



Director  
of the National Science Centre  
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Krakow, 4 April 2023

**NCN Director's letter  
interpreting the provisions of indirect cost of Open Access**

By introducing a new category of indirect cost of Open Access (also known as indirect cost of OA) in the project budget as of the 38<sup>th</sup> edition of the calls (SONATA BIS 10, MAESTRO 12), the National Science Centre intended to secure funds for open access to publications (resulting from ongoing research projects funded by the NCN) and research data (forming the basis for such publications) and to meet additional objectives related to open access to research results during the project performance and thereafter.

The indirect cost of open access to publications or research data are settled as a lump sum and deemed as incurred. The indirect cost of open access is not proportionally reduced if funds on the basis of which they are calculated are not used or are improperly used. The indirect cost of OA must not be increased as compared to the original amount provided for in the proposal.

The institutions must agree with the principal investigator how to spend the entire indirect cost of OA and such expenditures must comply with the NCN's Open Access Policy adopted pursuant to the NCN Director's Order No 38/2020 of 27 May 2020, as amended by Order No 40/2020 of 31 May 2020.

Furthermore, the cost of open access to publications and research data may also be borne under the budget category of "Other indirect cost" (also known as "Total direct costs"). The National Science Centre requires that the Article Processing Charges (APC) for open access to specific papers (if any) be well-documented and evidenced in the annual and final reports.

If a paper evidenced in the annual or final report is not regarded as a project outcome, the cost of its publication and open access distribution paid from the project cost must be returned.

If the agreement is terminated with immediate effect or deemed not performed, the project funds must be returned in their entirety (including the indirect cost of Open Access).

The foregoing view applies to all call editions that include references to the indirect cost of OA in the project budgets.

Zbigniew Błocki, Acting Director of the National Science Centre