ANNUAL PROGRAMME REPORT FM14-21

Poland

PL-Basic Research Research

2019

A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The main objective of the Basic Research Programme implemented by the National Science Centre (NCN) is enhanced research-based knowledge development through research cooperation between Poland and the Donor States. All activities implemented in 2019 within the programme contributed to this goal. Two calls for proposals were announced as planned:

- the GRIEG call for Polish-Norwegian research projects covering all areas of basic research including polar research and social sciences

- the IdeaLab call for ground-breaking, interdisciplinary research projects targeting challenges facing European societies today and in the future implemented in cooperation between teams from Poland and Donor States.

So far, the most important success of the programme is the large interest in the calls, which resulted in a great number of applications received under both calls.

The great challenge that was successfully overcome was to design and implement the IdeaLab call for the first time in Poland in an innovative formula. The process of carrying out the call was especially difficult because it required the preparation of appropriate call documentation that takes into account the innovative approach and is in line with the programme Regulation, internal procedures of the Programme Operator and national law.

There were also bilateral activities implemented including cooperation with the Research Council of Norway (RCN) - the Donor Programme Partner regarding the support in preparation of the call documentation and in designing the IdeaLab workshop. The RCN was also involved in the dissemination of information about calls for proposals among Norwegian research organisations. Those actions resulted in establishing the Polish-Norwegian partnerships and ultimately in receiving a large number of project proposals.

Overall, the programme implementation is progressing well. The programme elaboration as well as the preparation of implementation was successfully completed. According to the programme schedule the programme agreements were signed and two calls for proposals GRIEG and IdeaLab were announced. The results of the calls will be published in March/April 2020 and the project contracts are going to be signed in the period from March to September 2020. It is expected that 34-39 projects will be awarded.

The demanding schedule of 2019 taught the National Science Centre that there is more time needed in planning of the programme activities than in the NCN's usual routine.

The visibility of the programme was ensured through numerous promotional and informational activities. The activities included the establishment of the programme website, sending the press releases to various professional media, posting on social media, arrangement of informational chats and meetings promoting the program. An effective information and promotion campaign directed to the target groups resulted in broad interest of the calls and in a significant numbers of submitted applications in both the GRIEG and the Ideallab call.

Most of the risks that were initially defined for the programme, both programmatic and operational could still occur now.

The process of organising the IdeaLab call was successfully carried out, which resulted in submission of 4 full project proposals by the workshop participants. Therefore, it can be

stated that the risk of failure to provide appropriate conditions for opening and conducting call in IdeLab funding scheme has been mitigated in a proper way.

However, given the fact that the Programme Committee is expected to decide about the final ranking list of projects to be funded at the beginning of 2020, some uncertainty exists concerning the level of using the call allocation.

Also the risk of the difficulties in initiating cooperation between partners from Poland and Donor States did not arise thank to intensive information and promotion activities and access to the database of Norwegian research organisations, which helped the applicants from Poland in searching for potential partners or researchers interested in bilateral cooperation.

As in regard to the risk of delays in calls launch and projects selection, the risk has occurred to some extent. Two calls for proposals were announced according to schedule, while the announcement of the SGS POLS call was postponed to the next quarter due to the conducting of the decision-making process to which the NCN was obliged by the provisions of the programme agreement.

B. PERFORMANCE

1. Results

Bilateral Outcome: Enhanced collaboration between beneficiary and donor state entities involved in the programme

Analysis of bilateral relations and achievements

The programme contributes to strengthening of the bilateral cooperation between Poland and the Donor States on the level of the funding agencies and the research communities. In the reported period the bilateral activities concerned the cooperation with the Research Council of Norway focused on supporting and advising the NCN in preparation of calls documentation and dissemination the information on the possibilities of funding as well as facilitating the establishment of the partnerships. This collaboration resulted in involving around 220 research organisations: research institutes, university departments, NGOs etc. from Norway, which established partnerships with Polish institutions under the GRIEG and the IdeaLab call.

The establishment and operation of the Programme Committee for basic research is also an example of successful bilateral cooperation. The Programme Committee, which consists of two experts appointed by the RCN and three Polish researchers, was actively involved in supporting the NCN in all matters concerning the activities funded by the programme including approval of call documentation and defining the topic of the IdeaLab call.

2. Implementation

Conformity with specific requirements

The programme is implemented according to the schedule and in line with the conditions included in the Programme Agreement, which was signed in June 2019.

Norway grants

The NCN fulfilled the following general conditions set in the Programme Agreement:

 The National Focal Point shall ensure that pursuant to Article 1.5.2 of the Regulation that the Programme Operator shall ensure that any additional provisions to the implementation of the Programme shall be kept to a minimum, and to this end the Donor Programme Partner shall be closely involved in and effectively contribute to the development of the project contract template and other templates of document(s) relevant to the implementation of the programme, especially those affecting the relation of the project promoter and partner(s).

During the preparation phase the NCN closely cooperated with the National Focal Point and the Research Council of Norway to ensure that any additional provisions to the implementation of the Programme will be kept to the minimum. As far to the Donor Programme Partner, the Research Council of Norway was very much involved in the development of the call documentation and proposal templates both for the GRIG and IdeaLab call.

2. The National Focal Point shall ensure that the Programme Operator closely cooperates during the implementation of the programme with the Programme Operator of the Applied Research Programme in Poland.

In the reported period the NCN collaborated closely on daily basis with the National Centre for Research and Development (NCBiR) -the Programme Operator of the Applied Research Programme to ensure consistency of the Basic and Applied Research Programme. Within the cooperation, representatives of the NCBiR attended the Programme Committee meeting for Basic Research Programme, where the call documentation of the GRIEG and the IdeaLab calls were presented and discussed as well as colleagues form NCBiR participated in the IdeaLab workshop. Also the NCN representatives took part in the meeting of the Program Committee for Applied Research. In addition one bilateral meeting was organised in Warsaw in order to exchange experiences related to the financial and administrative issues of the programme implementation.

3. The National Focal Point shall ensure that the Programme Operator, before publishing the SGS 'POLS' presents to the Programme Committee a thorough assessment of the added value of this measure vis-à-vis similar national initiatives (offered by the Polish National Agency for Academic Exchange (NAWA)) and other European initiatives, in order to establish whether there is a justifiable funding gap for the activities proposed by the SGS 'POLS'. Further provisions on the implementation of this condition are specified in section 8. Miscellaneous in Annex II of this agreement.

In accordance with paragraph 8 point 2 of annex II to the Programme Agreement, before publishing the SGS POLS, the National Science Centre presented a thorough assessment of the added value of the SGS POLS to the Programme Committee. After reviewing the provided analysis, the Programme Committee decided to announce the SGS POLS call in March 2020.

With the reference to the annex II to the Programme Agreement the following milestones were achieved according to schedule: (1) announcement of the GRIEG call and (2) announcement of the IdeaLab call.

Within the GRIEG call 306 applications were received in all areas of basic research. The applications were grouped in three general domains: Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (83 applications), Physical Sciences and Engineering (136 applications) and Life Sciences (87 applications).

The research areas of special interest, required by MoU between Poland and Norway, are present in around 40 applications in the area of polar research whereas in social sciences in around 70 applications.

According to the Programme Agreement the IdeaLab call was carried out in line with the 'sandpit' method developed by the UK Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council. The selection process, including the content of the call for proposals was organised and developed in a close cooperation between the National Science Centre, the Programme Committee and the Research Council of Norway.

205 participants' applications from Poland (175), Norway (26) and Iceland (4) were received out of which 34 were selected for participation in the IdeaLab workshop. During the workshop 25 participants from Poland and 9 participants from Norway representing research institutions developed 8 interdisciplinary project ideas and 4 of those concepts were submitted in the form of full proposals.

Cooperation with International Partner Organisations (IPOs)

Not applicable

C. LEARNING

1. Monitoring

Monitoring is not applicable in this stage of the programme implementation and will be carried out in the next years/periods of the programme implementation.

2. Evaluation

Evaluation is not applicable in this stage of the programme implementation and will be carried out in the next years/periods of the programme implementation.

3. Lessons learned

The experience of the National Science Centre shows that the research projects are normally three-year projects. This three year period is very often prolonged due to the scientific risks or other unexpected circumstances. In order to ensure the possibility of projects extension, the NCN simultaneously consulted the Programme Agreement and prepared the call documentation. Although this measure was meant to ensure living up to the rigorous schedule to announce the calls, it made preparation of the call documentation extremely challenging. Due to the number of institutions involved, all of the processes were taking longer than initially expected.

Taking into consideration that in the decision making processes within the Norway and EEA Grants, a lot of national and foreign institutions are involved in order to avoid future risk, the NCN has adopted the principle that all activities should start earlier that it is usually accepted in the institution's daily practice.

D. ANNEXES

- **1. Updated results (indicator achievements)**
- 2. Communication
- **3. Overview of contracted projects**
- 4. Risk management
- 5. Monitoring plan
- 6. Evaluation report
- 7. List of individual mobilities

Norway grants

Annex 1: Updated results (indicator achievements)

Objective: Enhanced research-based knowledg	e development							
Outcome 1: Enhanced performance of Polish ba	isic research							
	Unit of		Achievements until end of previous reporting period	Achievements until end of December 2019				
Indicator	measurement	Baseline		Numerator	Denominator	Value	Target	Comment
Number of peer-reviewed scientific publications submitted	Number	0	-	-	-	0	250	to be achieved in the next periods of the programme implementation
Number of joint, peer-reviewed scientific publications submitted in basic research	Number	0	-	-	-	0	60	to be achieved in the next periods of the programme implementation
Financial Mechanism								
EEA Grants	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
Norway Grants	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
Donor State								
Norway	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
Iceland	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
Liechtenstein	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
Not specified	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
Output 1.1: Support to researchers conducting	basic research prov	ided						
	Unit of		Achievements until end of	Achieveme	nts until end of D 2019	ecember		
Indicator	measurement	Baseline	previous reporting period	Numerator	Denominator	Value	Target	Comment
Number of Polish researchers supported	Number	0	-	-	-	0	200	to be achieved in the next periods of the programme implementation
Financial Mechanism								

Liechtenstein
Norway grants

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EEA Grants	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
Norway Grants	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
Gender								
Female	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
Male	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
Not specified	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
Number of researchers from donor states supported	Number	0	-	-	-	0	70	to be achieved in the next periods of the programme implementation
Financial Mechanism								
EEA Grants	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
Norway Grants	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
Gender								
Female	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
Male	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
Not specified	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
Output 1.2: Support to young researchers provide	ed							
			Achievements until end of	Achieveme	Achievements until end of December 2019			
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline	previous reporting period	Numerator	Denominator	Value	Target	Comment
Number of mentor-mentee relationships established for young researchers	Number	0	-	-	-	0	70	to be achieved in the next periods of the programme implementation
Output 1.3: Support for collaboration between science and society implemented								
				Achievements until end of December 2019				
			Achievements until end of	Achieveme		ecember		
Indicator	Unit of measurement	Baseline		Achieveme Numerator		ecember Value	Target	Comment

								implementation	
Bilateral Outcome: Enhanced collaboration between beneficiary and donor state entities involved in the programme									
	Unit of		Achievements until end of	Achievements until end of December 2019					
Indicator	measurement	Baseline	previous reporting period	Numerator	Denominator	Value	Target	Comment	
Level of trust between cooperating entities in Poland and donors states	Scale 1-7	TBD, Survey to be carried out by the FMO	-	-	-	-	≥4.5, And an increase on the baseline	to be achieved in the next periods of the programme implementation	
Financial Mechanism									
EEA Grants	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Norway Grants	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
State type								·	
Beneficiary State	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Donor State	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Not specified	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Level of satisfaction with the partnership	Scale 1-7	TBD, Survey to be carried out by the FMO	-	-	-	-	≥4.5, And an increase on the baseline	to be achieved in the next periods of the programme implementation	
Financial Mechanism									
EEA Grants	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Norway Grants	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
State type									
Beneficiary State	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Donor State	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Not specified	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	

Liechtenstein
Norway grants

Share of cooperating organisations that apply the knowledge acquired from bilateral partnership	Percentage	N/A	-	-	-	-	≥50%	to be achieved in the next periods of the programme implementation
Financial Mechanism								
EEA Grants	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Norway Grants	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
State type			_					_
Beneficiary State	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Donor State	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Not specified	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Number of joint applications for further funding	Number	0	-	-	-	-	5	to be achieved in the next periods of the programme implementation
Financial Mechanism					•			
EEA Grants	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Norway Grants	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Donor State	•				•			
Norway	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Iceland	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Liechtenstein	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Not specified	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bilateral Output 1: Cooperation between benefic	iary and donor sta	ate entities s	supported					
	Unit of		Achievements until end of	Achieveme	Achievements until end of December 2019			
Indicator	measurement	Baseline	previous reporting period	Numerator	Denominator	Value	Target	Comment
Number of projects involving cooperation with a donor project partner	Number	0	0 (IFR 2019)	-	-	0	30	to be achieved in the next periods of the programme implementation
Financial Mechanism								
EEA Grants	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
Norway Grants	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-

Iceland PL Liechtenstein Norway grants								Norway grants
Donor State								
Norway	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
Iceland	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
Liechtenstein	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
Not specified	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-

Annex 2: Communication summary

a. Visibility of the Grants and the donors

Visibility of the Polish Basic Research Programme within the EEA and Norway Grants was ensured through the numerous information and promotional activities defined in Information and Communication Plan reaching the target groups such as Polish and foreign researchers, research organisations from Poland and Donor States, public organisations, enterprises, NGOs.

Number of views of the programme website (12 thous.), call announcements (52 thous.), news related to the programme showed a great interest in funding for research projects under the EEA and Norway Grants.

To further increase the presence of information concerning the Polish Research Programme around 50 press releases and other press materials were prepared and sent out in national and local media, professional media (research area), PR contacts (over 500 at present), research departments of Polish higher education institutions, NGO's, cultural organizations and diplomatic circles.

As a part of promotional activities, an event informing potential beneficiaries on available opportunities, admission rules and call timeframe was organised.

The informational day was attended by 106 administrative employees and representatives of the scientific staff of research organizations.

The promotion of the Polish Research Programme also took place during the NCN Days in Łódź and gathered over 500 representatives of the scientific staff of research organizations interested in submitting applications for the calls.

In addition leaflets dedicated to promoting the Polish Basic Research Programme as well as the GRIEG, IdeaLab and POLS calls were prepared, printed out and distributed both traditionally and electronically.

b. Communication with the National Focal Point

The NCN was an active member of the Programme Operators communication network exchanging information on the call announcement, event organisation and all programme activities. Furthermore, representatives of the National Science Centre took part in the following events organised by the National Focal Point:

- opening event of the 3rd edition of Norwegian and EEA Grants in Warsaw;

- training on effective communication in the Programme Operators network organised in Krakow;

- training on reporting results under the Norwegian Funds program conducted in Warsaw.

c. Website and social media

The web requirements of the programme were fulfilled through the following activities:

 Website www.ncn.gov.pl/eeanorwaygrants dedicated to the programme in both languages English and Polish was established. The website is regularly updated with comprehensive information regarding opportunities available in the Polish Basic Research Programme, information on programme activities and events organised for target groups.

- <u>The Partner Search database</u> run by the Research Council of Norway was available through the programme website. It supported the applicants from Poland in searching potential partners and researches from Norway interested in bilateral cooperation. (https://www.forskningsradet.no/no/Artikkel/Partner_Search_Database_for_E EA_and_Norway_Grants/1254034516104?lang=no)
- 3. <u>Social media</u> during the reported period about 11 news relating to the launch of the programme, calls announcement, promotional and informational events were posted. The following social media channels/profiles run by the NCN were used to promote the Polish Basic Research Programme:
 - Narodowe Centrum Nauki Facebook profile https://www.facebook.com/NarodoweCentrumNauki
 - Narodowe Centrum Nauki Instagram profile https://www.instagram.com/ncn_gov_pl/
 - NCN's YouTube Channel https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC2bHSeriW4Ity8j44k_CMAg
- 4. Two <u>informational chats</u> for researchers interested in applying in GRIEG and IdeaLab call were organised. About 170 participants from Poland and Donor States were registered for the chats. All questions and answers that appeared in the web chat were published afterwards on the website and updated in Frequently Asked Questions.

d. Best practice examples

Not applicable in this stage of the programme implementation.

e. Multimedia

The video presenting the IdeaLab call and the Polish Research Programme was recorded during the IdeaLab workshop and it will be promoted via all electronic means and social media profiles owned and run by the NCN after the call is closed.

Annex 3: Overview of contracted projects

Outcome	Projects	#	# of donor project partners	Amount contracted	% of outcome budget contracted
	Pre-defined	0	0	€0	0.00 %
Outcome 1: Enhanced	Contracted through open calls	0	0	€0	0.00 %
performance of Polish basic research	Contracted through small grants scheme	0	0	€0	0.00 %
	Total Outcome 1	0	0	€0	0.00 %
Programme	Total	0	0	€0	0.00 %



Annex 4: Risk management

Programmatic risks											
Risk description	Risk related to	Likelihood	Consequence	Risk score	Response type	Risk N/A?					
	Both	3	2	2.45	Mitigate	No					
	objectives	5	2	2.45		NO					
	Description of	ongoing consultation	ns with RCN, FMO and NFP	in Poland, reque	sting for regular teleconf	erences to					
	planned	verify and unify all questionable areas associated with the proper Programme management, policy of									
underspending of funds	response	financial flexibility in reference to project implementation									
allocated to the projects	Description of	ongoing consultations with RCN, FMO and NFP in Poland, requesting for regular teleconferences to									
	actual		verify and unify all questionable areas associated with the proper Programme management, policy of								
	response	financial flexibility in reference to project implementation									
	Planned	ongoing consultations with RCN, FMO and NFP in Poland, requesting for regular teleconferences to verify and unify all questionable areas associated with the proper Programme management, policy of									
	future										
	response	financial flexibility in reference to project implementation, analysing the EUR/PLN exchange risk									
	Both	3	3	3.00	Mitigate	No					
	objectives	_			J. J	_					
	Description of		ns with RCN, FMO and NFP	•							
different understanding of	planned		uestionable areas associate		v						
formal guidelines and criteria	response		ees involved in Programme								
related to cooperation within	Description of		ns with RCN, FMO and NFP	• •	v v						
the Programme	actual		uestionable areas associate		• •						
	response		ees involved in Programme								
	Planned		ns with RCN, FMO and NFP	•	0 0						
	future		uestionable areas associate		• •						
	response	meetings of employe	ees involved in Programme	e preparation, imp	Diementation and comple	etion					
changes in Polish law and/or	Both	2	3	2.45	Mitigate	No					
Donor States' law	objectives				-						

Iceland Liechtenstein



	Description of planned response	ongoing consultation	day-by-day overview of law modification and estimating its influence on the Programme assumptions, ongoing consultations with RCN, FMO and NCP in Poland to find acceptable solutions of preventing the risk of incompatibility with The Programme requirements and to moderate the delays in ongoing projects							
	Description of actual response	ongoing consultation	day-by-day overview of law modification and estimating its influence on the Programme assumptions, ongoing consultations with RCN, FMO and NCP in Poland to find acceptable solutions of preventing the risk of incompatibility with The Programme requirements and to moderate the delays in ongoing projects							
	Planned future response	day-by-day overview of law modification and estimating its influence on the Programme assumption ongoing consultations with RCN, FMO and NCP in Poland to find acceptable solutions of preventing risk of incompatibility with The Programme requirements and to moderate the delays in ongoing projects								
	Both objectives	3	4	3.46	Mitigate	No				
failure to provide	Description of planned response	close cooperation with RCN, the facilitating company, director, mentors (ongoing consultations to provide optimal IdeLab formula in the EEA grants setting) and Legal Team (ongoing consultations to provide the most adequate and effective formal/legal solutions in call regulations)								
appropriate conditions for opening and conducting call in IdeLab funding scheme	Description of actual response	close cooperation with RCN, the facilitating company, director, mentors (ongoing consultations to provide optimal IdeLab formula in the EEA grants setting) and Legal Team (ongoing consultations to provide the most adequate and effective formal/legal solutions in call regulations)								
	Planned future response	Organisation of the IdeaLab call was completed and the risk is not foreseen in the future.								
Operational risks				,	1					
Risk description	Risk related to	Likelihood	Consequence	Risk score	Response type	Risk N/A?				
difficulties with initiating cooperation between	Both objectives	3	4	3.46	Mitigate	No				
partners from Poland and	Description of	the Communication	Plan included the internati	onal promotion o	of the Programme, creati	ng a tool				

Donor States	planned		gine) to help the applicar		searching potential part	ners or					
	response	researchers interested in bilateral cooperation									
	Description of	the Communication Plan included the international promotion of the Programme, creating a tool									
	actual	(browser, search engine) to help the applicants from Poland in searching potential partners or									
	response	researchers interest	researchers interested in bilateral cooperation								
	Planned	The hilateral GRIEG	and IdeaLab calls were su	uccessfully implem	ented and the risk is not	foreseen in the					
	future	future		accessiony implem		ioreseen in the					
	response	latare									
	Both	3	4	3.46	Mitigate	No					
	objectives	5									
	Description of	involvement at an early stage of programming departments and teams of NCN working on research									
	planned	programme									
delays in call launch and	response	programme									
project selection	Description of	involvement at an e	arly stage of programmin	og denartments an	d teams of NCN working	on research					
	actual	involvement at an early stage of programming departments and teams of NCN working on research programme									
	response										
	Planned	involvement at an early stage of programming departments and teams of NCN working on research									
	future	programme									
	response										
	Both objectives	3	4	3.46	Mitigate	No					
failure to achieve goals and	Description of planned	ongoing supervision, in particular the assessment of annual reports (monitoring the status of achieving goals and results); agreement on the implementation and financing of a research project - encourage the possibility of:1) extension the duration of a project in case of justified delays;2) adequate									
results of the projects	response	modification of rese	arch tasks after a positive dly scientific goals and ol	e recommendation	n of an independent exp	•					
	Description of actual	ongoing supervision, in particular the assessment of annual reports (monitoring the status of achieving goals and results); agreement on the implementation and financing of a research project - encourage									

Iceland Liechtenstein Norway grants					Norway grants				
	responsethe possibility of:1) extension the duration of a project in case of justified delays;2) adequate modification of research tasks after a positive recommendation of an independent expert in particul justified cases (friendly scientific goals and objectives management and supervision)								
	Planned future response	ongoing supervision, in particular the assessment of annual reports (monitoring the status of achieving goals and results); agreement on the implementation and financing of a research project - encourage the possibility of:1) extension the duration of a project in case of justified delays;2) adequate modification of research tasks after a positive recommendation of an independent expert in particular justified cases (friendly scientific goals and objectives management and supervision)							
Overall risk of the program	Overall risk of the programme								
		Likelihood	Consequence	Risk score					
OVERALL RISK OF THE PRO	GRAMME	3	3	3.00					