

Research Excellence in Environmental Sciences (REES) Call for proposals

1. Purpose of the programme

The REES – Research Excellence in Environmental Sciences programme is an internal grant scheme of the Faculty of Environmental Sciences, Czech University of Life Sciences Prague (FZP CZU) aimed at establishing new independent research groups by internationally competitive researchers; supporting the preparation and submission of major international research grants, especially ERC; and strengthening the Faculty's position in selected research areas.

2. Who can apply

The call is open to early career researchers with clear potential to build an independent research group and to compete successfully in international grant schemes, as well as established scientists. All applicants must demonstrate:

- a PhD degree and relevant postdoctoral research experience,
- an emerging or established independent scientific profile,
- strong publication record relative to career stage and discipline,
- realistic potential to submit a competitive ERC Starting or Consolidator Grant.

Typical (but not exclusive) target applicant profiles include:

- researchers returning from long-term positions abroad,
- senior postdoctoral researchers aiming to establish their first independent group,
- exceptionally strong researchers from other institutions in Czechia.

Project proposals must align with at least one of the following research areas:

- Global Change
- Atmospheric Sciences
- Energy and Environment

Interdisciplinary projects are welcome, provided their core contribution strengthens the scientific profile of FZP in one or more of these areas.

3. Project duration and funding

Maximum project duration is up to 3 years. During this time, REES holders will be employed as research group leaders at FZP CZU on a limited employment contract. The funding period may be paused and respectively extended, (e.g. when the recipient secures external funding).

Maximum indicative budget (starting package) is 9 mil CZK (370K EUR) per project. Eligible costs include:

- salary of the REES holder
(proposed by the applicant within the project budget, must allow for sustainable team funding)
- salaries of research team members (postdocs, PhD students, technicians),
- research costs (equipment, consumables, services),
- travel, networking, and grant preparation costs.

4. Expectations and obligations

The faculty will provide the REES holders with necessary laboratory and office space, full access to shared laboratories and a comprehensive support infrastructure, as specified below.

REES holders are required to submit an ERC Starting or Consolidator Grant proposal during the REES period. Additional grant applications (e.g. GAČR, Horizon Europe) are encouraged but not mandatory. Teaching and student supervision duties are negotiable.

5. Support and Benefits

FZP CZU is committed to providing a supportive, world-class environment for our researchers. Beyond scientific freedom, REES holders will benefit from:

- **Dedicated Administrative Support:** Access to an experienced team of project managers and a specialized Grant Office to assist with the administrative aspects of international grant submissions (ERC, Horizon Europe).
- **International Onboarding:** The University Welcome Centre provides comprehensive assistance for international scholars, including help with visas, health insurance, and relocation logistics.
- **Family-Friendly Environment:** The university operates Poníček, a modern, newly built campus childcare center specifically for the children of employees.
- **Work-Life Balance:** We offer a generous 8-week annual leave policy and flexible working arrangements to support personal well-being.
- **Exceptional Campus & Location:** Work in a unique, green „oasis“ campus in Prague - one of the safest and most culturally vibrant cities in Europe.
- **Cost-Efficiency:** Compared to many Western European institutions, our funding packages offer higher purchasing power, allowing for the recruitment of more team members and more ambitious research scaling within the same budget.

6. Evaluation

The faculty leadership will carry out mid-term evaluation (after approximately 18 months) and final evaluation at the end of the REES funding period. The mid-term evaluation is qualitative and developmental, focusing on scientific progress, grant preparation, and group development. The final evaluation will assess the project outputs (esp. publications), progress along the recommendations given during the midterm evaluation, and the fulfilment of the obligations, esp. the ERC proposal submission.

Upon positive final evaluation, REES holders might be offered a tenure-track or permanent position at FZP, or an extension or bridge arrangement (e.g. pending ERC evaluation). Successful completion of REES does not guarantee tenure, but provides a genuine pathway to long-term employment at FZP.

7. Application process

Applications may be submitted **on a rolling basis throughout the year**. The language of the application is **English**. The application package is submitted by e-mail to the Vice-Dean for Science and Research, Vítězslav Moudrý (moudry@fzp.czu.cz), and must include at least the following:

- Scientific project description,
- CV and track record,
- preliminary budget outline,
- grant strategy (with emphasis on ERC).

The applications will be assessed in the following steps:

1. Initial screening by the Dean and Vice-Dean for Science and Research.
2. Assessment by the selection committee (including faculty leadership and PIs)
3. Shortlisted candidates are invited to present their project and broader research vision to the faculty leadership.

Apart from scientific excellence, the selection process also considers personal and interpersonal qualities, with emphasis on collegiality, teamwork, and the ability to integrate constructively into a relatively small faculty environment.

We strongly encourage prospective applicants to contact us in advance of submitting their application and to inform us about their intention to apply. This allows us to better understand the range of potential proposals and gives applicants the opportunity to discuss the relevance of their research ideas in the context of the faculty's priorities.

8. Additional information

Additional information about the REES programme, including templates of the application documents can be obtained at the project [webpage](#) or from Slavěna Zajícová, Science and Research Office (zajicovas@fzp.czu.cz, +420 224 382 166).