

# TEAM-NET

## Competition regulations

within

The Smart Growth Operational Programme 2014-2020

Priority IV

INCREASING THE SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH POTENTIAL

Measure 4.4: Increasing the human potential in the R&D sector

COMPETITION NO. 1/4.4/2018

*The Competition regulations have been prepared to present the application rules and the rules for the selection of projects for funding under Measure 4.4 of the Smart Growth Operational Programme 2014-2020. The document has been devised on the basis of the national and EU laws in force. In the case of any discrepancy between this document and legal regulations, the latter shall prevail.*

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## I. Introduction

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1. This document (hereinafter referred to as the Competition regulations) outlines the rules for submitting applications and implementing projects within the TEAM-NET competition, financed from the European Regional Development Fund under the Smart Growth Operational Programme (SG OP), Axis IV: Increasing the scientific research potential, Measure 4.4: **Increasing the human potential in the R&D sector**.
2. The TEAM-NET competition is organised by the Foundation for Polish Science (FNP) with its registered office in Warsaw, at ul. I. Krasickiego 20/22, 02-611 Warsaw, which acts as the Implementing Authority (IA) under Measure 4.4 of the SG OP.
3. Under Measure 4.4 of the SG OP, FNP coordinates the objectives of TEAM, TEAM TECH and HOMING/POWROTY projects, in particular activities for the development of R&D personnel in Poland, the utilisation of technical facilities and the provision of research services on market terms. The objective of the TEAM-NET competition is also to intensify cooperation between research units, search for synergies and develop new competences of these units and their R&D personnel related to the development of technologies and services.
4. The Foundation, through the TEAM-NET competition, will support national, international and cross-sectoral mobility related to R&D positions in Poland, additionally contributing to the strengthening of supra-regional cooperation of research units. The rules for the implementation of projects financed in the TEAM-NET competition aim at directing the competition offering in such a way as to reach scientists who are included in the same target group as those in the HOMING, POWROTY and First TEAM competitions, i.e. junior postdoctoral researchers (up to 9 years after obtaining their PhD degrees) and team leaders with eminent achievements who are implementing groundbreaking research projects, as in the TEAM and TEAM-TECH competitions.
5. The Competition regulations is the fundamental competition document, with appendices indicated in section X, including the Criteria of project selection in the TEAM-NET competition, Cost Eligibility Guide for Measure 4.4 of the Smart Growth Operational Programme, and model grant agreement, forming its integral part. The Applicants are obliged to familiarise themselves with the entire competition documentation.
6. All the dates specified in the Regulations (unless stated otherwise) referring to the obligations of applicants or beneficiaries are the dates of receipt of the documents by FNP rather than posting dates. With respect to time limits expressed in days, a day is defined as a calendar day. If the end of a time limit falls on a public holiday or on a Saturday, the

working day immediately following will be deemed the last day of the time limit concerned.

7. The applications selection procedure within the TEAM-NET competitions is a competition as defined in the Act of 11 July 2014 on the Principles of Implementing Cohesion Policy Programmes Financed under the 2014-2020 Financial Perspective. The competition is not divided into rounds.

## II. Definitions

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The terms used in this documentation have the following meanings:

1. **Beneficiary** - the entity referred to in Article 2 (10) of the General Regulation.
2. **Project budget** – a financial plan of the project, including eligible cost categories.
3. **PhD student** – a person with the status of a student of 3rd cycle studies or an equivalent programme who participates in the project under the supervision of a research team leader. It is recommended that PhD students be involved in project implementation on a full-time basis and that their time commitment to the project be not less than the suggested period of 3 years.
4. **Intermediate Body (IB)** – the National Centre for Research and Development.
5. **Implementing Authority (IA, Foundation)** – the Foundation for Polish Science (FNP).
6. **Managing Authority (MA)** – the institution referred to in Article 125 of the General Regulation – the minister in charge of regional development.
7. **Research Units** – as defined in the Act on the Principles of Financing Science of 30 April 2010 (Journal of Laws of 2018, item 87), organisational units conducting scientific research or development work on a continuous basis:
  - a) basic organisational units of higher education institutions within the meaning of the Statutes of such higher education institutions,
  - b) research units of the Polish Academy of Sciences as defined in the Act on the Polish Academy of Sciences of 30 April 2010 (Journal of Laws of 2017, items 1869 and 2201),
  - c) research institutes, as defined in the Act on Research Institutes of 30 April 2010 (Journal of Laws of 2018, item 736),

- 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 points a-e which have their registered offices in the Republic of Poland and are research- and knowledge-dissemination organisations as defined in Article 2(83) of Commission Regulation (EU) No 651/2014 of 17 June 2014 declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the internal market in application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty (OJ EU L 187 of 26.6.2014).
- 8. Project Leader** – a person with at least 10 years' experience in R&D work and project management, tasked with coordinating the work of research teams.
- 9. Consortium** – the entities representing the research units indicated in the application, cooperating to implement the joint project.
- 10. Consortium Leader** – an entity representing the consortium externally which acts for and on behalf of the Consortium Members and itself on the basis of an authorisation/power of attorney.
- 11. Consortium Member** – an entity included in the consortium established to implement the joint project implementing a part of it, representing the research unit(s) indicated in the application.
- 12. National Smart Specialisation (NSS)** – a document specifying the thematic scope to be financed within the competition, available on the website of the Foundation. The binding version is the one that is valid on the day of announcing the competition, constituting Appendix No. 2 to these Regulations.
- 13. Research Team Leader** – a scientist experienced in R&D work, corroborated by international achievements, acting as the leader of a research group in the project. This definition also encompasses junior research team leaders (cf. point 16).
- 14. Scientific and Economic Committee (SEC)** – a management and advisory body responsible for the quality of research work and research team leaders, comprising a minimum of 5 and a maximum of 9 persons whose knowledge and experience are justified in the light of the proposed subject matter of the project. The composition of SEC is presented by the Applicant when submitting the grant application (see points 4.2 and 7.4.2.5 of these Regulations).

- 15. Junior Postdoctoral Researcher** – a person who has had the academic degree of PhD for no more than 9 years (starting from the year of degree conferral and ending in the year of filing a competition application to act as a junior member of the team financed under the TEAM-NET project), who participates in project implementation under the supervision of the Research Team Leader. It is recommended that junior postdoctoral researcher's involvement in the project be no less than 1 year. There is no recommendation as to the amount of working time he/she should devote to the project.
- 16. Junior Research Team Leader** – a researcher who has had the academic degree of PhD for no more than 9 years (starting from the year of title conferral and ending in the year of filing a competition application to act as a junior research team leader financed under the TEAM-NET project) who is experienced in R&D work, corroborated by international achievements, acting as the leader of a research group in a project.
- 17. Project Duration** – the term indicated in an agreement, from 36 to 48 months, needed to implement the tasks, corresponding to the cost eligibility period in the project.
- 18. Reporting Period** – the period covered by the report of the beneficiary and the project leader on the implementation of the project. In TEAM-NET projects, the reporting periods for implementation reports submitted by the Project Leader via FNP's IT system cover 1 year, and the applications for payment submitted by the beneficiary via SL2014 are for no longer than 3 months.
- 19. HOMING, POWROTY and First TEAM programmes** – constitute part of the Grant Project of the Foundation for Polish Science (referred to as HOMING/POWROTY) financed from the European Regional Development Fund under the Smart Growth Operational Programme 2014-2020 (SG OP), Axis IV: Increasing the scientific research potential, Measure 4.4: Increasing the human potential in the R&D sector, implemented in 2016-2018; more information on the website of the relevant programme at [www.fnp.org.pl](http://www.fnp.org.pl).
- 20. TEAM programme** – implemented under the Grant Project of the Foundation for Polish Science (referred to as TEAM) financed from the European Regional Development Fund under the Smart Growth Operational Programme 2014–2020 (SG OP), Axis IV: Increasing the scientific research potential, Measure 4.4: Increasing the human potential in the R&D sector, implemented in 2016-2018; more information on the website of the relevant programme at [www.fnp.org.pl](http://www.fnp.org.pl).

- 21. TEAM Tech programme** – implemented under the Grant Project of the Foundation for Polish Science (referred to as TEAM TECH) financed from the European Regional Development Fund under the Smart Growth Operational Programme 2014–2020 (SG OP), Axis IV: Increasing the scientific research potential, Measure 4.4: Increasing the human potential in the R&D sector, implemented in 2016 - 2018; more information on the website of the relevant programme at [www.fnp.org.pl](http://www.fnp.org.pl).
- 22. R&D Work** – work carried out within the research and development project defined pursuant to Article 25 of Commission Regulation (EU) No 651/2014 of 17 June 2014 declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the internal market in application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty (GBER), in particular industrial research and/or experimental development.
- 23. Project** – a research programme in at least two fields of science (in line with the Appendix to the Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 8 August 2011 on areas of knowledge, fields of science and arts and scientific and artistic disciplines), described in the grant application for 3-6 research teams operating in the research units indicated in the application including the tasks associated with the preparation of knowledge transfer, determining a clearly defined scientific challenge (a research problem) or a challenge of a social and economic nature (within National Smart Specialisations) and method of work and approach to dealing with the said challenge; the project shall be a research project which provides for the implementation of industrial research and development work or experimental development work.
- 24. Entrepreneur** – as defined in the Act – Entrepreneurs’ Law of 6 March 2018 (Journal of Laws of 2018, item 646) is a natural person, legal person or an organisational unit which is not a legal person, which is granted legal capacity by a separate act, and carries out economic activities. Partners in a civil partnership are also entrepreneurs as regards the economic activities they carry out. The rules for establishing, carrying out and terminating economic activities by foreigners are determined in separate regulations.
- 25. Cost Eligibility Guide** - Cost Eligibility Guide for Measure 4.4. of the Smart Growth Operational Programme, appended to these Regulations.
- 26. General Regulation** - Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund

and laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 1083/2006 (OJ EU L 347 of 20.12.2013, p. 320).

27. **Student** – a person with the status of a 1st or 2nd-cycle student (or equivalent) participating in the project.
28. **Durability of the project results** – as defined in Article 71 of the General Regulation.
29. **Grant Agreement (agreement)** – a project implementation agreement concluded between the IA and the Beneficiary - an entity (or the Consortium Leader and Consortium Members - in the case of a consortium) representing the research units indicated in the application.
30. **Consortium Agreement** – an agreement concluded between Consortium Members determining , in particular, their interests, rights and responsibilities and the division of funds within the project, as well as the rules for the division of intellectual property rights.
31. **Implementation Act** – the Act of 11 July 2014 on the implementation principles of the Cohesion Policy programmes financed under the 2014-2020 Financial Perspective.
32. **Grant Application** (application) – a grant application for the project, including appendices, filed to the IA by the Applicant. In the TEAM-NET competition, the application shall be submitted using the electronic application form completed on-line, including all the required appendices (also in electronic format) submitted in accordance with these Regulations (see points 7.3 and 7.4).
33. **Applicant** – an entity (or the Consortium Leader – in the case of a consortium) applying for funding, representing the research units indicated in the application.
34. **Project Indicators** – indicators determined prior to the commencement of a project in order to monitor the project and evaluate its completion with respect to predetermined objectives, specified in point 4.5 of these Regulations, whose values and justifications are indicated in the grant application.
35. **Eligible Expenditures** – mean eligible expenditures in accordance with Guidelines on the eligibility of expenditures under the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund for the years 2014-2020, posted on the website of the Managing Authority, the Intermediate Body, and with the Cost Eligibility Guide for Measure

4.4. of the Smart Growth Operational Programme, published on the website of the Implementing Authority.

**36. Guidelines** – the guidelines referred to in Article 5 (1) of the Implementation Act.

**37. Foreign Research Partner** – a researcher or researchers who has the academic degree of PhD and working at a foreign entity (public or private) conducting R&D work.

### **III. Subject of the TEAM-NET competition**

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#### **3.1. Objective of the projects**

3.1.1. The objective of the TEAM-NET competitions is to develop the personnel of the R&D sector in Poland for the purposes of, among others, cooperating with enterprises, which is implemented by intensifying cooperation between research units, to improve their research quality, to search for research and innovation synergies, and to develop new competences related to the development of technologies and services. Within the competition, the remaining objectives of Measure 4.4 of the SG OP aiming at the development of R&D personnel in projects will also be implemented. These projects may be of the following nature:

- a) postdoctoral fellowships pursued by junior postdoctoral researchers from around the world, irrespective of their nationality – a continuation of the objective of the HOMING/POWROTY programme,
- b) first research teams led by junior postdoctoral researchers from around the world at the early stages of their scientific careers and irrespective of their nationality – a continuation of the objective of the First Team programme,
- c) team work carried out by eminent researchers from around the world, irrespective of their nationality, working in the most innovative fields and conducting research which is groundbreaking on an international level – a continuation of the objective of the TEAM programme,
- d) team work carried out by researchers with prominent experience in implementing the results of research into economic practice or in providing research services, or

operating research equipment, and implementing projects – a continuation of the objective of the Team Tech and the Team Tech Core Facility programme.

### 3.2. Thematic scope of the projects

- 3.2.1. The TEAM-NET competition involves the funding of projects compliant with the subjects listed in the National Smart Specialisations list, constituting Appendix No. 3 to these Regulations.
- 3.2.2. If a specific project fits in the scope of NSS, and solving a given problem can require interdisciplinary contributions made by various research teams representing various fields, due to the all-round approach to the issue, the SEC may also include, for instance, a project component involving scientists specialising in social studies or humanities. Such an approach is justified if it influences the final value and reliability of the project outputs and increases the possibility of applying them in business.

### 3.3. Project conditions

- 3.3.1. The project within the TEAM-NET competition shall include R&D work in at least two fields of science in line with the Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 8 August 2011 on areas of knowledge, fields of science and arts and scientific and artistic disciplines (Journal of Laws No. 179, item 1065).
- 3.3.2. The project within the TEAM-NET competition shall be implemented by from 3 to 6 research units indicated in the application. These units may be represented by **one entity**, e.g. one university whose basic organisational units have been indicated in the grant application or the **consortium leader** representing, e.g., research units of the Polish Academy of Sciences cooperating to implement a joint project, or basic organisational units of a university, or other research units (see Chapter II Definitions).
- 3.3.3. In the case of applications filed by a group of 3-5 units, at least one of them must have at least an "A" category, and when a group consists of 6 units, at least two of them must have at least the "A" category.
- 3.3.4. The project provides for establishing a total of 3 to 6 research teams led by leaders or junior research team leaders selected according to the rules indicated in points 5.1 and 5.2. The teams will be located (affiliated) in the research units indicated in the application.
- 3.3.5. The following are required within the proposed project:

- a) novelty of the R&D work in comparison with the activities presently carried out by the units indicated in the application;
  - b) originality of the solution to the problem specified in the project, taking into account the latest achievements in this field and the possibility of making a breakthrough in the area covered by the project.
- 3.3.6. The project within the TEAM-NET competition must have technological and scientific potential, be based on a defined market potential and a correctly indicated target market, and plan an effective knowledge transfer along with the described commercialisation mechanisms and the manner of overcoming the most common difficulties of this process.
- 3.3.7. Under the project, at least one research task must be dedicated to building the market potential of a service that will be made available to stakeholders. This task may consist in developing the core facility – the method of utilising the specialist research equipment, or in making available a new service on market terms, based on the research method developed within the TEAM-NET project, necessary to solve the issues of substantial socio-economic importance.
- 3.3.8. The planned work should be adequate (i.e. necessary, sufficient and justified) to achieve the project objective and solve the research problem, as well as divided into clearly defined and logical stages along with the specific milestones of each stage.
- 3.3.9. The project should include a risk analysis for the implementation of the project (with the major technological, organisational and personnel-related risks being identified and precisely described).

#### **3.4. Project duration**

- 3.4.1. The project should start to be implemented not earlier than on 1 February 2019 and no later than on 1 October 2019.
- 3.4.2. The Applicant shall specify the date of launching and completion of the project (considering points 3.4.1 and 3.4.4), taking into account that the project implementation period is equivalent to the period in which the incurred expenditures may be regarded as eligible.
- 3.4.3. At the justified request of the Applicant, the implementation of the project may commence on dates other than those indicated in point 3.4.1.

- 3.4.4. The duration of the project under the TEAM-NET competition shall be 36 to 48 months.
- 3.4.5. The project completion must take place by 31 December 2023 at the latest.
- 3.4.6. In the case of a project implemented within a period of less than 48 months, the beneficiary (in consultation with the project leader) may submit an application for the extension of the project implementation period within the period for the mid-term review or at any other time specified by the Foundation and applicable to all beneficiaries; however, the total duration of the project after the extension may not exceed 48 months and that it must be completed by 31 December 2023 at the latest.

### **3.5. Amount of funding**

- 3.5.1. The maximum amount of project funding depends on the number of research teams indicated in the grant application and duration of the project; however, the funding for one research team may not exceed **PLN 3.5 million per 36 months**.
- 3.5.2. The level of funding for the project is 100%.

## **IV. Project implementation**

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### **4.1. Managing team**

- 4.1.1. The managing team is composed of:
- The project leader with at least 10 years' experience in R&D work and project management, whose role is primarily to coordinate the work of research teams; and
  - one representative of each of the entities indicated in the application, with at least 5 years' experience in R&D work.
- 4.1.2. Furthermore, the managing team includes one person (other than the project leader) with at least 5 years' experience in implementing research work results in the economic practice or providing research services, who will be responsible for developing cooperation between research units and entrepreneurs within the project.
- 4.1.3. The project leader shall be employed by a legal entity within which the research units indicated in the application operate. In the case of an application submitted by a consortium, the project leader must be employed by the Consortium Leader.

- 4.1.4. When the application in the TEAM-NET competition is submitted by a **single entity** within which the research units indicated in the application operate, the managing team shall be composed of up to 3 persons specified in points 4.1.1 and 4.1.2.
- 4.1.5. When the application is submitted by a **consortium**, the managing team shall be composed of at least 3 persons (for a consortium composed of two entities) or up to 7 persons (for a consortium composed of 6 entities), subject to the provisions of points 4.1.1 and 4.1.2.
- 4.1.6. Up to two persons from the managing team (including the project leader) may apply at the same time to become a leader of a research team financed under the TEAM-NET project. In such a situation these persons, in addition to having met the requirements for managing team members, must meet those concerning the candidates for research team leaders (cf. point 5.2) and be accepted by the SEC.

## **4.2. Scientific and Economic Committee (SEC)**

- 4.2.1. The composition of SEC is presented by the Applicant when submitting the grant application for the TEAM-NET project.
- 4.2.2. The SEC is an advisory and consultative body of the project, whose role is primarily to select the leaders of research teams provided for in the project, to evaluate the project progress on an ongoing basis, to evaluate research team leaders, and to give the directions for project development in terms of the economic use of its results.
- 4.2.3. The SEC must contribute to the development of new competences by the units implementing the TEAM-NET project and building a competitive edge in the field of the project. The SEC shall monitor the research and economic quality of the project, as well as its management, and shall intervene to introduce the necessary modifications to the project, especially when preparing a report for the mid-term review of the project.
- 4.2.4. The Scientific and Economic Committee shall be composed of from 5 to 9 persons, including the personnel of the world's leading research units in the field of the project.
- 4.2.5. At least half of the members of the SEC may not be employed in any of the entities indicated in the application.
- 4.2.6. At least half of the members of the SEC shall have experience in the transfer of research results into the economy.

- 4.2.7. At least one third of the members of the SEC should be representatives of entrepreneurs operating in the area covered by the application (e.g. representatives of a chamber of commerce, a science and technology association or a cluster).
- 4.2.8. At least two members of the SEC shall have experience in some form of research unit restructuring, locally or abroad (e.g. experience in managing a field of science, which can be documented by successes in improving the research quality of units or tightening relations with the economy).

### **4.3. Access to infrastructure**

- 4.3.1. The project implementing units shall have at their disposal appropriate technical resources, including infrastructure (premises, scientific and research equipment and other equipment necessary for the implementation of R&D works within the project), complementary with the planned material scope of the project.
- 4.3.2. One of the objectives of the project, in line with point 3.3.7, is to build the market potential of a service that will be made available to stakeholders. This objective can be achieved through:
  - a) the development of the core facility – the method of utilising specialist research equipment, provided that access to the equipment for other entities (including entrepreneurs) must be provided on market terms, or
  - b) making available a new service on market terms, based on the research method developed within the TEAM-NET project.
- 4.3.3. Under the project, it is possible to finance, among other things, the purchase of low-cost scientific and research equipment; certain leasing costs; equipment depreciation costs; expenditures on the modernisation of equipment owned or rented out free of charge; rental of laboratory space; operation of equipment; construction components and components permanently installed in a prototype or pilot or demonstration installation; in accordance with the Cost Eligibility Guide for Measure 4.4. of the SG OP.

#### **4.4. Cooperation with entrepreneurs under the project without granting state aid**

- 4.4.1. Cooperation with entrepreneurs under the TEAM-NET project is possible (on the terms indicated below), but not obligatory.
- 4.4.2. The TEAM-NET project does not provide for the granting of state aid to business entities.
- 4.4.3. The economic cooperation must be based on an agreement or memorandum of understanding signed between the enterprise and the research unit indicated in the application and implementing the project, to specify the terms of cooperation, at least by stating the interests of individual partners (why), the contributions of the respective partners (what the cooperation is about) and the division of intellectual property rights (if the entrepreneur makes a contribution to the project which can be estimated). Agreements with the enterprises will be monitored by the IA.
- 4.4.4. Cooperation between the research unit and enterprises must meet one of the conditions below:
  - a) the enterprises bear all their respective costs of the cooperation project, or
  - b) results of the cooperation which do not give rise to intellectual property rights are disseminated and any intellectual property rights resulting from the funded project are fully owned by the implementing unit, or
  - c) any intellectual property rights resulting from the project, as well as related access rights, are allocated to the different cooperating partners in a manner which duly reflects their work packages, contributions and respective interests, or
  - d) the research unit receives compensation equivalent to the market value of the intellectual property rights generated by their activities which are granted to the participating enterprises or access rights granted to the participating enterprises. The absolute amount of the value of any contribution, financial or non-financial, by the participating enterprises to the costs of the unit's activities that gave rise the intellectual property rights concerned may be deducted from that compensation; the compensation received is equivalent to the market price if it enables the research unit concerned to enjoy the full economic benefits of those rights if one of the following conditions is fulfilled:
    - 1. the amount of compensation is established in an open, transparent and non-discriminatory competitive sale procedure, or

2. an independent expert's appraisal confirms that the amount of compensation is at least equal to the market value, or
3. the implementing unit, as the seller, may demonstrate that it effectively negotiated the compensation under fully competitive conditions in order to obtain the maximum economic benefit when the agreement is concluded, while considering its statutory objectives, or
4. in cases where, in line with the cooperation agreement, the cooperating enterprise has the right of pre-emption as regards intellectual property rights generated by the cooperating unit with a right to solicit more economically advantageous offers from third parties, the cooperating enterprise must adapt its range accordingly.

4.4.5. If none of the conditions specified in section 4.4.4 are fulfilled, the full value of the contribution to the project by the unit will be considered a benefit for the cooperating enterprises to which state aid rules apply, and it shall be considered a non-eligible expenditure within the project.

#### 4.5. Project implementation indicators

4.5.1. The applicant is required to indicate in the electronic application form the planned project implementation indicators, i.e. the expected project outputs and results. The following indicators are applied in the TEAM-NET competition:

##### **Output indicators:**

- a) *Number of research units which received support in the course of R&D work* – this indicator is a total of all research units which received support during project implementation,
- b) *Number of R&D work units completed* – number of R&D projects, i.e. the number of R&D work units started by research team leaders. Research conducted by persons with the degree of PhD, as part of the team, constitutes separate R&D work. Furthermore, every PhD must be related to the provision of original contribution to the state of knowledge, and thus also constitutes separate R&D work.
- c) *Number of enterprises cooperating with research centres* – this indicator is a total of all enterprises involved in R&D work within the project, i.e. they are not recipients of funding, but are involved in cooperation within the project, without granting state aid,
- d) *number of persons covered by support as regards the development of R&D personnel* – team leaders and final recipients involved in the implemented project, i.e. research

team members, including PhD students, students and junior postdoctoral researchers.

**Result indicators:**

- e) *number of foreign researchers in the supported project* – foreign partners and researchers, including PhD students, who have come to Poland to implement the financed project,
- f) *number of international research publications* – publications indexed in the JCR (Journal Citation Reports),
- g) *number of academic degrees obtained*,
- h) *number of patent applications filed*.

4.5.2. The indicators should be adequate to the proposed project and must reflect its objectives. The indicators presented in the application will be subject to a review by a panel of experts during the substantive evaluation of the application, and the indicator values and their justification may be modified at the stage of the evaluation. During project implementation, changes to the indicators must be accepted by the IA, and may be proposed by the beneficiary (in consultation with the project leader) in accordance with SEC recommendations or by experts evaluating progress in project implementation during mid-term review.

## 4.6. Reporting

4.6.1. The beneficiary (in consultation with the project leader) shall file reports and applications for payment in accordance with the reporting periods in force in the TEAM-NET competition and on the terms specified in the grant agreement.

4.6.2. The project is subject to mid-term review conducted by the IA at least once after 12 months from the start of the project, which concerns, in particular, the evaluation of:

- a) the project implementation procedure,
- b) the recruitment of team leaders and other project personnel,
- c) cooperation between research units,
- d) the introduction of knowledge transfer mechanisms.

4.6.3. During the mid-term review conducted by the IA, involving the participation of an expert (experts), it is possible to evaluate the modifications to the research programme proposed by the beneficiary (in consultation with the project leader) and the SEC.

## **4.7. Changes in the course of project implementation**

- 4.7.1. Changes in the project which could result in no funding being granted to the project at the competition procedure stage shall be inadmissible.
- 4.7.2. During project implementation, irrespective of the manner of changes resulting from the mid-term review, the beneficiary (in consultation with the project leader), may file an application for the modification of the project budget or a change in the project duration, especially in relation to:
  - a) initiation of another stage of research work to produce the results of the project, so as to potentially increase the feasibility of its implementation,
  - b) the necessity of increasing the number of junior team members or their remuneration in respect of the manner of research programme implementation within the individual research teams.
- 4.7.3. Any extension of project duration shall be related to the extension of the material scope of the application and shall include the possibility of increasing project funding.
- 4.7.4. A positive assessment of applications will depend on expert evaluation and the availability of funding for that purpose.

## **V. Project staff**

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### **5.1. General assumptions concerning competitions for leaders and members of their teams**

- 5.1.1. Research group leaders and other team members shall be selected according to the rules of employing researchers provided in the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers (downloadable from the Foundation's website) and according to the rules provided for in these Regulations. FNP has obtained the *HR Excellence in Research* log, and thus is obliged to report to the European Commission (EC) the rules for the recruitment of researchers applied by the beneficiaries in FNP's programmes, and is monitored by the EC in respect of the OTM-R (Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment) strategy.
- 5.1.2. Leaders of research teams are recruited in a process supervised by the SEC, while other team members are recruited in a process supervised by a recruitment committee.

- 5.1.3. During the selection of research team leaders and other members of the teams, the rules applicable to candidates from the research units indicated in the application and those from entities other than the research units involved in project implementation are the same.
- 5.1.4. In the case of selecting research team leaders, FNP accepts the criteria and rules for candidate evaluation before such recruitment is commenced.
- 5.1.5. The recruitment strategy within the project and the composition of the SEC are evaluated at the grant application stage, within the TEAM-NET competition. During project implementation, FNP monitors the manner of competition announcement and candidates' obligations associated with recruitment (e.g. the required documents, etc.), FNP may participate in the meetings of the SEC and reserves itself the right to accept recruitment reports in terms of their conformity with the requirements of these Regulations.
- 5.1.6. FNP evaluates the recruitment process through surveys or interviews with board members and candidates, and monitors the participation of candidates from other centres and countries in the recruitment process (including the principle of non-discrimination).
- 5.1.7. The beneficiary must provide the possibility to appeal against negative recruitment outcomes, which participants in the recruitment process may file within 7 days from receiving feedback from the SEC or the recruitment committee. In response to the appeal, the Beneficiary shall appoint the Appeals Committee, whose opinion shall be necessary for the acceptance of the recruitment reports by FNP.
- 5.1.8. In the course of project implementation:
  - a) The beneficiary (in consultation with the project leader) shall provide FNP provided with due notice with information on the criteria and rules for candidate evaluation (to be approved by FNP) and on the manner of selecting research team leaders and the planned dates of interviews with the candidates,
  - b) The research team leader (in consultation with the project leader) shall provide FNP with due notice with information on the manner of selecting research team members and the planned dates of interviews with the candidates,
  - c) The beneficiary (in consultation with the project leader) shall enable FNP's representatives to participate in the recruitment process in the role of observers,

- d) The beneficiary (in consultation with the project leader) shall provide appropriate conditions for conducting an open and international selection of research team leaders and other team members:
- the competition is announced publicly also in international fora (including on the EURAXESS website) so that it is available to all interested parties that meet the criteria – the notice on the competition shall provide full information on the recruitment also in English,
  - the notice shall include, in particular, job description, financial conditions (including the amount and form of remuneration and the duration of employment),
  - the notice shall include information on the possibility of appealing against or submitting comments on the evaluation,
- e) The SEC or the recruitment committee shall prepare and conduct the recruitment process on the basis of the adopted criteria; however, at least one of the criteria should refer to the candidate's scientific research achievements to date and their ability to facilitate the achievement of the project objectives,
- f) The SEC or the recruitment committee shall ensure such recruitment conditions under which no candidate may be discriminated for any reason, including especially his/her place of residence, disability, race, religion, nationality, political views, affiliation, ethnic origin, denomination, sexual orientation or gender,
- g) The SEC or the recruitment committee shall document the recruitment process in the form of a report, which shall contain, at a minimum, the list of candidates by gender, names of units from which they originate, scores received by the candidates during the recruitment, and details about competition notices, selection criteria, competition and appeal (if any) dates; in the case of recruiting PhD students, the report shall also include information on the mentor(s) referred to in point 5.3.7 for each of the selected PhD student,
- h) The SEC or the recruitment committee shall provide the candidates with feedback no later than within 7 days of the end of the recruitment process,
- i) The beneficiary (in consultation with the project leader) shall, no later than 14 days after the conclusion of the recruitment of research team leaders, provide FNP with a copy of the recruitment report,
- j) The research team leader (in consultation with the project leader) shall, no later than 14 days after the conclusion of the recruitment of other research team members, provide FNP with a copy of the recruitment report,

- k) Conducting project personnel recruitment in line with these Regulations is a precondition for funding a scholarship or an employment contract for the person selected in the competition under the project. In the case of scholarships, the rules for awarding scholarships, as appended to the grant agreement, shall be observed. The Foundation reserves itself the right to accept recruitment reports in terms of their conformity with the requirements of these Regulations before engaging the project personnel selected by way of competition in R&D Work.

## **5.2. Research team leaders**

- 5.2.1. The possibility of funding from project resources applies to only those research teams which are managed by the leaders selected and accepted by the SEC which supervises their recruitment. All research team leaders should be recruited by way of an open competition (except for situations in which a member of the managing team is indicated as the team leader).
- 5.2.2. At least half of research teams will be managed by team leaders who in the last 2 years were not employed in any of the entities indicated in the application in which the project selected for funding is being implemented.
- 5.2.3. If one member of the managing team is also to lead the research team, the R&D work of this team may be commenced on the starting date of the project implementation. On the other hand, if another member of the managing team is also indicated as the leader (see points 4.1.6 and 7.4.3.6), the team may commence its activities under the project only after the recruitment of at least two other research team leaders is completed, subject to point 5.2.2.
- 5.2.4. The beneficiary (in consultation with the project leader) shall provide appropriate conditions so as to facilitate the funding of first research team by junior research team leaders (see point 3.1.1 b)) under the TEAM-NET project.
- 5.2.5. The competition for the research team leader is based on the following requirements:
- a) the notice, in addition to basic information, shall also include information on the rules for and possibilities of funding for research team members and the funds allocated for team management or guaranteed to establish a research team; the notice may include information on additional incentives for candidates for leaders, guaranteed by the unit/entity in which the leader's team is located (affiliated),

- b) the candidate for a research team leader shall present, in the competition, the following:
- (1) his/her CV,
  - (2) one to five appendices<sup>1</sup> facilitating the evaluation of the major scientific and/or implementation-related achievements over the last 10 years, such as:
    - full texts of publications (in the original language) or
    - full texts of patents (in the original language; patent applications do not constitute achievements), or
    - descriptions of implementations,
  - (3) a description of the originality and groundbreaking nature of the listed achievements and their impact on the development of specific fields of science as well as a description of the achievements and results of the last implemented project (up to 3 A4 pages),
  - (4) a proposal of research assumptions and methods which will be the subject of R&D works of the research team managed by the given person within the implemented project along with an indication (if applicable) of foreign scientific partners with whom he/she intends to cooperate under the implemented project (up to 4 A4 pages),
- c) in the case of candidates for junior research team leaders, candidates who have completed similar projects, in particular LIDER projects financed by the National Centre for Research and Development or SONATA Bis, financed by the National Science Centre, within the term for submitting applications specified in the competition notice for the position of a research team leader, shall be excluded.

5.2.6. The research group leader must be employed by the implementing unit on at least half-time basis. The remuneration amounts for research team leaders shall be proposed by the Project Manager in consultation with the SEC and in consideration of the rules specified in point 6.2.

5.2.7. In justified cases and if approved by the Foundation, the research team leader, within the **TEAM-NET** project, may simultaneously lead another project funded by the Foundation for Polish Science, and in particular within the HOMING, POWROTY, First

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<sup>1</sup> One appendix shall mean one document, i.e. one full text of a publication or patent, or a description of implementation, as described in point 5.2.5 (b) (2))

TEAM, TEAM Tech, TEAM programmes or the International Research Agendas programme.

- 5.2.8. The research team leader remunerated at the same time under the TEAM-NET project and other projects financed by the Foundation, may not be involved in such other projects in working hours exceeding a full-time unit, i.e. 1 FTE.
- 5.2.9. The beneficiary (in consultation with the project leader) shall provide FNP with information on the planned budget resources allocated for the new leader and his/her research team and a description of the R&D work planned for implementation by the team managed by this leader, along with information on the possible participation of foreign research partners.
- 5.2.10. The research team leader should conduct systematic teaching activities; however, his/her teaching load should not exceed 60 hours per semester.

### **5.3. Research team members**

- 5.3.1. Each research team, after 12 months from the employment of its leader at the latest, should include at least three people who are students, PhD students or junior postdoctoral researchers, hereinafter referred to as junior team members.
- 5.3.2. Technical staff, selected by the research team leader for the implementation of the planned R&D work, may also serve as members of research teams.
- 5.3.3. Furthermore, the team may include up to two people with a scientific degree necessary for conducting research work or for supervising junior team members (appointed by the Project Leader in consultation with the team leader and approved by the Scientific and Economic Panel and FNP).
- 5.3.4. **Junior members of the research team:** students and PhD students and junior postdoctoral researchers shall be selected by the leader in an open competition based on transparent criteria, in accordance with the following rules:
  - a) the competition shall be announced publicly also in English, including on FNP's website; in the case of recruiting candidates for PhD students and junior postdoctoral researchers information on the competition shall be also published at least one month in advance of the indicated application deadline, including on the EURAXESS website,

- b) the competition shall be announced publicly and should indicate the method of submitting entries and requirements to be fulfilled by the candidates, as well as the expected amount of scholarship or remuneration and the period of involvement in R&D work within the project,
- c) an interview is one of the recruitment stages, and it should be also available in English for foreign candidates; the interview can be held as a teleconference; however, all the recruitment committee members must be provided with an opportunity to participate in the interview,
- d) the recruitment committee, consisting of at least three members – the team leader and two other persons (e.g. members of the managing team or other leaders of teams carrying out R&D work within the project), other than junior members of the team for which the recruitment is being conducted.

5.3.5. The selected **students and PhD students** may become team members on the basis of either a scholarship or an employment contract, and may not, at the same time, receive stipends or remuneration under other project financed by the Foundation (with the exception of the START programme). The amounts of stipends are proposed by the Project Manager in consultation with the team leader, in consideration of the rules specified in point 6.3.

5.3.6. Students and PhD students who receive stipends or are employed under an employment contract may receive remuneration or scholarship within the project up to the end of the month in which their Master's thesis (for students) or doctoral dissertation (for PhD students) was defended.

5.3.7. The beneficiary (in consultation with the project leader and the leaders of individual research teams) shall provide the PhD students participating in the project with appropriate supervision and mentoring by at least a research supervisor (i.e. a mentor) other than the leader of the team in which the PhD student carries out R&D work. It is recommended that the mentor be a person employed in a foreign institution or unit other than the unit which the PhD student is affiliated, e.g. another unit from among those indicated in the application and implementing the TEAM-NET project.

5.3.8. Stipends will be treated as financial support for project participants and paid to the individual bank accounts of stipends holders on the basis of the Regulations. Stipends holders may not receive remuneration from the project funds while receiving the scholarship.

- 5.3.9. In the case of recruiting **junior postdoctoral researchers** who carry out, under the supervision of research team leaders, R&D work which is their postdoctoral fellowship (see point 3.1.1 a)), the project leader (in consultation with the team leader) shall ensure conditions in which:
- a) the recruitment notice includes information on the vacant postdoctoral fellowship positions, with a particular focus on foreign junior scientists coming to Poland, irrespective of their nationality,
  - b) the recruitment must provide for the possibility of applications being filed by candidates who intend to continue their research activities after a maternity leave or a break resulting from other causes.
- 5.3.10. Junior postdoctoral researchers recruited to work in the research team may collect remuneration only under the employment contract in the amount proposed by the Project Manager in consultation with the team leader, in consideration of the rules specified in point 6.2.
- 5.3.11. The **research team members** specified in points 5.3.2 and 5.3.3 shall be selected by way of a competition proposed by the project leader. The Foundation's acceptance of the rationale for their employment shall be the condition for the remuneration of such employees being funded.

## VI. Financial terms

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### 6.1. Eligible costs

- 6.1.1. Costs eligible for financing are expenditures which meet the conditions included in the Regulations, including those specified in its appendices, in particular in the Cost Eligibility Guide and the grant agreement. The rules of the classification and the subsequent settlement of expenditures are set in Guidelines on the eligibility of expenditures under the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund for the years 2014-2020 and the Cost Eligibility Guide, which also specifies the catalogue of eligible costs.
- 6.1.2. Costs settled using a simplified method – flat rate calculated according to the method described in the Cost Eligibility Guide constituting a specific percentage of costs settled within the indicated categories.

6.1.3. The total professional involvement of each person receiving remuneration under the project in the implementation of all projects financed from structural funds and the Cohesion Fund and in any activities funded from other sources, including the unit's or other entities' own funds, may not exceed 276 hours per month. Where an employee's total workload of 276 hours per month is exceeded, his/her remuneration paid from the project funds shall represent ineligible expenditure for each month in which the level of 276 hours is exceeded.

## **6.2. Remuneration under the project**

6.2.1. This category covers the following eligible costs: cost of remuneration, including non-salary employment costs such as social and health insurance contributions of persons employed for research<sup>2</sup> (research staff, substantive management staff, technical staff and other auxiliary staff) and technology brokers in the part where such remuneration is directly related to the implementation of the project covered by the grant.

6.2.2. In the case of research team leaders, junior postdoctoral researchers and PhD students, their remuneration is qualified as eligible based on employment contracts.

6.2.3. The rules for the classification and subsequent settlement of remuneration are set in the Guidelines on the eligibility of expenditures under the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund for the years 2014-2020 and the Cost Eligibility Guide, constituting Appendix No. 1 to these Regulations.

## **6.3. Stipends, fellowships and training**

6.3.1. Only students and PhD students selected by way of an open competition in line with points 5.1 and 5.3 may join the project based on a stipend

6.3.2. Fellowships and training are available for scholarship holders or research team members within the scope related to the research work conducted as part of the project, the commercialisation of research results and state-of-the-art technology achievements or project management, in accordance with the Cost Eligibility Guide.

6.3.3. The total cost of stipends, fellowships and training may not exceed 30% of all eligible project costs.

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<sup>22</sup>Personnel directly involved in the research process, as per the range of duties of the personnel, may be settled through direct costs.

## VII. Competition and the application process

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### 7.1. Amount of funds allocated to the projects implementation

7.1.1 The total amount of funds allocated to the competition is **PLN 100,000,000** (say: one hundred million zlotys).

7.1.2 FNP reserves itself the right to increase the amount allocated for project funding in the competition, pursuant to Article 46 (2) of the Implementation Act, taking into account the principle of equal treatment.

### 7.2. Application submission deadlines

7.2.1 The grant applications may be submitted from 1 October 2018 to **31 October 2018 by 16:00 (GMT+1)**.

7.2.2 Grant applications submitted after the deadline indicated in point 7.2.1 shall not be considered.

7.2.3 The process of selecting projects for funding shall not exceed 90 days from the moment of closing the call for applications to the moment of making available the ranking list of projects selected for funding.

7.2.4 Questions concerning applications for funding under the competition may be sent to: [team-net@fnp.org.pl](mailto:team-net@fnp.org.pl) or to the programme coordinator indicated in Section IX. CONTACT.

### 7.3. Application submission method

7.3.1. The grant application shall be submitted by the Applicant in electronic format only, by using FNP's electronic system, registering at <https://wnioski.fnp.org.pl>.

7.3.2. The grant application shall be completed in Polish or English.

7.3.3. The grant application shall be submitted on behalf of the Applicant by the project leader (based on the relevant authorisations), along with the required declarations, including the declaration of the project leader (in line with Appendix No. 6) and declarations of all research units indicated in the application (in line with Appendix No. 7), and:

- a declaration of the entity representing the units indicated in the application (in line with Appendix No. 8) – in the case of an application submitted by one entity, or
  - a declaration of the consortium leader (in line with Appendix No. 9) – in the case of an application submitted by more than one entity.
- 7.3.4. The declarations referred to in point 7.3.3 shall be legibly signed by the authorised persons (the authorisation should result from the statute or other document issued by an authorised person). If a countersignature of another person is required according to the statute or other document, his/her signature and stamp with his/her name, surname and position/function should also appear on the grant application.
- 7.3.5. In the case of applications submitted by a consortium, the consortium agreement shall be appended at least 7 days before the 2nd meeting of the Project Assessment Committee (see point 8.3).
- 7.3.6. The grant application shall be composed of an electronic application form including the required attachments submitted in electronic format.
- 7.3.7. FNP's electronic system makes it possible to amend the electronic application forms and replace attachments (including the Declaration of the project leader and Declarations of research units) until the final acceptance of the application by closing the edition of application data.
- 7.3.8. In order to end the process of electronic sending of the application grant to FNP, the applicants shall append the Declaration of the entity representing the units indicated in the application or the Declaration of the consortium leader. The valid declaration templates should be downloaded from FNP's website, and then completed, printed, signed in accordance with the representation rules in force at the unit, scanned and attached in the electronic system. The declarations mentioned in this point cannot be attached before closing the edition of application data.
- 7.3.9. The attachments which constitute part of the grant application must meet the following requirements:
- Pdf format,
  - font size of at least 11 pts,
  - line spacing of at least 1.15,
  - margins of at least 2 cm,

- if the attached document relates to major scientific and/or implementation-related achievements, these must apply to the last 10 years, i.e. be published or implemented no earlier than on 1 January 2008 (attachments which do not meet this criterion will be removed at the formal evaluation stage),
- retention of the number of pages specified in the description of the attachment (pages beyond the set limit will be removed at the formal evaluation stage).

7.3.10. The selected attachments (cf. point 7.4.3) should be created based on the specially prepared forms (if indicated). The templates of these attachments should be downloaded from FNP's website or from the electronic system used to file grant applications. The submission of attachments incompliant with these forms, e.g. changing the title page of the form, deleting text or entering data or graphic elements other than the required information shall be analysed during formal verification on the terms indicated in point 8.2.

#### **7.4. Grant application**

7.4.1 The electronic application form includes, among other things, basic information about the project:

- title of the project and an abstract,
- project duration (taking into account the provisions of point 3.4),
- fields of research and topic of the project in relation to the National Smart Specialisations,
- data on project leader, including contact data facilitating communication with FNP,
- data of other members of the managing team,
- data on project location, including data of the entity (or entities – in the case of a consortium) representing research units in which the project included in the application will be implemented, along with the data of such units,
- information on the location of the research teams planned in the project,
- project budget,
- required appendices.

7.4.2 The applicant shall indicate and authorise the project leader as a person responsible for communication with FNP during the project selection process (see point 8.1).

7.4.3 The following appendices shall be attached to the electronic application form (in electronic format and the format specified in point 7.3.9):

7.4.3.1 **APPENDIX NO. 1: A description of the novelty and originality of the research programme**  
(4 parts – using the provided form; no more than 5 A4 pages in total)

The information contained in the appendix is to facilitate verification and evaluation of the novelty, originality and feasibility of the research programme to be carried out by cooperating research teams located in the research units indicated in the application. The research programme determines a clearly defined scientific challenge (a research problem) or a challenge of a social and economic nature (within National Smart Specialisations) and the method of work and approach to dealing with the said challenge. The appendix, therefore, includes a description of:

- a) novelty of the R&D work in comparison with the activities presently carried out by the applicant,
- b) originality of the solution to the problem specified in the project, taking into account the latest achievements in the field(s) covered by the project and the possibility of making a breakthrough in the area covered by the project;
- c) the planned R&D work necessary to achieve the objective of the project/solve the presented problem;
- d) clearly specified in and logical stages and milestones of each stage.

7.4.3.2 **APPENDIX NO. 2: The economic potential of the project and the plan of utilising its results**  
(4 parts – using the provided form; no more than 4 A4 pages in total)

The information in the appendix shall be used to verify and assess whether the assumptions made in the project are realistic and whether the planned resources and strategies are likely to ensure a successful implementation of the project results within the appropriate time horizon. The appendix, therefore, includes a description of:

- a) technological and research potential of the project (technologies or products),
- b) the market potential of the service proposed in the project (developed owing to R&D work) – made available as a core facility or other research method,
- c) the target market (potential customers/recipients and their requirements/preferences, size, directions and pace of growth, and the anticipated market share);
- d) the strategy of an effective transfer of knowledge resulting from the project (including commercialisation mechanisms, the manner of overcoming the most common obstacles, and the time horizon for market release).

7.4.3.3 **APPENDIX NO. 3: The plan of the utilisation of technical facilities and their complementarity with the implementation of the R&D work planned in the project** (2 parts – using the provided form; no more than 2 A4 pages in total):

The information included in the appendix is to facilitate the verification and evaluation of the complementarity of the resources held by the applicant with the research programme proposed within the project. The appendix, therefore, includes a description of:

- a) the available technical resources and infrastructure (premises, scientific and research equipment and other equipment) and their complementarity with the planned material scope of the project;
- b) the plan of making the owned specialist equipment or infrastructure available to other units (including entrepreneurs) on market terms or the provision of service resulting from the project on market terms (the basic rules for access to equipment or specialist services).

7.4.3.4 **APPENDIX NO. 4: The plan of using and increasing R&D human resources** (3 parts – using the provided form; no more than 3 A4 pages):

The information included in the appendix is to facilitate the verification and evaluation of the strategy of completing research resources within the project, including the recruitment of leaders and establishment of new research teams, taking into account the research programme proposed in the project. The appendix, therefore, includes a description of:

- a) the present human resources (research and technical) appropriate for the type and scope of work planned in individual stages;
- b) the use of the available human resources in respect of the competences necessary to implement the project;
- c) the plan of effective methods of obtaining human resources for project implementation (including team leaders, students, PhD students and junior postdoctoral researchers).

7.4.3.5 **APPENDIX NO. 5: Scientific and Economic Committee** (5-9 people – using the provided form; no more than 1 A4 page per person)

The appendix described the individual members of the SEC. The following information must be provided, but not all members of the SEC must meet the conditions set out in all of the points (cf. point 4.2):

- a) knowledge and experience related to the proposed project topic (all SEC members);
- b) employment (at least half of SEC members must be employed in entities other than those of the applicants, including at least two persons who are employed by the world's leading research units in the field of the project);

- c) experience in restructuring research units in the country and abroad (the scale and results of restructuring of any kind), (at least two members of the SEC);
- d) experience in the transfer of research results into the economy, including the results of commercialisation (at least half of the members of the SEC);
- e) representing entrepreneurs operating in the area covered by the application (e.g. representatives of a chamber of commerce, a science and technology association or a cluster), (at least one third of the members of the SEC). It is recommended that representatives of entrepreneurs come from at least two different enterprises.

7.4.3.6 APPENDIX NO. 6: **Managing team** (depending of the composition of the team – using the provided form; no more than 1 A4 page per person and 2 A4 pages in the common part) The appendix is a document describing the individual members of the managing team indicated in the electronic application form, in particular their knowledge and experience necessary for the implementation of the project and adequate to their roles in the team (cf. point 4.1) and the division of roles and tasks within the project (common part).

When one or two members of the managing team intend to act as research team leaders, the following should be appended:

- a) brief CV (up to 3 A4 pages),
- b) one to five appendices<sup>3</sup> facilitating the evaluation of the major scientific and/or implementation-related achievements over the last 10 years (i.e. published or implemented no earlier than before 1 January 2008), which shall be:
  - full texts of publications (in the original language) or
  - full texts of patents (in the original language; patent applications do not constitute achievements), or
  - descriptions of implementations,
- c) a description of the originality and groundbreaking nature of the listed achievements and their impact on the development of specific fields of science, as well as a description of the achievements and results of the last implemented project (up to 3 A4 pages),
- d) a proposal of research assumptions and methods to be the subject of R&D works of the research team managed by the given person under the implemented project along with an indication (if applicable) of foreign scientific partners with whom he/she intends to cooperate under the implemented project (up to 4 A4 pages).

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<sup>3</sup> One appendix shall mean one document, i.e. one full text of a publication or patent, or a description of implementation, as described in point 7.4.3.6 (b)

7.4.3.7 **APPENDIX NO. 7: Project implementation risk analysis** (up to 2 A4 pages)

The document includes the most important risks associated with technology and project organisation (including human resources risks).

7.4.3.8 **APPENDIX NO. 8: A description of the implementation of the principle of sustainable development** (up to 2 A4 pages)

The information in the appendix is intended to facilitate the verification and assessment of whether the project has a positive impact on the implementation of the principle of sustainable development (including the climate) by applying appropriate solutions during project planning and implementation. In relation to the above, projects with the following characteristics are eligible for funding:

- a) the method of implementation ensures the selection of solutions/methods of device operation/methods of R&D work implementation with a positive impact on environmental protection, in particular by purchasing the supplies and services necessary for the implementation of the project, based on the selection of quotations (supplies and services) most beneficial in economic terms and at the same time most beneficial in terms of environmental impact (e.g. lower energy consumption, water consumption, use of recycled materials);
- b) its result is a solution (product/technology/service) with a positive impact on environmental protection (this applies in particular to projects in the following areas: cleaner processes, materials and products, generation of cleaner energy, use of waste in the production processes, closed water and sewage circuits within the project, etc.), which will result in a solution leading, in particular, to a decrease in the material intensity of production, energy consumption and emission of pollutants, increased reuse of materials or waste and increased share of renewable energy sources in the energy balance.

Furthermore, the applicant shall present (quantitative) indicators confirming the positive impact on the implementation on the principle of sustainable development.

7.4.3.9 **APPENDIX NO. 9: A description of the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities** (up to 2 A4 pages)

The information in the appendix shall be used to verify and assess whether the project is compliant with the horizontal principle referred to in Article 7 of Regulation (EU) No 1303/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council, based on the applicant's declaration and justification.

The project must have a positive impact on the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities of men and women and the principle of nondiscrimination. In exceptional

conditions, project neutrality in relation to this principle may be allowed, provided that the applicant provides detailed justification as to why the project is unable to carry out any activities in this respect and that this justification is approved by FNP. Furthermore, the applicant shall ensure that the project outputs are available to people with disabilities.

7.4.3.10 APPENDIX NO. 10: **Declarations** – attachments prepared based on the templates which constitute appendices to these Competition Regulations, indicated in Section X, subject to the provisions of points 7.3.3 and 7.3.4. The declarations concern, in particular, the electronic submission of grant applications and the representation of the Applicant.

7.4.3.11 APPENDIX NO. 11: **Consortium Agreement** – this appendix is required only when the application is submitted by two or more entities establishing a consortium which represents the research units indicated in the application, and the consortium agreement shall be submitted at least 7 days before the 2nd meeting of the Project Assessment Committee (see point 8.3).

7.4.4 The appendices indicated in points 7.4.3.1–7.4.3.9 and 7.4.3.11 are prepared by the Applicant.

7.4.5 If it is found that an electronic file forming an attachment to the grant application is damaged, FNP may request the Applicant to re-submit it at any stage of the competition.

## VIII. Project evaluation

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### 8.1. Project selection system

8.1.1 The project selection process is composed of the following stages:

- a) competition notice,
- b) call for grant applications,
- c) verification of formal conditions,
- d) project evaluation,
- e) approval of the list of projects selected for funding and the list of projects not selected for funding,
- f) publication of the list of projects selected for funding on FNP's website and the SG OP portal,

- g) verification of the conditions for entering into an agreement specified in point 8.5 of these Regulations,
  - h) signing grant agreements.
- 8.1.2 The project is subject to formal verification conducted by FNP staff as well as evaluation conducted by the **Project Assessment Committee (PAC)** based on information presented in the grant application and appendices, as well as clarifications made by the Applicant, including during an interview with the PAC, in accordance with these Competition Regulations and PAC Regulations.
- 8.1.3 The PAC is composed of Experts, as defined in Article 68a of the Implementation Act, and an FNP employee as a chairperson with voting rights, as well as the Programme Coordinator who acts as the PAC secretary (without voting rights).
- 8.1.4 The Experts participating in PAC work are appointed from the list of candidates for FNP experts within Measure 4.4 of the SG OP, which includes scientific, economic and scientific & economic experts.
- 8.1.5 The Experts participating in PAC work shall have the appropriate scientific achievements or experience in the implementation of innovative solutions in the R&D sector, and shall submit an impartiality and confidentiality statement.
- 8.1.6 Projects are evaluated based on the project selection criteria approved by the SG OP Monitoring Committee, which constitute Appendix No. 2 to these Regulations.
- 8.1.7 The formal verification and project evaluation process, starting from the day following the day of closing the call for applications to the day of announcing the list of projects selected for funding, shall take up to 90 calendar days.
- 8.1.8 The Applicant may familiarise him/herself with the recording referred to in point 8.3.16, after the competition is settled, only in the registered office of FNP, after filing an application in writing and agreeing on the date. The recording may be made available only by the persons authorised to represent the Applicant, which have participated in the meeting with the PAC. The Applicant may listen to the recording in the presence of IA's lawyer during one visit within the business hours of FNP. When listening to the recording, the Applicant may take notes. Recording it using the Applicant's own devices is forbidden.
- 8.1.9 The application may be withdrawn at any stage of the competition procedure. The application withdrawal shall take place in the form of a written declaration of the

Applicant, signed by the authorised entity, filed personally at the registered office of FNP or sent to the address of FNP indicated in Chapter IX – Contact.

## **8.2. Verification of formal conditions**

8.2.1. The verification of formal conditions shall take place by establishing that a given condition has or has not been met.

8.2.2. The verification of formal conditions shall be performed by FNP staff.

8.2.3. Formal conditions:

- a) filing the application with the relevant institution,
- b) filing the application within the set deadline,
- c) preparing and filing the complete application in accordance with the requirements of these Regulations.

8.2.4. As a result of the verification of formal conditions, the grant application may:

- a) be forwarded for evaluation – if all the formal conditions have been met, or
- b) left undecided (with no possibility of appeal) – if the formal conditions have not been met, or
- c) be returned for amendment/supplementation – if any deficiencies in terms of formal conditions or obvious errors are identified, or
- d) officially amended by an FNP employee who carries out the verification in respect of obvious errors, with the Applicant being informed of the changes, and returned for evaluation.

8.2.5. If any formal deficiencies are found in the grant application, FNP shall request the applicant to complete or amend the application within 7 days from the date of FNP's sending the request, under pain of leaving the application undecided, indicating the elements of the application that need to be supplemented or amended.

8.2.6. If any obvious errors are found in the grant application, FNP may correct this error or request the applicant to correct such an obvious error, within 7 days from the date of FNP's sending the request, under pain of leaving the application undecided.

8.2.7. The requests to complete the grant application or requests to correct obvious errors shall be sent to the email address of the project leader indicated in the grant application (cf. point 7.4.1).

- 8.2.8. The terms specified in the requests referred to in 8.2.5 and 8.2.6 shall be counted from the day following the date of the request being sent. The applicant shall deliver, within the indicated term, the amended or completed application in electronic format in the manner specified in the requests discussed above.
- 8.2.9. At the request of the applicant, the terms specified in the requests referred to in 8.2.5 and 8.2.6 may be prolonged to up to 14 days following the date of the request being sent.
- 8.2.10. The application grant shall not be further evaluated and shall be left undecided (with no possibility of appeal), should the Applicant make any changes in the application other than those indicated in the request referred to in point 8.2.5 and 8.2.6, or fail to deliver the amended/completed application within the set term, or the amendment/correction was not made as recommended by FNP.

### **8.3. Project evaluation**

- 8.3.1. Evaluation – conducted by the Project Assessment Committee – is carried out on the basis of the access criteria and scored in accordance with the criteria catalogue specified in Appendix No. 2 to these Regulations.
- 8.3.2. Should the PAC find any infringements of formal conditions or obvious errors in the grant application, the application is removed from evaluation and returned for amendment/completion in line with point 8.2.
- 8.3.3. In respect of the access criteria, the PAC assigns “YES” or “NO” values. A failure to meet any of the criteria results in a negative score. The access criteria in force in the TEAM-NET competition are:
- a) **AC1:** The project is implemented in the field of research included in the current document – the National Smart Specialisations list
  - b) **AC2:** Applicant’s eligibility under the measure
  - c) **AC3:** Project’s conformity with the competition’s assumptions
  - d) **AC4:** The Project covers R&D work
  - e) **AC5:** Eligibility and adequacy of expenses
  - f) **AC6:** Project’s conformity with the principle of equal opportunities
  - g) **AC7:** The Project has a positive impact on the implementation of the principle of sustainable development
- 8.3.4. In respect of the scored criteria, the PAC gives scores from 0 to 5 (with the exception of AC7 - see point g), which means that the project fulfils a given criterion to an extent

evaluated with the following score: 5 – perfect; 4 – very good; 3 – good; 2 – average; 1 – low; 0 – unsatisfactory. The scored criteria in force in the TEAM-NET competition are:

- a) **SC1:** Innovative character and originality of the R&D work proposed by the project
- b) **SC2:** The economic potential of the Project and evaluation of the plan of utilising its results
- c) **SC3:** The plan of the utilisation of technical facilities and their complementarity with the implementation of the R&D work planned in the project
- d) **SC4:** The plan of using and increasing R&D human resources
- e) **SC5:** The Scientific and Economic Committee (SEC) is adequate for the implementation of project objectives
- f) **SC6:** The manner of project management assures its highest quality and complete implementation
- g) **SC7:** The Project is of a supraregional nature (the possible score is either 0 or 1; however, the score of 0 shall not disqualify the project).

8.3.5. The required score threshold for the scored criterion, conditioning the positive evaluation of the project shall be no less than 3 points for the entire criterion and no less than 2 points for individuals indents. The required score threshold for the criterion is calculated using the arithmetic mean of the scores awarded for the individuals indents in this criterion.

8.3.6. The full text of the criteria and their description, along with information on the extent to which it is possible to supplement or amend the grant application during its evaluation in the part concerning compliance with the criteria, shall be published together with the Competition Regulations on FNP's website (Appendix No. 2 to the Regulations).

8.3.7. At the **1st meeting of the PAC** its members analyse the individual applications in respect of the evaluation criteria and, when necessary, indicate the need to introduce amendments/complete the application or provide clarifications (based on the application correction sheet).

8.3.8. The project leader shall receive, to the email address indicated in the grant application, information on PAC comments on the application. The applicant shall issue an opinion on the information provided by FNP referred to above, and may amend/complete the application or present relevant explanations in line with the scope referred to in FNP's request within 14 days.

8.3.9. The term specified in the request referred to in 8.3.8 shall be counted from the day following the date of the request being sent via email.

- 8.3.10. At the request of the applicant, the term specified in the request referred to in 8.3.8 may be prolonged to up to 21 days.
- 8.3.11. Should the Applicant make any changes in the application other than those indicated in the request referred to in point 8.3.8, or the amendment/correction was not made as recommended by FNP, or fail to deliver the amended/completed application within the set term, the project shall be evaluated on the basis of the information provided in the original grant application.
- 8.3.12. At the **2nd meeting of the PAC** its members evaluate all applications, taking into account the changes and amendments admissible by the criteria as well as explanations in line with the scope provided for by FNP. One element of the evaluation carried out by the PAC is a meeting and discussion with the Applicant at the registered office of FNP, during which the Applicant may address the questions and possible doubts of PAC members.
- 8.3.13. Information on the date of the 2nd meeting of the PAC shall be sent to the Applicant no later than 14 days before such planned meeting to the email address of the project leader indicated in the grant application (cf. point 7.4.1).
- 8.3.14. At the 2nd meeting of the PAC, the following persons shall represent the Applicant in talks with the panel:
- a) Project Leader,
  - b) a representative of the Entity representing the units indicated in the application, in the case of an application submitted by one entity, or a representative of the Consortium Leader (in the case of an application submitted by a consortium),
  - c) optionally – a member of the Managing Team in charge of the development of cooperation within the project between research units and entrepreneurs (cf. point 4.1.2),
  - d) optionally – a representative of the SEC.

At the meeting, the Applicant may not be represented by individuals from consulting companies.

- 8.3.15. If any of the persons representing the Applicant indicated in point 8.3.14 is unable to participate in the 2nd meeting of the PAC in person, electronic means of communication may be used.
- 8.3.16. During the meeting between the PAC and the Applicant sound recordings shall be made.

8.3.17. After the meeting with the Applicant, the PAC shall jointly analyse and evaluate the individual applications in terms of fulfilling the competition criteria in line with points 8.3.3, 8.3.4 and 8.3.5 (based on the Evaluation sheet).

8.3.18. If the project is implemented within a consortium including at least one entity from another voivodeship or if the project is implemented in more than 1 voivodeship, it shall receive an additional 1 point in the evaluation of the additional substantive criterion (see the criterion indicated in point 8.3.4 g).

8.3.19. As a result of the substantive assessment made by the PAC, the project may be:

- a) **recommended for funding**, if it has met all the access criteria and reached at least the minimum score thresholds for each of the scored criteria, as defined in the descriptions of the individual criteria, or
- b) **not recommended for funding**, if it has failed to meet any of the access criteria or failed to reach the minimum score threshold for any of the scored criteria, as defined in the descriptions of the individual criteria.

8.3.20. The project may receive funding (positive evaluation) if:

- a) it was recommended for funding by the PAC, in accordance with the conditions specified in point 8.3.19, and
- b) the amount of project funding is within the available allocation for the competition, specified in point 7.1.1 and subject to point 7.1.2.

8.3.21. If the allocation available under the competition is insufficient to fund all positively evaluated projects, the aid is granted to those projects which achieved the highest scores for scored criteria. In the case of projects with equal scores, the number of points scored in the following criteria shall determine the funding, in the following order:

- a) **SC1**: Innovative character and originality of the R&D work proposed by the project,
- b) **SC4**: The plan of using and increasing R&D human resources,
- c) **SC2**: The economic potential of the Project and the evaluation of the plan of utilising its results.

8.3.22. Based on the evaluation of the projects, the IA shall prepare:

- a) the list of projects selected for funding, including all the projects recommended for funding which meet the conditions referred to in point 8.3.20 (a) and 8.3.20 (b),
- b) the list of projects not selected for funding which fulfil the criteria and minimum score thresholds, including all the projects recommended for funding which meet the

condition referred to in point 8.3.20 (a) but do not meet the one referred to in 8.3.20 (b),

- c) the list of projects not selected for funding due to failure to fulfil the criteria or reach the minimum score thresholds, including all the projects not recommended for funding.

8.3.23. After the lists indicated in point 8.3.22 are accepted by the Management Board of FNP and approved by the IA, FNP publishes on its website and the SG OP portal the list of projects selected for funding and the list of projects not selected for funding which fulfil the criteria and minimum score thresholds. The applicants are informed in writing of the results of the evaluation of their projects within 14 days from the publication of these lists.

#### **8.4. The appeal procedure**

8.4.1. If the project is evaluated negatively, the Applicant may appeal against such evaluation as provided for in the Implementation Act.

8.4.2. Pursuant to Article 53 (3) of the Implementation Act, when the amount allocated for project funding is insufficient for the selection of the project to be funded, this may not constitute the only grounds for appeal.

8.4.3. The appeal may be lodged in writing **within 14 days** of the Applicant being served with a notice on the negative evaluation of the project, and shall include:

- a) designation of the institution responsible for reviewing the appeal (the Foundation for Polish Science),
- b) designation of the applicant,
- c) grant application number,
- d) indication of the project selection criteria with the evaluation of which the applicant does not agree, including justification;
- e) indication of procedural complaints as regards the evaluation, if according to the applicant such infringements took place, including justification;
- f) the signature of the applicant or person authorised to represent the applicant, including the original or copy of a document confirming such authorisation.

8.4.4. If the lodged appeal does not meet the formal requirements referred to in point 8.4.3. (a)-(c) and 8.4.3. (f) or contains obvious errors, FNP shall request the applicant to complete or correct the obvious errors within **7 days** from the day of receiving such a request, under pain of leaving the appeal unreviewed.

- 8.4.5. FNP, within 14<sup>4</sup> days from receiving the appeal, shall verify the results of the evaluation of the project it conducted, and:
- a) recognises the appeal, and recommends the application for funding, informing the applicant of this fact, or
  - b) sustain the evaluation and forward the appeal to the IB, informing the applicant of this fact in writing.
- 8.4.6. The applicant may withdraw the appeal until it is reviewed by the IB, by lodging to FNP a written declaration on withdrawing the appeal, signed by the authorised entity, filed personally at the registered office of FNP or sent to the address of FNP indicated in Chapter IX – Contact.
- 8.4.7. If the appeal is withdrawn, it may not be lodged again.
- 8.4.8. The project may receive funding as a result of the appeal provided that it has scored at least the same number of points as the last project on the list of projects selected for funding (subject to point 8.3.21) and the funds are available.

## **8.5. Concluding the grant agreement**

- 8.5.1 After announcing the list of projects selected for funding, FNP shall promptly request the Applicant to supply documents necessary to conclude a grant agreement, in particular:
- a) the questionnaire regarding VAT eligibility<sup>5</sup>, constituting Appendix No. 10,
  - b) the declaration that no state aid is awarded, including a questionnaire, constituting Appendix No. 11,
  - c) the consortium agreement (applies to projects implemented by a consortium),
  - d) the form – analysis of project compliance with the environmental protection policy (if applicable), constituting Appendix No. 12:
    - i. The Applicant whose project is a project as defined in Article 3 (1) (13) of the Act of 3 October 2008 on the provision of information on the environment and its protection, public participation in environmental protection and environmental impact assessments (consolidated text, Journal of Laws of 2017, item 1405, as amended) – in accordance with information indicated in the grant application – shall provide the aforementioned form with its parts 1-5 completed

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<sup>4</sup>The request to complete or correct obvious errors shall suspend the appeal review term until the appeal is completed or the obvious errors are corrected.

<sup>5</sup> For projects implemented under a consortium agreement, the questionnaire for applicants regarding VAT eligibility in SG OP projects should be completed by the Consortium Leader and each Consortium Member separately.

- ii. The Applicant, who has declared in the grant application that costs related to climate adaptation measures and climate change mitigation measures will be borne within the project, shall supply the form with its part 6 completed before concluding the grant agreement.
- 8.5.3 The Applicant shall promptly supply, in electronic format, the documents necessary to conclude the agreement. If the documents are not supplied within the term specified by FNP, FNP may refrain from concluding the grant agreement, with no further request.
- 8.5.4 The documents supplied by the Applicant shall be verified by FNP. The Applicant shall supply paper versions of the documents (signed by the person authorised to represent the Applicant) within 14 days from the date of transferring information in electronic format stating that the documents were approved by FNP. If the documents are not supplied in line with the request, FNP may refrain from concluding the grant agreement, with no further request.
- 8.5.5 After the grant agreement is signed by FNP, two copies of the agreement shall be sent to the Applicant.

## **8.6. Final provisions**

- 8.6.1 The provisions of the generally applicable law shall apply to all matters not regulated by these Regulations.
- 8.6.2 FNP reserves itself the right to amend these Competition Regulations and all documents specifying the competition conditions to which the Regulations refer. The amendments shall be in force as of the date indicated in the information on the amendment, published on FNP's website. The amendments may not result in an unfair treatment of the Applicants within the competition to which these Competition Regulations apply.
- 8.6.3 FNP reserves itself the right to cancel the competition, especially if important changes are introduced to the legal regulations which influence the conditions of the competition and in the event of force majeure.

## **IX. Contact**

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The TEAM-NET competition is organised by the **Foundation for Polish Science** (FNP) with its registered office in Warsaw, at ul. I. Krasickiego 20/22, 02-611 Warsaw, which acts as the Implementing Authority (IA) under the Smart Growth Operational Programme (SG

OP), Axis IV: Increasing the scientific research potential, Measure 4.4: Increasing the human potential in the R&D sector.

9.2 Questions concerning applications for funding under the competition may be sent to: [team-net@fnp.org.pl](mailto:team-net@fnp.org.pl)

9.3 Information on the competition may be obtained by contacting the programme coordinators:

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## **X. Appendices to the Competition Regulations**

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1. Cost Eligibility Guide for Measure 4.4. of the Smart Growth Operational Programme.
2. Project selection criteria in the TEAM-NET competition.
3. National Smart Specialisations list.
4. Model grant application.
5. Model grant agreement.
6. Model declaration of the Project Leader.
7. Model declaration of the Research unit indicated in the application.
8. Model declaration of the Entity representing the units indicated in the application.
9. Model declaration of the Consortium Leader.
10. Model questionnaire regarding VAT eligibility.
11. Model declaration that no state aid is awarded with a questionnaire.
12. Model form – analysis of project compliance with the environmental protection policy (if applicable).