REGULATIONS
on the procedure for granting scholarships within the framework of the project "Skills4Deca – Skills for Housing Decarbonisation for Climate, Health and Jobs" (Project No. 101123311)

APPROVED
by the Order of the RTU Vice-Rector for Studies
No. _____
dated ___ _____ 20___

1 General Provisions

1.1. These Regulations determine the procedure according to which an applicant may apply for a scholarship competition and according to which a scholarship is granted to a scholarship recipient for professional development, retraining and career advancement through successful completion of the study modules referred to in Clause 1.4 and participation in a three-day hackathon dedicated to solving housing decarbonisation challenges.

1.2. The purpose of granting the scholarship is to promote the development of the housing decarbonisation sector in the Baltic States by fostering the acquisition of digital skills and knowledge in the field of energy-efficient and sustainable housing. In accordance with the conditions of the Digital Europe Programme call, the scholarship is granted only to applicants who, at the time of application, hold the status of a student or a registered listener (course participant); this status is verified as an administrative (exclusion) criterion (see Section 3 and Section 4.1.1 of these Regulations).

1.3. Terms used in these Regulations:

1.3.1. *Regulations* – these regulations of Riga Technical University (hereinafter – RTU) governing the procedure for awarding scholarships within the framework of the project "Skills4Deca";

1.3.2. *Project* – the project "Skills4Deca" (Project No. 101123311), funded by the Digital Europe Programme and the state budget of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Latvia (hereinafter – the Project), with an implementation period from 1 April 2024 to 1 April 2028;

1.3.3. *Study unit* – the Skills4Deca e-course is one of the study units referred to in Section 1.4 of these Regulations, with a scope of 1 ECTS credit point, and forms part of the study courses of the study programme "Heat, Gas and Water Technology" implemented at the RTU Faculty of Civil Engineering and Mechanical Engineering; languages of instruction – Latvian and English (with a distance learning option);

1.3.4. *Responsible unit* – the RTU Faculty of Civil Engineering and Mechanical Engineering (code 31000), which administers the implementation of study units and the scholarship competition;

1.3.5. *Project content manager* – an RTU representative or person who leads and supervises the activities carried out by the scholarship recipient within the framework of the "Skills4Deca" project. This person confirms that the information provided by the scholarship recipient regarding completed activities corresponds to the work plan foreseen in the project by signing the relevant reporting forms;

1.3.6. *Applicant* – a person who, at the time of application, holds the status of a student or a registered listener (course participant) at a higher education or vocational education and training institution (the applicant may also be employed or unemployed), is interested in professional development, retraining, or career advancement, and who is a national of, or legally resident in, a Member State of the European Union or a country associated to the Digital Europe Programme (hereinafter – an eligible student), has been assigned a personal identification number (personal code or equivalent identifier) and holds an account with a bank in Latvia or another Member State of the European Economic Area, and who has submitted an application and all required documents for participation in the scholarship competition in accordance with the procedure set out in these Regulations;

1.3.7. *Commission* – the scholarship awarding commission, the composition of which is approved by an order of the RTU Faculty of Civil Engineering and Mechanical Engineering (hereinafter – FCEME) Council, and whose competence is defined in Section 5 of these Regulations;

1.3.8. *Administrative criterion* – formal requirements that an applicant must meet in order for the application to be considered valid and forwarded for further evaluation (e.g., timely submission of the application, inclusion of all required documents, compliance with the basic requirements set out in the Regulations).

1.4. The scholarship is awarded for the successful completion **of three study units** (Skills4Deca e-courses) and **participation in a three-day hackathon** organized by the RTU Faculty of Civil Engineering and Mechanical Engineering (hereinafter – FCEME), **dedicated to addressing housing decarbonisation challenges**:

1.4.1. Skills4Deca e-course: PP0003 "Dynamics Energy and Indoor Air Quality Simulation" (part of the study course BM1014 "Modern Zero Energy Buildings"), 1 ECTS credit;

1.4.2. Skills4Deca e-course: PP0001 "Thermal performance of well insulated building envelopes" (part of the study course BM0279 / BM0352 "Heat Transfer in Building Constructions"), 1 ECTS credit;

1.4.3. Skills4Deca e-course: PP0006 "Renovation of a typical residential building" (part of the study course BM0474 "Energy Efficiency of Buildings and Their Engineering Systems"), 1 ECTS credit;

1.4.4. Three-day hackathon – an intensive, results-oriented working format during which participants, in interdisciplinary teams, develop innovative solutions for housing decarbonisation, improving energy efficiency, and integrating digital technologies into building management. During the hackathon, participants analyse real-life cases, develop conceptual or prototype-level solutions, present them to an expert panel, and receive feedback from industry professionals, thereby developing both technical and collaboration and problem-solving skills.

1.5. Information about the scholarship competition is published on the official RTU website (https://www.rtu.lv) and on the EU Funding&Tenders portal.

1.6. The Scholarship Programme is implemented through three consecutive scholarship calls. A total of 140 scholarships are awarded: 40 scholarships under the first call, 50 scholarships under the second call, and 50 scholarships under the third call.

1.7. The total funding allocated for scholarships is EUR 280,000 (two hundred and eighty thousand euros), including EUR 80,000 for the first call, EUR 100,000 for the second call, and EUR 100,000 for the third call. The gross amount of the scholarship awarded to each scholarship recipient is EUR 2,000.

1.8. Each scholarship call is followed by a three-month implementation period during which the selected scholarship recipients complete three Skills4Deca e-courses. At the end of each implementation cycle, a three-day hackathon is organised. A total of three hackathons are organised – one for each scholarship call. All three scholarship calls, the related learning activities, and the hackathons are completed by the end of the Project implementation period, i.e. by 1 April 2028. The hackathons take place at RTU, 6A Ķīpsalas Street, Riga, Latvia. The Skills4Deca e-courses are also available in a distance-learning format.

2. Scholarship Amount and Payment Procedure

2.1. The scholarship is awarded to the scholarship recipient within the framework of the Project as financial support to third parties in accordance with the funding provided for in the Project.

2.2. The gross amount of the scholarship for participation in the Skills4Deca e-courses and the hackathon is EUR 2000 (two thousand euros), and it is fixed for the entire scholarship period.

2.3. Scholarship payment procedure:

2.3.1. In order to receive the scholarship, the scholarship recipient concludes an agreement with RTU on the awarding of the scholarship (Annex 3 of the Regulations).

2.3.2. **The scholarship is paid in two instalments**, in accordance with the following procedure:

2.3.2.1. after concluding the agreement, the scholarship recipient begins the completion of the study units;

2.3.2.2. after successful completion of at least 25% of the Skills4Deca e-course volume (i.e. positive test results are registered in at least 25% of all required assessments in the Moodle platform: https://skills4deca.moodle.mii.lv/), but not earlier than 30 (thirty) calendar days from the date of signing the agreement, 50% of the scholarship (EUR 1000) is paid to the scholarship recipient;

2.3.2.3. the remaining 50% of the scholarship (EUR 1000) is paid after a positive final assessment of all Skills4Deca e-courses has been registered in the RTU information system (not less than 4 on a 10-point scale or "pass" for pass/fail courses) and the scholarship recipient's completion of the full three-day hackathon has been confirmed;

2.3.2.4. payment is made no later than 14 (fourteen) calendar days after the end of the agreement period.

2.4. The scholarship recipient has the right to simultaneously apply for and receive other scholarships or financial support, unless otherwise specified in the relevant funding sources and provided that double funding for the same costs or study units is not received.

2.5. If the scholarship recipient receives or plans to receive other support not related to the Skills4Deca project, they must submit a written declaration confirming that double funding is not applied and must immediately inform the Commission of any related circumstances.

2.6. If a risk or fact of double funding is identified, the Commission has the right to: refuse to award the scholarship; reduce its amount, or request repayment of the unjustified amount within 10 (ten) working days.

3. Applicant and Required Documents

3.1. The applicant must meet the following basic requirements:

3.1.1. must hold, at the time of application, the status of a student or a registered listener (course participant) at a higher education or vocational education and training institution – a valid certificate of student/listener status (issued by RTU or another institution) must be submitted; student/listener status is an administrative (exclusion) criterion;

3.1.2. must be national of, or legally resident in, an EU Member State or a country associated to the Digital Europe Programme – a copy of an identity document must be submitted;

3.1.3. must have an account in a bank in Latvia or another EEA Member State – a bank statement showing the account holder's name and IBAN must be submitted;

3.1.4. must consent to personal data processing in accordance with GDPR (Regulation (EU) 2016/679).

3.2. The applicant shall submit the following documents:

3.2.1. a completed application form with a signed declaration (Annex 1 of the Regulations);

3.2.2. a copy of an identity document;

3.2.3. a certificate of student/auditor status;

3.2.4. a short motivation letter (up to 3000 characters), in which the applicant substantiates how the completion of the Skills4Deca e-courses (study units) will contribute to their professional development, retraining, or career advancement;

3.2.5. a CV and other documents demonstrating previous education, professional experience, achievements, or certifications in relevant fields.

3.3. The application together with the attached documents shall be submitted electronically, signed with a secure electronic signature or signed by hand and scanned, attaching it in electronic format and sending it to the email address: guna.bebre@rtu.lv. The application documents shall be submitted in Latvian or English.

3.4. Applications that do not comply with the requirements set out in Sections 3.1–3.3 of the Regulations or that are received after the specified submission deadline shall not be evaluated.

4. Evaluation Criteria and Advantages of Applicants

4.1.The evaluation of applications is carried out in two stages:

4.1.1. Administrative compliance – it is verified whether the application complies with the requirements set out in Section 3 of the Regulations (criterion "compliant/non-compliant"). Applications that do not comply with the administrative requirements are not forwarded for further evaluation.

4.1.2. Quality evaluation – applications that meet the administrative requirements are evaluated by the Commission according to the evaluation table set out in Annex 2 of the Regulations. The quality threshold for the total (consolidated) application score is at least 11 (eleven) points across all criteria specified in Section 4.2 of the Regulations (hereinafter – the quality threshold), and at least four points in the criterion specified in Sub-section 4.2.2, at least four points in the criterion specified in Sub-section 4.2.3, and at least three points in the criterion specified in Sub-section 4.2.4. Applications that have not reached the quality threshold are not forwarded for the awarding of the scholarship, and the respective applicants are not approved as scholarship recipients.

4.2. Evaluation criteria and their weight:

No	Criterion	Evaluation criteria	Evaluation points	Weight
4.2.1.	Administrative compliance - application complies with the requirements set out in Section 3 **(exclusion criterion)**	- the application has been submitted on time; - all required documents have been submitted	atbilst/neatbilst	-
4.2.2.	Motivation and commitment (MC)	- quality of the motivation letter; - interest in building decarbonization and the study modules; - commitment to applying the acquired knowledge in practice, studies, or a career change.	Max 5 points	50%
4.2.3.	Education or Professional Profile (EPP)	- the relevance of the applicant's educational	Max 5 points	30%

		background and/or professional experience to housing decarbonisation and to the e-course content - existing education or experience in construction, energy, or related fields; - whether the career change into this sector is clearly justified; - additional training or experience in construction, energy efficiency, building services/HVAC engineering, building design, sustainability, or other fields relevant to housing decarbonisation.		
4.2.4.	Interest in Digital Skills and Development Potential (DP)	- motivation to learn digital tools and technologies (no prior experience required); - willingness to develop digital skills during the e-course studies; - ability to learn and adapt.	Max 5 points	20%
		TOTAL:	**15 points**	**100%**

4.3. Detailed sub-criteria, the scoring scale, and the Commission member's evaluation worksheet are specified in Annex 2 of the Regulations (Application Evaluation Table).

4.4. Based on the consolidated application evaluation score, the Commission calculates the weighted evaluation score for applications that have reached the quality threshold, using the following formula:

$$K=((MC\times 50)+(EPP\times 30)+(DP\times 20))/5,$$

where
K – weighted evaluation score of the project application in points;
MC – the score of the criterion referred to in Section 4.2.2 of the Regulations;
EPP – the score of the criterion referred to in Section 4.2.3 of the Regulations;
DP – the score of the criterion referred to in Section 4.2.4 of the Regulations.

4.5. Scholarships are awarded to applicants who meet the administrative criteria and have received the highest consolidated evaluation scores in the quality assessment, taking into account the number of scholarships available in the respective round as specified in Section 4.2 of the Regulations.

4.6. If several applicants receive the same total score and the number of available scholarships is lower than the number of such applicants, priority shall be determined by sequentially comparing the applicants' scores against the selection criteria according to their respective weighting. First, the score for "Motivation and Commitment" (50%) shall be compared; if the scores are equal, the score for "Educational or Professional Profile" (30%) shall be compared; if these scores are also equal, the score for "Interest in Digital Skills and Development Potential" (20%) shall be compared. If, after the sequential comparison of all the above criteria, two or more applicants still have equal scores, the Commission shall conduct an additional comparative assessment of those applicants based on the information provided in their submitted applications and the extent to which their motivation aligns with the objectives of the Project and the scholarship programme. The Commission's decision shall be objectively justified and recorded in the minutes of the Commission meeting. The selection of applicants shall be carried out in accordance with the principles of equal treatment, non-discrimination, objectivity and transparency. Information concerning an applicant's gender, age, socioeconomic status, disability, minority status, or other personal circumstances not directly related to the established selection criteria shall not be used to give an applicant preferential treatment in the award of a scholarship.

5. Scholarship Award Committee

5.1. The Committee shall consist of at least 3 (three) members: one representative of the academic staff from BMF (Chairperson of the Committee), one teaching staff member responsible for the Study Modules, and the Project Content Manager. The composition of the Committee shall be approved by an order of the RTU BMF Council upon the proposal of the Project Content Manager.

5.2. The tasks of the Committee are:

5.2.1. to review submitted applications and verify their administrative compliance;

5.2.2. to carry out the quality assessment in accordance with Section 4 and Annex 2 of the Regulations;

5.2.3. to make decisions on granting scholarships, refusing to grant scholarships, or repayment of scholarships;

5.2.4. to review appeals regarding the validity of its decisions;

5.2.5. to monitor the fulfilment of the Scholarship Recipients' obligations: successful completion of the study modules (Skills4Deca e-courses) and successful achievement of hackathon results;

5.2.6. to prepare and sign the minutes of the Committee meetings.

5.3. The Committee shall have a quorum if at least two-thirds of its members participate in the meeting. Decisions shall be adopted by a simple majority vote. In the event of a tie, the Chairperson of the Committee shall have the casting vote.

5.4. The work of the Committee shall be documented in written or electronic minutes. Each Committee member shall complete an individual evaluation table (Annex 2 of the Regulations); the final evaluation shall be determined as the arithmetic mean of the consolidated weighted evaluation scores awarded by the Committee members.

5.5. Committee members shall observe the principles of neutrality and objectivity. If a Committee member has a personal interest in the evaluation of an Applicant, they shall immediately disclose this and recuse themselves from evaluating the respective Applicant's application.

6. Decision-Making and Notification of Competition Results

6.1. The Committee shall make a decision on granting or refusing a scholarship within 10 (ten) working days after the application submission deadline of the respective competition round.

6.2. The adopted decision shall be communicated to the Applicants in writing to the email address indicated in the application within 5 (five) working days from the date the decision is made.

6.3. The Applicant has the right to submit an appeal regarding the Committee's decision to the Head of the Responsible Structural Unit within 5 (five) working days from the date of notification of the decision, attaching supporting documentation to the appeal where applicable.

6.4. The appeal shall be reviewed within 5 (five) working days. The decision of the Head of the Responsible Structural Unit following the appeal review shall be final.

7. Suspension, Termination, and Repayment of Scholarship Payments

7.1. Scholarship payments shall be terminated if:

7.1.1. the Scholarship Recipient has been exmatriculated or has discontinued participation in the study modules (Skills4Deca e-courses) and does not participate in the hackathon;

7.1.2. the Scholarship Recipient has not successfully completed the study modules (final grade below 4 points or "fail");

7.1.3. it is established that false information has been provided in the application or its annexes;

7.1.4. a case of double funding is identified.

7.2. Scholarship payments may be suspended:
7.2.1. if the Scholarship Recipient is on academic leave or has interrupted studies;
7.2.2. if the Scholarship Recipient is on sick leave granted for health reasons for longer than three months from the date of signing the scholarship agreement.

7.3. Payments shall be resumed after the end of the leave or interruption period if the Scholarship Recipient continues participation in the study modules, but no later than three months before the end of the project, i.e. by 30 December 2027. If participation in an already established study group is not possible, continuation of studies shall be organised according to an individual work plan.

7.4. If the Commission identifies circumstances that may constitute grounds for repayment of the scholarship, it shall inform the scholarship recipient in writing of the circumstances identified and provide the scholarship recipient with an opportunity to submit a written explanation within 5 (five) working days from the date of receipt of the notification.

7.5. The Commission shall assess the circumstances identified and the scholarship recipient's written explanation, if submitted, and shall adopt a reasoned decision either requiring repayment of the scholarship or determining that no repayment obligation shall apply. The Commission's decision shall be communicated to the scholarship recipient in writing.

7.6. If the Commission adopts a decision requiring repayment of the scholarship, the scholarship recipient shall repay the amount of the scholarship specified in the decision as having been unduly or erroneously paid within 10 (ten) working days from the date of receipt of the Commission's decision.

7.7. The scholarship recipient shall immediately, but no later than within 3 (three) working days, inform the Commission in writing of any circumstances that may constitute grounds for the suspension or termination of scholarship payments.

8. Final Provisions

8.1. Personal data obtained during the application review and scholarship administration process shall be processed in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 (General Data Protection Regulation) and RTU internal regulations in the field of data protection. The purpose of personal data processing is to ensure the organisation of the scholarship competition, fulfil contractual obligations, and prepare Project reports.

8.2. RTU's data privacy policy is available on the RTU website: https://www.rtu.lv/lv/universitate/dokumenti/rigas-tehniskas-universitates-fizisko-personu-datu-aizsardzibas-politika

8.3. RTU has the right to make amendments to the Regulations in order to ensure compliance with the Project conditions and the requirements of applicable laws and regulations. Amendments shall enter into force immediately upon their approval.

8.4. The Regulations shall enter into force upon their approval and shall remain valid until the completion of the Project implementation.

8.5. Any matters not specified in the Regulations shall be resolved within the competence of RTU, in compliance with the Project conditions and the laws and regulations of the Republic of Latvia.

8.6. The following annexes form an integral part of the Regulations: Annex 1 – Application for Receiving a Scholarship; Annex 2 – Application Evaluation Table; Annex 3 – RTU Scholarship Award Agreement.