

R&D&I Council holds more talks with world-renowned experts from the International Board

The Council for Research, Development and Innovation (the Council), chaired by Minister Helena Langšádlová, met on 9 October 2023 at the Hrzánský Palace for a joint meeting with its International Advisory Board. This meeting is regularly held in Prague and the main items on its agenda included recommendations from foreign experts on Czech research funding agencies and an overview of current developments in science policy in the Czech Republic.



The R&D&I Council discussed once again with experts from the International Board. The meeting was also attended by the Council's Chair, Minister Helena Langšádlová. Photo: Office of the Government of the Czech Republic.

"I always find the working meetings with experts from the International Board to be extremely beneficial. These are top, world-renowned scientists with valuable management experience in a foreign environment, with whom we have a unique opportunity to discuss key topics and the preparation of strategic materials in the field of science and research," said Helena Langšádlová, Minister for Science, Research and Innovation, summarising the outcome of this year's meeting.

The International Board is an advisory body to the R&D&I Council composed of distinguished international experts, which has been providing the Council with international expert comparison since 2016. It is headed by **Prof. Josef Michl, Ph.D.**, from the University of Colorado at Boulder, and it currently consists of 11 world-renowned elite scientists, namely **Prof. JUDr. Jiří Příbáň, Ph.D., DrSc.**, from Cardiff University, **Prof. Dr. Josef Jiříčný** from the Institute of Molecular Cancer Research, University of Zurich, **Prof. MUDr. Bohdan Pomahač, M.D.**, from the Yale Surgery and Smilow Cancer Hospital, **Prof. Jakub Kastl, Ph.D.**, who works at Princeton University, **doc. Dr. Vladislav Kolařík** from the Fraunhofer-Institute for Chemical Technology ICT, **M.D. Karel Pacák, Ph.D., D.Sc.**, from the National Institute of Health, USA, **Prof. Dalibor Sameš** from Columbia University, **MUDr. Martin Tolar**,

Ph.D., who works at Alzheon, Inc., **Prof. Pier Luigi Sacco** from IULM University of Milan and **Prof. Ding-Ming Wang, Ph.D.**, from the Taiwanese National Hsinchu University of Education.

Over the last three years, the International Board has issued several recommendations on the system of targeted support in the Czech Republic with the aim of improving the effectiveness of selected agencies. The first set of recommendations concerned the Czech Science Foundation, whereas the second concerned the Agency for Healthcare Research of the Czech Republic.

The day-long meeting was conducted in a hybrid mode in two blocks, given the time lag of the remotely connected participants from the USA and Asia. During the extensive discussion, which was also attended by the **President of the Czech Science Foundation dr. Petr Baldrian**, the foreign experts appreciated the level of change achieved especially at the Czech Science Foundation. One of the remaining important recommendations is to increase the level of internationalisation, for example by including foreign scientists on the Foundation's Supervisory Board or by establishing an independent foreign scientific committee. The International Board also draws attention to the need to promote quality over quantity. Other recommendations included reducing the administrative burden and supporting young researchers, who, in line with international trends, deserve special support. Junior grants should, in the view of the International Board, have a five-year duration and lead to the formation of a new independent Principal Investigator. *"It is not a surprise that the Czech Science Foundation is doing well. The situation is much better than when we started. They are willing to listen,"* added Professor Michl.

Finally, the foreign scientists were informed about the main aspects of the development of science policy in the Czech Republic, specifically in the areas of the State budget for science and research 2024+, the preparation of a new act on research, development, innovation and knowledge transfer, the intended update of the Evaluation Methodology 2017+ or the redefinition of the National Priorities of Oriented Research; they were also introduced to the activities of the working groups People in Science and Knowledge and Technology Transfer.

Source:

press release of the RDI Council – Office of the Government of the Czech Republic | 11 October 2023