

Supplementary regulations for the application, selection and funding of Dioscuri Centres of Scientific Excellence in Poland¹

Application for a Dioscuri Centre of Scientific Excellence

1. Before the formal call announcement, NCN invites all Polish universities and Polish research institutions to provide declarations of commitment as potential future Host Institutions in the framework of the Dioscuri Programme. A list of Polish universities and Polish research institutions that submitted expressions of interest is available on the NCN website. Applications with Host Institutions not included in this list are also welcome.
2. The applicant (leader of the proposed Dioscuri Centre) must submit all required application documents to MPG within the established application deadline via the application platform. Applications must be complete as specified in the call text. All application documents shall be written in English.

Evaluation Procedure

- a. The Dioscuri Programme is governed by a Scientific Committee (hereinafter referred to as 'Dioscuri Committee') which is responsible for the overall review and selection process for the establishment of Dioscuri Centres of Scientific Excellence.
- b. The Dioscuri Committee is composed of renowned scientists from European universities and European research institutions from outside Poland that have been nominated by the President of MPG in consultation with the Director of NCN. Furthermore, one renowned Polish scientist is member of the Dioscuri Committee in a consultative capacity.
- c. Applications are made up of a short research concept and a full research concept and are subject to a formal eligibility check and subsequently to peer review. The eligibility check is carried out by MPG and NCN.
- d. The review of all eligible applications is based solely on the scientific merit of the applicant and the quality of their research concept. Members of the Dioscuri Committee shall maintain objectivity of judgement and impartiality, apply uniform assessment criteria and avoid conflicts of interest.
- e. All decisions made by the Dioscuri Committee are binding collective decisions. The proceedings of the Dioscuri Committee shall remain confidential, individual feedback will not be provided.
- f. In a first stage, the Committee reviews all eligible application and selects up to around 15 applications based on short concepts.
- g. In the second stage, the remaining applications are subject to external peer review based on full concepts. The Dioscuri Committee subsequently selects up to around 6 applicants for interviews.
- h. In the third stage, applicants selected in the previous stage are invited for final interviews.
- i. Applicants selected in the third stage receive recommendations for the establishment of their DC from the Dioscuri Committee.
- j. All applicants are informed about the outcome of the Committee's decisions after every stage of the evaluation process by MPG.

¹ These regulations supplement the main document "Fourth Call for Dioscuri Centres of Scientific Excellence in Poland".

General Items for Review

1. A Dioscuri Centre (DC) goes beyond the scope of a project grant. It is built around a distinguished researcher position and is expected to become a lighthouse of scientific excellence according to international quality standards.
2. Bearing this in mind, the scientific quality of the leader of a DC and her/his ability to conduct innovative, internationally competitive research is the most important criterion for review.
3. Dioscuri Centres shall be scientifically ground breaking and flexible. They should take up innovative topics, follow a sustainable approach, and involve excellent researchers (the applicant as well as collaborating scientists).
4. The clear goal and the ability to build up and develop the Dioscuri Centre and to integrate it into the regional and international research landscape, including co-operation with the Partner from Germany, is indispensable.
5. The DC will be funded with up to € 325,000 p.a., while infrastructure and scientific equipment will be provided by the respective Host Institution. The leader of the DC will be encouraged to apply for additional funding from NCN and other Polish and European/international sources.

Negotiations

1. After the selection by the Scientific Committee, each designated leader of a DC and NCN representatives will negotiate specific conditions, e.g. provision of infrastructure, career perspectives etc. with the representatives of the respective Polish Host Institution.
2. Negotiations should be concluded within several months of the Committee's final decision. Operations of the DC should ideally start within less than a year after the funding decision. The precise starting date of the DC will be set during the negotiations.

Funding

1. The Dioscuri Programme in Poland is mutually funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and the Polish Ministry of Education and Science (MEiN).
2. The funds are transferred to the Host Institution on the basis of a written agreement. Before the signing of the agreement, the leader of the DC and the Host Institution shall provide an updated budget table including the starting date of the DC.
3. The rules for annual and final reporting requirements will be based on a written agreement.
4. The funding period is five years beginning from the date of the establishment of the respective Dioscuri Centre. Upon positive evaluation by the Scientific Committee and subject to the availability funding, the funding period may be extended once for another five years.

Partner from Germany / Advisory Board

1. Applicants shall designate a senior scientist from a German university or research institution as their Partner from Germany (a natural person, not an organization).
2. The Partner shall be well suited to advise on the scientific and structural development of the DC. Applicants are responsible for identifying and securing a Partner.
3. Joint activities with the Partner are eligible for funding within the Dioscuri Programme and might take various forms (e.g.: collaboration on research projects, exchange of PhD-students or post-docs, mutual research stays, joint organization of workshops/conferences etc.)
4. Each Dioscuri Centre is encouraged to expand this partnership tool and turn it into a Scientific Advisory Board. Regulations concerning the establishment of a Scientific Advisory Board will be provided together with the recommendations from the Dioscuri Committee.

Evaluation Form for External Reviewers

I. Review of the research concept

Is the topic ground-breaking and innovative, does it raise new and creative questions that go beyond the state of the art, in Poland as well as in international comparison?

Is the proposal dealing adequately with the proposed subject?

Is the proposal in line with the attached criteria for a Dioscuri Centre, i.e. a lighthouse of scientific excellence according to international quality standards? Does it follow an innovative and sustainable approach?

Is the proposed structure of the Centre appropriate?

Is the proposed Budget Plan reasonable and convincing?

Research Concept (4) outstanding (3) excellent (2) good (1) average

II. Assessment of the envisaged leader of the Dioscuri Centre

Is the applicant an outstanding research personality?

Scientific record of the applicant (4) outstanding (3) excellent (2) good (1) average

III. Are the following demands of the call met satisfactorily by the application

- | | | |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. stimulation of co-operation with partners in Germany | <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no |
| 2. stimulation of co-operation in the region | <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no |

IV. Concluding Remarks

Overall recommendation for funding

- I fully support this proposal for funding.
- I support this proposal with some reservations.
- I do not support this application.