



CEUS-UNISONO

Call for proposals carried out as multilateral cooperation under the CEUS programme pursuant to the Lead Agency Procedure

Guidelines for Polish research teams



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I. INTRODUCTION

Lead Agency Procedure

The Lead Agency Procedure (LAP) is a new standard used to evaluate proposals applied by the European agencies funding science. It is to facilitate international research teams to apply for funds for joint research projects and to simplify the evaluation of proposals by agencies funding research.¹ The key principles of the procedure include:

- the use of domestic calls carried out by partner agencies to perform merit-based evaluation not only of domestic proposals, but also bilateral and multilateral ones, which compete with domestic proposals on an equal footing;
- trust in the quality of *peer-review* among agencies undertaking such cooperation. Thus, projects involving two or more research groups from different countries to perform joint research will only be evaluated by a lead agency relevant for one of the teams participating in a project in the call that constitutes a permanent element of such agency's offer. Other agencies co-organising the call will accept the results of merit-based evaluation performed by the lead agency and award funding to research projects recommended for funding in the course of such evaluation.

The lead agency in the CEUS-UNISONO call for proposals

Under the CEUS-UNISONO call for proposals, **FWF** (*Austrian Science Fund - Fonds zur Förderung der wissenschaftlichen Forschung*), **GAČR** (Czech Science Foundation - *Grantová agentura České Republiky*) or **ARRS** (Slovenian Research Agency - *Javna agencija za raziskovalno dejavnost Republike Slovenije*) will act as the Lead Agency.

PLEASE NOTE: NCN cannot act as the lead agency under the CEUS-UNISONO call for proposals².

The rules for choosing the lead agency relevant for a given proposal are laid down in the section: [HOW TO SUBMIT PROPOSALS UNDER THE CEUS-UNISONO CALL](#).

Proposals will undergo an eligibility check carried out by both a respective lead agency (FWF, ARRS or GACR) and partner agencies competent for the teams involved in the project, in line with their respective requirements. Proposals approved during the eligibility check by all partner agencies involved in the eligibility check will undergo a merit-based evaluation performed by the lead agency in accordance with its own rules.

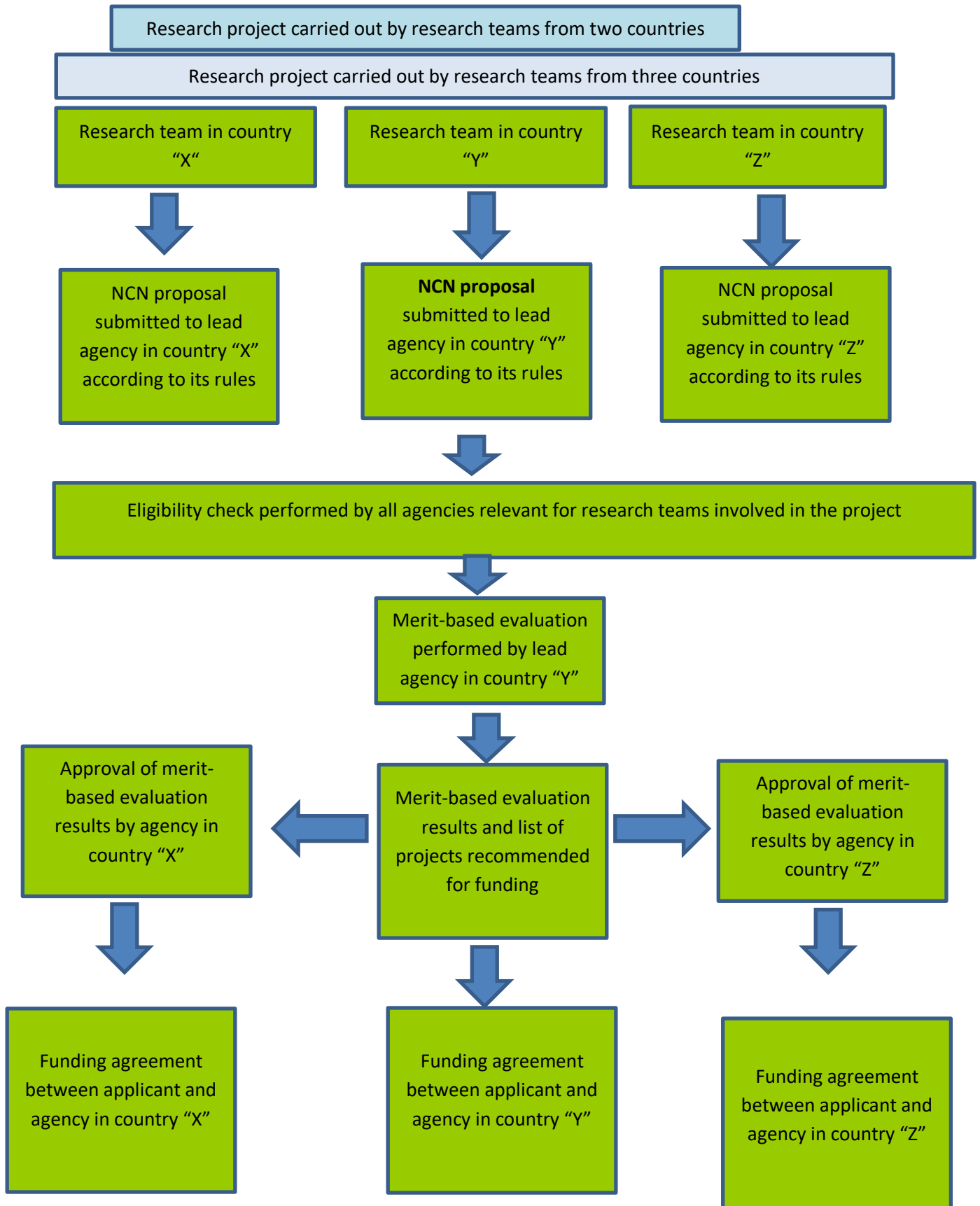
Below is a diagram showing the individual stages of the CEUS-UNISONO procedure, i.e. proposal submission, eligibility check and merit-based evaluation, approval of rating lists,

¹ More on LAP at: https://www.scienceeurope.org/wpcontent/uploads/2015/11/SE_WSReport_POL_LAP_fin.pdf

² The NCN acting as the lead agency shall start its call for proposals for research projects to be carried out in bilateral or trilateral cooperation by research teams from Poland, Austria, the Czech Republic and Slovenia in September 2020 under the OPUS call.

issue of decisions and execution of agreements. The diagram also shows the communication process among agencies in individual stages of the call.

Diagram. Individual stages of the procedure and communication process among agencies in the CEUS-UNISONO call





II. HOW TO SUBMIT A PROPOSAL IN THE CEUS-UNISONO CALL?

1. Preparation of joint proposals

Joint proposals are drafted by Polish research teams jointly with foreign research team(s) and submitted to the lead agency according to the rules of the lead agency by the research team affiliated in the home country of the lead agency.

Each lead agency in the CEUS-UNISONO call (FWF, GAČR and ARRS) applies its own requirements regarding the form, framework and contents of the joint proposal, which is why the lead agency in charge of merit-based evaluation of a given proposal must be identified in the [comparative CEUS cost sheet](#) table **before** the joint proposal is drafted. Once the lead agency in charge of merit-based evaluation of a given proposal is identified, the guidelines for drafting joint proposals applicable in that agency must be read and joint proposal must be drafted pursuant thereto.

PLEASE NOTE:

In the case of research projects on crises like epidemics or pandemics covered by the [fast-track merit-based evaluation at the FWF](#) ("[FWF Urgent Funding for Research Into Humanitarian Crises like Epidemics and Pandemics](#)"), only the FWF can act as the lead agency under the Stand-Alone Projects programme.

In order to determine the agency that may act as the lead agency in charge of merit-based evaluation of a proposal, the [comparative CEUS cost sheet](#) table must be completed jointly with foreign research team(s). However:

- in the case of research projects to be carried out jointly by research teams from **two countries involved in the CEUS programme**, the lead agency must cover **at least 40%** of the entire project costs planned in the joint proposal, as indicated in the [comparative CEUS cost sheet](#) table,
- whilst in the case of research projects carried out jointly by research teams from **three countries involved in the CEUS programme**, the lead agency must cover **at least 25%** of the entire project costs planned in the joint proposal, as indicated in the [comparative CEUS cost sheet](#) table.

PLEASE NOTE:

The above principles governing the choice of the lead agency do not apply to research projects on crises like epidemics or pandemics covered by the fast-track merit-based evaluation ("[FWF Urgent Funding for Research Into Humanitarian Crises like Epidemics and Pandemics](#)"), to be carried out jointly by research teams from Poland and Austria, with the participation of research teams from Germany or Switzerland or Luxembourg that apply for funding of such research to their competent foreign research funding institutions, i.e. German Research Foundation (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, DFG) or Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) or Luxembourg National Research Fund (FNR) under bilateral or multilateral programmes launched by the FWF in cooperation therewith pursuant to the lead agency procedure, in the case of which the share of budgets planned by individual research teams in the total budget specified in the joint proposal must be proportional. The **comparative CEUS cost sheet table** does not need to be filled out for these projects.

PLEASE NOTE:

Before completing the [comparative CEUS cost sheet](#) table, the guidelines concerning the eligibility of costs of the partner agency competent for a given research team must be read. The budget of tasks to be performed by Polish research teams must comply with the NCN regulations on the costs planned in the project, including costs relating to the budget for salaries and scholarships laid down in the document *Types of costs in research projects funded by the NCN (annex to the LAP Regulations)*. The rules for awarding NCN scholarships are laid down in the [Regulations on awarding scholarships](#).

PLEASE NOTE:

If a joint proposal is submitted to an incorrectly chosen lead agency, it will be rejected as ineligible by the partner agencies competent for the teams involved in the project.

The terms of the call and the guidelines concerning the eligibility check performed by the lead agency are laid down in the documents applicable to its domestic call announced under the CEUS programme, namely:

- [Stand-Alone Projects](#), and, in the case of clinical research: [FWF Clinical Research Programme](#) (if **FWF** is the lead agency);
- [Lead Agency Grants](#) (if **GAČR** is the lead agency); and
- [National Research Projects](#) (if **ARRS** is the lead agency).

Joint proposals, with all documents and annexes, must be drafted according to the rules of the lead agency applicable to its domestic call announced under the CEUS programme and submitted to the lead agency by the research team affiliated in the home country of the lead agency.

In addition, each research team involved in a project must submit a set of required documents, including- if required by the partner agency- the joint proposal, to the competent appropriate partner agency which does not act as the lead agency.

The CEUS-UNISONO call is open to NCN proposals³ to which joint proposals are attached. Such joint proposals must be drafted jointly by the research teams from two or three countries involved in the CEUS programme pursuant to the requirements of the lead agency set forth in the terms of the call and the [comparative CEUS cost sheet](#) table.⁴

The joint proposals submitted to the lead agency and other partner agencies must be identical. If discrepancies are found in the two versions of the joint proposal, including in the joint project description, CVs and/or list of publications, the proposal may be rejected at the stage of eligibility check.

³ NCN proposal means a proposal for NCN funding of the Polish part of a research project under an international call, submitted to ZSUN/OSF and including a joint proposal submitted to the lead agency.

⁴ Does not apply to research projects on humanitarian crises like epidemics and pandemics covered by the fast-track merit-based evaluation at the FWF ([FWF Urgent Funding for Research Into Humanitarian Crises like Epidemics and Pandemics](#)), to be carried out jointly by research teams from Poland and Austria, with the participation of research teams from Germany or Switzerland or Luxembourg that apply for funding of such research to their competent foreign research funding institutions, i.e. German Research Foundation (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, DFG) or Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) or Luxembourg National Research Fund (FNR) under bilateral or multilateral programmes launched by the FWF in cooperation therewith pursuant to the lead agency procedure.

2. Research projects to be carried out jointly by research teams from two countries involved in the CEUS programme – example

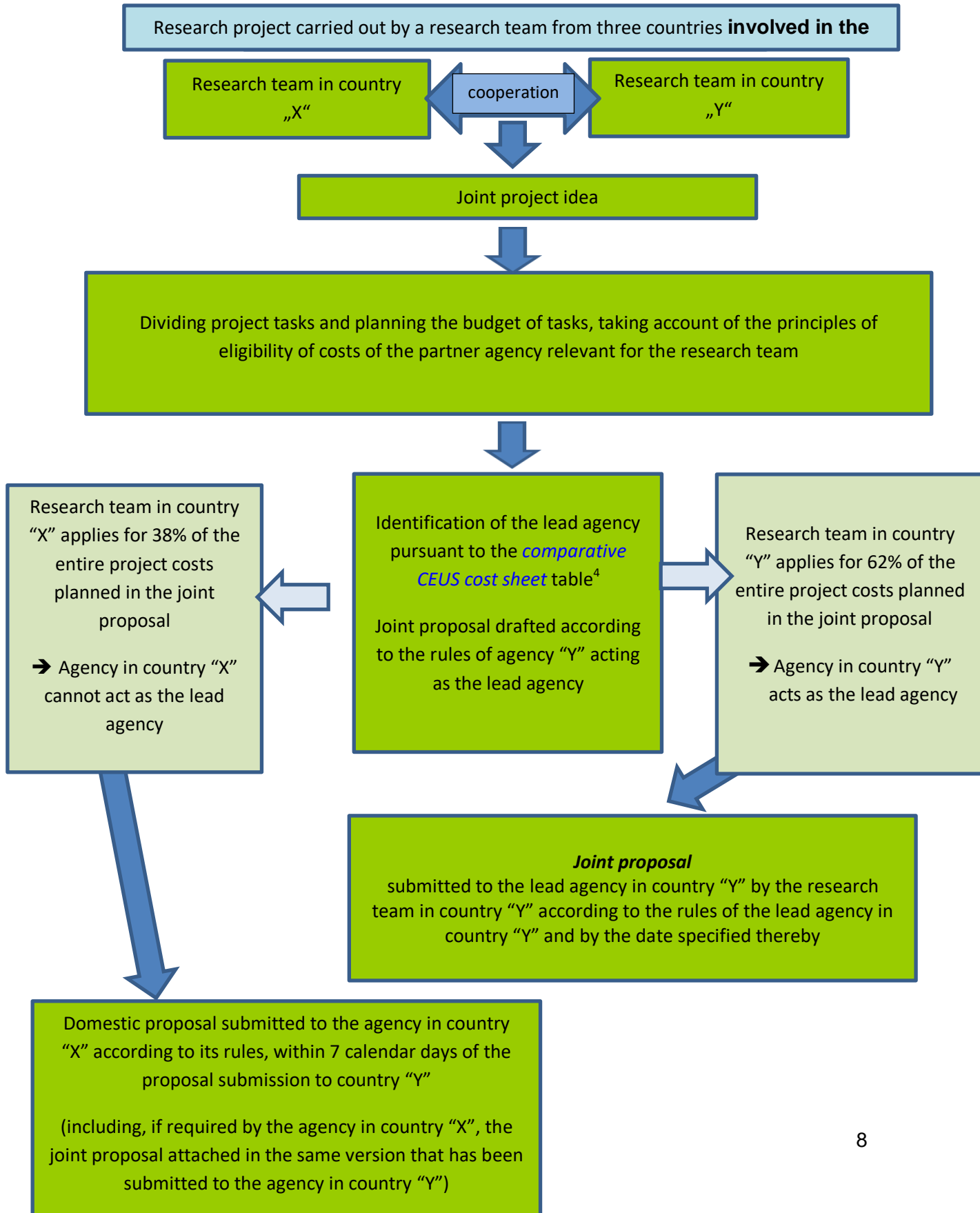
A. Identification of the lead agency - comparative CEUS cost sheet

Agency X cost category	Agency X - requested sum (in EUR)		Agency Y cost category	Agency Y - requested sum (in EUR)
Personnel costs	200 000		Personnel costs	330 000
Equipment costs	10 000		Equipment costs	11 500
Material costs	10 000		Material costs	21 500
Travel costs	15 000		Travel costs	17 250
Other costs	2 000		Other costs	2 500
Service contract costs	1 000		Service contract costs	2 150
Indirect costs	25 000		Indirect costs	38 750
SUM (in EUR)	263 000		SUM (in EUR)	423 650
share in %	38		share in %	62

TOTAL SUM REQUESTED (in EUR)	686 650
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In the example above, **agency “Y”** is the lead agency in charge of merit-based evaluation of the funding proposal for the project to be carried out by research teams from two countries involved in the CEUS programme. The research team affiliated in country “Y” must submit the joint proposal to agency “Y” (and, if necessary, the joint proposal should be attached to the proposal submitted to agency “X” in the same version that has been submitted to agency “Y”).

B. Applying to the partner agencies in the event of research projects to be carried out jointly by research teams from two countries involved in the CEUS programme:



3. Research project to be carried out jointly by research teams from three countries involved in the CEUS programme.

Example

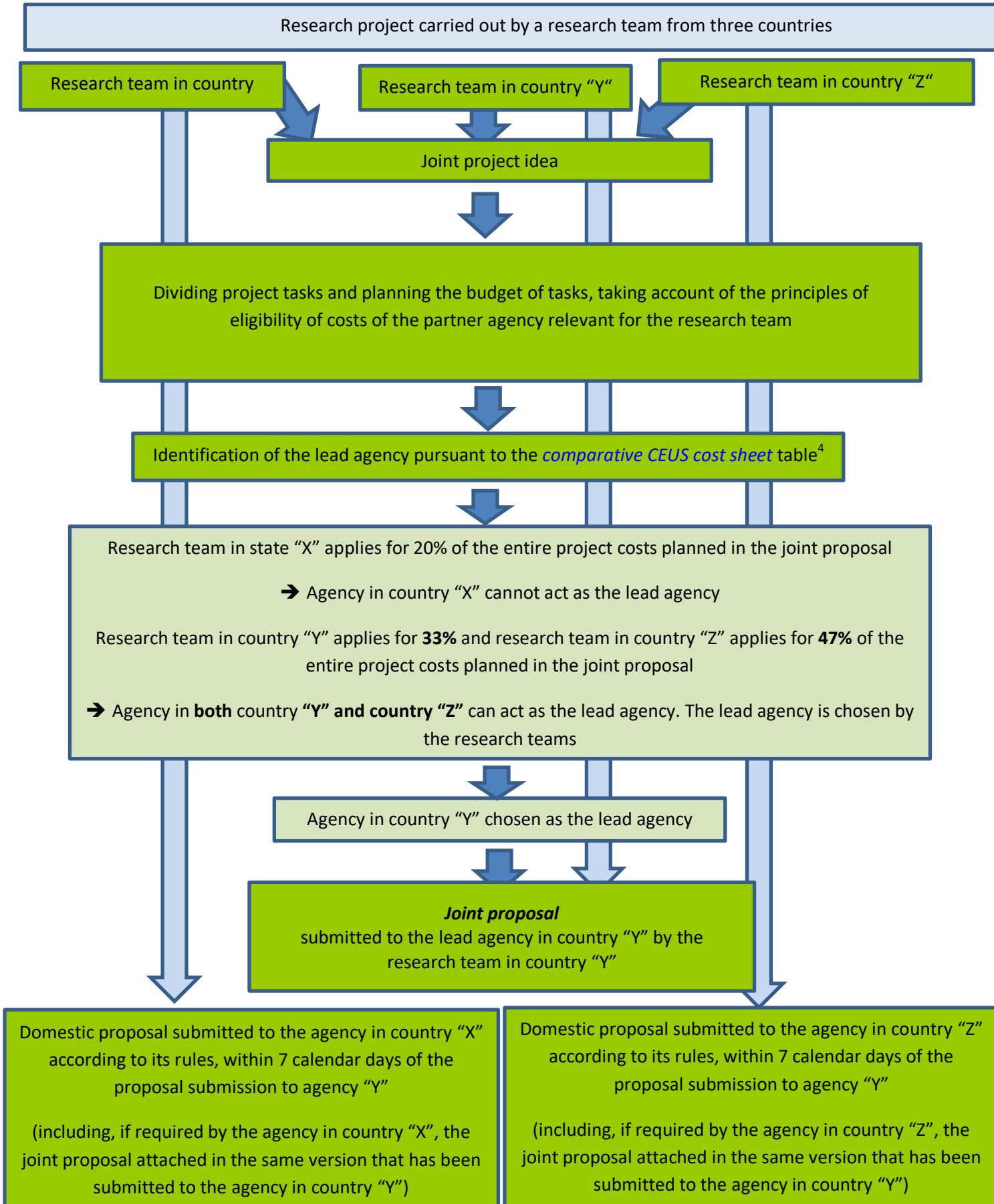
A. Identification of the lead agency - *comparative CEUS cost sheet*⁴

Agency X cost category	Agency X - requested sum (in EUR)	Agency Y cost category	Agency Y- requested sum (in EUR)	Agency Z cost category	Agency Z requested sum (in EUR)
Personnel costs	200 000	Personnel costs	330 000	Personnel costs	500 000
Equipment costs	10 000	Equipment costs	11 500	Equipment costs	45 000
Material costs	10 000	Material costs	21 500	Material costs	15 000
Travel costs	15 000	Travel costs	17 250	Travel costs	10 000
Other costs	2 000	Other costs	2 500	Other services	2 000
Service contract costs	1 000	Service contract costs	2 150	Service contract costs	10 000
Indirect costs	25 000	Indirect costs	38 750	Indirect costs	30 000
SUM (in EUR)	263 000	SUM (in EUR)	423 650	SUM (in EUR)	612 000
share in %	20	share in %	33	share in %	47

TOTAL SUM REQUESTED (in EUR)	1 298 650
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In the example above, **both agency “Y” and agency “Z”** may act as the lead agency in charge of merit-based evaluation of the funding proposal to be carried out by the research teams from three countries involved in the CEUS programme. If this case, the lead agency is chosen by the research teams involved in the project.

B. Applying to the partner agencies in the event of research projects to be carried out jointly by research teams from three countries involved in the CEUS programme:



4. 2020 submission deadlines for proposals

A. 2020 submission deadlines for joint proposals at the partner agencies acting as the lead agencies:

The CEUS-UNISONO call:

<p>FWF (Austria)</p>	<p>Proposals can be submitted on an ongoing basis from 22 February 2020 For research projects on humanitarian crises like epidemics and pandemics covered by the fast-track merit-based evaluation at the FWF: the call for proposals at the FWF will be open between 6 April and 30 September 2020</p> <p>PLEASE NOTE:</p> <p>Proposals submitted to FWF acting as the lead agency must cover research projects involving Austrian research teams applying to FWF for at least 40% of the entire project costs (in the event of bilateral projects) or at least 25% of the entire project costs (in the event of trilateral projects)⁴.</p> <p>Detailed FWF guidelines: FWF Stand-Alone Projects FWF Clinical Research Programme in the case of clinical research</p>
<p>GAČR (Czech Republic)</p>	<p>Submission deadline for proposals: 22 February – 4 May 2020</p> <p>PLEASE NOTE:</p> <p>Proposals submitted to GAČR acting as the lead agency must cover research projects involving Czech research teams applying for at least 40% of the entire project costs (in the event of bilateral calls) or at least 25% of the entire project costs (in the event of trilateral calls).</p> <p>Detailed GAČR guidelines: Lead Agency Grants</p>
<p>ARRS (Slovenia)</p>	<p>Submission deadline for proposals: September - October/ November 2020</p> <p>PLEASE NOTE:</p> <p>Proposals submitted to ARRS acting as the lead agency must cover research projects involving Slovenian research teams applying to ARRS for at least 40% of the entire project costs (in the event of bilateral calls) or at least 25% of the entire project costs (in the event of trilateral calls).</p>

	Detailed ARRS guidelines: National Research Projects
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OPUS call for proposals:

NCN	<p>Submission deadline for proposals: 15 September– 15 December 2020 under the OPUS call for proposals</p> <p>PLEASE NOTE: Proposals submitted to the NCN acting as the lead agency must cover research projects involving Polish research teams applying to the NCN for at least 40% of the entire project costs (in the event of bilateral calls) or at least 25% of the entire project costs (in the event of trilateral calls).</p>
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B. Submission deadlines for domestic proposals to fund joint research projects :

GAČR (Czech Republic)	From 22 February 2020, on an ongoing basis, as soon as possible following the submission of a joint proposal to the respective lead agency, within 7 calendar days at the latest, in accordance with the requirements of the GAČR.
FWF (Austria)	From 24 February 2020, on an ongoing basis, as soon as possible following the submission of a joint proposal to the respective lead agency, within 7 calendar days at the latest, in accordance with the requirements of the respective agency.
ARRS (Slovenia)	
NCN	<p>From 24 February 2020, on an ongoing basis, as soon as possible following the submission of a joint proposal to the respective lead agency, within 7 calendar days at the latest, in accordance with the terms of the CEUS-UNISONO call for proposals.</p> <p>For example: if a joint proposal is submitted to FWF acting as the lead agency on 15 June 2020, the NCN proposal must be submitted by 22 June 2020.</p> <p>PLEASE NOTE: If a joint proposal is submitted to GAČR acting as the lead agency, the NCN proposal must be submitted to ZSUN/OSF as soon as possible following the submission of the joint proposal to the respective lead agency, within 7 calendar days at the latest and no later than 11 May 2020.</p>



	If a joint proposal is submitted to ARRS acting as the lead agency, the NCN proposal must be submitted to ZSUN/OSF as soon as possible following the submission of the joint proposal to ARRS, within 7 calendar days at the latest and no later than 7 calendar days of the call deadline of ARRS acting as the lead agency.
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5. Preparation and submission of NCN proposals together with joint proposals in the ZSUN/OSF system

The CEUS-UNISONO call announced by the NCN shall be open to NCN proposals to which joint proposals are attached. Such joint proposals must be drafted jointly by the research teams from two or three countries involved in the CEUS programme pursuant to the requirements of the lead agency and rules set forth in [Section II. 1. Preparation of joint proposals](#).

NCN proposals are submitted to the NCN by the Polish research team, **as soon as possible following the submission of a joint proposal to the lead agency, within 7 calendar days at the latest.**

PLEASE NOTE:

If a joint proposal is submitted to **GAČR acting as the lead, the NCN proposal** must be submitted to ZSUN/OSF as soon as possible following the submission of the joint proposal to the lead agency, within 7 calendar days and no later than 14 April 2020.

If a joint proposal is submitted to **ARRS acting as the lead, the NCN proposal** must be submitted to ZSUN/OSF as soon as possible following the submission of the joint proposal to the lead agency, within 7 calendar days and no later than 7 calendar days of the submission deadline of ARRS acting as the lead agency.

From the commencement of the work on the NCN proposal in ZSUN/OSF, the Polish research team shall have 45 calendar days to complete the proposal and send it to the NCN, after which date the proposal shall be disabled for editing. In this case, if the Polish research team has not sent its proposal to the NCN, a new proposal must be drafted and completed in ZSUN/OSF.

Polish research teams are bound by all NCN formal requirements specified in the [announcement of the CEUS-UNISONO call for proposals](#). Before drafting the proposal, please read the call announcement and call documents which form an integral part of the call announcement. To read the complete announcement [at the NCN's website](#), please click on:

« Scroll down all questions »

6. Documents to be provided to the NCN by the Polish research team

Proposals submitted to the NCN in ZSUN/OSF contain:

- an NCN proposal comprising a complete proposal filled out in the ZSUN/OSF system to the extent compliant with the [call documents](#);
- the joint proposal **identical with the version submitted to the lead agency comprising all documents submitted in the lead agency's electronic submission system, including:**
 - a) project description according to the terms of the call launched by the lead agency (in English);
 - b) CV with a list of publications by members of the research teams involved in the research project, whose names are known at the proposal submission stage, in compliance with the terms of the call launched by the lead agency, with the exception of persons selected in an open call procedure, including persons to be employed as post-docs and remunerated from the NCN budget;

NCN proposals must be appended with the same joint proposal that has been submitted to the lead agency.

Information in the joint proposal must be consistent with information in particular sections of the NCN proposal in OSF and other annexes thereto.

The [comparative CEUS cost sheet](#) table must also be annexed to the NCN proposals, completed jointly with the foreign research team/s⁴.

- c) **additionally, the proposal in the ZSUN/OSF system** must be appended with PDF files of the following documents **signed by hand⁵ or with a qualified electronic signature**:
 1. confirmation of submitting the proposal signed by the authorised representative(s) of the entity acting as the applicant for the Polish part of the joint project, generated automatically by the ZSUN/OSF system when completing the work on the proposal under the *Electronic submission* tab;
 2. confirmation of submitting the proposal signed by the Polish principal investigator generated automatically by the ZSUN/OSF system when completing the work on the proposal under the *Electronic submission* tab;
 3. **in the case of Polish entities that do not receive any institutional core funding for research activities:**
 - information on research carried out over the last 2 years, together with a list of publications and information on research equipment and other instruments/facilities crucial to scientific research (in English);
 4. **in the case of a group of Polish entities (laid down in Article 27 (1) (2) of the NCN Act):**

⁵ In this case, a scan of the document signed by hand must be attached to the proposal in ZSUN/OSF.

- [agreement on collaboration for the purposes of completion of the requested research project](#) (in Polish).

Group of entities

The following shall be deemed to be a group of Polish entities:

1. at least two Polish entities referred to in Article 7 (1) (1), Article 7 (1) (2) and Article 7 (1) (4)-(8) of the Act on Higher Education and Science of 20 July 2018, i.e.:
 - universities,
 - federations of science and HE entities,
 - research institutes of the Polish Academy of Sciences, operating pursuant to the Act on Research Institutes of 30 April 2010 (Journal of Laws of 2018, item 736);
 - international research institutes established pursuant to separate Acts, operating in the Republic of Poland,
 - Łukasiewicz Centre operating pursuant to the Act on the Łukasiewicz Research Network of 21 February 2019 (Journal of Laws, item 534),
 - institutes operating within the Łukasiewicz Research Network,
 - Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences,
 - other institutions involved in research independently on a continuous basis, or
2. at least one institution as such together with at least one enterprise.

A group of Polish entities is established pursuant to an [agreement](#) laying down the following:

- parties to the agreement and the leader,
- subject-matter and term of the agreement covering the duration of the research project,
- authorisation for a representative of the leader to act on behalf of the entire group of entities in the course of application for funding and implementation of a research project,
- the leader's duty to pass information received from the NCN to the other parties, and
- signatures of authorised representatives of all members of the group of entities.

The [agreement](#) must be drawn up in Polish and must be attached to the proposal in the ZSUN/OSF system as a PDF file signed by hand⁴ or with a qualified electronic signature.

Furthermore, **each** organisational unit in the group of entities that does not receive any institutional core funding for research activities shall append its proposal in the ZSUN/OSF system with information on research carried out over the last 2 years, together with a list of publications and information on research equipment and other instruments/facilities crucial to research (in English), signed by hand or with a qualified electronic signature.

Confirmations of submitting the proposal shall be signed by an authorised representative(s) of the entity acting as the leader of the group of entities and by the principal investigator employed by the leader of the group of entities. The confirmations shall be generated automatically by the ZSUN/OSF system when completing the work on the proposal and downloaded from the *Electronic submission* tab.

7. Project budget

The budget of tasks to be performed by Polish research teams must comply with the regulations on the costs planned in the project, including costs relating to the budget for

salaries and scholarships laid down in the following document: [Types of costs in research projects funded by the National Science Centre \(annex to the LAP Regulations\)](#). The rules for awarding NCN scholarships are laid down in the [Regulations on awarding scholarships](#).

Creating a project budget is one of the most important aspects in the project planning which aims at identifying the required resources and estimating the costs. The project budget must be justified as regards the subject and scope of research, based on calculations and must specify the expenditures to be covered by the NCN (the so-called eligible costs).

The proposal may be rejected if unreasonable budget is planned and/or discrepancies occur between the costs of projects to be carried out by Polish research teams in the NCN proposal and the joint proposal.

Costs in the project include direct costs and indirect costs.

Direct costs include:

- 1) salary:
 - full time remuneration: funds for full-time employment of the principal investigator or post-doc(s),
 - additional remuneration for members of the research team,
 - salaries and scholarships for students and PhD students,
- 2) purchase or manufacturing of research equipment, devices and software,
- 3) purchase of materials and small instruments,
- 4) outsourced services,
- 5) business trips,
- 6) visits and consultations (**PLEASE NOTE:** The costs of consultations and visits of foreign partners who at the same time receive project funding from the partner agency are not eligible),
- 7) compensation for collective investigators and
- 8) other costs crucial to the research project which comply with the [Types of costs in research projects funded by the National Science Centre \(annex to the LAP Regulations\)](#), including:
 - costs of purchasing data/databases or access thereto,
 - specialist publications/teaching aids, and
 - costs of publishing the results of research. The cost of publication of monographs may be incurred once positively reviewed by the NCN.

Indirect costs may not exceed 20% of direct costs.

When developing the budget, it is necessary to consider the following:

1. NCN proposals shall specify the budget for tasks to be performed by the Polish team; a joint proposal – for the tasks to be performed by all research teams involved in the project;
2. the budget in the NCN proposal shall be specified in PLN; in the joint proposal – in EUR;
3. the budget planned for the Polish team in the joint proposal must be consistent with the budget in the NCN proposal;
4. exchange rate to calculate the budget of the Polish part of the project in the joint proposal: EUR 1 = PLN 4.2344 (exchange rate as at 17 January 2020);



5. the minimum funding for the Polish part of the project throughout its performance: PLN 150,000; and
6. the maximum funding: not specified (the costs must be justified as regards the subject and scope of research).

PLEASE NOTE: It is recommended that the budget for the Polish research team is planned in ZSUN/OSF (in PLN), joint proposal (in EUR) and [comparative CEUS cost sheet table⁴](#) simultaneously; the detailed justification of costs must be provided in a relevant section of the joint proposal and must be consistent with the justification provided in ZSUN/OSF. In the joint proposal, the budget planned for the Polish research team must be provided in:

- the [comparative CEUS cost sheet table⁴](#) – PLN costs in the table will be automatically converted into EUR according to the following exchange rate: EUR 1 = PLN 4.2344 (exchange rate as at 17 January 2020);
- the relevant section of the joint proposal, according to the requirements of the respective lead agency, including the detailed justification of the costs planned for the Polish research team; **the merit-based evaluation shall be carried out by the lead agency on the basis of the joint proposal and shall cover (*inter alia*) evaluation of justification of the costs planned for the Polish part of the research project as regards the subject and scope of research, hence justification of the costs planned for the Polish research team in the joint proposal must be comprehensive, detailed and consistent with justification of the costs in ZSUN/OSF.**

For example: justification of the costs planned for the Polish research team:

- justification of the costs planned for the Polish research team in an NCN proposal may be copied and pasted to the appropriate section of the joint proposal concerning justification of the costs of foreign research teams:



Other direct costs

Other direct costs

+ Add

Change order

No.	Other direct costs				
1.	Name / description [in English]	other costs	Year 2020	Year 2021	Year 2022
	Category	Materials and small equipment	4	4	4
	Entity	University of Warsaw			
	Total cost [PLN]		12		
	Calculation and merit-based justification for the purchase [in English]		merit-based justification for the purchase		
2.	Name / description [in English]	other costs	Year 2020	Year 2021	Year 2022
	Category	Materials and small equipment	100	100	100
	Entity	University of Warsaw			
	Total cost [PLN]		300		
	Calculation and merit-based justification for the purchase [in English]		merit-based justification for the purchase		

Research equipment

+ Add

No.	Research equipment			
1.	Name of research equipment in Polish	Research equipment		
	Name of research equipment in English	Research equipment		
	Description [in English]	Research equipment		
	Merit-based justification for the purchase [in English]			
	Merit-based justification for the purchase			
	Entity	University of Warsaw	Year of purchase or construction	2020
	Unit cost [PLN]	1 000	Number of units	1
	NCN's contribution [PLN]	0	Entity's contribution (if any) [PLN]	1 000

PLEASE NOTE:

- if the costs planned for Polish research teams in the joint proposal are not justified in detail, the proposal may be rejected at the stage of eligibility check;
- where unjustified costs are planned, the NCN Director may allocate less funds for research projects to be carried out by Polish research teams under the CEUS-UNISONO call than planned in the NCN proposal or may refuse to allocate any funds; and
- in the case of discrepancies between the costs planned for Polish research teams in the NCN proposal and the joint proposal, the proposal may be rejected at the stage of eligibility check.

PLEASE NOTE:

Read the guidelines of a respective lead agency describing costs in a joint proposal and rules of including justification of the costs planned for the foreign research team.

According to the [FWF guidelines](#) ([FWF Clinical Research Programme](#) for clinical research), information on applications, costs of Austrian and foreign research teams and detailed justification of funding requested by the Austrian and foreign research teams must be included in “Annex 1: Information on research institution(s) and justification of requested funding”. In order to read the FWF guidelines, contact the Austrian research team and FWF directly.

According to the [GAČR guidelines](#), costs of foreign research teams and detailed justification of funding requested by the Czech and foreign research teams must be included in “Part B: Financial Plan”. For further details as regards GAČR guidelines, contact the Czech research team and GAČR directly.

According to the [ARRS guidelines](#), costs of foreign research teams and justification of funding requested by the foreign research teams must be included in the “Financial plan of the part of the project conducted by the Foreign team. For further details as regards ARRS guidelines, contact the Slovenian research team and ARRS directly.

8. Polish research team’s duty to submit complete proposal to NCN

Polish research teams must ensure that their proposals submitted to the NCN are complete. A proposal that has been submitted to the NCN via ZSUN/OSF cannot be amended and no file submitted to the ZSUN/OSF system can be replaced if it forms a part of the proposal.

Therefore, we suggest that principal investigators carefully verify whether all sections of the joint proposal, including joint project descriptions and annexes, have been correctly completed. If any section of the joint proposal is left blank, the joint proposal may be rejected at the stage of eligibility check by all partner agencies involved.

PLEASE NOTE:

Polish and foreign research teams must submit identical joint proposals to the lead agency and the NCN. In the case of discrepancies between the joint proposals, including joint project descriptions, CVs and/or lists of publications, submitted to the lead agency and the NCN, the proposal may be rejected at the stage of eligibility check.

The lead agency may request the relevant applicant to supplement or modify certain information.

If a joint proposal submitted to the lead agency is amended and re-submitted at the lead agency’s request:

- a) **before the NCN proposal is submitted**, the amended joint proposal must be attached to the NCN proposal in ZSUN/OSF;

- b) **after the NCN proposal is submitted**, the amended joint proposal submitted to the lead agency must be submitted to the NCN electronically, within 3 days of submitting the amended joint proposal to the lead agency:
- a) by e-mail sent from the e-mail address of the principal investigator or applicant (Host Institution) specified in the NCN proposal, with the following e-mail addresses (specified in the NCN proposal) entered in the CC field:
 - applicant's e-mail address (if the e-mail is sent by the principal investigator),
 - principal investigator's e-mail address (if the e-mail is sent by the applicant),
 - b) in an electronic format, to the Electronic Correspondence Register (ESP) address of the National Science Centre at: /ncn/SkrytkaESP;

The NCN shall confirm the receipt of the amended joint proposal by e-mail, to the e-mail addresses of the principal investigator and applicant (Host Institution) specified in the NCN proposal.

9. Electronic submission of proposals

Under the CEUS-UNISONO scheme, NCN proposals must be submitted to the NCN electronically, via the ZSUN/OSF system available at <https://osf.opi.org.pl/>. The NCN does not require hard copies of proposals submitted under the CEUS-UNISONO call. Please note that the other agencies involved in the programme may apply their own requirements concerning submission of proposals.

III. EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

1. Eligibility check

Proposals shall undergo an eligibility check performed by the NCN, lead agency and partner agencies relevant for the research teams involved in the project in accordance with their respective requirements. The proposals approved as eligible by all partner agencies performing the check will undergo a merit-based evaluation performed solely by the lead agency in accordance with the rules of its domestic call launched for the purposes of the CEUS programme. The eligibility check is the first stage of the proposal review. At the NCN, the eligibility check is performed by scientific coordinators pursuant to the formal criteria applicable to the CEUS-UNISONO call.

The applicants' most frequent errors resulting in the proposal being rejected at the stage of eligibility check performed by the NCN include:

- failure to submit the proposal on time;
- submission of the proposal to one partner agency only;
- misidentification of the lead agency and submission of the joint proposal to the wrong lead agency;



- incompleteness of the proposal;
- naming, in the joint proposal or project description, persons whose names are known at the proposal submission stage and who are to be selected in an open call procedure, including persons to be employed as post-docs and remunerated from the NCN budget;
- inconsistency of information in the joint proposal and NCN proposal;
- miscalculation of the budget (cost differences in the budget for the tasks to be performed by the Polish team in the joint proposal and in the NCN proposal as a consequence of (for example) wrong conversion of the EUR/PLN exchange rate or inconsistency of the expenses planned). **PLEASE NOTE: Under the CEUS-UNISONO call, the budget for the Polish part of the research project in the comparative CEUS cost sheet⁴ table will be automatically converted according to the following exchange rate: EUR 1 = PLN 4.2344 (exchange rate as at 17 January 2020); and**
- failure to provide a justification of the costs planned for the Polish research team in the joint proposal; the merit-based evaluation shall be carried out by the lead agency on the basis of the joint proposal and shall cover (*inter alia*) evaluation of justification of the costs planned for the Polish part of the research project as regards the subject and scope of research, hence justification of the costs planned for the Polish research team in the joint proposal must be comprehensive, detailed and consistent with justification of the costs in ZSUN/OSF.

2. Merit-based evaluation

Joint proposals shall be subject to merit-based evaluation. The terms of merit-based evaluation shall be specified by the lead agency.

The terms of the call and guidelines of merit-based evaluation by the lead agency shall be specified in the documents applicable to its domestic call launched for the purposes of the CEUS programme, i.e.

- [Stand-Alone Projects](#), and, in the case of clinical research: [FWF Clinical Research Programme](#) (if **FWF** is the lead agency);
- [Lead Agency Grants](#) (if **GAČR** is the lead agency); and
- [National Research Projects](#) (if **ARRS** is the lead agency).

Under the merit-based evaluation performed by the lead agency, the project shall be verified for compliance with the basic research criterion. Following the merit-based evaluation, the lead agency shall provide the NCN and other partner agencies with information on the results of the merit-based evaluation along with the list of research projects recommended for funding. The list shall then be approved by the NCN Director who awards funds for research projects to be performed by the Polish research teams. The detailed terms of awarding funding for research tasks to be funded by the National Science Centre under international calls carried out as multilateral cooperation pursuant to the Lead Agency Procedure shall be laid down in the [LAP Regulations](#).



IV. FILLING OUT NCN PROPOSALS IN ZSUN/OSF

From the commencement of the work on the NCN proposal in the ZSUN/OSF system, the Polish research team shall have 45 calendar days to complete and send the proposal to the NCN, after which date the proposal shall be disabled for editing. If such is the case and the Polish research team has not sent its proposal to the NCN, it must draft a new proposal and complete it in the ZSUN/OSF system.

Selected section in the ZSUN/OSF system	Subsection	Description
Implementation period [months]		Projects can be carried out over the period of either 24 or 36 months and in the case of cooperation with Austria – also 48 months.
BASIC INFORMATION	Title in English	The project title in English must be identical to the title in the joint project and submission system of the lead agency. The title in English must be identical to the title in Polish.
	NCN Review Panel	A review panel must be selected according to the current list of panels available at the NCN's website .
	Joint proposal	All application documents submitted to the lead agency as PDF files must be identical to the ones submitted in the lead agency's submission system and the comparative CEUS cost sheet table⁴.
APPLICANT	Applicant's status	Proposals for NCN funding of the Polish part of the research project may be submitted by entities for which such funding will not constitute state aid, such as: 1. universities; 2. federations of science and HE entities; 3. research institutes of the Polish Academy of Sciences operating pursuant to the Act



Selected section in the ZSUN/OSF system	Subsection	Description
		<p>on the Polish Academy of Sciences of 30 April 2010 (Journal of Laws of 2018, item 1475);</p> <p>4. research institutes operating pursuant to the Act on Research Institutes of 30 April 2010 (Journal of Laws of 2018, item 736);</p> <p>5. international research institutes established pursuant to separate Acts, operating in the Republic of Poland;</p> <p>5a. Łukasiewicz Centre operating pursuant to the Act on the Łukasiewicz Research Network of 21 February 2019 (Journal of Laws, item 534);</p> <p>5b. institutes operating within the Łukasiewicz Research Network;</p> <p>6. Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences;</p> <p>7. other institutions involved in research independently on a continuous basis;</p> <p>8. groups of entities (at least two entities mentioned in sections 1-7 or at least one institution as such together with at least one company);</p> <p>9. research centres of the Polish Academy of Sciences as defined in the Act on the Polish Academy of Sciences of 30 April 2010;</p> <p>10. scientific libraries; and</p> <p>11. legal entities established with registered office in Poland.</p>
PARTICIPATING ENTITIES	Agreement on collaboration for the purposes of completion of the research project covered by the proposal	<p>If the applicant is a group of Polish entities, an agreement on collaboration by a group of Polish entities must be attached (in Polish). The agreement must concern the project and identify the leader. File format: PDF; the document must bear an electronic signature or scan of the signed document.</p> <p>A template of the agreement is available in ZSUN/ OSF and at the NCN's website: https://www.ncn.gov.pl/sites/default/files/pliki/regulaminy/porozumienie_o_wspolpracy_na_rzecz_realizacji_projektu_badawczego.pdf.</p>
DETAILS OF THE PARTICIPATING ENTITY	Is the entity under receivership, in liquidation or subject to bankruptcy	Participating entities under forced administration, in liquidation or subject to bankruptcy proceedings cannot submit proposals.



Selected section in the ZSUN/OSF system	Subsection	Description
	proceedings? (YES/NO)	
	Does the entity receive any institutional core funding for research activities?	<p>If the entity applying for funding under the CEUS-UNISONO call does not receive any institutional core funding for research activities, the proposal submitted to the ZSUN/OSF system must include the following information (in English): information on research carried out over the last 2 years preceding submission of the proposal, together with a list of publications affiliated with the applicant/participating entity, information on research equipment and other instruments/facilities crucial to research.</p> <p>File format: PDF; the document must bear an electronic signature or scan of the signed document.</p>
STATE AID	Will project funding constitute state aid?	<p>State aid will not be granted under the call. In order to determine if project funding constitutes state aid, please read the Rules governing application for state aid available in the ZSUN/OSF system and at the NCN's website: https://www.ncn.gov.pl/finansowanie-nauki/pomoc-publiczna?language=pl.</p>
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION	Countries	<p>Partner country/countries of research teams must be listed (at least 1 and at least 2 from the following countries: Austria, the Czech Republic and Slovenia). Furthermore, another partner country than listed above may be indicated.</p> <p>PLEASE NOTE: For research projects on crises like epidemics or pandemics covered by the fast-track merit-based evaluation ("FWF Urgent Funding for Research Into Humanitarian Crises like</p>



Selected section in the ZSUN/OSF system	Subsection	Description
	Entities	<p>Epidemics and Pandemics"), to be carried out jointly by research teams from Poland and Austria, with the participation of research teams from Germany or Switzerland or Luxembourg that apply for funding of such research to their competent foreign research funding institutions, i.e. German Research Foundation (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, DFG) or Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) or Luxembourg National Research Fund (FNR) under bilateral or multilateral programmes launched by the FWF in cooperation therewith pursuant to the lead agency procedure: in the INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION section specify the country with which a given team is affiliated (e.g. Germany or Switzerland or Luxemburg) as well as name of the research institution from that country with which a given research team is affiliated.</p> <p>International cooperation must be merit-based, therefore the following cannot be deemed international cooperation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) participation in international conferences,b) dissemination of information on the project abroad,c) implementation of the research tasks by a Polish research team abroad without the participation of researchers from foreign research institutions, andd) cooperation with foreign researchers employed in Polish institutions . <p>Please provide the full names of foreign research institutions from the above-mentioned countries with which cooperation under the project is planned.</p>
ABSTRACT FOR THE GENERAL PUBLIC		Project's abstract for the general public must be attached in Polish and English and must concern the joint research project, not only research tasks to be carried out by the Polish research team. The abstract for the general public in each language version must not be longer than one standard page (page format: A4, font size: at least 11, font: Times New Roman or equivalent, lead: single, left-right margins: 2cm, top-bottom margins: 1.5cm). The abstract must be addressed to a wide audience, including people who are neither experts in a given field nor researchers.
RESEARCH TASK		It is necessary to specify the research tasks planned to be performed by the Polish research team in Polish and English. Both language versions must be identical. The



Selected section in the ZSUN/OSF system	Subsection	Description
		research plan must not specify the tasks to be performed by the foreign research teams.
RESEARCH TEAM	Number of team members	<p>It is necessary to specify the number of all members of the Polish research team (including the principal investigator, scholarship recipients and post-docs as well as other co-investigators and persons who are not paid any remuneration), who are to be involved in the project on the Polish part. The principal investigator must be at least a PhD holder.</p> <p>Persons to be selected in an open call procedure, including persons to be employed as post-docs and remunerated from the NCN budget must not be named in either NCN or joint proposal.</p> <p>The rules for planning the costs of salaries and scholarships are laid down in the annex to the Regulations on awarding funding for research tasks funded by the National Science Centre under international calls carried out as bilateral cooperation pursuant to the Lead Agency Procedure, adopted pursuant to NCN Council Resolution No 24/2020 of 24 February 2020.</p>
PERSONNEL COSTS AND SCHOLARSHIPS RESEARCH EQUIPMENT OTHER COSTS		<p>A budget for research to be performed by the Polish research team must be provided. Requested funding for the entire duration of the Polish part of the research project must be at least PLN 150,000.</p> <p>Costs of the project carried out by the Polish research team and calculation thereof must be the same when specified in PLN in the project budget submitted to ZSUN/OSF and in EUR in the comparative CEUS cost sheet table⁴ and joint proposal.</p> <p>PLEASE NOTE: PLN costs in the comparative CEUS cost sheet table⁴ will be automatically converted into EUR according to the following exchange rate: EUR 1 = PLN 4.2344 (exchange rate as at 17 January 2020)⁶.</p>

⁶ An average exchange rate published by the National Bank of Poland on the date the NCN Council adopted [Resolution No 2/2020 on 17 January 2020](#) on the amount of funding allocated for the implementation of research projects under the CEUS-UNISONO call for proposals.



Selected section in the ZSUN/OSF system	Subsection	Description
BUDGET SUMMARY		<p>Costs of the project in ZSUN/OSF must be specified in PLN, rounded down to total values; in the joint proposal and the comparative CEUS cost sheet table⁴ in EUR, rounded down to two decimal places.</p> <p>More information on the rules for cost planning can be found in the LAP Regulations and Regulations on awarding scholarships in NCN-funded research projects.</p>
ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION <i>The section will appear after clicking "Disable to NCN"</i>	Submission deadline for joint proposals on the international level Confirmation of submitting the proposal – principal investigator (PI) Confirmation of submitting the proposal – entity	<p>The submission deadline for a joint proposal to the lead agency cannot be later than submission deadline for a proposal to the NCN via the ZSUN/OSF system.</p> <p>The proposal shall be accompanied by a confirmation of submitting the proposal signed by the head of the entity and principal investigator. Confirmations must bear a qualified electronic signature or be appended with a scan of the signed document in PDF format. Confirmations are generated automatically by the ZSUN/OSF system at the completion of the proposal under the <i>Electronic submission</i> tab.</p> <p>If the applicant is a group of Polish entities, a confirmation must be signed by the authorised representative of the leader of the group of entities.</p>

V. FILLING OUT JOINT PROPOSALS

The joint proposal, **with all documents submitted to the lead agency** and subject to merit -based evaluation performed by the lead agency must be annexed to the NCN proposal **in PDF format**.

The joint proposal and [comparative CEUS cost sheet](#) table⁴ must be submitted to ZSUN/OSF in the same version that has been submitted to the lead agency's system.

The joint proposal must be drafted jointly by all research teams involved in a research project according to the rules of the lead agency applicable to its domestic call launched for the purposes of the CEUS programme and submitted to the lead agency by the research team affiliated in the home country of the lead agency.

Each lead agency in the CEUS-UNISONO call (FWF, GAČR and ARRS) applies its own requirements regarding the form, framework and contents of the joint proposal, which is why the lead agency in charge of merit-based evaluation of a given proposal must be identified in the [comparative CEUS cost sheet](#) table **before** the joint proposal is drafted. Once the lead agency in charge of merit-based evaluation of a given proposal is named, the guidelines for drafting joint proposals applicable in that agency must be read and joint proposal must be drafted pursuant thereto.⁴

Should you have any more questions or queries regarding NCN's formal requirements, contact [the NCN officers](#). For other proposal-related matters, contact the partner research team affiliated in the home country of the lead agency or the lead agency directly.

Detailed guidelines of respective agencies:

- [Stand-Alone Projects](#), and, in the case of clinical research: [FWF Clinical Research Programme](#) (if **FWF** is the lead agency);
- [Lead Agency Grants](#) (if **GAČR** is the lead agency); and
- [National Research Projects](#) (if **ARRS** is the lead agency).

Any information in the NCN proposal must be consistent with information in the joint proposal since the joint proposal shall be subject to merit-based evaluation.

Persons whose names are known at the proposal submission stage and who are to be selected in an open call procedure, including persons to be employed as post-docs and remunerated from the NCN budget, **must not** be named in the joint proposal.

The budget planned for the Polish research team in the [comparative CEUS cost sheet](#) table⁴ and in the joint proposal must be the same as the budget in the NCN proposal; the detailed justification of the costs planned for the Polish research team must be provided in the joint proposal; the merit-based evaluation shall be carried out by the lead agency on the basis of the joint proposal and shall cover (*inter alia*) evaluation of justification of the costs planned for the Polish part of the research project as regards the subject and scope of research, hence

justification of the costs planned for the Polish research team in the joint proposal must be comprehensive, detailed and consistent with justification of the costs in ZSUN/OSF.

If the costs planned for the Polish research team in the joint proposal are not justified in detail, the proposal may be rejected at the stage of eligibility check.

VI. CONTACT DETAILS

NCN Contact Persons

For more information, read the announcement of the [CEUS-UNISONO call for proposals](#) and should you have any more questions, contact the NCN officers.

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