

**Focus area of the Swiss – Polish Cooperation Programme:
Human and Social Development**

Focus area no. 8. Research and Development; Polish – Swiss Research Programme

Objective:

To contribute to the knowledge based economy through the enhancement of the knowledge base and in particular through research, know-how and technology transfer.

An Executing Agency (operator) shall implement a programme in this focus area.

Obligatory programme value:

The overall Programme amounts to approximately CHF 21.2 million (calculated with the assumption of up to CHF 18 million allocation and 15% of co-financing on the Polish side), out of which around CHF 19.1 Mio shall be available for the joint research projects and institutional partnerships.

Executing Agency (operator):

The Information Processing Centre (IPC)

Final beneficiaries:

- public and non-public universities,
- research and development entities,
- scientific centres of the Polish Academy of Sciences,
- non-governmental research organisations conducting scientific activity,
- other entities running activities in the area of research and development.

Please note that if an applying entity runs above all an economic activity, or if the proposed research project is connected with an economic activity, aid can only be granted if in conformity with the European Commission (EC) Regulation no 800/2008 of 6 August 2008, declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the common market in application of Articles 87 and 88 of the Treaty (General block exemption Regulation)¹.

Description of eligible programme:

The Information Processing Centre will implement a programme to support joint research projects and institutional partnerships.

The implementation of such joint research projects and institutional partnerships of Swiss and Polish institutions shall contribute to the development of knowledge based economy, which is reflected in the objectives of the Swiss-Polish Cooperation Programme and at the same time is one of the development aims of the Polish National Development Plan 2007 –2013 and of the National Strategic Reference Framework 2007 –2013.

¹ OJ L of 9.8.2008 No 214

Moreover, joint research projects and institutional partnerships constitute an attractive instrument on the way to initiate, develop and strengthen the Polish – Swiss cooperation in the area of scientific research.

Experiences from the implementation of the Polish – Norwegian Research Fund within Norwegian Financial Mechanism and European Economic Area Financial Mechanism show that there is a considerable interest of potential beneficiaries in bilateral cooperation through research projects and institutional partnerships.

Thematic focus areas:

On the motion of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education and after consultation of the Swiss side, projects, within the Swiss – Polish Cooperation Programme, shall be implemented in the following research areas:

- ICT (Information and Communication Technology),
- Energy – renewable energy sources,
- Nanotechnology,
- Health,
- Environment.

Multidisciplinary projects are eligible.

Programme implementation scheme:

The Programme will be implemented on II levels:

The first level is the so called preparatory level, which consists in the elaboration by IPC of a programme supporting joint research projects and institutional partnerships within the abovementioned research areas.

In a later stage – level II - joint research projects and institutional partnerships will be submitted by eligible final beneficiaries. IPC, based on its experiences from the implementation of the Polish – Norwegian Research Fund, will select the projects through an open call for proposals. Before that, an information campaign shall raise awareness on the upcoming call for proposal. At the end of the call, a formal and content related evaluation of the submitted projects will take place. A ranking list will be established by IPC, based on peer reviews of Polish, Swiss or International experts. Finally, the Joint Polish – Swiss Selection Committee will recommend the best projects for co-financing. This final decision is made on a consensual way, lead by the Polish and the Swiss co-chairs of the joint selection committee. Once the final decision made and formally confirmed by the Swiss side, it will constitute the legal basis for proceeding to the signing of the project agreement and the project implementation agreement.

Grant awarding procedure for the Programme:

After the Polish and the Swiss sides agree on *the Conceptual Elements for the Polish-Swiss Research Programme* (be considered formally as the Programme Outline), IPC will be invited to elaborate a Final Proposal of the Polish – Swiss Research Programme along with requested obligatory attachments (especially Programme's implementation and management system). This document will be then submitted to the National Coordination Unit (NCU), acting as Intermediate Body for this Programme. After the completion of the formal and the content related evaluation by the NCU, the proposal, including recommendations, will be transmitted by the NCU to the Swiss side for the final decision.

IPC shall be responsible for the Programme implementation. It will sign an Implementation Agreement with the NCU, in conformity with the agreed procedures and binding legal regulations.

The NCU is responsible for the monitoring of the Programme compliance and implementation status, the provision of audits and the supervision of financial related issues.