

Methodological Guidance for Assessing Compliance of Calls and Projects for the 2025–2027 with the Research and Innovation Strategy for Smart Specialisation of the Slovak Republic 2021–2027 (“SK RIS3 2021+”)

SK RIS3 2021+ is a strategic document that defines the objectives, system of policies, and measures in the fields of research, innovation, and human resources aimed at stimulating structural change in the Slovak economy towards growth based on increasing research and innovation capacity and excellence in segments with the highest competitive potential.

Smart specialisation is a concept of innovation policy aimed at supporting national or regional innovation and contributing to growth and prosperity by helping and enabling countries or regions to focus on their strengths. It is based on partnerships between businesses, public entities, and knowledge institutions, and the identified areas are the result of the Entrepreneurial Discovery Process (EDP).

Based on the Resolutions of the Government of the Slovak Republic No. 46 of 5 February 2025 and No. 324 of 3 July 2019, the SK RIS3 2021+ strategy and its Summary Report to the EDP process for the 2025–2027 represent the framework for the concentration of resources and implementation of calls/projects in the field of research, development, and innovation under the Slovakia Programme, the Recovery and Resilience Plan, and the state budget.

In ensuring the enforcement of the SK RIS3 2021+ priorities in the new programming period 2021–2027, **the call issuer**, whose call is subject to content compliance with SK RIS3 2021+, **is obliged to ensure that both the project applicant and the expert evaluator have basic information about the method of assessing compliance with SK RIS3 2021+.**

The call issuer shall include a reference to the “Methodological Guidance for Assessing Compliance of Calls and Projects for the 2025–2027 with the Research and Innovation Strategy for Smart Specialisation of the Slovak Republic 2021–2027 (“SK RIS3 2021+”)“ in those parts of the call that refer to the requirement of compliance with the content of SK RIS3 2021+.

ASSESSING COMPLIANCE WITH SK RIS3 2021+:

The assessment of the compliance of projects from calls announced under the Slovakia Programme 2021–2027, the Recovery and Resilience Plan, and state budget **with the SK RIS3 2021+ is intended to ensure support for those Priority areas that have the greatest potential for transformation** towards activities with higher added value, while also possessing sufficient research and innovation capacity to drive the transformation of the Slovak Republic.

The specific procedures for assessing the compliance of projects with the SK RIS3 2021+ outlined below aim to ensure that financial resources from the Slovakia Programme 2021–2027, the Recovery and Resilience Plan, and state are implemented in line with the content focus of the identified smart specialisation priorities in research, development, and innovation in Slovakia. **The methodology for**

assessing compliance with SK RIS3 2021+ is binding across all 3 levels, with each level representing only a partial aspect of overall compliance.

Level 1: ASSESSMENT OF COMPLIANCE with the strategic objectives of the SK RIS3 2021+

- **The project applicant** must describe the project's ability to contribute to the fulfilment of the **strategic objectives of the SK RIS3 2021+** (The strategic objectives of SK RIS3 2021+ are included in Chapter 2.2 of the strategy).
- The assessment of compliance with the strategic objectives is **adequately justified in relation to the specific objective(s)** and the way they will be achieved.
- The description of the project's compliance with the **strategic objectives** of SK RIS3 2021+ is included either as a separate annex to the Application for Non-Repayable Financial Contribution or directly within the application itself (in Section 7 – Project Description).
- **The expert evaluator** follows the same approach as the project applicant when assessing the project's compliance with the **strategic objectives of SK RIS3 2021+**, and their task is to evaluate the relevance of the description in relation to the project's ability to contribute to the fulfilment of the strategic objectives of SK RIS3 2021+.
- The expert evaluator assesses the description of compliance with the **strategic objectives of SK RIS3 2021+** based on a separate annex to the Application for Non-Repayable Financial Contribution or directly from the application itself (in Section 7 – Project Description).

Level 2: ASSESSMENT OF COMPLIANCE with the goals of the Smart Specialisation Domains of SK RIS3 2021+ (domain goals and the Target state of the selected Priority Area)

- **The applicant must describe in the project how it will contribute to achieving the goals of the Smart Specialisation Domain and the Target state of the selected Priority Area.**
- If the content of the project **contributes to fulfilling the goals and the Target state of more than one Smart Specialisation Domain, it is necessary to justify the project's ability to meet the goals of other domains as well**, considering its contribution to achieving the target state of the respective Priority Area of the additional domain.
- The description of the project's compliance with the goals of the Smart Specialisation Domains of SK RIS3 2021+ is included either as a separate annex to the Application for Non-Repayable Financial Contribution or directly within the application itself (in Section 7 – Project Description).
- **The expert evaluator follows** the same approach as the project applicant when assessing compliance with the goals of the Smart Specialisation Domains and the Target state of the Priority Areas of the Smart Specialisation Domains of SK RIS3 2021+. **Their task is to evaluate the relevance of the description in relation to the appropriateness of the identified domain goal and the Target state of the Priority Area** to which the project implementation should contribute.
- The expert evaluator assesses the description of compliance with the goals of the Smart Specialisation Domains and the target state of the Priority Areas of the Smart Specialisation Domains based on a separate annex to the Application for Non-Repayable Financial Contribution or directly from the application (in Section 7 – Project Description).

Level 3: ASSESSMENT OF COMPLIANCE with the Thematic Support Areas of the Priority Areas within the Smart Specialisation Domains of SK RIS3 2021+

- **The submitted project must, through its content, cover one of the Thematic Support Areas within the given priority area of the Smart Specialisation Domain of SK RIS3 2021+.** The Thematic Support Areas are included in a separate table for each priority area listed in the Summary Report from the EDP process for SK RIS3 2021+ for the period 2025–2027.
- **The project applicant shall indicate which of the Thematic Support Areas the content focus of the submitted project falls under.**
- The description of the project's compliance with the Thematic Support Areas within the given priority area of the Smart Specialisation Domain of SK RIS3 2021+ is included either as a separate annex to the Application for Non-Repayable Financial Contribution or directly within the application itself (in Section 7 – Project Description).
- **The expert evaluator follows** the same approach as the project applicant when assessing the project's compliance with the Thematic Support Area within the given Priority Area of the Smart Specialisation Domain of SK RIS3 2021+. Their task is to assess the relevance of the description and the accuracy of the identification of the Thematic Support Area in relation to the project's content focus.
- The expert evaluator assesses the description of compliance with the **Thematic Support Area** within the given Priority Area of the Smart Specialisation Domain of SK RIS3 2021+ based on a separate annex to the Application for Non-Repayable Financial Contribution or directly from the application itself (in Section 7 – Project Description).

Online sources for Accessing the Currently Valid Documents:

Slovak version of documents:

Stratégia výskumu a inovácií pre inteligentnú špecializáciu SR 2021-2027 (SK RIS3 2021+): <https://vaia.gov.sk/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Strategia-vyskumu-a-inovacii-pre-inteligentnu-specializaciju.pdf>

Súhrnná správa z procesu EDP k SK RIS3 2021+ na obdobie 2025-2027: <https://vaia.gov.sk/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/Suhrnna-sprava-z-procesu-EDP-k-strategii-SK-RIS3-2021.pdf>

English version of documents:

Research and Innovation Strategy for Smart Specialisation of the Slovak Republic 2021-2027 (SK RIS3 2021+): <https://vaia.gov.sk/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Research-and-Innovation-Strategy-for-Smart-Specialisation-of-the-Slovak-Republic-2021-2027.pdf>

Summary Report of the EDP to the Strategy SK RIS3 2021+: <https://vaia.gov.sk/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Summary-Report-of-the-EDP-to-the-Strategy-2021-2027-SK-RIS3-2021.pdf>