



18th JOINT CALL FOR PROPOSALS
by
The National Science and Technology Council (Taiwan)
and
The Slovak Academy of Sciences

The Call is open between 1 April 2026 and 22 May 2026

1. Preamble

Within the framework of the Addendum to the Agreement on Scientific Cooperation between the Slovak Academy of Sciences and the National Science Council, Republic of China (later succeeded by MOST) signed on 15 and 21 May 2009, Taiwanese and Slovak researchers are invited to submit proposals for joint research projects.

SAS – NSTC Joint Research Projects is a bilateral program established to conduct joint research projects of common interest. Its objective is to encourage exchange and cooperation among researchers, engineers and research institutions in Slovakia and Taiwan.

2. Objectives and the Scope of the Call

The aim of the Joint Call is to foster bilateral scientific cooperation by enabling partners to access complementary research environments, facilities, knowledge and expertise. Such collaboration is expected to enhance scientific excellence and contribute to the effective translation of research results into economic and societal benefits. Proposals are expected to address basic or applied research. The funded projects are intended to establish collaboration that will support subsequent joint applications in other European and international funding schemes.

3. Thematic Areas

A bottom-up approach is applied in this Call, allowing researchers from all scientific disciplines to submit proposals **without thematic restrictions**. While the Call is fully open to any research field, project proposals in the Social Sciences and Humanities are particularly encouraged by both participating research funding organisations.

4. Available Funding

The Call follows a funding model in which each research funding organisation supports its own national team.

SAS applicants may apply for funding up to EUR 120,000 for a three-year period in line with the SAS Presidium Resolution No. 253.C of 11 February 2026 for two to three research projects. Funding for a third project may be made available if it concerns a project in the field of the Humanities or Social Sciences, the project proposal receives a positive evaluation from both organisations and no project from the mentioned fields is ranked in the top two.

SAS-funded costs of each grant will be issued and managed by SAS according to its funding guidelines and procedures.

Please coordinate closely with prospective partners to ensure that all activities funded by NSTC and SAS are implemented in full accordance with the rules and requirements of both funding agencies.

5. Duration of the Projects

The duration of joint projects is set to 12 to 36 months.

The tentative project start date is 1 January 2027.

6. Eligibility, Submission and Ethics

6.2. Eligibility

It is a prerequisite that projects include the participation of at least one Slovak SAS research institute and one Taiwanese institution eligible for NSTC.

Terms and conditions of participation in the Call are determined for both project partners by legal and internal rules and regulations of their respective research funding organisations.

Only an employee of the Slovak Academy of Sciences with an employment contract exceeding 50% with the organisation submitting the project proposal may apply as the Principal Investigator (PI). Unless specified otherwise in the call conditions, other project team members (except PhD candidates) must hold an employment contract either with the same SAS organisation or with another SAS institute.

SAS eligibility conditions and procedures are available [here](#). Financial rules and eligible costs are detailed [here](#).

Since 2018, Taiwanese PIs are eligible if they have an already running NSTC research project, to which they can add the SAS-NSTC project as an “add-on” grant. Check the NSTC website for further information on eligibility criteria and application procedures applicable to the Taiwanese partner.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to read these documents carefully and contact their Contact Points prior to submission to ensure compliance.

6.2. Proposal Submission

The partners should agree with each other using their own means of communication and jointly develop and complete their project proposal in close collaboration prior to submission. NSTC and SAS do not take responsibility for searching or identifying potential partners.

Application is valid only if required materials are submitted by both partners to their respective research funding organisations.

Each project proposal must provide detailed information on the objectives and justification of the planned joint research work, the methodology to be followed, the structure of each research team and the intended time schedule.

Please note that there is an online submission tool to be used by all applicants to the SAS-NSTC Joint Research Projects Call.

For the Taiwanese side

Taiwanese applicants must submit their proposals in accordance with the regulations and procedures of the National Science and Technology Council (NSTC).

Eligible Principal Investigators (PIs) must have an ongoing NSTC-funded research project to which the SAS–NSTC joint project can be attached as an “add-on” grant.

Applications must be submitted to NSTC through its designated submission system by the specified deadline.

For the Slovak side

The Slovak research partner submits the Application Form and the required supporting documents via the online platform available in the SAS Intranet **by 22 May 2026 inclusive**.

Each project proposal must be authorized in the submission system by the director of the applicant’s institute/centre, who has been granted the appropriate Director access rights. A proposal is regarded as formally submitted only after this authorization has been completed. The director’s approval must be provided no later than the application deadline.

For further information and instructions, please refer to the document templates and manuals attached to the Call announcement.

6.3 Ethics

Individuals who are involved in the preparation of the Call, in the evaluation process, or in the funding decision-making procedures are not eligible to participate in submitted project proposals either as Principal Investigators or as members of project teams.

Should SAS applicants identify any ethical issues in project proposals, the institute ethics committee will evaluate the issue(s) respectively. Ethics committee approval should be attached to the project proposal, if applicable.

7. The Evaluation Procedure and Criteria

Projects that are submitted online but do not include the requested supporting documents will not be evaluated and thus not considered for funding. NSTC and SAS follow their own parallel evaluation procedures. Only projects eligible on both sides will be evaluated.

At the SAS side, a two-step evaluation procedure is followed. Within Step 1, proposals are assessed by at least 2 external reviewers.

SAS applicants are requested to nominate 3 domestic and 5 foreign independent experts to enlarge the pool of potential evaluators, whose expertise is within the area of the project topic and who are not in a conflict of interest with the applicant.

The following evaluation criteria and subcriteria will be used, scoring from 0 to 5:

1) Scientific and technological excellence

- a) Clarity and relevance of the objectives
- b) Soundness, coherence and credibility of the concept and methodology
- c) Level of innovativeness (methodological/conceptual/theoretical contribution to the related scientific and technological area) and potential of the project results for application and exploitation in different areas (short-term and long-term impacts, identification of relevant stakeholders, effectiveness of dissemination measures)
- d) Competence and expertise of the applicants in the relevant field(s)

2) Quality of implementation

- a) Feasibility and effectiveness of the work plan, including project completeness, reasonable time-scope balance, availability of necessary infrastructure, reasonable allocation of tasks and responsibilities and appropriate team composition
- b) Appropriateness of management structures (PI's previous experience or demonstrated aptitude to manage an international project, internal communication measures, risk management)
- c) Budget cost-effectiveness and adequacy of financial resource distribution in view of planned activities

3) International cooperation

- a) Demonstrated added value of the bilateral cooperation and involvement of both partners of the bilateral cooperation
- b) Benefit for SAS in terms of exchange of expertise through visits, training of researchers by the foreign partner, involvement of young researchers etc.
- c) Capacity for lasting collaboration (plans for joint exploitation of results, further research projects, trainings and other types of collaboration or contacts beyond the project lifetime).

Maximum score stands for 50 points while a minimum threshold amounts to at least 70% of total score and 50% in each of the three criteria in the external evaluation. Project proposals that do not meet the minimum threshold score are considered not eligible.

Within step 2, internal reviewers examine the evaluation reports of eligible project proposals prepared by the external reviewers, develop their own reasoned assessment of the proposals, and compile a consensual report which is subsequently presented to the Committee for International Projects Evaluation. Further information about the procedure is available [here](#).

Based on its own evaluation outcomes, each funding institution will prepare a ranking list of proposals with the average score given to each proposal.

8. Selection and Funding Procedures, Feedback to Applicants

The mutual meeting of NSTC and SAS representatives is organized with the aim to consensually select proposals and prepare a final list of the projects recommended for funding on both sides.

Funding of the selected projects is then subject to final approval of the SAS and NSTC authorities.

Slovak principal investigators, whose projects are recommended for funding, will be requested to submit the specific form (MVTSA Form) ahead of final funding approval, which is subject to decision of SAS Presidium. Further details about the process are available [here](#).

In addition, the anonymized external reviewers' reports without the scores and overall assessment of the Committee for International Projects Evaluation are provided to the Slovak applicants as feedback.

Project funding is regulated by the Financial Rules for awarding SAS grants for international research projects.

9. Reporting Requirements, Project Results

The projects will be monitored by the means of progress and financial reports and the final report by SAS for its content and progress.

The Slovak Principal Investigator (PI) of a funded project submits an annual progress report consisting of a scientific and a financial part by 31 January each project at the latest. The final report must be submitted in 1 month since the end of the project and sent for a review to the International Projects Evaluation Committee.

Continuation of funding will be decided based on this monitoring and is subject to the consent of both research funding organisations.

Project partners are required to establish and sign an agreement on the ownership and management of intellectual property rights arising from the joint research and development activities. This agreement must specify the distribution of rights, rules for exploitation, IP management procedures, and the competent court and applicable law for dispute resolution.

The drafting, negotiation, and finalization of this agreement are the sole responsibility of the project partners. The participating funding agencies do not provide or endorse any model agreement. Funding for awarded projects must only be requested and initiated after the agreement has entered into force.

The terms agreed by the partners must not conflict with national laws, regulations, terms and conditions of NSTC and SAS. The signed agreement must be submitted to NSTC and SAS upon request.

Any publication of the project results must acknowledge the support received from the SAS and NSTC under the 18th Call for SAS – NSTC Joint Research Projects.

10. Call Schedule

One-Stage Joint Call

ACTIONS	DATES
Call Pre-Announcement	23 February 2026
Call Announcement	1 April 2026
Deadline for Applications	22 May 2026
Eligibility Check	May to June 2026
Peer Review	September 2026
Exchange of the Results between SAS and NSTC (Recommendation for funding)	October 2026
Results announcement	November 2026
Tentative projects start	January 2027

11. Contact Points

For NSTC

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