

CHARTER

CELSA Research Fund

'CELSA' is an alliance of seven European universities (see <http://celsalliance.eu>).

The 'CELSA Partners' are:

- Budapest University of Technology and Economics (BME), represented by János Józsa, rector
- Charles University (CUNI), represented by Tomáš Zima, rector
- Czech Technical University in Prague (CTU), represented by Petr Konvalinka, rector
- Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE), represented by Barna MEZEY, rector
- Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (KU Leuven), represented by Rik Torfs, rector
- Semmelweis University (Semmelweis), represented by Ágoston Szél, rector
- University of Ljubljana (UL), represented by Ivan Svetlik, rector

CELSA is governed by the 'CELSA Board' (see <http://celsalliance.eu/members.html>).

1. Concept of the CELSA Research Fund

The CELSA Board, meeting in Ljubljana on 14 September 2016, decided on the establishment of a virtual common research funding pot, the 'CELSA Research Fund' (or the 'Fund'), that will jointly fund collaborative research projects between researchers of at least two CELSA Partners (KU Leuven and one other CELSA Partner), with the purpose of leveraging their efforts towards future Horizon 2020 applications (or to its successor or any other competitive European fund).

This 'Charter' lays out the details regarding the establishment of the Fund, the commitment of the participating CELSA Partners, the guidelines for applicants and the call for proposals, the evaluation procedure including the selection criteria and the establishment of the joint evaluation committee, and the granting process.

2. Establishment of the Fund

The CELSA Partners will jointly launch an open call for proposals once a year, in the coming three years (after which the scheme will be evaluated, revised, continued or discontinued), starting in January or February 2017. The CELSA Partners will each fund their own researcher in a project that is conducted by at least two researchers, one from KU Leuven and at least one from another CELSA Partner.

3. Budget

3.1. Contribution

The CELSA Partners will contribute *at least* following budgets to each annual call, for the next three years. These contributions will consist of new project funds (and not be in kind contributions, e.g. covered by the existing salary costs of the researchers participating in the joint projects).

- Charles University will contribute: € 60,000 per call, for three calls
- Czech Technical University in Prague: € 60,000 per call, for three calls
- Eötvös Loránd University: € 60,000 per call, for three calls

- Semmelweis University: € 60,000 per call, for three calls
- Budapest University of Technology and Economics: € 60,000 per call, for three calls
- University of Ljubljana: € 60,000 per call, for three calls
- KU Leuven will contribute with in total € 1 million per call, for three calls

Maximum 10 to 11 projects will be funded per annum, depending on set-up and the available annual budget. In case less than 10 (to 11) projects are being selected by the CELSA Research Fund Evaluation Committee, or in case in a certain year an individual CELSA Partner will be granted no projects or less projects than their committed budget allows for, the remaining annual budget will be transferred to the next call.

3.2. Size of the projects

The Fund will fund joint research projects with a maximum of € 120,000 for a duration of 2 years, in case researchers from two CELSA Partners are involved (a KU Leuven researcher and a researcher from one other CELSA Partner). KU Leuven funds 3/4 of the total project's budget (€ 90,000), and the other CELSA Partner contributes 1/4 (€ 30,000); the funding goes to the own participating scientist.

In case researchers from more than two CELSA Partners are involved in a single joint project, the budget is increased with their share (e.g. a project with researchers from 3 CELSA Partners will have a maximum budget of € 150,000 for 2 years). In case more than one researcher from the same CELSA Partner is involved in a single joint project, the total project budget as mentioned is not increased.

3.3. Financial contribution commitment

By signing this Charter, the CELSA Partners formally confirm their commitment regarding their above mentioned financial contribution (section 3.1).

4. Publication of calls for proposals

The CELSA Partners will launch a joint call at the same time and inform their research community internally. The call for proposals has to specify the conditions, the available funding per project, and the time frame.

Time schedule for the 2017 call for proposals:

- The first call will be published by the end of January (or early February) 2017.
- The deadline for submission of the first call for proposals will be in May 2017.
- Evaluation of project proposals occurs in May-June
- Announcement of the results in July-August
- Start of the projects as of 1 October 2017

After finalizing the procedure of the first call, the CELSA Board will decide on the time frame for the 2018 (and 2019) call for proposals.

Conditions:

- Any scientific discipline qualifies for funding by the CELSA Research Fund.

- The applicant consortium has to consist of at least one KU Leuven researcher¹ (or research group²) and one researcher³ (or research group⁴) from one other CELSA Partner.
- The project funding can be used freely by the researchers involved⁵, as long as the activities concern research, strengthen the collaboration within the CELSA network, and can lead to a high quality application for any of the European competitive funds as mentioned. Preferably research staff⁶ will be appointed on the project's budget.
- Within 3 years of the start of the project funded by the Fund, the applicant consortium (including additional partners) has to jointly apply for a call for proposals for a European competitive funding program, such as a collaborative research project in Horizon 2020 or its successor (including Marie S. Curie innovative training networks, FET Open, Societal Challenges,...).

Assistance in 'match-making' by the EU support officers of the CELSA members:

- The initiative also targets new collaborations. To help researchers to find a matching scientist at another CELSA Partner, the EU support officers (see contact persons below, chapter 17) will exchange expressions of interests seeking collaboration by the researchers, attempting to find interested counterparts.
- Through an exchange of information between the EU support offices regarding future calls for proposals (e.g. future work programmes of Horizon2020), the EU support teams will also assist the applicants in finding potential future topics in European programs.

5. Project proposal template

The project proposal to be submitted to the CELSA Research Fund call for proposals has to contain following information:

- **Cover page** (max. 1p): title, name, affiliation, and e-mail address of the researchers involved, an indication of who will be the leading scientist of the project (coordinator), a non-confidential and public-friendly abstract or summary (max. 2000 characters), and up to 5 key words
- **Project description** (max. 4p): problem statement & objectives, envisaged progress beyond the state of the art, methodology, anticipated results, managerial aspects and timing
- **Resources** (max. 1p): description of the available resources (incl. infrastructure and equipment) and the proposed use of the project budget to acquire new resources, linked to the methodology
- **Added value of the collaboration** (max. 1p): description of the consortium of researchers from the CELSA Partners and added value of the collaboration to the envisaged research activities

¹ (*internal KU Leuven regulation*) The KU Leuven researcher has to comply with the rules for internal funds.

² (*internal KU Leuven regulation*) In case more than one KU Leuven researchers are involved in a single joint project, one of the researchers in that group has to act as the principal investigator (promotor; the others can be co-promotor)

³ In case a single researcher of ELTE or BME is involved, this researcher shall be a public servant, employed full-time by ELTE or BME.

⁴ In case a research group of ELTE or BME is involved, this research group shall either be an ELTE or BME - Hungarian Academy of Sciences joint research group or consist of only public servants, employed full-time by ELTE or BME.

⁵ Any contribution of ELTE or BME shall be used according to the relevant internal rules and regulations of ELTE or BME respectively. Any item funded by the contribution of the ELTE or BME, shall be approved ex ante by ELTE or BME, where relevant.

⁶ For KU Leuven: 'Wetenschappelijk medewerker' barema 43 of 44 or 'bursaal' ('science worker', PhD student or postdoc)

- **Potential towards a future EU funding application** (max. 1p): description of the potential towards a future joint application as well as the linkages to a call for proposals of a European research funding program, specifying the future call (e.g. Marie S. Curie network, Horizon 2020 focus area or draft call topic, ERA-Net call, cPPP call, ...); description of the relevance of the collaboration for that call, program, or European research & innovation policy or focus area (this may include aspects of innovation and potential future impact of the research or collaboration, if relevant in the future European call); proposed timelines and planning towards the future European application (including perhaps specifying types of additional partners outside CELSA required for the collaborative projects)
- **CV of the involved researchers** (max. 1p per participating researcher): short description of the expertise, 5 most important publications relevant to the proposal, indication of previous (most important) European or international collaborations.

6. Submission of project proposals and eligibility check

As KU Leuven will be participating in all the projects funded by the joint Fund, the online submission system of the KU Leuven Internal Funds will be used. Consequently, the KU Leuven researcher in the consortium will have to submit the joint project proposal.

The KU Leuven Internal Funds management unit (*'Management Unit'*) will administer the applications, check eligibility (completeness of the applications, at least two CELSA Partners involved), and present the applications to the CELSA Research Fund Evaluation Committee (see below).

The Management Unit will inform the CELSA Board of the number of applications, involved CELSA Partners, and the title of the applications.

7. Establishment of the CELSA Research Fund Evaluation Committee

The evaluation and selection of CELSA Research Fund project applications will be performed by a dedicated interdisciplinary *'CELSA Research Fund Evaluation Committee'* (or *'Evaluation Committee'*), which will be composed of:

- The 6 effective members and the chairman of the KU Leuven Executive Body of the Research Council (see <https://admin.kuleuven.be/raden/en/research-council>, "Voorzitter" en "Leden") and the KU Leuven vice-rector for research policy.
- Next to KU Leuven, 1 distinguished scientist of each of the other CELSA Partners, who has experience with international evaluations.
- The KU Leuven chairman of the Research Council chairs this Evaluation Committee. A co-chair from one of the other CELSA Partners will be appointed by the CELSA Board.

The members need to have complementary expertise as much as possible.

- Each of the other CELSA Partners will submit three names and short résumés of experienced scientists, from different scientific disciplines
- The Evaluation Committee chairman together with the president of the CELSA Board selects the members of the Evaluation Committee based on (complementary) expertise.

The members are considered to evaluate purely on the quality of the submitted proposals, independently of their institution, and to not take into consideration any institutional or geographical priorities. The Evaluation Committee members as well as the Managing Unit are strictly bound to

confidentiality and cannot disclose any information regarding the project proposals or the evaluation to any third party.

The Evaluation Committee can evaluate and rank the project proposals in full autonomy. The Evaluation Committee then formulates a final advice to the CELSA Board, and the respective CELSA Partner academic authorities⁷, who will confirm and execute the decision.

After each call, the CELSA Board will evaluate the call results, and may advise to introduce changes or additional criteria for consecutive call(s) for proposals.

8. Selection procedure

8.1. Reviewing process

The eligible proposals will be sent to all the members of the Evaluation Committee. Depending on the disciplines involved (based on the proposal abstract and the keywords), the chairman of the Evaluation Committee and the Management Unit assign each proposal to 3 (up to 4) relevant Evaluation Committee members; each proposal will be assigned to at least one Evaluation Committee member from KU Leuven and at least one from another CELSA Partner. The Evaluation Committee members remotely review the proposals assigned to them, based on below mentioned criteria.

The Evaluation Committee members remotely submit a score as well as evaluation comments to each of the proposals assigned to them into the online evaluation system of KU Leuven. The Management Unit collects all the scores and comments, and reports to the Evaluation Committee. The scoring system of the KU Leuven Internal Funds will be used.

The Evaluation Committee meets once to discuss the scoring and comments, to reach a consensus on the final score, and to rank the proposals. The CELSA Board president or CELSA secretary-general can act as observers.

The first ranked proposals will be recommended for funding, within the total available call budget.

8.2 Selection criteria

The submitted project applications will be evaluated based on (1) scientific quality, (2) the potential of the collaboration and its added value for the CELSA network, and (3) the potential towards a future European competitive fund application for collaborative research, including aspects like innovation and socio-economic impact when relevant.

- Scientific quality (60% of the scoring):
 - o To what extent does the proposed research address important challenges?
 - o To what extent are the objectives ambitious and beyond the state of the art (e.g. novel concepts and approaches or development between or across disciplines)?
 - o To what extent is the outlined scientific approach feasible? To what extent is the proposed research methodology appropriate to achieve the goals of the project?
 - o To what extent are the proposed timescales and resources necessary and properly justified?
- Added value of the collaboration (20% of the scoring):

⁷ According to internal rules and regulations of KU Leuven, the Executive Board and the Academic Council have to formally ratify the final advice of the Research Council (in this case the CELSA Research Fund Evaluation Committee) before internal funds can be assigned to individual researchers. This is being done without compromising the autonomy of the Research Council (in this case the Evaluation Committee).

- To what extent is the proposed partnership relevant to the proposed project objectives? To what extent do the involved researchers have complementary expertise?
- To what extent has the proposed partnership the potential to become sustainable?
- Potential towards future acquisition of European competitive funding (20% of the scoring):
 - Does the proposed activity greatly help move the research collaboration towards the initial steps of a process leading to a future European collaborative research project?
 - Does the proposal indicate a suitable and credible process that is designed to result in a concrete application for a European competitive program?
 - Where relevant for the indicated European competitive funding program call, are aspects like innovation and socio-economic impact sufficiently addressed?

8.3. Communication of the evaluation results

The KU Leuven Internal Funds Management Unit will communicate the results to all the applicants from all CELSA Partners, including the anonymous review comments. The CELSA Board will be informed by the Management Unit about the selected projects in parallel, including the names and affiliations of the successful applicants, and the abstract of the projects.

A redress to the decision of the Evaluation Committee is possible in case of mistakes regarding the procedure. This request for review should be submitted within 20 working days of the communication of the decision to contact@celsalliance.eu.

Rejected applications may be re-submitted to the next annual call of the CELSA Research Fund.

The abstracts, names, and titles may be used for external communication purposes by the CELSA Partners⁸.

9. Granting process

9.1. Assignment of funding to the selected projects

Each of the CELSA Partners contracts the own researcher in the winning joint project, after the final decision of the CELSA Board.

- The KU Leuven Internal Funds Management Unit will start the usual internal procedure to provide the selected KU Leuven researcher (or research group) with a project credit of € 90,000 for two years, starting at 1 October 2017 for the first call for proposals.
- The involved CELSA Partners will provide their involved researcher likewise with a project budget of at least € 30,000, starting at 1 October 2017 for the first call for proposals, for a period of two years. The CELSA Partners' usual practices and procedures will apply.

In case a single CELSA Partner would be granted more projects than their foreseen annual contribution to the Fund would allow, KU Leuven will take charge of the excess of that partner university. This excess will be deduced from the maximum contribution of KU Leuven over 3 years.

9.2. Eligible costs

What can be funded in a CELSA project?

⁸ KU Leuven is bound to report the projects funded via internal funds to the Flemish Government, and to include the non-confidential abstract in the Flemish database of research projects (FRIS Research portal)

- It is up to the consortium of researchers to decide what should be funded (this is subject to the evaluation procedure, cfr. supra).
- The internal rules of each involved CELSA Partner regarding funding research apply.
- The CELSA Partners cannot appoint staff at another CELSA Partner. However, travel & subsistence costs of the team members in the project can be covered by either side of the 'joint' budget.
- The CELSA Partner who paid for project equipment remains the owner of that equipment. It is up to the individual CELSA Partners to make arrangements to enable the use of the equipment or available infrastructure by all relevant team members (subject to the evaluation process, cfr. supra).

10. Reporting

10.1. Reporting during the project period

One year after the start of the project, the successful applicants are asked to report (max. 1 page) on the situation regarding the ongoing collaboration, on the progress regarding the preparation of a European project application, and regarding the scientific output of the project (publications, exchange of staff taken place,...).

10.2. Reporting after the end of the project

A single concise report will be submitted by the participating researchers one year after the end of the project (within three years after the start of the project) to the participating CELSA Partners. This document (max. 3 pages) will contain e.g. publications, the progress made regarding other projects applications, and a short financial report (who is financed, what exchange has taken place).

In addition, one year after the end of the project (within three years after the start), the successful applicants have to send the abstract of the submitted application and call identifier of the pan-European competitive funding program, or any other proof of the submission.

These reports have to be send to: contact@celsalliance.eu

11. Ownership of Results

Main principle: Results are owned by the CELSA Partner who employs the researcher that generates the results.

'Results' means any (tangible or intangible) output of the action such as data, knowledge or information – whatever its form or nature, whether it can be protected or not – that is generated in the action, as any rights attached to it, including intellectual property rights.

Two or more CELSA Partners own results jointly ('joint owners') if:

- they have jointly generated them and
- it is not possible to:
 - o establish the respective contribution of each project partner, or
 - o separate them for the purpose of applying for, obtaining or maintaining their protection.

The joint owners must agree (in writing, e.g. in a project partnership agreement) on the allocation and terms of exercise of their joint ownership.

Unless otherwise agreed in the joint ownership agreement, each joint owner may grant non-exclusive licences to third parties to exploit jointly-owned results (without any rights to sublicense), if the other joint owners are given:

- at least 45 days advance notice and
- fair and reasonable compensation.

Once the results have been generated, joint owners may agree (in writing, e.g. in a partnership agreement for the individual project) to apply another regime than joint ownership.

12. Dissemination of results

Prior notice of any planned publication shall be given to the researchers from the other CELSA Partners involved in the project, at least 45 calendar days before the publication.

Any objection to the planned publication shall be made in writing to the other involved CELSA Partners proposing the dissemination within 30 calendar days after receipt of the notice. If no objection is made within the time stated above, the publication is permitted.

An objection is justified if

- the protection of the objecting CELSA Partner's Results or Background would be adversely affected, or
- the objecting CELSA Partner's legitimate interests in relation to the Results or Background would be significantly harmed.

The objection has to include a precise request for necessary modifications.

If an objection has been raised, the involved CELSA Partners shall discuss how to overcome the justified grounds for the objection on a timely basis and the objecting CELSA Partner shall not unreasonably continue the opposition.

A CELSA Partner shall not include in any dissemination activity another CELSA Partner's Results or Background without obtaining the owning CELSA Partner's prior written approval, unless they are already published.

13. Access Rights

'Access Rights' means rights to use results or background under the terms and conditions in the project.

'Background' means any data, know-how or information – whatever its form or nature (tangible or intangible), including rights such as intellectual property rights that:

- is held by the project partners before they accede to the project, and
- is needed to implement the action or the results.

'Needed'

The researchers in a project funded by the Fund must give each other access – under fair and reasonable conditions – to background needed for exploiting their own results, unless the researcher in the project that holds the background has – before acceding to the project – informed the other researchers in the project that access to its background is subject to legal restrictions or limits, including those imposed by the rights of third parties (including personnel).

Anything not identified in an annex to the project proposal or in a partnership agreement between the individual project's researchers shall not be object of Access Rights obligations regarding Background.

Access Rights are granted on a non-exclusive basis.

Results and Background shall be used only for the purposes for which Access Rights to it have been granted.

All requests for Access Rights shall be made in writing. The granting of Access Rights may be made conditional on the acceptance of specific conditions aimed at ensuring that these rights will be used only for the intended purpose and that appropriate confidentiality obligations are in place.

The requesting CELSA Partner must show that the Access Rights are Needed.

Access Rights to Results and Background Needed for the performance of the own work of a CELSA Partner under the Project shall be granted on a royalty-free basis.

14. Authorship

The rules laid out in the 'KU Leuven policy on authorship' will be followed (for all details, see: <https://www.kuleuven.be/english/research/integrity/practices/authorship>).

15. Ethics and research integrity

The researchers must carry out the project funded by the Fund in compliance with all applicable ethical principles, including the highest standards of research integrity. The CELSA Partners shall obtain any ethics committee's opinion required under national law and/or any authorization for activities raising ethical issues required under national law.

In case the CELSA Partner or a researcher thereof receives complaint regarding an infringement of Research Integrity standards in the project funded by the Fund, that CELSA Partner or its researcher will inform the other involved CELSA Partner.

It will be decided by mutual consent who will take the lead in the investigation. When making such arrangements, it will be an important factor whether the respondent is enrolled on the KU Leuven payroll or on the payroll of another CELSA Partner.

16. Specific agreements

Once a project proposal has been selected for funding, the selected researchers from the CELSA Partners shall consult with each other in order to evaluate and decide whether or not it is necessary to make additional contractual arrangements with regard/in view of the particularities of the selected project (e.g. non-disclosure agreements, material transfer agreements, joint IP agreements, financial arrangements in case KU Leuven takes charge of the excess of the CELSA project partners,...).

17. Contact details

Questions on the guidelines, submission procedure, evaluation criteria, and evaluation procedure: Marian.Schoenmaekers@kuleuven.be

Questions on potential future European funding programs: Stijn.Delaure@kuleuven.be

The applicants can count on the support of their EU support offices to advice and where possible assist in the preparation of a high quality European collaborative research project application. The respective contacts of the EU support officers are:

- Charles University: adela.jiroudkova@ruk.cuni.cz
- Czech Technical University in Prague: Lucie.machanova@cvut.cz
- Eötvös Loránd University: palyzat@kancellaria.elte.hu
- Semmelweis University: innovation@semmelweis-univ.hu
- Budapest University of Technology and Economics: aniko.csakany@mail.bme.hu
- University of Ljubljana: EUprojekti@uni-lj.si
- KU Leuven: EU-info@kuleuven.be

18. Changes, disputes

In case of changes to the current Charter – e.g. regarding the financial commitment, termination of the participation of a CELSA Partner to the Fund, or addition of an institution to CELSA,... – the CELSA Partners agree to submit a written request for approval of the change to the CELSA Board and, after approval by all CELSA Partners, add an amendment to the Charter.

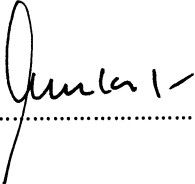
The Charter is governed by the law of Belgium. All disputes will preferably be arranged out of court. Un-clarities or questions regarding the interpretation of this Charter shall be discussed in the CELSA Board. The CELSA Partners shall endeavour to settle their disputes amicably. In case of non-compliance with what has been stipulated in this Charter, the CELSA Partners may bring legal proceedings before the competent Belgian courts.

19. Signatures

This Charter may be executed in several counterparts, each of which shall be deemed an original and all of which shall constitute one and the same instrument, and shall become effective when counterparts have been signed by each of the CELSA Partners and delivered to the other CELSA Partners; it being understood that all CELSA Partners need not to sign the same counterparts. In witness where of duly authorized representatives of the CELSA Partners have entered into this Charter as of the date last written below.



Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (KU Leuven)

Signature:


Name: Rik Torfs

Title: Rector

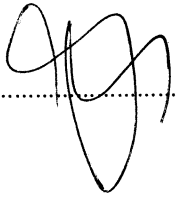
Date:
JAN 24 2017

Stamp:



KATHOLIEKE UNIVERSITEIT LEUVEN
Research Coordination Office
Huis Bethlehem, Schapenstraat 34
B-3000 LEUVEN (BELGIUM)

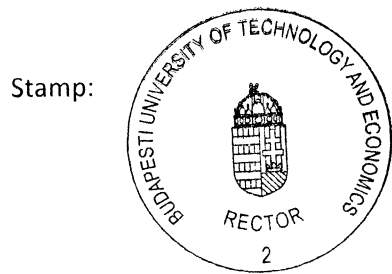
Budapest University of Technology and Economics

Signature: 

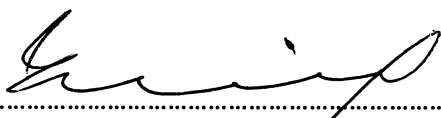
Name: János Józsa

Title: Rector

Date: *January 26, 2017*





Charles University

Signature: 

Name: Tomáš Zima

Title: Rector

Date: 

Stamp: **UNIVERZITA KARLOVA**
REKTORÁT 
Ovocný trh 560/5, 116 36 Praha 1
IČO: 00216208, DIČ: CZ00216208

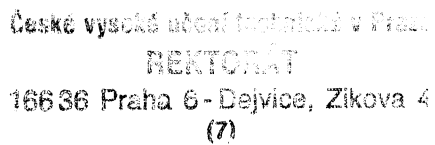
Czech Technical University in Prague

Signature: 

Name: Petr Konvalinka

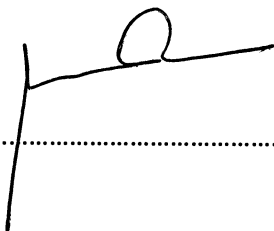
Title: Rector

Date: 24 -01- 2017

Stamp: 
České vysoké učení technické v Praze
REKTORÁT
166 36 Praha 6 - Dejvice, Žitkova 4
(7)

Eötvös Loránd University

Signature:



Name: Barna MEZEY

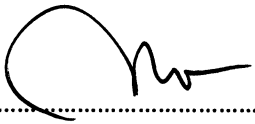
Title: Rector

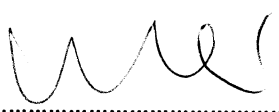
Date: 26 January 2017

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Semmelweis University

Signature: 



Name: Prof. Dr. Ágoston Szél

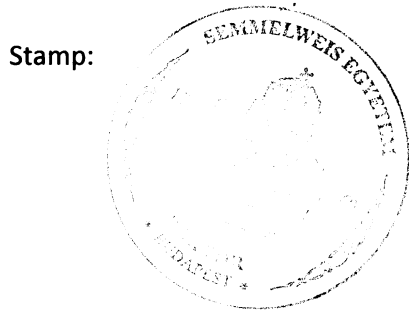
Dr. Károly Szász

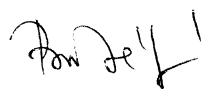
Title: Rector

Chancellor


Date: 2017. 01. 26.


2017 JAN 23




Dr. Ágoston Szél
Rector
Semmelweis University
H-1051 Budapest, Hungary

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Semmelweis Egyetem
Közvetítő Iroda
2017 JAN 26


2017 JAN. 24



University of Ljubljana



Signature:

Name: Ivan Svetlik

Title: Rector

Date: 18. 1. 2017

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