

17<sup>th</sup> June 2019

### **Announcement of the GRIEG call**

The Scientific Coordinators of the National Science Centre announce GRIEG call for research projects financed from the Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2014 – 2021. The GRIEG call is part of the Basic Research Programme operated by the National Science Centre under the EEA and Norway Grants and is prepared in cooperation with the Research Council of Norway.

### **About the Basic Research Programme**

The overall objectives of the Norway Grants and the EEA Grants are to contribute to the reduction of economic and social disparities in Europe and to strengthen bilateral relations between Poland and the Donor States (Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein).

The main objective of the Basic Research Programme implemented by the National Science Centre is enhanced research-based knowledge development through research cooperation between Poland and the Donor States. Supporting the collaborative research projects will foster long-term strategic partnerships and provide an important step for future collaborative projects on the European level, with increasing participation in Horizon Europe.

During the Basic Research Programme period, three open calls are foreseen: GRIEG, IdeaLab and POLS.

Basic research should be understood as “experimental or theoretical endeavours undertaken to gain new knowledge of the foundations of phenomena and observable facts, without any direct commercial use”.

English is the main language of communication in the programme, and between the collaborative research teams.

### **Expected results of the GRIEG call**

The GRIEG call will be implemented through curiosity-driven joint research projects, enabling Polish-Norwegian research teams to bring together complementary skills, knowledge and resources to jointly address specific research challenges. Collaborative research project proposals are invited in all areas of the fundamental sciences<sup>1</sup>. Based on the provisions of the MoU between Poland and Norway, research groups within polar research and social science research are particularly invited to submit proposals to this call.

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1. The list of 25 NCN panels determined by the Resolution of the Council of the National Science Centre (66/2018).

HS – Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences		NZ – Life Sciences		ST – Physical Sciences and Engineering	
HS1	Fundamental questions of human existence and the nature of reality	NZ1	Molecular biology, structural biology, biotechnology	ST1	Mathematics
				ST2	Fundamental constituents of matter
HS2	Culture and cultural production	NZ2	Genetics, genomics	ST3	Condensed matter physics
HS3	The study of the human past	NZ3	Cellular and developmental biology, molecular and cellular neurobiology	ST4	Physical and analytical chemical sciences
HS4	Individuals, institutions, markets	NZ4	Biology of tissues, organs and organisms	ST5	Materials and synthesis
HS5	Norms and governance	NZ5	Human and animal non-infectious diseases	ST6	Computer science and informatics
HS6	Human nature and human society	NZ6	Human and animal immunology and infection	ST7	Systems and communication engineering
		NZ7	Diagnostics tools, therapies and public health	ST8	Products and processes engineering
		NZ8	Evolutionary and environmental biology	ST9	Astronomy and space research
		NZ9	Fundamentals of applied life sciences and biotechnology	ST10	Earth system sciences

Expected results of the GRIEG call are:

- Internationally refereed joint publications in high-impact journals, in line with the programme's open access policy;
- Involvement of young<sup>2</sup> researchers in the projects, in a way which supports their career development and skills: as work package or task leaders, carrying out the research needed for their PhD or further career steps, etc.;
- Close cooperation between the Polish and Norwegian partners involved in projects with the aim of building cooperation for future activities (like joint applications to the EU Horizon Europe);
- Knowledge transfer, sharing experiences and best practices;

<sup>2</sup> A young researcher is a person involved in scientific activities: a doctoral student or a university teacher without a doctoral degree, or a person who has had a doctoral degree for a period not exceeding 7 years.

- Enhancement of the collaboration between science and society, including the involvement of public organisations, NGOs or other public benefit organisations.

### **Project partnerships**

Proposals for collaborative research projects shall be submitted by a partnership comprising at least one Polish and at least one Norwegian research organisation, *the Project Partners*. Beyond this minimum condition, there is no limitation on the number of partners: any public or private entity can be a partner. However, only partners from Poland and Norway can be supported by the GRIEG project grant.

### **Addressees of the call (Project Promoter, Principal Investigator, Leading Partner)**

For each proposal, the project partners shall designate a *Project Promoter* which has scientific and administrative responsibility for the project, and shall act as Applicant and submit the proposal on their behalf. The Project Promoter has to be a Polish research organisation. For each project, the Project Promoter designates a *Principal Investigator* – a researcher who provides the scientific lead for the research project on a daily basis. The Principal Investigator must, as a minimum, have a PhD.

The Project Promoter and Principal Investigator act as coordinators of the project and have to communicate to all Polish and Norwegian Project Partners all relevant information concerning the preparation and implementation of the collaborative GRIEG project.

One Norwegian partner being a research organisation approved by the Research Council of Norway shall take the role of leading partner.

### **Eligible Applicant**

The eligible Applicant<sup>3</sup> is a research organisation specified in Article 27 section 1, point 1, 3-6 of the Act on the National Science Centre of 30 April 2010, established as a legal person in Poland and employing the Principal Investigator.

### **Eligible project partners**

The eligible project partners may be any public or private entity, commercial or non-commercial as well as non-governmental organisations, established as a legal person in Poland or Norway.

At least one Norwegian partner has to be approved as research organisation according to the definition for eligibility at the Research Council of Norway.<sup>4</sup>

Entities established in third countries can participate, but they cannot receive funding from the project grant.

### **State aid**

If funding for a research project by the National Science Centre will constitute State aid for the applicant and/or project partners, State aid will be granted under conditions regulated by the Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 9 September 2015 on the

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<sup>3</sup> The Applicant is named "Project Promoter" in the Guideline for Research Programmes and in the Regulation on the implementation of Norwegian Financial Mechanism

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.forskningsradet.no/en/apply-for-funding/who-can-apply-for-funding/research-organisations/approved-research-organisations/>

terms and mode of granting State aid via the National Science Centre (Journal of Laws of 2015, item 1381).

The Regulation is in accordance with the Commission Regulation (EU) No 651/2014 of 17 June 2014 declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the internal market in application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty.

Please consult the [rules governing application](#) for State aid.

### **Budget and duration of projects**

The total budget for the GRIEG call is €37.34 million.

The minimum amount of grant assistance applied for is €500,000; the maximum amount is €1.5 million (including overhead costs).

The exchange rate of the Polish National Bank on the day of the call announcement must be used to calculate if the project budget in PLN is within the eligible limits. It is expected that the eligible costs claimed by the Norwegian entities participating in the project shall normally not exceed 40% of the total eligible costs of the project.

The eligible duration of the project is 24 months or 36 months with the possibility of up to 12 months extension. The grant amount cannot be increased. Expenditures incurred after 30 April 2024 shall not be eligible.

Grants from the GRIEG call may be up to the 100% of total eligible project costs, provided all applicable national and EU rules on State aid are complied with.

### **Eligible costs**

The eligible project costs are direct expenditures and indirect costs (overheads).

The category of direct expenditures includes:

- Cost of staff assigned to the project;
- Travel and subsistence allowances (for staff taking part in the project);
- Equipment;
- Consumables and supplies;
- Costs entailed by other contracts;
- Costs arising directly from requirements imposed by the project contract for each project.

Indirect costs (overheads) shall be determined by applying a flat rate of 25% of the total direct eligible costs, excluding direct eligible costs of subcontracting and the costs of resources made available by third parties which are not used on the premises of the project promoter or a project partner, as well as financial support to third parties.

Most partners (such as universities, university colleges and research institutes not part of the basic funding scheme at RCN) from Norway should use the same rates for personnel costs as in H2020 projects.

Norwegian research institutes which receive basic funding through the Research Council of Norway and have personnel rates calculated and approved by the RCN, should use the

same rates as they do when applying to the RCN. It is important to remember that they should not apply any overhead costs, as those are included in the personnel rates.

The description of the categories of costs listed above can be found in [Guide for Applicants – GRIEG call](#). Costs are eligible if they are justified, necessary and appropriate, and directly related to the project.

The first and final dates of eligibility of expenditures will be stated in the project contract.

### **Submission of proposals**

Proposals shall be filed electronically in English via the online submission system ZSUN/OSF, available at <https://osf.opi.org.pl>. Only the Project Promoter is authorized to submit a proposal. **The deadline for submission is September 17, 2019, 24.00 CET.** The [application form](#) is available on the NCN website.

For more information about the application procedure please consult the document [Guide for Applicants – GRIEG call](#).

### **Evaluation and selection of proposals**

Preceding the evaluation, proposals are checked by the Programme Operator (National Science Centre) against the eligibility criteria of the GRIEG call (see Guide for Applicants section 3). Proposals failing any of the eligibility criteria do not qualify for the evaluation process. A negative decision by the Director may be appealed against to the Appeal Committee of the Council of the National Science Centre.

The selection of proposals for funding is based on peer-review evaluation. The proposals are evaluated by panels composed of internationally recognised experts. The experts are invited to evaluate proposals that closely relate to their field of expertise. They must be resident and working outside of Poland and Norway.

First, each proposal is evaluated independently (online) by three panel members. Then these experts meet to compare and discuss their assessment with the objective of establishing a consensus report, representing the common view of them. During the Panel meetings, the experts discuss each proposal and prepare Evaluation Summary Reports. There will be one Panel for each research domain (HS – Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences; NZ – Life Sciences; ST – Physical Sciences and Engineering).

The National Science Centre prepares preliminary ranking lists, one for each research domain (HS – Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences; NZ – Life Sciences; ST – Physical Sciences and Engineering) including the requested grant amount for each proposal, for the Programme Committee. The task of the Programme Committee is to decide the final ranking order of the proposals on the basis of the total scores assigned to the projects and the panel reports.

While making a recommendation for funding, the Programme Committee takes into consideration: a) the quality of the proposals; b) a similar success rate for each research domain; and c) the overall portfolio of the programme, including the provision of the MoU to support polar research and social sciences, and the total budget of the call.

In the event that the final ranking lists approved by the Programme Committee reveal that the limit in the budget for the call prevents the full inclusion of another project to the lists, the National Science Centre may, acting on a proposal from the Programme Committee, apply budget cuts uniformly across all ranked proposals, not exceeding 3% of the requested budgets.

The National Science Centre awards individual grants to projects based on the final ranking lists approved by the Programme Committee. The Director of the National Science Centre issues decisions concerning project financing.

Detailed information on the evaluation criteria, scoring and procedure is provided in the document [Guide for Evaluators – GRIEG call](#). All applicants and partners are encouraged to read this document.

### **Announcement of call results**

The GRIEG call results shall be announced on the National Science Centre’s website by the end of March 2020 at the latest.

The call results will be available in the ZSUN/OSF electronic submission system and will also be communicated to the applicants by an electronically delivered decision of the NCN Director. The applicants will have access to the assessments of the individual experts, consensus assessments and results of the panel review.

The Applicant (Project Promoter/Project Investigator) should get acquainted with the rules for delivering the NCN Director’s decisions available on the NCN website.

### **Appeals**

The decisions of the NCN Director may be appealed against to the Appeal Committee of the Council of the National Science Centre, in the event of a breach of the call procedure or other formal infringements. The appeal shall be lodged by the Applicant within 14 days of the effective delivery of the decision.

### **Contracting of Projects**

A Project Contract is concluded between the Programme Operator (NCN) and the Project Promoter. All project partners will sign Partnership Agreements with the Project Promoter. If changes in the proposals and budgets are required, Project Promoters are invited for negotiations with the Programme Operator before signature of the contracts.

### **Timeline of GRIEG call**

Action	Date
Launching the call	June 17th, 2019
Deadline for submission of applications	September 17th, 2019 24.00 CET
Evaluation process	September 2019 – February 2020
Funding decision/Contracting phase	March – June 2020

### **Call documents**

Announcement – GRIEG call

Guide for Applicants – GRIEG call

Guide for Evaluators – GRIEG call  
Application form

The stipulations contained in documents listed above must be followed by the applicants to meet the eligibility criteria of the GRIEG call.

**Legal Acts**

Regulation on the implementation of Norwegian Financial Mechanism 2014-2021;  
Guideline for Research Programmes. Rules for the establishment and implementation of programmes falling under the Programme Area «Research»;  
Basic Research Programme Agreement

**Contact Persons**

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Please contact the EEA and Norway Grants Team at the National Science Centre with all queries concerning the Basic Research Programme and the GRIEG call. We will endeavour to answer your questions sent by e-mail as soon as possible, within 5 working days at the latest. Answers to the questions will be published in the FAQ to ensure equal access to information for all applicants.

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In case of specific issues concerning applicants from Norway, the Donor Programme Partner in the Basic Research Programme is the Research Council of Norway.