

Call for Dioscuri Centres of Scientific Excellence in Poland



Preamble

Max-Planck-Gesellschaft (MPG) and National Science Centre Poland (NCN) open the first call for Dioscuri Centres of Scientific Excellence (DC) in Poland.

Dioscuri is a programme devised by MPG to support the development of lighthouses of scientific excellence in Central and Eastern Europe by promoting outstanding researchers who want to conduct their research in this region. Following a bottom-up and sustainable approach, it strives to establish future-oriented research fields and international standards of scientific quality. Dioscuri serves to strengthen the European Research Area as a whole and to expand the foundations for long-term economic and social prosperity in Europe.

The joint calls by MPG and NCN are designed to establish Centres of Scientific Excellence at Polish Host Institutions. The work of the Centres will be accompanied by Partners from German universities or research institutions in order to strengthen scientific exchange between Poland and Germany. These Partners will promote the Centres' structural development and integration in scientific networks. Each DC may decide to expand this partnership tool and turn it into an Advisory Board.

DCs are expected to conduct top-class internationally competitive and innovative research. Each of them will be funded with up to € 300 000 p.a., initially for five years. This amount will be part of a larger package involving substantial additional funds, infrastructure, scientific equipment, and a long-term perspective for the principal investigators at the respective Host Institutions (to be arranged individually between selected candidates and their Host Institutions).

In the first call up to a total of 3 centres will be established in the fields of Natural Sciences and Technology, Life Sciences, and Humanities and Social Sciences.

Each DC established through this call will be monitored and evaluated by the Dioscuri Scientific Committee, and will be awarded the title of

Dioscuri Centre of Scientific Excellence.

A programme initiated by the Max Planck Society, jointly managed with the National Science Centre in Poland, and mutually funded by the Polish Ministry of Science and Higher Education (MNiSW) and the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF)





1. Dioscuri Centres (DCs) will be established at Polish Scientific Institutions in all Scientific Disciplines including especially

Natural Sciences and Technology

- Mathematics
- Fundamental constituents of matter
- Condensed matter physics
- Physical and analytical chemical sciences
- Materials and synthesis
- Computer science and informatics
- Systems and communication engineering
- Products and processes engineering
- Astronomy and space research
- Earth sciences

Life Sciences

- Molecular biology, structural biology, biotechnology
- Genetics, genomics
- Cellular and developmental biology
- Biology of tissues, organs and organisms
- Human and animal non-infectious diseases
- Human and animal immunology and infection
- Diagnostic tools, therapies and public health
- Evolutionary and environmental biology
- Applied life sciences and biotechnology

Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences

- Fundamental questions of human existence and the nature of reality
- Culture
- The study of the human past
- Individuals, institutions, markets
- Norms and governance
- Human nature and human society

2. Applicant:

The call is directed at internationally competitive and scientifically outstanding scientists who want to conduct their innovative research at a Polish Host Institution and:

- a) who completed their PhD no longer than 15 years¹ prior to the application deadline.
- b) who have not been employed at the Host Institution on a contract of employment during the last two years prior to the application deadline.

¹ Female applicants can add 18 months for each child, male applicants can add the number of months of parental leave if applicable.

- c) whose work will be accompanied by a Partner employed by a German university or research institution.

3. Host Institution

Only Polish research organisations and university research centres established within a single university structure are eligible² as Host Institutions.

The Host Institution must declare to:

- a) sign a contract of full-time employment with the PI for the entire funding period;
- b) sign contracts with DC personnel: the form of employment is to be agreed upon by all parties (contract of employment, contract of specific task, contract of mandate; stipend);
- c) provide from its own budget additional funding for the DC in the amount of at least € 25 000 on average per year for the entire funding period;
- d) provide the DC with optimal conditions for carrying out its research, including office/laboratory space and research equipment necessary for the completion of the research;
- e) provide administrative and financial services and support to the DC, including support related to the successful applicant's relocation (if applicable) and stay in Poland;
- f) provide at its own expense a full-time English-speaking administrative employee exclusively for the DC for the entire funding period;
- g) offer a long-term perspective to the principal investigator beyond the Dioscuri funding period. This includes a commitment to create a permanent position at the end of the funding period for which the principal investigator will be eligible to apply.

4. Proposal submission

The data to be provided in the proposal is specified in the Application Form.

Complete proposals in English must be submitted by 12 February 2018, both electronically and as one print copy to

Max-Planck-Gesellschaft
Attention Dr Manuel Tröster
Hofgartenstraße 8
D – 80539 München
e-mail dioscuri@gv.mpg.de

5. Proposal evaluation

- a. Proposals are made up of a short proposal and a full proposal and are subject to a formal eligibility check and peer review.
- b. The eligibility check is carried out by MPG and NCN.
- c. The Scientific Committee will select up to 15 applications based on short proposals.
- d. These selected applications will be subject to scientific review based on full proposals.

² As specified in Article 2, section 9: a-f and section 16a, Polish Journal of Laws 2010, No. 96 item 615 as amended.

- e. The Scientific Committee will select up to 6 applicants for final interviews.
 - f. All decisions of the scientific review will be based solely on the scientific merit of the candidates and the quality of their research projects.
6. Financing³
- a. The funding period for each DC comprises five years beginning from the date of the establishment of the respective DC.
 - b. The budget of each DC transferred to the respective Host Institution will be up to € 300 000 per year.
 - c. Upon positive mid-term evaluation of a DC during its fourth year and subject to the availability of funding, the respective DC may be extended for another five years.
 - d. Eligible costs from the DC budget (including the additional budget provided by the Host Institution as specified in 3c):
 - i. Salary of the PI: € 100 000 per year
 - ii. Salaries of the DC research team and stipends (stipends according to NCN regulations)
 - iii. Costs related to the research conducted at the DC (consumables, travel, publications, outreach activities etc.)
 - iv. Costs of joint activities with the Partner from Germany
 - e. The DC budget (including the additional budget provided by the Host Institution as specified in 3c) cannot be used for expenses relating to:
 - i. Infrastructure
 - ii. Scientific equipment⁴
 - iii. Administration and overheads⁵

Such costs must be provided for fully by the Host Institution.

The successful Applicant will be eligible to apply for additional funding from NCN and other Polish and foreign sources.

³ Public Aid is not allowed in this call.

⁴ Research equipment understood (in accordance with the definition by the Central Statistical Office of Poland, GUS) as sets of testing, measurement and laboratory apparatuses of limited application and high technical parameters (usually several orders of magnitude higher than typical apparatus used for production or utilisation purposes), which constitutes the tangible assets of the host institution, according to the accounting policies adopted by it. Small devices that cost up to € 2 500 per item may be paid from the DC budget (up to a total of € 10 000 p.a.).

⁵ Salaries of the administrative and financial staff (performing services related to personnel, accounting, legal issues, including the outsourcing of accounting to an accountancy office), costs of renovation of facilities, costs of adapting/upgrading facilities, so that they can meet the needs of the research tasks, fees and rent for the use of facilities, property taxes, etc., utilities (cost of electricity, heating, heating gas, water, as well as other transmission fees, sewage, etc.), costs of cleaning, janitorial and security services to facilities, cost of non-life insurance, handling and administrative fees, cost of banking services, including: opening a separate account for the grant, bank fees, costs of external audits.