

About the Programme

The “Basic Research” programme is one of 8 Polish programmes funded from the EEA and Norway Grants 2021-2028 (4th edition). The programme aimed to reduce social and economic disparities in the European Economic Area (EEA), and strengthen bilateral cooperation between Donor States (Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway) and Beneficiary Countries (including Poland).

The main purpose of the programme is to enhance the quality of basic research to better address the key challenges of the contemporary world. Basic research lays the foundation for economic and social development. Although direct commercialisation is not always its focus, basic research provides knowledge that deepens our understanding of complex phenomena and serves as a starting point for innovations, new technologies, and evidence-based public policies, collectively known as knowledge valorisation.

For the second time, the National Science Centre (NCN) is the “Basic Research” programme operator responsible for the organisation of calls for proposals, evaluation of proposals and research project funding. The Research Council of Norway (RCN) and the Icelandic Centre for Research (Rannis) are the programme partners (Donor States).

The programme budget exceeds EUR 71 million, and project funding will be available until 30 April 2031.

Two calls for research projects and two calls to support the development of the academic collaboration will be carried out under the programme:

- GRIEG BIS: a call for proposals in the bottom-up formula, with a budget of EUR 50 million;
- LANGSPIL: a call for interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary projects, involving collaboration between researchers and non-academic partners, backed by a EUR 12 million budget;
- Coordination & Capacity Kick-off: a call aimed at supporting international research team formation and development of interdisciplinary project concepts with a budget of EUR 150 000;
- Coordination & Capacity Follow-up: a call planned for 2028 to support the valorisation of knowledge and use of research findings, with a budget of EUR 1 550 000.

Under the 4th edition of the EEA and Norway Grants (2021-2028), projects need to align with at least one of the three donor priorities specified in the Blue Book: European green transition, democracy and the rule of law, and social transformations and resilience.

The Programme covers all disciplines, with special focus on Social Sciences, Humanities and polar research. The pre-defined SPARK project, with a budget of EUR 2 million, will strengthen the interdisciplinary polar research ecosystem by enhancing excellence, building capacity, and overcoming barriers.

An important part of the Programme is the development of international cooperation and strengthening the participation of early-career researchers and female researchers at each stage of their academic careers, including development of their competencies as research team leaders.

The 4th edition focuses on interdisciplinarity and collaboration with non-academic environment to ensure that related research findings can be effectively used to develop solutions that addresses current environmental, social and economic challenges.

The Programme's aims remain unchanged: to support top-quality research to foster a better understanding of contemporary challenges and build a greener, more democratic and resilient Europe. Bilateral research projects strengthen international collaboration and advance scientific progress by working together to address the most pressing cultural, social, and economic challenges facing contemporary Europe, including the long-term consequences of the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

Programme Operator

The “Basic Research” Programme is operated by the National Science Centre, a government agency established to support basic research in Poland. NCN funds research projects selected in the calls for proposals, enabling empirical and theoretical endeavours undertaken to gain new knowledge of the foundations of phenomena and observable facts, without any direct commercial use.

Since its establishment in 2011, the Polish National Science Centre has funded more than 34,000 research projects by 2025, allocating a total of over PLN 19.75 billion through national

and international funding calls. The NCN places particular emphasis on supporting new generations of researchers. Between 2016 and 2025, nearly PLN 7.2 billion was allocated to the development of early-career scientists, representing almost half (48%) of all awarded funding. In 2025 alone, the research budget amounted to PLN 1.69 billion, of which more than PLN 550 million was directed specifically to researchers at the early stages of their careers. The high quality of NCN's processes is confirmed by international expert communities – in 2025, as many as 97% of proposal reviewers were scientists affiliated with foreign institutions, ensuring the highest standards of impartiality and scientific excellence.

In the previous edition of the EEA and Norway Grants (2014-2021), NCN effectively managed the budget, making almost the most of all available resources. The higher budget in the current edition is due to the success of the previous one. NCN has completed all calls for proposals and implemented additional actions, e.g. pre-defined CRIOS project, bilateral initiatives (HarSval and Science & Society), and scholarship programme for students and early-career researchers from Ukraine.

NCN pursues the following principles:

- identifying and funding best research projects,
- openness to global science, internationalisation,
- inclusiveness of offers and refraining from imposing research topics,
- appreciating younger researchers,
- impartiality, transparent procedures, strict conflicts of interest procedures,
- independence and political impartiality,
- serving the scientific community.

As the Programme operator, NCN is in charge of the call for proposals, evaluation of proposals, project funding and supervising project performance and settlement. It actively supports internationalisation of research and development of research collaboration, including with partners from Donor States.

More information:

<https://eeagrants.org/en/poland/programmes/basic-research>

<https://www.ncn.gov.pl/en>