

“BEETHOVEN LIFE 1”: Polish-German Funding Initiative

Call for proposals 2018-2019

1. Introduction

In order to strengthen international academic co-operation, wishing to fund high quality scientific research within their own countries, and conscious that some of the best research can be delivered by working with the best researchers internationally, NCN and DFG are announcing the third call for proposals within the joint funding scheme “Beethoven”. The initiative, which was launched in 2014, aims to provide funding for integrated Polish-German research projects of outstanding scientific quality. In light of the success of the “Beethoven”’s first round in the Humanities and Social Sciences, and “Beethoven”’s second round in 2016 in the Humanities, Social Sciences, Chemistry, Mathematics, Physics (including Astronomy) and Materials Science, the NCN and DFG now **extend the funding initiative to cover more disciplines inviting proposals in the Life Sciences**. The new initiative “Beethoven LIFE 1” is the first round in the joint funding scheme “Beethoven” covering Life Sciences.

The joint projects must be collaborative and conducted jointly by the Polish and German teams. Projects must have, therefore, well-defined joint working programmes, demonstrating clearly the added value of international collaboration. It is expected that each partner contributes substantially to the common project; this includes taking organisational responsibilities. The division of responsibilities should also be reflected in the amount of funds requested by each partner. Only proposals involving [basic research](#)¹ (knowledge-oriented research) may be submitted.

The partner agencies have agreed on a lead agency procedure. DFG will act as the lead agency in Beethoven LIFE 1, i.e. it will conduct the review and selection process according to the same rules as in the Research Grants Programme (Sachbeihilfe) of the DFG. On the basis of this review process, the final funding decisions will be made by NCN and DFG according to the funding rules of each individual agency.

¹ Basic research (knowledge oriented research) is defined as experimental or theoretical endeavours undertaken to gain new knowledge of the foundations of phenomena and observable facts, without any direct commercial use.

Parallel to the Beethoven LIFE 1, a call for joint Polish-German proposals in the Humanities, Social Sciences, Chemistry, Mathematics, Physics (including Astronomy) and Materials Science entitled “Beethoven CLASSIC 3” is announced (for more information please refer to [NCN](#) and [DFG](#) websites). For transdisciplinary projects, the applicants need to decide which call matches their proposal best. As a rule the proposals submitted to “Beethoven LIFE 1” cannot be shifted to “Beethoven CLASSIC 3” and vice versa. Applicants who are uncertain of whether their proposal would be eligible should contact the relevant agency for clarification.

2. Disciplines covered by “Beethoven LIFE 1”

Researchers are invited to submit proposals in the following disciplines:

- Life Sciences

DFG: Proposals are accepted in the subjects 201-207 (please refer to [DFG's subject classification](#)). Applicants who wish to pursue a project which has a clear focus in the Life Sciences but falls in a different section of DFG's subject classification are advised to contact DFG well before the deadline.

NCN: Proposals are accepted in the subjects covered by the panels NZ1-NZ9 (please refer to [NCN's panel list](#)).

3. Eligibility

- All projects must focus on **substantive basic research and feature an integrated work programme**. Scientific infrastructure or networking activities can only be funded within projects with a substantive research focus. Purchase of the infrastructure and research equipment cannot be the main aim of the project. As stand-alone projects, infrastructure or networking projects are not eligible for funding and will be rejected.
- **Joint proposals, including all budget items must conform to the respective national rules** relevant for each applicant. Applicants must note that NCN and DFG retain the right to reject proposals which fail to comply with the requirements set out in the guidelines published by both agencies. If a proposal is deemed ineligible by one national agency, the joint project will also be rejected by the other agency. **No changes will be accepted after the deadline for submission.**
- Grants that are considered state aid will not be offered.

- If an **application has been submitted to any other call** or funding scheme of NCN, DFG or any other funding agency, this must be clearly stated in the proposal. Please also check the respective national agency's rules regarding submission of a project to more than one scheme.
- Joint proposals (consisting of Project Description and CVs of the Principal Investigators and Co-Investigators together with publication lists) must be **written in English**.
- Joint Polish-German research projects may be funded **for a period of either 24 or 36 months**.

4. Applicants

Each joint research project must involve a Polish and a German research team. Each Polish team must be led by one Principal Investigator (PI).

- The **DFG's eligibility rules** can be found in the 'Guidelines Research Grants Programme' (DFG form 50.01):

http://www.dfg.de/formulare/50_01/50_01_en.pdf

Cooperation with non-university research institutes: In the "Beethoven LIFE 1" funding scheme, research cooperation with the industrial sector is ruled out. German researchers from non-university research institutions who have to fulfil their duty to cooperate (Kooperationspflicht) may only submit proposals in cooperation with a partner from a German university. Your duty to cooperate is not considered fulfilled if you only cooperate with a Polish university partner. Please see the 'Guidelines on the Duty to Cooperate' (DFG form 55.01):

http://www.dfg.de/formulare/55_01/55_01_en.pdf

- The NCN's eligibility rules can be found in the the resolution No 81/2018 of Council of NCN of 06/09/2018. Principles of granting financial resources for the completion of tasks funded by the NCN in Beethoven LIFE 1 call is set out in the resolution no 80/2018 of Council of NCN of 06/09/2018.

The Polish PI must have at least a PhD degree when submitting a proposal.

Eligible Host Institutions in Poland: academic or research organisations, research consortia, research networks and organisational units within institutions of higher education that do not constitute their basic administrative units, research centres of the Polish Academy of Sciences, academic research centres shared by higher education

institutions, scientific libraries, other legal entities established in the territory of the Republic of Poland.

5. Budget and eligible costs

General requirements:

- All costs must be eligible according to the national eligibility requirements.
- The EUR budgets of the German and Polish teams, together with a detailed justification of **all** requested costs, must be included in the Project Description.
- Please note that since the Polish part of the project budget cannot be negotiated at any point after the submission of the proposal, an oversized budget may lead to the proposal's rejection.

Country specific requirements – Poland:

- Additionally, Polish applicants must provide the PLN budget in the ZSUN/OSF system.
- Expenses and the EUR costs of the project implemented by the Polish applicants provided in the Project Description must equal the budget provided in the breakdown of project's costs in the ZSUN/OSF. Severe discrepancies between the EUR budgets in Project Description and PLN budgets in ZSUN/OSF may lead to the rejection of the joint proposal.
- The EUR costs in the Project Description must be calculated based on the EUR exchange rate as in the Annex no. 2 to the resolution No 81/2018 of Council of NCN of 06/09/2018 (namely: 1 EUR = 4,3218 PLN).
- The PLN costs in the ZSUN/OSF must be rounded down to total values and EUR costs in the Project Description must be rounded down to two decimal places.
- The budget for the Polish part of the project must be at least 250,000 PLN; there is no maximum limit for the Polish part of the project.

6. Submission of proposals

Please use the Proposal Preparation Instructions – Project Proposals as a basis (DFG form 54.01):

http://www.dfg.de/formulare/54_01/54_01_en.pdf

The template for the Project Description can be found here:

[www.dfg.de/download/pdf/foerderung/internationales/partner/polen/
dfg_ncn_2018_beethoven_life_1_antragstemplate.rtf](http://www.dfg.de/download/pdf/foerderung/internationales/partner/polen/dfg_ncn_2018_beethoven_life_1_antragstemplate.rtf)

All documents must be written in English. Applicants are obliged to ensure that the joint proposal contains sufficient information for evaluation.

Please follow the ‘Guidelines for publication list’ (DFG form 1.91) for the preparation of publication list in the Project Description and the CVs:

http://www.dfg.de/formulare/1_91/1_91_en.pdf

The joint proposals (consisting of Project Description, the CVs together with publication lists and supplementary documents as needed) must be submitted online to both agencies’ respective submission systems, together with all necessary documents conforming to the formal requirements of the respective funding organisation set out in the call documentation.

Joint proposals submitted to both agencies must be **identical**; a project may be rejected if they differ.

The deadline for online submission in both submission systems is 17 December 2018, 23:59 CET. Proposals received after the deadline will not be eligible.

For German applicants:

- **DFG’s submission system ELAN can be found at <http://elan.dfg.de>.** Please select the appropriate call in the ELAN system, depending on the subject of your proposal:
 - “NCN-DFG 2019 Life Sciences”: proposals in Life Sciences
- **German applicants** are responsible for ensuring that they have an active ELAN account before the submission deadline. Please note that it takes up to five working days to set up an ELAN account.
- Please enter all **German project partners** who request funding from the DFG as ‘**Applicants**’.
- All **Polish project partners** who request funding from NCN have to be entered as ‘**Other Participating Individuals (cooperation partner)**’ or ‘**Participating Institutions**’.

- For each module, please only enter the funds requested from the DFG.

For Polish applicants:

- **NCN's submission system ZSUN/OSF can be found at <https://osf.opi.org.pl>**
- Information required in the proposal and the attachments to the application are set out in the Annex no. 2 to the Resolution No. 81/2018 of the Council of the NCN of 06/09/2018.
- Data included in the ZSUN/OSF system should be consistent with data included in the joint proposal.

7. Evaluation procedure

- 1) The applicants' and projects' eligibility will be checked by both NCN and DFG for the Polish and German sides, respectively. The merit-based evaluation is open only to proposals approved as eligible by both agencies. The review and selection process is conducted according to the same rules as in the Research Grants Programme (Sachbeihilfe) of the DFG.
- 2) As a general rule, in the first review stage, each proposal will be assessed by at least two external referees.
- 3) In the second review stage, each proposal will be evaluated by the DFG Review Boards (Fachkollegien) according to the subject area.
- 4) The funding recommendations of the DFG Review Boards will be subject to independent approval according to the national rules for funding decisions of both funding agencies.

8. Evaluation criteria

All project proposals will be assessed according to the same rules that apply for the Research Grants Programme (Sachbeihilfe) of the DFG (DFG form 10.20):

http://www.dfg.de/formulare/10_20/10_20_en.pdf

In addition, the added value of the bilateral cooperation will be a criterion of the assessment.

1) Quality of the Project/Qualification of the Applicant

- Originality
- Expected advancement of knowledge (also in relation to the costs)
- Scientific significance (in its own field and/or across different fields)
- Soundness of the preliminary work, quality of publications
- Broader impact (in terms of science policy, social policy, commerce/technology)
- Previous international cooperation
- Added value of bilateral cooperation

2) Working Environment/Scientific Environment

- Staff, institutional, room and instrument requirements and resources

3) Objectives and Work Programme

- Clear working hypotheses
- Reasonable limitation of the topic
- Appropriateness of the methods
- Feasibility, particularly with respect to the proposed timeframe

9. Tentative Timeline

14 September 2018	Launch of the call for proposals
17 December 2018	Submission deadline
December 2018-January 2019	Eligibility check
February-July 2019	Peer-review
Beginning of October 2019	Announcement of the results
From January 2020 on	Start of joint research projects

10. Call documents

1) *Call Text (this document)*

2) *Project Description Template*

For Polish applicants only: call documentation for Polish applicants available [here](#)

For German applicants only: call documentation for German applicants available [here](#)

- [Beethoven LIFE 1 Call Text](#) (this document)

- [Beethoven LIFE 1 Project Description Template](#)

11. Contact

<p>POLAND, NCN:</p> <p>Life Sciences:</p> <p>Dr Anna Wiktor Email: anna.wiktor@ncn.gov.pl tel.: +48 12 341 9166</p> <p>General inquiries:</p> <p>Dr Magdalena Godowska Email: magdalena.godowska@ncn.gov.pl tel.: +48 12 341 9016</p> <p>Dr Aneta Pazik Email: aneta.pazik@ncn.gov.pl tel. : +48 12 341 9017</p>	<p>GERMANY, DFG:</p> <p>Life Sciences</p> <p>Dr. Katharina Hartmann Email: k.hartmann@dfg.de tel: +49 228 885-2342</p> <p>Administrative inquiries: Jennifer Seemann Email: jennifer.seemann@dfg.de Tel. +49 228 885-2715</p> <p>For further information on cooperation with Poland:</p> <p>Dr. Annina Lottermann International Affairs Email: annina.lottermann@dfg.de phone: +49 228 885-2802</p>
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