

TERMS AND CONDITIONS
OF THE POLSKIE POWROTY 2018
PROGRAMME

Warsaw, 7 March 2018

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1. GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROGRAMME

1.1 Objectives of the programme

The objective of the Polish Returns (*Polish: Polskie Powroty*) programme is to enable Polish scientists to return to their country and take up employment in Polish higher education institutions or research units. The programme will create optimal conditions for Returning Scientists to conduct in Poland world-class research and/or development work. Funds obtained as part of the Polish Returns programme will facilitate offering the Returning Scientists remuneration at a European level and will facilitate the forming of a Project Group (research team). Polish higher education institutions and research units will draw in specialists with international experience and expertise on the latest research in their respective disciplines.

The programme is financing:

- remuneration of the Returning Scientist (for a period of 36-48 months) along with employer costs;
- remuneration for two members of the Project Group (for a period of 36-48 months) along with employer costs;
- costs of relocation and adaptation of the workplace.

The task of the Returning Scientist is to create his own Project Group and apply for grants to Polish and international research funding institutions, as well as to conduct and disseminate research results in renowned scientific journals or to conduct development/implementation work. As part of the projects financed in the programme, the Applicants plan research activities to be carried out during the project. The Returning Scientist will also be able to support the host institution by combining research work with management, didactic and mentoring functions.

NAWA will provide the financing of projects for the duration of 36 to 48 months limited to a maximum amount of PLN 2,175,000 per project.

1.2 Basic terms and abbreviations used in the Polskie Powroty programme

- **Agency, NAWA** – the Polish National Agency for Academic Exchange
- **Beneficiary** - a higher education institution or a research unit, which has obtained funding under the Polskie Powroty programme and signed a grant agreement with NAWA.
- **Experienced scientist** – a person holding a PhD, who over the ten years preceding the year of submitting the application for funding:
 - a. has published at least five articles in prestigious Polish or international scientific journals;
 - b. has led research projects;
 - c. has met at least three of the following criteria:
 - has sat on a scientific committee of at least one prestigious international conference;
 - has published at least one monograph;
 - has given presentations during prestigious international conferences;
 - has won an international award or distinction;

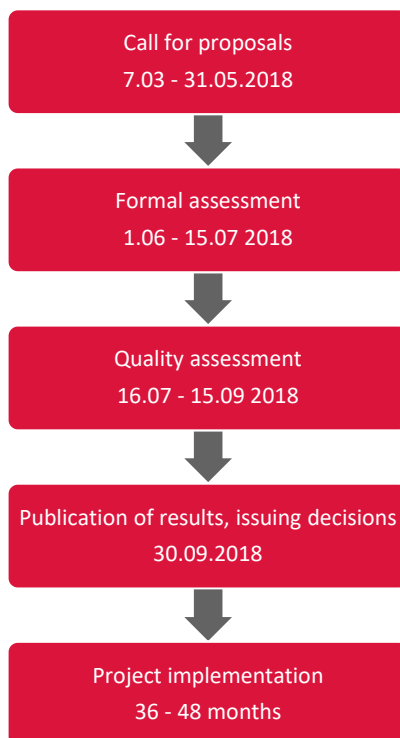
- is, or has previously been, a member of illustrious associations, international scientific organisations or academies,
- has other significant achievements in science;

and in the case of work in the scope of the creative arts - a person who has authored artistic works with international significance or relevance for Polish culture and who has actively participated in international exhibitions, festivals and events devoted to arts, visual arts, music, theatre and cinema.

The above mentioned achievements will be subject to expert assessment.

- **Director** - the Director of the Polish National Agency for Academic Exchange.
- **External expert** - a person from Poland or abroad requested by NAWA to perform quality assessment of proposals submitted under the Polskie Powroty call for proposals. External experts may perform individual quality assessments as reviewers or be members of an evaluation team
- **Project Group** - a group implementing a specific scientific, scientific/didactic, research or research and development project.
- **Returning Scientist** - a person returning to Poland under the Polskie Powroty programme.
- **Programme** - the Polskie Powroty programme.
- **Project** - a set of activities funded under the Polskie Powroty programme.
- **Reviewer** - an external expert performing individual quality assessments of proposals submitted under the Polskie Powroty call for proposals
- **Recommendations** - references concerning the Returning Scientist's scientific output, achievements and potential, issued at NAWA's request. Suggested referees are indicated by the Applicant.
- **ICT system of the Agency** - a system via which applications are submitted and assessed and the reports of beneficiaries are submitted and assessed.
- **Applicant** - an institution eligible to submit proposals, which has submitted or intends to submit an application for the participation in the Polskie Powroty Programme.
- **Evaluation team** - a team composed of external experts appointed by the Director to perform quality assessments of proposals within the scope identified in the Terms and Conditions.

1.3 Programme schedule



1.4 Terms and Conditions of the call for proposals

NAWA reserves the right to amend the Terms and Conditions during the call for proposals period, excluding amendments resulting in unequal treatment of applicants, unless the necessity to introduce such amendments results from the provisions of generally applicable law. The introduced amendments are effective from the moment they are published, in a manner consistent with the announcement of the call for proposals. If the application submitted before the amendments does not meet the requirements resulting from them, the Applicant is obligated to resubmit the application. All Applicants submitting proposals prior to the publication of amendments to the Terms and Conditions will be notified of all such amendments by NAWA via the ICT system of the Agency.

NAWA reserves the right to cancel the call for proposals, particularly in the case of significant amendments made to laws affecting the conditions in which the call for proposals is conducted, and in other duly justified cases including force majeure.

NAWA posts all information necessary for proper running of calls for proposals on its website www.nawa.gov.pl. It is recommended that entities interested in applying for grants under this call for proposals keep abreast of information posted on the above website.

2. APPLICATION PROCESS REQUIREMENTS AND OBLIGATIONS

2.1 Requirements for Returning Scientists

The Returning Scientist:

- a. has Polish citizenship;
- b. holds at least a degree of doctor (PhD);
- c. at the time of submitting the application is not employed in Poland, i.e. does not have a contract of employment with an entity having its registered office in Poland, under which remuneration was paid in the year preceding the year of the announcement of the call for proposals;
- d. returns to the country after at least two years of documented employment at a higher education institution abroad or at a research or scientific institute or at a research department of a foreign enterprise based outside of Poland. In the two-year period of a documented stay abroad, a stay financed or co-financed from Polish state budget cannot be included;
- e. conducted research, didactic or other scientific activity during their stay outside Poland for at least two full years (in the period counted from the beginning of 2014). Allowances can be made for the possibility of interruptions in scientific activity during the two-year stay abroad (e.g. in connection with maternity leave, parental leave, fortuitous events, unforeseeable circumstances, etc).

The two-year period since the Returning Scientist's departure from Poland must end no later than on May 31, 2018.

2.2 Terms and Conditions concerning the Returning Scientist:

- a. it is expected that after a period not exceeding 12 months of the project start date, Poland will be the Returning Scientist's principal place of residence;
- b. it is the Returning Scientist's task to set up his/her own Project Group and apply for research grants to Polish and international funding institutions, conduct such research and disseminate it in renowned scientific journals or conduct research and development activities;
- c. previously obtained grants may be used in Poland by the Returning Scientist who may also join a grant project implemented by a research group;
- d. the Project Group should be set up not later than 6 months of the project start date;
- e. the foreign institution hosting the Returning Scientist before his/her return to Poland may employ him/her on a not more than part-time basis and for a period not exceeding 12 months of the project start date;
- f. As part of their employment relationship, the Beneficiary will employ the Returning Scientist for the duration of the project. The Returning Scientist is employed respectively under Art. 118 (4) of the Law on Higher Education (Polish: Ustawa Prawo o szkolnictwie wyższym), Art. 91 (6) (2) of the Law on the Polish Academy of Sciences (Polish: Ustawa o Polskiej Akademii Nauk) or under Art. 43 (8) (2b) of the Law on Research Institutes (Polish: Ustawa o instytutach badawczych);
- g. Publications created within the duration of the project should possess the Beneficiary's affiliation.

2.3 Composition of the Project Group

Funding obtained under the programme will be instrumental in setting up a new Project Group (research team) headed by the Returning Scientist.

2.4 Requirements for the Project Group

- a. The composition of NAWA-funded project groups cannot exceed 3 people, that is the Returning Scientist and two members;
- b. the size of the Project Group may be increased if the Beneficiary ensures funding to cover the employment of additional group members other than those indicated in (a);
- c. Project Group members are employed on the basis of an employment contract and they have to be selected following a competition for the position indicated by the Returning Scientist; the competition is conducted by a three-strong recruitment team appointed by the Beneficiary and composed of the Returning Scientist as its Head plus at least two persons indicated by the Scientist who possess relevant academic or professional qualifications. One of the persons comes from an institution other than the one employing the Returning Scientist. Candidates are assessed on the basis of criteria published in the competition announcement. The results of the competition are made public by posting them on the Beneficiary's website;
- d. Project groups do not have to be set up if the type/scope of relevant research does not require it. The above will be evaluated by experts.

2.5 Obligations of the Applicant

Should funding be granted, the Applicant is obliged to:

- a. employ the Returning Scientist on the basis of an employment contract for the whole duration of the project, that is in the first year of the project on a basis of at least 0.5 full time equivalent, and in subsequent years for at least 0.75 full time equivalent;
- b. provide the Project Group with proper conditions for conducting research, including office/laboratory space and research equipment, as well as access to infrastructure enabling conducting research and teaching courses;
- c. provide financial and administrative services related to activities conducted by the Project Group, including dealing with matters relating to the Returning Scientist's come back and the founding of the Project Group;
- d. support the Project Group in the process of applying for research or research/development grants, obtaining necessary consents, opinions, permits, including applications to the relevant ethics committees;
- e. participate in programme evaluations involving the completion of three evaluation questionnaires, and in other evaluation activities conducted by NAWA, as stipulated in Section 9 of the Terms and Conditions.

2.6 List of scientific activities

In their application form, the Applicant planning to employ the Returning Scientist includes a list of scientific activities planned for implementation during the project and prepared by the Scientist. The list may include the following activities:

- research and development work;
- applying for research grants to funding institutions in Poland and abroad;
- didactic activity;
- mentoring activities;
- dissemination activities;
- cooperation with other scientific institutions or enterprises, including international cooperation;
- other activities proposed by the Applicant.

3. APPLICATION PROCEDURE

3.1 Eligible Applicants

Grant applications under the programme may be lodged by entities belonging to one of the following categories:

- a. higher education institutions specified in the Law on Higher Education of 27 July 2005 (Official Journal 2017, item 2183);
- b. research units of the Polish Academy of Sciences within the meaning of the Law on the Polish Academy of Sciences of 30 April 2010 (Official Journal 2016, item 572 as amended);
- c. research institutes within the meaning of the Law on Research Institutes of 30 April 2010 (Official Journal 2016, item 371 as amended);
- d. international research institutes established on the basis of separate regulations and operating in the territory of the Republic of Poland,
- e. other organisational units referred to in Article 2(9) (f) of the Act on the Principles of Financing Science (Official Journal 2018, item 87), which have assigned scientific category.

which intend to employ Returning Scientists.

The programme is open to Returning Scientists representing all scientific domains (the OECD classification is used in application forms submitted under the call for proposals).

3.2 Duration of the project

The duration of the project must be at least **36 months** and cannot exceed **48 months**. The project start and end dates are determined by the Applicant.

The project implementation start date can be 1 October 2018 at the earliest and 30 June 2019 at the latest.

Changes to the duration of the project:

- a. In duly justified cases caused by circumstances impossible to foresee at the stage of submitting the proposal, the project start date may be postponed by not more than 6

- months. Applications to change the project start date are considered on an individual basis by the Director who may ask the evaluation team to present their opinion on the matter;
- b. In duly justified cases caused by circumstances impossible to foresee at the stage of concluding the agreement, the duration of the project may be extended by not more than 12 months. Applications to extend the duration of the project are considered on an individual basis by the Director who may ask the evaluation team to present their opinion on the matter;
 - c. If the Returning Scientist takes breaks from work due to maternity leave, additional leave on the terms of maternity leave, paternity leave, parental leave or child-care leave granted on the principles specified in the provisions of the Labour Code, or due to receiving sickness benefits or rehabilitation allowance as a result of incapacity to work - including conditions requiring medical rehabilitation - the duration of the project may additionally be extended by a period that equals the length of the above breaks from work after the relevant application is approved by the Director;
 - d. In cases specified in points (a)-(c), the total amount of funding granted by NAWA will not be increased. This does not refer to possible funding granted by the higher education institution or research units, which are able to offer financial support to the project at its various stages.

3.3 Time limit for submitting proposals and forms of submission

Application forms under the Polskie Powroty call for proposals can be submitted **from 7 March to 31 May 2018, closing at 15.00 Polish local time. Applications can only be submitted in electronic format** through the NAWA's ICT system. Submission of applications after the expiry of the above deadline will not be possible.

Submission of an application through the system results in a change of the application status to "submitted" and the applicant receives an e-mail message with the application reference number.

The submission of the application means the Applicant's acceptance of the principles described in the Programme Terms and Conditions and annexes to them.

3.4 Information about the application form

The application form must be completed in English. Exceptions:

- project abstract included in the application form (in Polish);
- declarations and legal authorisations of the Applicant and the Returning Scientist which constitute annexes to the application (in Polish);
- documents attached to the application form confirming employment abroad and the award of academic title/degrees (in Polish or English).

A sample application form and information concerning its completion is available at www.nawa.gov.pl.

One Returning Scientist may submit one application form only. However, there is no limit to the number of applications submitted by one Applicant.

3.5 Required attachments

The application must be accompanied by the following documents:

- a. a list of five researchers, including three coming from abroad, who at the request of NAWA will give the Returning Scientist Recommendations. It is the obligation of the Returning Scientist to obtain the relevant consents from those persons listed as the ones who would give Recommendations;
- b. a scientific biography of the Returning Scientist, including: education, their history of scientific work at home and abroad, science internships, additional scientific activity (including membership in scientific societies/organisations, prestigious awards) - 5 pages at maximum;
- c. a list of scientific publications which the Returning Scientist has published over the past 10 years, indicating the three most important publications in his/her opinion;
- d. copies of three the most important scientific publications of the Returning Scientist (in the language they were published);
- e. a list of the most important research projects currently undertaken or previously carried out by the Returning Scientist, indicating any international projects, their sources of funding, and the Scientist's role in each project;
- f. description of research currently conducted by the Returning Scientist - 5 pages at maximum;
- g. a scanned copy of a document attesting that the Returning Scientist holds a degree/academic title;
- h. a declaration signed by a legal representative of the Applicant concerning the employment of the Project Group members;
- i. a declaration of the Returning Scientist;
- j. scanned copies of documents attesting that the Returning Scientist has been employed abroad for at least two years as at 31/05/2018;
- k. a scanned copy of a document confirming the authorisation of a representative of the Applicant to act on its behalf (taking into account the possibility of incurring financial obligations up to an amount not lower than the amount requested);
- l. a scanned copy of a document certifying the authorisation of the person submitting the proposal in the ICT system of NAWA to represent the Applicant;
- m. where the Applicant is a scientific unit referred to in Article 2(9) (f) of the Act on the Principles of Financing Science, it is required to attach a declaration of state aid nonoccurrence.

3.6 Eligible Applicants

Applications should be submitted by duly authorised persons whose scope of representation is specified in registration documents. Should an application be submitted by a person other than those specified in registration documents, the Applicant is obliged to attach a scanned copy of legal authorisation concerning that person.

3.7 Submitting an application via the ICT system

The following steps have to be taken to submit an application:

- a. **registration of the application with the NAWA ICT system available at www.nawa.gov.pl;**
- b. online submission of the application form with all necessary attachments via the system;
- c. to be accepted under this call for proposals, application forms must be complete and compliant with all requirements described in the call announcement and the Terms and Conditions. Should an application form be incomplete or require amendments (applicable only to attachments), the Applicant will be requested by the NAWA ICT system to complete the application form **within 14 days of the date of sending the request**. They will be informed that if the application fails to be completed within the time limit it will not be considered.

It is the Applicant's duty to check that the submission of the application form was successful.

4. PROPOSAL ASSESSMENT AND SELECTION

4.1 Proposal assessment procedure

Proposals are subject to formal and quality assessments. Only proposals meeting formal requirements can undergo quality assessments.

4.2 Formal assessment

The purpose of the formal assessment is verification of applications in terms of meeting the formal criteria set out in these Terms and Conditions.

If an incomplete application is submitted, the Applicant will be requested to **submit missing documents (attachments)** within 14 days of the date of sending the request. The request will contain instructions indicating that lack of completion means that the application will not be considered.

There may only be one amendment to the application form in the above scope.

If there is any doubt concerning the Applicant's status, NAWA may ask the Applicant for additional documents or clarifications.

Also the applications, which:

- were submitted outside the time limit specified in the call for proposals;
- failed to meet formal requirements specified in the announcement of the call for proposals

will not be considered.

Requests to complete application forms will be sent as notifications from the NAWA ICT system to the Applicant's email address.

Formal assessment of applications is made by NAWA employees.

After completing the formal assessment of all applications, a list of applications forwarded for quality assessment will be prepared along with a list of applications left without consideration.

Applicants are informed of the outcome of formal evaluation via the Agency's ICT system

4.3 Quality assessment

At the stage of quality assessment, proposals can score a maximum of 100 points. Such assessment involves:

- ratings given by two reviewers - each of them can award a maximum of 40 points (the arithmetic mean of the two ratings is taken into consideration);
- recommendations (3 recommendations ranging from 0 to 10 points), a total of not more than 30 points;
- a rating given by the evaluation team, which can award a maximum of 30 points.

The evaluation team appoints reviewers who will assess proposals from the perspective of the scientific domain, to which they refer.

Quality assessment is performed by the evaluation team appointed by the Director and result in a ranking list, which is prepared by the team and submitted to the Director. The evaluation team assesses the proposals by applying the criteria mentioned in Section 4.4 and takes into consideration two rankings given by reviewers and three recommendations.

Reviewers rate proposals on a scale from 0 to 40, applying the criteria mentioned in Section 4.4. Reviewers present a descriptive evaluation and a number grade for each assessment criterion. Descriptive evaluations prepared by reviewers show how much an individual proposal meets quality criteria. At the end, there are general comments relating to the assessment, conclusions and observations summing up the project assessment, reasons for ratings, weaknesses and strengths of the project and areas which - in reviewers' opinion - the Applicant could improve in the future. The final rating given by reviewers also contains information about the total number of points scored.

At the same time, from among five researchers indicated in the application form by the Returning Scientist, the evaluation team indicates three persons (at least two from abroad) to prepare recommendations. If no recommendations from those indicated by the evaluation team can be obtained, NAWA employees request recommendations from another researcher from Poland or abroad indicated in the application form, to obtain a total of three recommendations out of which two should be from foreign researchers. Recommendations are expressed in number grades, on a scale from 0 to 10 for each recommendation. A maximum of 30 points can be awarded for all recommendations. Recommendations take into consideration opinions on the Returning Scientist's past scientific output, achievements and scientific potential. **Should NAWA be unable to obtain three recommendations, each missing recommendation will score 0 points.**

Having obtained recommendations and two ratings from reviewers and having performed its own assessment (ratings given by the team are expressed on a scale of 0 to 30), the evaluation team prepares a ranking list of proposals to undergo quality assessment.

Under Art. 15 (3) of the Act on the Principles of Financing Science (Polish: Ustawa o zasadach finansowania nauki), details of external experts performing quality assessments may not be made publicly available. Every year and jointly for all programmes, NAWA publishes an alphabetical list of external experts participating in the assessment of proposals in an individual year.

4.4 Quality criteria

When assessing the applications, the following criteria will be taken into consideration:

Item no.	Description of the criterion	Points awarded by reviewers	Points awarded by the evaluation team
1.	Organisational capabilities and experience of the Applicant in the scope of carrying out projects, including international cooperation and preparations of the Applicant to welcome the Returning Scientist.	0-4	0-2
2.	Practical implications of employing the Returning Scientist and the establishment of the Project Group by him/her for enhancing the capability of the Applicant, also in the scope of international scientific or academic cooperation.	0-6	0-4
3.	Scientific achievements, and research/development and teaching experience of the Returning Scientist, taking into account the stage of his/her scientific career.	0-14	0-12
4.	Scientific value of the proposed scientific activities scheduled for the project implementation period (research, development, implementation works; grant applications submitted to research funding institutions in Poland and abroad; teaching/ mentoring and dissemination activities), taking into account research tools and methods used, original character of research topic, the correctness of research assumptions, and the importance of planned activities for the development of the field of science.	0-10	0-6
5.	Project feasibility	0-4	0-4
6.	The use of large research infrastructure held by the Applicant during the implementation of the project.	0-2	0-2
Total:		0-40	0-30

4.5 Ranking lists and results of the call for proposals

Having performed all assessments, the evaluation team prepares a proposal ranking list and submits it to the Director of the Agency for approval. The ranking list contains:

- proposals which have successfully undergone quality assessment and are eligible for funding;
- proposals on a reserve list, which have successfully undergone quality assessments but failed to be recommended for funding due to the exhaustion of funds earmarked for this call of proposals. These proposals may receive funding if no agreement is signed with the Applicant whose proposal has been selected for funding;
- proposals rejected due to a negative quality assessment - proposals scoring fewer than 60 points will be regarded as not meeting quality criteria, which means a negative quality assessment. In such circumstances they cannot obtain funding.

Basing on the ranking list, the Director makes their final decision about granting or refusing funding for proposals submitted under the call for proposals. The Director of NAWA may make a decision not to grant funding for proposals which have successfully undergone quality assessments and have been put on the ranking list. Valid reasons for funding refusal include:

- organisational and legal changes affecting the Applicant, which pose a threat to the proper implementation of the project;
- the Applicant has not fulfilled its obligations towards NAWA;
- NAWA obtaining information affecting the award of funding the project.

4.6 Publishing the results of the call for proposals

The Director issues decisions about granting or refusing funding under the Polskie Powroty Programme. The list of entities to be funded containing their names, full names of Returning Scientists, project duration and funding awarded will be posted on NAWA's webpage in the Public Information Bulletin.

4.7 Appeals procedure

Under Art. 25 of the Law on the Polish National Agency for Academic Exchange, in the event of formal contraventions when awarding funds, the applicant may make a formal request to the Director for reconsideration of the case.

A formal request for reconsideration may include reservations only as to formal issues in the process of awarding funds, and not to the merits of a quality assessment carried out on the basis of the Terms and Conditions as part of first instance proceedings.

Submitting a formal request for any other reasons will result in the adoption of a decision stating the inadmissibility of the request.

The formal request for reconsideration of a case should be submitted to the NAWA Director within 14 days from the date of receipt of the decision, in writing, to the following address:

Narodowa Agencja Wymiany Akademickiej
ul. Polna 40
00-635 Warszawa

When considering a formal request for reconsideration, the persons who participated in the initial assessment are not involved. The NAWA Director may also use the services of external experts.

5. AGREEMENT WITH THE APPLICANT

In his decision to grant funding, the Director specifies actions and time limits for their performance by the Applicant as an indispensable condition for signing a grant agreement.

Signing an agreement with the Applicant is based on the NAWA Director's final decision to grant funding under the programme after the procedure of formal and quality assessment of proposals has been successfully completed. The NAWA-funded project implementation agreement, whose sample forms an annex to the Terms and Conditions is a tripartite document signed by the Director, the Beneficiary and the Returning Scientist.

Should an Applicant or the Returning Scientist selected as a result of the call for proposals fail to sign their agreement, funding may be awarded to the next applicant on the ranking list.

6. FUNDING PRINCIPLES

6.1 Expenditure eligibility period

The expenditure eligibility period is specified in the grant agreement and depends on the schedule presented in the application form. It should be remembered that:

- the eligibility start date is the project start date set out in the agreement, however, not earlier than 1 October 2018;
- the eligibility end date is the project end date specified in the grant agreement.

6.2 Project budget

The maximum grant amount assigned for the implementation of NAWA-funded projects is calculated on the basis of the duration of the relevant agreement while taking into account the composition of the Project Group. This amount cannot exceed PLN 2,175,000.

Funding is awarded to eligible projects over a period from 36 to 48 months to cover operations relating to:

- a. the Returning Scientist's remuneration costs - this sum differs depending on the stage of his/her academic career and amounts to:
 - PLN 350,000 per annum in the case of experienced scientists working full-time;
 - PLN 240,000 per annum in the case of scientists working full-time and holding at least a degree of doctor (PhD), but failing to meet experienced scientist criteria;
- b. costs of remuneration paid to not more than two members of the Project Group formed by the Scientist - a total of PLN 180,000 per annum.
- c. resettlement costs incurred by the Returning Scientist and their family - a total of PLN 30,000 (gross).
- d. costs of adaptation and preparation of the workplace - a maximum amount of PLN 25,000 (gross).

The Applicant's own contribution is not obligatory. The amounts that are specified in points (a)-(d) may, however, be increased by the Applicant by contributing their own funds.

The amounts shown in points (a) and (b) **refer to remuneration along with employer costs and are gross amounts**. The above amounts have to cover non-wage labour costs incurred, including national and health insurance contributions, as well as other components of remuneration funded by the employing entity. These funds also cover a bonus salary ("the thirteenth salary"), if the employing entity is obliged to pay it.

Experienced scientist status will be verified at the stage of the quality assessment of the application. NAWA may reduce the amount of funding, should the experienced scientist criteria fail to be met.

Funding the same expenses from two different sources (double funding) is prohibited. Should cases of double funding be detected (at any stage of project implementation), NAWA will consider such expenses ineligible.

The Beneficiary will be under the obligation to keep separate financial and accounting records pertaining to funds awarded for project implementation, in accordance with the Accounting Act and in a way that allows for the identification of individual accounting operations.

6.3 Eligible costs

Eligible costs include:

- a. remuneration costs specified in Section 6.2a. Part-time employees' compensation is calculated proportionally. The Applicant may not reduce the amount of remuneration in any other way than by its proportional adaptation to hours worked.
- b. remuneration costs specified in Section 6.2b. Decisions concerning remuneration amounts are made by the Head of the Project Group.

- c. The Beneficiary pays resettlement costs mentioned in Section 6.2c to the Returning Scientist on the basis of actual expenses related to his/her resettlement (travel tickets for him/her and their family, luggage, other travelling expenses). The unit should keep accounting documents relating to such expenses.
- d. costs of adaptation and preparation of the workplace of the Returning Scientist and the Project Group members that are mentioned in Section 6.2d - including minor refurbishment, repairs, purchases (including, for example, costs of laptops, printers, mobile phones), costs of preparing applications to research funding agencies (including, for example, costs of networking, indispensable reagents, etc.), Project Group members' participation in conferences. Such costs are accounted for as actually incurred - not later than 12 months of the project start date. The unit should keep accounting documents relating to such expenses. Equipment purchased under this item is used by the Project Group, but owned by the unit.

6.4 Ineligible costs

- a. costs linked to the implementation of research projects run within the project implementation period;
- b. indirect costs - the Applicant may not use NAWA's funds for the project to cover indirect costs;
- c. purchase of research equipment understood as a set/sets of testing devices, measuring devices or laboratory devices with a low degree of universality and high technical parameters (whose accuracy of measurement is usually several times higher than that of regular equipment used for the purpose of production or maintenance), which is classified as an asset in accordance with the principles (policies) of accounting applicable to the entity implementing the project. Only the purchase of small equipment specified in Section 6.3d is allowed;
- d. other costs not mentioned in Section 6.3.

6.5 Payment principles

Payments made by NAWA under the project are in the form of advance payments based on the payment schedule contained in the application form. The payment schedule is prepared by the Applicant on the basis of anticipated financing needs during project implementation on the provision that the first payment constitutes 20% of requested funding. The first payment will be made upon signing the agreement in 2018. The second payment will be made in the 3rd quarter of 2019. Payments scheduled for subsequent years will be made on the basis of approved interim reports. Unused funds have to be returned to NAWA after the completion of the project.

Should NAWA become aware of gross irregularities occurring in the course of the implementation of the project, funding may be suspended until the matter has been clarified.

6.6 Expenditure documentation

All expenses incurred as part of the project must be documented in accordance with accounting regulations. Documents supporting expenses must contain at least the relevant NAWA agreement

number, amount of eligible expenses recorded in the document, purpose of expenses, budget item number and the date of payment.

In the case of costs actually incurred, the Beneficiary (if requested during checks or audits, as set out in Section 8 Project Monitoring) must present relevant supporting documents containing information about declared costs, e.g. agreements, invoices and account books.

Moreover, the usual accounting practice and internal audit procedures applied by the Beneficiary must ensure the direct reconciliation of declared amounts with those presented in the Beneficiary's financial statements and with amounts recorded in supporting documents.

6.7 Storing documents

Project documentation and accounting documents relating to the project must be stored in the Beneficiary's seat for a period of 5 years of the project end date. For the purpose of checks or audits, any evidence of expenses incurred by the Beneficiary as part of their projects must be made available to NAWA or institutions acting on its behalf.

6.8 Value Added Tax

Project expenses may contain VAT costs. Such expenses will be deemed eligible, when it is not legally possible for the Applicant to recover them.

VAT already paid is considered an eligible expense only when applicable laws do not permit the Applicant to claim a VAT refund or request the reduction of VAT still due by the amount of VAT charged. However, should the Applicant have the above entitlement, such expenses cannot be recognised as eligible.

6.8 a State aid

The Polish National Agency for Academic Exchange does not grant the state aid and *de minimis* aid. The Applicant who is not sure whether the funding possibly granted will be considered as state aid, referred to in Article 107 (1) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (consolidated version Official Journal of the European Union, C 83), should refer to the Questionnaire Confirming the State Aid Nonoccurrence (Kwestionariusz Potwierdzający Niewystępowanie Pomocy Publicznej).

6.9 Bank accounts and bank interest

The Applicant is under obligation to open a separate and dedicated bank account exclusively for the purpose of project implementation (a bank account or a sub-account).

Any accrued bank interest is to be returned to NAWA in full.

7. REPORTING

- a. Under the Polskie Powroty programme, the submission of annual interim reports and a final report is compulsory;
- b. interim reports are submitted via the NAWA ICT system by 31 January of each year for the preceding year. However, the first interim report is submitted for the calendar year, during which the project was implemented for at least 6 months;
- c. the final report is submitted 60 days of the project end date specified in the agreement;
- d. the Head of the Project Group is also obliged to provide NAWA with a list of publications directly or indirectly relating to the theme of the project within 12 and 24 months of the project end date;
- e. reports specified in points (b) and (c) include a content-related report describing the tasks that have been performed, their outcomes and ways of their dissemination taking account of obligations contained in the funding application form;
- f. should an incomplete or incorrectly prepared interim or final report be lodged, the Beneficiary is under the obligation to amend or complete such reports within 14 days of the date of sending a notification via the NAWA ICT system;
- g. the evaluation team appointed by the Director examines complete and formally correct reports mentioned in points (b) and (c) from the perspective of compliance between the implementation of the project and the description contained in the application form;
- h. interim reports are also evaluated to check that the continuation of the project will lead to the achievement of expected outcomes and project objectives. A negative assessment of an interim report may result in requesting that the Beneficiary returns the awarded funds or in the termination of the agreement;
- i. failure to lodge interim reports within the time limit or failure to complete or amend them within the deadline indicated in point (f) may result in requesting that the Beneficiary returns the awarded funds or in the termination of the agreement;
- j. samples of reports mentioned in points (b) and (c) together with the criteria and detailed methods of their evaluation, and with a description of grant settlement requirements form an integral part of the agreement concluded with the Beneficiary.

8. CHECKS AND AUDITS

8.1 Checks of NAWA programme beneficiaries and the submission of documents confirming that the funds awarded have been spent

Each NAWA programme Beneficiary may have to undergo checks and audits. Such checks and audits are intended to verify the proper management of funding received by the Beneficiary and its compliance with the provisions of the agreement. Checks may be substantive or financial.

Moreover, NAWA may conduct an interim or final evaluation of project outcomes to see to what extent the implementation of specific activities contributes to the achievement of project objectives and whether the Beneficiary honours their obligations towards the Returning Scientist and the Project Group.

8.2 Verification of final report

Moreover, each project may have to undergo a further desk-check run on documents or a check in the Beneficiary's seat, should the relevant agreement be included in a statistical sample used during a check required by the Agency or when NAWA has selected the agreement to be included in an intended documentary check in relation to its own risk assessment policy.

In order for the final report to be verified during a desk check, the Beneficiary must provide the Agency with duplicate copies of documents confirming that the funds awarded have been spent (in the case of categories accounted for on the basis of real costs), unless NAWA requires original copies. Having performed their analysis, NAWA will return original copies to the Beneficiary. If from the legal point of view the Beneficiary is not authorised to send original documents for the purpose of final report verification and desk checks, they will be allowed to send copies of supporting documents.

The Beneficiary must be aware that during each check NAWA may additionally request supporting documents or evidence as required for different types of checks.

Individual checks will comprise the following elements:

- Verification of final report

A final report is verified after it is submitted to the Agency via its ICT system to determine the final amount of funding, to which the Beneficiary will be entitled.

Using the NAWA ICT system, the Beneficiary must provide the Agency with a final report containing information about the proper way of spending the awarded funds.

- Desk checks

Desk checks are in-depth checks run on additional supporting documents in NAWA's seat. Such checks may be conducted at the stage of the final report or after its submission.

- Checks in the Beneficiary's seat

NAWA runs such checks in the Beneficiary's seat or in other venue linked to the project. During such checks, the Beneficiary has to provide NAWA with original supporting documents required as part of the verification of the final report and as part of desk checks. The Beneficiary must not only ensure the presence of people who will provide information about the implementation and funding of the project, but also enable those conducting the check to obtain explanations and statements from those people.

There are two types of checks run in the Beneficiary's seat:

- Checks in the Beneficiary's seat during project implementation

Such checks are conducted during the implementation of the project in order for NAWA to be able to directly verify the reality and eligibility of all project activities and participants, as well as the way in which the Beneficiary meets the obligations declared at the stage of lodging the application and signing the agreement.

- Checks in the Beneficiary's seat upon project completion

Such checks are run when the project has been completed and usually take place after the verification of the final report.

Apart from the presentation of all supporting documents, the Beneficiary must grant NAWA access to the records of project costs incurred during the project, which are to be entered into the Beneficiary's ledgers.

NAWA reserves the right to run special checks within each of the above forms.

9. PROGRAMME EVALUATION

Both Beneficiaries and Returning Scientists are under the obligation to participate in NAWA's evaluation of the programme. Participation in the evaluation means sending three evaluation questionnaires to NAWA (together with the first interim report, with the final report and 24 months of the project end date). Participation in the evaluation also means the participation of the Beneficiary, Returning Scientist and Project Group members in separate evaluation surveys conducted on behalf of NAWA. It is assumed that the Beneficiary and Project Group members may be invited to participate in such surveys once during the project implementation and once within 3 years of its completion.

NAWA guarantees that views and information submitted as part of the programme evaluation will remain fully confidential. It also guarantees that data obtained during the evaluation process from the Beneficiary, Returning Scientist or Project Group members will have no bearing on grant payment.

10. INFORMATION AND PROMOTION

The Beneficiary is under the obligation to display the name of the Polish National Agency for Academic Exchange in Polish or English in all publications created as a result of the project. Publications and other project outcomes not indicating the Agency as the project funding entity will not be treated as project outcomes, nor will they be taken into consideration during the settlement of the project.

11. PERSONAL DATA PROTECTION

NAWA is the administrator of personal data of individuals representing the Applicant, Returning Scientists, Project Group members, Beneficiary, evaluation team members, recommenders and external experts.

Personal data will be used in accordance with the Terms and Conditions for the following purposes:

- running the call for proposals to the Programme and making proposal assessment;
- selecting proposals for funding;
- performing agreements relating to projects;

- cooperating between NAWA and project participants, including cooperation linked to programme promotion.

To achieve the above objectives, the personal data of the above persons may be transferred to NAWA employees, recommenders, external experts cooperating with NAWA or to representatives of Applicants/Beneficiaries.

The transfer of personal data to entities based outside the European Economic Area (European Union member states, Iceland, Norway and Liechtenstein) will comply with the standard provisions of data protection adopted or approved by the European Commission. Data subjects are entitled to a copy of data transferred to foreign academic centres.

Art. 6 (1) (b, f) of the General Data Protection Regulation forms the legal basis for data transfer. Data transfer consent is freely given, but it is indispensable for the participation in projects or programmes. Refusal to provide personal data means that the relevant data subject may not participate in projects or programmes.

For accounting purposes, the personal data of the above persons involved with a project will be used at the stage of considering proposals, throughout the project and for 5 years of the project end date.

The personal data of unsuccessful applicants will be stored throughout the period of considering proposals or until it is removed from the NAWA ICT system via which it was submitted.

Art. 6 (1) (b) of the General Data Protection Regulation forms the legal basis for personal data processing. Data transfer consent is freely given, but it is indispensable for the participation in calls for proposals or for signing project-related agreements. Refusal to provide personal data means that the relevant proposal will not be considered.

Each data subject has the right to:

- request access to their personal data held by NAWA,
- have their personal data rectified, deleted or have its use restricted,
- object to their personal data being used,
- make a complaint to the supervisory authority – The Inspector General for Personal Data Protection (Generalny Inspektor Ochrony Danych Osobowych, ul. Stawki 2, 00-193 Warszawa).

Contact details of the data protection officer: odo@nawa.gov.pl.

12. FINANCIAL CAPACITY ASSESSMENT

The Agency reserves the right to assess the Applicant's financial capacity. Financial capacity means that the Applicant has stable and sufficient sources of funding to participate in project funding and to maintain their activity during the project or throughout the year, for which the grant is awarded. The result of such assessment is a precondition for signing a grant agreement.

Financial capacity assessment applies to non-public entities.

In the case of applications for grants under EUR 100,000 lodged by organisations of other types (other than those above), applicants must submit a declaration that they are financially capable to implement their projects.

Such declarations are included in application forms.

In the case of applications for grants over EUR 100,000 lodged by organisations of other types, apart from submitting a financial capacity declaration, before signing an agreement, upon NAWA's request and in the way indicated by NAWA, applicants must submit financial statements and balance sheets for the last financial year, for which the accounts have been closed.

Newly-established entities unable to provide the above documents may instead submit a financial declaration or a declaration concerning an insurance policy covering the risk undertaken by the Applicant as part of their operations.

Should the Agency - having analysed the above documents - decide that financial capacity cannot be confirmed or is insufficient, it can take any of the following steps:

- request more information;
- suggest concluding a grant agreement or make a decision to grant funding involving secured advance payments;
- suggest concluding a grant agreement or make a decision to grant funding without advance payments or with limited advance payments;
- suggest concluding a grant agreement or make a decision to grant funding involving advance payments paid in several instalments;
- reject the application.

13. CONTACTING NAWA

The contact person in matter relating to the programme is:

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magdalena.kachnowicz@nawa.gov.pl