

Medium-term Strategic Plan of the Research Centre for the Humanities (2020–2023)

1) Analysis of the external environment and review of the internal capacities

The *external* environment of the RCH is determined primarily by the national institutes and research centres of related sciences as well as by the prominent universities of higher education (departments, doctoral schools), but we also turn an attentive eye to government-founded workshops. In addition to them, just as important are international workshops from nearly all the continents, which we look to as points of reference and cooperation partners. In consideration of the fact that we wish to assert ourselves as key players in each discipline of the humanities in Hungary in which we are concerned, we have a different role to play “*in house*”: in order to inspire research, we must harmonize and conciliate the *disciplinary independence* of the seven *member institutes* making up the Centre and the interests of the *RCH as an interdisciplinary research centre*. Our strategic objective is to ensure that while respecting the autonomy of institutes and researchers, the RCH is able to position itself and operate as an intellectual think tank based on, enabling and inspiring cooperation where we can stand united.

2) Mission statement of the RCH

The RCH’s first and foremost task is to conduct internationally competitive research, and integrate its research as well as results into universal science. While Hungarian humanities scholars must work, in all respects, in conformity with the universal standards and expectations of science, universal topics should come more into focus as well. Researchers must consider it a priority to introduce the historically accumulated unique Hungarian knowledge pool (the lessons drawn from our history, culture and traditions) into the international discourse. Furthermore, they aim to renew communication with the members of the national and international academia, and to make humanities research visible to the general public with the help of modern media.

3) Setting strategic objectives for the RCH in close correlation with the aims of the organizational units and groups

The RCH considers it its fundamental task to publish and utilize the research results achieved with its involvement on the appropriate levels of science as well as institutional and general education. With that in mind, the RCH takes a lion’s share in higher education and doctoral programmes, the publication of journals and professional literature, the organization of conferences and exhibitions, as well as in the preparation and operation of databases, archives and documentations with public access.

The strategic objectives of the individual disciplines are detailed in the institutes’ own documentation. We consider it necessary to highlight three areas that enhance the widest and best-quality dissemination possible of the results of each of the member institutes:

Library: national scientific specialized library with restricted access. Its operation is based on the professional cooperation of its seven constitutive specialized disciplinary libraries. Thanks to its unique and diversified collection, it is an esteemed institution in national and international academia, a key player in research support. It aims to support and inform the community of researchers of each academic area with the help of its continuously growing collection and developing services, regardless of the physical location of the libraries, and to

safeguard and enrich the documents of the Hungarian scientific results in both print and digital form.

RCH Publishing House: It is common knowledge that academic publication in Hungary is currently experiencing a deep and persisting crisis. Funds available for such purposes are diminishing in the country while the competition to obtain them is growing increasingly fierce. The past years have led us to the conclusion that the best way to solve the problematic of book and journal publication of the humanities research institutes of the Academy is to launch – by revamping the publication unit of the RCH – the RCH Publishing House for Humanities and Social Sciences.

Databank project: Another area of priority is a long-term project the implementation of which requires broad cooperation from the Hungarian academic sphere, for its objective is to create a uniform, national, digital research data bank for the Hungarian humanities.

4) Setting up a system of performance indicators adapted to the profile of the RCH, which will ensure that the implementation of the strategy could be monitored and directed

In accordance with the Organizational and Operational Regulations of the RCH in force, the performance of the public employees working at the RCH is evaluated by the directors of the institutes and the Deputy Director General in the reporting period following the reference year. The evaluations are approved by the Director General. At present, the evaluations are anchored on the annual work plans. In addition to that, there is a system of criteria and promotions (specified in the classification policy of the research centre), which determines an expected yearly amount of work for each position (typically, a certain number of publications, certain scientific public life activities), and also, there exist performance indicators such as the number of references and various indices and factors that are predominantly required by the tendering institutions of national and international calls for proposals.

5) Determining the strategic action plans: the planning of research-centre-level programmes and projects

It is true for each of the institutes as for the whole of the RCH that they are involved in mostly long-term basic research, and they strive to publish their results in comprehensive works (preferably in handbooks). In harmony with their research profiles, the institutes publish much-needed sources and texts as well as comprehensive handbooks. The yearly distribution of the individual tasks is formulated in the strategic objectives of the institutes.

Of the research teams subordinated directly to the Director General, the *Early Hungarian History Research Team* continues to work on research into the early history of the Hungarian people, the systematization of the results, as well as their publication in both scholarly and popular science formats. They also seek to establish research partnerships with Russian, Moldavian and Ukrainian fellows and organize joint excavations. In the upcoming period, the *Rural History Research Team* will pursue its diversified research on the transfer of power in 1944–1945, and will present it at conferences and in publications.

6) Planning the economic background of the RCH's action plans (business plan)

The Research Centre provides funds for the majority of the activities (for approx. 70% of them) from the basic subvention, but it is also drawing on increasingly substantial and varied tender funds. Over recent years, tender funds have gradually increased in terms of proportion,

and we wish to pursue this trend. At the same time, the regular and reliable increase of the basic subvention is indispensable to ensure long-term and stable functioning. When planning projects, we always review the relevant domestic and international tender opportunities. Moreover, we take into consideration orders made by Hungarian entrepreneurs and dedicated grants, which – albeit seldom – occur from time to time.

7) Monitoring the measures following from the strategy (feedback); measuring and verifying the implementation of the strategic actions

The method of verification of scientific–professional activities is laid down in a special policy (FEUVE). According to that, the heads of department are to draft a report about the implementation of the annual research plans. These reports are then checked by the directors of the institutes. The scientific and professional activities of the Research Centre are monitored and controlled by the Governing Board. Operational verification is carried out by the supervisor who is responsible for the implementation of the projects launched in the framework of scientific activities on the basis of the annual plan. The internal auditor of the Research Centre may verify the proper financial performance of the individual projects as well as their time-proportionate financial performance and liquidity.

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Pál Fodor
Director General