

TEAM TECH PROGRAMME

COMPETITION DOCUMENTATION

COMPETITION N^o. 3/2016

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I. Introduction

The present document contains the principles for submitting applications and realising projects under the **Team Tech** Programme, which is a grant project of the Foundation for Polish Science (under the same name), financed from the funds of the European Regional Development Fund under Smart Growth Operational Programme (SG OP), Priority Axis IV: Increase of the research and development potential, Measure 4.4: Increasing the human potential in the R&D sector.

Should certain source documents be updated (e.g. the National Smart Specialisations document or the Guidelines published by the Managing Authority), certain information may be subject to changes, which, however, shall not influence the schedules nor the terms and conditions of the competition, although it might cause slight changes in the funding agreement or in certain appendices hereto. The Foundation shall notify the Applicants about the scope of any potential changes on an ongoing basis.

Projects under the programme may be realised in three variants:

- by research units to the extent to which they do not conduct economic activity (without granting state aid),
- by enterprises (pursuant to the principles of granting state aid for R&D activities),
- by scientific-industrial consortia consisting of one research unit and one enterprise (for the research unit: without state aid, to the extent, to which it does not conduct economic activity; for the enterprise, pursuant to the principles of granting state aid for R&D activities).

For consortia, the project is generally divided into two parts – one realised at the research unit and one realised at the enterprise. The principles for conducting specific project parts, in particular the manner in which they are financed, are specified in the relevant Cost Eligibility Guides for research units and enterprises.

As far as scientific units are concerned, projects under the **Team Tech** programme must always be realised with the participation of at least one economic partner. Regardless of the realisation variant, the project may be realised in collaboration with more than one partner, pursuant to the principles specified in item 5.5 "Partnership in the project".

All dates specified in the Competition documentation (unless it is stated otherwise) that refer to the obligations of applicants or grantees are dates of delivery of the documents to the FNP, not posting dates. For terms expressed in days – a day is deemed as one calendar day. If the period ends on a public holiday or on Saturday, then the closest subsequent business day shall be deemed as the last day of the period.

II. Definitions of terms

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

- 2.1. **Industrial research** - refers to planned or critical research aimed at obtaining new knowledge or skills in order to develop new products, processes or services or to introduce major improvements to the existing products, processes or services. It involves creating complex system components and it may include the construction of prototypes in laboratory environment

or in an environment simulating existing systems as well as pilot lines whenever they are necessary to conduct industrial research, and in particular to obtain evidence for generic technologies.

- 2.2. **Project budget** – financial plan of the project, including the categories of eligible costs divided into reporting periods.
- 2.3. **Doctoral student** – a person with a status of a PhD student who participates in the project under the supervision of project manager.
- 2.4. **Experimental development works** – refers to acquiring, combining, shaping, and applying currently available knowledge and skills in the areas of science, technology and business as well as other relevant knowledge or skills in order to develop new or improved products, processes or services. They may also include, for example, any activities, whose aim is to define, plan and document new products, processes and services.

Experimental development works do not comprise routine and periodical changes introduced to existing products, production lines, manufacturing processes, services and other ongoing operations, even if such changes constitute improvements.

- 2.5. **Foundation** – the Foundation for Polish Science (FNP).
- 2.6. **Grantee** – the Project Manager together with the unit, in which the project is realised.
- 2.7. **Intermediary Authority (IA)** – an entity entrusted with the realisation of tasks under a national or regional operational programme, pursuant to an agreement or contract concluded with the Managing Authority. For Priority Axis 4 of SG OP: The National Centre for Research and Development.
- 2.8. **Managing Authority (MA)** – an institution or a public entity responsible for managing the operational programme. For SG OP: the competent Minister for issues related to regional development (pursuant to Article 9, item 1 of the implementation act).
- 2.9. **Unit** – the unit, in which the project (or part of the project) financed under the competition is realised, meeting the requirements of the present Competition documentation. The Units may be research units or enterprises.
- 2.10. **Research units** – units, which continuously engage in research or development works, as defined in the Act on the Principles of Financing Science of April 30, 2010 (Journal of Laws No. 96, item 615, pursuant to Journal of Laws of 2014, item 1620, of 2015, item 249);
 - a. basic organisational units of higher education institutions within the meaning of the Charters of these institutions;
 - b. research units of the Polish Academy of Sciences within the meaning of the Act of 30 April 2010 on the Polish Academy of Sciences (Journal of Laws No. 96, item 619 with further amendments 2.)
 - c. Research institutes, as defined in the Act of April 30, 2010 on Research Institutes (Journal of Laws No. 96, item 618 with further amendments 3.)
 - d. international scientific institutes established pursuant to separate regulations, operating in the territory of the Republic of Poland;
 - e. the Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences;
 - f. other organisational units not listed in items a. to e., which are legal persons and have registered offices in the Republic of Poland, including entrepreneurs with a status of a

research and knowledge-dissemination organisation pursuant to Article 2 item 83 of the Regulation of the Commission (EU) of June 17, 2014, declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the internal market in application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty (Official Journal of the EU of the EU L 187 of 26.6.2014, page 1).

- 2.11. **Project manager (Principal Investigator)** – applicant who realises the project financed under the programme pursuant to the application and funding agreement.
- 2.12. **Scientific-industrial consortium (consortium)** – one research unit and one enterprise that cooperate in order to realise a common project.
- 2.13. **Consortium member** – a unit being part of a consortium, established in order to realise a common project, realising part thereof, i.e. a research unit or an enterprise.
- 2.14. **Consortium leader** – the leader of the project realised by the consortium, employed either by the research unit or by an enterprise.
- 2.15. **National Smart Specialisation (NSS; PL: KIS)** – a document specifying the thematic scope subject to funding under the competition, available on the website of the competent central government body, an institution responsible for the NSS, as well as on the Foundation website.
- 2.16. **Local research partner** – a scientist or a group of scientists holding a doctoral degree and being employed at a local unit (public or private) conducting R&D works, where the local unit is other than a research unit or an enterprise in which the project (or part of the project) is realised.
- 2.17. **Young doctor (postdoc)** – a person who has held a doctoral degree for no more than 5 years. The beginning of the aforementioned period is the year of obtaining the degree and the end is the year preceding the deadline for submitting applications in the competition for member of the research teams financed in the Team Tech project.
- 2.18. **Duration of the project** – a period specified in the grant agreement that is required to realise the tasks and obtain the results specified in the application for funding, compliant with the schedules provided in the Competition documentation.
- 2.19. **Reporting period** – the period, after which the Project Manager or the unit are obliged to provide the financial statements or merit-based report on the project realisation. The binding reporting periods in the **Team Tech** programme are half-year reporting periods for financial statements and one-year periods – for merit-based reports. The grant agreement specifies the starting and ending dates of reporting periods and the dates of submitting periodical reports.
- 2.20. **Economic partner** – an entity meeting the definition of an enterprise, involved in the realisation of the financed project (mandatory if the project will be realised by research unit).
- 2.21. **Partner unit** – a local or foreign unit (public or private), specified in the application for funding, other than a consortium member.
- 2.22. **State aid** – (state aid for R&D activities) – financing of R&D projects from public sources for enterprises pursuant to the principles listed in the Regulation No. 651/2014 of the European Commission of June 17, 2014. The legal basis for granting state aid for R&D to enterprises is the Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of February 25, 2015, on the terms and conditions and manner of granting state aid and *de minimis* aid through the National Centre for Research and Development.

- 2.23. **R&D activities** - research and experimental development (R&D) comprise creative work undertaken on a systematic basis in order to increase the stock of knowledge, including knowledge of man, culture and society, and the use of this stock of knowledge to devise new applications. The term R&D covers three activities: *basic research* (experimental or theoretical work undertaken primarily to acquire new knowledge of the underlying foundation of phenomena and observable facts, without any particular application or use in view), *applied research* (original investigation undertaken in order to acquire new knowledge; it is, however, directed primarily towards a specific practical aim or objective) and *experimental development* (systematic work, drawing on existing knowledge gained from research and/or practical experience, which is directed to producing new materials, products or devices, to installing new processes, systems and services, or to improving substantially those already produced or installed).
- 2.24. **Project** – an activity with the aim to achieve the set of planned objectives, as defined by indicators, with a specified start and end dates of realisation, financed under the TEAM TECH grant programme under SG OP 2014-2020.
- 2.25. **Enterprise** – an entity registered and conducting its activity in the territory of the Republic of Poland, regardless of its legal status and the manner of financing such activity.
- 2.26. **Consortium member representative** – the person responsible for realising part of the project on part of the Consortium member.
- 2.27. **Cost Eligibility Guide** – full title: *Cost Eligibility Guide under Measure 4.4 of the Smart Growth Operational Programme*, appendix to the Competition documentation specifying the catalogue of eligible and ineligible costs and the principles for incurring and settling expenditures under the project. The Cost Eligibility Guide is available in two versions – one for units that are not beneficiaries of state aid, the other for such beneficiaries. The second version specifies, among others, how to calculate the funding amount and the principles of benefitting from state aid for R&D activities.
- 2.28. **Student** – a person with a status of an undergraduate student or a Master degree student or a student of an equivalent programme, who participates in the project under the supervision of the Project Manager.
- 2.29. **Durability of the project results** –the durability of the operation as defined in Article 71 of the Regulation No. 1303/2013 of the European Parliament and the Council (EC) of December 17, 2013.
- 2.30. **Grant agreement (Agreement)** – an funding agreement on grant assignment concluded by and between the Foundation and the grantee, whose project has been selected for funding.
- 2.31. **Stipend agreement** – an agreement on stipend assignment concluded by and between the beneficiary of the stipend, the Project Manager and the Foundation.
- 2.32. **Application** (a so-called application for funding or application for grant assignment) – under the **Team** Programme the application consists of an application form filled out online, a form printed and signed pursuant to the requirements of the Competition Documentation and all required appendices (in electronic or hardcopy version), as specified in the Competition Documentation.

- 2.33. **Applicant** – a scientist (candidate for Project Manager) with at least a doctoral degree and the scientific track record proven by international achievements, who is the author of the application for funding.
- 2.34. **Project indicators** – any indicators determined prior to the project commencement in order to monitor it and evaluate its completion with respect to previously set objectives, specified herein.
- 2.35. **Eligible costs** – any costs or expenditures incurred in connection with project realisation under the **Team** programme that are eligible for settlement or reimbursement pursuant to the agreement, calculated pursuant to currently binding accounting principles, the principles of proper finance management and the practices of the beneficiary (accounting policy), as specified in the *Cost Eligibility Guide for Measure 4.4 of the Operational Programme Smart Growth*.
- 2.36. **Guidelines** – a legal instrument that determines uniform conditions and procedures for implementing structural funds and of the Cohesion Fund, addressed to institutions participating in realising operational programmes and applied by these institutions pursuant to the relevant agreement, territorial contract or contract and by beneficiaries pursuant to the grant assignment agreement or to the decision on project funding.
- 2.37. **Foreign research partner** – a scientist or a group of scientists holding a doctoral degree and being employed at a foreign (public or private) unit conducting R&D works.
- 2.38. **Deputy Project Manager (Deputy Principal Investigator)** – a person with at least a doctoral degree, acting as Deputy Project Manager, if the project is realised by Project Manager with a commitment lower than 50% of a full-time employment, subject to the terms and conditions specified in the Competition Documentation.

III. Subject of the Team Tech programme

The objective of the TEAM TECH programme is to improve human potential in the R&D sector in team projects conducted by scientists (regardless of their nationality) who have an outstanding experience in implementing the results of research works in economic practice or in providing research services or operating research equipment for corporate customers.

Support should enable individuals at the beginning of their scientific career: students, doctoral students or young doctors to gain experience in conducting R&D works **by realising projects related to developing a technology, a process or an innovative product**.

Recipients of project outcomes will be, among others, enterprises operating in Poland.

IV. General information

4.1 Information about the competition

4.1.1 The application selection procedure under the **Team Tech** Programme is not a competition mode in the view of the Act of July 11, 2014 on the principles of implementation of the cohesion policy programmes, financed under the 2014-2020 financial perspective.

4.2 Thematic scope of the projects

4.2.1 The **Team Tech** Programme involves funding of projects compliant with the topics listed in the National Smart Specialisations list.

4.2.2 In exceptional cases, while treating the NSS projects preferentially, the Foundation may accept funding of projects that refer to topics not included in the NSS, provided that they have significant application potential or are important for solving a major socio-economic issue. Such areas might be included in the SG OP, among others, in order to verify their potential as smart specialisations, which may lead to updating the NSS if the results are positive.

4.2.3. The subject of the project are R&D works connected with developing a product or production process (manufacturing or technological) which is of great importance for the economy. The Team Tech project is based on an identified product, technology or market of recipients of the given product or technology. **Amount of funds allocated to the realisation of projects**

The total amount of funds allocated to the competition is:

21 000 000 PLN

Allocated amount is shared between Team Tech competition and Team Tech – Core Facility competition

4.4 Schedule of submitting the applications

The call for applications for funding projects within the framework of the **Team Tech** Programme will close on

16 January 2017 at 16:00 local time (UTC+1:00)

4.5 Manner of submitting applications

Applicants must submit applications using the on-line mode only.

4.5.1 Applicants must register with the electronic system made available by the Foundation on the website www.fnp.org.pl. The electronic application form must be filled in **in English**, except for the section available for enterprises, *Evaluation of information about the enterprise*, which must be filled in in Polish. Appendixes to the application must be enclosed in the format and language version specified in this Competition documentation.

4.5.2 The applicant fills in an electronic form, completing it with, among other things, the details of the grantee, the location and the project budget, and enclosing the obligatory documents (see 4.5.3. a.-n.). The electronic system enables the electronic form of the application to be modified and appendices to be replaced until the moment when the data edition has been completed.

Next, applicants are to enclose, within the electronic form, a *Statement of the unit* at which the project is to be carried out (see 4.5.3 o.). The above-mentioned form is to be downloaded from the Foundation's website, and then completed, printed out, signed in accordance with the representation rules applicable at the unit, scanned and enclosed in the electronic system. The *Statement of the unit* cannot be enclosed before completing the edition of the application data.

NOTICE:

- I. The application may be submitted electronically only after completing edition of the application data and uploading all the statements required of the unit/enterprise.
- II. In the case of a project to be carried out by a consortium, two files must be enclosed: the *Statement of the research unit* and the *Statement of the enterprise* (these statements differ in term of their contents).

4.5.3 The following appendices in electronic form must be enclosed with the electronic application form (in **PDF format**, unless specified otherwise):

- a. CV of the applicant focusing on implementation experience or developing technologies or services for enterprises (in English) – up to 3 A4 pages,
- b. total of up to **five** appendices containing in total not more than five most important scientific and/or implementation achievements of the applicant from the last 10 years, i.e.:
 - full text of publications (in the original language),
 - full text of patents (in the original language),
 - descriptions of completed implementations (in the English language),
- c. description of the originality of the above mentioned achievements and their impact on the development of the given fields of science, supplemented with a specification of the achievements and results of the last completed project (in English) – up to 3 A4 pages,
- d. description of the research programme including the tasks assigned to future team members, the objectives, methodology and planned project outcomes management (in case of projects to be realised by a consortium, the research programme description should specify two parts of the project, respectively for each consortium member, along with tasks assigned to future team members), (in English) – up to 10 A4 pages, not including references,
- e. description of collaboration with the project partner(s), if applicable, (in English) – up to 3 A4 pages,
- f. a description of the available apparatus and the planned expenses on laboratory equipment, if the project envisages such costs (a limit of up to 5% of the eligible costs of the project) along with their justification to be prepared in accordance with the template available to be downloaded from the Foundation's website (in English) – up to three A4 pages,
- g. letters of intent from the research partners, containing a description of partner's involvement and contribution in realising the project (in English) – up to 3 A4 pages (appendix required only in the case when such a research partner has been specified as a project partner, provided that the project partner may not be a scientist working at the same organisational unit as the applicant),
- h. letters of intent from local enterprises acting as an economic partners in the project, containing a description of partner's involvement and contribution in realising the project (in English) – up to 3 A4 pages (appendix required only in the case when such an economic partner has been specified as a project partner),
- i. description of the economic or social significance and the potential applications of project outcomes with respect to the NSS (in English) – up to 3 A4 pages,
- j. project realisation schedule divided into individual tasks, prepared on the template available for download on the Foundation website (in English),

- k. project indicators along with justification, prepared on the template available for download on the Foundation website (in English),
- l. the project manager's statements – an appendix to be prepared in accordance with the template available to be downloaded from the Foundation's website (in Polish or in English),
- m. a form containing information to be provided when applying for aid other than aid in agriculture or fishery, *de minimis* aid or *de minimis aid* in agriculture or fishery, available to be downloaded from the Foundation's website (in Polish) – **an appendix required only if the project is to be carried out by an enterprise or by a consortium**
- n. the PNT-01 form "Report on Research and Development (R&D) Activities" for the year preceding the year of submission of the application, to be filed where the enterprise is subject to the obligation to submit it with the Central Statistical Office of Poland (GUS) (where the enterprise has not filled in the PNT-01 form before submitting the application for co-financing and is not obliged to do so, the relevant statement should be provided. At the same time, as a result of submitting an application for funding under the **TEAM TECH** Programme, the entity may be included in the Central Statistical Office reporting requirements) (in Polish, the form in the xml format, the statement in the pdf format) – **an appendix required only if the project is to be carried out by an enterprise or a consortium,**
- o. a statement of the unit at which the project is to be carried out – an appendix to be prepared in accordance with separate templates for the research unit and the enterprise, available to be downloaded from the Foundation's website (in Polish),

NOTICE:

- I. If any among the required appendices are submitted in a language other than that specified above, it will be removed from the application during the formal evaluation. Where, despite the removal of such attachments, the application complies with the formal requirements set in the Competition documentation, given application will be considered in the competition,
- II. Where an appendix is submitted whose number of pages exceed the limit indicated in this documentation, at the formal evaluation phase such appendix will be shortened to the maximum number of pages provided for in the Competition documentation.
- III. The *Statement of the unit* cannot be enclosed before completing edition of the application data. In the case of a project to be carried out by a consortium, two files must be enclosed: the *Statement of the research unit* and the *Statement of the enterprise*.

4.5.4 Where the project is carried out by a consortium or where the Project Manager's commitment to the project will be less than 50% of full-time employment (with the stipulation that the Project Manager's commitment to the project may not be less than 30% of full-time employment), the following appendices in electronic form (**PDF format**) must be enclosed:

- a. the Deputy Project Manager's or the consortium member representative's CV (in English) – up to three A4 pages
- b. total of up to **five** appendices containing in total not more than five most important scientific and/or implementation achievements of the Deputy Project Manager or consortium member representative from the last 10 years, i.e.:

- full text of publications (in the original language),
 - full text of patents (in the original language),
 - descriptions of completed implementations (in the English language),
- c. description of the originality of the above mentioned achievements and their impact on the development of the given fields of science, supplemented with a specification of the achievements and results of the last completed project (in English) – up to 3 A4 pages,
- d. statement of the Deputy Project Manager or consortium member representative – an appendix to be prepared in accordance with the template available to be downloaded from the Foundation’s website (in Polish or English).

4.5.5 Additionally, if the project is qualified for stage 3 of the evaluation procedure and is to be conducted at an enterprise or by a consortium (this refers only to large enterprises) – the applicant will be requested to submit a feasibility study for the project (see 5.6.3). The candidates will be informed of the time limit for submitting it and the form in which it is to be submitted in writing or by electronic mail.

4.5.6 The statements referred to in items 4.5.3.l. and 4.5.3.o. and 4.5.4.d., constituting appendices to the application, concern, among other things:

- a. a declaration that the grantee will apply for all consents of ethics or other committees and other permits required by law, necessary to conduct the research to which they refer, and will start to carry out this research only after obtaining the relevant consents and permits,
- b. consent to provide information for the purposes of the evaluation to be conducted by the Foundation for Polish Science, the SG OP managing authority, the SG OP intermediary authority or other authorised bodies, regardless of the outcome of the process of selection of projects to be co-financed,
- c. statements required to meet the formal evaluation criteria, in accordance with the appendix *Catalogue of criteria for selecting grantees*,
- d. in the case of enterprises, statements also include:
 - i. a statement that the enterprise has not received aid allocated to cover the same costs qualifying for aid, to cover which it is applying for state aid,
 - ii. a statement that the enterprise is not subject to receivership, is not in liquidation and no bankruptcy proceedings are pending in respect of it,
 - iii. a statement that the project has not commenced and will not commence until the day following the date of submitting this application for co-financing,
 - iv. a statement that no significant loss of jobs at the applicant’s existing locations in the EU territory will take place in connection with carrying out the project, with the significant loss meaning the loss of at least 100 jobs.

4.5.7 If any of the aforementioned statements are filed, the Foundation may ask for documents confirming the content of the statements at any stage of the evaluation of the application or before signing the agreement.

4.5.8 An applicant submitting false statements will be excluded from the possibility of applying for any form of funding from the Foundation for 5 years from the date of submission of such statements.

V. General terms and conditions

5.1 Entities entitled to apply for funding

5.1.1 The **applicant** must meet all of the following conditions:

- a. must hold at least a doctoral degree,
- b. will be employed at the unit for the duration of the project, with a time commitment to carrying out the project corresponding to at least 50% of full-time employment. In justified cases, the applicant may apply for a lower level of employment to be committed to the project (in any case not lower than 30% of full-time employment). In such an event, the application needs to be extended to include information and documents relating to the Deputy Project Manager, who will supervise the work of the team (see point 5.1.2). Where the project is carried out by a scientific-industrial consortium, the applicant's time commitment to carrying out the project must correspond to at least 50% of full-time employment and the applicant may not appoint a deputy.
- c. is obliged to provide adequate scientific supervision to PhD students participating in the project and to ensure that they are additionally supervised by another research mentor. If possible, the mentor should be employed at a foreign partner institution or at a unit other than the applicant's employer – a research unit or an enterprise conducting R&D activity.

5.1.2 **Deputy Project Manager** must meet all of the following conditions:

- a. must hold at least a doctoral degree,
- b. will be employed at the unit for the duration of the project, with a time commitment to carrying out the project corresponding to at least 50% of full-time employment.

5.1.3 **The consortium member representative** – the person responsible for carrying out a part of the project, acting on behalf of the consortium member, must meet all of the following conditions:

- a. must hold at least a doctoral degree,
- b. will be employed at the consortium member's unit for the duration of the project, with the time commitment to carrying out the project corresponding to at least 50% of full-time employment.

5.1.4 **The unit** which will host the project being financed:

- a. is to undertake to respect the research autonomy of the project manager and deputy project manager (if applicable), in accordance with the approved research project being the subject of the application,
- b. is to provide appropriate conditions for conducting research work in accordance with the scope presented in the application as well as access to research apparatus.

5.1.5 Units cannot be entities excluded from applying for financing on the basis of:

- a. Article 207 of the Act of August 27, 2009 on Public Finance (Journal of Laws No. 157, item 1240),

- b. Article 12, item 1 point 1 of the Act of June 15, 2012 on the Effects of Hiring Foreigners Unlawfully Present in Polish Territory (Journal of Laws of 2012, item 769),
- c. Article 9, item 1, point 2a of the Act of October 28, 2002 on the Liability of Collective Entities for Acts Prohibited under Penalty (Journal of Laws of 2012, item 768 with further amendments).

5.2 Team members

5.2.1 The project manager is obliged to conduct an open and international competition to select team members who will receive remuneration (on the basis of an employment contract) or a stipend from the funds allocated to carry out the project. **Eligible to participate in a competition organised by the project manager are candidates for:**

- a. **students** (see item 2.28);
- b. **PhD students** (see item 2.3);
- c. **young doctors** (see item 2.17).

As a result of the above mentioned recruitment, within six months after the start of the project, the team conducting R&D work under the project should consist of at least three persons, including the project manager.

5.2.2 Team members selected in open competitions to conduct R&D work under the project should be involved to an extent adequate to their status:

- a. **students** – participation in the project is to be connected with following a 1st or 2nd degree studies programme or an equivalent programme.

It is recommended for students to be involved in the project on a full time basis, and their time commitment to the project should be no shorter than the suggested one year period;

- b. **PhD students** – participation in the project is to be connected with following a 3rd degree studies programme (doctoral studies);

It is recommended for PhD students to be involved in the project on a full time basis, and their time commitment to the project should be no shorter than the suggested three year period;

- c. **young doctors** – participation in the project is to be directly connected with carrying out the R&D work planned by the project manager as part of the post-doctoral project.

It is recommended for students to be involved in the project for no less than the suggested one year period. There are no indications in their case as to the proportion of full time employment to be assigned to carrying out the project.

5.2.3 Students and PhD students may become team members either on the basis of receiving a stipend or on the basis of an employment contract. Young doctors recruited for work in the team are to receive remuneration on the basis of an employment contract.

5.2.4 Stipends will be treated as financial support for project participants and paid by the Foundation directly into the individual bank accounts of stipend beneficiaries on the basis of separate agreements concluded with them. Stipend beneficiaries may not receive remuneration from the project funds during the period of receiving a stipend.

5.2.5 Stipends are exempt from personal income tax on the basis of Article 21, item 1 point 137 of the Personal Income Tax Act of 26 July 1991 (Journal of Laws of 2012, item 361, as amended).

5.2.6 The values of remuneration and stipends is to be proposed by the project manager in accordance with the rules specified in items 5.8.1.1 and 5.8.1.3 respectively.

5.2.7 Students and PhD students who receive stipends or are employed on the basis of employment contracts may receive remuneration or a stipend under the project until the end of the month in which they have defended their Master's thesis (students) or doctoral dissertation (PhD students).

5.2.8 Technicians or research-support staff may also be involved in the work on the project.

5.2.9 Employees other than students, PhD students, young doctors or research-support staff may be involved in the project only provided this is required to ensure the necessary R&D competences, e.g. competences required to operate advanced research equipment or a specific technology.

5.2.10 The employees specified in items 5.2.8 and 5.2.9 should be selected in a competition procedure proposed by the project manager. The remuneration of such employees may be financed only if the Foundation approves the need to employ them.

5.3 Teaching duties

In order to enable the project manager, deputy project manager, consortium member representative and young doctors to devote an adequate amount of time to conduct research or development works, it is recommended that their teaching load should not exceed 60 hours/year. For doctoral students, it is recommended that their education should match the realisation of the project, which should account for a major part of their contribution, so the suggested teaching load should not exceed 45 hours/year.

In justified cases, the project manager can take responsibility for allowing a different teaching load to research team members, although the Foundation should be notified about such fact.

5.4 Principles of the recruitment of students, PhD students and young doctors

5.4.1 Information about the competition should be announced publicly, also in the English language version, including on the Foundation's website, and in the case of recruiting candidates for PhD students and young doctors at least on the EURAXESS website. Information about the competition should be publicly available for at least 30 calendar days prior to the deadline for submitting applications by candidates for PhD students and young doctors.

5.4.2 Information about the competition should contain at least a description of the application procedure, a description of the requirements for candidates and the expected amount of the stipend or remuneration.

5.4.3 The project manager is to appoint a committee composed of at least two members to be responsible for the recruitment process.

5.4.4 The committee is to prepare and conduct the recruitment process on the basis of the criteria adopted by it, with at least one of such criteria to refer to the candidate's scientific research achievements to date.

5.4.5 One of the stages of the recruiting process for team members should be an interview, which depending on the candidates can be conducted in English. Such interview may be held as a teleconference, where all members of the committee must be able to participate in the conversation.

5.4.6 The recruitment committee is to document the recruitment process in the form of a protocol.

5.4.7 The protocol is to contain at least the lists of candidates, the names of their units of origin, information about the date and place of receiving a doctoral degree by candidates applying for a young doctor position in the team, the scores received by candidates in the recruitment process, the details of the mentor(s) referred to in item 5.1.1.c for each of the selected PhD students, and information concerning the announcements of the competition, selection criteria, recruitment time schedules and the proposed remuneration or stipend rates.

5.4.8 Within 14 days of the end of the recruitment process, the project manager is to supply a copy of the recruitment protocol in the Foundation's electronic system. The original recruitment protocol is to be stored at the place of carrying out the project.

5.4.9 As a condition for financing a person selected in a competition, the recruitment protocol has to be approved by the Foundation. Moreover, the Foundation must be provided with a copy of the doctoral diploma or a document certifying the award of the degree of doctor or a certificate confirming the status of a student (or PhD student) or a copy of his/her student visa for a stay in Poland.

5.4.10 The unit and the project manager will enable a representative of the Foundation to participate in the works of the committee as an observer.

5.5 Partnership in the project

5.5.1 The catalogue of potential partners in the Team Tech project includes:

- a. local research partners,
- b. foreign research partners,
- c. enterprises registered and conducting business activity in the Republic of Poland.

5.5.2 The partner should be involved in the realisation of the grantee's project on a synergy or project complementarity basis. The partner's participation should also enable sharing experiences in the areas of intellectual property management and potential commercialisation. The partner may also provide supervision for students, doctoral students and young doctors as well as access to other personnel or unique equipment.

5.5.3 The entity specified as partner in the application cannot be specified as a consortium member at the same time.

5.5.4 If the project is realised in collaboration with an economic partner, including the R&D department of an enterprise without granting state aid, the grantee must guarantee to fulfill one of the following conditions*:

- a. the participating undertakings bear the full cost of the project, or
- b. the results of the collaboration which do not give rise to intellectual property rights (IPR) may be widely disseminated and any IPR resulting from the activities of research organisations or research infrastructures are fully allocated to those entities, or
- d. any IPR resulting from the project as well as related access rights are allocated to the different

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

collaboration partners in a manner which adequately reflects their work packages, contributions and respective interests, or

- e. the research organisations or research infrastructures receive compensation equivalent to the market price for the IPR which result from their activities and are assigned to the participating undertakings, or to which participating undertakings are allocated access rights. The absolute amount of the value of any contribution, both financial and non-financial, of the participating undertakings to the costs of the research organisations or research infrastructures' activities that resulted in the IPR concerned, may be deducted from that compensation. The compensation received is equivalent to the market price if it enables the research organisations or research infrastructures concerned to enjoy the full economic benefit of those rights, where one of the following conditions is fulfilled:
 - i. the amount of the compensation has been established by means of an open, transparent and non-discriminatory competitive sale procedure
 - ii. an independent expert valuation confirms that the amount of the compensation is at least equal to the market price, or
 - iii. the research organisation or research infrastructure, as seller, can demonstrate that it effectively negotiated the compensation, at arm's length conditions, in order to obtain the maximum economic benefit at the moment when the contract is concluded, while considering its statutory objectives, or
 - iv. in cases where the collaboration agreement provides the collaborating undertaking with a right of first refusal as regards IPR generated by the collaborating research organisations or research infrastructures, where those entities exercise a reciprocal right to solicit more economically advantageous offers from third parties so that the collaborating undertaking has to match its offer accordingly.
- f. If none of the above conditions are fulfilled, the full value of the contribution of the research organisations or research infrastructures to the project will be considered as an advantage for the collaborating undertakings, to which State aid rules apply.

NOTE: Contracted research or providing research services shall not be considered as forms of co-operation.

5.6 Projects involving state aid

5.6.1 Whenever the grantee or consortium member is an enterprise, the principles of granting state aid for R&D works shall apply. The intensity of financing such project (or project part) is specified in the Cost Eligibility Guide.

5.6.2 State aid may be granted (project may receive funding) if all of the following conditions are met:

- a. the project is innovative;
- b. there is an existing demand for project outcomes;
- c. the proposed solutions are similar or better than the existing technical, technological or organisational solutions;
- d. the project is doubtlessly feasible and cost-efficient to achieve the planned result;

- e. the planned project realisation costs are justified with respect to the subject and scope of basic research, industrial research or development works.

5.6.3 For large enterprises[†], in order to confirm that the aid has an incentive effect, it is necessary to prepare project feasibility studies based on the assumptions that the project will or will not receive state aid. The said internal documentation prepared by the enterprise should confirm that the aid will lead to at least one of the following effects:

- a. a significant increase in project reach or impact caused by the state aid means, or
- b. a significant increase in the total amount spent by the beneficiary as a result of the state aid means, or
- c. significantly accelerated project completion or impact.

5.7 Duration of the project

5.7.1 The project should start to be implemented in the recommended period of 1 September 2017–1 December 2017. The project start and end dates will be set by the applicant, taking into consideration that the project implementation period is the same as the period in which incurred expenditure may be recognised as eligible.

5.7.2 The agreement should be signed within 3 months of the date when the list of grantees is published.

5.7.3 The maximum duration of the project covered by the application for funding is **36 months**.

5.8 Project financing

5.8.1 Project budget:

The suggested total project budget should not exceed **PLN 3,500,000** for projects lasting for 36 months.

The budget consists of direct and indirect costs. Direct costs include the following categories: W - remuneration, E – subcontracting costs, C – cross-financing and Op – other direct costs.

5.8.1.1 **W - Remuneration** – this category covers eligible remuneration costs together with non-salary costs of labour, including social and health insurance contributions of persons employed for research purposes (research staff, technical staff and other auxiliary personnel) or technology brokers:

- a. Project Manager’s remuneration:

The Project Manager may only be remunerated for the project under an employment contract. It is recommended that the remuneration costs, including all non-salary labour costs, do not exceed the amount of **PLN 27,000 per month**, where project work is performed on a full-time basis.

- b. Deputy Project Manager’s remuneration:

[†] Large enterprises mean enterprises that do not meet the criteria specified in Annex I to the Commission Regulation (EU) 651/2014 of June 17 2014 declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the internal market in application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty. Cf. also Cost Eligibility Guide for Measure 4.4 of the Smart Growth Operational Programme, section 6.

The Deputy Project Manager may only be remunerated for the project under an employment contract. It is recommended that remuneration costs, including all non-salary labour costs, do not exceed **PLN 17,500 per month** where project work is performed on a full-time basis.

c. Remuneration of consortium member representative:

The consortium member representative may only be remunerated for the project under an employment contract. It is recommended that the remuneration costs, including all non-salary labour costs, do not exceed the amount of **PLN 15,000 per month**, where project work is performed on a full-time basis.

d. Young doctor's remuneration:

The young doctor selected in a competition may only be remunerated for the project under an employment contract. It is recommended that the remuneration costs, including all non-salary labour costs, do not exceed the amount of **PLN 15,000 per month**, where project work is performed on a full-time basis.

e. PhD student's remuneration:

A doctoral student selected in a competition may be remunerated for the project under an employment contract. It is recommended that their remuneration costs under an employment contract, including all non-salary labour costs, do not exceed the amount of **PLN 8,000 per month**, where project work is conducted on a full-time basis.

f. Student's remuneration:

A student selected in a competition may be remunerated for the project under an employment contract. It is recommended that their remuneration costs under an employment contract, including all non-salary labour costs, do not exceed the amount of **PLN 4,000 per month**, where project work is conducted on a full-time basis.

g. The remuneration of other personnel involved in research or project work is eligible to the extent that it is directly related to the implementation of the project.

NOTICE:

- I. The total professional involvement of each person remunerated under the project in all projects financed from structural funds and Cohesion Funds and in any activities financed from other sources, including the own means of the unit or other entities, may not exceed 276 hours per month.
- II. Where the Project Manager applies for remuneration in excess of that indicated in the Competition documentation, FNP may appoint an additional expert to evaluate such an application.
- III. The Project Manager and other Project staff remunerated for their work in the Project from Project funds must not simultaneously be remunerated or receive scholarships under a different project financed by the Foundation, with the exception of scholarships received as part of the START Programme.
- IV. Before hiring an employee who is to be remunerated from Project funds, the unit agrees to verify whether the candidate is receiving any remuneration or scholarship as part of a different project financed by the Foundation and to identify the candidate's total workload to ensure that it will not exceed 276 hours per month.

- V. Where a staff member is working on the project on a part-time basis at the implementing Unit, the remuneration they will receive as part of the Project depends on the amount of time, calculated as a share of full-time equivalent, that they dedicated to the performance of tasks related to the implementation of the Project at the Unit. At the same time, in such cases the remuneration must not be higher than the same percentage of the suggested remuneration specified in the Competition documentation.
- VI. The grantee will notify the Foundation in its financial statements of the share of full-time equivalent corresponding to the involvement in the Project of each staff member who receives remuneration from Project funds and of their total workload in hours per month. Where the workload of 276 hours per month is exceeded, the staff member's remuneration paid from Project funds will represent non-eligible expenditure in each month in which the amount of 276 hours is exceeded.

5.8.1.2 **E - Subcontracting costs** – this category includes the following eligible expenses:

- a. costs related to subcontracting to a third party some of the substantive work in the project which is not performed on-site and under the direct supervision of the grantee,
- b. costs of resources made available by third parties, i.e. cost of leasing a lab with research equipment,
- c. costs of all specific work contracts.

NOTICE:

- I. Subcontracting is understood not to include auxiliary activities necessary for the completion of project tasks, such as legal or accounting services.
- II. Subcontracting costs must not exceed 25% of all eligible costs of the project.
- III. Subcontracting costs are not included in the basis on which the project's flat-rate indirect cost is calculated.
- IV. Partners should not be subcontractors in the project.

5.8.1.3. **C - Research staff development costs (Cross-financing)** – this category includes the following eligible costs related to the development of research staff:

- a. Stipends for students and PhD students selected in an open competition to participate in project research work. The suggested scholarship amounts should be within the following ranges:
 - i. for students: **PLN 1500-2500/month;**
 - ii. for PhD students: **PLN 3500-4500/month.**

Where the project or its part is carried out by an enterprise, the stipend will be granted provided that the enterprise ensures that[‡]:

- the results of the collaboration which do not give rise to intellectual property rights may be widely disseminated and any intellectual property rights resulting from the activities of research organisations or research infrastructures are fully allocated to those entities, or

[‡] Communication from the Commission: Framework for State aid for research and development and innovation (2014/C 198/1), point 28(b)-(d).

- any intellectual property rights resulting from the project, as well as related access rights are allocated to the different collaboration partners in a manner which adequately reflects their work, contributions and respective interests, or
 - the research organisations or research infrastructures (this applies to units with which doctoral students are affiliated) receive compensation equivalent to the market price for the intellectual property rights resulting from their activities and assigned to the participating enterprises, or to which participating enterprises are allocated access rights. The absolute amount of the value of any contribution, both financial and non-financial, of the participating enterprises to the costs of the research organisations or research infrastructures' activities that resulted in the intellectual property rights concerned, may be deducted from that compensation.
- b. Fellowships or training courses for stipend holders or employees of the research team to the extent related to the research work conducted as part of the project, the commercialisation of research results and state-of-the-art technological accomplishments or project management and in particular traineeships with project partners.

NOTICE:

- I. The total amount of eligible project expenses in the (C) category must not exceed 30% of the project's total eligible costs.
- II. The costs of research staff development are not included in the basis on which the project's flat-rate indirect cost is calculated.

5.8.1.4 Op – Other direct costs – this category includes the following eligible cost items:

- a. Costs of research and scientific equipment and intangible assets. Including, among others: for units which are not recipients of state aid, expenditure for the purchase of low-cost scientific and research equipment in the amount of 5% of all eligible costs in the project;
- b. Cost of land and buildings in the amount of 10% of all eligible costs in the project ;
- c. Other operating costs, including, among others, promotion costs in the amount of up to 1% of all eligible costs of the project and selected costs of international collaboration on the project and of collaboration with enterprises.

5.8.1.5 O – Indirect costs – not exceeding 17% of the actually incurred direct eligible costs of the project, excluding subcontracting costs (E) and the costs of research staff development/cross-financing (C), i.e. $O=(W+Op) \times \max 17\%$.

NOTICE:

- a. Where the unit is a beneficiary of state aid, if the equipment and devices are not used for project implementation through their entire lifetime, eligible costs are only understood to mean depreciation costs corresponding to the project implementation period and only the portion corresponding to the proportion of use of assets to the project.
- b. Where the unit is a beneficiary of state aid, depreciation write-offs represent eligible costs only if the equipment and devices were purchased after the application for co-financing was submitted.

- c. In the event that the proposed project costs exceed the amounts suggested above or that the application includes expenses for the purchase of fixed assets, the Foundation may appoint a special expert to assess the legitimacy of such costs.
- d. Indirect costs settled as a flat-rate payment cannot be listed as direct project costs.
- e. Indirect costs settled as a flat-rate payment are eligible proportionally to the direct costs used.
- f. Each reimbursement of direct project costs entails the proportional reimbursement of indirect costs.

5.8.2 The full list of eligible costs and the principles of documenting eligible expenses in the **Team Tech** Programme can be found in the *Cost Eligibility Guide for Measure 4.4 of the Smart Growth Operational Programme*, attached to the Competition Documentation.

5.8.3 Expenses eligible for financing are expenses which meet the conditions included in the *Cost Eligibility Guide* (including the Guidelines for the eligibility of expenditure under the European Regional Development Fund, European Social Fund and Cohesion Fund for 2014-2020 and the Guidelines for eligibility of SG OP expenditure) and which have been incurred in accordance with the terms of this Competition Documentation.

5.9 Project indicators

5.9.1 The applicant will provide the planned project deliverable and result indicators in the application form. The following project implementation indicators will be analysed in the **Team Tech** programme:

- a. number of enterprises collaborating with the research units, as well as the enterprises where the project is implemented, enterprises which are members of project consortia or economic partners of the project,
- b. number of people receiving support for R&D staff development – project managers and final beneficiaries involved in project implementation, i.e. students and PhD students, young doctors and others (see point 5.2),
- c. number of foreign scientists involved in the supported projects – foreign partners and scientists, including doctoral students who came to Poland to implement the financed project,
- d. number of international scientific publications included in the JCR (Journal Citation Reports), Thomson Reuters list,
- e. number of scientific degrees obtained – in the statutory meaning of the term (i.e. doctor and habilitated doctor degrees),
- f. number of patent applications filed.

The indicators must be adequate for the type of the project and they must reflect its assumed objectives. They will be reviewed by a panel of experts during the substantial review of the application, during project implementation and after its completion, and may be subject to change as suggested by the Foundation's experts. If the grantee fails to attain the previously declared indicators during project implementation, financial penalties may be imposed (in particular, the amounts granted may be proportionally reduced).

5.10 Reporting

5.10.1 During the project, the Project Manager will be required to use the Foundation's IT system, including for the purposes of reporting, documenting scientific achievements and applying for changes in the project budget.

5.10.2 The detailed reporting principles for the project will be specified in the grant agreement.

5.10.3 Grantees are required to submit merit-based and financial reports to the Foundation for predetermined reporting periods. The financial reporting period amounts to 6 months and the merit-based reporting period amounts to 12 months.

5.10.4 Students, doctoral students and young doctors will submit merit-based reports to the project manager.

5.10.5 The Foundation may at any time appoint an expert to review the said reports.

5.10.6 The Project Manager is required to present project results to the public as requested by the Foundation, e.g. at an interdisciplinary conference event.

5.10.7 Reporting also includes the monitoring of the attainment of objectives of the project or part of the project, especially emphasizing the expenses incurred, the purchase of fixed assets, team member recruitment and support for PhD students engaged in the project.

5.10.8 On the basis of reviews and opinions received during the merit-based report review performed by experts, the Executive Board of FNP may decide to implement a corrective action plan for the project, which may consist in the value of the financing being reduced, project implementation period being cut short or the project itself being discontinued. The grantee shall be informed in writing of the Board's decision.

5.11 Changes in the project

5.12.11 Detailed principles outlining the possibility and scope of introducing changes to the project shall be specified in the grant agreement.

5.12.12 During the realisation of the project, starting from the second reporting period for financial reports, the Project Manager may – unless existing laws or the provisions of agreements or other regulations binding for the grantee state otherwise – introduce the following changes on the interim report stage:

- a. transfer of funds between specific budget categories – provided that the percentage limits for expenditures in each cost category determined by the Foundation or by the Guidelines are maintained,
- b. change of the payment schedule for subsequent advance payments.

The changes described above do not require signing an annex to the agreement, although they must be approved by the Foundation.

5.12.13 During project realisation, the Project Manager may apply to introduce changes to the application with respect to:

- a. **changes in the substantial scope of the application** – considering the proposed changes requires a substantial justification and a declaration of the Project Manager stating that such changes are necessary and that any failure to introduce them would threaten the proper realisation of the project or that it might result in a failure to achieve the planned project indicators, or that such changes are beneficial for the outcomes of the application selected for funding and that they will enable to fully realise the planned project indicators; changes in the substantial scope of the application may be connected with changes in the project budget.

- b. **changes in project duration**, provided that the proposed project duration must be contained in the cost eligibility period under SG OP and that it must not exceed June 30, 2023 – in particular in the following cases:
 - i. if the Project Manager is a woman who gives birth during the duration of the Project or the Project Manager adopts a child during the duration of the Project, then the project realisation period may be extended by up to 12 months for each child born or adopted during that period; or
 - ii. if the project duration specified in the application is shorter than the maximum acceptable duration specified in the Competition Documentation, then it may be extended do the said maximum project duration; or
 - iii. If the project duration specified in the agreement is the maximum acceptable project duration pursuant to Competition Documentation, then it is possible to extend the cost eligibility period by up to 6 months.

The Foundation shall consider whether it is justified to introduce the proposed changes to the application, taking into account the prerequisites that influenced the selection of the project for funding and the influence of the proposed change on project results and indicators.

5.12.14 The Foundation reserves a period of 3 months as a minimum period to consider the application for changes.

5.12 Competition for extending project duration

5.12.1 The Foundation is planning to announce an internal competition for grantees to extend the duration of the projects by **a maximum period of 24 months** (with the reservation of the provisions of item 5.11.3.b), provided that:

- a. Extending the project duration pursuant to internal competition entails broadening the substantial scope of the application and provides an opportunity to increase project funding.
- b. The manner of submitting applications and an evaluation process shall be specified in the competition announcement. However, the application shall contain, at least, a full report on already commenced works, a description of the obtained results and of their implementation potential.
- c. Application in the internal competition may be filed, particularly in connection with:
 - i. Planning a subsequent stage of research works devoted to elaborating project results, with the aim of improving the potential implementation possibilities or commencing new tasks as a consequence of the results obtained so far.
 - ii. The necessity to complete doctoral dissertations or master's theses of team members
 - iii. The necessity to increase the number of team members or their remunerations in comparison to the original application,
 - iv. Starting co-operation with a new partner unit.

5.11.2. The Foundation reserves that the extension period and additional financing granted in the internal competition will depend on the funds available in the programme.

VI Project selection system

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

The planned evaluation time for applications (from the submission deadline to announcing the list of grantees) is approx. 5 months.

6.1 Formal evaluation of the application

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

6.1.2 The only documentation that may be supplemented during the formal evaluation process is the power of attorney to sign the application. The period for supplementation is 14 days from the receipt of the relevant notification.

6.1.3 If it is detected that the electronic file attached to the online form has been damaged, or if there are any clerical errors, the Programme Officer may request to supplement such file on any stage of the competition.

6.2 Merit-based evaluation

Applications that received a positive formal evaluation will be submitted for merit-based evaluation. The merit-based evaluation consists of three stages: evaluation by the scientific and economic panel (SEP), written reviews stage and the stage of interviews conducted by the interdisciplinary panel of experts (IPE).

6.2.1 Stage 1 – the scientific and economic panel (SEP)

6.2.1.1 The scientific and economic panel is composed of at least 3 members who possess adequate scientific achievements or experience in implementing innovative solutions in the R&D sector. The Foundation may appoint several panels in the competition, corresponding to the fields of science represented by the submitted applications.

6.2.1.2 The SEP shall evaluate the applications in the aspect of merit-based criteria by assigning scores and appropriate recommendations (A – positive, B – conditional, C – negative).

6.2.1.2 As a result of the works by the SEP at least 40% but not more than 60% of the best applications will be qualified for further proceedings (provided that such part of the applications fulfils the criteria on the minimum required level).

6.2.1.3 Applicants who receive a C recommendation from the scientific and economic panel cannot be re-considered in the subsequent edition of the competition (one-edition deferral period).

6.2.1.4 The applicants shall be notified by e-mail that their application was or was not qualified for the 2nd stage of merit-based evaluation.

6.2.1.5 Applicants who are not invited to the 2nd stage will be notified about the received score and recommendations, along with a brief substantiation.

6.2.2 Stage 2 – written reviews

6.2.2.1 Each application is evaluated by at least two third-party reviewers. Members of the scientific and economic panel or of the interdisciplinary panel of experts (3rd stage of merit-based evaluation) cannot act as reviewers.

6.2.2.2 The reviewers shall evaluate the applications in the aspect of merit-based criteria by assigning scores and appropriate recommendations, along with substantiation, in the evaluation form.

6.2.2.2 Reviewers may also suggest issues for further clarification with the Project Manager on the 3rd stage of merit-based evaluation and may also point to particularly breakthrough applications that pose exceptionally bold or risky hypotheses, whose results, if verified positively, may be of potentially transformative importance for the given fields of science or areas of economy.

6.2.2.3 Following the reviewers' evaluation, applications that receive the highest score, the best recommendations will be qualified for further stage, along with those to which the Programme Officer in agreement with the Director of Programme Division have objections concerning the reliability of the review or highly divergent scores assigned by reviewers.

6.2.2.4 The applicants shall be notified in writing or by e-mail that their application was or was not qualified for the 3rd stage of merit-based evaluation.

6.2.2.5 Immediately after setting the panel session date, the applicants (and the contact persons specified in the application form) shall be notified by e-mail about the planned date and place of interviews with the interdisciplinary panel of experts (IPE).

6.2.2.6 Applicants who have been invited to the 3rd stage of evaluation shall receive the content of reviews of their applications, but the evaluating reviewers shall remain anonymous. The remaining applicants shall be granted access to these reviews in the electronic system of the Foundation.

6.2.3 Stage 3 – interdisciplinary panel of experts (IPE)

6.2.3.1 The interdisciplinary panel of experts is composed of at least three experts representing various fields of science and one Board Member of the FNP (acting as chairman, without the right to evaluate applications) and, optionally, an expert delegated by the Intermediary Authority as an observer.

6.2.3.2 On this stage, the number of applications subject to evaluation shall correspond to at least twice the funding amount allocated to the competition. Additionally, applicants qualified by means of appeal procedure may be invited to the panel. The number of applications considered on this stage may be lower than twice the budget if the required number of application does not meet the minimum merit-based criteria or has not received the required minimum recommendation.

6.2.3.3 The IPE compares the evaluated applications, prepares a ranking and evaluates them on the basis of the adopted merit-based criteria. The candidates are compared by the IPE with regard to the written reviews obtained during the preceding stage and direct interviews with the applicants, who will have at this stage an opportunity to express their concerns regarding the written reviews.

6.2.3.4 In exceptional situations, it is possible to conduct the interview on the telephone or with use of online communication tools (e.g. skype). Each such case shall be considered by the Programme Officer on an individual basis.

6.2.3.5 The IPE may ask the applicants to introduce necessary changes in their applications in order to ensure the proper realisation of the project (e.g. changes in project budget, planned expenditures on

laboratory equipment or indicators). Moreover, the IPE may authorise the FNP to conduct such negotiations at a later date, in particular before signing the grant agreement.

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

6.2.3.7 The list of grantees will be published on the Foundation website.

6.2.3.8 The Project Manager shall be notified if the project is accepted for realisation. The remaining participants of the 3rd stage of merit-based evaluation shall be notified by post or e-mail.

6.2.3.9 Any applications not accepted for funding may be submitted again, provided that they meet the terms and conditions of the competition.

6.3 Appeal procedure

6.3.1 The appeals procedure in place at the Foundation does not constitute an appeals procedure within the meaning of the Act of 29 August 2014 on the Principles of Implementation of Cohesion Policy Programmes financed under the 2014-2020 Financial Framework.

6.3.2 The applicant or the unit may appeal in writing to the Executive Board of the Foundation against non-compliance with the procedures at each of the stages of evaluation of the submitted application within 7 days of the date of receipt of the official notification. The appeal will be examined within 21 days of the date of its receipt by the Foundation.

6.3.3 The date of receipt by the Foundation, rather than the stamp date, will be decisive, with the provision that the appeal may also be lodged with the Foundation by fax or e-mail. The fax number and email address can be found in Section VIII – Contact details.

6.3.4 The Appeals Committee exclusively reviews procedural matters relevant for each of the stages of application evaluation and selection.

6.3.5 Appeals concerning procedural issues at the stage of formal evaluation are examined by the Appeals Committee consisting of a lawyer and two FNP employees who were not involved in the evaluation of the application.

6.3.6 Appeals concerning procedural issues at the stage of merit-based evaluation are examined by a committee consisting of two third-party experts who were not involved in the evaluation of the application concerned in the appeal and an FNP employee who was not involved in the evaluation of the application. The final opinion is adopted by a vote. Upon examination of the committee's opinion, the Executive Board of the Foundation decides whether the application should be re-examined (by the expert panel or a reviewer) or dismissed. The appellant will be informed in writing of the decision. The decision of the Executive Board is final.

VII. Grant agreement

7.1 Grant agreement

7.1.1 The applicant is obligated to implement the project under a grant agreement.

7.1.2 The grantee is responsible for ensuring that the data submitted to the Foundation in the application and during project implementation is accurate.

7.1.3 The grant agreement will be signed by the Foundation, the unit which will host the project and by the Project Manager. If the project is implemented by a consortium, the grant agreement will be signed between the Foundation, the Project Manager, a consortium member representative and consortium members.

7.2 Preparing the grant agreement

7.2.1 Prior to the execution of the grant agreement, the Foundation reserves the right to negotiate with the grantee who has applied for funding for the project, in order to introduce necessary changes to the project, including changes regarding project indicators or the project budget, especially in terms of the accuracy of the financial assumptions made in the application.

7.2.2 At the agreement preparation stage, the data necessary for the agreement shall be uploaded in the Foundation's IT system and the following documents in particular need to be provided:

- a) VAT eligibility questionnaire,
- b) a statement that no state aid applies together with the questionnaire,
- c) consortium agreement (if the project is carried out by a consortium).

Moreover, for projects where state aid will be granted, the following documents need to be submitted in particular:

- a) statement on the status of the enterprise,
- b) form with information submitted when applying for aid other than aid in agriculture or fishing, de minimis aid or de minimis aid in agriculture and fishing.

7.2.3 Before signing the agreement or during project implementation, the unit implementing the project may be requested to submit in particular:

- a) a statement of no arrears in the payment of budget payables and social insurance and health insurance premiums,
- b) a document to confirm proper security for the agreement,
- c) a certificate confirming the award of a REGON (statistical) number to the unit,
- d) a decision to award a NIP (tax identification) number to the unit.

7.2.4 Failure to submit all required information and documents referred to in points 7.2.2 and 7.2.3 by the relevant deadline will result in the Foundation's inability to prepare the agreement or its refusal to sign it.

7.3 Signing the grant agreement

7.3.1. After reviewing the correctness of the data and documents referred to in point 7.2.2, the grant agreement is prepared. The Project Manager will receive the agreement by email. Three identical copies of the agreement, signed in accordance with the rules of representation of the unit, including all the required documents (appendices) are returned to the Foundation by post. Where the project is executed by a consortium, five identical copies of the agreement need to be returned. The Foundation will send back to the unit's correspondence address specified in the agreement two signed copies of the

agreement, one for the Project Manager and one for the unit (in the case of a consortium: four signed copies, one for the Project Manager, for the consortium member representative and for consortium members).

7.3.2. In particular, the following will be integral parts of the agreement:

- a) project budget,
- b) project implementation schedule,
- c) instalment payment schedule,
- d) VAT eligibility statement for the unit,
- e) a document to confirm that the applicant's representative is authorised to act for them and on their behalf (a power-of-attorney or other document) – this appendix is required when the agreement is signed by a persons or persons who are not statutorily authorised to represent the unit,
- f) a statement on indirect costs of the project.

7.4 Consortium agreement

7.4.1. If the project is implemented by a consortium, the consortium members are required to sign a consortium agreement and submit a copy to FNP by email prior to signing the grant agreement.

7.1.7 The consortium agreement should in particular indicate the parties' respective interests, require that both parties to the agreement execute their tasks as set out in the submitted application, and it should regulate the parties' input into the project and the distribution of intellectual property rights arising from the project implementation or rights of access to the outcome of joint delivery of the project.

VIII. Contact data

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

Telephone: +48 22 311 84 25

Or by e-mail: dariusz.lukaszewski@fnp.org.pl

IX. Appendices to the Competition Documentation

9.1 Appendices to competition documentation for units which do not benefit from state aid:

9.1.1 Cost Eligibility Guide for Measure 4.4 of the *Smart Growth Operational Programme for units not being beneficiaries of state aid*.

9.1.1.1 Catalogue of eligible costs under Measure 4.4 Increasing the human potential of the R&D sector for units which are not beneficiaries of state aid.

9.1.1.2 Catalogue of non-eligible costs for units which are not beneficiaries of state aid.

9.1.1.3 Manner of incurring expenditures in compliance with the fair competition principle.

9.1.2 Criteria for the evaluation of applications in the Team Tech Programme (SG OP Measure 4.4)

- 9.1.3 Project implementation schedule (sample appendix to the application for financing in the Team Tech Programme (SG OP Measure 4.4))
- 9.1.4 Description of the available equipment and planned expenses on laboratory equipment with justification (sample appendix to the application for financing in the Team Tech Programme (SG OP Measure 4.4))
- 9.1.5 Project indicators with justification (sample appendix to the application for financing in the Team Tech Programme (SG OP Measure 4.4))
- 9.1.6 Statement of the Project Manager (sample appendix to the application for financing in the Team Tech Programme (SG OP Measure 4.4))
- 9.1.7 Statement of the Deputy Project Manager or a consortium member representative (template appendix to the application for financing in the Team Tech Programme (SG OP Measure 4.4))
- 9.1.8 Statement of the unit which is to implement the project (template appendix to the application for financing in the Team Tech Programme (SG OP Measure 4.4)).

9.2 Appendices to Competition Documentation for units which benefit from State aid:

- 9.2.1 Cost Eligibility Guide for Measure 4.4 of the *Smart Growth Operational Programme for units which benefit from state aid.*
 - 9.2.1.1 Catalogue of eligible costs under Measure 4.4 Increasing the human potential of the R&D sector for research organisations which are beneficiaries of state aid.
 - 9.2.1.2 Catalogue of non-eligible costs for beneficiaries of state aid.
 - 9.2.1.3 Manner of incurring expenditures in compliance with the fair competition principle.
- 9.2.2 Criteria for the evaluation of applications in the Team Tech Programme (SG OP Measure 4.4)
- 9.2.3 Project implementation schedule (sample appendix to the application for financing in the Team Tech Programme (SG OP Measure 4.4))
- 9.2.4 Description of the available equipment and planned expenses for laboratory equipment with justification (sample appendix to the application for financing in the Team Tech Programme (SG OP Measure 4.4))
- 9.2.5 Project indicators with justification (sample appendix to the application for financing in the Team Tech Programme (SG OP Measure 4.4))
- 9.2.6. Statement of the Project Manager (template appendix to the application for financing in the Team Tech Programme (SG OP Measure 4.4))
- 9.2.7 Statement of the Deputy Project Manager or a consortium member representative (template appendix to the application for financing in the Team Tech Programme (SG OP Measure 4.4))
- 9.2.8 Statement of the unit which is to implement the project (template appendix to the application for financing in the Team Tech Programme (SG OP Measure 4.4)).
- 9.2.9 Information form to be submitted when applying for state aid under the Regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education of 25 February 2015 on the terms and procedure for granting state aid and *de minimis* aid through the National Centre for Research and Development – in accordance with the template annexed to the Regulation of the Council of Ministers of 29 March 2010 on the scope of the information submitted by the entity applying for aid other than *de minimis* aid or

de minimis aid in the agriculture and fisheries (OJ 2016 pos. 238) (template appendix to the application for financing under the Team Tech Programme (SG OP Measure 4.4)).

All appendices are an integral part of the Competition Documentation and are published along with competition documentation on the website of the TEAM Tech programme