

“Beethoven CLASSIC 4”: Polish-German Funding Initiative in the Humanities and Social Sciences
Call for proposals 2020-2021

1. Introduction

In order to strengthen international academic cooperation, wishing to fund high quality scientific research within their own countries, and conscious that some of the best research can be delivered by working with the best researchers internationally, NCN and DFG are announcing the fourth call for proposals within the joint funding scheme “Beethoven”. The initiative’s aim is to provide funding for integrated Polish-German research projects of outstanding scientific quality. “Beethoven CLASSIC 4” is the continuation of a successful funding initiative which was first launched in 2014.

The joint projects must be collaborative and conducted jointly by Polish and German teams, each led by a respective Principal Investigator. Projects must have, therefore, well-defined joint working programmes demonstrating clearly the added value of international collaboration. It is expected that each partner contributes substantially to the common project; this includes taking organisational responsibilities. The division of responsibilities should also be reflected in the amount of funds requested by each partner. Only proposals involving [basic research](#)¹ (knowledge-oriented research) may be submitted. The partner agencies will conduct a joint peer review and selection process. Funding will be distributed according to the funding rules of each individual agency.

Parallel to the “Beethoven CLASSIC 4” call, Polish-German joint proposals in life sciences, physical sciences and engineering will be accepted within the NCN OPUS scheme and will be administered in accordance with the principles of the Lead Agency Procedure (OPUS LAP). NCN will act as the lead agency, i.e. assessment of all applications will be made by the NCN according to its rules for the OPUS scheme. For transdisciplinary projects, applicants need to decide which call matches their proposal best. As a general rule proposals submitted to “Beethoven CLASSIC 4” cannot be shifted to OPUS LAP and vice versa².

¹ Basic research (knowledge oriented research) shall mean experimental or theoretical work undertaken primarily to acquire new knowledge of the underlying foundations of phenomena and observable facts, without any particular commercial application or use in view.

² Please note that proposals in human/social geography which have a clear humanities and social sciences focus must be submitted to Beethoven CLASSIC 4.

2. Disciplines covered

Researchers are invited to submit proposals in the following disciplines:

- All Humanities disciplines
- All Social Sciences disciplines³

Applicants who are uncertain of whether their proposal would be eligible should contact the relevant agency for clarification.

3. Eligibility

- All projects must focus on **substantive basic research and feature an integrated work programme**. Scientific infrastructure or networking activities can only be funded within projects with a substantive research focus. Purchase of the infrastructure and research equipment cannot be the main aim of the project. As stand-alone projects, infrastructure or networking projects are not eligible for funding and will be rejected.
- **All budget items must conform to the national rules** relevant for each applicant. Applicants must note that NCN and DFG retain the right to reject proposals which fail to comply with the requirements set out in the guidelines published by both agencies. If a proposal is deemed ineligible by one national agency, the joint project will also be rejected by the other agency.
- Grants that are considered state aid will be eligible on the Polish side.
- If an **application has been submitted to any other call** or funding scheme of NCN, DFG or any other funding agency, this must be clearly stated in the proposal. Please also check the respective national agency's rules regarding submission of a project to more than one scheme.
- Joint proposals (consisting of Joint Project Description and CVs of the Principal Investigators and Co-Investigators together with publication lists) must be **written in English**.
- Joint Polish-German research projects may be funded **for a period of either 24 or 36 months**.

³ **DFG**: Proposals are accepted in subjects 101-113. Proposals in the subject 317-02 are accepted if they have a clear humanities and social sciences focus.

NCN: Proposals are accepted in subjects covered by the panels: HS1, HS2, HS3, HS4, HS5, HS6.

- Research teams that are carrying out or have carried out a research project in “Beethoven 1, 2 or 3” can apply for funding within Beethoven CLASSIC 4.

4. Applicants

Each joint research project must involve a Polish and a German research team. Each team must be led by one Principal Investigator (PI).

- The **DFG’s eligibility rules** can be found in the ‘Guidelines Research Grants Programme’ (DFG form 50.01):

http://www.dfg.de/formulare/50_01/50_01_en.pdf

Cooperation with non-university research institutes: German researchers from non-university research institutions who have to fulfil their duty to cooperate (Kooperationspflicht) may only submit proposals in cooperation with a partner from a German university. The duty to cooperate is not considered fulfilled if there is only cooperation with a Polish university partner. Please see the ‘Guidelines on the Duty to Cooperate’ (DFG form 55.01)”

http://www.dfg.de/formulare/55_01/55_01_en.pdf

- The NCN’s eligibility rules can be found in the resolution No 98/2020 of Council of NCN of 14/09/2020.
The Polish PI must have at least a PhD degree when submitting a proposal.

Eligible Host Institutions in Poland: NCN proposals may be submitted by entities referred to in Article 27 (1) of the NCN Act, hereinafter referred to as the “applicants” of the NCN Act.

5. Budget and eligible costs

General requirements:

- All costs must be eligible according to the national eligibility requirements.
- The EUR budgets of the German and Polish teams, together with a detailed justification of all requested costs, must be included in the Joint Project Description (for this purpose, German applicants should fill out sections: V.1 and V.3. of the JPD and Polish applicants: sections V.2. and V.3. of the JPD).
- Please note that since the Polish part of the project budget cannot be negotiated at any point after the submission of the proposal, an oversized budget may lead to the proposal’s rejection.

Country specific requirements – Germany:

- Additionally, German applicants must provide the budget in the elan system.
- The budget provided in the Joint Project Description must equal the budget provided in the elan system.

Country specific requirements – Poland:

- Additionally, Polish applicants must provide the PLN budget in the ZSUN/OSF system.
- Expenses and the EUR costs of the project implemented by the Polish applicants provided in the Joint Project Description must equal the budget provided in the breakdown of the project's costs in ZSUN/OSF. Severe discrepancies between the EUR budgets in the JPD and PLN budgets in ZSUN/OSF may lead to the rejection of the joint proposal.
- The EUR costs in the JPD must be calculated based on the EUR exchange rate as in the Resolution No 98/2020 of Council of NCN of 14/09/2020 (namely: 1 EUR= 4,4490 PLN).
- The PLN costs in the ZSUN/OSF system and the EUR costs in the JPD must be rounded down to total values.
- The budget for the Polish part of the project must be at least 150,000 PLN; there is no maximum limit for the Polish part of the project. However, the project budget must be justified as regards the subject and scope of research, based on reasonable calculations and must specify the expenditures to be covered by the NCN (eligible costs).
- It is recommended that the budget for the Polish research team is planned in ZSUN/OSF (in PLN) and in the Joint Project Description JPD (in EUR) simultaneously. Justification of the costs planned for the Polish research team in the JPD must be comprehensive, detailed and consistent with justification of the costs in the ZSUN/OSF system. Justification of the costs planned for the Polish research team in a NCN proposal may be copied and pasted from the proposal in the ZSUN/OSF system to section V.2. of the JPD: Polish project part: Specification and justification of funds requested.

For detailed information please see "[Information for Applicants](#)".

6. Submission of proposals

The joint proposals (consisting of the Joint Project Descriptions and the CVs together with publication lists) must be submitted online to both agencies' respective submission systems, together with all

necessary documents conforming to the formal requirements of the respective funding organisation set out in the call documentation.

Joint proposals submitted to both agencies must be identical; a project will be rejected if they differ.

The deadline for online submission in both submission systems is 15 December 2020, 16:00 CET. Proposals received after the deadline will not be eligible.

For German applicants:

- DFG's submission system elan can be found at <http://elan.dfg.de>. Please select the following call in the elan system: "NCN DFG 2021 Humanities and Social Sciences"
- German applicants are responsible for ensuring that they have an active elan account before the submission deadline. Applicants who have not yet registered in elan must do so by **1 December**. Registration requests received after this time cannot be considered.

For Polish applicants:

- NCN's submission system ZSUN/OSF can be found at <https://osf.opi.org.pl>
- Information required in the proposal and the attachments to the application are set out in Resolution No. 98/2020 of the Council of the NCN of 14 September 2020 and in the call's announcement.
- Data included in the ZSUN/OSF system should be consistent with information included in the joint proposal (JPD and the CVs together with publication lists).

7. Evaluation procedure

- 1) The applicants' and projects' eligibility will be checked by both NCN and DFG for the Polish and German sides, respectively. The merit-based evaluation is open only to proposals approved as eligible by both agencies.
- 2) As a general rule, in the first review stage, each proposal will be assessed by at least two external referees.
- 3) In the second review stage, each proposal will be evaluated by a joint expert panel. The panel will consist of internationally recognised researchers from the relevant disciplines who are familiar with the two agencies' decision-making procedures.
- 4) The funding recommendations of the expert panels will be subject to approval by the agencies.

8. Criteria

All project proposals will be assessed against three sets of criteria: 1) qualification of the research team members; 2) academic merits of the research project; and 3) feasibility of the project.

1) Qualification of the research team members (40%)

- Research portfolio of the research team
- Relevant preliminary work
- Previous international cooperation

2) Academic merits of the research project (50%)

- Innovative nature of the project
- Impact of the research project on the academic discipline and international cooperation
- Scientific level of objectives and work programme
- Integrated approach of the project
- Added value of bilateral cooperation

3) Feasibility of the project (budget, research facilities and infrastructure) (10%)

- Assessment of project's feasibility
- Appropriateness of project's budget

9. Tentative Timeline

15 September 2020	Launch of the call for proposals
15 December 2020	Submission deadline
December 2020-January 2021	Eligibility check
February-July 2021	Peer-review
Beginning of October 2021	Results
From January 2022 on	Start of joint research projects

10. Call documents

- 1) *Call Text (this document)*
- 2) *Joint Project Description Template*
- 3) *Information for Applicants*
- 4) *Evaluation Sheet for Reviewers*

For Polish applicants only: call documentation for Polish applicants available
https://ncn.gov.pl/ogloszenia/konkursy/beethoven_classic4

For German applicants only: call documentation for German applicants available here:

- [Beethoven CLASSIC 4 Call Text](#) (this document)
- [Beethoven CLASSIC 4 Joint Project Description Template](#)
- [Beethoven CLASSIC 4 Information for Applicants](#)
- [Beethoven CLASSIC 4 Reviewer Evaluation Sheet](#)

Please note that personal data included in BEETHOVEN CLASSIC 4 proposals (in the JPD, CV with publication list and in domestic NCN and DFG proposals) will be processed by the NCN and DFG according to the rules and regulations available under the following links:

- NCN: <https://ncn.gov.pl/dane-osobowe?language=en>
- DFG: https://www.dfg.de/en/service/privacy_policy/index.html

11. Contact

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