Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for Call No. 1/2026 for Measure 2.2. First TEAM FENG

We are pleased to provide you with an updated list of frequently asked questions and answers.

This is not an exhaustive list – if you cannot find the answer to your question, please contact the Project Coordinators listed on the website https://fnp.org.pl/component/fnp_programs/program/first-TEAM FENG-feng

1. Project Information

1.1. In the case of projects involving the humanities field, should the National Smart Specialization (NSS) be indicated?

Yes. Under the First TEAM FENG Measure, only Projects that fit the priorities specified in the list of National Smart Specializations (NSS) can be funded.

1.2. Is it necessary to provide an acronym for the title?

It is possible to create an acronym, but it is not mandatory.

1.3. Does the Project have to be submitted in Polish?

Thanks to the amendment introduced to the Polish Language Act, starting from this Call, Applications may be submitted in Polish or English. In the event of any discrepancies between the Polish and English versions of the competition documentation published on the Foundation's websites, the Polish version shall prevail.

1.4. When can I submit a Project in Call 1/2026 and when will I find out the results?

According to *the Schedule of calls for proposals for co-financing under the European Funds for a Modern Economy program, 2021-2027*, the call for proposals will run from January 20 to February 17, 2026. The project evaluation process, counted from the day following the end of the call for proposals to the date of announcement of the list of projects selected for co-financing, lasts 154 calendar days, which means that the results will be announced on July 22, 2026. In justified cases, the deadline for evaluation and approval of the evaluation results may be extended, which will be announced by the IP on the call for proposals website.

1.5. When can the implementation of the First TEAM FENG Project under Call 1/2026 begin?

The start date of the Project should be set within a timeframe that allows for the implementation of the project in accordance with the terms and conditions specified in the grant agreement and documentation. The start of the project implementation period does not have to coincide with the date of signing the Grant Agreement. Please note that the time for fulfilling the conditions set out

in the Criteria is counted from the start of the project implementation period, i.e., within 6 months from the start date of the project, the team conducting R&D work in the project will consist of at least 3 people.

1.6. How long can the First TEAM FENG Project last?

The Call for Proposals documentation does not specify a minimum duration for the Project – the duration of the Project should be adequate for the planned tasks within the allocated budget. The Project cannot last longer than December 31, 2029, i.e., until the end of the FENG perspective.

1.7. Can I start the recruitment process for team members before the project start date?

Yes, we allow this possibility.

1.8. Can I apply for funding for basic research under the First TEAM FENG measure?

No, basic research is excluded from support under the FENG program. In accordance with mandatory criterion No. 1 of the second stage of the substantive evaluation, the research planned in the Project includes industrial research or experimental development work.

1.9. What is the difference between novelty and originality?

Under criterion No. 2 of the first stage of substantive evaluation, the Project is assessed, among other things, in terms of novelty and originality. Novelty must be demonstrated in relation to the current state of knowledge and literature data. Originality refers to the way in which the author of the Project intends to solve the scientific problem presented in the application, with originality being assessed in relation to other methods/approaches used in the field of the Project.

1.10. What is the innovative nature of the Project in relation to the doctoral project and research internship of the Principal Investigator?

Criterion No. 2c of the first stage of substantive evaluation is directly related to the implementation of the First TEAM FENG objective, which is to establish a research team, conduct innovative research with implementation potential, and achieve scientific independence. Candidates must submit an independent and original project proposal that introduces a sufficient level of innovation in relation to their previous work (including postdoctoral internships). In this way, candidates demonstrate their readiness to independently set the direction of their research and provide adequate substantive supervision to team members.

1.11. What is meant by "the advantage of the proposed work in the project over other scientific research conducted in the field of the project"?

One of the objectives of First TEAM FENG is to address important challenges facing society. In criterion No. 3 of the second stage of the substantive evaluation, the evaluation assesses whether the candidate has demonstrated that the results of the project will be significant in the context of scientific competition and will have an impact on the development of research conducted in the subject area of the project. Funding under the First TEAM FENG action must contribute to the development of innovative solutions, i.e., have a competitive advantage over other solutions used in the subject area of the Project. Otherwise, the Project will not meet the objective of the First TEAM FENG action, which is also to address significant challenges facing society. Projects that do not meet the objectives of the action cannot be funded.

2. Applicant

2.1. Is the instigator of the Project the same as the applicant?

No, the instigator of the project is the Principal Investigator of the project. The applicant, and later the beneficiary, is the research organization employing the Principal Investigator during the implementation of the project.

2.2. Can a company that conducts R&D work be an Applicant?

The applicant can only be a "research organization, which is an entity referred to in Article 2(9) of the General Regulation and specified in Article 7(1) of the Act of July 20, 2018 Law on Higher Education and Science and meeting the definition of an organization conducting research and promoting knowledge – in accordance with the definition specified in the GBER (Article 2, point 83).

2.3. The Application should specify the Unit within the research organization. What does this mean?

If the Applicant is a university, the basic organizational unit of the university, e.g., a faculty, should be indicated as the Unit. If the Applicant is the Polish Academy of Sciences or a research institute, the Institute should be indicated as the Unit.

2.4. Is it possible to indicate the Principal Investigator of the Project as the contact person for the evaluation of the Project on behalf of the Applicant?

It is necessary to indicate a person other than the Principal Investigator of the Project – correspondence regarding the Application will be addressed to the Principal Investigator of the Project and to the person indicated by the Applicant.

3. Principal Investigator (PI)

3.1. How to calculate the date of obtaining a doctoral degree that allows you to meet the conditions for applying for funding?

Applications for funding may be submitted by persons who obtained their doctoral degree between 2 and 9 years prior to the deadline for submitting applications in the call for proposals. In call 1/2026, the deadline for submitting applications is February 17, 2026, which means that the date of obtaining the degree cannot be earlier than February 17, 2017, and no later than February 17, 2024.

The 9-year period may be extended under the conditions specified in the competition documentation, in particular see point 3.2.

3.2. Can breaks in academic work be confirmed by submitting a child's birth certificate?

Yes, the 9-year period may be extended by all documented periods of interruption in scientific work occurring after the date of obtaining the degree, provided that the interruptions lasted at

least 6 months. A documented break in work includes, among others, unpaid leave, parental leave, breaks due to long-term illness, work in the R&D sector without participation in scientific research, work in other sectors of the economy, etc.

In the case of women, a child's birth certificate entitles them to extend the 9-year period by 1 year for each child, regardless of the date of birth or adoption of the child (even if the child was born before the doctoral degree was awarded). In the case of men, in addition to the child's birth certificate, confirmation of an uninterrupted break in work lasting at least 6 months after obtaining the academic degree is required.

3.3. Can the principal investigator be a habilitated doctor or a professor?

Yes, the Principal Investigator may hold a habilitated doctor degree or the title of professor. It is important that they meet the conditions specified in the Funding Agreement in § 4(3) constituting Appendix 2 to *the Regulations for Project Selection,* in particular that the doctoral degree was awarded no later than 2 years and no earlier than 9 years before the deadline for submitting applications in the call for proposals.

3.4. Does the Principal Investigator have to be employed by the Applicants Unit at the time of submitting the Application?

It is not necessary for the Principal Investigator to be employed by the Applicants Unit at the time of submitting the Application. However, it is important that the Principal Investigator to be employed by the Applicants Unit for the duration of the Project and be involved in the work for at least 0.5 FTE, and that the employment contract be delivered to the Foundation within 14 days of the date of signing the Grant Agreement.

3.5. Can the function of the Principal Investigator of the Project be performed by a person who is currently employed by the Applicant and will be seconded to the project work for the required number of hours?

Yes.

3.6. If I want to apply to the First TEAM FENG program as the Principal Investigator of the Project, can I be a contractor in another FNP program?

In accordance with the provisions of the Grant Agreement template constituting Appendix 2 to the Regulations for Project Selection (§8. Remuneration of Project staff, section 2), in the First TEAM FENG competition, the Principal Investigator of the Project and other persons involved in the direct implementation of the Project may not simultaneously receive remuneration in another Project financed by the FNP, with the exception of the Proof of Concept and PRIME Projects, within specified full-time equivalents, with the consent of the FNP. However, there are no restrictions on the possibility of submitting more than one application at a given time. At the same time, the total professional involvement of each member of the Project staff in the implementation of all projects financed from EU funds and activities financed from other sources, including the Applicant's own funds and those of other entities (regardless of the form of involvement), may not exceed 276 hours per month (in accordance with §8. Remuneration of Project staff, paragraph 3 of the above-mentioned Agreement).

3.7. What is meant by the scientific excellence of the team leader presented by the applicant in the form of the candidate's scientific achievements (criterion No. 1 in the first stage of the substantive evaluation)?

The scientific excellence of achievements is assessed by experts in relation to a given field (rather than a scientific discipline) and the stage of the candidate's scientific career. Usually, achievements published in the most prestigious journals in a given field (e.g., Nature, Science, Cell) are considered by experts to be the highest rated in this criterion, while achievements published in very good scientific journals with a wide range of fields (e.g., PNAS, Nature derivatives) are also highly rated. To sufficiently meet a given criterion, it is usually sufficient to have an achievement published in a good, single-field industry journal (e.g., JBC, JACS, EMBO Rep.). Achievements published in journals without proper *peer review* are usually considered insufficient in the spectrum of scientific excellence. The experts' decisions may also take into account factors other than those mentioned above, e.g., the person's contribution to a given achievement (e.g., collective work, independent work, lead author, contribution, corresponding author, etc.) and/or the number of citations.

3.8. When assessing the criterion "The leader of the research team (principal investigator) has the scientific achievements and experience necessary to carry out the project," do experts take into account information about the principal investigator from publicly available databases?

No, only the information provided in the grant application and attachments and provided during the interview with the Principal Investigator is taken into account in the evaluation process. Please choose the achievements you attach carefully – they should be related to the proposed project and assessable (e.g., a patent application without a number does not provide sufficient data to assess it as a scientific achievement).

3.9. Can a series of publications be indicated as a single scientific achievement?

Only one publication, patent application, patent, prototype, etc. selected by the Applicant should be indicated as a single scientific achievement.

3.10. How is a research internship understood?

A research internship is evaluated during the first stage of the substantive evaluation. Research work in an entity other than the entity where the Principal Investigator received their doctoral degree, conducting scientific activity in the Republic of Poland or abroad, in order to acquire knowledge and skills, including in the field of scientific research, lasting continuously for at least 3 months. In order to obtain a high internship rating, its results must be demonstrated (e.g., publications, patent applications, etc.).

3.11. What is meant by the terms "experience in project implementation" and "experience in supervising students or doctoral students" in the assessment of a candidate's profile?

The aim of the First TEAM FENG competition is to establish a research team composed of young members, including students, doctoral students, and young doctors. Candidates must have adequate experience in project implementation to perform the role of team leader. Experience is usually gained while conducting an independent research project or postdoctoral project. The type of project that the candidate has previously carried out, his/her role in the project, the project budget, the composition of the team he/she has supervised so far, and the results obtained are also important. Providing the numbers of the projects carried out will facilitate the Commission's verification and evaluation of the candidates' experience. The term "experience in supervising

students or doctoral students" means being a supervisor of bachelor's or master's theses or being a supervisor or co-supervisor of a doctoral dissertation.

4. Foreign Scientific Partner (FSP)

4.1. How many FSPs are required in the Project?

Under Measure 2.2. First TEAM FENG, the Project must be implemented in cooperation with at least one Foreign Scientific Partner.

4.2. What are the requirements for a FSP?

An FSP is a person who holds at least a doctoral degree and works for a foreign entity (public or private) that meets the definition of a research organization. The FSP must bring added value to the Project.

4.3. Is it possible to involve a National Scientific Partner in the Project?

Cooperation with scientific partners from Poland is possible within the Project, but it is not mandatory. It is mandatory to establish cooperation with at least one Foreign Scientific Partner.

4.4. Is it necessary to use the letter of intent template from the FSP?

Yes, it is mandatory.

4.5. Is a cooperation agreement with the FSP required?

An active cooperation agreement is only required if the Beneficiary intends to bear the costs within the Project related to the conduct of scientific research by Project staff or scholarship holders at a Foreign Scientific Partner.

4.6. Can a letter of intent from the Foreign Scientific Partner prepared and signed in the previous Call be used in the next Call?

This is not possible. The date of signing the letter of intent from the Foreign Scientific Partner should not be earlier than the date of the Call announcement - in Call 1/2026 it is January 8, 2026.

4.7. Can the FSP be employed in the Project?

No, a Foreign Scientific Partner cannot be employed in the Project.

4.8. Can members of the research team do an internship at the unit where the FSP works?

If the Project provides for the stay of Project staff or scholarship holders at the FSP, only the costs incurred by the Beneficiary for the purpose of conducting and establishing cooperation with the Foreign Scientific Partner, including the performance of research at the FSP, are eligible. *The catalog of eligible expenses in Measure 2.2 FENG* does not include internship costs.

4.9. Is it possible to use research equipment owned by the unit where the FSP works for a fee?

Yes, if this is in line with the provisions *of the Catalog of eligible expenses in Measure 2.2 FENG*, point 2.4.2 letter "j"), i.e., in the case of an active cooperation agreement between entities, only costs incurred by the Beneficiary for the purpose of conducting and establishing scientific cooperation of the Project with a foreign scientific partner indicated in letter a-i, k-m of the Catalog. This means that the Beneficiary may use the FSP's research equipment for the implementation of the Project by staff or scholarship holders and cover the costs of conducting this research if an active cooperation agreement has been signed.

4.10. Who can sign a letter of intent from FSP?

The letter of intent should be signed by the Foreign Scientific Partner, i.e., a natural person.

5. Domestic Economic Partner (DEP)

5.1. How many DEPs are required in the Project?

Throughout the entire duration of the Project, cooperation with at least one Domestic Economic Partner is mandatory.

5.2. What is meant by an "enterprise" that acts as a Domestic Economic Partner in the First TEAM FENG Project?

According to the definition in *the Regulations for Project Selection*, a Domestic Economic Partner (DEP) is an enterprise within the meaning of Article 1 of Annex I to Commission Regulation (EU) No. 651/2014 GBER.

5.3. Is there a template for a letter of intent from the DEP?

There is no template for a letter of intent from the DEP. According to the instructions for completing the application, the attached letter of intent from the Domestic Economic Partner should contain at least:

a) the exact name of the entity (enterprise) whose involvement in the Project is planned;
b) a declaration that the Domestic Economic Partner is familiar with and accepts the application and the terms and conditions of the Call for Proposals and the requirements for Action 2.2. First TEAM FENG;
c) a description of the partner's involvement in the implementation of the Project.

The letter should be signed by a person authorized to represent the company (according to the National Court Register) planning the cooperation, and a copy of it should be attached to the Application form.

5.4. Is it possible to attach a cooperation agreement with DEP to the Application instead of a letter of intent?

At the stage of submitting the Application for co-financing, only a letter of intent is required. An agreement with the company is required before signing the Co-financing Agreement.

5.5. Can a letter of intent from DEP prepared and signed in the previous Call be used in the next Call?

No, because the date of signing the letter of intent cannot be earlier than the date of the Call announcement - in the current Call No. 1/2026, it is January 8, 2026.

5.6. Can DEP be a subcontractor in the Project?

No, DEP cannot be a subcontractor in the Project. Furthermore, it cannot receive funds from the project or provide research services on commission.

5.7. Is it possible to employ DEP employees in the Project?

Neither DEP nor its employees can be financed by the Project.

5.8. Can members of the research team do an internship at DEP?

In the case of an active cooperation agreement between entities, only costs incurred by the Beneficiary for the purpose of conducting and establishing cooperation with the Domestic Economic Partner for the Project will be eligible. *The catalog of eligible expenses in Measure 2.2 FENG* does not include internship costs.

5.9. Is it possible to use research equipment owned by the Domestic Economic Partner indicated in the Project Application for a fee?

Paid use of research equipment would be a service that cannot be provided within the partnership. Only costs incurred by the Beneficiary for the purpose of conducting and establishing cooperation with the Domestic Economic Partner for the Project will be eligible.

5.10. What are the benefits for the DEP from cooperation within the First TEAM FENG Project?

The benefits of cooperation between the Beneficiary and the DEP are not listed in the Project Selection Rules or in the Grant Agreement, but they must be in the interests of both parties. The interests of the parties should be specified in the cooperation agreement. The agreement should provide, among other things, for the rules of access of the DEP to the results of the Project, the division of intellectual property in accordance with the contributions of the parties, etc.

6. Budget

6.1. What is the maximum amount of co-financing for a single First TEAM FENG Project?

The total amount of funding requested for the implementation of a First TEAM FENG Project may not exceed PLN 4,000,000 (in words: four million PLN).

6.2. How to calculate the indirect costs of the Project?

The indirect costs of the Project are covered by a flat rate of 15% of the costs of Project personnel employed under an employment contract or a civil law contract.

6.3. Do I have to justify indirect costs in detail?

No, according to *the Catalog of Eligible Expenditures in Measure 2.2. FENG*, indirect costs will be settled using a simplified method in the form of a flat rate, in accordance with the catalog specified in *the Guidelines on the Eligibility of Expenditures for 2021-2027*.

6.4. Is the purchase of scientific and research equipment mandatory under the Project?

The purchase of scientific and research equipment is not mandatory.

6.5. What is the maximum amount that can be allocated to scientific and research equipment (over PLN 10,000)?

A maximum of 25% of the eligible expenditure in the Project may be allocated to this category.

6.6. What are the rules for calculating remuneration for contractors in the Project?

The remuneration of R&D staff, including the remuneration of persons acting as Project Brokers for work carried out under the Project, should be planned in such a way as to ensure competitive remuneration on an international scale, taking into account the achievement of the Project's objectives. When calculating remuneration, objective, publicly available statistical data, reports, and analyses on the remuneration of researchers in the international environment may be used, including the FNP analysis available on the recruitment website for Measure 2.2 FENG First TEAM FENG.

6.7. Is it possible to remunerate Project staff in the form of a salary supplement?

Yes, this is possible. If a salary supplement is granted in connection with the implementation of the Project, it will be settled in proportion to the involvement in the Project. If it is planned to settle only the salary supplement to the Project remuneration, the basic remuneration will be financed from the Applicant's own funds, and the salary supplement from the Project. The salary supplement for Project staff for performing tasks in the Project must meet the conditions specified in the Guidelines on the eligibility of expenditure - subchapter 3.8, point 9).

Please note that the Principal Investigator of the Project must be employed/seconded to the Project for at least 0.5 FTE – therefore, the employment contract indicating that the person meets this condition will be subject to verification. If, in the case of the Principal Investigator in the Project, only the salary supplement will be settled, the basic salary corresponding to at least 0.5 FTE will be financed from the entity's own funds, and the salary supplement from the Project – and such provisions must be clearly indicated in the HR documentation.

7. Composition of the project team

7.1. What is the mandatory composition of the team?

In Ranking Criterion No. 1c of the second stage of the substantive evaluation, the assessment includes whether the team, apart from the Principal Investigator of the Project, includes at least one Young Scientist (i.e., a young doctor or doctoral student) and at least one student. The team conducting R&D work in the Project should consist of at least 3 people, including the Principal Investigator of the Project, within 6 months of the start of the Project.

7.2. Can the team members be named at the application stage?

The name of the Principal Investigator for the project must be specified. In addition, the names of persons in positions for which no competitive selection procedure is required may be specified.

7.3. Which persons must be employed in the Project through a competitive selection process?

The Beneficiary is required to conduct competitions in order to involve students and young scientists (i.e., doctoral students and young doctors) financed from the Project funds in the implementation of the Project. The conditions are specified in the Grant Agreement and *the*

Regulations for awarding scholarships constituting aid for Project scholarship holders under Measure 2.2. First TEAM FENG 2021-2027 of the Foundation for Polish Science.

7.4. How should the term "young scientist" be understood?

According to Article 360(2) of the Act of July 20, 2018 - Law on Higher Education and Science, a young scientist is a person conducting scientific activity who: 1) is a doctoral student or academic teacher - and does not hold a doctoral degree, or 1a) is preparing a doctoral dissertation on an external basis and does not hold a doctoral degree – if no more than 4 years have passed since the date of appointment of the supervisor or supervisors or the supervisor and assistant supervisor in accordance with Article 217, or 2) holds a doctoral degree, which was obtained no more than 7 years ago, and is employed by an entity referred to in Article 7(1). We advise against using the term "post doc" - it is insufficiently precise and is not used in the competition documentation.

7.5. Who, according to the recruitment documentation, is a student and a doctoral student?

According to the recruitment documentation, a student is a person who has the status of a first-cycle, second-cycle, or long-cycle Master's student or equivalent. Within the meaning of the competition documentation, a doctoral student is not a student, but a young scientist. At the same time, according to the competition documentation, a doctoral student is a person who is preparing a doctoral dissertation as part of doctoral education (at a doctoral school) and participating in a project under the supervision of a research team leader (the Principal Investigator of the project).

7.6. Can a candidate who does not have student status apply for a position in the Project?

Yes, you can apply for the competition before obtaining student status. However, a certificate of student status is required to sign the Agreement and qualify for a scholarship/remuneration.

7.7. Is student participation required in the Project?

Yes, the grant application must include at least one student in the team. As part of ranking criterion No. 1c of the second stage of the substantive evaluation, the evaluation assesses whether, in addition to the Principal Investigator, the team includes at least one young scientist and at least one student.

7.8. How should the term "scholarship holder" be understood?

According to the competition documentation, a scholarship holder is a student of first-cycle, second-cycle or uniform master's studies or equivalent, or a person who is preparing a doctoral dissertation as part of doctoral education (at a doctoral school), receiving a scholarship under the Project on the basis of *the Regulations for awarding scholarships constituting assistance for Project scholarship holders* in Measure 2.2. First TEAM FENG 2021-2027 of the Foundation for Polish Science, which is an appendix to the Grant Agreement.

7.9. Is the Project/technology/innovation Broker mandatory in the Project?

The employment of a Broker is not mandatory for the implementation of tasks under the First TEAM FENG Project.

8. Indicators and other EU requirements

8.1. Environmental indicators and what do they actually mean?

The Project Evaluation Committee checks whether the project complies with the principle of sustainable development referred to in Article 9(4) of Regulation (EU) 2021/1060 of the European Parliament and of the Council, i.e. whether the Project will be implemented in accordance with the relevant environmental protection regulations and the 6R principles. Two indicators should be selected, e.g., choose one R principle (e.g., Reduce) and select two appropriate indicators for it, or choose two R principles (e.g., Reduce and Reuse) and select one indicator for each principle. Other options are described in the Project Selection Criteria.

Please note that the indicators must relate to the Project being implemented (and not to the product or the Entity), must be consistent, measurable, correctly defined, objectively verifiable, and achievable. Please note that environmental indicators will be reported, monitored, and controlled at the Project site and during periodic settlements.

8.2. Will I get more points if I indicate more indicators?

No, a larger number of proposed indicators (both product and result) will not translate into a higher score. Indicators should be achievable, measurable, and documentable. The degree of achievement of the indicators is assessed during mid-term, final, and end-of-durability period evaluations.

8.3. How to determine the year of achieving the target value for result indicators?

The target year for outcome indicators is no later than the end of the project's lifetime, which is 5 years from the project completion date.

8.4. Does the number of patents or publications indicated as a result of the Project have an impact on the evaluation of the Project?

The proposed number of patents or publications must be adequate for the scientific objective of the Project and the strategy for commercializing the results. There is no indication that a higher or lower number will affect the evaluation results. It is recommended to focus on the objective and quality of publications rather than their number. In the case of patents, it should be considered whether this form of protection and publication of results is adequate for the adopted strategy for commercialization/use of results.

8.5. When should an increase in the "Publications within supported projects" result indicator be reported?

According to the definition of the indicator, we count publications that have been submitted and accepted for review as scientific publications. Publications may take the form of articles, book chapters, or books (including co-publications). We would like to remind you that the contribution of the supported project should be clearly marked, in accordance with the obligations described in Annex 4 to the Grant Agreement*, Extract from the Applicant and Beneficiary Handbook on Information and Promotion*, which can be found on the Foundation's website.

8.6. Who should be included in the development of the methodology for the indicator "Researchers working in supported research facilities"?

The indicator should only include those researchers who will use equipment purchased with Project funds or a research facility whose improvement will be financed by the Project. The indicator is measured in terms of annual full-time equivalents (FTE), calculated in accordance with the methodology set out in the OECD Frascati Manual 2015, over a period of 12 months from the date of purchase of the equipment specified in the application.

8.7. How is the indicator "Research organizations participating in joint research projects" measured?

Based on the definition, this indicator includes a research organization that is a party to the FENG agreement, i.e., a research organization covered by support (co-financing). In addition, the research project involves cooperation between at least one organization and another partner (company, other research organizations, etc.).

8.8. Is it mandatory to plan training for team members?

No, planning training as part of the Project is not mandatory.

8.9. Does the term "training..." refer to training organized by the Project team for people outside the Project?

No, training can only be planned for people involved in tasks directly related to the Project and should be confirmed by a certificate.

9. Work schedule

9.1. Can the stages of the Project overlap in terms of time?

Yes, the stages may overlap in time. An adequate research period should be assigned to each stage. The individual stages in the R&D work schedule for the Project should be clearly defined and form a logical whole. There are no restrictions on the number of stages listed.

9.2. How is a milestone understood?

A milestone is an important point in the Project used to measure its progress. It is a checkpoint indicating the completion of an activity or group of activities or the beginning of a new phase within the Project. Milestones make it possible to assess whether the work is going according to plan and achieving the desired goals. They facilitate the coordination of activities by providing insight into the progress of the Project and enabling the assessment of priorities. In addition, they support the monitoring of deadlines, the identification of important dates, and the detection of potential bottlenecks in the Project. The formulation of milestones should be transparent and allow for easy assessment of whether they have been achieved. The target values for a milestone should be defined in a measurable way – e.g., they can be specific numerical values. The achievement of subsequent milestones will be reported during interim settlements.

10. Submitting an application in the system

10.1. I cannot generate an application, what should I do?

It may happen that digital signatures from attachments make it difficult to generate a PDF. In this case, please upload a flattened PDF as an attachment in the tabs appropriate for the information in question, and the signed originals in tab 9, section 3/3.

10.2. Where can I attach the power of attorney document?

In tab 9, section 3/3, along with the closed, signed application, you can attach other necessary documents, e.g., a power of attorney.

10.3. Is it mandatory to attach a file in the Schemes, drawings, graphics, structural designs, tables, figures, etc. section?

No, attaching this attachment is not mandatory. We would also like to emphasize that this attachment is only intended to help understand the substantive part (e.g., novelty and/or originality) of the Application. Do not include project work schedules or employment diagrams here.

11. What happens next?

11.1. What will happen to my application after I submit it to the system?

The Project Evaluation Committee (PEC) begins its work the day after the deadline for submitting applications and works in accordance with *the Project Selection Rules*, applying *the Project Selection Criteria*. Applications are first evaluated in terms of their completeness and eligibility. During the formal evaluation, the Applicant may be asked to supplement or correct the Application in the scope indicated by the PEC. If the Application passes the formal evaluation, it is qualified for the first stage of substantive evaluation. At this stage, the ranking criteria are evaluated, and after the evaluation, the Applicant is not able to correct/supplement the Application. Only Projects that have exceeded the required threshold score proceed to the second stage of substantive evaluation. During the second stage of substantive evaluation, we evaluate the mandatory and ranking criteria and then send a letter requesting the Applicant to supplement or correct the Application within the scope indicated by the PEC. It is not possible to make corrections in places other than those indicated by the PEC. The final stage of the evaluation is an interview with the Principal Investigator of the project. It takes place in person at the headquarters of the Foundation for Polish Science. The results of the Call for Proposals are announced on the Foundation's website, and decisions are sent to Applicants (ePUAP or traditional mail).

11.2. The decision was positive! What should I do now?

After receiving a positive decision, you will receive a message from us containing a list of documents required to sign *the Grant Agreement*, in accordance with Section IX *of the Regulations for Project Selection*. The applicant shall submit the documents (signed by a person authorized to represent the applicant) within 14 days of the date of electronic notification of their approval by the IP. Important: in order to sign the Grant Agreement, a signed agreement with at least one Domestic Economic Partner is required.

11.3. The decision was negative... What else can I do?

Within 14 days of receiving notification of the negative assessment of the application, the applicant may lodge an appeal for the application to be re-examined in terms of its compliance with the project selection criteria (Article 64(1) of the Act of April 28, 2022 on the rules for the implementation of tasks financed from European funds in the 2021-2027 financial perspective).

The protest shall be submitted to the Intermediate Body in writing or electronically and shall require a handwritten signature or a qualified electronic signature, a trusted signature or a personal signature, as appropriate.

11.4. Does signing the Grant Agreement mean that the project has started?

Not necessarily, as you specified the project implementation period in the Grant Application.