

Prof. dr hab. Zbigniew Blocki

Director

of the National Science Centre

Kraków, 06.02.2018

DBR.070.4.2018

Dear Researchers,

Ever since assuming activities, the National Science Centre has sought to create a modern and uniform system of research grants, based upon rules conducive to the dynamic growth of the best and most talented researchers and ensuring cost-efficient expenditure of public funds.

Among the demands most often voiced by research communities was the request that the National Science Centre provide uniform terms and conditions for the implementation of research projects, regardless of the call edition in which a given project has been approved for funding.

Having thoroughly analysed the consequences of unifying the terms and conditions for the implementation of research projects, the Centre hereby declares that it approves the above request by stating that, as a rule, the projects shall be carried out in accordance with their respective grant agreements; that said, it is possible to modify those agreements in ways referred to in the further part of this document, on the condition that such changes are justified by the scope of the research and the tasks planned in the project and serve its objectives. Legitimacy of the changes made will be verified upon the project's final reporting procedure or during a potential audit.

The Centre is aware of the current provisions of each and every grant agreement, which require that modifications be made solely in a written form or otherwise are considered null and void. Meeting the above condition would require that an appropriate annex to the agreement be drafted, which would cause a considerable degree of additional work for you and the Centre alike.

In light of the above, the hereby document should be interpreted to the effect that the host institution where the project is carried out and the project's principal investigator are allowed to make modifications listed in the hereby document, provided that the modifications serve the proper performance of the agreement and are instrumental in reaching the project's objectives. Exercise of this arrangement is tantamount to the consent, on the part of the host institution and the principal investigator, to have the legitimacy of the changes verified by the National Science Centre at the stage of the project's final reporting procedure or during a potential control. Should they give no such consent, the changes will have to be made in accordance with the mode specified in the grant agreements, i.e. by drafting an appropriate annex.

The hereby document regulates the scope of acceptable modifications to several call types. Thus, upon introducing modifications, one should always bear in mind the provisions of the grant agreement and the terms and conditions of a given call. The modifications introduced

NARODOWE CENTRUM NAUKI

UL. KRÓLEWSKA 57, 30-081 KRAKÓW, TEL. +48 123419000, FAX 123419099, E-MAIL: biuro@ncn.gov.pl
REGON: 121361537, NIP: 6762429638



must be in line with the remaining provisions of the grant agreement, unless the hereby document states otherwise. By way of summary:

1. Modifications to the implementation of research projects may not fall within the scope of increasing the budget approved by the Director's decision; they may only change its respective uses.
2. Shifts within the budget plan may not jeopardise the full and proper performance of the research and tasks planned in the project, nor may they violate the principle of economy.
3. Legitimacy of the changes made will be verified upon the project's final reporting procedure or during a potential audit.

§ 1 The Centre accepts the following modifications to the implementation of research projects:

1. Remuneration:

- a. In research projects recommended for funding from the 17th edition of the NCN calls, i.e. calls announced on 16th March 2015, (OPUS 9), to which applied the National Science Centre's regulations on the funding limits for hiring post-docs and specialist auxiliary personnel, one may change the limits within the project costs within the following scope:
 - i. increasing the budget for hiring the post-docs listed in the proposal up to PLN 120 thousand per annum;
 - ii. increasing the budget for hiring the specialist auxiliary personnel listed in the proposal up to PLN 85 thousand per annum;

If the resources for "full-time remuneration" stated in the research proposal are not paid to (a) project team member(s) over the project's entire duration or, for any reason, have not been used, they may alternatively be used solely for the purpose of "full-time remuneration" of (an) additional post-doc-type post(s) (within the meaning of the "Regulations on the Mode of Granting Financial Resources for the Completion of Tasks Funded by the National Science Centre as Regards Research Projects, Post-doctoral Internships and Doctoral Scholarships") or be returned to the Centre.

- b. The funding planned for research scholarships and for reducing the number of obligatory teaching hours may not be used for other purposes.
- c. The project's host institution may provide additional funding from its own resources for those receiving full-time remuneration and additional remuneration.

1. Other modifications:

The regulations described below refer to the terms and conditions for the implementation of research projects, i.e. all projects carried out since 2011 under calls OPUS, PRELUDIUM, SONATINA, SONATA, SONATA BIS, HARMONIA, MAESTRO, SYMFONIA, BEETHOVEN and projects carried out under multilateral



international programmes NORFACE, JPND, CHIST-ERA, JPI HDHL, BIODIVERSA, ENSUF, JPI AMR, M-ERA NET, QUANT-ERA, ERA-CAPS, SUGI.

The regulations that follow have no effect on the calls: MINIATURA, ETIUDA, FUGA, UWERTURA and POLONEZ.

- a. Unless this conflicts with the host institution's inner regulations, the principal investigator may introduce the following changes to the project:
 - i. changes to the lists of equipment to be purchased or built in the project, devices and software within the sum stated in the project's budget;
 - ii. research-related changes;
 - iii. changes within other direct costs.

- b. With the consent of the head of the host institution, expressed in the electronic form¹ or signed in their own writing, the following changes may be introduced to the project:
 - i. extending the project duration by up to 12 months from the initially stated date of its completion (to be expressed in full months). The document granting the consent should be delivered to the Centre no later than one month before the initially stated date of the project completion. The date of the delivery is to be understood as the date of sending the document granting the consent to the Centre.

As regards projects carried out under multilateral international programmes, every extension of the project's duration will have to be agreed with the project's officer at the Centre;
 - ii. shifting the funding between items of the budget stated in the proposal to a total amount up to 15 per cent (as long as this sum is no larger than PLN 100 thousand) of the direct costs from the column titled *Total*² in the budget's breakdown table in the research proposal. In the case of research consortia, the shifts can be made for each partner in the consortium separately. In research projects recommended for funding from the 17th edition of the NCN calls on, i.e. starting from calls announced on 16th March 2015, increasing the pool allocated for remuneration is not eligible, with the exception of § 1, point 1a of the hereby document.

- c. In light of the above, the Centre's approval will be required only for the following modifications:
 - i. change of the host institution, principal investigator, supervisor in the case of PRELUDIUM, principal foreign partner in the case of HARMONIA and the team heads in the case of SYMFONIA;
 - ii. reduction of the project duration (to be expressed in full months);

¹ Electronic form is to be understood as the electronic form of the legal act consisting in issuing a declaration of will in a digital form bearing a qualified electronic signature.

² As against the initially stated amount in the budget's direct costs (*Total*).



- iii. extension of the project duration by more than 12 months from the initially stated date of its completion (to be expressed in full months);
- iv. transfer of funds between calendar years, resulting in a change to the instalments paid to the host institution by the Centre;
- v. transfer of funds between items of the budget stated in the proposal to a total amount of more than 15 per cent (or a sum larger than PLN 100 thousand) of the direct costs from the column titled *Total*³ in the budget's breakdown table in the research proposal. In the case of research consortia, the transfers can be made for each partner in the consortium separately. In research projects recommended for funding from the 17th edition of the NCN calls on, i.e. starting from calls announced on 16th March 2015, increasing the pool allocated for remuneration is not eligible, with the exception of § 1, point 1a of the hereby document.

The host institution and the project's principal investigator are required to inform the Centre of any and all of the abovementioned changes in the annual report for the year in which the change has been made, as well as in the final report.

The abovementioned regulations enter into force on 1st February 2018 to the effect that by that date research projects are carried out in accordance with their respective grant agreements, whereas starting from 1st February 2018 the implementation of the projects may take place in accordance with the provisions of the grant agreements, allowing also for the options presented in the hereby document.

Regulations listed in this paragraph do not apply to projects where funding constitutes state aid for the host institution or for at least one partner in a research consortium applying for state aid. Whenever this is the case, projects should be carried out in accordance with the provisions of the appropriate grant agreement. This restriction results from additional legal regulations that apply to the abovementioned projects (among other things, the requirement of conforming to the provisions of the directive of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 9th September 2015 on the terms and mode of granting state aid by the National Science Centre).

§ 2 Cost eligibility:

In projects recommended for funding from the 26th edition of calls, i.e. starting from calls announced on 14th June 2017, i.e. MAESTRO 9, HARMONIA 9, SONATA BIS 7, SONATA 13, an eligible cost is to be understood as an expenditure incurred from the day on which the Director of the Centre's decision to grant the funding becomes fully valid, and which fulfils other conditions laid down in the "Regulations on the Mode of Granting Financial Resources for the Completion of Tasks Funded by the National Science Centre as Regards Research Projects, Post-doctoral Internships and Doctoral Scholarships." Failure to sign the agreement for reasons attributable to the host institution or the principal investigator does not entitle one to apply to the Centre for reimbursement of the costs incurred.

³ As against the initially stated amount in the budget's direct costs (*Total*).



Regulations listed in this paragraph also apply to projects where the funding constitutes state aid for the host institution or for at least one partner in a research consortium.

The Centre is of the opinion that the solutions presented here will significantly facilitate the implementation of research projects.

Should you have any questions or doubts, do not hesitate to contact the National Science Centre.

Zbigniew Błocki

Director of the National Science Centre