publications with impact factor (IF) – co-author	5 points
Original scientific article, published or accepted for publication in an international peer-reviewed scientific publications with impact factor (IF) – publication category A1 (Q1 after JCR)	Double points according to the authorship category above
independent scientific contribution or chapter in a monograph publication or scientific monograph	10 points
professional article, published in proceedings or professional publication – 1 st author	5 points
professional article, published in proceedings or professional publication – co-author	2 points
a validated patent or a patent accepted for validation at the international level	10 points

3. Motivation letters and recommendations are evaluated according to table 3:

Table 3: Evaluation of motivation letter and recommendations

motivation letter and recommendations	value
motivation letter	up to 5 points
recommendations	up to 3 points (total)

Applicants who meet the basic and special conditions are ranked according to the total number of points achieved by the applicant according to the above criteria. Depending on the available funds, the applicants who achieve the highest number of points until the funds are used up are selected.

Equally evaluated applications will be ranked according to the number of points obtained according to the criterion written under sequential number 3, then according to the written sequence according to the score according to the criterion under sequential number 1, then according to the points received according to criterion 2. When all the options listed have been exhausted and if it is still impossible to rank all the applications, the order of tied applications of the applicants shall be decided by a commission draw.

6. PROCEDURE FOR APPLYING TO THE CALL AND NOTIFICATION ABOUT SELECTION

Applicants must submit a complete application that includes a completed **application** on the prescribed form (annex 1), motivation letter, letters of recommendation and proof of outstanding achievements.

Applicants must deliver the application, regardless of the type of shipment, to the dispatch office of the University of Maribor, Slomškov trg 15, 2000 Maribor, **by 14:00 CET on 1 October 2024 at the latest**. The applicants must submit the applications in a sealed envelope with a note »DO NOT OPEN – APPLICATION TO THE PUBLIC CALL FOR AWARDING A FINANCIAL INCENTIVE TO TALENTED INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS FROM THE FIELD OF STEM AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MARIBOR – TALENT:UM 2024« indicating on the envelope applicant's full name, surname, and address. To be considered punctual, an application must be submitted to the University's dispatch office, University of Maribor, Slomškov trg 15, 2000 Maribor within the specified deadline for submitting the applications regardless of the type of shipment.

The application is complete if submitted on the required form, is duly signed, and contains all the required information and annexes. The application must be signed by hand.

If an application does not arrive on time or is not submitted on the prescribed form, the commission will reject it without a request for supplement by a decision.

Other applicants who do not submit a complete application will be asked in writing to supplement the application. Incomplete applications, which the applicants do not complete in accordance with the call to complete the application, will be rejected by the commission, or the commission will decide about them based on the available data.

Applicants will be informed of the selection results by a decision issued by the commission for evaluating received applications no later than **12 November 2024**. Selected applicants will be issued a decision on the allocation of a financial incentive in the academic year 2024/2025.

The selected applicants will be asked to sign a financial incentive agreement with the University of Maribor simultaneously with the selection decision. If the selected applicant does not respond to the invitation within eight days of receiving it, it is considered that he has withdrawn his application for the incentive.

7. DECISION ON APPEALS

The rector of the University of Maribor decides on appeals against the decisions from the previous point.

The administrative court decides disputes against the rector's decisions from the previous paragraph.

8. CONTRACTUAL OBLIGATIONS OF THE RECIPIENT OF THE FINANCIAL INCENTIVE

The recipient of the financial incentive must:

- successfully complete first year of study for which he received a financial incentive,
- within 30 days after a change occurred or within 30 days from the day, he became aware of a change, inform the UM of all changes that occur during the current academic year and could affect the contractual relationship, which also includes:
 - suspension of education,
 - circumstances due to which the student no longer meets the conditions for obtaining the financial incentive.

Based on the signed GDPR statement by the applicant, the university will check the regular advancement of the selected students in the week after 1 October 2025.

The student receiving a TALENT:UM financial incentive has an obligation to participate in at least two UM promotional events at home or abroad during the period of receiving the financial incentive, and any material costs incurred in doing so will be reimbursed. Regarding the form and method of participation, they will agree on the spot with the coordinator of this call.

9. FINANCIAL INCENTIVE REFUND AND THE REFUND WRITE-OFF

If the recipient of the financial incentive does not regularly advance to the higher year of study or terminates the contractual relationship with the University of Maribor, he is obliged to refund the entire amount of the financial incentive he received. If the student did not advance to the higher year due to justifiable reasons in accordance with the UM Statute, the financial incentive will not be refunded.

The deadline for refunding the amount from the previous paragraph is 30 days from the receipt of the refund request.

In the case of a late refund, in accordance with the previous paragraph, the student is also obliged to pay late interest.

A refund write-off is possible:

- if the recipient of the financial incentive terminates the education due to category one disability, illness or injury lasting at least 12 months continuously,
- in the event of death of the recipient of the financial incentive.

10. PROTECTION OF PERSONAL DATA

Applicants' personal data is collected for the purpose of carrying out the public call. The protection of personal data will be ensured in accordance with the applicable legislation. More about the processing of personal data at the University of Maribor is available on the following website: <https://www.um.si/en/o-univerzi-en/document-center/protection-of-personal-data>.

11. OTHER PUBLIC CALL PROVISIONS AND PUBLIC CALL DOCUMENTATION

The UM, as the executor of this public call, reserves the right to amend or supplement the financing conditions in the event of changed financial conditions or the occurrence of force majeure. Changes to the rules and conditions of participation in the public call can be made at any time.

The public call documentation is published on the my.um.si website > Future Students > [Funding of Study](#).

Terms used in the Public Call in the grammatical form for the masculine gender are used as neutral for all genders.

CONTACT AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MARIBOR

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Maribor, 30 January 2024

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