



Council
of the National Science Centre
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RESOLUTION NO 80/2018

OF THE COUNCIL OF THE NATIONAL SCIENCE CENTRE

of 6 September 2018

on the terms of Regulations of awarding funding for the implementation of research tasks funded by the National Science Centre under international calls carried out as bilateral cooperation pursuant to the lead agency procedure.

Pursuant to Article 21, in conjunction with Article 20 (1) (1) (b) and Article 20 (4) of the Act of on the National Science Centre 30 April 2010 (Journal of Laws of 2018, item 947), the Council of the National Science Centre lays down the Regulations of awarding funding for the implementation of research tasks funded by the National Science Centre under international calls carried out as bilateral cooperation pursuant to the lead agency procedure.

Chapter I

General provisions

§ 1. The following regulations lay down the terms of awarding, by the National Science, hereinafter referred to as the “NCN,” funding for research tasks carried out by Polish research teams in projects implemented under calls launched by the NCN as bilateral cooperation pursuant to the lead agency procedure, hereinafter referred to as “bilateral calls.” The foreign partner agency, hereinafter referred to as the “lead agency,” acts in the bilateral call for proposals as the party responsible for the peer review of the submitted proposals.

§ 2. Awarding funding for the tasks carried out by foreign research teams under bilateral calls is ruled by terms laid down by the lead agency.

§ 3. Detailed conditions of the call are governed by separate documents adopted by the NCN and the lead agency. For the NCN, terms of launching bilateral calls are laid down by the NCN Council.

Chapter II

Eligible applicants

§ 4. Proposals requesting NCN’s funding of the Polish part of the research project in a bilateral call, hereinafter referred to as the “domestic proposal,” may be submitted by the entities referred to in Article 10 (1)-(3), (5)-(6) and (8) of the Act on the principles of funding science of 30 April 2010 (Journal of Laws of 2018, item 87), hereinafter referred to as the “applicants,” for whom the funding in the project will not constitute state aid, i.e.:

- 1) academic or research centres;
- 2) research consortia;
- 3) scientific networks and units within Higher Education institutions that are not their basic administrative units;

- 4) research centres of the Polish Academy of Sciences;
- 5) academic research centres;
- 6) research libraries;
- 7) organisational units with legal personality and registered office in Poland.

Chapter III Terms of entry for domestic proposals

§ 5. The principal investigator may not be named in the domestic proposal as the authorised representative of the entity applying for funding.

§ 6. Under NCN calls with deadline for submissions expiring on the same date one may act as principal investigator only in one proposal. The principal investigator named in the domestic proposal submitted to a bilateral call with continuous submission may act in that capacity in other NCN calls as long as the date of submitting the proposal to the bilateral call with continuous submission does not fall within the period for submissions under the other calls.

§ 7. The person named as principal investigator in the domestic proposal submitted to a bilateral call may act in that capacity regardless of the number of other on-going NCN-funded research projects in which they act as principal investigator.

§ 8. A proposal stating research tasks overlapping with the ones stated in the domestic proposal may not be submitted to other NCN calls with deadline for submissions expiring on the same date as the bilateral call. In the case of bilateral calls with continuous submission, proposals stating research tasks overlapping with the ones stated in the domestic proposal may be submitted to other NCN calls as long as the date of submitting the proposal to the bilateral call with continuous submission does not fall within the period for submissions under the other calls.

§ 9. A domestic proposal stating research tasks overlapping with the ones stated in a proposal submitted to another NCN call may be submitted under a bilateral call only when the evaluation process of the earlier (previous) proposal has ended.

§ 10. A domestic proposal stating research tasks overlapping with the ones stated in a proposal submitted to an earlier NCN call which is subject to an appeal procedure may be submitted to the NCN only once the appeal procedure has been concluded to the effect other than granting funding/a commitment to grant funding.

Chapter IV Procedure of submitting research proposals to a bilateral call

§ 11. A bilateral call is open to domestic research proposals to which joint proposals have been attached.

§ 12. A joint proposal is drafted by a Polish research team in collaboration with its fellow foreign research team, and it is submitted to the lead agency by the foreign research team on terms determined by the lead agency.

§ 13. The domestic proposal is drafted and submitted to the NCN by the Polish research team, pursuant to terms set out by the NCN.

§ 14. The joint proposal attached to the domestic proposal submitted to the NCN must be identical with the version submitted by the foreign research team to the lead agency.

§ 15. The information included in the domestic proposal must be consistent with the information included in the joint proposal.

§ 16. In a bilateral call a given joint proposal may constitute an attachment to no more than one domestic proposal, with the reservation of § 9.



§ 17. The NCN accepts only proposals that are complete and that meet the terms of the bilateral call.

Chapter V Proposal evaluation

§ 18. Proposals submitted to a bilateral call are subject to an eligibility check procedure carried out by the NCN and the lead agency, and to merit-based evaluation carried out only by the lead agency.

§ 19. Eligibility check of domestic proposals is performed by Discipline Coordinators.

§ 20. Domestic proposals or joint proposals may be rejected as ineligible also at a later stage of the evaluation procedure.

§ 21. Eligibility check of domestic proposals consists in:

- a) verification of the proposal's completeness;
- b) verification whether the terms for bilateral calls are met;
- c) verification whether the requested costs conform to the terms set out in the document titled "Costs in research projects funded by the National Science Centre under international calls carried out as bilateral cooperation pursuant to the lead agency procedure," which constitutes an annex to these Regulations;
- d) verification whether the joint proposal attached to the domestic proposal is identical with the proposal submitted to the lead agency by the foreign research team;
- e) verification whether the information in the joint proposal is consistent with the information provided in the domestic proposal.

§ 22. The NCN informs the lead agency of the results of eligibility check.

§ 23. The subject of merit-based evaluation are only the proposals which have been found eligible by the NCN and the lead agency.

§ 24. The subject of merit-based evaluation are joint proposals.

§ 25. The terms of the merit-based evaluation are laid down by the lead agency.

§ 26. The lead agency informs the NCN of the results of the merit-based evaluation, providing it with a list of projects recommended for funding.

§ 27. The ranking list of the research projects recommended for funding is approved by the NCN Director. The NCN Director awards funding for the implementation, by Polish research teams, of the highest-ranking research projects in the bilateral call, taking into account the availability of the funding earmarked for the call by the NCN Council. The NCN Director may decide on awarding funding to research projects from the lead agency's list of the projects recommended for funding which partly fall within the budget earmarked by the NCN Council for the implementation of projects in a given discipline or group of disciplines, taking into account the percentage by which the budget has been exceeded.

prof. dr hab. Janusz Janeczek
Chairman of the Council
of the National Science Centre

Annex to the Regulations of awarding funding for the implementation of research tasks funded by the National Science Centre under international calls carried out as bilateral cooperation pursuant to the lead agency procedure.

**TYPES OF COSTS IN RESEARCH PROJECTS
FUNDED BY THE NATIONAL SCIENCE CENTRE
UNDER INTERNATIONAL CALLS CARRIED OUT
AS BILATERAL COOPERATION PURSUANT TO THE LEAD AGENCY PROCEDURE¹**

ELIGIBLE COSTS are expenditures eligible for funding from NCN resources. Eligible costs shall be deemed only the expenditures that fulfil all of the following criteria:

- 1) are critical to the completion of the project,
- 2) have been incurred from the day on which the decision of the NCN Director to grant funding becomes legally binding until the final date of the research project's implementation²,
- 3) incurred in line with the principle of advisability and frugality, and in line with the principle of obtaining optimal effects from given resources,
- 4) allowing for identification and verification, scrupulously documented and duly recorded in an account book,
- 5) conforming with applicable rules and regulations, including the rules and regulations of the host institution and the rules and regulations of the NCN, including the rules set forth in this document.

The following shall not be deemed eligible costs:

- 1) costs of visits and consultations by collaborators from foreign research institutions, who receive separate funding for the project from the agency collaborating with the National Science Centre on the bilateral call in question,
- 2) reserves for future liabilities, interest due and other expenditures for debt-servicing, interest and other expenditures for late payments, contractual penalties, fines, penalties and payments for the costs of judicial proceedings,
- 3) VAT, if the host institution is entitled to reclaim VAT,
- 4) costs of proceedings related to conferment of academic degrees/titles,
- 5) costs of fees paid for pre-publishing reviews,

The eligibility of costs is checked during the proposal evaluation, evaluation of the annual report, evaluation of the final report and during the external audit.

Eligible costs incurred by the host institution are subdivided into direct and indirect costs.

1. Indirect costs are the costs related indirectly to the research project, and essential for the proper realisation of the funding agreement.

¹ The costs of the research project carried out by the Polish research team and the calculation of such costs given in PLN in ZSUN/OSF (Zintegrowany System Usług dla Nauki /Obsługa Strumieni Finansowania) must be identical with the costs given in foreign currency in the joint proposal. The costs given in joint proposal should be calculated on the basis of the average exchange rate quoted by the National Bank of Poland on the day the NCN Council adopted Resolution on the terms of conducting a bilateral call. The costs of the project implementation in ZSUN / OSF should be given in PLN, rounded down to the total values, and in joint proposal, in foreign currency rounded down to two decimal places.

² In the event of failure to sign the funding agreement for reasons directly attributable to the host institution or the principal investigator, return of incurred costs may not be demanded of the NCN. Making records of costs and settling all liabilities incurred during the period of the fellowship is possible by the date of drawing up the final report, no later, however, than within 60 days of the research project completion.



The maximum limit for indirect costs amounts to 40 per cent of direct costs, excluding “costs of research equipment, devices and software.” Indirect costs shall be covered by a lump sum and considered as incurred expenditure. The host institution shall arrange with the principal investigator in the project for the distribution of at least 25 per cent of the direct costs’ value.

2. Direct costs are costs directly related to the completion of the research project; the following direct costs may be distinguished:

- costs of remuneration and scholarships,
- costs of research equipment, devices and software,
- other direct costs.

The following expenditures may not be financed as direct costs:

- 1) remuneration of the administrative and financial staff (performing services related to personnel, accounting, legal issues, including the outsourcing of accounting to an accountancy office),
- 2) costs of renovation of facilities,
- 3) costs of adapting/upgrading facilities, so that they can meet the needs of the research tasks,
- 4) fees and rent for the use of facilities, property taxes, etc.,
- 5) utilities (cost of electricity, heating, heating gas, water, as well as other transmission fees, sewage, etc.), telecommunications charges (telephone, Internet) and mail and courier services, excluding the services referred to in point 2.3.2.
- 6) costs of cleaning, janitorial and security services to facilities,
- 7) cost of non-life insurance,
- 8) handling and administrative fees,
- 9) cost of banking services, including: opening and maintaining a sub-account or separate account for the research project, bank fees,
- 10) costs of external audits,
- 11) costs of organising conferences, workshops, seminars, meetings (with the exception of personal costs in points 2.3.3 and 2.3.4),
- 12) costs of subscriptions (with the exception of the cost of data and access to data referred to in point 2.3.6),
- 13) fees for membership in organisations, associations, etc.

All expenses outlined above in points 1-13 may be covered as indirect costs.

2.1. Costs of remuneration and scholarships³ – under this heading fall the costs of remuneration and related expenditures,⁴ and scholarships.

Remuneration may be paid **only to persons employed as members of the research team, i.e. the principal investigator and other investigators in the project.** Scholarships for doctoral candidates and students engaged in the project can also be paid from the project resources. Budget for remuneration and scholarships for members of the research team may include resources for:

- a) *full-time remuneration* i.e. remuneration paid pursuant to a full-time contract of employment to the project’s principal investigator and persons employed as post-docs,
- b) *additional remuneration* for members of the research team,
- c) *scholarships* for doctoral candidates and students.

³ For joint entities, the budget for remuneration and scholarships is shared by all individual entities that form the joint entity.

⁴ The amounts of remuneration quoted in the document are gross amounts. The amounts quoted shall include also non-wage labour costs, including social and health insurance contributions and other elements of remuneration, financed by the host institution. These resources shall also cover the annual bonus, should the host institution carry the obligation pay it.

Each person may be paid remuneration from the project's direct resources only in one of the forms enumerated above in points a) through c).

2.1.1. Full-time remuneration:

Principal investigator may be paid remuneration from the pool allocated for full-time remuneration pursuant to a full-time contract of employment at a research post as long as they meet all of the following conditions:

- a) at the time of receiving such remuneration, they are not receiving any other remuneration paid from the resources granted under NCN calls under the heading of direct costs;
- b) at the time of receiving such remuneration they are not employed by another employer pursuant to a contract of employment⁵ nor do they receive a pension from the social security system;
- c) the sum of resources for their employment does not exceed⁶ PLN 150,000 per annum.

Person at a *post-doc* type post⁷ may be paid remuneration from the pool allocated for full-time remuneration pursuant to a full-time contract of employment as long as they meet all of the following conditions:

- a) has been selected by means of open competition procedure, carried out by three-person recruitment committee appointed by the head of the project's host entity, composed of the project's principal investigator as its chair and at least two other persons selected by him/her, who have necessary scientific or professional qualifications. The assessment of the candidates is carried out pursuant to the criteria outlined in the call announcement, and the results are made public by posting on the webpage of the project's host entity;
- b) the principal investigator in the project has not been thesis supervisor/auxiliary thesis supervisor of their doctorate;
- c) for two years before employment in the project has not been employed by the host entity pursuant to a contract of employment;
- d) at the time of receiving such remuneration they are not receiving any other remuneration paid from the resources granted under NCN calls under the heading of direct costs;
- e) in the period of receiving the remuneration they are not employed by another employer pursuant to a contract of employment⁵;
- f) the sum of resources for their employment ⁶ does not exceed to PLN120,000 a year.

It is permitted to employ at the post-doc type post in the project, remunerated from the pool allocated for full-time remuneration, one person who does not meet the criterion set forth in point b).

Under a bilateral call it is permitted to employ persons at post-doc type posts provided that the aggregate time of employment of all persons employed at those posts is no more than twice the time planned as the project's duration. Employment at this post may be no less than 6 months.

⁵ Applies also to contracts of employment concluded with an employer established outside the territory of the Republic of Poland.

⁶ If full-time remuneration is not received on a continuous basis during the entire course of the project's completion, the amount of full-time remuneration is reduced in proportion to the period when the remuneration is received.

⁷ "*Post-doc*" type post is to be understood as a full-time post, scheduled by the project's principal investigator for a person at the beginning of their career in research, who has obtained their doctorate degree within 7 years before of joining the project. This period does not include breaks related to: maternity leave, adoption leave, paternal leave, parental leave granted in compliance with the Employment Code, nor periods of sickness benefit or rehabilitation benefit granted on account of unfitness for work, including any caused by a health condition requiring rehabilitation. Women may extend the 7-year period by 18 months for every child born or adopted. A woman may choose whichever manner of accounting for career breaks she finds preferable.

2.1.2. Additional remuneration:⁸

The resources for the project may be directed toward payment of additional remuneration, which may be used to finance employment pursuant to full- or part-time employment contracts as well as pursuant to civil law contracts. Member of a research team employed pursuant to a contract of employment by a host institution may only receive additional remuneration in a form other than pursuant to a civil law contract.

When calculating the budget for additional remuneration, the calculation shall exclude from the team's personnel (principal investigator and other investigators) any persons who in the period of the project's duration should be included in the *full-time remuneration* pool of another NCN-funded project, and persons who should be receiving scholarships under the project. The number of persons thus determined shall be the basis for the calculation of the budget for additional remuneration.

The amounts set out below serve solely the purpose of calculating the maximal budget for additional remuneration in a given project. The maximum budget for the remuneration of the principal investigator may not be increased once the project has entered the stage of implementation.

Under the bilateral call, the budget for additional remuneration **calculated** for each month of the project's implementation, for all investigators, amounts in total to no more than:

- a) should the principal investigator not plan to be employed pursuant to a full-time contract of employment, with remuneration paid from the pool allocated for full-time remuneration:
 - PLN 3,000 for one person;
 - PLN 4,500 for two persons, of which no more than PLN 3,000 for the principal investigator;
 - PLN 5,500 for three or more persons, of which no more than PLN 3,000 for the principal investigator.
- b) should the principal investigator plan to be employed pursuant to a full-time contract of employment, with remuneration paid from the pool *allocated for full-time remuneration*:
 - PLN 1,500 for one person;
 - PLN 2,500 for two or more persons.

2.1.3. Scholarships:

The NCN scholarships may be awarded provided that:

- a) they are granted in compliance with the Regulations on awarding scholarships for young researchers in the NCN-funded research projects, as specified in Resolution No 96/2016 of 27 October 2016 of the NCN Council;
- b) in the period of receiving the NCN scholarship, the investigator may not receive remuneration from the NCN funds;⁹
- c) the total amount of all NCN scholarships received by the investigators does not exceed PLN 4,500 a month. This amount must not include scholarship received on terms of the doctoral scholarship funded from the NCN resources under the ETIUDA call.

The total amount of all research scholarships received monthly in a given project under a given bilateral call may not exceed PLN 9,000. The amount indicated serves solely the purpose of calculating the maximum budget for scholarships in a given project.

⁸ The employment paid for from the pool allocated for additional remuneration is not subject to the restrictions set forth in point 2.1.1.

⁹ Does not apply to laureates of the ETIUDA call.

2.2. Costs of research equipment, devices and software - under this heading fall costs of the research equipment, other devices and software to be purchased or developed, as necessary to conduct the research tasks in the project.

Research equipment¹⁰ (as defined by the Central Statistical Office) is to be understood as set(s) of testing, measurement and laboratory apparatus[es] of limited application and high technical parameters (usually several orders of magnitude higher than typical apparatus used for production or exploitation purposes), which in accordance with the accounting policies of the host institution constitute the host institution's fixed assets.

Purchase of research equipment may not constitute the main goal of the project.

Other devices – other devices outside the scope of the definition of research equipment, which in accordance with the accounting policies of the host institution constitute the host institution's fixed assets.

Software – software purchased to meet the requirements of the research project, which in accordance with the accounting policies of the host institution constitutes the host institution's intangible assets.

The value of research equipment shall be determined in accordance with the Accounting Law and it includes, among others: costs of transportation, loading and unloading, insurance of the transported goods, installation/assembly, customs and excise duty, and the value of software if it is treated as a component of the research equipment.

2.3. Other direct costs – under this heading fall costs qualifying neither as “costs of remuneration and scholarships” nor “costs of research equipment, devices and software.”

2.3.1. Materials and small devices – cost of purchasing materials and consumables for direct use over the course of the project, including, among others:

- raw materials, half-finished products, reagents,
- stationery, office items and supplies,
- small laboratory devices, IT hardware and small office devices (e.g. a computer, licensing costs and software development, printers, scanners, monitors, copiers), other devices, as long as according to the accounting policies of the host institution they are not qualified as tangible or intangible assets.

2.3.2. Outsourcing: costs of services rendered by third parties (incorporated as well as individuals with a business activity), including, among others:

- cost of research services (laboratory analyses, statistical reports, polls, etc.),
- cost of purchasing other specialist services critical to the completion of the research in due form (proofreading, editing, graphics, counselling, monitoring, etc.),
- cost of postal, shipping and transport services directly related to the completion of a given research task,

¹⁰ The project's resources may not be used to finance or co-finance the purchase or building of research equipment which forms large or strategic research infrastructure (art. 22, Act on the principles of funding science of 30 April 2010). Pursuant to art. 2 point 17 of the Act, large research infrastructure shall be understood as research infrastructure, including IT infrastructure with a value in excess of:

- a) PLN 150,000 in the case of research equipment used for research and for research and technological development in the domain of arts, humanities and social sciences,
- b) PLN 500,000 in the case of research equipment used for research and for research and technological development in the domains of physical sciences and engineering and life sciences.

- cost of renting a venue, cost of catering, etc., which are essential to the completion of research tasks that include respondents.

Persons who are recipients of remuneration or scholarships in the project may not be involved in research tasks as subcontractors directly or indirectly (via institutions that employ them).

2.3.3. Business trips – costs of business trips of the members of the research team, including, among others:

- costs of participation in seminars/conferences related to the subject of the research,
- costs of trips (including business trips) critical to the completion of the research, e.g. preliminary archival and library research, fieldwork, etc.

Costs of business trips include:

- daily allowance and reimbursement of travel costs, as set forth by the regulations passed in accordance with art. 77⁵ § 2 of the Polish Labour Code,
- individual insurance,
- conference fees,
- other costs, as long as they are considered justified and essential to the completion of the research, such as: visas, vaccinations, etc.

Long-term expeditions may be qualified as eligible if their costs have been calculated in line with the principle of advisability and frugality, based on a solid assessment of their actual costs.

2.3.4. Visits and consultations – costs of visits by external collaborators and/or consultants closely connected to the subject of the research, excluding the costs indicated as ineligible above.

In this category eligible shall be only personal costs in the form of allowances, reimbursement of travel costs and accommodation.

2.3.5. Collective investigators – total cost of gratification for persons carrying out one-time responsibilities (e.g. interviewers) as well as study participants. The minimum number of such investigators is 5 persons. This category does not include technicians and lab managers.

A detailed cost estimate shall be drafted, describing the objective of the expenditure and its total cost, as well as the number of persons receiving benefits, the value of a unit-rate and the form of benefit (monetary or material).

2.3.6. Other costs – other costs that fall in none of the previous categories, among others:

- costs of purchasing data/databases or access thereto,
- specialist publications/teaching aids,
- costs of publishing the results of the project's research by an international publisher(s).

The research project may include actions intended to promote it and disseminate its results. Anticipated costs generated by such actions, as long as they meet the conditions of eligibility, shall be entered in the categories "*Costs of remuneration and scholarships*," "*Outsourcing*," etc., accordingly.

prof. dr hab. Janusz Janeczek

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