



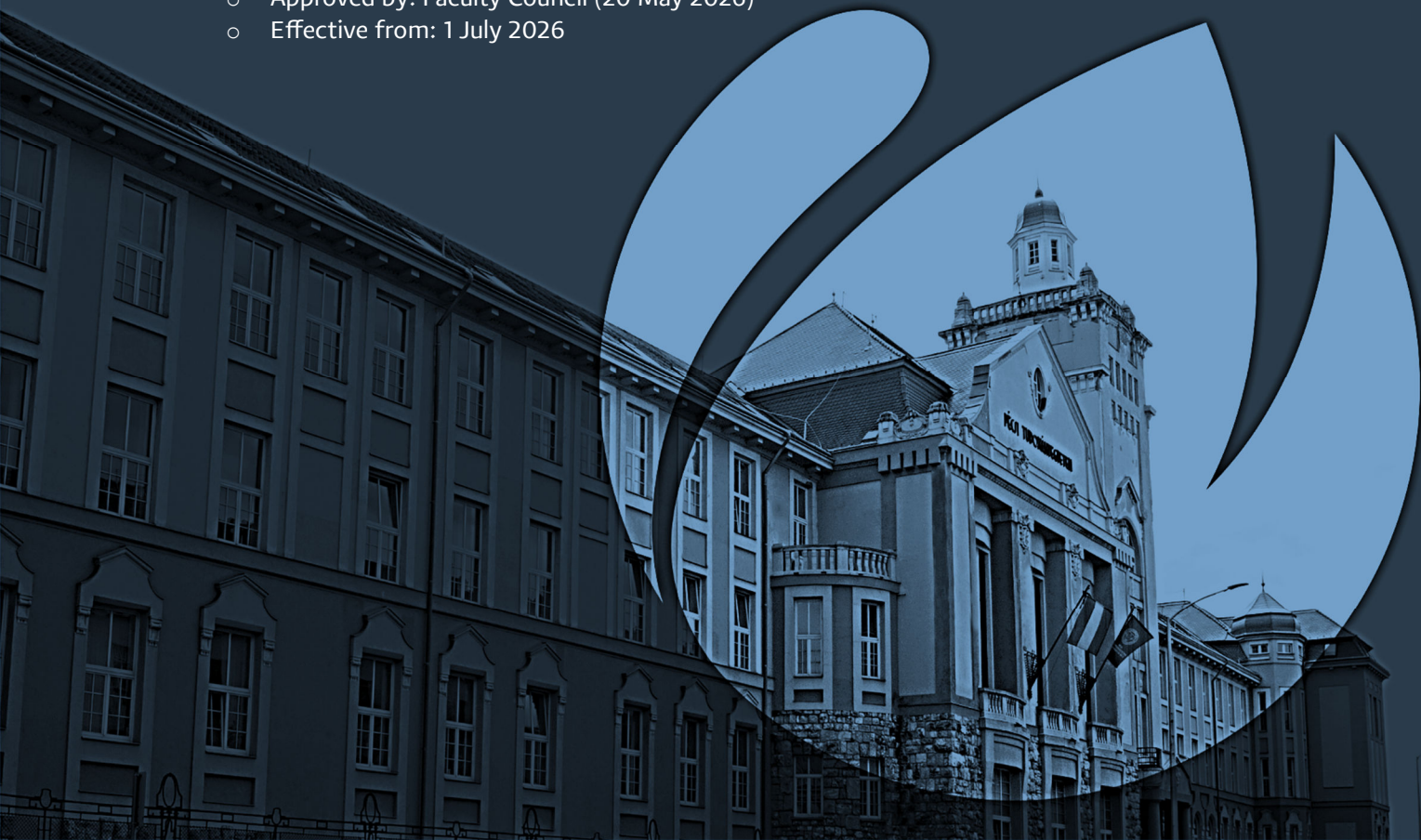
University of Pécs
Faculty of Business
and Economics

RESEARCH STRATEGY

2026-2030

Document history:

- Submitted by: Prof. Dr. Tamás Sebestyén, Director of Research (Feb 2026)
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This document sets out the main elements of the research strategy of the University of Pécs, Faculty of Business and Economics (hereinafter: UPFBE or the School), as well as the research-related objectives and performance indicators for the period 2026 – 2030, in alignment with the provisions of the School's [Strategy](#) for the same period.

The past

Over the past decades, academic research at the School has evolved organically from a fragmented foundation towards higher awareness for international visibility.

Fragmented Beginnings – Around twenty years ago, research was largely individual, thematically dispersed, and weakly connected. Most publications appeared in Hungarian journals and monographs, with limited international visibility, except for a few scholars with foreign doctoral training, mainly in the United States.

Shift to a Research Incentive System – The School launched the Research Incentive System in 2013, introducing a transparent, output-oriented framework aligned with the School's performance evaluation. It emphasized research quality by rewarding international publications and engagement in recognized academic forums. Over the past decade, this scoring system has become central to research motivation and continues to guide activities with minor adjustments.

Thematic Excellence Programs – Over the past six years, the School has implemented several rounds of a nationally funded research excellence program. This initiative established an organizational framework that supported diverse research fields involving a wide range of faculty members, promoted high-quality publications, and aimed to create a clear thematic focus for the School's research activities.

Increasing research output – As a result from the Research Incentive System, the publication output measured in terms of high-quality academic publications, primarily journal articles, has significantly increased in the last decade from 9 (2015) to 83 (2025) Scopus listed publications.

The present

The developments in the past have contributed to a research ecosystem which has some strong points but also faces challenges.

Positive developments

Increased research visibility, including Q1-Q2 publications. Both the awareness of the importance of publishing in high quality international academic outlets, and the skills and capabilities of faculty members to actually do so has developed significantly over the past decade.

Strong embeddedness in the national academic environment, with leading positions in several academic bodies, associations and editorial boards. UPFBE is a strong thought leader in Hungary in most of the broad academic areas it represents.

Formation of research agendas/topics that overarch short-term funding. As a result of organic development of research activities and careers, a few relatively strong research teams have developed which are capable of producing high quality academic output. These topics are linked to groups of faculty members rather than short period grants which is a good basis for further developing the research ecosystem.

Challenges

Workload and Time Constraints – The vast majority of faculty members are in teaching positions, which entails a high teaching workload. The performance-oriented culture of the School further increases this burden, while administrative and institutional management tasks—especially for senior faculty—reduce the time available for in-depth research. This severely limits the ability to achieve further high-quality research output.

Short-Term Funding – The external funding sources that support research performance—though useful—typically come from short-term (2–3 year) projects. These are not well suited to supporting long-term research agendas.

Fragmentation and Lack of Synergies – Additional problems include the fragmentation of research areas, sporadic communication among research groups, and underutilized synergies. The School does not have an overarching, distinctive research theme; such topics are typically defined by ad hoc research groups organized around more ambitious faculty members.

Need for Refined Evaluation – Another challenge is the current output-focused research evaluation system. While this approach has effectively strengthened the School's research portfolio and international visibility, there is a growing need to supplement it with evaluation criteria that emphasize research quality and impact. In this context, "quality" refers to targeting internationally recognized forums that shape scientific discourse within the relevant field.

International Integration – A key objective might be to achieve deeper integration of research activities into the international research ecosystem. This would increase the chances of attracting international funding, which not only brings new financial opportunities but also further strengthens the School's international standing.

Societal and Economic Impact – Finally, promoting the societal and economic relevance of research activities is another important challenge. This is partly a matter of performance evaluation—through appropriate incentives and recognition mechanisms—and partly an organizational issue: the necessary support functions must be established both at the School and university levels.

Vision for the future

The School creates and maintains a nationally and internationally **embedded research environment** that motivates **impactful research** both at the academic and societal levels. Research agendas are informed by societal challenges and research results spill over to **educational programmes**, advances the global and national **academic community** as well as contributes to the development of the **local economic and social environment**.

The goals

The vision of the research ecosystem of the School is translated into three goals, and respective KPIs that enables both tracking research efforts and channeling resources towards reaching these goals. These goals are (1) further increasing high quality research output, (2) increase the academic impact of research and (3) improve the embeddedness of research activities into the global research environment. Although the metrics used to track the progress towards these goals are standard, the method of calculation is shifted towards a more balanced approach by using mainly composite indicators and sums across years. This allows researchers to move more freely between different types of research and academic forums, while the system continues to reflect the School's research performance in a transparent and fair manner. This transformation simultaneously addresses the problem of temporal inequalities, reduces the distorting effect of random fluctuations, and encourages the development of a diverse research ecosystem that is sustainable in the long term.

Primary research related goals in the School's Strategy – output metrics

- **Increase high quality research output**
 - This goal is in line with the vision of impactful research as it puts high quality research outlets in the focus that are highly visible within the national and international research communities.
 - **KPI 5 defined in the Strategy 2026-2030 document: Increasing the cumulative four-year total RMS score achieved by the UPFBE faculty.**
 - Details of the KPI: The Research Motivation System of UPFBE uses a sophisticated evaluation scheme for publication outputs. This scheme differentiates research outputs with respect to their potential audience (national or international), their quality (using the Scimago SJR score) and also their subject area (using the Scopus categorization of journals). The system also has a strict entry criterion by evaluating only publications in listed journals and books, book chapters in prestigious publishers. Based on this scheme, the sum of annual RMS publication points reflects both the quantity and quality of faculty publications and their alignment with the School's academic fields. At the same time, this KPI is in line with the School's internal evaluation system for research output.

- Data background:

Year	Total faculty RMS points	Annual increase	Relative annual increase	Sum of past 4 years	Increase in past 4 years	Relative increase in past 4 years
2013	80.6					
2014	138.12	57.4	71%			
2015	101.52	-36.6	-26%			
2016	148.58	47.06	46%	468.88		
2017	158.76	10.18	7%	546.98	78.1	17%
2018	159.34	0.58	0%	568.2	21.22	4%
2019	167.86	8.52	5%	634.54	66.34	12%
2020	205.78	37.92	23%	691.74	57.2	9%
2021	285.36	79.58	39%	818.34	126.6	18%
2022	281.17	-4.19	-1%	940.17	121.83	15%
2023	286.69	5.52	2%	1059	118.83	13%
2024	365.65	78.96	28%	1218.87	159.87	15%
2025	345.13	-20.52	-6%	1278.64	59.77	5%

- Base value: sum of 2022-2025 values, **1278.64**.
- **Target value: 1580**. This value means an average increase of 20 RMS points annually and 80 over 4 years. 20 RMS points correspond to two additional international A category (Q1) publications, or 5 additional Hungarian A category publications.
- **Increase the academic impact of research**
 - This goal is in line with the vision of impactful research advancing the national and global academic community as it puts academic impact in the focus in the form of citations that reflect the relevance of the School's research output within the academic field.
 - **KPI 6 defined in the Strategy 2026-2030 document: Increasing the four-year cumulative total of HSB+Scopus citations received by UPFBE publications.**
 - Details of the KPI: The academic impact of research publications is primarily measured by the citations received by these publications. There are two overlapping sources that are frequently used in recording and measuring citations. The Hungarian Science Bibliography (HSB) database contains all reported citations of publications both in Hungarian and in international publications. The Scopus database provides a more strict criterion for citations counting only citations that appear in listed outlets referring to listed publications. With minor exceptions, the HSB database contains all Scopus listed citations as well. Adding the two metrics results in an indicator that uses a double weight for Scopus citations over the other (non-Scopus listed citations) recorded in HSB.

- Data background:

Year	Total HSB + Scopus citations	Annual increase	Relative annual increase	Sum of past 4 years	Increase in past 4 years	Relative increase in past 4 years
2013	1385					
2014	1547	162	12%			
2015	1447	-100	-6%			
2016	1455	8	1%	5834		
2017	1840	385	26%	6289	455	8%
2018	1706	-134	-7%	6448	159	3%
2019	2031	325	19%	7032	584	9%
2020	2018	-13	-1%	7595	563	8%
2021	2641	623	31%	8396	801	11%
2022	2764	123	5%	9454	1058	13%
2023	3058	294	11%	10481	1027	11%
2024	3129	71	2%	11592	1111	11%
2025	3663	534	17%	12614	1022	9%

- **Base value:** sum of 2022-2025 values: **12614**.
- **Target value: 17652.** This value means 300 points increase in the indicator annually, which adds up to 1200 points over 4 years. This annual increase corresponds to 150 additional Scopus citations or 300 additional non-Scopus citations recorded in HSB every year. This amounts to a 15-20% annual increase if calculated in Scopus-equivalent citations or to a 10-15% increase in HSB-equivalent citations.
- **Increase the embeddedness of research**
 - This goal is in line with the vision of embedded research environment, as it puts national and international collaboration in the focus that contribute to a diverse and vivid community of scholarly interaction.
 - **KPI 7 defined in the Strategy 2026-2030 document: Increasing the proportion of publications (recognized in RMS) with non-faculty co-authors, including the proportion of works with foreign co-authors.**
 - Details of the KPI: interorganizational research collaboration results in coauthored papers. This can be clearly measured by the number or share of publications that has non-UPFBE coauthors. This metric does not differentiate between national and international collaborations, and is not sensitive to the number of co-authors from outside the School.
 - Data background: between 2022 and 2025, there was altogether 411 publications that got RMS points (HAS and Scopus listed publications, books and book chapters at prestigious publishers), and at least one UPFBE faculty appear as co-author on the publication. From this set of acknowledged publications, 128 (31.18%) had a co-author from outside UPFBE (not counting PhD students as external co-authors). 11 (4.87%) publications had at least one foreign co-author, where foreign co-author is defined as someone with foreign origin, i.e. Hungarians with foreign affiliation does not count in this indicator.

- **Base value:** share of total 2022-2025 publication counts in the respective categories, **31.18% non-UPFBE co-authors** and **4.87% international co-authors**.
- **Target value:** acknowledged (RMS pointed) publications should show at least **35% collaboration rate** (at least one non-UPFBE co-author), and **8% international collaboration rate** (at least one international co-author).

Actions and milestones – roadmap towards the KPIs

The goals set out previously is expected to be reached through a series of actions that strengthen and in some aspects reorganize the institutional setting of research activities, research support and research evaluation. These actions and respective milestones are detailed in the following points.

1. Strengthening the organizational framework for research.

- Defining research teams.* The present organizational structure for research needs to be revised. The organizational setup must explicitly determine research groups or teams, while these research groups shall belong under the coordination of a School-level research center (rethinking the role of GKK). The necessary qualifications and criteria for establishing research teams must be developed. The administrative background of research administration requires rethinking (Research and Digitalization Committee, Research Office, Research Excellence Council).

Milestone 1.1: UPFBE research topics list, by 2026 September

Milestone 1.2: Concept for research group qualifications, by 2026 October

Milestone 1.3: Concept of organizational structure, by 2026 October

- Reconsidering the status of researchers.* A more conceptual approach is required to determine full or dominantly research focused positions. This must be aligned with research team compositions. The performance evaluation system of researchers must be aligned with tasks required from dominantly research-oriented colleagues.

Milestone 1.4: Concept for performance evaluation of researchers, by 2026 December

Milestone 1.5: Determining research-focused faculty in alignment with topics/research groups, by 2026 December

2. Strengthening the thematic focus of UPFBE research

- Establishing a broad research topic/agenda.* The School must define its position in the national and global research space. This requires a thematic focus which is broad enough to invite all strong, internationally visible research activities on board, but allows a clear focus for the research activities.

Milestone 2.1: Defining the thematic focus/position of the School, by 2026 October

- b. *Defining research teams in alignment with the broad research topic.* Based on the research group qualification system (M1.2) and the map of research activities of the School (M1.1), the flagship research teams can be identified.

Milestone 2.2: List of research teams under the School research agenda, by 2026 November

- c. *Internal funding focuses on recognized research agendas and teams.* Once the School's research focus and the respective teams have been identified and declared, the internal funding system of research activities must be developed in a way that funding strengthens these activities.

Milestone 2.3: Development of internal funding scheme, by 2026 December

Milestone 2.4: First call for grants, by 2027 January, annual calls later

3. Strengthening the internal funding of research activities

- a. *Dedicated budgets for research teams.* The School shall reconsider its research funding schemes. A general research fund shall be established. This is partly linked to research related revenues, but the School-level overhead of research projects shall feed this fund as well, on top of infrastructural contributions. Research teams might have a fixed annual allowance for material costs, plus an application-based part.

Milestone 3.1: Development of internal funding scheme by, 2026 December

Milestone 3.2: First call for grants, by 2027 January, annual calls later

- b. *Budget to support diversity and renewal.* While keeping the thematic focus as a key priority, research management must keep an eye on diversity as well as potential start-up projects in research that might contribute to the main agenda in the long run. Part of the research budget shall be kept for non-accredited research teams to support these projects to some extent. This part of the process shall be scheduled after the first round of calls for accredited research teams.

Milestone 3.3: Development of internal funding scheme by, 2026 December

Milestone 3.4: First call for diversity grants, by 2027 January, annual calls later

4. Strengthening the external funding of research activities

- a. *Active cooperation with researchers to develop grant proposals.* The research support system of the School must develop activities that support grant proposal writing. Continuous cooperation with research team leaders and channeling external (UP level and national/EU level) expertise in these processes.

Milestone 4.1: Identification of key bottlenecks in grant writing: problem map, by 2026 October

Milestone 4.2: Concept of training schedule for researchers, by 2026 December

Milestone 4.3: Annual training programs in collaboration with UP IGI and NKFIH

- b. *Grant writing as part of the performance evaluation system.* Researchers/research team leaders shall be motivated to write grants on a continuous basis. The PES shall be reconsidered to put adequate weight on these efforts for researchers.

Milestone: 4.4: Concept for performance evaluation of researchers, by 2026 December

Milestone: 4.5: At least three national grants submitted annually.

Milestone: 4.6: At least one international research grant submitted annually.

- c. *Increase international embeddedness to help attracting international funding.* International embeddedness is required to successfully apply for EU and other funds available for research projects. Internationalization activities (see process activities #6 in this respect) support this.

Milestone 4.7: Development of internal funding scheme by, 2026 December

Milestone 4.8: Concept for the annual program of events, annually.

5. Strengthening the research support activities

- a. *Support in ideation, academic writing, finding journals, methodological workshops, etc.* In cooperation with UP level research support units and external expertise the School shall provide a more intensive research support to its researchers both in terms of research methods, publishing and grant acquisition.

Milestone 5.1: Concept of training schedule for researchers, by 2026 December

Milestone 5.2: Annual training programs in collaboration with UP IGI and NKFIH

6. Strengthening the international embeddedness of research activities

- a. *Stronger cooperation with international partners in research related activities.* The School shall strengthen its portfolio of activities and events that build collaboration network with mostly international peers. These should include research seminars, short visits, summits, and joint conferences. The internal funding scheme for these activities shall be reconsidered.

Milestone 6.1: Development of internal funding scheme by, 2026 December

Milestone 6.2: Concept for the annual program of events, annually.

- b. *Funding for international collaboration.* The internal funding shall acknowledge research projects that involve international partners.

Milestone 6.3: Development of internal funding scheme by, 2026 December

Milestone 6.4: Concept for performance evaluation of researchers, by 2026 December

- c. *Recognizing international cooperation in the research Incentive System.* The Research Motivation System shall clearly reflect and recognize publication output that involves external collaboration.

Milestone 6.5: Redesign of the Research Motivation System, by 2026 December

7. Strengthening impactful research

- a. *Increase the academic impact of research.* Meaningful research is reflected in the first place by the level to which academics in the field are using the research results. This is easily captured by the number of citations received by the publications of faculty members. In order to weight international and impact over local (national) impact, HSB and Scopus citations can be used in addition to each other. The School's Research Motivation System shall recognize this type of research impact in line with the School's strategy and the University level incentives.

Milestone 6.3: Redesign of the Research Motivation System, by 2026 December

- b. *Increase the global societal impact of research.* More focus must be put on the impact of research beyond academia. An intermediate point to measure this impact is through the SDG-related publications as reported by Scopus. This part is covered in the societal impact sub-strategy.

Milestone 6.3: Redesign of the Research Motivation System, by 2026 December

- c. *Increase the local societal impact of research.* More focus must be put on the impact of research beyond academia. This can be measured through different activities on the local and national scale that transfer academic knowledge and research output into use (R&D, consultancy, core facilities). This part is covered in the societal impact sub-strategy.