

**Announcement of the Director of the Nicolaus Copernicus Research Center
of July 21, 2023
about the competition for financing the Nicolaus Copernicus Grants**

Based upon art. 32 of the Act of April 28, 2022 on the Copernicus Academy (Journal of Laws, item 1459) in connection with § 1 sec. 1 of the Regulations for awarding Copernicus Scholarships and Grants, which constitutes an Annex to the order of the Secretary General of the Copernicus Academy of June 21, 2023, a competition for financing the Nicolaus Copernicus Grants is announced and detailed conditions for its conduct and detailed criteria for the evaluation of applications are established.

I. Subject of the program

1. Nicolaus Copernicus grants are awarded to international scientific consortia consisting of scientists of recognized international standing, carrying out important research projects.
2. Nicolaus Copernicus grants are intended in particular for scientists with an internationally recognized reputation who carry out research projects devoted to the most important research issues in the field of: astronomy, economy, law, medicine, philosophy and theology, taking into account issues significantly related to the needs of Poland and Central and Eastern Europe.
3. The Nicolaus Copernicus grants are intended, in particular, to support the Applicants and their research teams in financing the necessary activities, in particular in the scope of preparing applications for co-financing of international research projects or conducting scientific research in cooperation with an international partner.
4. Nicolaus Copernicus grants may also be awarded to scientists who do not have Polish citizenship.
5. The maximum co-financing amount of the Nicolaus Copernicus Grant is PLN 1,500,000.
6. The implementation period of the Nicolaus Copernicus Grant is no longer than 36 months.

II. Entities entitled to participate

7. The basis for applying for support under the Nicolaus Copernicus Grant is the submission of an application by the Applicant where the scientist or research team referred to in point I (Programme's subject) perform research work.
8. Applicants may be the following entities:
 - a. universities,
 - b. scientific institutes,
 - c. other entities conducting mainly scientific activity in an independent and continuous manner.
9. In order to carry out the research project, the entities listed in point 8 form a consortium of two or more entities. The consortium includes at least one entity referred to in point 8 and at least one entity that is a foreign university, scientific or research institute. A consortium may not be formed by an entity that cannot be an Applicant.

III. Conditions of participation

10. The condition for participation in the program is the presentation of a research project that:
 - a. does not cover activities financed from other funds from the state budget,
 - b. whose indirect costs do not exceed 20% of the amount of funds requested,
 - c. implements the objectives set out in point I (Subject of the program),
 - d. constitutes a closed and coherent whole,
 - e. indicates concrete and verifiable results,
 - f. has substantive justification for its implementation,

g. include in the budget only the costs necessary for the implementation of project activities.

11. Each Applicant, also as a consortium member, may apply for the Nicolaus Copernicus Grant not more than once in a given calendar year.

12. The applicant may participate in no more than three competitions under this procedure.

IV. Recruitment mode

13. The application on the form specified in Appendix No. 1 to this notice, together with the required additional documents indicated in Appendix No. 2 to this notice, should be submitted in writing to the following address: AKADEMIA KOPERNIKANSKA, ul. Nowogrodzka 47a, 00-695 Warsaw.

14. The call for applications lasts from the date of announcement until August 24, 2023 (6:00 p.m.).

15. The application is signed by the person/persons authorized to represent the Applicant.

16. The application is accompanied by:

a. a statement that the funds granted will not constitute state aid for the applicant in accordance with art. 107 and Art. 108 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

b. a declaration that the project does not include activities financed from other funds from the state budget,

c. the following documents:

- a certified true copy of the agreement, statute or other document provided for by law regarding the establishment, activity and organization of the Applicant,
- declaration of no arrears with payments due to budgetary liabilities,
- declaration of no arrears in the payment of social security and health insurance contributions,
- a statement that the Applicant is an entity conducting mainly scientific activity in an independent and continuous manner (concerning entities from point 8.3)
- statement of the entities forming the consortium, indicating the project leader signing the contract with the Research Center on behalf of the consortium.

17. The person signing the application submits a declaration of compliance of the information contained in the application with the factual and legal status, and also consents to the sending of correspondence by means of electronic communication within the meaning of Art. 2 point 5 of the Act of 18 July 2002 on the provision of electronic services.

18. If the application is signed by a person authorized by the Applicant's representative, an appropriate authorization shall be submitted with the application.

19. An application received after the deadline shall not be considered and the Applicant shall be informed about it.

V. Formal evaluation of the application

20. The data contained in the application and annexes to the application are subject to formal assessment.

21. The formal assessment of the application is made by the Director of the Nicolaus Copernicus Research Centre.

22. Formal evaluation of the application includes checking the completeness of the application and verifying whether the application meets the requirements set out in the competition announcement.

23. In the case of finding formal deficiencies in the application, the Director of the Nicolaus Copernicus Research Center sets a deadline, not shorter than 7 days, for the Applicant to complete it, under pain of leaving the application without consideration.

24. The application may be withdrawn at any stage of the competition procedure.

25. Applications that have received a positive formal evaluation are submitted for substantive evaluation.

VI. Substantive evaluation of applications

26. The data contained in the application and in the appendices to the application are subject to substantive assessment. The substantive assessment is carried out by a team of experts appointed by the Director of the Nicolaus Copernicus Research Center in consultation with the chairmen of the Chambers of the Academy.
27. The team of experts includes members of the Academy appointed by the chairpersons of the Chambers of the Academy.
28. Other persons with knowledge and experience necessary to evaluate applications submitted under competitions may also participate in the work of the team of experts. These people are part of expert teams.
29. The number of persons referred to in par. 3 may not be greater than the number of members of the Academy in the team of experts.
30. The team of experts may seek the opinion of other persons from outside their group who have the knowledge and experience necessary to evaluate the applications submitted under a given competition.
31. The substantive evaluation consists in presenting individual opinions by members of the expert team and determining the overall evaluation of the application, using a point scale.
32. The score scale for the substantive evaluation of the application is from 0 to 100, where 100 means the highest score.
33. The team of experts makes decisions by way of resolutions adopted by a simple majority of votes. If it is impossible to adopt a resolution for any reason, the final decision is made by the coordinator of the expert teams after consultation with the chairman of the expert team.
34. The substantive evaluation ends with the establishment of a ranking list with the indication of applications recommended for funding and editing the justifications for the final evaluations.
35. The team of experts has the right to deem it expedient and to recommend granting funds to finance the research project in the amount corresponding to all or part of the amount applied for.
36. In the case of a proposal to allocate an amount lower than requested, the team of experts shall indicate in the budget the items covered by the reduction together with the justification.
37. The team leader submits to the Director of the Nicolaus Copernicus Research Center a ranking list with the proposals recommended for funding, together with written justifications.
38. If the application is approved, the Director of the Nicolaus Copernicus Research Center, with the consent of the Secretary General of the Copernicus Academy, determines the amount of funding.
39. Information on the amount of funds granted or refusal to grant them is provided to the Applicant together with the draft agreement for financing the Nicolaus Copernicus Grants.
40. Within 10 days from the date of delivery of the information referred to in point 38, the Applicant submits 2 copies of the agreement for financing the Nicolaus Copernicus Grants signed by authorized persons.
41. Failure to comply with the above the deadline shall be deemed to be the Applicant's resignation from concluding the contract and from the funds granted.
42. Decisions in the proceedings regarding the funding of the Nicolaus Copernicus Grants are made by the Director of the Nicolaus Copernicus Research Centre, by way of an administrative decision, within 4 months from the date on which the deadline for submitting applications expired.
43. If formal defects of the application are found at the stage of its substantive evaluation, the team of experts rejects the application.

VII. Detailed criteria for substantive evaluation

44. The team of experts evaluates the applications taking into account the following criteria:

- a. international position of scientists included in the consortium referred to in point 1 (max. 20 points),
- b. the validity of the research project referred to in point 1 (max. 20 points),
- c. consistency of the research project with the indicated priorities set out in § 18-19 of the Regulations for awarding Copernican Scholarships and Grants of Nicolaus Copernicus, which is an Annex to the order of the Secretary General of the Copernicus Academy of June 21, 2023 (max. 30 points),
- d. measurable and expected results of the research project, including publications or other forms of dissemination of the results of the research project (max. 10 points),
- e. the applicant's physical resources and their availability and usefulness for achieving the objectives of the research project (max. 10 points),
- f. correct preparation of the budget and reasonableness of costs necessary for the implementation of the research project (max. 10 points).

VIII. Appeal against the decision of the Director of the Nicolaus Copernicus Research Center

45. In the event of a violation of the competition procedure or other formal violations, the Applicant may appeal to the Secretary General of the Copernicus Academy within 14 days from the date of delivery of the decision of the Director of the Nicolaus Copernicus Research Centre. The appeal is submitted through the Director of the Nicolaus Copernicus Research Center.

46. The Secretary General of the Copernicus Academy considers the appeal within one month from the date of its submission. Provisions of the Act of 14 June 1960 – Code of Administrative Procedure, with the exception of art. 13, art. 14, art. 31, art. 56, art. 61 § 4, art. 75-103, art. 114-122 and art. 123.

47. If the Applicant submits an appeal pursuant to Art. 34 sec. 2 of the Act on the Copernicus Academy, the provisions of the Regulations for awarding Copernicus Scholarships and Grants of Nicolaus Copernicus, attached to the order of the Secretary General of the Copernicus Academy of June 21, 2023, shall apply accordingly, however, the re-evaluation of the application should be completed within 2 months from the date when the decision of the Secretary General of the Copernicus Academy to revoke the decision of the Director of the Nicolaus Copernicus Research Center has become final.

48. An application covering research tasks overlapping with the tasks indicated in the application submitted earlier, against which appeal proceedings have been initiated, may be submitted only when the decision on its financing has become final.

IX. Principles of financing the Nicolaus Copernicus Grants

49. On behalf of the Academy, the Director of the Nicolaus Copernicus Research Center concludes agreements for financing the Nicolaus Copernicus Grants, specifying in particular:

- a. thematic scope, deadline and conditions for their implementation,
- b. the amount of funds granted and the method of their transfer,
- c. measurable and expected effects of the implementation of the subject of the agreement,
- d. the manner and mode of supervision by the Center over the implementation of the subject of the agreement,
- e. the method and scope of the final substantive assessment,
- f. method of settlement of the funds granted,
- g. issues regarding proprietary copyrights or related rights resulting from the implementation of the subject of the contract,
- h. issues related to the publication or the possibility of disseminating the effect of the implementation of the subject of the contract,

i. terms of termination.

50. Direct costs and indirect costs of project implementation may be financed under the Nicolaus Copernicus Grants, with the direct costs meeting the following conditions jointly:

- a. were incurred within the deadlines specified in the agreement for financing the Nicolaus Copernicus Grants,
- b. they are necessary for the implementation of the project and the achievement of its results,
- c. are related to the activities specified in the application,
- d. are identifiable and verifiable, in particular they are registered in the Applicant's accounting records and specified in accordance with the accounting principles.

51. The subject of support under the Nicolaus Copernicus Grants are in particular the necessary activities related to:

- a. preparation of an application for funding an international research project, e.g.:
 - costs of travel and allowances (in particular meetings of consortium participants, etc.),
 - costs of research/expert opinions necessary to prepare the application,
 - costs of translations and language corrections,
 - other justified costs of preparing applications for co-financing.
- b. carrying out scientific research in cooperation with an international partner, e.g.:
 - travel and allowance costs,
 - research costs,
 - publication costs,
 - other reasonable costs related to conducting research as part of an international consortium.

52. The subject of support cannot be own contribution to the project, as well as other costs not directly related to the preparation of the application or conducting research.

53. Nicolaus Copernicus grants cannot finance research projects that are financed from other budgetary resources.

54. The direct costs of project implementation are not:

- a. costs of salaries of administrative staff, including HR, legal and accounting services for the project,
- b. costs related to meetings of the contractor team, organizational meetings, meetings (this does not violate point 50 letter a of the announcement regarding meetings within the consortium)
- c. costs of renovation and adaptation of rooms,
- d. surface exploitation costs, property taxes, etc.,
- e. fees for utilities (including electricity, water, gas), telecommunications, postal and courier services,
- f. costs of maintaining the cleanliness of the premises and supervision,
- g. property insurance costs,
- h. handling, administrative and bank fees,
- i. costs of purchase of fixed assets over PLN 50,000,
- j. tax on goods and services (VAT), if it can be recovered under the provisions of the Act of 11 March 2004 on tax on goods and services,
- k. interest, fines, penalties, etc.

Appendix 1
to the announcement of the Director of the Nicolaus Copernicus Research Center of July 21, 2023.
about the competition for financing the Nicolaus Copernicus Grants.

Appendix No. 2
to the announcement of the Director of the Nicolaus Copernicus Research Center of July 21, 2023.
about the competition for financing the Nicolaus Copernicus Grants.