

GOVERNMENT GAZETTE

OF THE HELLENIC REPUBLIC

23 November 2018

SERIES II

No 5252

DECISIONS

No. 195245

Internal Rules of Operation of the Hellenic Foundation for Research and Innovation (HFRI)

THE MINISTERS FOR EDUCATION, RESEARCH AND RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS - FINANCE - ADMINISTRATIVE RECONSTRUCTION

Having regard to:

1. Law 4429/2016 (Government Gazette, Series I, no. 199) on the Hellenic Foundation for Research and Innovation and other provisions, in particular Article 12 thereof.
2. Law 4452/2017 (Government Gazette, Series I, no. 17) on the regulation of matters pertaining to the National Language Proficiency Certificate, the National Library of Greece and other provisions.
3. Law 4485/2017 (Government Gazette, Series I, no. 114) on the organisation and functioning of higher education, provisions pertaining to research and other provisions.
4. Law 4521/2018 (Government Gazette, Series I, no. 38) on the establishment of the University of Western Attica and other provisions.
5. Law 4270/2014 (Government Gazette, Series I, no. 143) introducing principles of financial management and supervision (transposing Directive 2011/85/EU) - public accounting system and other provisions.
6. Law 4129/2013 (Government Gazette, Series I, no. 52) ratifying the Code of Laws for the Court of Audit.
7. Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.
8. Presidential Decree 63/2005 (Government Gazette, Series I, no. 98) codifying the legislation on Government and governmental bodies.
9. Presidential Decree 80/2016 (Government Gazette, Series I, no. 145) on the assumption of responsibilities by authorising officers.
10. Presidential Decree 18/2018 (Government Gazette, Series I, no. 31) on the organisation of the Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs.
11. Presidential Decree 70/2015 (Government Gazette, Series I, no. 114) on the restructuring of the Ministries of Culture and Sports; Infrastructure, Transport and Networks; Agricultural Development and Food. Restructuring of the Ministry of Shipping and the Aegean and renaming thereof to Ministry of Shipping and Island Policy. Renaming the Ministry of Culture, Education and Religious Affairs to Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs; the Ministry of Finance, Infrastructure, Shipping and Tourism to Ministry of Finance, Development and Tourism; and the Ministry of Production Reconstruction, the Environment and Energy to Ministry of the Environment and Energy. Transfer of the General Secretariat for Industry to the Ministry of Finance,

Development and Tourism.

12. Decision of the Prime Minister no. Y2/22-09-2015 (Government Gazette, Series II, no. 2076) establishing the posts of Deputy Ministers and State Secretaries.

13. Decision of the Prime Minister no. Y8/25-9-2015 (Government Gazette, Series II, no. 2109) delegating responsibilities to the Deputy Minister for Education, Research and Religious Affairs, Konstantinos Fotakis.

14. Decision of the Prime Minister no. Y29/8-10-2015 (Government Gazette, Series II, no. 2168) delegating responsibilities to the Deputy Minister for Finance, Georgios Chouliarakis.

15. Opinion no. KMKE 00213 ΕΞ 2018 ΕΜΠ/12-7-2018 of the Central State Aid Unit pursuant to subparagraph B6 of Law 4152/2013, as in force.

16. Proposals nos. Φ.1/Γ/59ΝΠ/93957/Β1/7-6-2018 and Φ.1/ Γ/113ΝΠ/167465/Β1/8-10-2018 of the Directorate General for Financial Affairs of the Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs, pursuant to Article 24, paragraph 5, point (e) of Law 4270/2014 (Government Gazette, Series I, no. 143).

17. The fact that the provisions of this joint ministerial decision creates a burden of approximately two hundred and fifty thousand euro for the current year (2018), which will be covered by the appropriations in the Foundation's budget (revenue codes 60.00 and 60.03) and an annual expense starting from 2019 amounting to approximately one million five hundred and fifty thousand euro (EUR 1,550,000) in total, which will correspond to the Midterm Fiscal Strategy Framework forecasts.

18. Decision No. 593/18-1-2018 on the assumption of obligations (Internet Posting No.: Ψ6X246M77Γ-ΔKM), we hereby resolve as follows:

We approve the Internal Rules of Operation of the Hellenic Foundation for Research and Innovation, as follows:

CHAPTER I: General Provisions

Article 1 Legal Nature - Registered Office - Supervision

1. The Hellenic Foundation for Research and Innovation (hereinafter: HFRI or the Foundation) was established as a legal entity under private law by virtue of Law 4429/2016 (Government Gazette, Series I, no. 199). It belongs to the broader public sector and operates in the public interest and, specifically, for the promotion of research and innovation.

2. The HFRI is governed by the provisions of Law 4429/2016 (Government Gazette, Series I, no. 199), as in force, and these Internal Rules of Operation (IRO).

3. The HFRI shall be based in Athens. HFRI departments and offices may also operate in other cities in Greece. In its relations abroad, the HFRI shall use the name "Hellenic Foundation for Research and Innovation (HFRI)".

4. The HFRI shall be granted all administrative,

financial and judicial exemptions, as well as procedural and material privileges of the State, and shall be exempt from taxes on revenue gained in pursuit of its objective, excluding VAT, the unified property ownership tax (ENFIA), inheritance tax and real estate transfer tax.

5. The HFRI shall be supervised by the Deputy Minister for Education, Research and Religious Affairs who is competent for research matters (hereinafter: the Minister or the supervising Minister). The functioning of the Hellenic Foundation for Research and Innovation shall be supported by the General Secretariat for Research and Technology (GSRT).

Article 2 Purpose and mission

1. The aim of the HFRI is to promote research and innovation, develop and strengthen research potential in the framework of the national research and innovation strategy. To achieve this, the HFRI shall:

a. Finance research programmes. Financing shall cover, indicatively, payroll expenses of research, administrative and other staff, cost of access to research infrastructure, expenses for consumables, travel and publication of research papers, protection of intellectual property rights.

b. Grant scholarships for doctoral dissertations and finance post-doctoral studies.

c. Finance the purchase of research equipment based on a strategic plan drawn up by the potential beneficiary.

d. Promote its aims by any means, spread the results of its actions and facilitate the access of Universities, Technological Education Institutes and research and technology operators to financing for innovative research programmes by providing all types of information and support services.

e. Provide services associated with the above activities.

The HFRI shall conclude all kinds of contracts, cooperation agreements and framework contracts with the General Secretariat of Research and Technology, other Central and General Government bodies, and with natural and legal persons, Greek or foreign, to assess grant applications, manage research programmes and other activities

and, in general, ensure the unhindered implementation of its purpose.

Article 3 Assets - Resources

1. The HFRI shall have the following resources:

a. Any sort of financing/grants from the state budget (regular and under the Public Investment Programme).

b. Financing and any sort of aid or grant from European Union institutions and organisations and from other European or international organisations.

c. Financing under the Agreement between the Hellenic Republic and the European Investment Bank of 15 July 2016, which is managed by the HFRI as beneficiary, on behalf of the Hellenic Republic.

d. Donations, aid, inheritance, legacies, grants, sponsorships, and any kind of contribution from natural

or legal persons, public or private, in Greece or abroad.

2. The financing to be granted under the Agreement between the Hellenic Republic and the European Investment Bank of 15 July 2016 shall be credited as a loan into the state budget and the corresponding amount shall be recorded in the budget of the Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs under the special budget code applicable to the HFRI.

3. The HFRI shall manage its resources, in accordance with the provisions of Law 4429/2016 (Government Gazette, Series I, no. 199), the Agreement between the Hellenic Republic and the European Investment Bank of 15.7.2016, and these Internal Rules of Operation, through a special cash management account held with the Bank of Greece. In order to meet its operational needs, the HFRI may hold accounts with banking institutions, without prejudice to the provisions of Article 69A of Law 4270/2014 (Government Gazette, Series I, no. 143), as amended and in force.

4. In the event of dissolution of the HFRI, its movable and immovable assets, as well as its rights and obligations of any kind, shall be transferred to the Greek State.

CHAPTER H: Management

Article 4

Bodies of the HFRI The HFRI Bodies shall be as follows: a. The General Assembly (GA); b. The Scientific Council (SC); c. The Director and the Deputy Directors.

Article 5

General Assembly - Selection and Term of Office 1. The individuals selected as members of the GA should be distinguished Greek or foreign scientists with extensive scientific work and research experience. The persons selected shall be appointed for a full term of office and shall not be dismissed during their term of office for an opinion they have given or a vote they have cast in performing their duties.

2. The members of the General Assembly shall be selected from the Greek universities and bodies referred to in Article 13a of Law 4310/2014 using the following procedure:

a. Every two years, a decision of the National Council for Research and Innovation (NCRI) shall set the criteria for outstanding research performance, which must be met by the Greek universities and bodies referred to in Article 13a of Law 4310/2014 in order for them to appoint members of the HFRI General Assembly.

b. Thereafter, the NCRI shall draw up a list of the bodies (universities and research centres) that fulfil the aforementioned criteria and are, therefore, entitled to select a member for the HFRI General Assembly. The NCRI shall post the list on the HFRI and the GSRT websites. This list shall be notified to the HFRI Scientific Council and to the universities and research centres mentioned therein.

c. The Senate of the University and the Board of Directors of each body referred to in Article 13a of Law 4310/2014, which are included in the aforementioned list, shall issue an open call for expression of interest to select

one (1) regular and one alternate member to staff the Foundation's GA, pursuant to paragraph 1 of this Article.

d. Once candidates are assessed, the Senate of the University, following a recommendation from the Research Committee and the Board of Directors of the body referred to in Article 13a of Law 4310/2014 respectively shall elect the regular and alternate member and shall notify the HFRI accordingly. The decision must be reasoned in terms of the extent and quality of research work and the research experience of those selected. The persons selected shall not necessarily belong to the bodies that select them. The Board of Directors of the Biomedical Research Foundation of the Academy of Athens shall select one regular and one alternate member and the Senate of the Academy of Athens shall select one regular and one alternate member from among the research centres of the Academy of Athens.

3. The GA shall be constituted by decision of the Deputy Minister for Education, Research and Religious Affairs competent for research affairs. The decision shall be then published in the Government Gazette.

4. The term of office of each member of the GA shall be three years, and may be renewed only once.

5. No later than three (3) months before the end of the term of office of each member, the Chairperson of the GA shall request that the relevant institution selects new members (regular and alternate) to succeed the departing members. If the institution fails to do so within the above deadline, the Minister shall select the new member (regular and alternate) from among the professors or researchers of the relevant institution.

Article 6

General Assembly - Meetings and operation

1. The Chairperson and the Vice-Chairperson of the GA shall be elected by its members for a three-year term, which may be renewed only once. Where the Chairperson is absent or impeded, he/she shall be replaced by the Vice-Chairperson.

2. The Chairperson shall convoke the regular or extraordinary meetings of the GA, draw up the agenda, preside over the deliberations and sign the minutes, jointly with an employee of the HFRI who shall act as the GA secretary. The Minutes shall also mention any dissenting opinions of the members.

3. The invitation for the GA meeting shall be sent to the regular members of the GA at least one (1) week before the meeting, by any appropriate means (including e-mail). Alternate members shall be invited to replace absent or impeded members.

4. The GA shall meet regularly twice a year and extraordinarily whenever this is requested by at least ten (10) of its members, or by the SC Chairperson, or by the HFRI Director, by virtue of a written request to the Chairperson of the GA, which must also mention the proposed items on the agenda.

5. The GA shall be quorate when at least 50% of its members are present and shall take decisions by majority of vote of the members present. In the event of a tied vote, the Chairperson shall have the casting vote.

6. The GA shall meet at the registered office of the HFRI. It may also meet at the headquarters of the Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs or, if

necessary, at another location, by virtue of a decision by its Chairperson.

7. The members of the GA may attend in person or long-distance, by electronic means and communications. The members of the GA may exercise their right to vote by correspondence or by electronic means, without the physical presence of the members of the GA at the meeting location.

8. The GA may invite other persons to provide information or data; however such persons shall depart before the voting begins.

9. Once constituted, the GA shall operate lawfully, even if one or more of its members are disqualified or removed from office, or resign, or become permanently unable to perform their duties for any reason whatsoever, provided that the remaining members are at least $\frac{3}{4}$ of the initial number. If more than $\frac{1}{4}$ of the GA members are permanently unable to perform their duties or are absent, the institutions from which they come shall select new members for their remaining term of office. If the institution fails to do so within three (3) months after being notified of the member's absence or permanent inability to perform their duties, the Minister shall select the new member (regular and alternate) from this institution concerned.

Article 7

Competences of the General Assembly

1. The General Assembly (GA) shall guarantee the independence of the HFRI, and the fulfilment of its mission.

2. The GA shall have the following competences: a. Select the members of the Scientific Council. b. Approve collaborations and partnerships with other bodies of the public and private sector within the country or abroad for the fulfilment of the HFRI objectives. These collaborations shall be proposed to the GA by the Scientific Council and the Director. Members of the Scientific Council and the Director may be present as rapporteurs during the discussion at the GA, without the right to vote.

c. Submit proposals to the Scientific Council on matters relating to the research activity of the HFRI. Such proposals may also include suggested implementation measures.

d. Approve the HFRI annual report (annual financial report and activity report).

Article 8

Incompatibilities of the GA members

1. A member of the GA of the HFRI may be removed from office during their term by decision of the Minister, if they exercise activities which are incompatible with or undertake actions contrary to their membership in the GA and the HFRI objectives.

2. Membership in the HFRI GA is incompatible with: a. Being a Rector, Vice-Rector, Dean, member of the Senate, member of the Research Committee or Chair of a university department.

b. Being a member of the Board of Directors of a research body or institute referred to in Article 13a of Law 4310/2014.

3. The members of the GA shall avoid any situation in which a conflict of interest may arise. A conflict of interest shall arise when members of the GA have private or personal interests, which may affect, or appear to affect,

the impartial and objective execution of their duties. Private or personal interests of GA members means any potential benefit which they, their families or other relatives, up to the second degree of kinship, may have.

4. The members of the GA of the HFRI may not conclude contracts with the HFRI. The prohibition applies to all types of contracts (employment, work, services, supply, etc.). This prohibition shall also apply to the members' spouses or life partners with whom they have entered into a civil partnership, and to persons related to them by blood or marriage up to the second degree of kinship. This prohibition shall also apply to any contract concluded between the HFRI and legal entities whose management is controlled directly or indirectly by a member of the HFRI GA. Specifically, the members of the HFRI GA may not be members of other Boards of Directors, administrators, partners in partnerships, and shareholders and partners of corporations, which have a contractual relationship with the HFRI, if their participation in such companies exceeds three (3%) per cent of the company's total equity.

5. Should any of the aforementioned incompatibility criteria apply to a member of the GA, such member shall be removed from office and their contract shall be declared null and void.

6. The members of the GA are under the obligation of confidentiality and are bound by professional secrecy.

7. The members of the HFRI GA may participate in any capacity in a research team financed by the HFRI.

Article 9

Scientific Council - Selection and term of office

1. The Scientific Council (SC) of the HFRI shall comprise nine (9) regular members from the following fields: (a) agronomic sciences, (b) physical sciences, (c) mathematics and information science, (d) social sciences, (e) arts and humanities, (f) environment and energy, (g) medicine and health sciences, (h) engineering and technology sciences and (i) innovative entrepreneurship.

2.a. Members must be scientists of international renown, who have been internationally recognised for their research, and must possess significant experience in matters relating to scientific policy development. It is advisable that the members of the SC represent the wider Greek scientific community and originate from various public or private sector bodies.

b. The members must:

i. have successfully participated, as scientific advisors, in research projects approved following an international or national competitive selection procedure and assessment;

ii. possess administrative experience in managing research and the results thereof, accumulated in a public or private sector body, in Greece or abroad;

iii. have authored research papers published in monographs or original publications in scientific journals; iv. speak the Greek language.

c. The support of their candidature by bodies (universities, research centres referred to in Article 13a of

Law 4310/2014) whose representatives participate in the HFRI GA shall constitute an added asset for the selection of the SC members. Proposals may be submitted by the Senate or by Departmental Boards of universities, or by BoDs or Scientific Councils of research institutes represented in the HFRI GA. Proposals in support of a candidature may also be submitted by members of the National Council for Research and Innovation (NCRI). The proposal in support of the candidature must be justified.

3. The members of the SC shall serve a four-year (4-year) term.

4. The members of the HFRI SC shall be selected as follows:

a. The GA shall draw up and post on the websites of the HFRI, the

GSRT and the Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs, as well as on relevant international websites, a call for expression of interest for the aforementioned nine (9) positions no later than three (3) months before the term of office of the SC members expires.

b. Applications shall be filed online by the interested parties themselves. Each applicant may file an application only for one thematic field. If applications are filed for more than one thematic field, the candidature shall not be considered.

c. The GA shall designate a nine-member nomination committee from among its members, representing the nine fields set out in paragraph 1 of this Article. If a field is not represented in the GA, the GA shall appoint one external member to the nomination committee, with significant international experience in this field. For each of the 9 fields, the GA may appoint up to 2 (two) additional members (internal or external) who shall assist the appointed rapporteur in his/her duties. The committee shall assess the nominations and propose to the GA a list of candidates per field, ranked according to the assessment.

d. The GA shall take into account the proposals of the nine-member Committee and shall select the members of the SC from among the candidates, one for each field set out in paragraph (1) of this Article. The decision of the GA shall be notified to the Minister and shall be binding. The SC shall be constituted by decision of the Minister, which shall be published in the Government Gazette.

Article 10

Scientific Council -

Meetings and operation

1. Once constituted, the Scientific Council shall elect its Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson. The Chairperson of the SC shall be elected by the SC members for a four-year term, which may not be renewed.

2. The Chairperson shall convoke the SC for regular meetings 6 (six) times per year and extraordinarily when requested by three (3) members of the SC, or by the SC Chairperson, or by the HFRI Director. The Chairperson of

the SC shall draw up the agenda, preside over the deliberations and sign the minutes, jointly with an employee of the HFRI who acts as the SC secretary. The minutes shall also mention any dissenting opinions of the members.

3. The invitation for the SC meeting shall be sent to the regular members of the SC and its Chairperson at least one (1) week before the meeting, by any appropriate means (including e-mail).

4. The members of the SC may attend the meetings in person or long-distance, by electronic means and communications. The members of the SC may exercise their right to vote by correspondence or by electronic means, without the physical presence of the members of the GA at the meeting location.

5. The SC may invite other persons to provide information or data; however such persons shall depart before the voting begins.

6. Where the Chairperson is absent or impeded, he/she shall be replaced by the Vice-Chairperson, and if the latter is absent or impeded, by the most senior SC member.

7. The SC shall be quorate when at least five (5) of its members are present and shall take decisions by majority of vote of the members present. In the event of a tied vote, the Chairperson shall have the casting vote.

8. If a member of the SSC resigns, is absent, or his/her term of office is terminated in any manner, he/she shall be provisionally replaced by a member who shall be selected by the SC, following publication of a call for expression of interest drawn up by the SC and published on the HFRI website. The call shall be published no later than fifteen (15) days from the date of submission of the resignation. The deadline for submission of applications is set to twenty (20) days. At the GA meeting held after the selection of the provisional member, the GA shall either endorse the selection of this member for the remaining term of office, or reject it. In case of rejection, the member shall be automatically removed from the SC and the GA shall draw up and publish a call for the expression of interest for the selection of a new member on the HFRI website. The SC shall be re-constituted by decision of the Minister, which shall be published in the Government Gazette.

9. In case the number of SC members is not sufficient to constitute a quorum, the Minister shall appoint as many members as necessary for the quorum required as per paragraph 7 of this Article to be constituted. The decision shall be published in the Government Gazette. The term of the members appointed as above shall last until members of the Scientific Council are appointed pursuant to the provisions of this law, but shall in no case exceed six (6) months.

10. The members of the SC shall be entitled to compensation for their participation in meetings, pursuant to the provisions of Article 22(3) of Law 4354/2015. Out-of-office work of the SC members shall be subject to the provisions of Article 2(d)(d9) of Law 4336/2015. These expenses shall be financed from the HFRI budget and may not exceed the total amount of EUR 15,000 per year (exclusive of VAT).

Article 11

Competences of the Scientific Council

1. The Scientific Council shall manage the HFRI and shall have the following specific competences: a. Ensure that the HFRI objectives are achieved, based on the national research and innovation policy.

b. Accept donations and any type of financing, subject to the prior opinion of the HFRI financial department.

c. Set up selection committees and redress committees for evaluating grant applications and selecting final beneficiaries, as well as supervise their proper operation in accordance with the rules of meritocracy and transparency. Ensure that no conflicts of interest exist between the members of the committees and the candidates, guarantee confidentiality and resolve any issue of which it may become aware. The Scientific Council members may not participate in these committees.

d. Select the Director and approve the selection of Deputy Directors.

e. Approve the HFRI budget, following a recommendation from the Director.

f. Propose to the GA partnerships and collaborations between the HFRI and public and private sector bodies in Greece or abroad.

g. Propose amendments to the Internal Rules of Operation to the Minister, justifying its proposal, as appropriate.

h. Approve the operation of the HFRI departments and offices in other cities in Greece, following a proposal from the Director.

i. Approve decisions regarding the recruitment of HFRI staff, following a proposal by the Director.

2. The Scientific Council shall have competence over any issues pertaining to the management of the HFRI, which are not delegated to the GA or to the Director, and may delegate part of its competences to the Director or to one of the Deputy Directors.

Article 12

Incompatibilities of the members of the Scientific Council

1. A member of the HFRI Scientific Council may be removed from office during their term by resolution of the General Assembly or by decision of the Minister for Education, Research and Religious Affairs, if they perform their duties inadequately or engage in activities which are incompatible with or undertake actions contrary to their membership in the Foundation's Scientific Council.

2. Membership in the SC is incompatible with:

a. Being a Rector, Vice-Rector,

Dean, member of the Senate, member of the Research Committee or Chair of a university department.

b. Being a member of the Board of Directors of a research body or institute referred to in Article 13a of Law 4310/2014.

c. Being a member of the Council of Ministers, Deputy Minister, General Secretary or Special Secretary of a Ministry or an independent General Secretariat, Member of Parliament, Governor, Deputy Governor, Mayor, or Deputy Mayor. Moreover, membership in the SC is

incompatible with being a member of the GA, or the Director or Deputy Director of the HFRI. A member of the SC may not submit an application for financing to the HFRI, nor may they be a member of the scientific team that has submitted an application.

3. The members of the SC shall avoid any situation in which a conflict of interest may arise. A conflict of interest shall arise when members of the SC have private or personal interests, which may affect, or appear to affect, the impartial and objective execution of their duties. Private or personal interests of SC members means any possible benefit which they, their families or other relatives, up to the second degree of kinship, may have.

4. The members of the SC of the HFRI may not conclude contracts with the HFRI. The prohibition applies to all types of contracts (employment, work, service, supply, etc.). In addition, the members of the SC may not be experts or members of committees evaluating financing by the HFRI.

5. The prohibition of the previous paragraph shall also apply to the members' spouses or life partners with whom they have entered into a civil partnership, and to persons related to them by blood or marriage up to the second degree of kinship. The prohibition shall also apply to any contract concluded between the HFRI and legal entities whose management is controlled directly or indirectly by a member of the HFRI SC. Specifically, the members of the HFRI SC may not be members of other Boards of Directors, administrators, partners in partnerships, and shareholders and partners of corporations, which have a contractual relationship with the HFRI, if their participation in such companies exceeds three (3%) per cent of the company's total equity.

6. Should any of the aforementioned incompatibility criteria apply to a member of the SC, such member shall be removed from office at the HFRI and their contract shall be declared null and void.

7. The members of the SC are under the obligation of confidentiality and are bound by professional secrecy.

Article 13

Director - Selection, term of office - Deputy Directors

1. The Director of the HFRI shall be a scientist of international renown, holder of a Ph.D., with administrative experience and outstanding research activity. He/she shall have a broad vision, knowledge and understanding of important development in science and research, including interdisciplinary research. He/she shall be familiar with the procedures and possibilities for financing research in Greece and internationally.

2. The Director must:

a. have successfully participated in research projects in Greece or abroad in any capacity; b. have documented and extensive managerial skills and experience in matters of research policy; c. speak the Greek language; d. be less than 63 years old at the time of submission of his/her candidature.

e. The support of their candidature by bodies (universities, research centres referred to in Article 13a of Law 4310/2014) whose representatives participate in the HFRI GA shall constitute an added asset for the selection of the Director. Proposals may be submitted by the Senate or by Departmental Boards of universities, or by BoDs or Scientific Councils of research institutes represented in the HFRI GA. Proposals in support of a candidature may also be submitted by members of the National Council for Research and Innovation (NCRI). The proposal in support of the candidature must be justified.

3. The Director shall be selected and appointed by decision of the Scientific Council for a four-year (4-year) term of office, renewable only once. The decision appointing the Director shall be published in the Government Gazette. The Director's term of office shall be extended until his/her successor takes up his/her duties but shall in no case exceed six (6) months. The new Director shall always be appointed for a full term of office.

4. The Director of the HFRI shall be selected as follows:

a. The HFRI SC shall draw up and publish on the HFRI website

a call for expression of interest for the position of the Director. This call shall include a detailed list of the formal and substantial qualifications that the Director must have.

b. The SC shall appoint a three-member committee from among its members for the evaluation of candidates. This committee shall evaluate the candidatures and shall recommend to the SC the five (5) candidates with the highest score, whom it shall invite to an interview before the SC. The SC shall select one of them to fill in the position of the Director.

5. The Director of the HFRI shall propose to the SC the appointment of two (2) Deputy Directors to be selected following an open call for expression of interest published on the HFRI website. One of the Deputy Directors shall be responsible for organisational and operational matters pertaining to the HFRI. He/she shall be a scientist holding a master's degree or a Ph.D. and shall have documented extensive managerial skills and many years of experience in the management and organisation of research and research policy, as well as in-depth knowledge of the country's research environment. He/she must speak the Greek language and be less than 63 years old at the time of submission of his/her application. The second Deputy Director shall be responsible for research matters. He/she shall be a scientist holding a Ph.D., with significant research activity and must have successfully participated in research projects in Greece or abroad in any capacity. He/she must speak the Greek language and be less than 63 years old at the time of submission of his/her application. The competences of the Deputy Directors shall be further specified by a decision of the Director. The Deputy Directors shall be appointed by the SC for a four-year (4-year) term of office, renewable only once. The decision appointing deputy directors shall be published in the Government Gazette and shall specify which of the Deputy Directors shall fill in for the Director. If the

Director's position is vacant, the duties of the position shall be performed by the Deputy Director appointed by virtue of the aforementioned decision, until the new Director has taken up his/her office but for a period that shall in no case exceed six (6) months. Deputy Directors shall be appointed by way of derogation from the provisions of Act No 33/2016 of the Council of Ministers (Government Gazette, Series I, no. 280).

6. The Director and the Deputy Directors of the HFRI shall exercise their duties full time and as exclusive employment. The salaries of the Director and Deputy Directors shall be determined by a joint decision of the Minister for Finance and the Minister for Education, Research and Religious Affairs. The above remuneration shall be covered by the HFRI budget.

Article 14 Competences of the Director

1. The Director shall implement the strategy of the HFRI, which has been determined by the Scientific Council. The Director shall have the following competences:

- a. Preside over the HFRI departments, be responsible for its smooth operation, approve expenditure and act as authorising officer for all its expenses.
- b. Draw up and publish calls for actions financed by the HFRI, in accordance with the annual action plan and the SC decisions.
- c. Issue financing decisions, following evaluation by the relevant committees.
- d. Order extraordinary administrative and on-site audits of actions financed by the HFRI.
- e. Ensure the achievement of the targets set in the HFRI budget.
- f. Request the convocation an extraordinary meeting of the GA or the SC, if necessary, by applying to the Chairperson of each collective body, and attend their sessions, without a voting right.
- g. Ensure that the annual report is drawn up and submit it to the SC and, thereafter, to the GA for approval.
- h. Seek sources of financing for the HFRI, as well as any type of collaboration with private or public bodies in Greece or abroad.
- i. Represent the Foundation in judicial and extrajudicial proceedings, in all types of events, joint ventures, collaborations and other similar activities with private or public bodies in Greece or abroad.
- j. Recommend partnerships and collaborations between the HFRI and public and private sector bodies in Greece or abroad to the Scientific Council and the General Assembly.

2. The Director may also assign the exercise of specific powers to the Deputy Directors on a case-by-case basis, and transfer his/her right to sign to them or to an employee of the HFRI .

Article 15 Incompatibilities of the Director

1. The HFRI Scientific Council may, upon proposal from no less than three (3) of its members and a decision of six (6) of its members, remove the Director or Deputy Directors from office at any time, if they fail to perform their obligations. The decision for the removal must be

fully justified.

2. The position of Director or Deputy Director of the HFRI is incompatible with:

- a. Being of member of the GA or the SC of the HFRI.
- b. Being a beneficiary of financing from the HFRI.
- c. Being a Rector, Vice-Rector, Dean, member of the Senate, member of the Research Committee or Chair of a university department.
- d. Being a member of the Board of Directors of a research body or institute referred to in Article 13a of Law 4310/2014.
- e. Being a member of the Council of Ministers, Deputy Minister, General Secretary or Special Secretary of a Ministry or an independent General Secretariat, Member of Parliament, Governor, Deputy Governor, Mayor, or Deputy Mayor, or member of a regional or municipal council. Where the Director is a university professor or a research centre researcher, his/her duties shall be suspended throughout his/her term of office.

3. The Director may not be involved in the financial management of the Foundation, which falls within the exclusive competence of the Foundation's financial department.

4. The Director and Deputy Directors shall avoid any situation in which a conflict of interest may arise. A conflict of interest shall arise when the Director or the Deputy Directors have private or personal interests, which may affect, or appear to affect, the impartial and objective execution of their duties. Private or personal interests of Director or the Deputy Directors means any potential benefit which they, their families or other relatives by blood or marriage, up to the second degree of kinship, may have.

5. The Director and the Deputy Directors may not conclude contracts with the HFRI other than their contract for employment at the specific position, with fixed a term of office. The Director and the Deputy Directors may not participate in a research team that is financed by the HFRI, nor may they be experts or members of the committees evaluating financing by the HFRI.

6. The prohibition of the previous paragraph shall also apply to the members' spouses or life partners with whom they have entered into a civil partnership, and to persons related to them by blood or marriage up to the second degree of kinship. The prohibition shall also apply to any contract concluded between the HFRI and legal entities whose management is controlled directly or indirectly by the Director or the Deputy Directors. Specifically, the Director and the Deputy Directors may not be members of other Boards of Directors, administrators, partners in partnerships, and shareholders and partners of corporations, which have a contractual relationship with the HFRI, if their participation in such companies exceeds three (3%) per cent of the company's total equity.

7. Should any of the aforementioned incompatibility criteria apply to the Director or the Deputy Directors, they shall be removed from office and their contract shall be declared null and void.

8. The Director and the Deputy Directors are under the obligation of confidentiality and are bound by professional secrecy.

9. The Director and the Deputy Directors may teach

or conduct research, if this teaching or research are not related to HFRI financing and subject to a decision of the Scientific Council.

Article 16 Advisory Committee

1.a. An Advisory Committee, independent from the Foundation's other governing bodies, shall be constituted by decision of the Minister, to be published in the Government Gazette. The term of office of the Advisory Committee's members shall be four years.

b. The Advisory Committee shall consist of eleven (11) members, scientists of international renown or originating from business and/or production operators, in Greece and abroad.

c. The members of the Advisory Committee shall be selected as follows: three (3) months before the end of the term of office of the Advisory Committee's members, the National Council for Research and Innovation (NCRI) shall draw up and submit to the Minister and to the Scientific Council a list of twenty-two (22) suggested members, six (6) of whom will also be members of the NCRI. From this list, the Minister shall select six (6) members, while five (5) members shall be selected by the Scientific Council. Up to three (3) of the eleven (11) members of the Advisory Committee may also be members of the NCRI.

d. The Advisory Committee shall act as advisor and its objective is to assess the Foundation's activities, and to express opinions and make recommendations, in order to optimise its operation. The Advisory Committee shall examine issues of special importance or issues of specific interest related to the operation of the Foundation and the financing of research and innovation. The issues shall be examined either at the request of the Minister or the Scientific Council or following a proposal from members of the Advisory Committee.

2. Up to three (3) members of the Advisory Committee may be present during the meetings of the HFRI Scientific Council. These members shall be appointed by the decision establishing the Advisory Committee. An employee of the General Secretariat for Research and Technology, appointed by the supervising Minister, may also be present during the meetings of the Scientific Council. Renowned Greek or foreign scientists may be invited to the Advisory Committee's meetings, by decision of the Scientific Council and/or of the Advisory Committee.

3. The members of the Advisory Committee may attend the meetings in person or long-distance, by electronic means and communications. The members of the Advisory Committee may exercise their right to vote by correspondence or by electronic means, without the physical presence of the members at the meeting location. Renowned Greek or foreign scientists may be invited to express their opinion during the Advisory Committee's meetings, by decision of the Scientific Council and/or of the Advisory Committee.

4. The members of the Advisory Committee shall be entitled to compensation for their participation in meetings, pursuant to the provisions of Article 21 of Law

4354/2015. Out-of-office work of the members of the Advisory Committee shall be subject to the provisions of Article 2(d)(d9) of Law 4336/2015. These expenses shall be financed from the HFRI budget and may not exceed the total amount of EUR 10,000 per year (exclusive of VAT).

CHAPTER III Administrative Structure of the HFRI

Article 17 Organisation Chart

The HFRI structure shall comprise the Directorate of Administrative Services and Research Projects, the Independent Department of Financial Services, which supervises the Cash Management Office, and the independent legal office.

The Directorate of Administrative Services and Research Projects shall supervise all administrative and support services and functions required for the smooth operation of the HFRI and the achievement of its objectives. The Directorate of Administrative Services and Research projects, which shall be headed by the Administrative Director, shall be composed of: a) the Department of Administrative Services, b) the Department of Technical Support, Facilities, Equipment and IT Systems, and c) the Department of Research Projects.

Article 18

Competences of the Administrative Director The Administrative Director shall head the Directorate of Administrative Services and Research Projects, report to the HFRI Director and Deputy Directors, and ensure the smooth administrative operation of the HFRI. More specifically, he/she shall:

1. Manage and coordinate the individual departments and offices of the HFRI, supervise their operation, resolve any matters pertaining to their competences, and ensure the legality of their actions.

2. Submit proposals to the HFRI Director and Scientific Council on matters of their purview.

3. Supervise and monitor the drawing up of the calls for expression of interest and the HFRI financing procedure, and assess their elements.

4. Monitor the handling and proper execution of the resolutions of the General Assembly, the Scientific Council, the Director and the Deputy Directors.

5. Sign, subject to authorisation by the HFRI Scientific Council and the Director, and exercise all other powers delegated to him/her.

6. Supervise the appointment and transfer of employees, subject to authorisation by the Director, and authorise staff leaves.

7. Bear responsibility for the adoption of measures for the protection and safety of the HFRI staff and assets.

8. Submit proposals and recommendations to the Director, as required for the implementation of the HFRI objectives.

Article 19 Department of Administrative Services

The Department of Administrative Services shall provide secretarial support to all HFRI governing bodies and collective bodies, keep records, conduct public

relations and promote the Foundation's activities, and exercise the powers of a human resource office. The head of the Department of Administrative Services shall report to the Administrative Director and shall coordinate and ensure the coordination and proper functioning of the department. More specifically, the Department in question shall:

1. Provide secretarial support to the General Assembly, the Scientific Council, the Director, the Deputy Directors, the Administrative Directors and the HFRI departments and committees.
2. Keep an archive and a record (on paper and electronic), as well as the minutes of the meetings of the HFRI collective bodies.
3. Keep an updated staff record and a personal file on each employee.
4. Monitor and implement the applicable provisions on the HFRI staff employment status.
5. Promote the work and the activities of the HFRI and inform the public by any appropriate means.
6. Monitor the Greek and international press on matters of interest to the HFRI and keep an archive of the related articles.
7. Monitor the activities of Greek and foreign bodies whose activities are similar to those of the HFRI and suggest ways of collaboration.

Article 20

Department of

Technical Support, Facilities, Equipment and IT Systems

The Department of Technical Support, Facilities, Equipment and IT Systems shall provide all services related to the technical support of the HFRI buildings, facilities, equipment and IT systems. The head of the Department shall report to the Administrative Director and shall coordinate and ensure the coordination and proper functioning of the department. More specifically, the Department in question shall:

1. Be responsible for the safe and unimpeded functioning of all types of infrastructure (buildings, IT, etc.) and for their maintenance.
2. Be responsible for collecting all types of technical project studies and for coordinating actions required to obtain any type of administrative licences required.
3. Keep a detailed register of fixed assets in cooperation with the independent Department of Financial Services.
4. Monitor and support the proper and uninterrupted functioning of software, IT systems and the HFRI website.
5. Train and support users of IT applications.

Article 21

Department of Research Projects

The Department of Research Projects shall provide all services related to the design and implementation of the HFRI financing actions. In addition, the Department shall process and evaluate data pertaining to the HFRI financing and other actions. The head of the Department shall report to the Administrative Director and shall coordinate and ensure the coordination and proper functioning of the department. More specifically, the Department in question shall:

1. Plan, draw up and publish calls for the actions

financed by the HFRI, following approval by the Director and in accordance with the annual action budget and the decisions of the SC and the Director.

2. Draw up and publish detailed application guides, where foreseen, and internal rules of committees, where necessary.

3. Organise and monitor all stages of the procedure: call, submission, evaluation of grant applications, objections and, in general, the entire procedure until the final results have been published.

4. Draw up and publish financing decisions.

5. Monitor the progress of implementation of financed actions, perform the audits foreseen and perform any action necessary for the completion of the actions.

6. Propose to the HFRI Director to issue a project completion attestation or an act amending or revoking the financing decision.

7. Collect, process, classify and present data on HFRI actions.

8. Evaluate the results of the HFRI actions and suggest corrective interventions to improve and rationalise its activities.

9. Assess the short- and long-term needs of the country's research network and suggest measures for its reinforcement.

Article 22

Department of Financial Services

The independent Department of Financial Services shall exercise all competences pertaining to financial management, accounting, payroll, procurement, and cash management. The head of the Independent Department of Financial Services shall coordinate and ensure the coordination and proper functioning of the department and shall exercise the powers of Head of Financial Services laid down in Articles 25, 26 and 69C of Law 4270/2014. More specifically, the Department in question shall:

1. Draw up the annual budget, the annual financial statements (General Balance Sheet, Profit and Loss Account, etc.).

2. Perform and monitor cashflow management.

3. Perform and supervise all financial, accounting and fiscal activities of the HFRI.

4. Manage staff payroll and pay all types of remuneration to the members of the HFRI governing bodies, make all payments and manage the HFRI cash.

5. Supervise the HFRI annual financial results, audits and analyse the HFRI operating cost.

6. Manage and utilise the HFRI cash with banks under permanent or special mandate from the Director.

7. Issue financial documents and monitor the execution of HFRI contracts from a financial perspective.

8. Conclude all types of procurement contracts (for services, materials, etc.).

9. Ensure that the HFRI central warehouse is kept and monitored, and perform annual scheduled inventories.

10. The cash management office shall ensure the audit, clearance, invoicing and registration of expenses.

Article 23

Independent Legal Office

The Legal Office shall be under the HFRI Director. The staff of the Legal Office shall cooperate with the Administrative Director in matters of their purview. More specifically, the Legal Office shall:

1. Provide legal services and express opinions on matters pertaining to the HFRI activities.
2. Represent the HFRI in all types of legal proceedings, judicial or extrajudicial, subject to special authorisation by the Director.
3. Draw up draft HFRI administrative acts and contracts.
4. Monitor the legislation and case law that regulates the operation of the HFRI and inform the HFRI bodies and services.
5. Attend the meetings of the GA and of the SC, if so required by the Chairperson of the collective body involved.

CHAPTER IV HFRI staff

Article 24 Number and allocation of staff positions

The HFRI shall have thirty-five (35) organic staff positions fillable under with open-ended employment contracts governed by private law, which shall be allocated per category and sector as follows:

DIRECTORATE OF ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES: thirty-five (35) positions

Administrative Director:

Master's degree in Administration or Finance/Economics and at least 5 years of experience in administration or finance/economics.

1. DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES: 9 (nine) positions

Head of the Department of Administrative Services: Degree in Administration or Finance/Economics and at least 5 years of experience in administration.

A Master's degree shall be considered an asset.

- Secretariat - Registry:

2 (two) positions requiring a degree in Administration or Finance/Economics and knowledge of at least one foreign language.

1 (one) positions requiring a technical university diploma in Administration or Finance/Economics and knowledge of at least one foreign language.

- Public Relations:

1 (one) position requiring a degree in Administration or Finance/Economics

- Human Resources:

2 (two) positions requiring a degree in Administration or Finance/Economics

1 (one) position requiring a technical university diploma in Administration or Finance/Economics

1 (one) assistant staff position requiring mandatory education

1 (one) recordkeeper position requiring secondary education

2. DEPARTMENT OF TECHNICAL SUPPORT, FACILITIES, EQUIPMENT AND IT SYSTEMS: 4 (four) positions

Head of the Department of Technical Support, Facilities, Equipment and IT Systems: degree in Information Technology or Computer Engineering or other related field and at least 5 years of experience in one of the department's areas of competence.

A Master's degree shall be considered an asset.

- IT System Technical Support:

2 (two) positions requiring a degree in IT or Computer Engineering or other related field.

1 (one) position requiring a technical university degree in IT or Computer Engineering or other related field.

- Technical Support of Facilities and Equipment: 1 (one) position requiring a technical university diploma in Engineering or other related technical field.

3. DEPARTMENT OF RESEARCH PROJECTS: 12 (twelve) positions

Head of the Department of Research Projects: Master's degree in Administration or Accounting and at least 5 years of experience in the Department's area of competence.

A Ph.D. shall be considered an asset.

- Planning, drawing up of calls for expression of interest and management of research projects and post-doctoral studies:

4 (four) positions requiring a Master's degree in Administration or Finance/Economics and experience in the Department's area of competence.

- Planning, drawing up of calls for expression of interest and management of scholarships:

3 (three) positions requiring a Master's degree in Administration or Finance/Economics and experience in the Department's area of competence.

- Planning, drawing up of calls for expression of interest and management of research equipment:

2 (two) positions requiring a Master's degree in Administration or Finance/Economics and experience in the Department's area of competence.

- Planning, drawing up of calls for expression of interest and management of scientific and social research actions and other actions:

2 (two) positions requiring a Master's degree in Administration or Finance/Economics and experience in the Department's area of competence.

- Assessment of results and statistical processing:

1 (one) position requiring a degree in finance, economics, administration, science or other related field.

INDEPENDENT DEPARTMENT OF FINANCIAL SERVICES: 9 (nine) positions

Head of the Department of Financial Services: degree in finance and at least 5 years of relevant experience. A Master's degree in a relevant field shall be considered an asset.

- Financial Management, Accounting and Payroll: 6 (six) positions requiring a university degree in Finance 1 (one) position requiring a technical university degree in Finance.

- Cash office:

1 (one) position requiring a degree in Finance or Accounting.

- Procurement:

1 (one) position requiring a degree in law, finance or accounting.

INDEPENDENT LEGAL OFFICE: 1 Legal Advisor position: Attorney at the Supreme Court, with a degree in Law, a Master's degree and experience in research projects.

Article 25

Categories of staff

The staff employed by the HFRI shall belong to the following categories:

1. Regular staff, employed by the HFRI under indefinite term employment contracts and recruited via the Supreme Council for Civil Personnel Selection (ASEP), pursuant to Law 2190/1994.

a. Temporary staff, employed by the HFRI under service contracts or fixed-term private law employment contracts, or agent contracts with a duration of up to three (3)-years, which may be renewed (paragraph 2 of Article 10 of Law 4429/2016, as replaced by paragraph 17 of Article 69 of Law 4485/2017, Government Gazette, Series I, no. 114), the total number of whom may not exceed twenty-three (23) persons.

b. The HFRI Director shall draw up and publish on the HFRI website a call for the expression of interest for these positions. The call shall mention the object of the contract, shall specify the required qualifications depending on the position being advertised and the way in which they will be evaluated; it shall also mention the deadline and the manner of submission of applications. By virtue of the same decision, the Director shall establish a 3-member evaluation committee, which shall be made up of HFRI staff or external members or members of the HFRI governing bodies (GA, SC). The evaluation committee shall assess the applications, rank the candidates according to their qualifications and make recommendations to the Director. If it deems it necessary, the evaluation committee may invite the candidates (or some of them) to an interview (paragraph 2 of Article 10 of Law 4429/2016, as replaced by paragraph 17 of Article 69 of Law 4485/2017, Government Gazette, Series I, no. 114).

c. The staff shall be hired by virtue of a decision of the Director, which shall be submitted to the Scientific Council for approval.

d. The temporary staff contracts fall under the exceptions of paragraph 8 of Article 6 of Law 2527/1997 (Government Gazette, Series I, no. 206), as in force (paragraph 2 of Article 10 of Law 4429/2016, as replaced by paragraph 17 of Article 69 of Law 4485/2017, Government Gazette, Series I, no. 114).

2. Staff seconded to the HFRI from another State agency or another legal entity, governed by public or private law (paragraph 3 of Article 10 of Law 4429/2016, as replaced by paragraph 4 of Article 98 of Law 4547/2018, Government Gazette, Series I, no. 102). The length of secondment shall be considered, in all aspects, the actual time spent at the organic position in the department or legal entity where the employee is placed. The total number of employees seconded to the HFRI shall not exceed five (5).

3. a. The members of staff shall avoid any situation

in which a conflict of interest may arise. A conflict of interest shall arise when members of staff have private or personal interests, which may affect, or appear to affect, the impartial and objective execution of their duties. Private or personal interests of the members of staff means any potential benefit which they, their families or other relatives by blood or marriage, up to the second degree of kinship, may have.

b. Members of staff

may not conclude contracts with the HFRI other than the contracts for their employment at the specific position and may not participate in a research team that receives financing from the HFRI, or act as experts or members of evaluation committees for financing by the HFRI.

c. The prohibition of the previous paragraph shall also apply to the members' spouses or life partners with whom they have entered into a civil partnership, and to persons related to them by blood or marriage up to the second degree of kinship.

d. Should any of the aforementioned incompatibility criteria apply to the member of staff, such member shall be removed from office and their contract shall be declared null and void.

e. The members of staff are under the obligation of confidentiality and are bound by professional secrecy.

Article 26

Remuneration

1. The remuneration and all compensation of the members of HFRI staff (regular, temporary, seconded) shall be covered by the HFRI budget.

2. The remuneration of the members of HFRI staff (regular, temporary, seconded) shall be calculated pursuant to the provisions of Chapter B of Law 4354/2015.

Article 27

Personal Personnel File

1. The Directorate of Financial and Administrative Support shall keep a personal personnel file for each member of staff of the Centre.

2. The file shall contain the data stipulated in Presidential Decree 178/2004. This file shall also contain all other data related to the employee's employment status such as commendations, reports and disciplinary sanctions.

4. The data contained in the personnel file constitute personal data and shall be processed pursuant to the General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679 and Presidential Decree 28/2015.

Article 28

Staff assessment - Grades

1. The HFRI staff shall be assessed annually. The assessment of employees shall be performed in full transparency, cooperation and dialogue, so that its results may be substantial for both the employee and the HFRI.

2. The provisions hereof pertaining to the assessment system shall apply to HFRI staff employed under open-ended employment contract governed by private law.

3. The employees and managers of the organic units shall be assessed by two of their hierarchical superiors in the Foundation's organic structure.

4. Each assessor must draw up assessment reports for all employees under his/her authority, whom he/she has supervised for five (5) months or more during the previous year, even if he/she is posted in another department at the time the assessment reports are drawn up.

If the manager has completed at least 5 (five) months of service but the employment relationship was terminated due to resignation or retirement, the assessment reports shall be drawn up before his/her departure and submitted by the competent personnel unit.

In case of actual inability of the manager who acts as assessor, the assessment reports shall be drawn up by his/her duly appointed deputy, provided that the latter has served as a deputy manager for at least one third (1/3) of the period covered by the assessment. Where this is not the case or no duly-appointed deputy exists, the assessment reports shall be drawn up, by way of exception, by the assessor's immediate superior.

5. The assessment report shall include as a minimum: a) The employee's qualifications, and the training he/she has received during the years covered by the assessment.

b) A summary description of the work carried out by the organic unit (Directorate, Department) to which the employee being assessed serves, during the period covered by the assessment.

c) A brief description of the work carried out by the assessed employee during the period covered by the assessment.

d) The information about the employee's interview. e) The grades awarded to the assessed employee based on the criteria laid out in the following paragraphs.

6. a) The Human Resources Department shall be responsible for ensuring compliance with the assessment procedures. If the assessment report is found to be incomplete or inaccurate or not properly filled in, it shall be returned by the head of the department so that it may be completed or corrected.

b) All assessment reports must be sent to the employee whom they concern.

c) The employee is entitled to have full knowledge of his/her assessment reports and may request a copy thereof from the Human Resources department any time.

7. The final assessment grade shall be the average of the grades awarded by the two (2) assessors. If the grades awarded by the two (2) assessors diverge by more than twenty-four (24) percentage points, the assessment reports shall be forwarded to the Scientific Council which shall make the grading.

8. Employee assessment criteria and procedure The assessment criteria for all employees are divided into the following categories:

A. Knowledge of the subject matter, interest and creativity.

B. Professional relations and conduct.

C. Efficiency.

Each category comprises the following criteria:

A. KNOWLEDGE OF THE SUBJECT MATTER, INTEREST

AND CREATIVITY

a) Administrative capacity, professional competence, ability to apply knowledge and experience in performing tasks.

b) Full knowledge of the administrative work carried out by the Foundation.

c) Display of interest, development of skills and dedication in performing professional tasks.

d) Initiative, innovation, ability to prioritise, coordination and planning of work.

e) Ability to elaborate studies, write articles or proposals and validate such papers.

f) Ability to assume responsibilities and perform several tasks related to the nature of the service. Ability to prioritise, coordinate and plan activities.

B. PROFESSIONAL RELATIONS AND CONDUCT

g) Communication and excellent cooperation with colleagues in the same unit or in other departments.

h) Attitude towards citizens and ability to respond immediately to their needs.

C. EFFICIENCY

i) Quantity and quality of work performance (specifically: crisis management, upgrade of the working environment, added value to administrative work).

j) Degree to which the personal targets have been achieved, participation in setting the Department's targets.

Criterion (h) only applies to employees whose duties involved communication with the public. Criterion (j) only applies if targets have been set for the years covered by the assessment.

9. Each individual assessment criterion is graded by the assessors with a whole number that they believe the employee being assessed deserves. The grades shall be on a scale of 0 to 100.

Grades 90 to 100 shall be awarded to excellent employees, who have performed their tasks outstandingly. "Outstanding performance" means the provision of high-quality work by the assessed employee which has resulted in significant benefits for the Foundation. Grades of 90 or higher must be duly justified against the assessment criteria and substantiated by factual information and data.

Grades 75 to 89 shall be awarded to very competent employees, who are able to fully meet the requirements of their position, cope with all professional matters and may need only occasional assistance in performing their duties.

Grades 60 to 74 shall be awarded to competent employees who consistently seek to meet the requirements of their position but do not satisfy the aforementioned criteria.

Grades 50 to 59 shall be awarded to partially competent employees, who perform below the average and may need assistance in performing their tasks.

Grades 40 to 49 shall be awarded to average employees, who normally require assistance in performing their tasks.

Grades 25 to 39 shall be awarded to incompetent

employees.

Grades 0 to 24 shall be awarded to employees who are unsuited for the specific job.

Any grade below sixty (60) must be duly justified and substantiated by reference to specific events and objective data and information recorded in the employee's personal file, such disciplinary sanctions imposed, unfavourable comments by the employee's superiors or other objective data that clearly prove that the employee does not perform his/her professional duties adequately.

In the absence of data substantiating the unfavourable grade, the employee may appeal to the Scientific Council.

10. Once the assessment reports have been finalised, the competent department shall communicate the assessment report to the employee being assessed.

11. Criteria and procedure for the assessment of the heads of organic units.

The assessment criteria for the heads of organic units are classified as follows:

A. Knowledge of the subject matter, understanding, interest and creativity.

B. Professional relations and conduct.

C. Administrative skills.

D. Efficiency.

Each category comprises the following criteria:

A. KNOWLEDGE OF THE SUBJECT MATTER, UNDERSTANDING, INTEREST AND CREATIVITY a) Professional competence.

The following are assessed: knowledge of the public administration subject matter, ability to organise individual and collective workload, and sound judgment. b) Understanding and problem-solving skills. The following are assessed: correct understanding of problems, ability to understand complex situations, forethought and timely handling of consequences, and correct crisis management. c) Initiative - Innovations.

The following are assessed: ability to develop creative and practical solutions, ability to constantly improve performance and creativity, and ability to introduce and accept innovative methods.

B. PROFESSIONAL RELATIONS AND CONDUCT d) Conduct to citizens. Customer service. e) Communication and cooperation with superiors. f) Communication and cooperation with subordinates. The following are assessed: ability to communicate precisely and clearly, verbally and in writing, negotiation skills and understanding of communication problems, respect for diversity. C. ADMINISTRATIVE SKILLS

g) Ability to plan, organise, coordinate and control the tasks of his/her unit. The following are assessed: leadership skills, especially with regard to the preparation of future executives and the allocation of tasks to the staff they supervise.

h) Ability to guide, inform, motivate employees, develop their professional and personal abilities and skills, provide incentives for constant training, set an example for proactive participation in conventions, conferences and international events.

i) Ability to conduct objective and fair assessments.

j) Ability to make effective decisions, especially at times of crisis.

D. EFFICIENCY

k) Degree to which personal targets are reached.

Criterion (d) applies only to managers whose organic units are involved in communication with the public. Criterion (k) only applies in case targets have been set for the years covered by the assessment.

12. Each individual assessment criterion is graded by the assessors with a whole number that they objectively believe the employee being assessed deserves for the relevant criterion. The grades shall be on a scale of 0 to 100.

Grades 90 to 100 shall be awarded to excellent managers whose performance during the time covered by the assessment was outstanding. The term outstanding performance shall be understood to mean the high-level ability to coordinate the organic unit towards achieving preset goals which significantly benefited the Foundation.

Grades 75 to 89 shall be awarded by the assessors to very competent managers, who are able to fully meet the requirements of their positions and handle all professional matters.

Grades 60 to 74 shall be awarded to competent managers.

Grades 50 to 59 shall be awarded to partially competent managers.

Grades 40 to 49 shall be awarded to average managers.

Grades 25 to 39 shall be awarded to incompetent managers.

Grades 0 to 24 shall be awarded to managers who are unsuited for their position.

Any grade below 60 must be specifically justified and be corroborated by actual facts and objective data and information which prove the inadequate management of the structure and its human resources. In the absence of data substantiating the unfavourable grade, the manager being assessed may appeal to the Scientific Council.

13. The assessment of managers shall also take into account the assessment given by their subordinates, as described below.

The head of a Department shall also be assessed by all his/her immediate subordinates. The head of a Directorate shall be assessed by the heads of Department and, if they are fewer than three (3), by all employees of the Directorate.

The assessment by the subordinates, as per above, shall be performed via an anonymous questionnaire, drawn up by the Human Resources Department.

This questionnaire shall include the following criteria:

a) ability to manage human resources;

b) ability to guide subordinates efficiently, professional relations and conduct; c) ability to manage crises; d) ability to assume responsibility;

e) openness to the adoption of new methods and technologies.

The subordinates shall assess their manager based on the aforementioned criteria on the following grading scale: 90 - 100: excellent

75 - 89: very competent

60 - 74: competent

50 - 59: rather competent

40 - 49: average

25 - 39: incompetent

0 - 24: unsuitable.

Each criterion shall be graded separately.

The assessment grades awarded to managers by their subordinates shall accompany the personal assessment file of each manager and shall be taken into account during his/her assessments.

14. Interview

Prior to the completion of the assessment, the immediate superior, as first assessor, shall invite the employee to discuss ways of improving his/her performance and making better use of and developing his/her skills to the benefit of the employee him/herself and to the general functioning and performance of the organic unit in which the employee serves.

15. Appeals

The employee being assessed shall be entitled to appeal to the Scientific Council if the average grade of his/her Assessment Report is lower than seventy-five (75).

The appeal must contain details of the specific data and actual facts that the employee being assessed believes corroborate his/her claims.

Appeals shall be submitted within a mandatory deadline of seven (7) business days from the date on which the employee was notified of the report. Appeals shall be submitted to the Human Resources Department, which shall forward them to the Scientific Council.

The Scientific Council shall examine the admissibility and substance of the appeal and may either finalise or correct the assessment report with full justification. The Scientific Council shall be entitled to request any additional clarifications it deems necessary from the assessors

or from the employee being assessed and, in general, shall perform all actions required to verify the claims put forward. The Scientific Council shall decide on these appeals within a deadline of two (2) months from the date of submission thereof.

16. Any matters relating to the assessment procedure and the form and content of the Assessment Report Forms shall be regulated by a decision of the Director. The decision in question shall be sent to the employees being assessed before the start of the procedure, so that they may be notified in due time.

17. Employees shall be informed of the assessment procedure, as described in the Internal Operation Rules of the HFRI and shall personally and in writing receive the results of their assessment, as well as the related comments that accompany it, upon completion of the procedure.

18. If the competent bodies do not perform an assessment, there will be no consequences for employees.

19. The employees of the HFRI shall be classified into job grades according to the following structure:

a. Positions requiring University Education (UE), Technical Education (TE), Secondary Education (SE) and Mandatory Education (ME) shall be classified in five (5) job grades, as follows:

Grade A

Grade B

Grade C

Grade D

Grade E

b. Positions requiring UE, TE and SE shall be classified in job grades D, C, B and A, where D is the lowest and A is the highest grade. Positions requiring ME shall be classified in job grades E, D, C and B, where E is the lowest and B is the highest grade.

c. The entry level grade for positions requiring UE, TE and SE shall be grade D; while that for positions requiring ME shall be grade E. Holders of a Ph.D. shall enter the service at grade B.

Holders of a Master's degree shall enter the service at grade C. Employees must remain at the entry-level grade applicable to their position for two (2) consecutive years, regardless of the formal qualifications they may obtain in the meantime.

d. The job grades of all positions requiring UE, TE, SE and ME shall be organically interconnected.

e. Promotion

Promotion from one grade to the next shall require:

- For positions requiring ME:

Two years of service in grade E for promotion from grade E to grade D; ten years of service in grade D for promotion from grade D to grade C; and ten years of service in grade C for promotion from grade C to grade B.

- For positions requiring SE:

Two years of service in grade D for promotion from grade D to grade C; eight years of service in grade C for promotion from grade C to grade B; and six years of service in grade B for promotion from grade B to grade A.

- For positions requiring TE:

Two years of service in grade D for promotion from grade D to grade C; six years of service in grade C for promotion from grade C to grade B; and six years of service in grade B for promotion from grade B to grade A.

- For positions requiring UE:

Two years of service in grade D for promotion from grade D to grade C; five years of service in grade C for promotion from grade C to grade B; and six years of service in grade B for promotion from grade B to grade A.

For employees at positions requiring UE or TE, holders of a Master's degree awarded after at least one (1) year of studies, the time required for promotion from one grade to the next shall be reduced by a total of two (2) years. For holders of a Ph.D., the time required for promotion shall be reduced by a total of six (6) years. If the employee holds a Master's degree and a Ph.D., the time required for promotion shall be reduced only by the period applicable to Ph.D. If the employee holds more than one Master's degrees, the time required for promotion shall be reduced by one (1) year for each consecutive degree after the first.

Employees who, during their assessment, receive a grade higher than or equal to 90 for two (2) consecutive periods, may be promoted one (1) year sooner. If such assessment grades relate to the employee's last year in a certain job grade, the one (1) year period shall be taken into account in the calculation of the time served in the next grade.

f. Promotions shall require a decision by the Scientific

Council.

Employees shall be promoted to the immediately next grade if they have served in their current grade for the required time and possess the essential qualifications mentioned in their assessment reports to a high degree. The decisions relating to promotions shall not be posted in Diavgeia (the State transparency website), nor shall they be published in the Government Gazette.

g. The Scientific Council shall recognise employees' prior experience and classify them on recruitment depending on the actual time of the employee's prior experience in the public or private sector.

20. The heads of HFRI organic units shall be appointed by virtue of a decision of the Director, approved by the Scientific Council. The positions in question shall be occupied by staff serving at the HFRI under any type of employment contract or by secondment or transfer or temporary assignment, with the exception of the head of Financial Services, who shall either be employed by the HFRI under an open-ended contract or shall be a permanent employee (under an open-ended contract governed by public or private law) at the public or wider public sector (legal entity governed by private or public law), who is serving at the HFRI by secondment or transfer, temporary assignment or out-hiring.

Article 29

Leaves of absence

Employees' leaves of absence shall be governed, depending on their employment relationship, by the provisions of Articles

48-60 of the Public Servants' Code (Law 3528/2007, Government Gazette, Series I, no. 26).

Article 30

Disciplinary offences and sanctions

1. Disciplinary offences and sanctions shall be governed, depending on the HFRI employees' employment relationship, by the provisions of Articles 106-146 of the Public Servants' Code (Law 3528/2007, Government Gazette, Series I, no. 26).

2. The Director shall have disciplinary jurisdiction at first instance and the Scientific Council on appeal.

3. The employee must have been invited to submit a written statement in his/her own defense before any disciplinary sanction may be imposed. This statement shall be submitted within eight (8) calendar days from the notification of the invitation to the employee. The invitation must mention the offence of which the employee is accused. Failure by the employee to submit his/her statement on time does not preclude the adoption of a decision.

4. Before drawing up the statement, the employee shall be entitled to obtain full knowledge of the case file.

5. The appeal before the Scientific Council shall be submitted within fifteen (15) calendar days from the notification of the decision at first instance to the employee. Submission of an appeal shall suspend the enforcement of the first instance decision until the Scientific Council has issued its decision.

Chapter V:

Financial operation

Article 31

Accounting

1. The HFRI shall pursue both non-economic and economic activities. Its economic activities shall be governed by the rules on state aid.

2. The HFRI shall ensure that its non-economic and economic activities are accounted for separately and recorded separately in the double-entry books that the Foundation shall keep pursuant to the following articles.

3. The HFRI fiscal year shall start on 1 January each year and shall end on 31 December each year.

4. The HFRI shall keep all necessary financial and supporting documents and shall make them available to competent bodies, whenever requested.

Article 32

Financial Management

1. The financial operation of the HFRI and the financing of research programmes by the Foundation shall be carried out based on the principles of outstanding academic performance, transparency, meritocracy, and good financial management.

2. The HFRI shall draw up an annual report, which shall be published on its official website. The annual report shall include the HFRI financial statement and a report of its activities. The financial report shall include the HFRI balance sheet, profit-and-loss account, and cash flows. The annual report for the previous year shall be submitted to the Minister in October each year.

3. The budget shall be drawn up annually and shall include the budget of fixed and invariable costs, as well as the financing of projects and programmes that have been launched or will be launched by the HFRI for the year following the year covered by the budget, as well as the budget of the HFRI revenue. The budget shall reflect, as closely as possible, the revenue and expenditure for the following year, so that the HFRI may achieve the goals and objectives of its mission. The budget shall reflect the funds required for financing the HFRI invariable expenditure and payroll, the financing of research and development projects, and programmes that have been launched or will be launched during the year, for financing of buildings and other infrastructure and equipment; lastly, it shall reflect the sources of such financing. Once approved by the HFRI bodies, the budget shall be submitted to the competent authorities, pursuant to the applicable law.

4. The regular audit on the HFRI financial management shall be annual and shall be carried out by two certified accountants, who shall be appointed, along with an equal number of deputies, by decision of the director of the HFRI, to verify the legality of financial management based on the information contained in the annual report. The certified accountants' fee shall be charged to the HFRI budget.

5. The competent minister may, at any time, request ad hoc audits of the HFRI financial management.

6. Each year, two months after the end of the fiscal year, the Foundation shall submit to its supervising bodies and to the bodies awarding grants and/or financing, if they are not the same, and to the Court of Audit, a report on its overall economic activity and a separate report on the grants or financing it has awarded, if they are less than 100% of the total amounts it managed. The

forementioned reports shall be accompanied by the budget for the following year.

7. The HFRI shall apply Law 4308/2014 on the Greek Accounting Standards, similar arrangements and other provisions (Government Gazette, Series I, no. 251).

PART TWO IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FOUNDATION'S ACTIVITIES

CHAPTER VI SELECTION AND APPROVAL OF OPERATIONS

Article 33
Actions required for the publication of calls for expression of interest

1. The Director shall ensure that calls for expression of interest for financing are duly drawn up and published. Calls

for expressions of interest for financing shall be directly related and issued pursuant to:

a. The Minister's decision regarding the annual allocation of the HFRI resources per category of action and scientific field, which shall be issued, following a proposal by the Scientific Council, at the end of each year. The decision shall concern the following financial year. Should the Scientific Council fail to submit a proposal by the end of October, the Minister shall issue a decision on the allocation of funds without a proposal.

b. The annual Scientific Plan of the Foundation (SPF), which shall be issued at the end of each year by the Scientific Council. The SPF shall set out the HFRI annual actions, pursuant to the ministerial decision referred to in point a.

The SPF shall include, as a minimum, a timetable for issuing calls for expression of interest and shall be posted on the HFRI website and on the website of the Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs. In addition to the title of forthcoming calls for expression of interest, the estimated date on which they will be published and the indicative budget, the SPF shall also mention certain essential information, such as the type of actions, the type of potential beneficiaries and the expenditure that is eligible for financing. The timetable issuing forthcoming calls for expression of interest shall be annual and shall be updated in accordance with the changes in the HFRI action plan.

Article 34
Contents of the call and application manual

1. The call for expression of interest and the application manual shall include, by way of an example and to the extent that they apply to the category of action launched (scholarships, research programmes, financing for the purchase of research equipment, and other actions), the following information:

a. The legislative and regulatory framework for the implementation of the action;

b. The category of the action (scholarships, research programmes, financing for the purchase of research equipment, support to actions that promote science in

society, etc.);

c. The action identification data (content, objective, general and/or specific indices/indicators) and the total amount available for grant applications, as well as the maximum allocation limits per application, where applicable;

d. The deadline for submission of grant applications and the procedure for submitting them to the Information System (IS);

e. The web address at which potential beneficiaries may access the IS, and the means by which they will be informed by the system regarding the progress of their application;

f. The eligibility terms and conditions, which potential beneficiaries must fulfil, so that their grant applications may be selected for financing;

g. The criteria by which the grant applications will be evaluated and selected, the methodology and the competent bodies that will conduct the selection procedure; h. The type of financing to be awarded, i. The total budget for the action and its allocation per approved proposal; the maximum financing limit per proposal and any minimums must also be specified; j. Information regarding the maximum amount of financing that may be awarded, as a percentage of public participation in the total budget of the proposal, as well as the minimum rate of co-financing and the manner in which it will be covered (where foreseen); k. The activities that are eligible for financing under the proposals, and the corresponding eligible categories of expenditure, with special reference to the various implementation stages of the action; l. The procedure for submission and receipt of grant applications and accompanying documentation and information: the call must mention the manner of submission of grant applications; the exact end date and time of the submission procedure; the manner in which potential beneficiaries will be informed of the receipt and progress of their application; the documentation and information that must accompany the application, either in electronic or in printed format; information regarding the submission of queries by the interested parties and the provision of clarifications by the HFRI; m. The deadline for and manner of submission of objections on evaluation results, the body that will examine such objections, and the procedure to be followed; n. The competent bodies at national, regional or local level, that may provide information regarding the action; o. The procedure by which the results of the selection procedure and the financing decision will be announced;

p. The procedure by which the financing will be disbursed; q. The obligations of the beneficiaries and, in particular, their obligation to keep data, follow the rules of disclosure and accept audits and verifications from competent bodies; r. The terms and conditions for the implementation of approved grant applications;

s. The procedure for monitoring the implementation of approved grant applications, specifying milestones, where feasible; t. The procedure for performing audits and verifications and submitting objections; u. The procedure

for modifying the outputs and financial structure of approved grant applications; v. The procedure for monitoring the fulfilment of beneficiaries' long-term obligations and the procedure for certifying the completion of approved grant applications; w. The procedure for imposing sanctions, revoking or amending the financing decision, recovering financing and any unduly paid sums and the competent bodies on these matters;

x. If an intermediate body is foreseen for the implementation of a given action, the call must specify this body and its role in the implementation of the grant applications to be financed;

y. The possibility to disclose information concerning approved grant applications.

2. The call must state explicitly that the grant applications shall not be eligible, if their outputs have been completed or if they have been fully implemented before the submission of the grant application by the potential beneficiary.

3. To assist the efforts of potential beneficiaries, the call may be accompanied by or refer to a related detailed Action Plan Application Manual. The manual shall contain detailed information on the conditions and procedures of which potential beneficiaries must be aware, and detailed instructions for filling in and submitting grant applications. In that case, the call must contain an express reference to the manual in question and to the manner in which it may be accessed.

4. The methodology and selection criteria, as defined in the call and the related application manual, shall be formulated in such a way as to be non-discriminatory, serve the principles of meritocracy, excellence, transparency and guarantee that the grant applications contribute to the achievement of the specific goals and results as described in the HFRI action plan.

Article 35

Publication of the call for expression of interest

1. The call shall be posted on the websites of the HFRI, the GSRT and the Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs.

2. A summary of the call shall be posted on the DIAVGEIA portal. The HFRI shall keep an archive of the proofs of publication of all calls.

3. The HFRI may adopt additional publicity measures to inform potential beneficiaries, such as:

- organisation of open information days;
- organisation of a Help Desk to provide potential beneficiaries with uniform and standardised information.

Article 36

Submission and receipt of grant applications

1. Submission of grant applications

Potential beneficiaries must submit grant applications via the IS, using the related standardised grant application submission form and in accordance with the terms of the relevant call. Grant applications in which some mandatory IS fields have not been filled in shall not be taken into account. A scientific manager whose application has already been financed following the publication of an HFRI call may not submit a new grant application in the call immediately following; even if they

do submit an application, such application shall not be taken into account and shall not be evaluated. The HFRI shall adapt the general IS user manual published depending on the contents of the call.

The HFRI shall provide operational support services to users of the IS (helpdesk) on matters related to the implementation of the call for the entire procedure for submission of grant applications.

2. Receipt of grant applications:

Once the application has been submitted and received on time, the full receipt data shall be registered in the IS, in accordance with the provisions of the related call, while the potential beneficiary shall be informed of its receipt via the IS, in accordance with the related instructions of the call. All grant applications and supporting documentation foreseen by the call shall be archived by the HFRI.

3. Control of the completeness of grant applications:

The completeness of submitted grant applications shall be controlled via the IS, based on a standardised check list, in accordance with the terms of the call, to ensure that each grant application has been duly filled in, drawn up and submitted, as specified in the call. As soon as the related control has been completed, potential beneficiaries whose grant applications are not complete and, therefore, not forwarded for evaluation, shall be notified.

Article 37

Evaluation of grant applications

1. Once the proposal has been duly submitted on time, it shall be evaluated, in accordance with the criteria and the methodology described in the call and in the Application Manual for the action, placing emphasis on the scientific adequacy and quality of grant applications. The procedures to be followed shall guarantee the swift and as non-bureaucratic as possible completion of grant applications, drafting of studies and implementation of actions described in the call.

i. Evaluation - selection of experts/assessors

a. The evaluation shall be conducted by one or more independent experts and/or thematic evaluation committees, depending on the nature and the number of scientific fields covered by the action. The Scientific Council may draw up lists of experts and assessors per scientific field, who may originate from the Register of Certified Assessors referred to in Article 27 of Law 4310/2014.

b. The experts/assessors shall submit to the IS a statement on the absence of a conflict of interests.

c. If the list does not contain the number of experts/assessors required for a specific evaluation, expert scientists from the country or abroad, not included in the Register of Certified Assessors, may be appointed as members, by decision of the Scientific Council, taken with the consent of the Advisory Committee. If the assessors are to be remunerated, such remuneration shall be determined pursuant to the provisions of Article 21 of Law 4354/2015, as in force.

ii. Evaluation procedure

a. Grant applications shall be evaluated comparatively, except in specific cases where, with full and specifically documented justification, the call suggests

direct evaluation as being the most appropriate solution, in accordance with the provisions of the following paragraphs.

b. Grant applications shall be evaluated comparatively in actions where the fulfilment of minimum requirements is sufficient to cover the objectives of the SPF. In that case, all grant applications submitted within the deadline set in the call shall be evaluated. Grant applications shall be financed based on their ranking in the list of evaluation results of duly submitted grant applications, until the budget of the call has been exhausted. The following lists shall be drawn up during the evaluation procedure: list of approved grant applications; list of rejected grant applications due to negative evaluation; and list of approved grant applications, which will not receive financing due to exhaustion of the call budget.

c. Direct evaluation involves separate evaluation of each grant application, based on the first-in first-out principle and the available resources. Grant applications shall be approved if the conditions set by the call are met; otherwise, they shall be rejected.

ii. Completion of the evaluation - Announcement of results

The assessment process may not exceed six (6) months. Potential beneficiaries shall be notified of the results immediately, with individual, substantiated reference to the assessment of each evaluation criterion. The results shall be posted on the HFRI website. The HFRI shall ensure that all information regarding the evaluation is archived. The evaluation records may be archived electronically via the Administrative Information Management System. Potential beneficiaries shall be notified of the evaluation results by any appropriate means and in any case via the IS, in accordance with the related terms of the call.

Article 38

Submission of objections

1. Potential beneficiaries shall be entitled to submit objections on matters pertaining to the lawfulness of the procedure within a deadline of ten (10) days from the date of notification of the evaluation decision. Objections shall be submitted to the HFRI and shall be examined by a Redress Committee specifically constituted for that purpose, for each call, by virtue of a decision of the Scientific Council following a proposal by the Advisory Committee.

2. Redress Committees shall be composed of at least three (3) members, who may originate from the Register of Assessors, shall be appointed in accordance with the procedure for appointing assessors set out in Article 36, paragraph 2 above, and shall be other than the members of the evaluation committee. The Redress Committee shall meet and come to a decision within ten (10) days from filing the objection. The decisions of the Committee shall be taken by absolute majority of the members present, who may not be fewer than three (3). If the above deadline expires with no action taken, the objection shall be considered to have been rejected. The decision of the Redress Committee, which is binding, shall be forwarded to the HFRI Director, so that he/she may

issue the related decision, which shall be sent to the interested party.

Once the redress procedure has been completed, the decision approving the evaluation/ranking results shall be updated or supplemented, if required, and the evaluation/ranking results shall be notified once again.

3. The HFRI shall ensure that the results of the examination of objections are sent to the potential beneficiaries by any appropriate means.

Article 39

Decision

for financing of approved grant applications - notification

Once the application evaluation procedure has been completed, the Director shall issue the financing decision. Potential beneficiaries shall be notified of the evaluation results by any appropriate means and in any case via the IS, in accordance with the related terms of the call. The financing decision shall be an enforceable administrative act subject to an application for annulment before the Administrative Court of Appeal.

Article 40

The financing awarded by the Foundation shall be governed by the rules on state aid of EU and national law.

CHAPTER VII

MONITORING AND VERIFICATION OF ACTIONS

Article 41

Monitoring the progress of approved projects

1. Throughout the implementation of approved projects and for five (5) years following their completion, beneficiaries must keep and make available to the HFRI competent bodies all documentation, supporting documents and information concerning the approved project, in the manner foreseen, either in hard copy or in electronic format via the AIMS, so that it may be possible to check and verify that the project implementation (outputs and financial aspects) follows the timetable, the implementation terms, the applicable regulatory framework and the specific provisions of the call, the application manual and the financing decision.

The HFRI shall update the IS with information concerning actions that fall under its purview, such as the results of verifications.

2. If the beneficiary is found not to comply with their obligations regarding the implementation of the specific project, the HFRI shall adopt corrective measures, which - depending on the severity of the breach of obligations - may range from simple compliance recommendations to the beneficiary to exclusion of the approved project and revocation of the financing decision, in accordance with the provisions of the call and of the application manual.

3. Following the completion of the approved project, the persons responsible for its implementation shall submit a report on its results and impact.

Article 42

Control - Verification

1. The beneficiaries must accept on-the-spot and administrative controls by the competent bodies of the HFRI or other related bodies to whom this power has been delegated, both in their registered offices and at the locations where the approved project is being implemented, if they are other than the registered office, and facilitate the control by producing any information relating to the implementation of the approved project.

2. The procedure for administrative and/or on-the-spot verification may be applied at every stage of implementation of the approved project, as well as before any disbursement of financing for which the beneficiary submits a payment request to the HFRI, so that the related expenditure may be verified and/or certified.

Article 43

On-the-spot verification

i. Appointment of Verification Officer

a. The Director of the HFRI shall appoint a verification officer, which will be competent for certifying the beneficiaries' expenditure. The appointment decision shall determine, as a minimum, the object of the verification, i.e. the physical and economic object of the expenditure being certified, the time and place of the verification, and the details of the natural persons who will perform the verification. The natural person to be appointed as a verification officer must submit a statement to the effect that:

(a) he/she is not in a position of conflict of interests, and

(b) he/she has not participated in a previous stage of evaluation and/or monitoring of the financing.

ii. Notification of the beneficiary regarding impending verification

a. In accordance with the provisions of the call, beneficiaries shall be notified of the performance of on-the-spot verification in due time and in writing by the HFRI, specifying the date, the estimated duration and the manner of the verification, as well of all the information or staff that must be available to the verification officer.

b. In exceptional cases, when it is not possible to prove the implementation of the approved project or part thereof following its completion, on-the-spot verifications shall be performed without notification and without the beneficiary being required to submit a related request.

iii. Performance of on-the-spot verification

a. On-the-spot verification shall be performed by the verification officer at the location where the approved project is being implemented. The verification particulars shall depend on the object of the HFRI action and shall be specified in the relevant call and/or the financing decision. The verification must prove that the expenditure has indeed been made by the beneficiary for the specific project, that it is lawful, justified and complies with the principle of sound financial management, especially with regard to cost effectiveness and profitability, and that it is not covered from another source of financing.

b. The details to be verified shall be recorded by the verification officer in the verification report, which is a standardised IS form depending on the type of action.

Article 44

Administrative verification

1. An administrative verification shall be performed when expressly foreseen by the call and whenever an advance payment is foreseen.

2. The administrative verification pertains to all supporting documents of the approved project and may be performed via the AIMS. The amount of advance payment, where foreseen, shall be determined by the call for the specific action and may not exceed 60% of the total financing amount.

Article 45

Verification report

1. On completion of the verification procedure (on-the-spot or administrative) and in order to disburse the financing to the beneficiaries, the officer who has performed the verification shall draw up and register in the IS an (interim or final) verification report.

2. On finalisation of the verification report, the beneficiary shall be notified in writing of its results, so that:

a. they may raise objection, if they disagree with the results of the verification.

b. they may receive the balance of the financing, if the verification did not find any irregularities or if the beneficiary accepts the results of the report.

Article 46

Issuance of an action completion attestation

1. Based on the results of the verification report and the total information on the approved project, the Director of the HFRI shall draw up and publish, via the IS, an action completion attestation. This attestation shall:

a. Confirm that the implementation of the approved project has been completed in terms of outputs, in accordance with the conditions set in the call.

b. Confirm that the implementation of the approved project has been completed in its financial aspects, and document the final result of the expenditure verification (total expenditure and corresponding public expenditure, in cases where co-financing is foreseen) of all previous interim payment requests and of the final request.

c. Determine the final amount of financing to be paid and record amounts that may have already been disbursed, as well as the amount to be disbursed.

d. Set the final financing scheme of the approved project.

e. Confirm that any licences foreseen by the relevant regulatory framework have been issued.

f. Confirm the beneficiary's compliance with its obligations, as detailed in the grant application, based on the specific characteristics of the action.

g. Confirm the beneficiary's compliance with any recommendations made during earlier verifications performed on the approved project.

2. The HFRI shall communicate the action completion attestation to the beneficiary. All related documents and verification information shall be registered in the archive kept by the HFRI for each approved project.

Article 47

Disbursement of financing

1. The standardised financing disbursement form stored in the IS shall record all required supporting documentation produced or submitted via the IS by the beneficiary for the purposes of disbursement.

2. Where verification is performed to confirm the

completion of the approved project, before the standardised financing disbursement form is filled in, the HFRI shall issue an action completion attestation according to the procedure stipulated in the previous Article.

3. Following the disbursement of financing to the beneficiary, the financing disbursement form in the IS shall be finalised with the details of the disbursement made.

4. The HFRI shall ensure that the beneficiary receives the amount of financing due in full, no later than ninety (90) days after the date on which the relevant request has been submitted. To this effect, the HFRI may set indicative interim deadlines. The 90-day disbursement deadline may be suspended by the HFRI in duly justified cases. The suspension procedure and the related justification shall be recorded in the IS. All documents incorporating the details related to the procedure shall be kept by the HFRI in the archive for each approved project.

5. Payments must be proven via the statement of the separate account held by the beneficiary for each approved project with a banking institution established in Greece.

Article 48

Discovery of irregularities - Objections - Recovery

i. Discovery of irregularities during the verification procedure

1. The project implementation terms, as set out in the call and the financing decision, shall be binding and material; any unilateral modification by the beneficiary without the prior approval of the Director shall constitute grounds for suspension of financing for the project concerned.

2. If the verification reveals irregularities concerning expenditure for which the relevant financing has already been disbursed, these irregularities shall be recorded in the verification report with due justification and reference to the provisions breached, and recommendation shall be made for financial correction and recovery of the amounts that have been disbursed unduly or unlawfully.

3. The HFRI shall notify the beneficiary of the amount and the reasons for the financial correction by communicating the verification report to them within ten (10) days from its approval, by any suitable means (e-mail, etc.), so that the beneficiary may formulate any objections.

ii. Objections procedure, finalisation of the on-the-spot verification report and issuance of decision.

4. Within a deadline of fifteen (15) calendar days from receiving the verification report, the beneficiary shall be entitled to submit their objections in writing to the HFRI, along with all supporting information. The objections shall be submitted to the HFRI and shall be examined by a three- (3-) member committee within the mandatory deadline of fifteen (15) calendar days from their submission. This committee shall be appointed by the HFRI Director and shall be composed of HFRI and/or GSRT employees.

5. In the event that further investigation is needed in order to decide whether the objections submitted are

valid or not, an additional verification may be conducted by the initial verification officer. In that case, the report shall be completed within a deadline of ten (10) calendar days from the date on which the supplementary verification procedure was completed.

6. After the objections have been considered or the deadline set for submission thereof has expired without any objections being filed, the verification report shall become final.

7. If the final report does not recommend financial correction and recovery, it shall be approved by the HFRI Director, registered in the IS and notified to the beneficiary.

8. The final verification report and the decision regarding the withdrawal and recovery shall be notified to the beneficiary.

9. Verification reports drawn up by verification officers, which recommend the adoption of corrective measures shall be approved by the Director.

10. Following the approval of the final report by the HFRI Director, the HFRI shall register in the IS a correction registration sheet, which shall update, within three (3) business days from approval, the amount of the financial correction, and the project financing amounts that have already been registered shall be reduced accordingly.

Article 49

Amendment of an approved project

1. On request of the beneficiary and a proposal by the Department of Research Projects, the HFRI Director may issue a decision modifying the approved project.

2. The request shall substantiate the need to modify elements of the approved project, which may pertain to its outputs or financial aspects, or the duration of its implementation, and of the corresponding terms of the financing decision. The request shall be accompanied by all documents and supporting evidence that corroborate the need for a modification. The modification request shall be submitted using a standardised form via the IS, in accordance with the more specific conditions, stipulated in the call.

3. The request for modifying an approved project shall be accepted under the condition that the modifications suggested do not affect the initial objectives of the approved project and do not alter the results of its initial evaluation, especially in cases of comparative evaluation.

4. In case the modification request is accepted, individual elements of the approved project shall be modified, in accordance with the provisions of the call, and the financing decision shall also be amended. If required, the HFRI Director shall issue an amendment of the financing decision. The beneficiary shall be notified via the IS and the relevant documents shall be registered in the archive for each approved project kept by the HFRI.

5. If the modification request is not accepted, the HFRI Director shall issue, via the IS, a decision rejecting the modification request, with full justification of the grounds for rejection. The document shall be sent to the beneficiary, who shall thereafter undertake to implement

the project in accordance with the initial financing decision.

Article 50

Activation of the procedure for revoking the financing decision

The financing decision may be revoked, by virtue of a decision of the HFRI Director, in the following cases:

a. If, before the end of the approved implementation timetable, the beneficiary submits to the HFRI, via the IS, a withdrawal document declaring that they are unable to implement the project;

b. As a sanction due to the non-compliance with the terms of the financing decision, as attested by the related attestations. By way of example, the procedure shall be activated when:

- i. the project implementation period has elapsed;
- ii. the project's outputs could not be verified;
- iii. the financial aspects and their eligibility could not be verified, based on original documentation and other supporting documents and evidence collected during the verification procedure;
- iv. the existence of an adequate verification path could not be verified;

v. in case of non-compliance of the beneficiary with the recommendations of the HFRI administrative or on-the-spot verification.

The occurrence of the aforementioned events shall be certified by the Department of Research Projects and the HFRI Director shall issue a justified decision revoking the financing; this decision shall be notified to the beneficiary. The related documents shall be registered in the IS and in the archive kept by the HFRI for each approved project.

Article 51

Issuance of the recovery decision

1. In case a financing amount has been disbursed, which, according to the verification procedure, should not have been disbursed, this amount shall be mentioned in the revocation decision with due justification and reference to the provisions breached. The same or a different decision shall order the recovery of the unduly or unlawfully paid amounts, in accordance with the procedure described above and in the related financing decision. The related decision shall be sent to the beneficiary and to the Tax Office of the Beneficiary.

2. The amount by which the financing is reduced shall be calculated based on the individual unlawful costs declared by the beneficiary and shall be equal to the amount of the damage incurred or based on the principle of proportionality in case the beneficiaries have not complied with any long-term obligations foreseen. Where it is not possible to calculate the amount of the damage incurred precisely and the total annulment of the unlawful expenditure would be disproportionate, the severity of the violation shall be calculated. If the beneficiary is found to have acted in breach of the terms and conditions of the financing

decision, which also affect future disbursements that have not been declared and/or made, the further financing of the affected part shall be suspended, with reference to the

decision regarding the reduction of the financing amount.

Article 52

Recovery of unduly or unlawfully paid sums

1. The recovery of the amounts for which a recovery decision has been issued shall be carried out by the competent Tax Office of the beneficiary.

2. The recovery decision shall invite the beneficiary to pay the amount to any Tax Office within fifteen (15) calendar days from the date on which it was notified in writing, by registered mail and/or proof of receipt, of the recovery decision, which shall be accompanied by a related deposit note. The beneficiary shall produce the decision and the note to the Tax Office in order to pay the unduly or unlawfully disbursed amount. Within fifteen (15) calendar days from the end of the deadline for payment of the recovery amount to the competent Tax Office, the beneficiary shall submit to the HFRI proof of payment of the amount.

3. In case of state aid actions, the unduly or unlawfully disbursed amount to be recovered shall be repaid with interest from the date of its disbursement until the date on which it was recovered at the competent Tax Office. The interest rate applied shall be the reference rate set for each calendar year for Greece by the European Commission, as published in the Official Journal of the European Union, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter V of Commission Regulation (EC) No 794/2004, as in force.

4. In case the amount is not paid within the deadline, or if the deadline of 30 calendar days expired without the beneficiary having informed the HFRI, the procedure for attesting the debt shall be completed with the drawing up of a related tax file by the HFRI, which shall be sent to the beneficiary's Tax Office, pursuant to the provisions of Articles 54 et seq. of Presidential Decree 16/1989 (Government Gazette, Series I, no. 6) 'Regulation on the Operation of Tax Offices and Local Offices and the duties of their employees'.

5. In case of state aid, the interest to be paid on the unduly or unlawfully disbursed amount shall be recalculated in the aforementioned tax file, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter V of Commission Regulation (EC) No 794/2004, as in force, for the time period between the recovery decision and the submission of the tax file to the beneficiary's Tax Office.

6. In case payment is not made within the deadline, the unduly or unlawfully disbursed amount shall bear default interest and any other surcharges after the expiry of the deadline foreseen, in accordance with the provisions of the Code of Public Revenue (KEDE), as in force at any given time.

Article 53

Activity Report

1. In the first quarter of each year, the Director shall draw up an activity report for the previous year regarding the actions of the HFRI, which shall be submitted to the Scientific Council for approval. The annual report shall be posted on the official website of the HFRI and shall include a record of the Foundation's activities during the period in question, based on the information held in its archive.

2. For the purposes of this report, the competent HFRI departments shall inform the Director of the following:

- the SPF and the yearly allocation of HFRI resources;
- the HFRI grant applications;
- the decisions for financing approved grant applications;
- any modifications or revocations of grant applications during the year;
- the results of administrative and on-the-spot verifications;
- the project completion attestations.

3. All the acts pertaining to calls for expression of interest, submission, evaluation, implementation, monitoring, verification and financing of HFRI projects and all related archives may be kept on the Foundation's AIMS.

CHAPTER VIII INTERMEDIATE BODY

Article 54

HFRI

actions undertaken by an intermediate body

1. In planning its actions, the HFRI may determine the SPF actions, the management of which it may assign, in whole or in part, to an intermediate body. The actions shall be determined by thematic field, thematic objective and intervention field. Depending on the character or the nature of the action, the management of financing for its implementation, in accordance with each decision for the appointment of the intermediate body, shall either remain with the HFRI or shall be assigned to the intermediate body. For this reason, following the relevant selection and decision of the HFRI General Assembly, the Foundation shall conclude a contract or cooperation agreement with the intermediate body.

2. The decision for the appointment of an intermediate body and/or the contract with the

intermediate body shall specify:

a. The body that undertakes the management of the specific action;

b. The object being assigned, the actions, the corresponding budget and the indicators, thereof; c. The management powers and duties assigned, with any necessary specifications; d. The obligations of the intermediate body and of the HFRI; e. Any necessary detail regarding the exercise of the powers undertaken by the intermediate body.

3. In order to select the intermediate body, the HFRI General Assembly must examine and assess its capacity to efficiently perform the management powers or the specific duties assigned to it.

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The Ministers

Deputy Minister for
Education, Research

Deputy Minister
and Religious Affairs Finance
KONSTANTINOS FOTAKIS GEORGIOS CHOULIARAKIS

for Administrative Reconstruction
MARIA - ELIZA XENOGIANNAKOPOULOU

**NATIONAL
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