

# RDIC nominates immunologist Václav Hořejší for Česká hlava 2020 National Government Award

On 25 September, the regular session of the Research, Development and Innovation Council ("the Council") took place at Straka Academy, chaired by PM Andrej Babiš. The main items of the meeting included support for research, development and innovation as part of the economic strategy, nominating a candidate for the Česká hlava National Government Award, and nominating a president and Presidium members for the Czech Science Foundation and members/vice-chair for the Scientific Board of the Technology Agency of the Czech Republic.



*Councilmembers at its 360th session; press conference after the meeting. Photo: Office of the Government*

At the start of the meeting, the members of the Council once again dealt with support for science and research as part of the economic strategy (National Recovery Plan). *"The item was dedicated to an extensive discussion on using the prepared funds from the National Recovery Fund, which the PM and Czech government are negotiating for from European sources. The Council will return to this topic over the coming sessions,"* said Council Vice-Chair Pavel Baran.

On the given point, the Council approved setting up a working group for medical research led by Jan Konvalinka and a working group for applied industrial research, which will be led by Luboš Novák.

**The Council proposed awarding the highest prize in science and research, the Česká hlava National Government Award for 2020, to Václav Hořejší for his outstanding achievements in the field of molecular immunology.** The nomination will now be submitted for discussion by the government. The Česká hlava National Government Award is granted for extraordinary lifetime achievement in research and development. It comes with a prize of CZK one million.

This session once again discussed Implementation of Methodology 2017+. Council members approved publishing of the first results after the third year of assessment under the valid methodology, as well as the establishment and working procedures of the Working Group for Evaluation of Applied Research with the following members: Libor

Kraus, Josef Psutka, Ilona Müllerová, Tomáš Büchler, Petr Očko, Daniel Münich, Radim Vácha, Michael Valášek, Jaroslav Machan, Petr Štěpánek, Jan Rýdl, Iveta Volšičková, Ivo Hain.

The session programme included the election of three candidates for the Presidium of the Czech Science Foundation (GACR), including the president, and two candidates for the Scientific Board of the Technology Agency of the Czech Republic (TACR). The Council also proposed to the government the appointment of a Scientific Board vice-chair.

Following a secret ballot, the RDIC proposed re-appointing to another term the current members of the GACR Presidium **Petr Baldrian, Jaroslav Koča and Alice Valkárová, with Professor Koča also being nominated for the function of agency president.** Jaroslav Koča is the director of the National Centre for Biomolecular Research at Masaryk University in Brno and the scientific director of the Central European Institute of Technology (CEITIC).

In another secret ballot, the Council members approved the proposal of new members for the TACR Scientific Board, which are **Jana Klánová** for the academic sector and **Josef Kašpar** for the ministries. With the nomination for vice-chair of the Scientific Board from among the existing members was **Jan Kleindienst**, director of IBM Watson AI Lab (IBM Czech Republic).

The Council also approved a mandate for the main negotiator for negotiating optimal financial and other contractual conditions for transformation agreements (on the matter of procuring, providing access to and publishing electronic information sources) and proposed that its chair appoint Martin Svoboda, director of the National Technical Library, as the main negotiator.

Over the course of the further discussions, the Council approved organisation of a joint session with the International Council on 29 and 30 October 2020, in the form of a video conference in light of the current epidemiological situation. The Council members approved prolonging the mission of the diplomats for science, research and technology/innovation for the area of Southeast Asia and at the Washington office.

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### **Václav Hořejší**

Václav Hořejší is an excellent academic figure. He is at the top of his field as one of the most cited Czech scientists, the best known and recognised researcher abroad in the field of molecular immunology. Among other things he has been a scientific researcher at Harvard University, in 2003–2011 he was a member of the Learned Society of the Czech Republic. Professor Hořejší is the head academic of the Institute of Molecular Genetics of the Czech Academy of Sciences and a professor of immunology at the Charles University Faculty of Science.

In the first decade of his academic career he developed a new affinity model for the isolation and characterisation of the biologically significant proteins known as lectins, and he and his team have long been devoted to identifying and biochemically characterising the surface molecules of human white blood cells. Numbering among his most significant scientific achievements is his role in the discovery of several "membrane microdomains". The results of Václav Hořejší's research fundamentally contribute to the understanding of the mechanisms by which the immune system functions at a molecular level.