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Policy on the canon in the Research and Transfer activity of the UOC

Approved by the UOC Executive Board

UOC

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1. Introduction

The Policy on the canon in the Research and Transfer activity of the UOC (hereinafter, “the Policy”) updates the current framework of canon applicable to the research and transfer (R&T) activity of the Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (hereinafter, “**the UOC**”, “**the University**” or “**the Institution**”). Homogeneous criteria are established based on the funding model of each call, reinforcing institutional sustainability and shared responsibility in the attraction and execution of projects.

It should be noted that any activity carried out within the framework of a project in which UOC staff participate entails an associated indirect cost that must be covered. All universities and research centres apply a canon to their projects and grants. This canon consists of a standard percentage that is increased or decreased depending on the type of projects or grants.

2. Principles

The general principles by which the UOC must be governed in matters of canon in the Research and Transfer activity are those set out below:

1. **Principle of institutional sustainability**

The purpose of the canon is to contribute to covering the structural indirect costs derived from the Research and Transfer activity, guaranteeing the economic sustainability of the UOC and the continuity of its R&T policies.

2. **Principle of shared responsibility**

The attraction and execution of projects with external funding entails shared responsibility between the institution and the project teams in assuming the indirect costs necessary for their proper execution.

3. **Principle of homogeneity and equity**

The application of the canon is governed by homogeneous, objective and non-discriminatory criteria, depending on the type of project and the funding model of each call, guaranteeing equitable treatment between projects of a comparable nature.

4. **Principle of economic viability of the projects**

The canon policy must allow the proper execution and economic justification of the projects, avoiding situations that may compromise their financial viability or compliance with the regulations of the funding body.

3. Object

The object of the Policy is to determine the concept of canon, establish the applicable percentages and specify the rules associated with its application.

4. Subjective scope of application

The Policy applies to the staff of the Fundació per a la Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (hereinafter, “**the FUOC**”), specifically, to the academic staff —comprising PDI and PI—, and to the management staff who participate in research and transfer activities of the UOC or in other institutional projects with external funding.

5. Roles and responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities of each of the areas and teams of the UOC involved in the canon in the research and transfer activity of the UOC are detailed below:

5.1. Research Promotion Office (OIR) and Transfer and Entrepreneurship Office (OTE)

1. Analyse the conditions of the calls and determine the percentage of canon applicable to each project proposal, in accordance with this Policy.
2. Inform the person responsible for the project (project leader) about the applicable canon during the preparation phase of the proposal and/or contract.

5.2. Project Management Office (OGP)

1. Register the approved projects applying the percentage of canon corresponding in each case.
2. Ensure the correct application of the UOC canon, once the project has been approved, taking into account the conditions and grant finally approved.

5.3. Vice-General Manager for Research, Transfer and Entrepreneurship (VGRTE)

Validate, on an exceptional basis, requests for reduction of the percentage of canon

established in this Policy, when duly justified for reasons of economic viability.

5.4. PDI, PI and management staff leading projects

1. Know and comply with this Policy on canon and the percentages applicable to their project.
2. Provide the OIR with the necessary information for the correct determination of the canon during the preparation phase of the proposal.
3. Plan the project budget taking into account the impact of the canon and implement it in accordance with the established economic and justification rules.

6. Definitions

a) **Direct costs:** those that are exclusively attributable to the performance of a specific activity and directly related to the development of the project: time dedicated by UOC staff, purchases of consumable and inventory material, contracting a company to carry out a specific task, a trip for a project meeting, etc. **These are expenses necessary to obtain the results of the projects.**

b) **Indirect costs (or overheads):** those which, by their nature, cannot be directly allocated to the project as they cannot be individualised. These are the costs incurred by the institution in making available to the research team a set of resources and services that enable it to carry out the project. These costs are applied to the project proportionally to the amount received. For example, electricity and telephone consumption, expenses related to the use of building infrastructures, equipment and structural tools (computers, software, network, etc.) and general university services.

c) **Canon:** standard percentage established by the University, according to the type of project, which aims to cover the indirect costs linked to the project.

7. Canon percentages

The following canon percentages are established taking into account the **type of project:**

| TYPE OF PROJECTS | CANON (%) |
|------------------|-----------|
|------------------|-----------|

| | |
|--|----|
| 1. Competitive R&D&I projects* | 20 |
| 2. Institutional projects | 0 |
| 3. Contracted research / Consultancy | 20 |
| 4. Infrastructure grants / Mobility and grants / Internal grants | 0 |
| 5. Conferences / Seminars | 15 |
| 7. Chairs | 10 |
| 8. Awards | 0 |

* With the possibility of applying reductions depending on the type of call (see Annex I)

7.1. Reglas de aplicación

The UOC canon is applied to the total funded budget of the project, understood as the sum of the direct and indirect costs included in the approved budget.

- In competitive **R&D&I Projects**, a **reference canon of 20% is established**. However, with the aim of ensuring the correct economic justification of the projects and their financial viability, a reduction of this percentage is approved depending on the characteristics of the corresponding call.

The reduction of the canon shall be applied in accordance with the conditions of the call, in particular according to the applicable cost regime (total costs or marginal costs), the existence or not of a specific item of indirect costs and the existence or not of co-financing by the UOC, as indicated in **Annex I** of this regulation.

- **Competitive Institutional Projects** are those promoted by a member of the Strategic Commission of the UOC with the aim of responding to an institutional objective, provided that this consideration is ratified by the vice-rector, or by the vice-general manager, competent in the matter. In no case shall initiatives led by research staff to respond solely to the objectives of their research group/centre/Faculty be considered institutional initiatives.

- In the case of **R&D&I Projects or competitive Institutional Projects** which, during their execution, have not been subject to canon or have had a reduced canon, lower than 20%, and in which, at the end of the project, remaining balance are generated, **a retention of 25% shall be applied to the remaining balance once the project has been closed and justified**. In no case shall the total sum of the retentions applied by the UOC, including the canon applied during the execution of the project and, where appropriate, the retention on remaining balance, exceed 20% of the total funded budget of the project.
- With regard to “**Contracted research / Consultancy**”, the canon to be applied in all cases is 20%. In addition, the provisions of the current UOC Regulations on R&D&I activity under collaboration and contract shall apply.
- **Infrastructure grants, mobility grants and internal grants** are not subject to canon.
- With regard to “**Conferences and seminars**”, the percentage of canon is applied to the total amount of the conference or seminar, including all types of funding sources.
- With regard to “Chairs”, the percentage of canon is governed by the provisions of Article 8.2 of the current *UOC Regulations on the creation and operation of Chairs*.
- “**Awards**” are those intended to recognise the trajectory, excellence or merit of research staff by the awarding body. In these cases, the financial amounts received by research staff have a specific-purpose nature and, therefore, are not subject to the application of canon. In the case where there are grants called “awards” which do have a specific-purpose nature —that is, which entail the awarding of funds intended for carrying out a specific activity— the canon foreseen for competitive R&D&I Projects shall be applied.

In the event that, for reasons of economic viability, it is not possible to apply the canon percentages established in this policy, the reasons for the reduction must be duly justified and shall be validated by the **Vice-General Management for Research, Transfer and Entrepreneurship (VGRTE)**.

8. Destination of the funds generated by the canon

The funds collected by the UOC in the form of canon **are reinvested in the overall budget of the FUOC**. Specifically, the amount of the canons shall be used to:

- Finance the annual budget of R&T policies and thus contribute to the sustainability of the UOC.
- Finance provisions of funds for possible losses arising from R&D&I projects.

9. Approval of the Policy

The approval of this Policy has been carried out in accordance with the provisions of the Policy on roles and responsibilities in the approval of internal regulations of the UOC.

10. Entry into force

The canon percentages established in this policy shall apply to all projects **submitted from 1 January 2027 onwards**. In no case shall the canons applicable to projects which, on that date, are in the execution phase, evaluation phase or in the process of formalisation or signing of the corresponding agreement be modified.

Likewise, **the 25% retention on the remaining balance shall apply to projects ending from 1 January 2027 onwards**. This measure shall affect R&D&I projects and competitive institutional projects that, during their implementation, have not been subject to canon charges or have been subject to a reduced canon percentage (below 18% in the case of projects submitted before 1 January 2027, or below 20% in the case of projects submitted from 1 January 2027 onwards).

11. Confidentiality

All rules, procedures and documentation approved internally shall be the property of the UOC and may not be used for purposes other than those for which they have been provided, nor shall they be transmitted or communicated to persons outside the interests of the UOC.

ANNEX I - Specific canon for competitive R&D&I Projects according to the characteristics of the call

In competitive R&D&I Projects, a reference canon of 20% is established. However, with the aim of ensuring the correct economic justification of the projects and their financial viability, a reduction of this percentage is approved depending on the characteristics of the corresponding call.

The reduction of the canon shall be applied in accordance with the conditions of the call, in particular according to the applicable cost regime (total costs or marginal costs), the existence or not of a specific item of indirect costs and the existence or not of co-financing by the UOC, as indicated below.

| Co-financing | Total cost | Indirect costs in the call | Canon UOC | Exemple |
|--------------|------------|----------------------------|---|--|
| NO | YES | YES / NO | 20% | Horizon Europe Projects funded at 100% with 25% indirect costs |
| ≤ 20% | YES | YES / NO | 10% | Erasmus+ Projects funded at 80% with 7% indirect costs |
| > 20% | YES | YES / NO | 7% | Digital Europe Projects funded at 50%, without indirect costs |
| NO | NO | YES | Total amount of indirect costs of the call (with a maximum of 20% canon) | National Plan Projects funded at 100% with 21% indirect costs |
| YES / NO | NO | NO | 0% | IMPACTE call of the Generalitat with 20% co-financing, under marginal costs and without indirect costs |