

PROGRAMME - INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH AGENDAS

Competition documentation

COMPETITION NO. 2/2015

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I. Introduction

1. The information contained in the present document outlines the principles for the submission of applications and realisation of projects under the International Research Agendas Programme, which is a grant programme of the Foundation for Polish Science, realised from the funds of the European Regional Development Fund under Smart Growth Operational Programme (SG OP), Priority Axis 4: Increasing the research potential, Measure 4.3: International Research Agenda.
2. Should certain source documents be updated (e.g. the National Smart Specialisations or the Guidelines published by the Managing Authority), certain information may be subject to changes, which, however, will not influence the schedules nor the terms and conditions of the competition, although it might cause small changes in the grant agreement or in certain appendices hereto. The Foundation shall notify the Applicants about the scope of any potential changes on an ongoing basis.
3. All dates specified in the Competition Documentation that refers to the obligations of Applicants or grant beneficiaries are dates of delivery of the documents to the FPS, not posting dates. For terms expressed in days – a day is deemed as one calendar day. If the end of a period falls on a public holiday or on a Saturday, then the closest subsequent business day shall be deemed as the last day of the period.

II. Definitions of terms

For the purposes of this Documentation, the terms listed below shall have the following meaning:

1. **Project budget** – financial plan of the project, including the categories of eligible costs divided into reporting periods.
2. **Doctoral student** – a person enrolled in a third degree studies, or a person preparing his/her doctoral dissertation within a doctoral school or as part of an extension programme, as defined in the Law on Higher Education and Science. However, a person developing his/her doctoral dissertation under an extension programme can only be engaged in the project under an employment contract and cannot be a stipend holder.
3. **Foundation** – the Foundation for Polish Science (FPS).
4. **Intermediary Authority (IA)** – an entity to whom the realisation of tasks under a national or regional operational programme was entrusted, pursuant to an agreement or contract concluded

with the Managing Authority. For Priority Axis of SG OP: The National Centre for Research and Development.

5. **Managing Authority (MA)** – institution or public entity responsible for the management of the operational programme. For SG OP: the competent Minister for issues related to regional development (pursuant to Art. 9, item 1 of the implementation act).
6. **Partner unit (foreign)** – a foreign (private or public) unit or international organisation that, pursuant to its main statutory objective, conducts continuous scientific research, involved in the management of a research agenda and of the unit realising the IRA, presented in the application for funding.
7. **Unit realising the IRA (IRA unit)** – scientific unit in which the project co-financed under the competition is realised, meeting the requirements of the present Competition Documentation.
8. **Scientific units** – as defined in the Act on the Principles of Financing Science of the 30th of April, 2010 (Journal of Laws No. 96, item 615, pursuant to Journal of Laws of 2014, item 1620, of 2015, item 249) conducting scientific research or development works in a continuous way;
 - a) Basic organisational units of higher education institutions within the meaning of the Charters of those higher education institutions;
 - b) Scientific units of the Polish Academy of Sciences within the meaning of the Act of 30 April 2010 on the Polish Academy of Sciences (Journal of Laws No. 96, item 619 incl. further amendments 2.))
 - c) Research institutes, as defined in the Act of April 30, 2010 on Research Institutes (Journal of Laws No. 96, item 618 incl. further amendments 3.))
 - d) International scientific institutes established pursuant to separate regulations, operating in the territory of the Republic of Poland;
 - e) The Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences;
 - f) Other organisational units not listed in Letters a to e, which are legal persons and have registered offices in the Republic of Poland, including entrepreneurs with a status of a research and development centre pursuant to Art. 2 item 83 of the Regulation of the Commission (EU) of June 17, 2014, declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the internal market in application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty (Official Journal of the EU L 187 of the 26.6.2014, page 1).
9. **Project Manager** – Leader of the Unit implementing IRA - a prominent scientist from Poland or abroad who filed an application for funding under the programme and is responsible for the substantial realisation of the Research Agenda in the unit realising the IRA.

- 10. National Smart Specialisation (NSS)** – document specifying the thematic scope subject to funding under the competition, available on the website of the Ministry of Economy – institution responsible for the NSS, also available on the website of the Foundation. The binding version is the version that is valid on the day of opening the call for proposals in the IRA programme (26 November 2015).
- 11. Research team leader** – researcher acting as the leader/manager of the research team at the unit realising the IRA.
- 12. International Research Agendas (IRA)** – a research programme that determines a clearly defined challenge (problem) of a scientific or social and economic nature (matching the scope of National Smart Specialisations) and the method of work and approach to solving it, which constitutes a substantial basis for the existence of the unit realising IRA. Apart from the precisely defined research problem, the research agenda should be characterised by an innovative and competitive approach to solving it, which should guarantee the unit realising the IRA the position of a global leader among units dealing with similar research problems. The first Research Agenda is created by the Applicant in co-operation with partner institutions, in particular the foreign partner unit.
- 13. International Scientific Committee (ISC)** – an international body composed of distinguished representatives of science and, if it is justified by the need to facilitate the realisation of the project objective, also entrepreneurs who have experience in co-operating with scientists in research and development works or entrepreneurs experienced in the implementation of new technologies. Representatives of science must account for at least half of the ISC members and they must be globally recognized experts in the field represented by the IRA.
- 14. Young PhD** – a person that has had the doctoral (PhD.) degree for not longer than 5 years (the period begins on the year date of obtaining the degree and expires on the year date of submitting applications in the competition) who participates in the project realisation under the supervision of the research team leader.
- 15. Duration of the project** – a period specified in the agreement that is required for the realisation of the tasks and obtaining the results specified in the application for funding, compliant with the schedules provided in the Competition Documentation.
- 16. Reporting period** – the period, after which the Project Manager and the unit realising the IRA are obliged to present the financial statements or substantial report on the project realisation. The reporting periods that are binding in the International Research Agendas Programme are maximum half-year periods for financial statements and one-year periods for substantial reports.

The grant agreement specifies the starting and ending dates of reporting periods and the dates of submitting periodical reports in detail.

- 17. IRA Project** – an enterprise with the aim to realise the International Research Agendas (described in the application for funding) and to achieve the set objectives defined by indicators, with a specified start and end of realisation, subject to co-financing under the IRA programme at the unit realising IRA.
- 18. Business** – an entity that conducts business activity, regardless of its legal status and the manner of financing such activity.
- 19. Student** – a person with a status of a student of 1st or 2nd degree studies or an equivalent programme, who participates in the IRA project.
- 20. Durability of the project results** – as defined in Art. 71 of the Regulation No. 1303/2013 of the European Parliament and the Council (EC) of December 17, 2013.
- 21. Grant agreement (Agreement)** – agreement concluded between the Foundation and the unit realising the IRA for the realisation of the IRA project.
- 22. Application for funding** (so-called application or grant application) – under the International Research Agendas Programme the application consists of an application form filled out online, a form printed and signed pursuant to the requirements of the Competition Documentation and all required appendices (in electronic or hardcopy version).
- 23. Applicant** – for the purposes of this documentation the term refers to a prominent scientist from Poland or abroad or two scientists who file the application for funding for the realisation of an IRA project.
- 24. Project indicators** – indicators determined prior to the commencement of the project in order to monitor it and evaluate its completion with respect to previously set goals, specified herein.
- 25. Eligible costs** – costs or expenditures incurred in connection with the realisation of a project under the International Research Agendas Programme that are eligible for settlement or reimbursement pursuant to the grant agreement, specified in the *Cost Eligibility Guide for Measure 4.3 of the Smart Growth Operational Programme* constituting an appendix hereto.
- 26. Guidelines** – a legal instrument that determines uniform conditions and procedures for the implementation of structural funds and the Cohesion Fund, addressed to institutions participating in the realisation of operational programmes and applied by these institutions pursuant to the relevant agreement, territorial contract or contract and by beneficiaries (grant recipients) pursuant to the grant agreement or to the decision on project funding.

III. Subject of the International Research Agendas Programme

The aim of the International Research Agendas Programme is the realisation of high quality research and development, conducted by teams of prominent foreign and Polish scientists. The support should contribute to the creation of specialised, world-leading scientific units in Poland that would apply the best practices with respect to:

- the identification of research programmes and topics,
- HR policy and R&D works management,
- the commercialisation of the results of R&D works.

IV. General information

4.1 Information about the competition

4.2.1 The application selection procedure under the International Research Agendas Programme is not a competition as defined in the Act of July 11, 2014 on the principles of implementation of the cohesion policy programmes, financed under the 2014-2020 financial perspective.

4.2 Thematic scope of the projects

The competition covered by this Competition Documentation under the International Research Agendas Programme involves the funding of projects compliant with the topics listed in the National Smart Specialisations list. The valid NSS list of March 31, 2015, published on the website of the Ministry of Economy, is available on the website of the Foundation.

4.3 Amount of funds allocated to the realisation of projects

The total amount of funds allocated to the competition is: **PLN 120 000 000.**

4.4 Schedule of filing the applications

The process of filing applications under the MAB programme consists of three stages.

The first part of the application in electronic and hardcopy form has to be filed by:

the 15th of January, 2016.

The second part of the applications should be filed by Applicants who were invited to submit it by:

the 26th of February, 2016.

Applicants who are invited to the third stage of the evaluation procedure, i.e. the interview with a panel of experts, shall be obliged to present the documentation required on this stage within the period specified in the information stating that their application has been selected for the third stage of the procedure however not earlier than by the 7th of April, 2016.

4.5 Manner of filing applications

Applicants file applications in electronic and hardcopy form.

4.5.1 Applicants shall register in the electronic system available on the FPS website: www.fnp.org.pl. The electronic form should be filled out in **English language** and the appendices **in the specified language (see the subsequent item)**. The electronic system enables users to modify the forms and to replace appendices until the moment of final approval of the filed part of the application.

4.5.2 The following appendices must be attached to the application in electronic form (pdf format):

Part 1 of the application (filed in electronic and hardcopy form)

- a) Documents related to the Applicant (English version).
(If the application is filed by two Applicants, the listed documents should be attached for each Applicant. The main Applicant, to whom all requirements and obligations of the Leader of the unit realising the IRA specified herein will apply, should be specified in the electronic system.)
- (1) brief CV (up to 3 pages),
 - (2) 10 most important scientific and/or implementation achievements of the Applicant (e.g. full texts of publications, the list of obtained patents specifying the territory of application and the title in English or realised implementations) from the last 10 years,
 - (3) description of the originality of the scientific achievements of the Applicant and their influence on the development of the given fields of science, with respect to documents listed in item (2) from the last 10 years (total up to 3 pages),

- (4) a list of key projects for which the applicant has obtained funding during the last 10 years (with details of the institution which provided the support and the amount of funding) (up to 2 pages),
 - (5) list of conference speeches or lectures from the last 10 years delivered by the Applicant on the invitation of organisers along with the names of organisers (up to 2 pages),
 - (6) description of experience in conducting scientific research (including the administration of scientific units, participation in science councils, managing international scientific consortia) (up to 2 pages),
 - (7) description of experience in business-science co-operation and successful implementations (up to 2 pages),
- b) Outline of the international research agenda – description of the scientific challenge that the IRA refers to and the original approach to the said challenge (up to 5 pages) (English version),
 - c) Description of the economic or socio-economic significance and the potential applications of the results obtained in the course of realisation of the IRA project (up to 2 pages) (English version),
 - d) Letter of intent from the partner unit – the foreign strategic partner in the project (English version),

The letter should contain at least:

- (1) a declaration stating that the partner unit will act as the foreign partner at least during the period of funding of the IRA project,
- (2) a declaration stating that the partner unit knows and accepts the terms and conditions of the competition and the requirements related to the realisation of the IRA project, in particular the requirements set for the unit realising the IRA and for the foreign partner,
- (3) a description of the manner of involvement and substantial contribution of the partner unit in the creation and management of the unit realising the IRA,
- (4) a description of the contribution of the partner unit in the recruitment of the most suitable and experienced candidates for work at the IRA,
- (5) a description of the contribution of the partner unit in the evaluation of the conducted research and achieving the objectives of the project,
- (6) Data of two individuals proposed by the partner unit as future members of the International Scientific Committee in the first term.

The letter has to be signed by a person authorised to represent the foreign partner unit.

- e) Brief description of the structure of the unit realising the IRA – the description should contain at least information about the selected legal form and organisational structure of the unit realising the IRA (up to 2 pages) (English version),
- f) Description of the place where the IRA will be realised (containing information about the manner of obtaining laboratory space, possibly lease of equipment, etc.), (English version),
- g) Letters of intent from local partner units if the Applicant foresees such co-operation (English version),

If such co-operation is foreseen, then the letter should contain information about the planned scope of co-operation between the unit realising the IRA and the local partner and it should state whether the local partner unit wishes to:

- 1) participate in the creation of the unit realising the IRA,
- 2) appoint members of the ISC,
- 3) involve students or doctoral students in the realisation of the IRA,
- 4) enrol candidates selected in competitions announced by IRA research team leaders in doctoral studies,
- 5) provide access to laboratory space,
- 6) and/or co-operate in the project realisation in any other ways.

The letter has to be signed by a person authorised to represent the Polish partner unit.

NOTE:

The hardcopy version of the first part of the application may be generated in the electronic system only after it has been filled out and closed in the electronic version.

On the second and third stage of the application filing procedure, documents will be required in electronic form only.

Part 2 of the application (for third-party reviewers) – filed in electronic form

- a) Complete International Research Agendas (up to 15 pages) (English version)

The agenda should take into account the works of the first 5 – 7 research teams in the period of 5 years following the start of the project realisation and specify which groups and on what stages will co-operate with entrepreneurs (see item 5.2.2 h). For information on the members of a research team see 5.4.1 and 5.4.2.

b) Description of the competences of the foreign partner unit(s); the description should contain at least information concerning:

- 1) achievements in science and implementation,
- 2) organisational culture,
- 3) good practices related to the organisation and conducting scientific research and the evaluation of work of research teams.

Part 3 of the application (for the panel of experts) – filed in electronic form

a) Documents organising the work of the unit realising the IRA, relevant for the selected legal form (Polish and English versions):

- (1) Content of the statutes of the unit realising the IRA and if the statute of the institution in Poland appointing the unit implementing IRA affects the manner of operations of that unit, the statute of the institution.
- (2) The content of the international agreement that the unit realising the IRA will conclude with the foreign partner unit. This type of agreement will be required if the unit realising the IRA has a legal personality, e.g. in form of a foundation or a company.
- (3) The content of the international agreement pursuant to which the unit realising the IRA is appointed. This type of agreement will be required e.g. if the unit realising the IRA takes the form of a joint unit of a Polish and foreign higher education institution and in similar cases.

The international agreement should contain at least all the information included in the letter of intent issued by the foreign partner unit submitted with the first part of the application, apart from the data of persons designated for ISC members.

The statute of the unit and the international agreement must guarantee the possibility to realise the project in compliance with the requirements of the present Competition Documentation. The submitted statute and international agreement will be subject to evaluation. Individual provisions these documents may be subject to changes at the request of the International Panel of Experts before the conclusion of the grant agreement.

The proposed template of the statute compliant with the IRA requirements is available on the website of the Foundation for the convenience of the applicant.

- b) The description of the adopted operational rules of the unit realising the IRA, including, first of all (up to 20 pages) (English version):
- (1) science management strategy,
 - (2) strategy of research workers recruitment,
 - (3) policy on the commercialisation and intellectual property management,
 - (4) informational and promotional policy of the unit, including activities for the understanding of science in the economic and social development of Poland,
 - (5) plans of obtaining funds from sources other than the IRA programme during the realisation of the IRA project,
 - (6) plans of co-operation with a local scientific centre, e.g. with respect to the scientific development of students and doctoral students, common conducting of research (if applicable),
 - (7) access to infrastructure.
- c) Budget – the necessary costs related to conducting research, administration costs and all other costs of functioning of the IRA should be presented in compliance with the catalogue of eligible costs listed in the electronic form (pursuant to the *Cost eligibility guide* constituting an appendix hereto).
- d) Schedule of the project realisation during the project cost eligibility period for the first 5 years of project realisation– pursuant to the attached form, containing information about:
- (1) organisational and administrative activities,
 - (2) the announcement of and conducting recruitment process of research workers,
 - (3) informational and promotional activities related to the realisation of IRA,
 - (4) activities connected with the commencement of research (commencement of subsequent R&D works),
 - (5) evaluation of research team leaders,
 - (6) obtaining funds for conducting statutory activity.
- e) Development plan of the unit realising the IRA after the period of funding under the IRA programme (up to 4 pages) (English version), containing a long-term perspective vision concerning:
- (1) the scientific development of the research agenda,

- (2) co-operation with the business sector,
 - (3) co-operation with the foreign unit,
 - (4) obtaining funds from sources other than the IRA programme,
- f) Indicators – along with grounds. (pursuant to the template) (English version).
- g) Description of the project influence on sustainable development, in particular on environmental protection. (Up to 2 pages). (English version)

The description should contain information about the planned number of R&D works with respect to ecology or environmental protection, number of patents, publications, media coverage about eco-innovations.

- 4.5.3** Applications filed on the first stage of the competition may be submitted by post, by courier mail or in person to the following address:

Fundacja na Rzecz Nauki Polskiej
ul. Krasickiego 20/22
02-611 Warsaw
 with the annotation "**IRA Programme**" on the envelope.

- 4.5.4** The date of receipt of the hardcopy version of the application shall be decisive, **not the date of posting**, although on the last day of the filing period applications will be accepted until 4:00 p.m. Applications submitted to the Foundation after that time shall not be considered. The due dates for the submission of the successive parts of application are listed in item 4.4.

V. General terms and conditions

5.1 The Applicant

- 5.1.1** Applications may be submitted by prominent scientists from Poland or from abroad, with recognised scientific achievements. In justified cases, e.g. if the proposed project is interdisciplinary in its nature, an application may be submitted by two scientists.

After obtaining funding for the unit realising the IRA, both Applicants will act as research team leaders while the main Applicant will at the same time act as unit manager. For information on the research group leaders see 5.4.1 and 5.4.2.

5.1.2 The Applicant(s) should meet all of the following conditions, regardless of their citizenship:

- a) Have recognised scientific background and achievements in their field of science,
- b) They will be employed at the newly created unit as research team leaders,
- c) They will act as managers of the unit realising the IRA (depending on the legal form chosen for the new unit, e.g. as the chairman of the foundation or director),
- d) They will be subject to evaluation by the ISC equally to all research team leaders,
- e) They may become managers of the unit for the subsequent term pursuant to a positive recommendation from the ISC,
- f) They will be employed at the unit realising the IRA at least for a number of hours that ensures the possibility of realisation of the IRA project, however not lower than half-time.

5.2 Unit realising the IRA

5.2.1. The IRA unit conducts activity by realising projects and scientific tasks in research teams and, if necessary, by realising scientific tasks by individual scientists (see item 5.4.3).

The number of research groups and of other individuals who realise the R&D tasks corresponds to the adopted research agenda submitted in the application, with potential later amendments introduced by the International Scientific Committee.

5.2.2. The IRA unit has to meet the following conditions throughout the period of project realisation and the durability period:

a) Manager of the unit realising the IRA,

The first manager of the unit realising the IRA is the Applicant selected by the FPS in the competition under the IRA programme.

The manager of the unit realising the IRA may be only such person who will act as research team leader at the same time.

If the Applicant is unable to perform the function of manager of the IRA unit until the end of the term due to reasons beyond their control, then the International Scientific Committee shall

conduct a competition procedure in order to appoint a new manager pursuant to the rules and regulations adopted by the unit.

The competition for a new manager shall be governed also by the rules concerning the recruitment of research team leaders (see item 5.4.1).

During the period of funding from the IRA programme funds, the unit realising the IRA shall provide the FPS with information and documents related to the individual designated by the ISC as unit manager, pursuant to the list of documents required from the Applicant on the first stage of filing the application (see item 4.5.2 a, application part 1). The Foundation shall evaluate and approve the new manager of the unit realising the IRA.

As the unit manager is at the same time the IRA project manager, the approval of the potential new manager by the FPS during the period of the project is indispensable for the continuation of the IRA project.

b) Partnership with a leading scientific institution from abroad.

A strategic partner in the project will be a foreign scientific institution (public or private) which conducts research at the highest world level, has significant achievements with respect to the implementation of research results and meets the highest working and research organisation standards.

The partnership will consist mainly in shared introduction in the newly created unit of good practices related to work organisation, commercialisation of research results and conducting research, and delegating representatives of the partner unit or individuals recommended by it to participate in the International Scientific Committee.

c) International Scientific Committee

(1) One of the bodies of the unit realising the IRA shall be the International Scientific Committee composed of internationally recognised scientists who conduct research in the area of expertise which is to be developed in the unit responsible for the implementation of the International Research Agendas, or, if it is justified by facilitating the realisation of the project objectives, entrepreneurs having experience in carrying out research and development activities together with scientists or entrepreneurs with extensive experience in the implementation of new technologies.

(2) It is advisable that the following requirements concerning the members of the ISC are met:

- i. At least half of the ISC members must be scientists and at least half of ISC members have to be employed at foreign units that conduct scientific research.
 - ii. Members of the International Scientific Committee are appointed for terms lasting not longer than 5 years. After the expiration of the term of the ISC, not more than half of its members may be appointed for the subsequent term. Each of the ISC members may perform the function for not more than two terms.
- (3) The duties of the International Scientific Committee include:
- i. Verification of the research agenda and making all the necessary changes, i.e. those resulting from the global progress in research in a given thematic area. The ISC shall conduct such verification at least every 4 years.
 - ii. Evaluation of the work of all team leaders and their teams. The ISC shall conduct such evaluation at least every 4 years.
 - iii. Issuing opinions on the employment of individual scientists or a laureate of the European Research Council competition at the IRA unit (see items 5.4.3, 5.5.6).
- iv. Announcing and running competitions to select the manager and leaders of research teams employed at the units implementing IRAs, by means of:
- 1) approval of the competition criteria and rules prepared by the unit,
 - 2) approval of the scope of requirements for the potential manager or leader,
 - 3) evaluation of applications and issuing recommendations related to the employment of the most suitable candidate(s).
- (4) During the period of realisation of the project, the unit realising the IRA shall provide an FPS representative with the possibility to participate in ISC sessions and it shall notify the FPS about any changes in the composition of the ISC after or during the term, if such situation occurs.

d) Legal status which allows for granting the required powers to the International Scientific Committee

The requirements set for a unit realising the IRA may be fulfilled, for example, by a foundation established pursuant to the Act on Foundations, whose statutory aim is conducting scientific research. The Statutes will allow the foundation to define and secure the objectives of its activities and the scope of powers of its bodies as well as the manner of co-operation with the foreign partner unit. It will also secure the durability of the adopted objectives and powers. Sample Statutes of a foundation which meets the requirements of the competition are available for downloading on the FPS website.

A unit which is to implement the International Research Agendas established in a form other than foundation will also have to meet all requirements specified herein. Additionally, if it has legal personality, then, prior to the conclusion of the grant agreement, it will have to enter with a partner unit from abroad into an agreement which determines the manner of co-operation during the realisation of IRA. If the unit realising the IRA is to be a unit operating pursuant to an international agreement (e.g. a common unit of a Polish and foreign higher education institution), then both institutions shall sign an international agreement that determines the manner of establishment and operations of such unit pursuant to the terms and conditions contained herein.

The Applicant may use the expert opinion on various legal forms of the units, which is available on the website of the FPS. To the extent to which the assumptions adopted for the purposes of the said opinion differ from the objectives of the competition specified herein, the principles contained herein shall prevail.

e) Partnership with local scientific partner (optionally)

The unit realising the IRA may start co-operation with a local scientific partner. Such partnership may consist, e.g. in providing access to laboratory equipment, starting joint activities in connection with doctoral projects or other scientific co-operation.

f) Access to infrastructure

The Applicants should gain access to the existing research infrastructure: premises and equipment for the purposes of realisation of the IRA. If necessary, the lease costs of the premises and their maintenance could be financed from the funds of the International Research Agendas project.

g) Periodical evaluation of all team leaders and their teams

All research team leaders have to undergo evaluation conducted by the International Scientific Committee at least every 4 years. After the evaluation, the Committee shall present a recommendation concerning their further employment, prolongation or non-prolongation of the employment or termination of the employment relationship.

h) Co-operation with entrepreneurs

Partnership has to be based on an agreement or contract concluded by the entrepreneur and unit realising the IRA that determines the principles of co-operation and of funding, the contribution of each partner and the assumed potential allocation of intellectual property rights (if the entrepreneur participates in the project financially). Agreements with businesses shall be monitored by the FPS.

During the initial 3 years from the commencement of the realisation of the project, at least 2 of the research teams operating in the unit shall start co-operation with entrepreneurs.

Finally, by the end of the realisation of the project, at least half of the research teams operating in the unit realising the IRA should co-operate with entrepreneurs. Such co-operation may consist e.g. in joint realisation of research tasks under the project, consultations on the commercialisation of the obtained research results or joint training of young R&D sector personnel.

The unit realising the IRA must not grant public aid to entrepreneurs.

5.3 Partnership in the project without granting public aid

5.3.1. The International Research Agendas Programme does not foresee granting public aid.

5.3.2. The co-operation between the unit realising the IRA and the entrepreneur must be conducted in a manner that ensures the fulfilment of the following conditions¹:

- a) the participating undertakings bear the full cost of the project,
- b) the results of the collaboration which do not give rise to intellectual property rights may be widely disseminated and any intellectual property rights resulting from the financed project are fully allocated to the unit realising the IRA,
- c) any intellectual property rights resulting from the project, as well as related access rights are allocated to the different collaboration partners in a manner which adequately reflects their work packages, contributions and respective interests, or
- d) the unit realising the IRA shall receive compensation equivalent to the market price for the intellectual property rights which result from their activities and are assigned to the participating

¹ Cf. Communication from the Commission — Framework for State aid for research and development and innovation (Official Journal of the EU C 198 of 27.6.2014), items 28-30.

undertakings, or to which participating undertakings are allocated access rights. The absolute amount of the value of any contribution, both financial and non-financial, of the participating undertakings to the costs of the research organisations or research infrastructures' activities that resulted in the intellectual property rights concerned, may be deducted from that compensation. The obtained compensation shall be the equivalent of the market value if it enables the unit realising the IRA to fully benefit from the economic advantages resulting from the discussed rights, if one of the following conditions is met:

- i. the amount of the compensation has been established by means of an open, transparent and non-discriminatory competitive sale procedure, or
 - ii. an independent expert valuation confirms that the amount of the compensation is at least equal to the market price, or
 - iii. the unit realising the IRA as seller, can demonstrate that it effectively negotiated the compensation, at arm's length conditions, in order to obtain the maximum economic benefit at the moment when the contract is concluded, while considering its statutory objectives, or
 - iv. in cases where the collaboration agreement provides the collaborating undertaking with a right of first refusal as regards intellectual property rights generated by the collaborating research organisations or research infrastructures, where those entities exercise a reciprocal right to solicit more economically advantageous offers from third parties so that the collaborating undertaking has to match its offer accordingly.
- e) if none of the above conditions are met, the total value of the contribution of the unit realising the IRA into the project shall be deemed as benefit for the co-operating businesses, to which the principles of public aid are applicable.

5.4 Research workers – individuals who realise the IRA project

5.4.1 Research team leaders,

1. Research team leaders will be selected in an open competition organised by the International Scientific Committee, pursuant to the regulations on the employment of research workers contained in the *European Charter for Researchers* and the *Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Research Workers* (both documents are available for downloading on the website of the Foundation) and pursuant to the principles contained herein.

2. The applicant or applicants become leaders of research teams on the basis of recommendation by the Interdisciplinary Panel of Experts in the competition run by the FPS (see item 6.2.3 h).
3. The competition procedure has to be open for all interested parties and based on transparent criteria, in compliance with the principles of equal opportunities.
4. Competitions for research team leaders shall be conducted pursuant to the following principles:
 - a) information about the competition shall be announced publicly, in such way that makes it available for all interested parties who meet the criteria,
 - b) the ISC shall conduct recruitment according to the adopted criteria, provided that at least one of such criteria should refer to the existing scientific achievements of the candidate,
 - c) the unit realising the IRA shall provide a representative of the FPS with the possibility to participate in the recruitment process as an observer,
 - d) the unit realising the IRA shall document the recruitment process in form of a protocol,
 - e) the protocol shall contain at least the lists of Applicants, names of their units of origin, notes received by candidates in the recruitment process and information concerning the announcement of competition, selection criteria and recruitment schedules,
 - f) after the end of the recruitment process, the unit realising the IRA shall publish a copy of the recruitment protocol in the electronic system of the Foundation, while the original document remains at the unit,
 - g) after obtaining the approval of the Foundation, the unit realising the IRA shall employ the research team leader selected in the competition,
5. The unit realising the IRA shall enter the data of the new research team leader and information of planned budget funds allocated to their research team into the electronic system made available by the FPS.
6. Only candidates who have received a positive recommendation of the ISC in the conducted competition may be employed at the unit realising the IRA as research team leaders (except for the laureates of European Research Council competitions, whose employment requires the opinion of the ISC – see item 5.4.6).
7. The unit realising the IRA must be specified as primary place of employment for each individual employed as research team leader, as specified in the regulations that may influence the obtaining of funds for conducting statutory operations.
8. The research team leader (with the reservation of item 5.2.2 a)) (whose employment is financed from the funds of the IRA programme) has to be employed at the unit realising the IRA at least on a ½ time, for the purposes of realisation of the IRA project. However, all scientific results,

publications, patent applications and patents obtained as part of the realisation of the IRA project have to be assigned (affiliated) to the unit realising the IRA.

5.4.2 Research team members

1. The research team leader shall recruit students, doctoral students, young doctors and other employees for their team.

Their team has to be composed of at least 3 individuals conducting R&D works not later than 12 months after the employment of the research team leader.

2. Research team members: students, doctoral students or young doctors shall be selected by the leader in an open competition based on transparent criteria, pursuant to the following rules:
 - a) information about the competition shall be announced publicly (for the recruitment of doctoral students and senior team members at least on the EURAXESS website) and it should contain information about the manner of applying, the requirements set for candidates and the planned amount of stipend or remuneration.
 - b) the research team leader shall appoint a committee composed of at least two members who will be responsible for the recruitment process,
 - c) the committee shall prepare and conduct recruitment process according to the adopted criteria, provided that at least one of such criteria should refer to the existing scientific achievements of the candidate,
 - d) the committee shall document the recruitment process in form of a protocol,
 - e) the protocol shall contain at least the lists of Applicants, names of their units of origin, notes received by candidates in the recruitment process and information concerning the announcement of competition, selection criteria and recruitment schedules,
 - f) after the end of the recruitment process, the research team leader shall publish a copy of the recruitment protocol in the electronic system of the Foundation, while the original document remains at the unit,
 - g) the approval of the recruitment protocol by the Foundation is required for the financing of the stipend or employment contract of the individual selected in competition under the IRA project. Moreover, as far as stipend agreements are concerned, it is also required to submit to the Foundation a statement confirming the status of the student (or doctoral student) or a copy of their student visa for the stay in Poland.

3. The unit and the research team leader shall provide a representative of the Foundation with the possibility to participate in the works of the competition committee as an observer.
4. Students selected in the competition shall receive registered stipends. Doctoral students may be employed by the team either pursuant to stipend or to an employment contract. The amount of stipends will be proposed by the project manager. Young doctors recruited for work in the research team may receive remuneration in the amount proposed by the project manager pursuant to an employment contract.
5. Doctoral students who conduct R&D works under the supervision of the research team leader should have another scientific supervisor, from the foreign partner unit if possible.
6. Stipends shall be treated as financial support for participants of the project and paid only by the Foundation, directly to individual bank accounts of the beneficiaries, pursuant to separate agreements concluded with them. Beneficiaries of stipends may not receive remuneration from the funds of the project during the period of the stipend.
7. Stipends are exempt from personal income tax pursuant to Art. 21, item 1 point 137 of the Act of July 26 1991 on Personal Income Tax (Journal of Laws of 2012, item 361 incl. further amendments).

5.4.3 Individual Scientists (Visiting Scientists)

1. The unit realising the IRA may employ individual scientists to realise short-term research projects supporting the works of the IRA teams, disregarding the competition procedure for research team leaders, however for a period not exceeding 6 months.
2. The employment of individual scientists is approved by the ISC on request of the manager of the unit realising the IRA.
3. One scientist may be employed in the manner foreseen for individual scientists only once.
4. Scientists employed in such a way are not research team leaders. Their employment may be connected, for example, with the realisation of a specific research task or with expert co-operation with one or more research teams operating in the IRA unit.
5. The remuneration of the Individual Scientist may be covered by the IRA project according to the rules and regulations given in *Cost Eligibility Guide under the Measure 4.3 of the Smart Growth Operational Programme* (see attachment 1).
6. The unit realising the IRA shall enter the information about the employed individual scientist into the electronic system of the FPS.

7. The unit may allocate funds under the IRA project for the realisation of research tasks by individual scientist. To do so, the unit shall enter information about the planned funds to the relevant budget form available in the electronic system of the FPS.

5.4.4 Research and technical staff

Research and technical staff members are employed by the manager of the unit realising the IRA and their remuneration is covered from the funds allocated to the common part of the R&D projects in the unit realising the IRA.

5.4.5 Doctors with advanced research and development experience

Doctors may be employed at the unit realising the IRA on request of the unit manager. Employment in this category has to be connected with the necessity to obtain the necessary competences with respect to R&D by the unit, e.g. with respect to the operation of advanced research equipment or a specific technology. Employment of a doctor with advanced R&D experience at the unit requires the approval of the FPS. The remuneration of these employees is covered from the funds allocated to the common part of the R&D projects in the unit realising the IRA.

- #### **5.4.6 European Research Council grant laureates**
- may be employed at the unit realising the IRA as research team leaders on request of the unit manager, disregarding the competition procedure specified in item 5.4.1, for the period of realisation of the grant for which they have received funding from the ERC. The request shall be approved by the ISC.

5.4.7 Director of Scientific Affairs

The Director of Scientific Affairs must be a scientist with extensive experience in scientific research and science management who will be responsible at the IRAP Implementing Unit for coordinating the activities related to the achievement of the research objectives and R&D work specified in the Research Agenda. The Director of Scientific Affairs may be the second applicant or may be hired for the project during its course as a result of a competition procedure analogous to that for a research team member. All administrative tasks falling beyond the scope of R&D activities must be settled from indirect costs proportionately to individual involvement

5.5 Duration of the project

- 5.5.1 The realisation of the project may not commence earlier than on the 1st of June, 2016.
- 5.5.2 The Applicant shall specify the dates of commencement and end of the project realisation, considering that the period of project realisation is the same as the period during which the incurred expenditures may be deemed as eligible.
- 5.5.3 The first stage of realisation of the project is planned for the duration of 60 months, which is the period covered by the application for funding. The period of project realisation may be prolonged until the 31st of December, 2023 on request of the unit realising the IRA, provided that the project receives a positive recommendation in the second mid-term evaluation, i.e. after 36 months of the realisation.
- 5.5.4 The manager of the unit realising the IRA shall file an application for the prolongation of the project realisation period on the date and in the form specified by the Foundation. The application for the prolongation of the project shall contain, first of all, information about the planned research agenda adopted by the ISC, for all research teams that will work for the unit realising the IRA during the prolonged period of project funding.

5.6 Financial terms and conditions

- 5.6.1 **The full catalogue of eligible costs and the principles for documenting eligible costs under the International Research Agendas Programme are specified in the *Cost Eligibility Guide under the Measure 4.3 of the Smart Growth Operational Programme* constituting an appendix hereto.**
- 5.6.2 Financing under the International Research Agendas Programme shall cover the following categories of costs:

DIRECT COSTS:

- W – Remunerations** - Eligible costs in this category include the costs of remunerations including non-payroll labour costs, including social and health insurance contributions of individuals employed for conducting research (research workers, technical employees and other auxiliary personnel) or technology brokers proportionally to the extent to which these remunerations are directly connected with the realisation of the co-financed project.
- a) Remuneration of the research team leader of the project pursuant to an employment contract (cost of remuneration along with non-payroll labour costs, including social security and health insurance contributions) in the suggested amount up to PLN 27 000 per

month for full-time work at the project (in case of part-time employment this amount will be proportionally lowered).

- b) Remunerations of individuals employed at the R&D works in the project, to the extent, to which such works are directly connected with the realisation of the project.
- c) Remunerations of doctoral students and young doctors, if they receive remuneration pursuant to employment contracts (including remuneration costs and non-payroll labour costs, including social security and health insurance contributions) should not exceed the suggested amount: doctoral students – PLN 8 000 per month; young doctors – PLN 15 000 per month.

Note:

The total professional involvement of all individuals receiving remuneration under the project in the realisation of all projects financed from the structural funds and from the Cohesion Fund and activities financed from other sources, including own funds of the unit and of other entities, must not exceed 276 hours per month.

E – Subcontracting costs - entrusting third parties with the performance of part of the substantial works of the project that are not performed on the premises and under direct supervision of the beneficiary, and costs of resources made available by third parties (i.e. the costs of lease of the laboratory along with research equipment) (auxiliary tasks required for the performance of project tasks, such as legal or accounting services, are not considered as subcontracting), and all contracts for the performance of specific work.

Subcontracting costs may not exceed the limit identified in the Cost Eligibility Guide under Measure 4.3. The Smart Growth Operational Programme.

C – Costs of the development of research personnel (Cross-financing) – the following costs related to the development of research personnel may be financed in this category:

- a) Stipends

The suggested stipend amounts should not exceed:

- for students of 1st or 2nd degree studies or equivalent uniform study programmes – PLN 1500 – 2500 per month
 - for doctoral students – PLN 3500 – 4500 per month
- b) Fellowships (of stipend beneficiaries or research team employees to the extent connected with the research works realised in the project, commercialisation of

obtained results or works related to newest technological achievements or project management).

- c) Trainings (of stipend beneficiaries or research team employees to the extent connected with the research works realised in the project, commercialisation of obtained results or works related to newest technological achievements or project management, including the costs of summer schools for doctoral students).

Costs allocated to this category (C) may not exceed the limit identified in the Cost Eligibility Guide under Measure 4.3. The Smart Growth Operational Programme.

Op – Other indirect costs

1. Costs of research equipment and intangible assets

Including:

- a) Expenditures on the purchase of low-cost research equipment – funds allocated to expenditures in this category may not exceed the limit identified in the Cost Eligibility Guide under Measure 4.3. The Smart Growth Operational Programme.

2. Land and building costs

3. Other operational costs

Including:

- a) Costs of project promotion (the maximum may not exceed the limit identified in the Cost Eligibility Guide under Measure 4.3. The Smart Growth Operational Programme)
- b) Lease of laboratory space

O – Indirect costs Costs settled using a simplified method (“Indirect costs”) – flat rate calculated according to the method described in the Cost Eligibility Guide, constituting a specific percentage of costs settled within the indicated categories.

Note:

1. The total sum of funding for one unit realising the IRA in the initial 5-year period should not exceed the suggested amount of PLN **35 million**.
2. If the IRAP Implementing Unit is asked to refund the expenditures classified as direct costs and this causes the total amount of costs settled with the flat rate method to exceed the provided

percentage limit of direct costs, then the IRAP Implementing Unit will be required to refund the corresponding part of funds settled using the flat rate in order for the limit to be observed.

3. In the event of proposed costs exceeding the values suggested hereinabove or if the application contains costs related to the purchase of tangible fixed assets, then the Applicant will be obliged to present the relevant information during the interviews with the interdisciplinary panel at the seat of the FPS or on site of project realisation.

5.6.3 Expenditures eligible for co-financing are expenditures that meet the conditions listed in the *Cost Eligibility Guide* and that have been incurred in compliance with the provisions contained herein.

5.6.4 The budget allocated to the unit realising the IRA will be divided into the common part for R&D projects at the IRA unit (e.g. purchase of equipment, lease, remunerations of technical staff) and to budgets of individual research teams or individual scientists.

The common part of R&D projects at the IRA unit will be paid in instalments pursuant to the schedule presented in the appendix to the grant agreement. The first instalment of the budget for the project realisation by research team or individual scientist will be paid after the employment of the research team leader or of the said scientist.

5.6.5 Additional competition for financing research equipment:

1. During the realisation of the project, but not earlier than after the competition procedure for research team leader at the unit realising the IRA has been closed, the unit may file an application to the FPS for the purchase of specialist equipment. The competition will be conducted basing on the following assumptions:
 - a) the application shall be filed on request and on the dates specified by the Foundation for Polish Science,
 - b) the application shall be subject to evaluation by experts appointed for that purpose,
 - c) the application shall be considered taking into account, among others, an analysis of equipment of the given type available in Poland, based on available lists and databases of equipment,

- d) consent for the purchase of specialist equipment cannot be granted to projects realised with the participation of a scientific unit that received significant funding for research equipment under the Operational Programme Innovative Economy (IE OP) or the Operational Programme Infrastructure and Environment (IaE OP) with respect to the research conducted in the IRA project. The Foundation for Polish Science shall consult the applications for the purchase of specialist equipment filed by such units with the Intermediary Authority for Priority Axis 4 of the SG OP, in particular in order to confirm the fact of receipt of significant funding and to confirm the overlapping of the thematic scope of the IRA project and the purposes of purchase of equipment under IE OP or IaE OP.
- e) A representative of the National Centre for Research and Development will be invited to participate as an observer in the meeting of experts evaluating the applications for financing specialist equipment.

5.7 Indicators of realisation of the Project

5.7.1 The Applicant is obliged to include in the form the planned project realisation indicators, i.e. the planned products and outcomes. In the IRA programme these are the following:

- (1) Number of implemented R&D works,
- (2) Number of research units supported within the implementation of R&D works,
- (3) Number of collaborating foreign research units,
- (4) Number of people conducting R&D works within the project,
- (5) Number of new scientists in the supported units,
- (6) Number of foreign scientists in the supported projects,
- (7) Number of international scientific publications - indexed in the JCR list (Journal Citation Reports), Thomson Reuters,
- (8) Number of filed patent applications.

5.7.2 The presented indicators have to be relevant to the given type of the project and to reflect the objectives of the project. They will be subject to evaluation by a panel of experts during the substantial evaluation of the application, during the realisation of the project and after the completion thereof, and they may be subject to changes proposed by experts of the Foundation.

5.8 Reporting

1. During the project realisation, the unit realising the IRA shall submit reports to the FPS on the terms and conditions specified in the grant agreement.

2. During the project realisation, the unit realising the IRA shall be subject to at least two mid-term evaluations conducted by the FPS.

a) The first mid-term evaluation shall take place 1 year after the commencement of the project and it shall refer, first of all, to:

- i. the manner of implementation of the organisational structure proposed in the application,
- ii. the introduction of good practices e.g. with respect to recruitment of research workers,
- iii. co-operation with the foreign partner unit.

b) The second mid-term evaluation shall take place 3 years after the commencement of the project and it shall refer, first of all, to:

- i. the evaluation of scientific excellency of the research team leaders and of the whole IRA unit,
- ii. initiating co-operation with entrepreneurs,
- iii. level of internationalization and development of the R&D personnel for the needs of innovative economy.

3. During the second mid-term evaluation, the FPS shall make available the terms and conditions for filing applications for additional funding or for the prolongation of the project cost eligibility period. Positive mid-term evaluation result and a recommendation of the evaluation committee will be decisive for the positive consideration of the said application

5.9 Changes in the project

5.9.1 Any changes in the project that might influence the result of project evaluation on the first, second or third stage of the competition procedure, each time require the approval of the FPS, under the pain of termination of the agreement. This applies in particular to changes in the Statutes of the unit realising the IRA.

5.9.2 During the realisation of the project, regardless of the manner of project prolongation as a result of mid-term evaluation, the manager of the unit realising the IRA may file an application for the increasing of the granted funding (project budget) or for the project prolongation. The terms and conditions of the project prolongation shall be specified in the grant agreement.

5.9.3 The application for increasing the funding of the project may be filed, in particular, in connection with:

- a) the commencement of the subsequent stage of research works devoted to the elaboration of project results, with the aim to improve the potential implementation possibilities.
- b) the necessity to increase the number of students or doctoral students or their remunerations in comparison to the original application,
- c) starting new partnership within the project.

The acceptance of such applications will depend on the evaluation by experts and on the availability of funds for this purpose in the programme.

VI. System of IRA projects selection

Projects submitted in the competition are evaluated in the formal and content-based aspects. The wording and description of evaluation criteria constitute an appendix hereto.

If it is detected that the electronic file attached to the online form has been damaged, FPS may request to supplement such file at any stage of the competition.

6.1 Formal evaluation of the proposal

6.1.1 Applicants whose applications do not meet the formal criteria shall be notified (by e-mail or the electronic system) about the fact that their applications will not be considered due to formal deficits.

6.1.2 There will be no possibility to amend or supplement a formally incorrect application.

6.2 Content-based evaluation

Applications that received a positive formal evaluation will be submitted for content-based evaluation. The content-based evaluation consists of three stages: evaluation by the scientific and economic panel, written review stage and the stage of interviews with an interdisciplinary expert panel.

6.2.1 Stage 1. Scientific and economic panel

- a) The scientific and economic panel is composed of a minimum of 3 members who possess adequate scientific background or experience in the implementation of innovative solutions in the R&D sector. The Foundation may appoint several panels in the competition, corresponding to the fields of science represented by the filed applications.
- b) The scientific and economic panel evaluates, among others, the criterion "The Applicant guarantees the achievement of the objectives of the programme" (Content-based scored criterion No. 4). If the application is filed by two Applicants, the panel shall evaluate this criterion taking into account information filed in the application related to both Applicants.
- c) As a result of the evaluation by the scientific and economic panel, at least 50% of the best evaluated applications are qualified for the 2nd stage of content-based evaluation.
- d) The Applicants shall be notified by e-mail about the qualification of their application for the 2nd stage of content-based evaluation. Applicants, whose applications are qualified for the 2nd stage of evaluation, are invited to submit the second part of the application within the period specified herein.
- e) Applicants who are not invited to the 2nd stage will be notified about the received score and recommendations, along with a brief substantiation.

6.2.2 Stage 2. Written reviews

- a) Each application is evaluated by at least two third-party reviewers. The intention of the Foundation is to ensure that foreign experts constitute at least 50% of all experts involved in the process. Members of the scientific and economic panel or of the interdisciplinary expert panel (3rd stage of content-based evaluation) cannot act as reviewers.
- b) Reviewers evaluate, among others, the criterion: "Assessment of the competences of the Applicant" (Content-based scored criterion No. 2). If the application is filed by two Applicants, each Applicant is evaluated separately.

- c) Apart from the evaluation of content-based criteria, the reviewers may suggest certain issues to be clarified with the Applicant on the 3rd stage of content-based evaluation and point to the conclusions that deserve particular attention due to the risk connected with the enterprise, exceptional economic potential or potential solution of a significant social problem.
- d) The Applicants shall be notified by e-mail about the qualification of their application for the 3rd stage of content-based evaluation. Applicants who have been invited to the 3rd stage will receive the content of reviews of their applications, in compliance with the principle of maintaining the anonymity of reviewers, and they shall be requested to file the third part of application within the period specified in the letter of notification stating that they have been qualified for the 3rd stage of evaluation. The other Applicants may receive reviews on request.

6.2.3 Stage 3. Interview with the Interdisciplinary Panel of Experts

- a) Applications that receive the highest score, the best recommendations or those that receive the most divergent scores will be qualified for stage 3.
- b) On the third stage, the FPS reserves the right to request the Applicant to provide additional clarifications and, possibly, to submit additional documents concerning the organisational form of the unit realising the IRA. The aim of the possibility to request additional clarifications is to enable a comprehensive preparation of the Interdisciplinary Panel of Experts. The presentation of additional clarifications and documents by the Applicant is of a purely supplementary nature and it may not lead to any changes in the previously filed application. On this stage, it refers only to competition requirements.
- c) The Interdisciplinary Panel of Experts (IPE) shall compare the considered applications, rank them and evaluate them basing on the adopted criteria (see Appendix No. 2). The Interdisciplinary Panel of Experts is composed of at least three experts representing various fields of science and one Member of the Board of the FPS (acting as chairman, without the right to evaluate applications) and, optionally, an expert delegated by the IA as an observer.
- d) The basis for the comparison of candidates by the IPE are the written reviews obtained on the preceding stage and a direct interview with the Applicant, who will have an opportunity to express their opinion on the received score.
- e) The works of the IPE may consist of two stages: interview on the premises of the FPS (including, in particular, a discussion on the project, written reviews and reviewers' comments) and an on-site evaluation of the realisation of projects (evaluation of the criteria related to the feasibility of the project). The composition of the panel on the premises of the Foundation and on-site may vary.

- f) The foreign partner unit shall ensure the participation of its representative in the interview with the Interdisciplinary Panel of Experts. The representative of the partner unit who participates in the interview with the panel of experts shall present the final position of the partner unit.
- g) Evaluation by the IPE (in particular on-site of the realisation of the project) may be also conducted with the participation of other scientific or economic partners of the project, who will take part in the realisation of the project.
- h) Moreover, in situations when the application is filed by two Applicants, the IPE shall decide whether it is justified to employ both Applicants as research team leaders pursuant to the reviews from the 2nd stage of evaluation and the interview with Applicants. If one of the Applicants has received a low score on the stage of content-based evaluation, the IPE may recommend not to employ them as a research team leader without a competition organised by the ISC.

6.2.4 The Interdisciplinary Panel of Experts may recommend the Applicants to introduce changes necessary to ensure the proper realisation of the IRA project in their applications. Such changes may refer, in particular, to the conditions of the feasibility of the project with respect to the principles of operating of the unit realising the IRA.

6.2.5 The IPE may request the Foundation to conduct negotiations and to supervise the introduction of the recommended changes.

6.2.6 The Foundation reserves that potential negotiations between the Applicant and the Foundation concerning project indicators or project budget may continue after the end of the panel, before the conclusion of the grant agreement.

6.2.7 The Board of the Foundation shall adopt a resolution on the decision to allocate funds to the realisation of projects, based on the ranking of projects prepared by the panel and on the funds available in the given competition.

6.2.8 The list of beneficiaries (grant recipients) will be published on the website of the Foundation.

6.3 Procedure of appeal

6.3.1 The Applicant has the right to submit to the Board of the Foundation a written appeal against the decisions taken with respect to the filed application within 7 days from the date of receipt of the information about the refusal to grant funding or to qualify the application to the subsequent stage of evaluation. The date of the appeal delivery to the Foundation shall serve as proof, not the posting date, however the appeal may be sent to the Foundation by fax (+48 22 845 95 05)

or e-mail. The appeal shall be considered within 21 days from the date of receipt by the Foundation.

- 6.3.2** Appeals concerning the formal evaluation shall be considered by the Committee of Appeal (CA), composed of: a lawyer and two employees of the FPS who were not involved in the evaluation of the application.
- 6.3.3** Appeals concerning the content-based evaluation shall be considered by a committee composed of two third-party experts permanently co-operating with the Foundation who were not involved in the evaluation of the applications to which the appeal refers and an employee of the FPS who was not involved in the evaluation of the application.
- 6.3.4** The works of the Committee of Appeal shall consider only the evaluation of procedural aspects on each stage of evaluation and the selection of applications. The final opinion shall be adopted by voting. The Board of the Foundation, having familiarised itself with the opinion of the Committee, shall decide to submit the application for re-evaluation (by the panel or a reviewer) or reject the appeal. The Applicant shall be notified about the decision in written form. The decision of the Board is final.

VII. Grant agreement

7.1 Conclusion of the agreement

The grant agreement along with the application shall constitute the basis for the obligation of the project manager and the IRA unit to realise the project.

Before the conclusion of the grant agreement, the Foundation reserves the right to start negotiations with the Applicant who applies for the grant in order to introduce the necessary changes to the project.

- 7.1.1** The grant agreement is concluded between the FPS and the unit realising the IRA. Managers of the units realising the IRA shall receive the agreement by e-mail and send two identical, signed copies thereof along with all required documents (appendices) by post to the Foundation, within the period specified by the Foundation. The Foundation shall send a signed copy of the said agreement back to the unit.

Appendices to the agreement:

- (1) Project budget,
- (2) Statutes of the unit realising the IRA,
- (3) International agreement,
- (4) Schedule of the payment of instalments,
- (5) Statement concerning the VAT eligibility of the unit,
- (6) Power of attorney (this appendix is required if the agreement is signed by individual(s) who are not authorised to represent the unit pursuant to the Statutes),
- (7) Declaration stating that the unit realising the IRA will apply for all consents of ethics committees and other permissions required by law necessary for the conducting of research, to which they apply, and that it will start the realisation of such research only after obtaining all relevant consents and permissions.
- (8) Statement confirming that the tasks covered by the application are not financed and that the unit does not apply for the financing of such tasks from national or European public aid sources with respect to the same eligible costs.
- (9) The certificate on the absence of arrears in payments of budget fees and social security and health insurance contributions.
- (10) A document confirming that the agreement has been duly secured.

7.1.2 Apart from the appendices listed in item 7.1.1, before the conclusion of the agreement, the Foundation may request the unit to make available other documents, in particular:

- (1) Statement confirming the assignment of the REGON number to the unit,
- (2) Decision on the assignment of Taxation Identification Number (NIP) to the unit,
- (3) An excerpt from the National Court Register or from another applicable register.

7.1.3 Failure to submit the full set of requested appendices in the specified periods may result in the refusal to sign the agreement by the Foundation.

7.1.4 During the realisation of the project, the unit realising the IRA shall be obliged to use the IT system of the Foundation, among others, for the purposes of

submitting reports, documenting scientific achievements or applying for changes in the projects budgets.

VIII. Contact

Additional information about the programme may be obtained by calling the following telephone numbers:

Telephone: +48 22 845 95 46
+48 22 311 84 39
+48 22 845 95 01

or by e-mail:

slominska@fnp.org.pl

wegrzyn@fnp.org.pl

fnp@fnp.org.pl

IX. Appendices to the Competition Documentation

1. Cost Eligibility Guide under the Measure 4.3 of the Smart Growth Operational Programme
2. Evaluation criteria of the applications and description of the selection criteria of the projects in the IRA programme
3. Sample grant agreement