THE RESEARCH STRATEGY OF THE “VICTOR BABEŞ” UNIVERSITY OF MEDICINE AND PHARMACY OF TIMIŞOARA FROM 2013 TO 2020

The research strategy of the “Victor Babeş” University of Medicine and Pharmacy of Timişoara aims at integrating the university in the national, European and international environment, adjusting the objectives and strategies with current and future policies, so as to ensure the growth of the University’s reputation at national level and to establish an internationally recognized profile in terms of its ranking among the top institutions from Romania and Europe.

Mission

Once Romania joined the European Union (2007), strategy definition was made taken into account the vision of the “Victor Babeş” University of Medicine and Pharmacy of Timişoara, which sets its role related to scientific research, i. e.:

- Consolidation and development of managerial capacities in university scientific research, focused on the identification and raising of internal and external funding sources;
- Development of high performance sources in priority medical fields at European level and of the research infrastructure;
- Promotion of research of excellence and its linking to current standards;
- Increase of international visibility of the scientific activity developed by the university community.

This strategy provides a framework through which the University will fulfil its mission and objectives of scientific research, aiming at its development as an entity with national and international visibility in terms of competitive research, knowledge transfer and providing support for building a functional system to ensure the attraction, training and retaining of high quality human resources, competence and responsibility.

Short history and Milestones

In the first two years after the 1989 revolution, the period 1990-1992, scientific research in our university was carried out only at the discipline level, without institutional coordination at the university level.

Between 1992-2012 the university scientific research, as well as other fields of academic activity was conducted in transparent manner, while financial resources for research were allocated preferentially to a large extent, the Research Department having no power in allocating funds for research, and without holding the role to design research policies and research fields in the university. The entire decision making in these fields belonged to the Rector's Office. During this time, the Research Department had a passive role to collect and report research outputs. Achievements in this period (especially the ones related to the establishing of research centres) were due to the efforts of the teaching staff of the disciplines in question.
Once the new management team of the university was elected on March 1, 2012, by the election in the management staff of teachers who carry out and understand scientific research, the scientific research of the university was offered a huge development opportunity based on European criteria. The Department for Research and Grant Management has now the chance to outline the policy of scientific research in the university. In this regard, the Research Department has divided the current and future period in three distinct stages:

- Current stage – September 15, 2012 – December 31, 2013;
- The 2014 – 2020 stage, which includes also the stage of the current legislature - 2014-2016.
Strategic Objectives and Fields from 2012 to 2013

Current LOCAL status

- Decrease the number of research projects gained through national and international competition;
- Decrease of research-development funds raised through competition;
- Decrease of the yearly amounts allocated to the development of the infrastructure for research activities;
- Decrease of the number of teachers and researchers involved in strategic projects;
- Decrease of the number of partners involved in interdisciplinary projects;
- Stagnation of the number of research centres and non-accreditation of new centres;
- Decrease of the access to international databases with papers in full-text;
- Decrease of the writing of papers published in ISI and BDI indexed journals;
- Lack of an internal school for the preparation of scientific papers and research projects;
- Doctoral school with non-attractive courses and programme, and non-correlated to the current level of the European research;
- Decrease of the number of post-graduate courses based on own research fields;
- Decrease of the number of researchers under the age of 35 involved in performance scientific research;
- Loss of the sense of belonging of the teachers to the university (in the published papers the affiliation to UMFVBT was replaced by the affiliation to the hospital).

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<th>Strategic goal 1.</th>
<th>Recovery and stabilization of performance research activity</th>
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<td><strong>Objectives</strong></td>
<td><strong>Activities undertaken</strong></td>
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| Increase the number of research projects gained through competition at national and international level and increase of funds raised and allocated for research. | Direct information and information through scientific officers on the agenda of research projects at national and European level.  
Commencement and development of internal competitions for research grants. |
| Increase the number of teachers and researchers involved in research projects and the increase of the number of partners involved in interdisciplinary projects. | Inclusion in promotion criteria of several research projects gained through competition and papers published in ISI and BDI indexed journals.  
Optimization of the activity of the doctoral school. |
| Increase the number of research centres. | Launching the internal competition for the accreditation of the existing research centres and for the accreditation of new research centres in UMFVBT. |
| Inventoring and increase the efficiency of the existing performance research | Joint use of performance equipment by several disciplines and research centres by establishing laboratories for medical examination at the level of the faculties. |
equipment; purchase of new performance research equipment in correlation with the activities developed and results obtained.

Purchase of basic equipment based on yearly and multi-annual research plans.

Increase the access to international databases with medical papers in full-text.

Implementing the access to international databases in all buildings and clinical centres of UMFVBT.

Increase the number of papers published in ISI and BDI indexed publications and the number of patents.

Including in the minimum promotion criteria of teachers a higher number of ISI papers as a minimum criterion for promotion. Granting a merit pay for one year to teachers who write a larger number of ISI papers with higher impact factor.

Set up an internal school for the writing of scientific papers and research projects.

Organization of a support centre for writing scientific papers, working in three of the UMFVBT’s buildings.

Revitalize and render efficient the doctoral school.

Changing the topic of several courses of the doctoral school. Changing the criteria for granting qualifications for defending doctoral theses, criteria based on the publication of ISI papers with high impact factor.

Increase the number of new post-graduate courses based on own research fields.

Stimulating well-known teachers to deliver new post-graduate courses based on own research fields. National crediting of the courses with the Romanian College of Doctors.

Increase the number of young researchers under the age of 35 involved in performance scientific research.

Granting through contest of doctoral grants for young researchers (under the age of 35). Internal competitions for projects for young researchers.

Regain the sense of belonging of the teachers to UMFVBT.

Granting diplomas for research activity of excellence. Taking into account in the files for promotion only of the papers correctly mentioning the affiliation to the disciplines, departments and faculties of the university.

**Strategic goal 2.**

**Optimization of research project management**

**Objectives**

Transformation of the Department for Research and Grant Management of UMFVBT in a well-defined structure, highly efficient in the management of research projects.

**Activities undertaken**

Encourage training in the field of management, research and innovation of the entire teaching and research personnel interested to deliver research of excellence in UMFVBT. Develop an information system providing integrated records on research results achieved through projects, grants, contracts at the level of UMFVBT. Increase international visibility of the research potential of UMFVBT. Identify research trends in the European Union and opportunities to attend international research projects. Create the framework required to support research teams in the writing, development and promotion of research projects.
Optimization of working procedures at the Department level, to ensure efficient communication with the faculties, departments, research centres of UMFVBT.

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<th>Post on the website <a href="http://www.umfvbt.ro">www.umfvbt.ro</a> in section “Research” of all useful and required information from the field.</th>
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<td>Appoint a scientific officer for each discipline and department, rapidly reachable by e-mail or phone.</td>
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<td>Active monitoring of projects, grants, research contracts in close connection with UMFVBT departments.</td>
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<td>Establish manners of output reporting in order to prepare the yearly reports on scientific research at the level of UMFVBT.</td>
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<td>Promote the outputs of scientific research developed in UMFVBT at local and national level.</td>
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<td>Involve students in scientific research through the organization of students’ scientific circles at discipline level and involve students in the research teams of UMFVBT.</td>
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Strategic Objectives and Fields from 2014 to 2020
Current NATIONAL status

GD 789/2011 regarding the approval of the evaluation methodology for university classification and study programme ranking. Decision no. 789/2011:

**A - Advanced research and education universities.** A number of 12 universities. From these, three are medical universities:
- "Carol Davila" University of Medicine and Pharmacy Bucharest,
- "Gr. T. Popa" University of Medicine and Pharmacy Iași,
- "Iuliu Hațieganu" University of Medicine and Pharmacy Cluj-Napoca

**B - Universities for education and scientific research.** A number of 22 universities, including the
- "Victor Babeș" University of Medicine and Pharmacy Timișoara,
- University of Medicine and Pharmacy Craiova,
- University of Medicine and Pharmacy of Târgu Mureș

**C - Centred university education.** A number of 46 universities.

In 2001, **SCIMAGO INSTITUTION RANKINGS** included three Romanian medical schools:
- "Carol Davila" University of Medicine and Pharmacy Bucharest – rank 2,301
- "Iuliu Hațieganu" University of Medicine and Pharmacy Cluj-Napoca – rank 2,360
- "Victor Babeș" University of Medicine and Pharmacy Timișoara – rank 2,857.

**Strategic goal 1. Ranking UMFVBT in the world’s top 1,000 universities**

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<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
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<td>Improve research quality in UMFVBT by using performance indicators as defined by the European standards.</td>
<td>Yearly amount of research-development funds granted through budgetary allocation for performance in research (3%); Increase the number of papers published in well-known international publishing houses and their impact at international level; Increase the total number of ISI papers and of the total impact factor. Yearly amount of research funds raised through national and international competitions. Evolution of the yearly scientific output. Number of national / international prizes awarded to teaching and research personnel. UMFVBT position in several international rankings.</td>
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<td>Development of infrastructure for research and supporting centres, programmes, research projects offering high potential for international recognition and validation.</td>
<td>Expanding the access to major international databases (e. g. Thomson Web of Science, PUBMED, SCOPUS etc.). Number of accessing major international databases (e. g. Thomson Web of Science, PUBMED, SCOPUS etc.). Number of publications entered in international databases (e. g. Thomson Web of Science, PUBMED, SCOPUS etc.) to which the research personnel has access. Yearly amount of the funds granted for the development of research structures. Material and logistical facilities for research. Increase the amount of funds raised through research</td>
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projects aimed at developing the research infrastructure. Increase the number of research projects developed in UMFVBT, funded through national and international programmes granted for the equipping of the research centres (e.g. CAPACITĂŢI Programme, structural fund programmes).

**Identification of centres of excellence and supporting interdisciplinary strategic programmes and projects on majors issues at national and international level.**

- Increase the number of strategic projects and programmes.
- Increase the number of teachers and researchers involved in strategic projects.
- Funds run through strategic programmes.

**Promotion of interdisciplinary topics through cooperation between departments and partnerships with other medical schools of Romania.**

- Increase the number of the existing and newly-started interdisciplinary projects at the level of the department / faculty / research centre / university.
- Increase the number of partners involved in these interdisciplinary projects.

**Increase of the quality and number of publications developed by the University's publishing house and of the number of internationally indexed papers**

- Increase the number of papers in internationally indexed publications.
- Increase the number of papers published in ISI- and/or BDI+BD-ranked journals.

**Encourage technology transfer through the initiation and development of partnerships with the economic environment.**

- Increase the number of contracts.
- Increase the number of patents.
- Increase the number of internationally protected patents.

**Increase of research importance and role in long-term institutional development.**

- Increase the number of post-graduate courses based on own research fields.
- Increase the number of master and doctoral programmes.
- Increase the number of employed researchers.

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**Strategic goal 2. Involvement of UMFVBT in advanced research and education universities in Romania**

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<th>Objectives</th>
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<tr>
<td>Reorganization of research structures of UMFVBT to increase their efficiency, the number of funded programmes, projects and topics, and to increase the amount of funds raised through calls for projects.</td>
<td>Number of research programmes and projects; Yearly amount of the funds granted to research structures; Number of employed researchers; Internal and/or national and/or international accreditation of CDI structures of UMFVBT.</td>
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<td>Identifying and attracting new funding sources for research, especially from the economic environment.</td>
<td>Number of research contracts. Yearly amount of the funds raised through research. Number of beneficiaries from the economic environment.</td>
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<td>Dissemination of scientific research results through national and international publications.</td>
<td>Number of papers in internationally indexed publications.</td>
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<td>Visibility increase of the research</td>
<td>UMFVBT's position in several national and international</td>
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<td>activity conducted in UMFVBT.</td>
<td>rankings.</td>
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<td>Increased absorption of structural funds.</td>
<td>Number of projects awarded.</td>
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<td>Amount of funds raised.</td>
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<td>Number of researchers, teachers and students involved in projects.</td>
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SHORT SWOT ANALYSIS
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• Existence of teams consolidated in previous competitions;
• Growth of the scholarships for young researchers (under 35 years);
• Awarding the published articles in ISI Web of Knowledge;
• Existence of a new management team of the university motivated for change and improvement;
• Increasing trend of basic research performance; Growing the scientific production in relatively poor conditions of financing (especially in the past 2-3 years).

STRENGTHS

OPPORTUNITIES

• Existence of a Law of Romanian Scientific Research;
• Research funding based on grant programs and projects;
• National and international scientific partnerships.
SHORT SWOT ANALYSIS

- Ranking in second class of universities;
- Imperfections of the local research management strategies;
- Low level of training of graduate students in the medical research field;
- "Brain drain";
- Incorrect and incomplete reporting (underreporting) of the scientific activity (papers without university affiliation, failure of collection of articles).

WEAKNESSES

THREATS

- Existence of imperfect legislation, frequent changes and absence of effective reforms;
- Low attractiveness of the research activities;
- Financial effects of the current economic crisis;
- Hesitations in the local implementation of the National Strategy for research, development and innovation;
- Insufficient financial support;
- Using different evaluation criteria for research at local, national and international level.