

**Order No 48/2021**  
**of 23 August 2021**  
**by the Director of the National Science Centre**  
**adopting an additional merit-based evaluation procedure**  
**under Weave-UNISONO**

Pursuant to § 2 (3) of the Organisational Regulations of the National Science Centre's Office and according to the tasks of the Scientific Coordinators of the National Science Centre, as adopted by Order No 41/2021 of the NCN Director of 5 July 2021 and pursuant to Article 30 (3) of the Act on the National Science Centre of 30 April 2010 (consolidated text in Journal of Laws of 2019, item 1384), in conjunction with §§ 35, 37, 38, 39, 40, 44 and 45 of the Annex to NCN Council Resolution No 133/2020 of 11 December 2020 amending the Regulations on awarding funding for research tasks funded by the National Science Centre under international calls carried out as multilateral cooperation pursuant to the Lead Agency Procedure ("LAP"), hereinafter referred to as the "Regulations", an additional merit-based evaluation procedure is hereby laid down for proposals recommended for funding under Weave-UNISONO pursuant to the Lead Agency Procedure.

The additional merit-based evaluation procedure for proposals recommended for funding by the lead agency under the international Weave-UNISONO call for proposals launched in multilateral cooperation under the Weave-UNISONO Programme pursuant to the Lead Agency Procedure covers the scope laid down in §§ 35, 37, 38, 39, 40, 44 and 45 of the Regulations, i.e. reviewing if the costs for the Polish part of the research project are reasonable as regards the subject and scope of research, reviewing the ethical issues of the Polish part of the research and reviewing the project at large.

**Article 1 Abbreviations and definitions**

Whenever this Order refers to:

- 1) NCN, it shall mean the National Science Centre;
- 2) NCN Act, it shall mean the Act on the National Science Centre of 30 April 2010 (Journal of Laws of 2019, item 1384);

- 3) Council, it shall mean the Council of the National Science Centre;
- 4) Director, it shall mean the Director of the National Science Centre;
- 5) Scientific Coordinators, they shall mean Scientific Coordinators within the meaning of Article 2 (5) of the NCN Act;
- 6) projects, they shall mean research projects within the meaning of Article 2 (2) of the NCN Act, financed under NCN calls;
- 7) international call, it shall mean an international call launched by the NCN and carried out in multilateral cooperation with partner institutions pursuant to the Lead Agency Procedure (“LAP”) with a foreign partner institution acting as the lead agency;
- 8) lead agency, it shall mean a partner agency of the coordinating applicant that acts as the agency responsible for merit-based evaluation of joint proposals;
- 9) Polish research team, it shall mean the principal investigator named in the NCN proposal together with members of the research team, if applicable in the NCN proposal;
- 10) NCN proposal, it shall mean a proposal for NCN-funding of the Polish part of the project under an international call including a joint proposal submitted to the lead agency;
- 11) joint proposal, it shall mean a proposal drafted by the co-applicants and submitted to the lead agency by the coordinating applicants pursuant to the lead agency’s terms and conditions;
- 12) proposal recommended for funding, it shall mean an NCN proposal for funding of the Polish part of the joint project recommended for funding by the lead agency following its merit-based evaluation; and
- 13) Expert, it shall mean the Expert evaluating NCN proposals recommended for funding under international calls launched pursuant to the Lead Agency Procedure (LAP), requested for their review by the NCN Director pursuant to Article 11 (11) of the NCN Act.

### **Article 2 General terms**

1. The Director shall request that the Experts make an additional merit-based evaluation of proposals recommended for funding as required by §§ 35, 37, 38, 39, 40, 44 and 45 of the Regulations pursuant to Article 11 (11) of the NCN Act.

The Experts evaluating proposals recommended for funding shall comply with the “Code of Ethics for Experts of the National Science Centre” annexed to Order No 104/2020 of the NCN Director dated of 30 December 2020.

2. The Scientific Coordinators shall exclude the Expert from the evaluation procedure of proposals recommended for funding in the event of a conflict of interest or justified suspicion of Expert’s impartiality.
3. Proposals recommended for funding are subject to an additional merit-based evaluation under the Weave-UNISONO call for proposals if:
  - 1) following a merit-based evaluation of a joint proposal by the lead agency, the NCN has some doubts as regards the rationale of the costs of the Polish part of the research project specified in the joint proposal as regards the scope and subject of research, in which case the NCN shall perform a merit-based evaluation of NCN proposals recommended for funding by the lead agency pursuant to Article 30 (1) of the NCN Act. If the costs of the Polish part of the project are deemed unreasonable as regards the subject and scope of research following a merit-based evaluation by the lead agency and/or NCN, the NCN may refuse funding or award less funding than requested in the NCN proposal;
  - 2) following a merit-based evaluation of a joint proposal by the lead agency, the NCN has some doubts as regards the ethics issues of the Polish part of the research to be carried out, in which case the NCN shall perform a merit-based evaluation in this regard of NCN proposals recommended for funding by the lead agency pursuant to Article 30 (1) of the NCN Act. The principal investigator of the Polish research team shall use the recommendations on the ethics issues resulting from NCN’s review pursuant to § 39 of the Regulations;
  - 3) the lead agency recommends research projects for funding without ordering them by quality and the total funding for the Polish part of the projects planned by the Polish research teams exceeds the available funding for research tasks funded by the NCN, the NCN shall perform an additional merit-based evaluation of the NCN proposals recommended for funding by the lead agency;
  - 4) the lead agency recommends research projects for funding evaluated in

various groups of disciplines and placed on various ranking lists and the total funding for the Polish part of the projects planned by the Polish research teams exceeds the available funding for research tasks funded by the NCN, the indicators referred to in § 43 of the Regulations shall apply. If it is still impossible to order the projects conclusively regardless of the indicators, the NCN shall hold an additional merit-based evaluation of the NCN proposals recommended for funding by the lead agency.

### **Article 3 Experts**

1. The tasks of the Experts shall include:
  - 1) drafting individual additional merit-based evaluations of proposals recommended for funding or NCN proposals;
  - 2) drafting an agreed final justification for the additional merit-based evaluation as required by Article 2 (3) (1) - § 2 (3) (4) with the following recommendation: if the ethics issues have been partially unduly addressed, according to the evaluation sheet attached hereto as Annex 2 and if the costs covered by the proposal recommended for funding are deemed partially unreasonable by adjusting the project budget, according to the evaluation sheet attached hereto as Annex 1.

### **Article 4 Scientific Coordinators**

1. The tasks of the NCN Coordinators related to the additional merit-based evaluation shall include:
  - 1) identifying the Experts to draft an additional individual merit-based evaluation of proposals recommended for funding under the Director's authority;
  - 2) arranging an additional merit-based evaluation of proposals recommended for funding, including:
    - providing the Experts with joint proposals, reviews and justifications of the merit-based evaluation of joint proposals by the lead agency to allow them to evaluate proposals recommended for funding and to draft their evaluations,
    - collecting individual additional merit-based evaluations drafted by the

Experts,

- providing the Experts with individual additional merit-based evaluations of proposals recommended for funding drafted by the other Experts,
  - collecting the agreed final justifications for an additional merit-based evaluation laid down in Article 5 (6), including recommendations referred to in Article 3 (1) (2);
- 3) evaluation of the reliability and impartiality of the additional individual merit-based evaluations drafted by the Experts;
  - 4) providing the Director, for his approval, with ranking lists of proposals recommended for funding following an additional merit-based evaluation performed at the NCN.

#### **§ 5 Evaluation criteria for proposals recommended for funding**

1. The evaluation referred to in Article 2 (3) (1) – (4) shall be drafted by three Experts acting independently. Evaluation sheets for proposals recommended for funding for an additional merit-based evaluation laid down in Article 2 (3) (1) are attached as Annex 1, in Article 2 (3) (2) are attached hereto as Annex 2, and in Article 2 (3) (3) and (4) are attached as Annex 3.
2. The Experts shall perform an individual and independent additional merit-based evaluation of proposals recommended for funding as required by Article § 2 (3) (1) – (4) and shall specify:
  - 1) if the costs planned in the proposal recommended for funding are:
    - a) fully justified as regards the subject and scope of research;
    - b) partially justified as regards the subject and scope of research, in which case the Expert shall justify their evaluation and make detailed recommendations to adjust the project budget covered by the NCN proposal recommended for funding by reducing funding;
    - c) completely unjustified as regards the subject and scope of research, in which case the Expert shall justify their evaluation.

The Expert shall make their recommendations for proposals as

follows: A. Proposal recommended for funding; B. Proposal recommended for funding as second choice; C. Proposal not recommended for funding.

The evaluation sheet is attached hereto as Annex 1.

2) if the ethics issues have been duly addressed in the Polish part of the research covered by the proposal recommended for funding:

- a) yes, the ethics issues of the Polish part of the research are duly described as regards the subject and scope of research;
- b) no, the ethics issues of the Polish part of research are not duly described as regards the subject and scope of research, in which case the Expert shall justify their evaluation and make detailed recommendations as regards the ethics issues.

The Expert shall make their recommendations for proposals as follows: A. Proposal recommended for funding; B. Proposal recommended for funding as second choice; C. Proposal not recommended for funding.

The evaluation sheet is attached hereto as Annex 2.

3) if the proposal is recommended for funding following an evaluation of the NCN proposal pursuant to an evaluation sheet attached hereto as Annex 3. The Expert shall make their recommendations for proposals as follows: A. Proposal recommended for funding; B. Proposal recommended for funding as second choice; C. Proposal not recommended for funding.

3. The proposal shall be recommended for funding following a an on-line Expert meeting. A proposal may be recommended for funding when it is recommended by at least two Experts as follows: (A) Proposal recommended for funding.
4. Before an on-line meeting, the NCN shall provide each Expert evaluating a proposal recommended for funding, following their evaluation, with access to the evaluations made by the other Experts evaluating the same proposal.
5. The Experts evaluating proposals recommended for funding shall agree and

draft the final justification of their additional merit-based evaluation. When the project costs are deemed partially unjustified, the Experts shall make detailed recommendations to adjust the project budget covered by the proposal recommended for funding referred to in Article 5 (2) (1) (b). If the ethics issues of the Polish part of the research covered by the proposal recommended for funding are partially unduly addressed, the Experts shall make detailed recommendations as regards the ethics issues laid down in the proposal recommended for funding referred to in Article 5 (2) (2) (b).

6. The final justifications of the evaluation, including detailed recommendations to adjust the project budget referred to above, shall be made available to the Applicants.

Annex 1  
to Order No 48/2021  
of 23 August 2021  
by the Director of the National  
Science Centre  
adopting an additional merit-  
based evaluation procedure  
under Weave-UNISONO

### **EVALUATION SHEET FOR EXPERTS: EVALUATION OF COSTS**

EVALUATION OF FUNDING PROPOSALS FOR RESEARCH PROJECTS  
RECOMMENDED FOR FUNDING BY THE FOREIGN LEAD AGENCY WITH  
REGARD TO THE RATIONALE OF THE COSTS VIS-À-VIS THE SUBJECT AND  
SCOPE OF RESEARCH

The merit-based evaluation covers solely the justification of the costs planned in the NCN proposal as regards the subject and scope of research. The merit-based evaluation of the scientific quality of the research project covered by the NCN proposal has been carried out by the lead agency according to its terms and as a result the project was recommended for funding.

#### **Are the costs covered by an NCN proposal:**

- A. Fully justified as regards the subject and scope of research;
- B. Partially justified as regards the subject and scope of research;
  - detailed justification (at least 500 characters with spaces),
  - detailed recommendations to adjust the project budget covered by the proposal recommended for funding by reducing funding (at least 1,000 characters with spaces).
- C. Unjustified as regards the subject and scope of research; the cost covered by the proposal recommended for funding are unjustified as regards the subject and scope of research to an extent that prevents project implementation:



- detailed justification (at least 500 characters with spaces),
- please specify each unjustified cost item and clarify why the project budget cannot be adjusted (at least 1,000 characters with spaces).

**Recommendation:**

- A. Proposal recommended for funding.
- B. Proposal recommended for funding as second choice.
- C. Proposal not recommended for funding

Annex 2  
to Order No 48/2021  
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**EVALUATION SHEET FOR EXPERTS: EVALUATION OF THE ETHICS  
ISSUES OF THE POLISH PART OF THE RESEARCH**

EVALUATION OF FUNDING PROPOSALS FOR RESEARCH PROJECTS  
RECOMMENDED FOR FUNDING BY THE FOREIGN LEAD AGENCY, COVERING  
THE ETHICS ISSUES OF THE POLISH PART OF THE RESEARCH.

The merit-based evaluation covers solely a view by the principal investigator of the ethics issues of the Polish part of the research. The merit-based evaluation of the scientific quality of the project covered by the NCN proposal has been carried out by the lead agency according to its terms and as a result the project was recommended for funding.

**Have ethics issues been duly addressed in the Polish part of the research?**

Yes

No

In the case of “no”, please justify (at least 500 characters with spaces). In that case, the Expert shall justify the evaluation and make detailed recommendations on the ethics issues.

**Recommendation:**

- A. Proposal recommended for funding.
- B. Proposal recommended for funding as second choice.
- C. Proposal not recommended for funding.

Annex 3  
to Order No 48/2021  
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## **EVALUATION SHEET FOR EXPERTS: EVALUATION OF NCN PROPOSALS**

**Has the NCN proposal been prepared in a reliable manner?**

Yes

No

In the case of “no”, please justify:

**Does the project meet the criteria of a scientific proposal?**

Yes

No

In the case of “no”, please justify:

**Does the project meet the criteria of basic research?<sup>1</sup>**

Yes

No

In the case of “no”, please justify:

**Is the project based on a balanced and complementary contribution of**

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<sup>1</sup> Pursuant to Article 4 (2) (1) of the Act on Higher Education and Science of 20 July 2018, basic 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.

## **research teams involved in international cooperation?**

Yes

No

In the case of “no”, please justify:

### **A. PROJECT ASSESSMENT (55%)**

#### **A1. SCIENTIFIC QUALITY OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT (25%)**

*scientific relevance, importance, originality and novelty of research or tasks to be performed; quality ought to be evaluated in an international context*

### **SCORING**

#### **5 Excellent**

The research project is of world-class quality: it addresses a problem of very high importance and interest, demonstrates exceptional novelty and innovative approaches, and has no weaknesses.

#### **4 Very good**

The research project is of high quality: it addresses a problem of high importance and interest and no significant elements have to be improved. May have some minor weaknesses.

#### **3 Good**

The research project is of good quality: it addresses an important problem but contains a few elements that could be improved.

#### **2 Moderate**

The research project is of moderate quality: it addresses a problem of moderate importance or contains important elements that could be improved.

#### **1 Fair**

The research project is of low quality: it addresses a problem of low importance or it needs substantial modification or improvement.

#### **0 Poor**

The research project is of very low quality: it addresses a problem of low or no importance and it contains structural flaws.

Justification:

## **A2. POTENTIAL IMPACT OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT (15%)**

*the potential for substantial international impact on the research field(s) and for high quality research publications and other research outputs, taking into account the specifics of the research field and the variety of forms of impact and output; impact ought to be evaluated using an international context*

### **2 High**

The project will have a substantial impact on the advancement of the research field(s) or discipline(s) and the project results are likely to be published by academic publishers or journals of the highest academic rank.

### **1 Moderate**

The project will have some impact on the advancement of the research field(s) or discipline(s) and the project results are likely to be published by academic publishers or journals that are widely recognized.

### **0 Low**

The project will have no impact on the advancement of the research field(s) or discipline(s) or the project results are unlikely to be published by academic publishers or journals that are widely recognized.

Justification:

## **A3. FEASIBILITY OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT (15%)**

*the feasibility of the proposed project (also with regard to foreign partners), including the appropriateness of the research methodology to achieve the goals of the project, the risk management description, the principal investigator's qualifications, the structure of the research team, research facilities and equipment, international cooperation (if any), other factors affecting the feasibility of the project*

## **SCORING**

### **2 High**

The implementation of the project is very well planned: the proposed timescale and methodology are relevant and suitable to achieve the goals of the project; project risks and mitigation plan are clearly described; the qualifications of the research team and the allocation of research tasks are appropriate; the available research facilities and equipment are sufficient for the proposed research.

### **1 Moderate**

The implementation of the project is reasonably planned but it contains some gaps or shortcomings or it leaves room for improvement with respect to: the proposed timescale and methodology, project risks and mitigation plan, the qualifications of the research team, the allocation of research tasks or the available research facilities and equipment.

### **0 Low**

The implementation of the project is not feasible or it cannot be evaluated due to missing or incomplete information.

Justification:

## **B. SCIENTIFIC QUALIFICATIONS OF THE PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR(S) (45%)**

### **B1. SCIENTIFIC ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR(S) (35%)**

*scientific achievements of the principal investigator(s) in the past 10 years, taking into account the stage of scientific career, career breaks, and the diverse range of research outputs evaluated from an international perspective, in particular: (1) important contribution to the field(s) or discipline(s), (2) 1 to 10 most important publications (for research in art, 1 to 10 most important artistic achievements and achievements in research in art) from the academic and research track record, (3) with 1 to 3 of them attached to the proposal as PDF files; (4) research performance and research outputs (publications, datasets, software, etc.) of previous grants, (5) presentations to internationally established conferences, including invited talks, (6) scientific or artistic prizes/awards or membership in well-regarded international organizations, (7) international recognition, and (8) other research activities.*

## **SCORING**

## **5 Excellent**

The scientific track record and research achievements are excellent, internationally recognized and highly valued in terms of quality and contribution to science, publication track record and other research activities. The principal investigator(s)<sup>4</sup> is/are among the top researchers in the research field(s).

## **4 Very good**

The scientific track record and research achievements are very good and internationally recognized in terms of quality and contribution to science, the publication track record and other research activities. The principal investigator(s)<sup>4</sup> is an/are internationally recognized researcher(s) in the research field(s).

## **3 Good**

The scientific track record and research achievements are good; however, they are of limited international recognition in terms of quality and contribution to science, the publication track record and other research activities. The principal investigator(s)<sup>4</sup> has/have limited international recognition in the research field(s).

## **2 Moderate**

The scientific track record and research achievements are average and of limited recognition in the field(s) in terms of quality and contribution to science, the publication track record and other research activities. The principal investigator(s)<sup>4</sup> has/have limited recognition in the research field(s).

## **1 Fair**

The scientific track record and research achievements are less than average and lack recognition in the research field(s) in terms of quality and contribution to science, the publication track record and other research activities. The principal investigator(s) lack(s) recognition in the research field(s).

## **0 Poor**

The principal investigator(s) has/have poor or no scientific achievements.

Justification:

**B2. PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR'S (PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS') INVOLVEMENT IN RESEARCH PROJECTS NOT CO-FINANCED FROM THE POLISH BUDGET (NATIONAL BUDGETS), SELECTED IN THE EUROPEAN UNION RESEARCH AND INNOVATION PROGRAMMES (ERC, 7TH FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME, HORIZON 2020 AND HORIZON EUROPE) (10%)**

**SCORING**

**4** The principal investigator(s) has/have been the coordinator/principal investigator of a research project not co-financed from the Polish budget (national budgets), selected in the European Union Research and Innovation Programmes.

**3** The principal investigator(s) has/have been the group leader in a research project not co-financed from the Polish budget (national budgets), selected in the European Union Research and Innovation Programmes.

**1** The principal investigator(s) has/have been the co-investigator in a research project not co-financed from the Polish budget (national budgets), selected in the European Union Research and Innovation Programmes.

**0** The principal investigator(s) has/have not been involved in a research project not co-financed from the Polish budget (national budgets), selected in the European Union Research and Innovation Programmes.

Justification:

**Are the costs to be incurred well justified with regards to the subject and scope of research?**

- A. Fully justified as regards the subject and scope of research;
- B. Partially justified as regards the subject and scope of research;
  - detailed justification (at least 500 characters with spaces),
  - detailed recommendations to adjust the project budget covered by the proposal recommended for funding by reducing funding (at least 1,000 characters with spaces).
- C. Unjustified as regards the subject and scope of research; the cost covered by the proposal recommended for funding are unjustified as regards the subject and scope of research to an extent that prevents project implementation:



- detailed justification (at least 500 characters with spaces),
- please specify each unjustified cost item and clarify why the project budget cannot be adjusted (at least 1,000 characters with spaces).

**Has the data management been duly planned?**

Yes

No

In the case of “no”, please justify:

**Have ethics issues been duly addressed in the Polish part of the research?**

Yes

No

In the case of “no”, please justify:

In that case, the Expert shall justify the evaluation and make detailed recommendations on the ethics issues.

**Are the effects of the previous principal investigator’s research projects financed by the NCN satisfactory? If no such projects or minor reservations, please select YES**

*Consider: evaluation of the final report, other circumstances*

Yes

No

Please justify

**Strengths of the proposal:**

**Weaknesses of the proposal:**

**Recommendation:**

- A.** Proposal recommended for funding.
- B.** Proposal recommended for funding as second choice.
- C.** Proposal not recommended for funding

*Disclaimer: The English version of this Order does not constitute a sworn translation and has been prepared as an auxiliary document for your convenience. In case of any doubts as to the interpretation of its provisions, the Polish version shall prevail.*