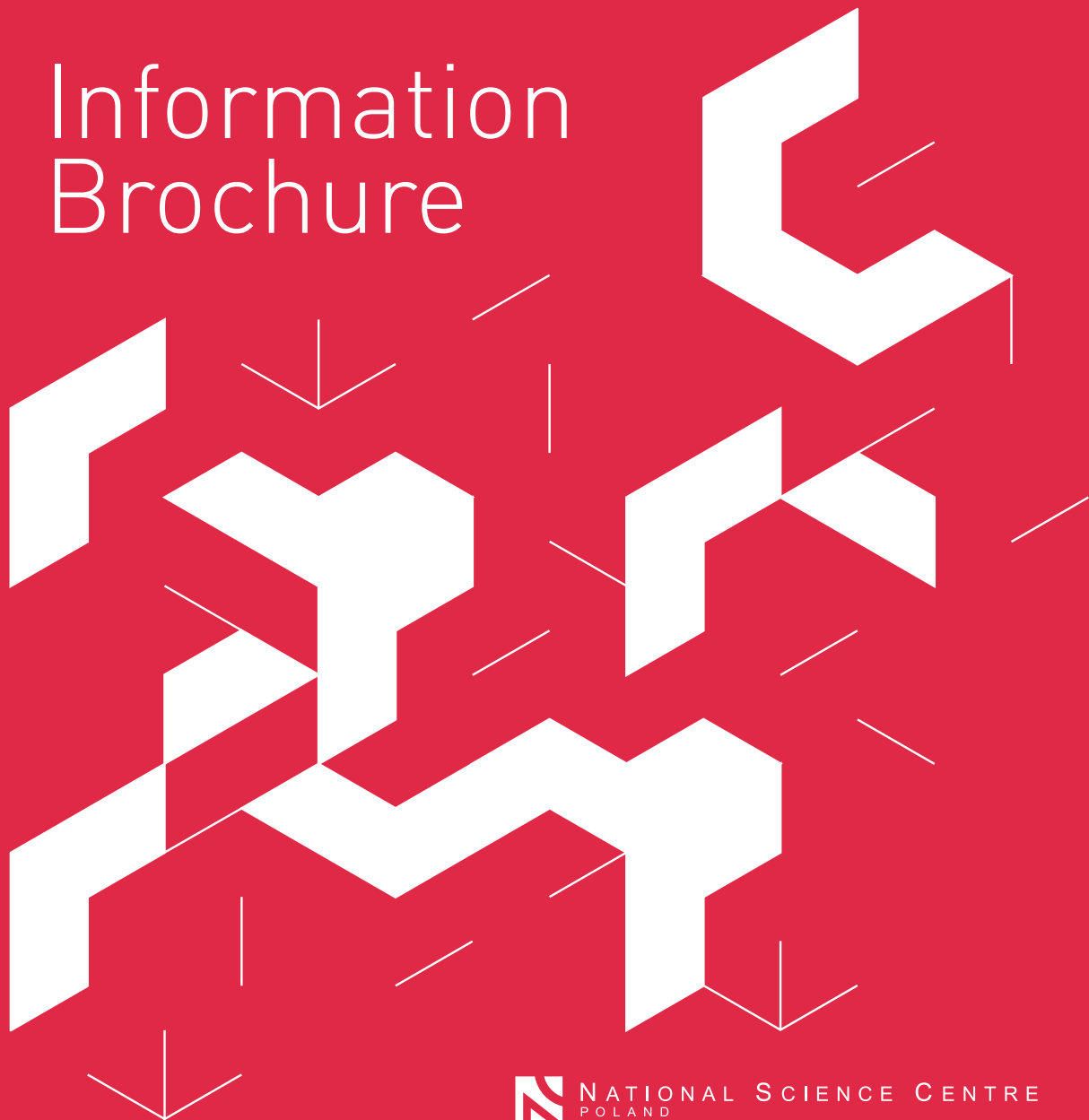


# Information Brochure



NATIONAL SCIENCE CENTRE  
POLAND



## Narodowe Centrum Nauki (National Science Centre)

ul. Twardowskiego 16  
30-312 Kraków, Poland  
phone: +48 12 341 90 03  
Email: [biuro@ncn.gov.pl](mailto:biuro@ncn.gov.pl)  
[www.ncn.gov.pl](http://www.ncn.gov.pl)

Facebook: @NarodoweCentrumNauki  
Instagram: @ncn\_gov\_pl  
LinkedIn: NCN National Science Centre  
X (ex-Twitter): @NCN\_PL  
YouTube: @ncngovpl

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# National Science Centre

The National Science Centre (NCN) is a government executive agency established to support basic research, i.e., experimental or theoretical work undertaken primarily to acquire new knowledge of the underlying foundations of phenomena and observable facts, without any direct commercial application or use in view. The mission of the NCN is to boost the quality and efficiency of Polish research thanks to a competitive grant system and to promote its growing importance on the international stage. Therefore, the NCN thus publishes regular calls for research projects and research activities. In 2023, it has a budget of almost PLN 1.4 billion slated to fund basic research.

The Act on the National Science Centre of 30 April 2010 came into force on 1 October 2010. The NCN officially started to operate on 4 March 2011 and the first calls were announced within the next three weeks. The NCN is supervised by the Minister of Education and Science and the calls are designed by a Council composed of twenty-four distinguished researchers. The Office of the NCN is managed by the Director.

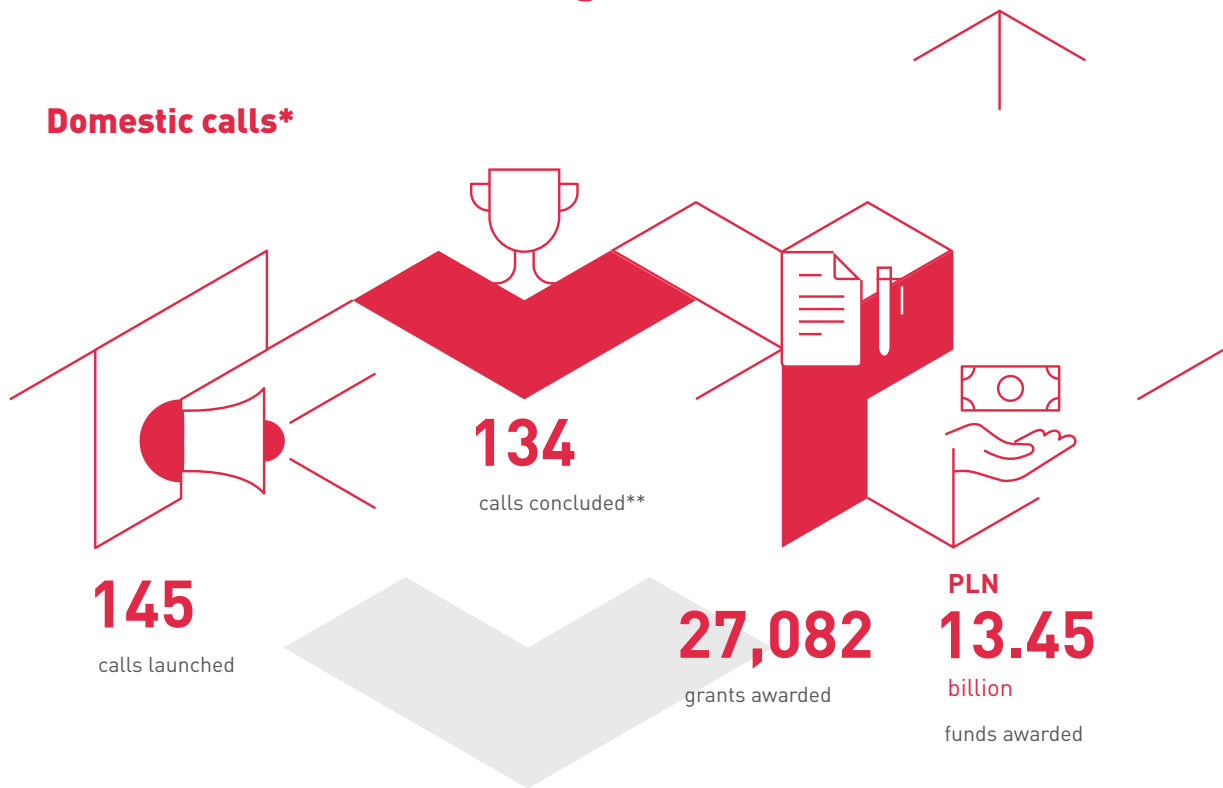
The National Science Centre also funds basic research in cooperation with foreign institutions that support science. It coordinates QuantERA I, QuantERA II and CHANSE programmes with the support of the EU funds under the Horizon 2020, as well as European Biodiversity Partnership (Biodiversa+) cofunded by the European Commission. Furthermore, the NCN operates the Basic Research Programme within the framework of the EEA and Norway Grants.



# The NCN in figures

MARCH 2011 – DECEMBER 2022

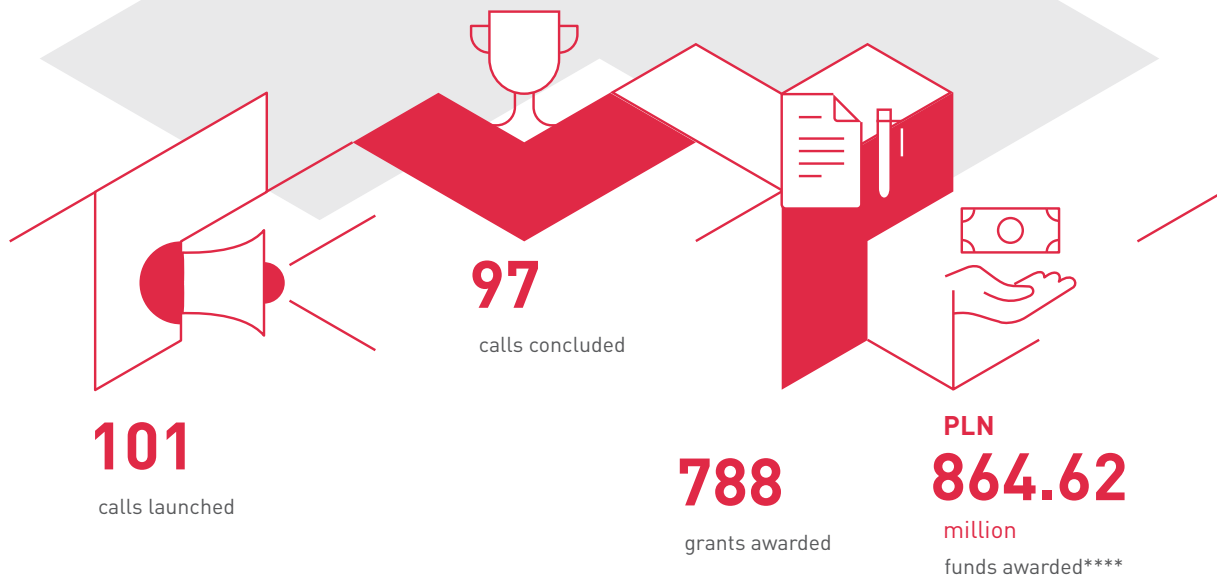
## Domestic calls\*



\* Information on domestic calls currently offered, suspended, the ARTIQ call and special scheme for Ukrainian researchers. The number and amount of funds includes grants awarded following an appeal, according to the state of affairs as at the end of 2022.

\*\* The figure does not include the TANGO calls concluded by the National Centre for Research and Development and calls launched with NAWA.

## International calls\*\*\*



\*\*\* The data corresponds to bilateral and multilateral calls organised within the framework of international cooperation, the POLONEZ and POLONEZ BIS calls co-funded within the „Horizon 2020” EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation under the „Marie Skłodowska-Curie” grant agreement No 665778, calls within the framework of the EEA and Norway Grants, calls launched jointly with the Polish National Agency for Academic Exchange (NAWA), Dioscuri and OPUS LAP calls.

\*\*\*\* The figure includes the contribution of the NCN, the funds provided by the European Commission and grants awarded under the Dioscuri call.

# ORGANISATION STRUCTURE



## The NCN Director

The Director manages the National Science Centre, supervises its tasks and financial management, and represents it to the outside world.

## The NCN Council

The Council of the National Science Centre is made up of twenty-four scholars from various disciplines, who define the priority areas of basic research in accordance with the state's development strategy, lay down the terms and conditions for calls for research proposals, allocate funding and publish calls for doctoral scholarships and postdoctoral fellowships. Furthermore, the Council appoints members of expert teams that evaluate research proposals.



## The NCN Coordinators

Coordinators organise the efforts of expert teams and conduct calls for research proposals, making sure that the peer review process is correct, impartial and fair. They must be at least PhD holders and are selected in open calls. Coordinators work in three research areas: Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, Physical Sciences and Engineering, and Life Sciences.

## The NCN Office

Made up of several divisions and more than ten teams, the NCN office is the administrative core of the Centre, responsible for delivering information to applicants, providing ongoing support for current calls and organising expert team meetings. The Office staff is also the first line of support to grant recipients who carry out the projects; it handles the process of signing grant agreements, oversees their implementation and initiates international funding cooperation.

# NCN Management



**ACTING DIRECTOR**  
**PROF. ZBIGNIEW BŁOCKI**

Professor at the Faculty of Mathematics and Computer Science of the Jagiellonian University since 1990. Prof. Błocki has spent several years abroad, developing his research career, e.g., in Sweden, Germany and the US, also as a Fulbright scholar, and delivered numerous lectures at research centres all over the world.

He was a member of the NCN Council between 2010 and 2015, and NCN Director between March 2015 and March 2023. Since November 2015, he has been a member of the Science Europe Governing Board, an association that brings together European research funding organisations.

He is a former head of the Institute of Mathematics at the Jagiellonian University and Vice Chair of the Executive Organising Committee of the 6<sup>th</sup> European Congress of Mathematics in Kraków in 2012. In 2010-2015, Prof. Błocki coordinated a research project as part of the International PhD Projects of the Foundation for Polish Science, carried out at the Jagiellonian University; he was also a principal investigator for the Ideas Plus programme.

He is the winner of the Stanisław Zaremba Prize of the Polish Mathematical Society (2007) and the Polish Prime Minister's Award for outstanding research achievements (2008). In 2014, he was awarded the "Jagiellonian Laurel" prize.





**CHAIR OF THE NCN COUNCIL  
PROF. ROBERT HASTEROK**

Biologist and molecular cytogeneticist. He is an expert in fluorescence using in situ hybridisation techniques to study plant genomes. His career has burgeoned during various stays in foreign research institutions. He is a co-author of over 100 publications in international scientific journals. He has supervised nine completed doctoral dissertations and has been a reviewer in promotion procedures in Poland and abroad.




Leader of the Plant Cytogenetics and Molecular Biology Group at the University of Silesia in Katowice. One of the founding members of the International Brachypodium Initiative; participant in international Brachypodium genome sequencing projects. Member of the Polish Academy of Sciences, Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences and foreign scientific societies. Principal investigator in NCN-funded research projects, chair of the expert panels of the National Science Centre and member of an expert panel of the European Research Area. A member of the NCN Council since 2020, and its President since December 2022. Recipient of the Barbacki National Scientific Award (2001), the Minister of Science and Higher Education Award for outstanding research achievements (2011) and the Gold Badge of Merit awarded by the University of Silesia in Katowice (2019).

# NCN calls

The National Science Centre (NCN) supports basic research conducted within the framework of research projects and research activities. Calls for proposals are open to all researchers irrespective of their age or experience. Many calls for proposals are also open to foreign researchers. The call documents are always available in English and only certain parts of the proposal form must be completed in Polish.

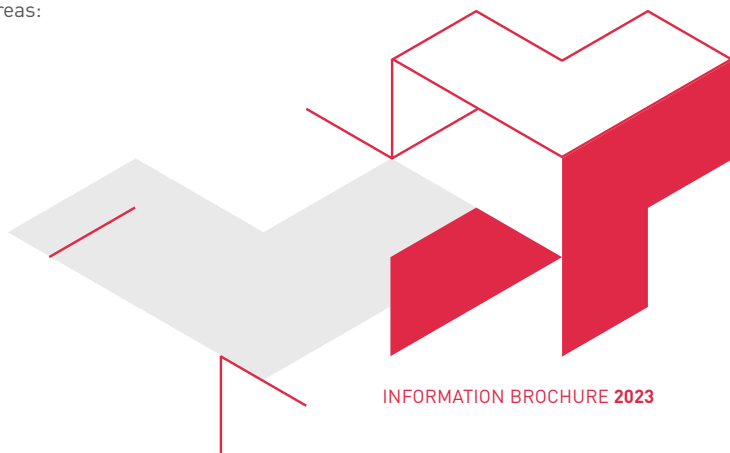
The call portfolio includes domestic calls, as well as international calls launched by the NCN in bilateral or multi-lateral cooperation with foreign research funding agencies and a number of multilateral programmes launched by international consortia and networks (e.g., ERA-NET) that include the National Science Centre as its member.

Proposals may be submitted in three research areas:

-  Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences
-  Physical Sciences and Engineering
-  Life Sciences

Researchers may submit proposals on behalf of their employing organisations (e.g., universities, institutes of the Polish Academy of Sciences, research institutes) or may apply individually. Most funding schemes provide resources for the purchase of research equipment, with the exception of large research infrastructure. Proposals must be drafted in accordance with the call guidelines, in Polish and English, and must be submitted to the NCN electronically via the OSF submission system before the submission deadline.

Funding is awarded to the best basic research projects conducted by principal investigators capable of demonstrating the required research experience and skills.



## DOMESTIC

### REGULAR

NCN-funded calls for research proposals and research activities, launched in accordance with the call schedule once or twice per year, targeted at various groups of researchers:



MINIATURA



SONATINA



SONATA



SONATA BIS



PRELUDIUM



PRELUDIUM BIS



MAESTRO



OPUS

### IN COOPERATION WITH THE POLISH NATIONAL AGENCY FOR ACADEMIC EXCHANGE, NAWA

- THE NAWA CHAIR
- THE POLISH RETURNS

## INTERNATIONAL

### BILATERAL

Calls launched in cooperation with foreign research funding institutions and organisations.



SHENG



DAINA



### WEAVE PROGRAMME

Calls for international research projects in all academic disciplines, launched by the NCN in collaboration with foreign research funding agencies pursuant to the Lead Agency Procedure (LAP):

- WEAVE-UNISONO
- OPUS + LAP/Weave

### MULTILATERAL

Calls for international research projects, funded from the EU Framework Programme, launched by the NCN in cooperation with foreign research funding agencies (e.g., ERA-NET Co-fund financed from the "Horizon 2020" EU Framework Programme).

# Domestic Calls



**NCN-funded calls for research proposals and research activities launched according to the call timeline once or twice per year, targeted at various groups of researchers.**

The terms and conditions of each programme may vary between different editions. The latest information on the calls is published on [www.ncn.gov.pl](http://www.ncn.gov.pl).



## MINIATURA

A call for research activities aimed at supporting researchers in applying for funding of their research projects to the NCN. The call is open to researchers with a PhD degree conferred within 12 years prior to the proposal submission date, who have not acted as the principal investigator in any research project and are not winning applicants of any NCN-funded call for doctoral scholarships or fellowships. Researchers applying for funding must be employed by the applicant pursuant to an employment contract on the proposal submission date.



## SONATA

A call for research projects carried out by researchers with a PhD degree. The objective of the call is to support principal investigators in innovative basic research, including the use of cutting-edge research equipment and/or methodology. The call is open to researchers who earned their PhD between 2 and 7 years prior to the proposal submission date.



## SONATINA

A call targeted at researchers who earned their PhD within 3 years prior to the proposal submission date. The grant includes full-time employment as a researcher and provides funds for the completion of a research project at the host institution.



## SONATA BIS

A call for research projects that aim to establish a new research team, carried out by researchers with a PhD or higher degree, who earned their PhD between 5 and 12 years prior to the proposal submission date. The call is open to outstanding early-stage researchers intending to establish their own research teams to conduct particularly innovative research projects.



## PRELUDIUM

A call for research projects carried out by researchers without a PhD degree. Projects funded under the PRELUDIUM scheme may take anywhere between one and three years to complete and are supervised by thesis supervisors or academic tutors. The subject of research does not have to be related to the applicant's doctoral dissertation.



## PRELUDIUM BIS

A call for research projects addressed at institutions operating doctoral schools. The objective of the call is to support PhD student education in doctoral schools and fund research projects carried out by PhD students as part of their doctoral dissertations. The principal investigator is the doctoral supervisor of the PhD dissertation.



## MAESTRO

A call targeted at experienced researchers intending to conduct pioneering research projects, often with an interdisciplinary perspective, which are essential for scientific progress, expand the current state of knowledge and may likely lead to significant scientific discoveries. The call is open to researchers with a PhD degree or higher, who have published at least 5 papers in renowned academic journals and coordinated at least two research projects selected in a call for proposals within 10 years prior to the proposal submission date.



## OPUS

A call for research proposals open to all researchers irrespective of research experience. The projects may be carried out by the principal investigator alone or by research teams including an appropriate number of assistant researchers.

In September 2023, we are launching the so-called OPUS LAP/Weave call for research projects carried out by research teams from Poland in cooperation with their partners from the Czech Republic, Austria, Slovenia, Switzerland, Germany, Luxembourg and Belgium - Flanders, whose tasks are funded by the partner agencies of the National Science Centre based on the recommendations of the latter in the capacity of lead agency in charge of the merit-based evaluation of proposals.



## CALLS LAUNCHED IN COOPERATION WITH THE POLISH NATIONAL AGENCY FOR ACADEMIC EXCHANGE

The National Science Centre organises programmes in cooperation with Polish research funding institutions.

The NCN cooperates with the Polish National Agency for Academic Exchange (NAWA) within the framework of the following schemes:

- the Polish Returns call targeted at Polish researchers working abroad, who wish to return to Poland and work in Polish research centres;
- the NAWA Chair programme allowing universities and research institutions to invite eminent specialists from their priority fields.

Under the schemes, the NAWA covers the costs of employment of researchers and project team members, their adaptation, workplace organisation and relocation to Poland. The NCN funds the so-called research components carried out in the first 18 months from the project start date. The funding covers basic research that can be continued within the framework of larger research projects.

Under the NCN's PRELUDIUM BIS call targeted at experienced researchers planning to take PhD students under their wing, the NAWA covers the cost of doctoral scholarships.

## NCN FOR UKRAINIAN RESEARCHERS

The National Science Centre supports researchers fleeing the war in Ukraine. Shortly after the war broke out, we expressed our solidarity with the Ukrainian nation and in March 2022, we launched a special scheme allowing researchers seeking shelter in Poland to continue research. We have funded a one-year stay for 51 Ukrainian researchers in the Polish research institutions, providing funds for their research and salaries. The scheme was commissioned by the Polish Ministry of Education and Science.

In July 2022, we launched a special scholarship programme to support Ukrainian students and researchers by allowing them to continue MSc and PhD studies, work on their MSc theses and PhD dissertations or pursue any other education at Polish research institutions. Allocation for the programme is from the bilateral fund of the Basic Research Programme under the 3rd edition of the EEA and Norway Grants 2014-2021.

Apart from that, Ukrainian researchers can also seek employment in projects funded by the National Science Centre and may submit proposals to our regular calls for proposals.

# INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION



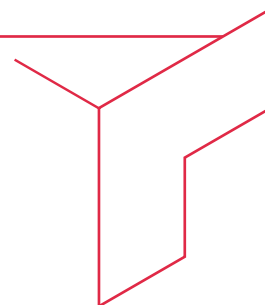
Ever since its inception, the National Science Centre has collaborated with foreign research funding organisations to launch joint calls for international proposals. The National Science Centre also cooperates with other agencies, with the aim of developing European research policy by participating in the operations of Science Europe or Coordination and Support Actions.

Each year, the National Science Centre launches multilateral calls carried out jointly with foreign research funding agencies under multilateral networks to support particular academic disciplines. The National Science Centre is a programme coordinator of QuantERA in the field of Quantum Technologies and CHANSE in the field of Humanities and Social Sciences. The NCN also operates the POLONEZ BIS scheme to support incoming researchers with the support of Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions COFUND (MSCA).



## International networks engaging the National Science Centre

Name	Number of organisations	Number of countries	Research area supported by the network
<b>Biodiversa+</b>	74	36	Conservation and sustainable management of biodiversity
<b>CHANSE</b>	27	24	Humanities and Social Sciences with a special focus on social and cultural dynamics in the digital age
<b>CHIST-ERA</b>	32	28	Information and communication science and technologies
<b>ForestValue</b>	31	19	Research, development and innovation in the forest-based sector
<b>HERA</b>	26	25	Establishing the humanities in the European Research Area, and funding and coordinating transnational research projects in this area
<b>JPIAMR</b>	31	29	Antimicrobial resistance
<b>JPI Urban Europe</b>	25	18	Interdisciplinary research projects responding to the challenges of modern cities and urban areas
<b>JPND</b>	29	24	Research aimed at finding causes, developing cures and identifying appropriate ways to care for those with neurodegenerative diseases
<b>M-ERA.NET</b>	49	35	Materials science and engineering, low carbon energy technologies and materials for future batteries technologies supporting the European Green Deal
<b>NORFACE</b>	25	19	Social sciences (migration, future of the welfare state, social inequalities, etc.)
<b>QuantERA</b>	39	31	Quantum technologies
<b>Solar-Driven Chemistry</b>	6	6	Solar-driven chemistry
<b>Trans-Atlantic Platform (T-AP)</b>	18	13	Humanities and Social Sciences



## INTERNATIONAL NETWORKS COORDINATED BY THE NATIONAL SCIENCE CENTRE



QuantERA is a quantum technologies programme coordinated by the National Science Centre that brings together 39 research funding agencies from 31 countries. It includes two projects: QuantERA I and QuantERA II and is steered by one of the largest networks involved in QT development in the world. In addition to launching calls for research projects performed by international consortia, the purposes of the QuantERA programme include:

- fostering international collaboration between research funding agencies operating in the area of QT;
- mapping of public policies in QT in Europe;
- cooperating with the Quantum Technologies Flagship initiative of the European Commission;
- actions to promote equal treatment of men and women under the programme and in research;
- dissemination of scientific excellence and ensuring wider participation.

QuantERA programme has a total budget of EUR 127 mln, of which EUR 26.5 mln is paid by the European Commission within the EU Framework Programme Horizon 2020. 77 projects were recommended for funding under the calls launched in 2017, 2019 and 2021. The last call was launched in January 2023 and will be concluded in December.



The Collaboration of Humanities and Social Sciences in Europe (CHANSE) is an ERA-Net Cofund programme supporting research in the area of Humanities and Social Sciences. Coordinated by the National Science Centre, the programme is a joint initiative of 27 research funding agencies from 24 European countries. CHANSE's goal is to finance high-quality international research projects and inspire collaboration between researchers and various stakeholder groups, e.g., NGOs, cultural institutions, legislators, policy makers, schools, etc.

In 2023, CHANSE will launch a new call for international research projects in cooperation with the HERA and NORFACE networks: HERA Crisis (Perspectives from the humanities); NORFACE (Enhancing well-being for the future).

The CHANSE programme is a result of cooperation between the HERA and NORFACE networks supporting research in Humanities and Social Sciences. EUR 10 mln in the programme budget is co-financed by the EU Horizon 2020 Framework Programme.

## BIODIVERSA+ EUROPEAN BIODIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP

The NCN is the national coordinator of the European Biodiversity Partnership: Rescuing Biodiversity to Safeguard Life on Earth (Biodiversa+). It is a European platform for national and regional research and innovation programmes aimed at protecting and enhancing biodiversity. Biodiversa+, co-financed by the European Commission, aims to connect science, policy and practice for transformative changes. It is part of the European Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 and brings together 74 research funding agencies and environmental protection actors from 37 European and associated countries.

Biodiversa+ is intending to launch 6 calls for international research projects in the area of biodiversity protection. 2 calls have been launched to date: BiodivProtect: Supporting the protection of biodiversity and ecosystems across land and BiodivMon: Improved transnational monitoring of biodiversity and ecosystem change for science and society. The next call for proposals will be launched in September 2023.

In addition to the calls for research projects, the Partnership has set ambitious goals and focuses, in particular, on:

- forecasting activities and identifying problems related to biodiversity, dynamics and trends of changes and factors stimulating such changes;
- ensuring efficient science-based support for policy-making and implementation in Europe;

- strengthening the relevance and impact of pan-European research on biodiversity in a global context;
- creating an online interactive database of research infrastructure and online database of R&D projects in the area of biodiversity;
- building capacity of research and innovation stakeholders and increasing the social impact of R&D programmes and projects;
- supporting researchers in facing open access challenges; and
- measures aimed at increasing the transfer of knowledge.

Biodiversa+, with the total budget of EUR 800 mln, will be carried out over a period of 7 years.

## Multilateral calls in 2023: launched and expected

Area	Programme	Subject-matter	Call for proposals	Pre-proposal submission deadline	Full proposal submission deadline
INTERDISCIPLINARY	EN-UTC (Call 2023, JPI Urban Europe)	<i>Building transformation capacity through arts and design: Unlocking the full potential for urban transitions (BTC):</i> 1. <i>Experimentation and co-creation for a beautiful and sustainable urban future</i> 2. <i>Transformation to sustainable cities / urban transformation</i> 3. <i>Designing Inclusive, Liveable and Green Neighbourhoods</i>	22 February	-	25 April
NZ – Life Sciences	JPcofuND2 (JPND network, Call 2023)	<i>Large scale analysis of OMICS data for drug-target finding in neurodegenerative diseases</i>	4 January	7 March	27 June
	JPIAMR-ACTION (JPI AMR network, Call 2023)	<i>Development of innovative strategies, tools, technologies, and methods for diagnostics and surveillance of antimicrobial resistance (DISTOMOS)</i>	16 January	7 March	4 July
	JPI HDHL	<i>New food resources and technologies to improve public health and food security (FOODRETEC)</i>	21 February	-	21 April
	ForestValue	<i>Innovating forest-based bioeconomy</i>	2 May	-	1 September
	BiodivNBS (Biodiversa+ partnership)	<i>Better knowledge to develop, deploy and assess nature-based solutions</i>	September	November	April 2024
ST – Physical Sciences and Engineering	CHIST-ERA IV (Call 2023)	<i>Sustainable advanced materials for energy Innovative surfaces, coatings and interfaces High performance composites Functional materials Advanced materials and technologies for health applications Next generation materials for advance electronics</i>	October	-	February 2024
	M-ERA.NET 3 (Call 2023)	<i>Quantum Phenomena and Resources; Applied Quantum Science.</i>	1 March	16 May	21 November
	QuantERA II (Call 2023)	<i>HERA Crisis – Perspectives from the Humanities; NORFACE Enhancing Well-being for the Future</i>	26 January	-	11 May
HS – Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences	CHANSE (Call 2023)	<i>HERA Crisis – Perspectives from the Humanities; NORFACE Enhancing Well-being for the Future</i>	26 May	21 September	March 2024
	T-AP (GDT Call 2023)	<i>Governance, Democracy, Trust (GDT)</i>	June	-	November

## WEAVE COOPERATION PURSUANT TO THE LEAD AGENCY PROCEDURE

The National Science Centre participates in the programmes carried out pursuant to the Lead Agency Procedure (LAP) based on domestic calls launched by each participating institution in order to evaluate international research projects. Funding proposals for bilateral or trilateral research projects in all academic disciplines are subject to merit-based evaluation by the lead agency, i.e., the agency selected in the call and competent for one of the research teams participating in the call. Proposals are evaluated alongside other proposals submitted to the call, including domestic ones.



Under the Weave programme, the National Science Centre cooperates with partner agencies from Austria (Austrian Science Fund, FWF), the Czech Republic (Czech Science Foundation, GACR), Slovenia (Slovenian Research Agency, ARRS), Switzerland (Swiss National Science Foundation, SNSF), Germany (German Research Foundation, DFG), Luxembourg (Luxembourg National Research Fund, FNR) and Belgium-Flanders (Research Foundation – Flanders, FWO). The Weave programme was created with the support of Science Europe.

Bilateral or trilateral proposals in all academic disciplines can be submitted to the NCN under two calls within the framework of the Weave Programme, depending on the

institution in the capacity of lead agency (foreign partner institution or NCN):

- **Weave-UNISONO** for NCN proposals, for which joint proposals will be submitted to and evaluated by the foreign partner institutions acting as the Lead Agency (FWF, GACR, ARRS, SNSF, DFG, FNR or FWO); the call was announced on 4 January 2021;
- **OPUS**, launched in the autumn, for proposals for research projects carried out within the Weave cooperation, and evaluated by the NCN as the Lead Agency. OPUS 26 + LAP/Weave will be launched on 15 September 2023.

## BILATERAL COOPERATION

In December 2023, the third edition of the DAINA call for Polish and Lithuanian research projects will be launched in collaboration with the Research Council of Lithuania (LMT). The call will cover all academic disciplines.



## CALLS FOR PROPOSALS FUNDED UNDER THE EEA AND NORWAY GRANTS 2014-2021

Three calls were launched in the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of the Basic Research Programme within the framework of the EEA and Norway Grants:



**GRIEG** – call for proposals for Polish-Norwegian research projects in all academic disciplines, with a particular focus on polar research and social sciences.



**IdeaLab** – innovative, interdisciplinary call operated according to the ‘sandpit’ method by research teams from Poland, Norway, Iceland and Lichtenstein for ground-breaking research projects addressing important scientific, geopolitical, social and economic challenges.



**POLS** – call for proposals supporting researcher mobility with small grants, targeting foreign researchers wishing to carry out research in Poland.

Under the GRIEG call, 35 Polish-Norwegian research projects received funding of over PLN 198 mln. 3 projects were recommended for funding of PLN 17.5 mln under the IdeaLab call and 37 projects received funding of PLN 28 mln under the POLS call.

Initiated by the National Science Centre as the Basic Programme operator, a scholarship programme was launched in July 2022, addressed at Ukrainian students and researchers without a PhD degree. The programme was funded from the resources of the bilateral cooperation fund, of which PLN 2.18 mln was designated for scholarships for 40 Ukrainian students and early-stage researchers.

In 2022, EUR 1.27 mln was awarded from the EEA Financial Mechanism for the predefined polar programme CRIOS (Cryosphere Integrated Observatory Network on Svalbard).










## DIOSCURI

In collaboration with the German Max Planck Society (MPG), the National Science Centre has devised the DIOSCURI programme to support the development of Centres of Scientific Excellence in Poland. In four editions of the call, eight Dioscuri Centres were established at Polish host institutions specialising in various academic disciplines. Each new Dioscuri Centre cooperates with a German research partner and is funded by the National Science Centre with resources from the Polish Ministry of Education and Science and the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research. Leaders of the Dioscuri Centres form new research teams in host institutions and raise funds for research conducted at their Centres.

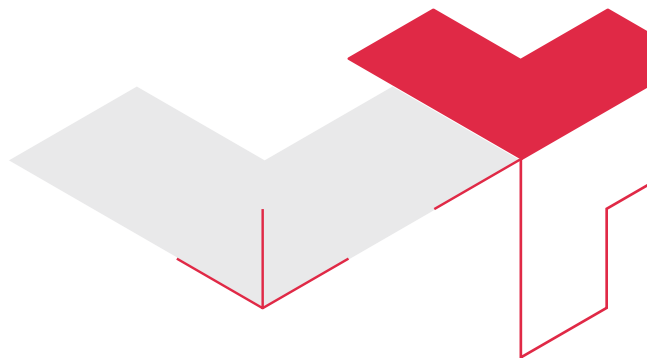


Funded under the „Horizon 2020” EU Framework Programme for Research and Innovation: CHIST-ERA IV: Grant Agreement No 857925; JPCofuND2: Grant Agreement No 825664; CHANSE: Grant Agreement No 101004509; EN-UAC: Grant Agreement No 875022; EN-UTC: Grant Agreement No 101003758; JPIAMR-ACTION: Grant Agreement No 963864; M-ERA.NET 3: Grant Agreement No 958174; QuantERA II: Grant Agreement No 101017733; POLONEZ BIS: Grant Agreement No 945339.

# Timeline of 2023 domestic and international calls: bilateral and based on the Lead Agency Procedure

Funding scheme	Submission start date	Submission deadline	Results (at the latest)
<b>Weave-UNISONO</b>	continuous call, in line with partner agencies call timelines		depends on the time when partner agencies publish results
 <b>OPUS 25 PRELUDIUM 22</b>	15 March	15 June	December
 <b>SONATA BIS 13</b>  <b>MAESTRO 15</b>  <b>PRELUDIUM BIS 5</b>	15 June	15 September	March 2024 PRELUDIUM BIS 5 – February 2024
 <b>OPUS 26 + LAP/Weave</b>  <b>SONATA 19</b>	15 September	15 December	OPUS 26, SONATA 19 – June 2024 Weave – depends on the time when partner agencies accept evaluation results, November 2024 at latest
 <b>SONATINA 8</b>  <b>DAINA 3</b>	15 December	15 March 2024	SONATINA 8 – September 2024 DAINA 3 – November 2024
 <b>MINIATURA 7</b>	ongoing call, open between 1 February and 31 July		

# NCN Experts



NCN experts specialise in their respective fields and are engaged in reliable, comprehensive and impartial evaluation of proposals submitted to NCN calls and reports on the implementation of NCN grants pursuant to the applicable rules and regulations adopted by the NCN Council. NCN experts must use their skills, experience and knowledge in any actions and evaluations they carry out.

There are three categories of NCN experts:

1. **expert team members**, i.e., a group of experts selected by the NCN Council from among prominent researchers and appointed by the NCN Director to evaluate proposals in a given discipline or groups of disciplines. They evaluate proposals at the first stage of evaluation, discuss their joint reviews of each proposal at meetings and jointly decide on the future of the proposals, e.g., whether or not a proposal will be recommended for funding,
2. **external experts**, i.e., experts performing individual reviews at the second stage of evaluation,
3. **members who are not team members**, i.e., experts evaluating the reports on the implementation of grants awarded by the NCN.

In 2022, 2,136 expert team members were appointed who reviewed a total number of almost 10 thousand proposals at the first stage of evaluation. Almost 10 thousand external experts participated in the second stage of evaluation, delivering over 11 thousand reviews. More than 96% of them were foreign experts, who reviewed 10,700 proposals.

NCN experts must be driven by actions aimed at promoting the development of Polish science and support research that deserves promotion and financial support within their competencies. They perform their tasks in compliance with strict confidentiality provisions as regards the evaluation procedure, evaluation alone as well as evaluators. They must adhere to the ethical rules adopted by the NCN Council.



# Proposal evaluation procedure

The objective of the National Science Centre is to grant funding to top research projects selected through a two-stage peer review process. The NCN Council generally reviews, in carefully considered proportion, both the quality of the project as such, and the achievements of the researchers involved.

The review procedure begins with an eligibility check performed by NCN Coordinators, which involves checking the completeness and correctness of the submission. The proposals then undergo a two-stage merit-based evaluation by dedicated expert teams.

## STAGE 1

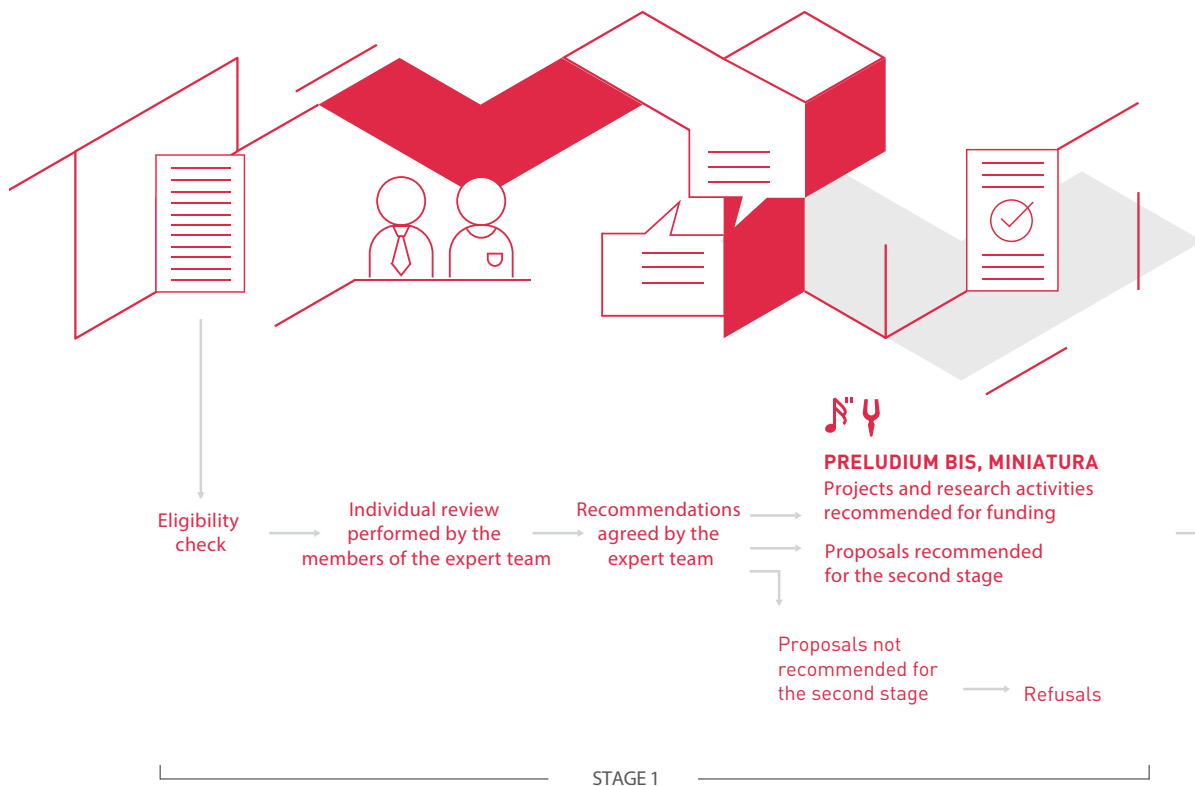
The proposals are first assessed by experts working independently. Individual reviews serve as a point of departure for debate during the first panel session. The decision to reject or approve the proposal is taken collectively by the team as a whole. Subsequently, the members prepare a shortlist of projects admitted to stage two or a list of projects recommended for funding in MINIATURA or PRELUDIUM BIS calls (a single stage merit-based evaluation).

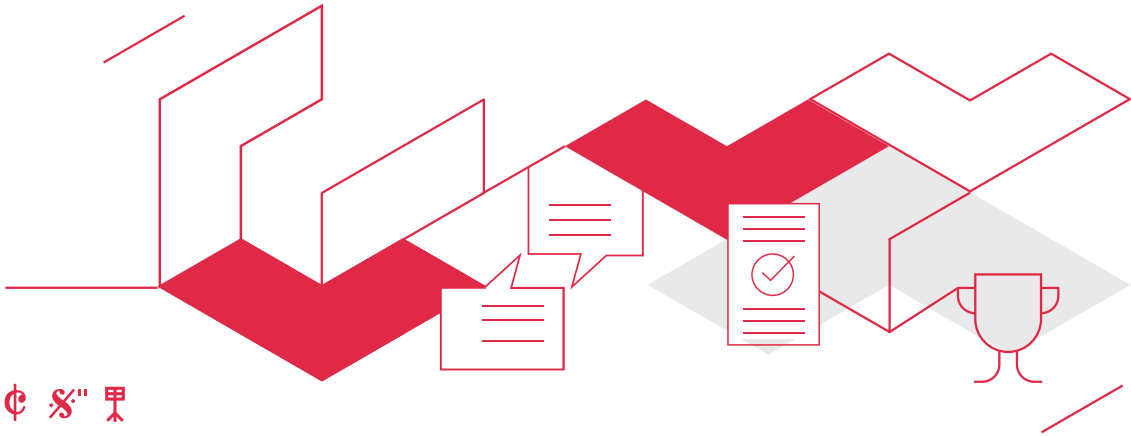
## STAGE 2

Stage two may be conducted in one of two ways, depending on the type of call. Proposals submitted to the OPUS, PRELUDIUM and SONATA calls are evaluated by at least two, often foreign, experts (reviewers), working independently, whose reviews are later discussed by the expert team during the second panel session. External experts are nominated by NCN coordinators, based on the recommendations of team members. The second stage of the review process in the SONATINA, SONATA BIS and MAESTRO calls includes an interview with the principal investigator.

The procedure scheme presented on the following pages applies to most domestic calls from the NCN portfolio. Proposals in international calls are assessed based on separate principles described in dedicated call documents.

# PROPOSAL EVALUATION DIAGRAM





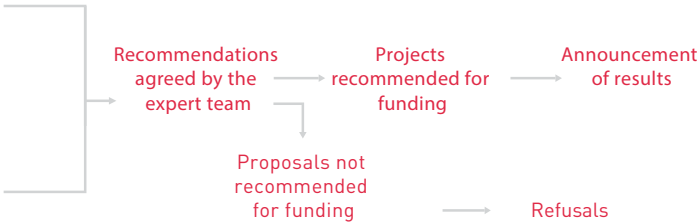
**SONATINA, SONATA BIS,  
MAESTRO**

Evaluation by reviewers and interview  
with the principal investigator



**OPUS, PRELUDIUM, SONATA**

Evaluation by reviewers



STAGE 2

# Early-stage researchers

One of the priorities of the National Science Centre is to support the growth of early-stage researchers who have not yet earned their PhD or have done so within the last 7 years. The PRELUDIUM, PRELUDIUM BIS, SONATINA, SONATA and ETIUDA calls, under which they do not need to compete against more experienced researchers, are specifically designed for this group. In 2011-2022, a total of 63 calls addressed to early-stage researchers was announced.

NCN supports the development of early-stage researchers by funding their research projects. In NCN calls\* concluded in 2022:

38%

of the total funding awarded went to projects led by early-stage researchers;

52%

of all proposals were proposals submitted to calls addressed to early-stage researchers and to other NCN calls where principal investigators met the definition of an early-stage researcher;

56%

of projects recommended for funding were coordinated by early-stage researchers.

\* Due to lack of data, the estimate does not include the TANGO call, calls launched with the NAWA, as well as the EXPRESS CALL TO FUND RESEARCH ON COVID-19.

# 2022 NCN award



The NCN Award is a distinction granted to researchers up to 40 years of age for outstanding achievements in basic research, documented with publications affiliated with Polish research institutions. The award was founded by the Council of the National Science Centre in February 2013 and is bestowed by the NCN Director and Council in three research areas: Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences; Life Sciences; and Physical Sciences and Engineering.

The NCN Award has been awarded ten times. The 2022 NCN Award ceremony was held on 12 October 2022 at the Gallery of 19th-Century Polish Art in the Sukiennice, the branch of the National Museum in Kraków.



Arts, Humanities  
and Social Sciences



Physical Sciences  
and Engineering



Life Sciences

# NCN Award 2022 Laureates



**ARTS, HUMANITIES  
AND SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**Dr hab. Karolina  
Safarzyńska**

*Professor at the Faculty of Economic  
Science, University of Warsaw*

**Scientific achievement:**

innovative theoretical models allowing to study the impact of limited rationality, preference diversity, and social interactions on climate policies.



## LIFE SCIENCES

### Dr hab. Michał Bogdziewicz

*Professor at the Faculty of Biology,  
Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań*

**Scientific achievement:**

ground-breaking research into the ecology of tree reproduction within the context of climate change.



## PHYSICAL SCIENCES AND ENGINEERING

### Dr hab. Piotr Wciśło

*Professor at the Faculty of Physics, Astronomy  
and Informatics, Nicolaus Copernicus  
University in Toruń*

**Scientific achievement:**

developing a new method of searching for dark matter, using optical atomic clocks and relying on high-precision laser spectroscopy to test quantum theory and look for a new physics beyond the standard model.



# RESEARCH STORY







# PERCEPTION OF THE EUROPEAN BISON AND THE PRIMEVAL FOREST IN THE 18<sup>TH</sup> AND 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURIES

**Principal Investigator:**

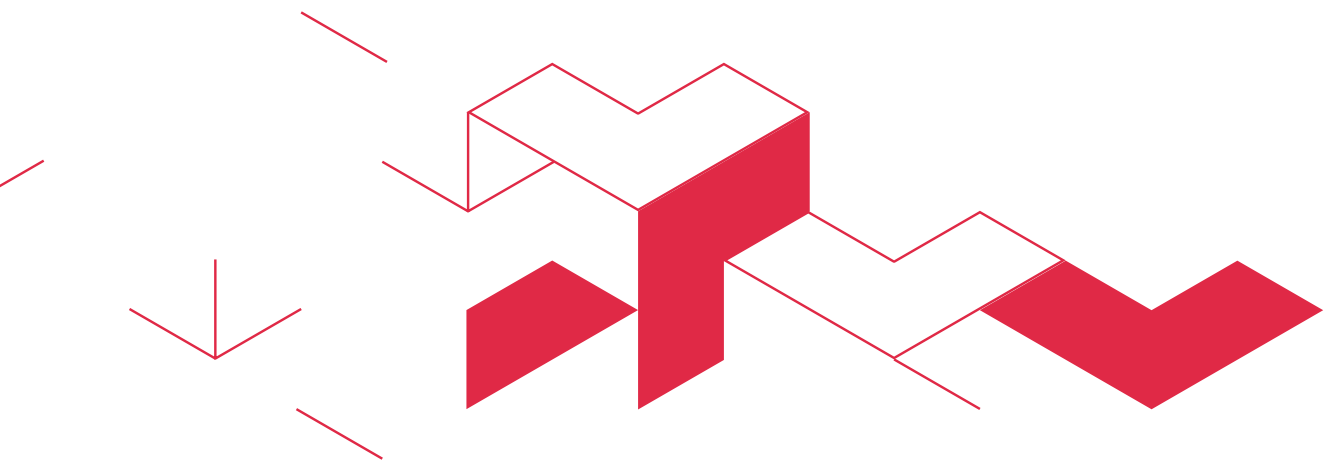
**Dr hab. Tomasz Samojlik**, the Mammal Research Institute of the Polish Academy of Sciences

**Project title:** Perception of the European bison and the primeval forest in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries: the shared cultural and natural heritage of Poland and Lithuania

**Funding scheme:**

DAINA 1, announced on 15 September 2017

**Panel:** HS3



Current debates on environmental protection and the treatment of high natural value forests in Europe often invoke the concept of a primeval forest. Different interpretations of this idea are frequently used to justify the intensive exploitation of areas that are not considered to be virgin, natural or primeval. Our contemporary idea of the primeval forest, however, is a product of several centuries of evolution, in which an important role was played by the interest taken by the European scientific and cultural community in the Białowieża Forest and the European bison in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

The purpose of this international project (with principal investigators based in Poland and Lithuania, and contractors in France and Russia) was to chart the evolution of the idea of a primeval forest and trace the perception of the Białowieża Forest and the European bison in European culture and science in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Archival and museum research, as well

as literature surveys, carried out in Poland and beyond, allowed us to explore a variety of different sources (archival documents, research papers and popular science publications, hunting press releases, museum exhibits, publications, artworks).

The idea of a primeval or virgin forest dates back to a debate on the destruction of forests in the 18<sup>th</sup> century in France. At the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the concept made it into the vocabulary of German Romanticism, which associated it with the roots of German exceptionalism. Concepts such as “primeval forest”, “virgin forest” and “natural forest”, however, long had no clear definition, let alone a designate. The designate only appeared later, following the “rediscovery” of Lithuanian forests, and especially the Białowieża Forest, at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Targeted at scientists and the general public alike, descriptions of the Białowieża Forest either directly or indirectly referred to it as “primeval”, although it was

not usually taken to mean it was completely untouched by man. The perception of Białowieża also changed over time; first dominated by folk beliefs, it was later supplemented by the reports of travellers who had traversed the “Lithuanian forests” (a shorthand for forests that were wild, vast and, most importantly, not exploited by man), only to become the subject of scientific research in the strict sense at the turn of the 18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup> centuries.

The Białowieża Forest largely owed its high-profile status to its last lowland population of the European bison. The recognition of the exceptional nature of this species was a complex process, which we traced on the basis of selected visual depictions created from the 16<sup>th</sup> to the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. The growing number of available illustrations of the European bison, the growth of our knowledge about the species and the wide distribution of bison exhibits in European museums all contributed to the success of the campaign to save this iconic species after its extinction in 1919.

Discussions about the primeval forest and European bison also helped raise awareness of Polish and Lithuanian nature and culture in Western Europe. The debates were not limited to academic papers, but pervaded the culture at large, making appearances in literature, poetry, theatre, painting and later also in photography and film. The subject thus became an important element in the dissemination of natural knowledge among the general public throughout Europe.

### Dr hab. Tomasz Samojlik

He conducts interdisciplinary research in the field of natural history, focusing on historical changes in human interactions with the natural environment. He takes a particular interest in the human relationship with forests and wild animals, as well as the human role in the preservation and transformation of the Białowieża Forest. He has authored 60 books and popular science comic books that disseminate natural science and knowledge among children and young adults.





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PERFORMING FOR POLISH RESEARCH

**2023**