

**TYPES OF COSTS IN RESEARCH PROJECTS
FUNDED BY THE NATIONAL SCIENCE CENTRE
UNDER THE BEETHOVEN CLASSIC 3 CALL FOR PROPOSALS¹**

ELIGIBLE COSTS are expenditures eligible for funding from NCN resources. Eligible costs shall be deemed only the expenditures that fulfil all of the following criteria:

- 1) are critical to the completion of the project,
- 2) have been incurred from the day on which the decision of the NCN Director to grant funding becomes legally binding until the final date of the research project's implementation²,
- 3) incurred in line with the principle of advisability and frugality, and in line with the principle of obtaining optimal effects from given resources,
- 4) allowing for identification and verification, scrupulously documented and duly recorded in an account book,
- 5) conforming with applicable rules and regulations, including the rules and regulations of the host institution and the rules and regulations of the NCN, including the rules set forth in this document.

The following shall not be deemed eligible costs:

- 1) costs of visits and consultations by collaborators from German research institutions, who receive separate funding for the project from Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG),
- 2) reserves for future liabilities, interest due and other expenditures for debt-servicing, interest and other expenditures for late payments, contractual penalties, fines, penalties and payments for the costs of judicial proceedings,
- 3) VAT, if the host institution is entitled to reclaim VAT,
- 4) costs of proceedings related to conferment of academic degrees/titles,
- 5) costs of fees paid for pre-publishing reviews.

The eligibility of costs is checked during the proposal evaluation, evaluation of the annual report, evaluation of the final report and during the external audit.

Eligible costs incurred by the host institution are subdivided into direct and indirect costs.

1. Indirect costs are the costs related indirectly to the research project, and essential for the proper realisation of the funding agreement

The maximum limit for indirect costs amounts to 40 per cent of direct costs, excluding "costs of

¹ The costs of the research project carried out by the Polish research team given in PLN in ZSUN/OSF (Zintegrowany System Usług dla Nauki /Obsługa Strumieni Finansowania) must be identical with the costs given in EUR in the Joint Project Description (JPD). The costs given in JPD should be calculated on the basis of the average exchange rate quoted by the National Bank of Poland on the day the NCN Council adopted Resolution No 82/2018 of 6 September 2018 on the terms and Regulations on awarding funding for the implementation of research tasks funded by the National Science Centre under the BEETHOVEN CLASSIC 3 call for proposals for Polish-German research projects, namely: 1 Euro = PLN 4.3218. The costs of the project implementation in ZSUN / OSF should be given in PLN, rounded down to the total values, and in JPD, in EUR, rounded down to two decimal places.

² In the event of failure to sign the funding agreement for reasons directly attributable to the host institution or the principal investigator, return of incurred costs may not be demanded of the NCN. Making records of costs and settling all liabilities is possible by the date of drawing up the final report, no later, however, than within 60 days of the research project completion.



research equipment, devices and software.”

Indirect costs shall be covered by a lump sum and considered as incurred expenditure. The host institution shall arrange with the principal investigator in the project for the distribution of at least 25 per cent of the direct costs' value.

2. Direct costs are costs directly related to the completion of the research project; the following direct costs may be distinguished:

- costs of remuneration and scholarships,
- costs of research equipment, devices and software,
- other direct costs.

The following expenditures may not be financed as direct costs:

- 1) remuneration of the administrative and financial staff (performing services related to personnel, accounting, legal issues, including the outsourcing of accounting to an accountancy office),
- 2) costs of renovation of facilities,
- 3) costs of adapting/upgrading facilities, so that they can meet the needs of the research tasks,
- 4) fees and rent for the use of facilities, property taxes, etc.,
- 5) utilities (cost of electricity, heating, heating gas, water, as well as other transmission fees, sewage, etc.), telecommunications charges (telephone, Internet) and mail and courier services, excluding the services referred to in point 2.3.2.
- 6) costs of cleaning, janitorial and security services to facilities,
- 7) cost of non-life insurance,
- 8) handling and administrative fees,
- 9) cost of banking services, including: opening and maintaining a sub-account or separate account for the research project, bank fees,
- 10) costs of external audits,
- 11) costs of organising conferences, workshops, seminars, meetings (with the exception of personal costs in points 2.3.3 and 2.3.4),
- 12) costs of subscriptions (with the exception of the cost of data and access to data referred to in point 2.3.6),
- 13) fees for membership in organisations, associations, etc.

All expenses outlined above in points 1-13 may be covered as indirect costs.

2.1. Costs of remuneration and scholarships³ – under this heading fall the costs of remuneration and related expenditures,⁴ and scholarships.

Remuneration may be paid **only to persons employed as members of the research team, i.e. the principal investigator and other investigators in the project**. Scholarships for doctoral candidates and students engaged in the project can also be paid from the project resources.

Budget for remuneration and scholarships for members of the research team may include resources for:

- a) *full-time remuneration* i.e. remuneration paid pursuant to a full-time contract of employment to the project's principal investigator and persons employed as post-docs,
- b) *additional remuneration* for members of the research team,
- c) *scholarships* for doctoral candidates and students.

³ For joint entities, the budget for remuneration and scholarships is shared by all individual entities that form the joint entity.

⁴ The amounts of remuneration quoted in the document are gross amounts. The amounts quoted shall include also non-wage labour costs, including social and health insurance contributions and other elements of remuneration, financed by the host institution. These resources shall also cover the additional annual bonus, should the host institution carry the obligation pay it.

Each person may be paid remuneration from the project's direct resources only in one of the forms enumerated above in points a) through c).

2.1.1. Full-time remuneration:

Principal investigator may be paid remuneration from the pool allocated for full-time remuneration pursuant to a full-time contract of employment at a research post as long as they meet all of the following conditions:

- a) at the time of receiving such remuneration, they are not receiving any other remuneration paid from the resources granted under NCN calls under the heading of direct costs;
- b) at the time of receiving such remuneration they are not employed by another employer pursuant to a contract of employment⁵ nor do they receive a pension from the social security system;
- c) the sum of resources for their employment does not exceed⁶ PLN 150,000 per annum.

Person at a *post-doc* type post⁷ may be paid remuneration from the pool allocated for full-time remuneration pursuant to a full-time contract of employment as long as they meet all of the following conditions:

- a) has been selected by means of open competition procedure, carried out by three-person recruitment committee appointed by the head of the project's host entity, composed of the project's principal investigator as its chair and at least two other persons selected by him/her, who have necessary scientific or professional qualifications. The assessment of the candidates is carried out pursuant to the criteria outlined in the call announcement, and the results are made public by posting on the webpage of the project's host entity;
- b) the principal investigator in the project has not been thesis supervisor/auxiliary thesis supervisor of their doctorate;
- c) for two years before employment in the project has not been employed by the host entity pursuant to a contract of employment;
- d) at the time of receiving such remuneration they are not receiving any other remuneration paid from the resources granted under NCN calls under the heading of direct costs;
- e) in the period of receiving the remuneration they are not employed by another employer pursuant to a contract of employment⁵;
- f) the sum of resources for their employment⁶ does not exceed to PLN 120,000 a year. The remuneration may be increased provided that it is justified by particular facts outlined in the proposal. The expert team decides whether there are reasons to increase remuneration.

It is permitted to employ at the *post-doc* type post in the project, remunerated from the pool allocated for full-time remuneration, one person who does not meet the criterion set forth in point b).

Under the **BEETHOVEN CLASSIC 3** call it is permitted to employ persons at *post-doc* type posts provided that the aggregate time of employment of all persons employed at those posts is no more than twice the time planned as the project's duration. Employment at this post may be no

⁵ Applies also to contracts of employment concluded with an employer established outside the territory of the Republic of Poland.

⁶ If full-time remuneration is not received on a continuous basis during the entire course of the project's completion, the amount of full-time remuneration is reduced in proportion to the period when the remuneration is received.

⁷ "*Post-doc*" type post is to be understood as a full-time post, scheduled by the project's principal investigator for a person at the beginning of their career in research, who has obtained their doctorate degree within 7 years before joining the project. This period does not include breaks related to: maternity leave, adoption leave, paternal leave, parental leave granted in compliance with the Employment Code, nor periods of sickness benefit or rehabilitation benefit granted on account of unfitness for work, including any caused by a health condition requiring rehabilitation. Women may extend the 7-year period by 18 months for every child born or adopted. A woman may choose whichever manner of accounting for career breaks she finds preferable.

less than 6 months.

2.1.2. Additional remuneration:⁸

The resources for the project may be directed toward payment of additional remuneration, which may be used to finance employment pursuant to full- or part-time employment contracts as well as pursuant to civil law contracts. Member of a research team employed pursuant to a contract of employment by a host institution may only receive additional remuneration in a form other than pursuant to a civil law contract.

When calculating the budget for additional remuneration, the calculation shall exclude from the team's personnel (principal investigator and other investigators) any persons who in the period of the project's duration should be included in the *full-time remuneration* pool of another NCN-funded project, and persons who should be receiving scholarships under the project. The number of persons thus determined shall be the basis for the calculation of the budget for additional remuneration.

The amounts set out below serve solely the purpose of calculating the maximal budget for additional remuneration in a given project. The maximum budget for the remuneration of the principal investigator may not be increased once the project has entered the stage of implementation.

Under the **BEETHOVEN CLASSIC 3** call, the budget for additional remuneration calculated for each month of the project's implementation, for all investigators, amounts in total to no more than:

- a) should the principal investigator not plan to be employed pursuant to a full-time contract of employment, with remuneration paid from the pool allocated for full-time remuneration:
 - PLN 3,000 for one person;
 - PLN 4,500 for two persons, of which no more than PLN 3,000 for the principal investigator;
 - PLN 5,500 for three or more persons, of which no more than PLN 3,000 for the principal investigator.
- b) should the principal investigator plan to be employed pursuant to a full-time contract of employment, with remuneration paid from the pool *allocated for full-time remuneration*:
 - PLN 1,500 for one person;
 - PLN 2,500 for two or more persons.

2.1.3. Scholarships:

The NCN scholarships may be awarded provided that:

- a) they are granted in compliance with the Regulations on awarding scholarships for young researchers in the NCN-funded research projects, as specified in the Resolution No 96/2016 of 27 October 2016 of the NCN Council;
- b) in the period of receiving the NCN scholarship, the investigator may not receive remuneration from the NCN funds;⁹
- c) the total amount of all NCN scholarships received by the investigators does not exceed PLN 4,500 a month. This amount must not include scholarship received on terms of the doctoral scholarship funded from the NCN resources under the ETIUDA call.

⁸ The employment paid for from the pool allocated for additional remuneration is not subject to the restrictions set forth in point 2.1.1.

⁹ Does not apply to laureates of the ETIUDA call.

The total amount of all research scholarships received monthly in a given project under the BEETHOVEN CLASSIC 3 call may not exceed PLN 9,000. The amount indicated serves solely the purpose of calculating the maximum budget for scholarships in a given project.

2.2. Costs of research equipment, devices and software – under this heading fall costs of the research equipment, other devices and software to be purchased or developed, as necessary to conduct the research tasks in the project.

Research equipment¹⁰ (as defined by the Central Statistical Office) is to be understood as set(s) of testing, measurement and laboratory apparatus[es] of limited application and high technical parameters (usually several orders of magnitude higher than typical apparatus used for production or exploitation purposes), which in accordance with the accounting policies of the host institution constitute the host institution's fixed assets.

Purchase of research equipment may not constitute the main goal of the project.

Other devices – other devices outside the scope of the definition of research equipment, which in accordance with the accounting policies of the host institution constitute the host institution's fixed assets.

Software – software purchased to meet the requirements of the research project, which in accordance with the accounting policies of the host institution constitutes the host institution's intangible assets.

The value of research equipment shall be determined in accordance with the Accounting Law and it includes, among others: costs of transportation, loading and unloading, insurance of the transported goods, installation/assembly, customs and excise duty, and the value of software if it is treated as a component of the research equipment.

2.3. Other direct costs – under this heading fall costs qualifying neither as “costs of remuneration and scholarships” nor “costs of research equipment, devices and software.”

2.3.1. Materials and small devices – cost of purchasing materials and consumables for direct use over the course of the project, including, among others:

- raw materials, half-finished products, reagents,
- stationery, office items and supplies,
- small laboratory devices, IT hardware and small office devices (e.g. a computer, licensing costs and software development, printers, scanners, monitors, copiers), other devices, as long as according to the accounting policies of the host institution they are not qualified as tangible or intangible assets.

2.3.2. Outsourcing: costs of services rendered by third parties (incorporated as well as individuals with a business activity), including, among others:

- cost of research services (laboratory analyses, statistical reports, polls, etc.),

¹⁰ The project's resources may not be used to finance or co-finance the purchase or building of research equipment which forms large or strategic research infrastructure (art. 22, Act on the principles of funding science of 30 April 2010). Pursuant to art. 2 point 17 of the Act, large research infrastructure shall be understood as research infrastructure, including IT infrastructure with a value in excess of:

- a) PLN 150,000 in the case of research equipment used for research and technological development in the domain of arts, humanities and social sciences,
- b) PLN 500,000 in the case of research equipment used for research and technological development in the domains of physical sciences and life sciences.



- cost of purchasing other specialist services critical to the completion of the research in due form (proofreading, editing, graphics, counselling, monitoring, etc.),
- cost of postal, shipping and transport services directly related to the completion of a given research task,
- cost of renting a venue, cost of catering, etc., which are essential to the completion of research tasks that include respondents.

Persons who are recipients of remuneration or scholarships in the project may not be involved in research tasks as subcontractors directly or indirectly (via institutions that employ them).

2.3.3. Business trips – costs of business trips of the members of the research team, including, among others:

- costs of participation in seminars/conferences related to the subject of the research,
- costs of trips (including business trips) critical to the completion of the research, e.g. preliminary archival and library research, fieldwork, etc.

Costs of business trips include:

- daily allowance and reimbursement of travel costs, as set forth by the regulations passed in accordance with art. 77⁵ § 2 of the Polish Labour Code,
- individual insurance,
- conference fees,
- other costs, as long as they are considered justified and essential to the completion of the research, such as: visas, vaccinations, etc.

Long-term expeditions may be qualified as eligible if their costs have been calculated in line with the principle of advisability and frugality, based on a solid assessment of their actual costs.

2.3.4. Visits and consultations – costs of visits by external collaborators and/or consultants closely connected to the subject of the research, excluding the costs indicated as ineligible above (p.1).

In this category eligible shall be only personal costs in the form of allowances, reimbursement of travel costs and accommodation.

2.3.5. Collective investigators – total cost of gratification for persons carrying out one-time responsibilities (e.g. interviewers) as well as study participants. The minimum number of such investigators is 5 persons. This category does not include technicians and lab managers.

A detailed cost estimate shall be drafted, describing the objective of the expenditure and its total cost, as well as the number of persons receiving benefits, the value of a unit rate and the form of benefit (monetary or material).

2.3.6. Other costs – other costs that fall in none of the previous categories, among others:

- costs of purchasing data/databases or access thereto,
- specialist publications/teaching aids,
- costs of publishing the results of the project's research by an international publisher(s).

The research project may include actions intended to promote it and disseminate its results. Anticipated costs generated by such actions, as long as they meet the conditions of eligibility, shall be entered in the categories "*Costs of remuneration and scholarships*," "*Outsourcing*," etc., accordingly.

prof. dr hab. Janusz Janeczek



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Chairman
of the Council
of the National Science Centre