

CEITEC Masaryk University: Report 2018 and Plan 2019

Jiří Nantl

February 2019



Version	2019-02-27
Editor / Reviewed by	Jiří Nantl, Director
Authors	Jiří Nantl, Director Eliška Handlířová, Head of Director's Office
Consulted with	Karel Říha, Deputy Director for Science Martina Pokorná, Deputy Director for Administrative Matters Michal Marcolla, Secretary Nikola Kostlánová, Scientific Secretary
Admin Meeting	February 2019
Management	February 2019
Director's Board	5 th March 2019
Scientific Board	14 th March 2019
Type of Document	Report, Plan
Key Words	Activity Plan 2019; Status Report 2018
Reported Period	2018-2019
Sensitive Document	No

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2018, CEITEC profiled itself further as the most productive and competitive part of MUNI in terms of several key indicators. As demonstrated by data provided by the MUNI Rectorate, CEITEC operates with the lowest allocation of space in m² per FTE; however, CEITEC also has the highest total income per both FTE and m² from all MUNI faculties and institutes.

Moreover, an analysis of contributions from faculties and institutes into the central budget of MUNI against available institutional funding shows that CEITEC, at the same time, operates with the lowest amount institutional funding of research per FTE from all MUNI faculties and institutes (less than one third of average allocation per FTE at MUNI).

CEITEC, however, continues to drive the overall scientific performance of MUNI. Measured by the Nature Index, the cumulative value displayed by the Nature Index for MUNI, combined with CEITEC (the Nature Index counts CEITEC as a distinct organisation, in which approximately 85 percent of performance is contributed by CEITEC MUNI), places MUNI in 2nd-3rd place in the Czech Republic, along with Charles University (both institutions follow to the Academy of Sciences as a whole).

Benchmarking done within the activities of Alliance4Life, a Central and Eastern European research institute network coordinated by CEITEC, in cooperation with EU-LIFE, also shows that within the region, CEITEC (and the University of Tartu, which, as a whole, ranks in the range 301-350 of world university rankings) is beginning to have a similar publication profile to some of the distinguished Western European institutions.

The high competitive quality of most research carried out at CEITEC was confirmed by the Common Evaluation of Scientific Excellence of the CEITEC consortium, which was completed in October 2018. The results of CEITEC MUNI research groups were on average, best in the whole consortium.

CEITEC continues to submit highly competitive grants as well. In 2018, a new ERC Starting Grant (M. Mráz) was awarded (to begin in July 2019). Three new projects for ERC are in the pipeline for submission. The PASSAGE project in the H2020 Teaming Second Phase is currently awaiting the final panel hearing. CEITEC also submitted, in strategic agreement with the three campus faculties, an ERA-Chair project.

At the beginning of this year, CEITEC MU was awarded with the HR Excellence in Research label by the European Commission. The HR Strategy and Action Plan was set for 2018-2023, defining five areas: 1. Recruitment and onboarding, 2. Career system, supervision and training, 3. Working conditions, 4. Cultivation of internal culture and governance, and 5. Diversity, internationalisation, and gender equality.

CEITEC coordinates the project of National Sustainability Program II (NPU II) for the whole CEITEC consortium, and carries out a major part of its substantial commitments. In 2018, a mid-term evaluation of NPU II was organized by the Ministry of Education. As the only beneficiary of NPU II in the country, CEITEC received the highest possible assessment (A1), which, by terms of its contract with the

government, also guarantees full funding for research infrastructure projects under a separate scheme until 2022.

However, given the complexities of the conditions of the NPU II scheme, there is near certainty that it will be impossible to have fully secured co-financing (i.e., contracted and spent within a given budget year in reality and on time in connection with activities supported by the NPU II direct grant) both at CEITEC MUNI, as well as for the whole consortium. While this risk is being managed on an ongoing basis, it will also require the incoming institutional funding of research to be spent regularly within a given year, rather than left undistributed, as has been the current practice (also with the aim to prepare for the aforementioned funding gap).

In respect to 2020+, CEITEC primarily needs to know what the university's strategy in research will be, and how such a strategy will be translated into a budgetary policy and formula.

However, based on current working forecasts, CEITEC will be ready in 2021 to manage the expected funding gap (on balance) in institutional and quasi-institutional resources of about 30 mil CZK, which would require the termination of 6 to 10 research groups (and proportionate savings in institutional operating costs). Contingency planning has been underway since fall 2018, and implementation measures will be presented during the second half of 2019.

The long-term financial strategy of CEITEC takes into account that, in addition to the institutional funding of research and quasi-institutional resources (NPU II), national grants are the most significant type of resource at CEITEC. With a steady success rate in national grant schemes, in which CEITEC currently ranks (sometimes very significantly) higher than the national average, the policy of CEITEC is to provide its research groups with baseline funding (plus infrastructural and administrative support), while expecting them to raise most their budgets by their own efforts.

The enhanced emphasis on individual international grants, such as, namely, ERC, is more important for the long-term scientific profiling of CEITEC (even its continuing success will not substantially affect its co-financing ability under NPU II for technical reasons).

2. FULFILMENT OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN UP TO 2020 IN 2018

The Strategic Plan of CEITEC was approved by the Rector on 3rd January 2017, with the implementation period up to 2020. The strategy is further specified in the form of the Activity Plan of Management on an annual basis. This document describes major activities started and accomplished in 2018.

In general, implementation is ongoing as planned, with selected activities that are delayed. Graph 1 shows the distribution of individual activities (tasks) as defined in the Activity Plan of Management for 2018, according to the status of the task. There were 79 actions, resp. 174 individual tasks, formulated in the Activity Plan of Management for 2018, in which, 71 % were accomplished, 6 % were implemented according to plan (the deadline is set for 2019), 6 % were postponed, and 11 % were delayed. The rest of the tasks are to be started or were reviewed by the management.

Among the major achievements of the 2018, we can highlight the following:

- **Career System** - This Director's Measure regulates the principles and prerequisites of career advancements, career development, and career changes for CEITEC employees, as well as the establishment and extinction of research groups in connection with the implementation of the Institute's career system.
- **Evaluation of Scientific Excellence** - The international evaluation is organised by the CEITEC consortium on a regular basis in four-year intervals. According to the statement of international experts, CEITEC significantly exceeds the usual standard in other European countries in the current setting of the scientific evaluation system.
- **HR Excellence in Research Award** – CEITEC was awarded with the label of excellence in HR, based on the detailed internal gap analysis, definition of the HR Strategy, and five-year action plan.
- **Space Allocation Policy** – The policy was prepared by the Space Allocation Committee and internally discussed with group leaders, and amongst the Director's Board.
- **PASSAGE (Teaming project, phase 2)** – The project application was submitted in October 2018 in partnership with VIB (Belgium).
- **ERA Chair** – In cooperation with the Faculty of Sport Studies, the Faculty of Science, and the Faculty of Medicine, CEITEC prepared and submitted a project application for the new ERA Chair in November 2018.
- **Alliance4Life** – Alliance4Life is a bottom-up initiative of ten leading life science institutions from nine EU-13 countries that aims at closing the divide in European health research and innovation. Members of the Alliance are **progressive research institutions** that have the necessary strength to **stimulate institutional change**. CEITEC is the coordinator of the consortium.

List of Approved Director's Measures in 2018

1/2018	Amendment of CEITEC MUNI Organisational Structure
2/2018	Cancellation of Measure No. 1/2012
3/2018	Fire Safety Code of CEITEC MUNI Buildings (Except for SUKB Premises)
4/2018	Rules of Preparation, Implementation and Sustainability of Projects
5/2018	Rules of Setting Personal Evaluation Bonuses and Function-Based Wage Supplements in Line with the Internal Wages Regulation of MUNI
6/2018	Amendment to the Rules of Setting Fees for Use of Devices and Equipment Owned by CEITEC MUNI
7/2018	CEITEC MUNI Awards
8/2018	Change of Internal Budget Rules
9/2018	Career System

Source: https://is.muni.cz/do/ceitec/uredni_deska/opatreni_reditele/70921299/?lang=en

3. CEITEC MU: ACTIVITY PLAN 2019 SUMMARY

The Activity Plan of CEITEC MUNI Management for 2019 further specifies individual activities and measures of the Strategic Plan of CEITEC MUNI up to 2020. All activities/measures/target values of indicators are dedicated to particular departments or to the Director's Office.

3.1. TOP PRIORITIES FOR 2019

- I. **Financial model for 2020+** (e.g., savings, reduction of the Institute, and internal budget rules update) – start of the implementation in 2020
- II. **Shift of the grant policy towards enhanced emphasis on individual international grants** - includes the career system and statement of expectations (e.g., collaborative projects and ERC grants)
- III. **Framework agreement with faculties on the conditions of PhD studies**
- IV. **Wage system** (e.g., harmonisation of wage levels, and a better model for junior positions, such as tenure contracts for technical positions)
- V. **Systematic relations** with the City of Brno and the South Moravian Region, MUNI internal relations, and CEITEC researchers as members of national communities

3.2. FURTHER ACTIVITIES

Cross-Cutting Activities

- **PASSAGE project (Teaming)** – results of the call are expected in April 2019
- **HR Excellence in Research Award** – implementation of the HR Action Plan 2019
- **ORION project (Open Science)** – implementation of the H2020 consortia project

Scientific Management and PhD School

- **Implementation of the new doctoral programme, Biomedical Sciences** – continuation of the process started in 2018 in cooperation with the Faculty of Medicine
- **Summer school for potential candidates of the CEITEC PhD School**
- **Director's Measure on Scholarship Programmes**
- **Conference "Institutional Management in Research"**

Human Resources

- **Career System implementation** – the Career System was approved in 2018, with effectivity from April 2019
- **Recruitment Policy** – overall recruitment policy and related guidelines covering the full procedure, with specific attention to attracting postdoc researchers
- **Onboarding process for new employees** – process from the signature of the working contract to the full "adaptation" of the new employee

- **Exit procedure**
- **Conception of Mentoring Programme** – with specific attention to Junior Group Leaders (continuing activity launched in 2018)
- **Conception of Group Leader evaluation and conception of Core Facility Heads evaluation (managerial skills)**
- **Postdoc Platform operation**
- **Update of systemisation rules** – based on experience from 2016-2018

Financial Management

- **Budget Plan 2019**
- **Review of price levels for Core Facility services**

Grants and Project Administration

- **Update of Research Group and Core Facility mapping in relation to grant opportunities**
- **General risk analysis of most frequent project risks**
- **Analysis of audit and control findings**

Operation Management

- **Space Allocation Policy** – implementation of the policy approved in 2018
- **IT Policy** – final approval of the policy was prepared and discussed in 2018
- **Rules of Operation**
- **GDPR** – further implementation of the Action Plan was defined in 2018
- **Investments** – schedule and regular collections of investment purchase requirements - renewal of standard laboratory and IT equipment
- **Lab management** – lab books system

Governance and Internal Culture

- **Strategic Partnerships** – Alliance4Life, EU-LIFE, UOCHB, and CEITEC Consortium
- **Further internationalisation of the Institute** – 90 % of background documents for the Director's Office are to be prepared in English
- **Further standardisation of internal processes** – preparation and implementation of new methodological guidelines across all administrative departments
- **Further electrification of internal processes** – in cooperation with ICT MU (e.g., electronic cover sheets of contracts in INET and electronic evidence of working hours)
- **Increase of professional services and governance** – including internal trainings in order to increase competences and know-how of administrative employees
- **Further development of the Regular Reporting System**