

Annex to NCN Council Resolution No 36/2025 of 10 April 2025 amending the terms and conditions of the SONATA BIS call for proposals

Terms and conditions of the SONATA BIS call for research projects launched by the National Science Centre

I. Addressees of the call

The call is addressed at researchers with a PhD degree conferred within 5 to 12 years before the proposal submission year who intend to carry out research projects aiming to create a new research team to conduct basic research.

II. Eligible applicants

- §1. Funding proposals, hereinafter: “proposals” may be submitted by entities specified in Article 27 (1) of the Act on the National Science Centre of 30 April 2010 (consolidated text in Journal of Laws of 2023, item 153; hereinafter: the “NCN Act”), hereinafter: the “applicants”¹.
- §2. Proposals may also be submitted by applicants, for which project funding will constitute state aid granted pursuant to the Ordinance adopted by the Minister of Science and Higher Education pursuant to Article 37 (2) of the NCN Act.
- §3. Where the applicant is a group of entities defined in Article 27 (1) (2) of the NCN Act, the proposal shall be submitted by the leader. PI’s employer shall act as the leader of the group of entities.
- §4. Where the applicant is an individual, the research project must not be conducted by a group of entities or entity for whom project funding constitutes state aid.
- §5. An entity that is under receivership, in liquidation or subject to bankruptcy proceedings must not act as an applicant or host institution for a research project.

III. Terms of entry

- §6. The following proposals may be submitted under the call:
- 1) to carry out research that neither is nor was funded by the NCN or from any other sources,
 - 2) which comprise basic research specified in Article 2 (1) of the NCN Act in any of the academic disciplines defined in the NCN panels adopted by the NCN Council,
 - 3) in which the principal investigator has a PhD degree conferred within 5 to 12 years before the proposal submission year²,
 - 4) which cover a research project planned for the period of 36 months, 48 months or 60 months,

¹ In the case of applicants outside of the public finance sector or unable to establish a relevant security for due completion of the project, who have operated for less than 5 years, their legal and organisational as well as financial situation shall be analysed. In the case of applicants who are natural persons, the analysis referred to in the preceding sentence shall be performed with respect to the host institution, while in the case of applicants that form a group of entities, with respect to each partner individually.

² This period may be extended by the time of long-term (in excess of 90 days) evidenced sickness benefits or physiotherapy benefits on account of unfitness for work. In addition, this period may be extended by the number of months of a child care leave granted pursuant to the Labour Code and in the case of women, by 18 months for every child born or adopted, whichever manner of accounting for career breaks is preferable.

- 5) which comply with the Regulations on awarding funding for research tasks funded by the National Science Centre as regards research projects, adopted by the NCN Council, hereinafter: the "Regulations",
- 6) in which investigators involved in project other than the principal investigator must not hold an academic title, title of professor, habilitation degree or equivalent degree or title³ and must not have cooperated in the implementation of a research project funded following a call for proposals,
- 7) where the tasks to be performed under the project include engagement of PhD student(s)⁴ for the total period of at least 36 months pursuant to the Regulations, and
- 8) which include the documents and information specified in §7.

§7. Proposals must include information specified in the proposal form in the OSF submission system, the template of which is provided in the call text, including:

- 1) research project title (*in Polish and in English*),
- 2) project's abstract (*in English*),
- 3) project's abstract for the general public (*1 page in Polish and 1 page in English*),
- 4) research project description:
 - a) short description (*up to 5 pages in English*),
 - b) full description (*up to 15 pages in English*).

Project descriptions must contain the scientific goal of the project, significance of the project, general concept and work plan, research methodology, composition and qualifications of the research team, including (if applicable) achievements of the co-investigators in the project specified in the proposal, justification for the creation of a new research team and project literature applicable to the subject of the project.

Project literature does not count towards the page limit.

- 5) work plan (*in Polish and in English*) presenting research tasks;
- 6) information on the research team (*in English*), including:
 - a) information on the principal investigator, including:
 - academic and research career,
 - 1-10 most important papers published or accepted for publication (letter of acceptance required) in the proposal submission year or over the period of 10 years prior to the proposal submission year². 1-3 most important papers referred to above must be annexed in pdf format,
For research in art, 1-10 most important papers published or accepted for publication (letter of acceptance required) or artistic achievements and achievements in research in art in the proposal submission year or over the period of 10 years prior to the proposal submission year²; if one or more publications are specified, annex 1-3 of them in pdf format;
 - information of research project management or other research funding awarded under NCN calls in the proposal submission year or over the period of 10 years prior to the proposal submission year²,
 - information of research project management funded under other national or international calls⁵ in the proposal submission year or over the period of 10 years prior to the proposal submission year² (*up to 5 projects*),
 - description of the most important research achievement,
 - research experience gained in Poland or abroad,
 - the most important national or international distinctions for research and other scientific and artistic activity,

³ This condition must be met on the last day of submitting proposals under the call. Does not apply to investigators involved in the project who will receive their academic title, title of professor, habilitation degree or equivalent degree or title in the course of the project.

⁴ Participants of doctoral programmes defined in the Act on Higher Education of 27 July 2005 or PhD students at doctoral schools defined in the Act on Higher Education and Science of 20 July 2018.

⁵ Acting as a principal investigator also means managing/ coordinating the work of a research group in international research projects or programmes.

- b) information on the required qualifications and scope of work planned by each investigator in the research project,
- 7) research project budget drafted according to the Regulations (*in English*),
- 8) in the case of a research project carried out in cooperation with partners from foreign research institutions, information on international cooperation as well as description of related advantages (*in English*),
- 9) information on the data management plan concerning data generated or used in the course of a research project, as required by the proposal (*in English*),
- 10) information on the ethical aspects of the project, including any consents, opinions, permits and/or approvals necessary to carry out the project in compliance with generally applicable laws and best practices adopted for a specific academic discipline, as required by the proposal (*in English*),
- 11) in the case of research projects which include clinical trials with a medicinal product or a medical device, a detailed justification of the non-commercial nature of the trials (*in English*),
- 12) in the case of research projects covering research being performed or completed by the principal investigator, or with respect to which the principal investigator applies for funding under other NCN calls or from other sources, description of similar research tasks with reasons justifying the need to have them funded under the project (*in English*),
- 13) in the case of research projects carried out by a group of entities, an agreement on collaboration for the purposes of completion of the requested research project, as required by the proposal (*in Polish*),
- 14) administrative declarations by the principal investigator and the host institution, as required by the proposal, and
- 15) in the case of entities for which project funding constitutes state aid, specific costs as well as other documents and declarations related to the application for state aid via the NCN, as required by the proposal (*in Polish*).

IV. Evaluation of proposals

§8. Proposals are evaluated pursuant to the Regulations.

§9. In the evaluation of proposals, the following criteria shall be reviewed in particular:

- 1) compliance with the basic research criterion specified in Article 2 (1) of the NCN Act,
- 2) quality of research and innovative nature of research or tasks to be carried out,
- 3) project's impact on the advancement of the scientific discipline,
- 4) evaluation of feasibility of research,
- 5) scientific achievements of the principal investigator, including publications in prestigious academic press/ journals,
- 6) reasons and manner of the new research team formation,
- 7) evaluation of other projects carried out by the principal investigator and funded by the NCN or from other sources,
- 8) relevance of the costs to the subject and scope of the research, and
- 9) development of the proposal and compliance with other requirements of the call text.

V. Funding decision

§10. The call shall be concluded within 6 months of the proposal submission date.

§11. The call results shall be delivered in the form of a decision of the NCN Director.

Prof. Dr hab. Tomasz Dietl
President of the Council
of the National Science Centre

The English version of this Resolution 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.