

Order No 4/2019
of the NCN Director
on the detailed procedure
according to which the Expert Team evaluates proposals
submitted to the BEETHOVEN CLASSIC 3 call
for the Polish-German research projects,
dated 4 January 2018

Pursuant to Article 30 (3) of the Act on the National Science Centre of 30 April 2010 (Journal of Laws of 2018, item 947, 1669) and Memorandum of Understanding between the National Science Centre and Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft of 2 June 2016 and in conjunction with Resolution No 82/2018 of the NCN Council of 6 September 2018 on the terms and regulations of awarding funding for the implementation of research tasks by the Polish research teams funded by the National Science Centre under the BEETHOVEN CLASSIC 3 call, a detailed procedure according to which the Expert Team evaluates proposals submitted to the BEETHOVEN CLASSIC 3 call for the Polish-German research projects, is hereby decided.

§ 1. Abbreviations and definitions

Whenever this Order refers to:

- 1) NCN, it shall be understood as the National Science Centre;
- 2) Council, it shall be understood as the Council of the National Science Centre;
- 3) Director, it shall be understood as the Director of the National Science Centre;
- 4) DFG, it shall be understood as Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft;
- 5) DFG Joint Committee, it shall be understood as the DFG's decision-making body, deciding on, *inter alia*, the budget, research policy and research grant funding;
- 6) NCN Coordinators, it shall be understood as Coordinators employed by the NCN;
- 7) DFG Coordinators, it shall be understood as Coordinators employed by the DFG;
- 8) Team, it shall be understood as the international Expert Team whose members are recommended jointly by the NCN and DFG:
 - a) Inter-Panel Team, it shall be understood as the international Expert Team appointed under a given research domain, i.e. HS or ST;
 - b) Inter-Domain Team, it shall be understood as the international Expert Team comprising experts representing different research domains, i.e. HS and ST;
- 9) Expert, it shall be understood as a member of the international Expert Team or external

reviewer who is not a member of the Expert Team;

- 10) proposal, it shall be understood as a proposal submitted in response to the BEETHOVEN CLASSIC 3 call announced by the NCN;
- 11) meeting, it shall be understood as a meeting day of the Expert Team;
- 12) session, it shall be understood as all meetings of the Expert Team at a given stage of merit-based evaluation and
- 13) ranking list, it shall be understood as the ranking list of proposals evaluated in the second stage of merit-based evaluation, which indicates the proposals recommended for funding.

§ 2. General provisions

1. The Expert Team members shall be selected by the Council pursuant to Council Resolution No 26/2018 of 8 March 2018 “Expert Teams of the National Science Centre: formation and appointment”, having considered the recommendations of the DFG and having received opinions on the candidates from the appropriate Committees, and shall be appointed by the NCN Director.
2. The Teams shall evaluate proposals submitted to the BEETHOVEN CLASSIC 3 call in a panel group (Inter-Panel Teams or Inter-Domain Teams).
3. The number of Team members shall be decided upon by the Council, considering the number and subject of proposals under evaluation and the need to carry out the call in a timely and orderly manner. A Team shall consist of at least five members.
4. The work of an Expert Team shall be managed by a Chair, appointed by the NCN, and a Vice-Chair, recommended by the DFG. The Chair and the Vice-Chair of the Team shall be selected by the NCN Council.
5. During the meetings, the Chair of the Team may appoint another member of the Team to manage the work of the Team in his/her stead. Should the Chair of the Team be unable to appoint such a person, the oldest member of the Team shall manage the work of the Team in his/her stead.
6. The experts evaluating proposals under the BEETHOVEN CLASSIC 3 call shall be bound by the ethical principles laid down in the following documents: “Code of Ethics for the Council Members and Experts of the National Science Centre” annexed to NCN Council Resolution No 22/2017 of 9 February 2017 and “Guidelines for Avoiding Conflict of Interests” (DFG-form 10.201 – 4/10) applicable to the Experts evaluating proposals under the calls launched by the DFG. Should either document lay down principles more stringent than the other, its provisions shall prevail and the Experts shall be bound by them.
7. The NCN Coordinators and DFG Coordinators shall exclude an Expert from the proposal evaluation procedure in the event of a conflict of interest or justified suspicion of a bias in his/her actions.

§ 3. Expert Teams

The duties of the Teams shall include:

- 1) evaluation of proposals at the second stage of merit-based evaluation and
- 2) compilation of a list of projects recommended for funding under the BEETHOVEN CLASSIC 3 call.

§ 4. NCN Coordinators

1. The duties of the NCN Coordinators shall include:

- 1) running eligibility checks on proposals;
- 2) indicating, subject to the authorisation of the Director, external reviewers for the evaluation of proposals at the first stage of merit-based evaluation, taking into account recommendations by the DFG;
- 3) organising the Team's meetings, including:
 - a) convening meetings and participating in them;
 - b) verifying conformity of the minutes with the actual course of the meeting and decisions of the Team;
- 4) assessing the accuracy and impartiality of opinions drafted by Experts and
- 5) delivering the ranking lists drafted by the Teams to the Director for his approval.

2. The NCN Coordinators shall organise the work of a Team and closely cooperate with the Chair of the Team, the Vice-Chair of the Team and DFG Coordinators.

§ 5. DFG Coordinators

1. The duties of the DFG Coordinators shall include:

- 1) running eligibility checks on proposals;
- 2) recommending external reviewers for reviewing the proposals at the first stage of merit-based evaluation pursuant to the internal regulations of the DFG;
- 3) participating in the meetings of the Teams;
- 4) verifying conformity of the minutes with the actual course of the meeting and decisions of the Team;
- 5) assessing the accuracy and impartiality of opinions drafted by the Experts and
- 6) delivering the ranking lists drafted by the Teams to the DFG Joint Committee for its approval.

2. The DFG Coordinators shall closely cooperate with the Chair of the Team, the Vice-Chair of the Team and NCN Coordinators.

§ 6. Chair of the Expert Team

1. The duties of the Chair of the Team shall include:
 - 1) naming two Team members to present all proposals and their evaluations at the session;
 - 2) chairing the Team's meetings, taking into account the situation described in § 2 (5);
 - 3) ordering and conducting voting;
 - 4) approving the minutes of the Team meetings and
 - 5) appointing another member of the Team to manage the work at a meeting, should they become unable to perform their duties.
2. The Chair of the Expert Team shall closely cooperate with the NCN Coordinators and DFG Coordinators.

§ 7. Expert Team Members

The duties of the Team members shall include participation in all Team meetings as well as:

- 1) presenting the proposals they have been assigned and evaluations thereof at the sessions and
- 2) drafting justifications for the final grades of proposals they have been assigned during the Team meetings.

§ 8. External reviewer

1. The duties of the external reviewers shall include individual reviews of proposals at the first stage of the merit-based evaluation of proposals.
2. External reviewers cannot be members of the Team reviewing a proposal under the BEETHOVEN CLASSIC 3 call.

§ 9. Proposal evaluation stages

1. Proposals submitted under the BEETHOVEN CLASSIC 3 call shall undergo eligibility check followed by merit-based evaluation.
2. The eligibility check of proposals submitted to the DFG shall be performed in accordance with the rules applicable at the DFG.
3. The eligibility checks of proposals submitted to the NCN shall be performed by the NCN Coordinators in accordance with the rules applicable at the NCN.
4. A proposal may be rejected on formal grounds also at a later stage of evaluation.
5. Only proposals found eligible by both the NCN and the DFG shall be subject to merit-based evaluation.

6. The merit-based evaluation of proposals at the NCN shall be performed in two stages:
 - a) stage one – preliminary evaluation is based on the data included in the joint Polish-German proposal requesting funding for a research project and is performed by at least two external reviewers named by the NCN and DFG who are not Expert Team members;
 - b) stage two – evaluation is performed at a meeting of an Expert Team composed of members appointed by the NCN and DFG, based on the data included in the joint Polish-German proposal requesting funding for a research project, opinions received from the external reviewers at the first stage of evaluation, analysis of markings of individual criteria and discussions on the proposal, as weighed against other proposals reviewed under the BEETHOVEN CLASSIC 3 call.

§ 10. Organisation of Expert Team meetings

1. Expert Team meetings shall be held by the Polish party.
2. The NCN Coordinators and DFG Coordinators shall decide on the number of Team meetings to be held. The number of Team meetings to be held within a single session should be established with regard to the number of proposals to be reviewed and the volume of work necessary for their evaluation.
3. Team meetings shall take place in the presence of a quorum of an absolute majority of the Team members.
4. Team meetings shall be chaired jointly by the Chair and the Vice-Chair of the Team or member appointed as the Chair's substitute.
5. The following persons shall participate in each Team meeting: NCN Coordinators and DFG Coordinators as well as designated officers of the NCN and DFG, who shall not take part in the voting.
6. Team members who have a conflict of interest with the applicants (or investigators) shall leave the room where the session is being held. Exclusion of a Team member due to a conflict of interest shall not affect the quorum during voting.
7. Minutes shall be taken of each Team meeting, whose conformity with the actual course of the meetings shall be verified by the NCN Coordinator and DFG Coordinators and approved by the Chair of the Team and the Vice-Chair of the Team. The minutes of the meeting shall be kept at the NCN's Office and copy of the minutes shall be kept at the DFG's Office.

§ 11. Principles of proposal evaluation at the Team meetings

1. All proposals approved for merit-based evaluation shall be the subject of analysis and discussions during the Team meetings.
2. Each proposal shall be given a score derived from the mean average of the individual reviews by external reviewers.
3. The score shall not be binding upon the Team and shall be treated merely as a point of departure for the discussions on the final grade by the Expert Team.
4. A proposal's final grade shall be its position on the ranking list as agreed by the Team. The final grade of a proposal shall be based on the analysis of markings of individual criteria and discussion on the proposal as weighed against other proposals evaluated under the call.
5. The Team members shall refer to the reviews performed by the external reviewers. While settling the proposal's final grade, the Team may fully agree with the external reviewer's evaluation, partly agree with it, or disagree with it. Disagreement with the external reviewer's evaluation must be accounted for.
6. A proposal which has been given a score of zero by an agreed decision of the Expert Team in any of the criteria subject to evaluation or whose evaluation form contains a negative answer to any of the questions therein, shall not be recommended for funding.
7. If a common position cannot be found on the evaluation of the proposal, the Team shall make the decision by vote. The Team's decisions requiring voting shall be made by a simple majority vote.
8. The ranking lists must be approved by an absolute majority vote.
9. The Team may conditionally recommend one proposal for funding that is partly within the limit of funds earmarked for the call under individual disciplines or groups of disciplines.
10. The funding decision on the proposals referred to in Clause 9 shall be made by the NCN Director and DFG Joint Committee.
11. The Team does not have to disburse the total funds available and cannot recommend for funding proposals the funding of which would exceed the funds available, subject to Clause 9.

§ 12. Ranking list

1. The NCN Coordinator shall deliver the ranking list drafted by the Teams to the Director for his approval.
2. The DFG Coordinator shall deliver the ranking list drafted by the Team to the DFG Joint Committee.

§ 13.

The order shall come into force on the date of its signature.

NCN Director