



National Science Centre An Important Component of Research Funding in Poland

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Andrzej Jajszczyk



NATIONAL SCIENCE CENTRE

- Overview of the research funding structure in Poland
- National Science Centre: basic information
 - Mission
 - Budget
 - Structure
- Grant types and evaluation procedures
- Selected statistics



Structure of Polish Science Funding System

Strategic level

**Ministry of Science
and Higher Education**

Expert level

**Science Policy
Committee**

**Committee of Evaluation
of Scientific Units**

**Young Researchers'
Council**

Executive Agency level

National Science Centre

**National Centre for
Research and Development**



National Science Centre

- The National Science Centre (NCN) is a government executive agency set up to fund basic research
- Basic research is original experimental or theoretical research work undertaken primarily to acquire new knowledge of the underlying foundations of phenomena and observable facts, without any direct practical application or use



Tasks of National Science Centre

- **Funding of:**
 - basic research in the form of research projects
 - doctoral fellowships and post-doctoral internships
- **Supervising** the implementation of research projects
- **International cooperation** in financing basic research
- **Fostering and monitoring** the funding of basic research funded from outside the state budget

NCN Budget





Council of the NCN

Council of the NCN consists of 24 distinguished professors selected by the Nominating Committee and appointed by the Minister of Science and Higher Education

The Council of the NCN:

- Sets priority areas in basic research in line with the country's development strategy plan
- Sets up NCN Panels of scientific disciplines
- Decides on the type of programmes the NCN supports and decides on the rules of the calls announced by the NCN
- Allocates funds within Panels and calls
- Appoints members of the Expert Teams responsible for the evaluation of proposals
- Appoints the Director and nominates Disciplines Coordinators



Discipline Coordinators (14)

- Perform eligibility check
- Coordinate project evaluation by Expert Teams
- Assure the impartiality of the evaluation
- Are entitled to change the position of projects on the ranking lists



Workload in Funding Agencies

	Number of proposals	Number of employees	Proposals per employee
ERC	4882	316	15.4
NSF	40000	2100	19.0
NSERC	10000	400	25.0
NCN	14917	71	210.0

- ERC – *European Research Council*
- NSF – *National Science Foundation (USA)*
- NSERC – *Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (Canada)*
- ERC, NSF i NSERC: data for 2010, NCN: data for 2011



NCN Granting Programmes I

- **OPUS: general grants**

Competition for the funding of research projects, including financing the purchase or construction of research equipment needed to carry out these projects

- **SONATA, SONATA BIS: PhD holders grants**

Competition for PhD holders starting a career in research aiming to create a unique scientific workshop or appoint a new scientific team

- **PRELUDIUM: pre-doctoral grants**

Competition for the funding of research projects carried out by pre-doctoral researchers starting a scientific career



NCN Granting Programmes II

- **HARMONIA: non co-financed international grants**

Competition for the funding of research projects carried out in cooperation with foreign partners/within the framework of international programmes or initiatives/with the use of large international research infrastructure

- **MAESTRO: advanced researchers grants**

Competition for advanced academics for the funding of research projects aimed at carrying out pioneering research, including interdisciplinary research, important for the development of science beyond the current state of knowledge (leading to scientific discoveries)

- **POST-DOCTORAL INTERNSHIPS**



Example of International Cooperation

ASPERA 2 (Astroparticle Physics)

- Associate Agreement with PT-DESY (Germany)
- Joining organisational works related to announcing the third ASPERA call for proposals
- Executing a contract concerning participation in the call for proposals
- Specifying the funding to be provided
- Information and promotional tasks concerning the call for proposals
- Administrative services related to the call for proposals and membership in the ASPERA 2 consortium



Evaluation Criteria

- Basic research
- Scientific level of research tasks
- Pioneering nature of the research problem
- Potential impact of the research project on the development of the scientific discipline
- Principal Investigator's scientific achievements
- Evaluation of previous research projects conducted by the applicant funded under previous calls for proposals (this criterion does not apply to pre-doctoral grants)
- Suitability of the planned costs
- Project feasibility

- 25 Panels, covering all fields of science, are divided into the following three thematic groups of disciplines:
- HS: Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences
- ST: Physical Sciences and Engineering
- NZ: Life Sciences



ST Panel:

Physical Sciences and Engineering

- ST1** Mathematics
- ST2** Fundamental constituents of matter
- ST3** Condensed matter physics
- ST4** Physical and Analytical Chemical sciences
- ST5** Materials and Synthesis
- ST6** Computer science and informatics
- ST7** Systems and communication engineering
- ST8** Products and processes engineering
- ST9** Astronomy and space research
- ST10** Earth system science



Evaluation Process

SUBSTANTIAL
EVALUATION

I STAGE

II STAGE



**Evaluation procedure is supervised
by Discipline Coordinators**



Statistics 2011

- Eligible proposals: **7826**
- Proposals qualified for the second-stage evaluation: **3395** (43%)
- Proposals qualified for funding: **1870** (24%)
- Grants: **€ 127.5 million** (2012: **€ 225 million**)
- Young researchers:
 - Received about 50% of grants
 - Received about 30% of the budget



Statistics 2011 for Physical Sciences

ST2 Fundamental constituents of matter

ST3 Condensed matter physics

ST4 Physical and analytical chemical sciences

ST5 Materials and synthesis

ST9 Astronomy and space research

GRANTING PROGRAMMES	# OF PROPOSALS	FUNDING	# OF GRANTS	FUNDING	SUCCESS RATE
OPUS, PRELUDIUM, SONATA, HARMONIA	1397	€ 129 million	341	€ 29.4 million	24%
MAESTRO	117	€ 56.1 million	21	€ 10.9 million	18%



Conclusion

- NCN funds basic research
- Covers all research disciplines, including physical sciences
- Cooperates with leading institutions supporting basic research (HARMONIA)
- Offers Polish scientists the freedom of conducting research in a broad international context and seeks to pave the way for developing new ideas in cooperation with funding agencies in Europe and the world



More information available at:
www.ncn.gov.pl

Thank you for your attention



NATIONAL SCIENCE CENTRE