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Team

How many people does the project Team consist of and what is their role in the Grant?

The Team should consist of three different people (Chapter III. Regulations of call for Phase 1 and selection for Phase 2, Explanation of Terms), who together are the backbone of successful commercialisation:

- **Scientific Leader:** A scientist, the Principal Executor of the Grant, who must be the creator or co-creator of the research results/intellectual property that is the basis of the subject of commercialisation. He/she is the main originator of the solution that will be commercialised. The PRIME project does not set any limits on the scientific degree or stage of the scientific career. The Scientific Leader must have in-depth, direct scientific knowledge of the technology/solution itself as well as its landscape. He/she is responsible for the market fit of the product, participates in market interviews, identifies technical/conceptual/regulatory shortcomings of his/her solution. In collaboration with the other members of the project Team, creates the commercialisation strategy.
- **Technology Transfer Support:** A person with excellent knowledge of the procedures and internal regulations of the host research organisation in the context of the commercialisation process. He/she is responsible for the preparation and implementation of the intellectual property (IP) protection strategy necessary to run the Grant and achieve its objectives, as well as to secure the commercialisation process in the long term. He/she works in close collaboration with the other members of the project Team. The Technology Transfer Support is the liaison between the project Team and its host research organisation in situations of decision-making or preparation of contract proposals (e.g. licensing).
- **Business Leader:** The person who is primarily responsible for the Customer Discovery process and, to this end, conduct interviews verifying market potential and analyzing them in order to confirm and better understand existing problem of recipients and/or direct customers. The role of the Business Leader will be to create business models and marketing and sales strategies. The person in this role must have adequate knowledge and understanding regarding the subject of commercialisation. Together with the other members of the project Team, he/she will create the commercialisation strategy based on the findings from market interviews.

Is it possible to involve more people in the project Team than the 3 indicated in the Grant Application?

Yes, it is possible to involve more people in the project Team than the 3 indicated in the Grant Application, but the costs of their work and involvement cannot be accounted for within the Grant budget. Eligible costs are only unit rates for the tasks performed by the Scientific Leader, Business Leader and Technology Transfer Support.

Is Polish nationality of the Team members required?

Team members do not need to have Polish citizenship. However, they must be employed by the research organization that is the Applicant.

Can the Business Leader and Technology Transfer Support come from outside the Applicant's Research Organisation?

Yes, the Business Leader and the Technology Transfer Support can be individuals from outside the Applicant'sResearch Organisation (Applicant), provided they are formally employed by the Grantee (Research Organisation) to implement the Grant since the start date of Phase I.

As stated in the Grant Agreement (§ 5, p. 1), permitted forms of employment are:

- employment contracts,
- equivalent appointment letter,
- contract of mandate.

Thus, persons outside the Research Organisation may implement Grant tasks as long as their work is formally settled as required by the PRIME Project.

Can the Technology Transfer Support and Business Leader play the same role in two different Grants?

Yes, the Technology Transfer Support and Business Leader can play the same role in two different Grants, but they must ensure they avoid double funding for the same tasks, as well as regulate potential conflicts of interest and involvement. This means that funding allocated under different Grants cannot cover the same activities or working hours. It is also important to bear in mind the limits set out in the Grant Agreement in § 6(11-12).

<u>**PLEASE NOTE:** During the Bootcamps carried out in Poland and the UK, it is required that all members of the project Team work actively as a group during the workshop. It is therefore **not possible** for the same person to participate in Bootcamps as a member of two different Teams.</u>

How does the process of changing project Team members look like?

- Scientific Leader:
    - A change of Scientific Leader <u>is not allowed</u> during the project. The Scientific Leader has a key role as the principal executor of the Grant, creator of the results/intellectual property, main implementer of the concept.
- Business Leader and Technology Transfer Support:
    - A change of individuals performing these roles is possible after the approval of the modification in the Application.
    - Requests for a change must be duly justified and in accordance with the terms of the Grant Agreement.

A good time to verify the compatibility of the Team's composition with the planned commercialisation strategy is during the decision phase between Phase I and Phase II (selection).

Any change in the composition of the Team must comply with the rules and regulations of the Project to ensure its smooth implementation.

Call

Will project Team that are not approved for funding receive feedback information on their Grant Application?

Yes, in the case of a negative assessment, each Applicant, after the end of the Application assessment process, receives information on the result electronically (via ePUAP) or in a paper version (if the Applicant does not have an ePUAP account) together with the number of points and the justification (Chapter X. point 15 of the Regulations of call for Phase 1 and selection for Phase 2).

Do the experts assessing the applications sign a non-disclosure agreement?

Yes, all experts are required to sign both a declaration of confidentiality and impartiality. This is to ensure that the information given in the Applications remian confidential and the assessment process is carried out in an objective and independent manner.

This ensures that the application assessment process is transparent and in line with the highest ethical standards.

What is more important during an assessment - the competence of the Team or the innovation of the idea/solution?

Both criteria are crucial and assessed equivalently in two, separate evaluation stages, as the success of a Grant depends on both the scientific quality and innovation of the solution and the competence of the project Team responsible for its implementation.

- **Innovation of the idea/solution**: It is assessed in terms of market potential, scientific quality and innovation of the solution.
- **Competence and experience of the Team**: The experience and skills of the Scientific Leader, Business Leader and Technology Transfer Support in research, commercialisation and collaboration with the market are important.

In order for a Grant to be positively evaluated, it is necessary to meet the requirements in both areas. One criterion does not outweigh the other, but a lack of adequate competence of the project Team or a low level of innovation of the idea can significantly affect the final outcome of the assessment.

How to estimate the value of the indicator *Number of market interviews conducted*?

The estimation of the values of the indicators should be reasonable and adapted to the specifics of the Grant. This means that the number should realistically reflect the needs of the Grant and the capabilities of the project Team over a certain period of time.

Number of market interviews

The minimum number of interviews in Phase I is **20** and in Phase II depends on the number of accounting periods:

- **20 interviews** for 1-2 periods,
- **40 interviews** at 3-4 periods.

Interviews should include a needs analysis of potential customers, market assessment, readiness of the technology for commercialisation and potential business partnerships.

The value should be estimated depending on the number of market players who can provide valuable information and the scope of the planned market verification. Regardless of the minimum value of the declared indicator, during the Grant the Team can, and should, seek the maximum number of opportunities for the best possible market intelligence.

How to approach the estimate?

1. Realistic approach: It is worth estimating the number of interviews and meetings based on an initial recognition of the network of contacts within the reach of the Team members or its research organisation. Do not declare too high values that could be difficult to meet.
2. Timeframe: Determine how many interviews can be made each accounting period (e.g. an average of 5-7 calls per month).
3. project Team capacity: At the stage of planning the composition of the Team, make sure that its members have the time and commitment to carry out these activities.

Adapting the indicators to the capacity of the Team and the requirements of the Project will help to avoid difficulties in implementation and ensure that the objectives of the Grant are effectively achieved. It is possible to change an indicator during the course of the Grant (after approved proposal for change and signed annex to the grant agreement), but it must not be less than the minimum parameters set out in the Grant Agreement. Remember that your Mentor will support the Team in reaching out to relevant and contributing contacts, as well as helping to analyse the information coming from the interviews in the context of building an adequate business model and commercialisation strategy.

How to estimate the value of the indicator *Number of mentoring sessions*?

The estimation of the values of the indicators should be **reasonable** and adapted to the specificities of the Grant. This means that the figures should realistically reflect the needs of the Grant and the capacity of the Team over a specific period of time. The minimum number of mentoring sessions as further defined by the provisions of the Grant Agreement (§5.5(e)) is:

- **4 mentoring sessions in Phase I**,
- In Phase II, the number is at least **6 mentoring sessions** for 1-2 periods or **12 mentoring sessions** for 3-4 periods.

The number of mentoring sessions should be planned according to the needs of the Team members, considering the work timeline and the intensity of the collaboration with the mentor.

How to approach the estimate?

1. **Realistic approach**: It is worth estimating the number of mentoring sessions based on actual demand. Do not declare too high a figure that could be difficult to meet.
2. **Schedule**: Determine how many meetings can be held each accounting period (e.g. an average of 2-3 longer or 3-4 shorter meetings per month).
3. **Capacity of the Team**: Ensure that the Team members have the time and commitment to carry out these activities.

Adapting the indicators to the Team's capacity and PRIME Project requirements will help avoid difficulties in implementation and ensure that the Grant objectives are effectively achieved.

Can a proposal be submitted in a consortium - e.g. 2 research organisations - under the call?

The PRIME project does not accept Grant Application from consortia. The Applicant must be a single research organisation.

If one Research Organisation wants to submit several applications, should a separate account be set up for each application?

Yes, a separate account must be set up for each application submitted.

However, it is possible to set up several accounts using the same e-mail address. To do this, simply set a different username and password for each account.

Funding and settlements

How do we understand the €200,000 limit set out in the Regulations of call for Phase 1 and selection for Phase 2?

The limit of EUR 200,000 possible to be granted to one Grantee results from the provisions of Article 41(6) of the Implementation Act and is equivalent to PLN 942,060 (euro exchange rate from the day of the announcement of the call for proposal for the non-competitive PRIME Project in February 2023, i.e. PLN 4,7103).

This means that each Research Organisation, as a Grantee, can receive PLN 942,06 in total during the entire PRIME Project (until the end of 2029), i.e. in all editions.

What is the maximum fund limit of a single Grant that can be received in Phases I and II?

Each Grant within Phase I and Phase II can receive a maximum of PLN 313,904. However, it is worth remembering that the grant limit for one Research Organisation is PLN 942,000. This means that if Teams apply for the maximum amount (PLN 313,904), only three Grants can be funded from one Research Organisation over the duration of the entire PRIME Project.

However, the Applicant has the possibility to model the amount of funding applied for to enable the participation of more than 3 Teams in the Project, e.g. by applying for less funding with the same non-financial support (e.g. mentoring, training, study visit).

Example: The applicant decides to submit three applications in Call 1 with a budget of PLN 200 000. Assuming that all three pass the assessment process and sign a Grant Agreement, it is still possible to apply for a grant in the next call, while meeting the obligatory criterion of formal assessment, i.e. the Applicant did not exceed the grant amount limit defined in Article 41(6) of the Implementation Act.

Please note that there is a selection process between Phases I and II, which may end negatively for some of the Grants, or the Teams themselves will decide that they are not able or ready to commercialise the solution. In such a situation, the grant agreement ends after 6 months, and the remaining funds "revert" to the limit usable by the research organisation.

Example: The research organisation received funding in Call 1 for 3 Grants of £313,904 each. Thus, the research organisation used up its entire limit. However, in the selection process, one of the Grants did not meet the obligatory criteria and the implementation ended in Phase 1. Thus, all the funds that were not used for Phase II (PLN 244,055) are available for future calls.

Can an Applicant submit more than 3 Applications under one Call?
Yes, an Applicant may submit more than 3 Grant Applications under one Call. However, please note that only the 3 Applications from the same Research Organisation that score the highest number of points will receive funding.

Does the funding granted to a research organization in Phase I and II constitute public aid?

No, the grant awarded to the Research Organisation in Phases I and II is not state aid or *de minimis* aid. It is therefore not cumulative with *de minimis* aid limit. The limit referred to in Chapter IV.1 point 7 of the Regulations of Call for Phase 1 and Selection for Phase 2 is regulated by separate regulations, i.e. Article 41(6). of the Implementation Act.

How to document the settlement of Business Travel Costs expenses so that the expense can be an eligible?

The costs of Business Travels of the Team (Scientific Leader, Business Leader, Technology Transfer Support) may be eligible within the scope necessary for the successful implementation of the Grant. In accordance with the provisions of the Grant Agreement (§6.3), the payment of the grant is made upon acceptance by the Foundation of a properly completed and complete report submitted by the Grantee. A list of the Team's Business Travel costs together with full documentation confirming the settlement of the given Business Travel Costs is attached to the report (§6(10)).

Eligible expenditures on Business Travels must be settled in accordance with the provisions of the Call 1 documentation and considering the internal regulations applicable in the Grantee's unit. The basis for settling the costs of the business trip from the Grant funds will be a document confirming the completion of the business trip by a member of the Team and the settlement of the travel costs in the Grantee's unit along with documentation confirming the incurred costs (e.g. a business trip order along with an invoice issued to the Grantee for accommodation/flight services and a payment confirmation).

What is the limit of funding for a single grant in Phase III?

In Phase III, the Applicant is a spin-off created as a result of the implementation of the commercialisation strategy prepared by the Team in Phase II. Companies that want to use financial support are selected in the call process, organised continuously, i.e. without one specific date. Financial support is granted to the company in the form of *de minimis* aid, with the limit specified in Article 41.6 of the Implementation Act , and amounts up to EUR 200,000.

Budget

What is the distribution of unit rates within the Team?

The distribution of unit rates within the project Team (Scientific Leader, Business Leader, Technology Transfer Support) can be determined by the Team itself based on the Grant's needs during its implementation, but it still must remain within the fixed limits for each Phase:

- Phase I: A maximum of 597 unit rates to be shared among Team members.
- Phase II: A maximum of 1,915 unit rates to be shared among Team members.

Each Team member can use any number of unit rates in line with the Grant's assumptions, as long as it stays within the available limits. However, it's important to ensure that the distribution of unit rates reflects the actual contribution of each Team member.

Is VAT an eligible cost in the Grant?

No, the costs related to VAT on Business Travels are ineligible expenditure.

Subject of commercialisation

If the Scientific Leader is the only owner of the Background IP related to the subject of commercialisation, can he/she participate in PRIME?

Yes, the Scientific Leader, who is the sole owner of the intellectual property (IP) rights, can participate in PRIME, but it will be necessary to formalize the IP rights agreement between them and the Research Organisation as the Applicant. The agreement must guarantee the Research Organisation profit from future commercialisation, as the funding recipient and entity responsible for providing the resources to achieve the Grant's objectives (Annex to the Grant Application "Applicant's Statement of Access to Intellectual Property and Commercialisation Intent").

Does the PRIME Project require a minimum or maximum TRL Level (Technology Readiness Level)?

It is not required to indicate a specific TRL level for the proposed solution. However, the technology should be sufficiently developed or validated to motivate discovery of its commercial potential including verification of the hypothesis on:

- market problems that innovation can solve,
- key market stakeholders,
- the value and advantage that innovation can offer customers.

Please note that the PRIME Project does not provide funding for R&D work.

Is it necessary to have a patent application for the solution included in the Application at the time of application?

No, it is not required to have a pending patent application at the time of the submitting an application. However, it is important to establish a forward-looking plan to protect the intellectual property securing the ability to commercialise the solution and provide a competitive advantage.

Does the PRIME project have a limit of 276 hours for project staff?

Yes, the PRIME project has a limit of 276 hours per month, as referred to in the Eligibility Guidelines 2021-2027 (§6(11) of the Grant Agreement). This means that the total working time of one person on all publicly co-financed projects must not exceed this number of hours. In all projects Double financing of the same tasks or scopes of work from different sources is prohibited.

Other

Does FNP hold shares in spin-off?

No, neither the Foundation nor the Partner hold shares in spin-offs set up as an implementation of the commercialisation strategy. PRIME Project works on equity free basis.

Who is the Founder of the company which applies for Phase III? How is it linked to the earlier phases of the PRIME project?

The company established before Phase III of the PRIME Project is directly related to the project Team implementing the Grant in Phases I and II. The condition for submission an Application for Phase III funding is the presence among the Founders of the company of at least one member of the project Team implementing the Grant in Phase II - Scientific Leader, Business Leader or Technology Transfer Support.

Phases I and II play a key role in the preparation the Team for this step. Within these phases, the Team:

- verifies the market potential of the proposed solution,
- develops a commercialisation strategy,
- gains knowledge and experience in creating business models and implementing innovations.

The establishment of the spoin-off before Phase III is a natural extension and result of the work done by the project Team in the previous phases. The spin-off takes on the role of the entity carrying out further commercialisation and implementation activities, using the knowledge and results developed during the implementation of the Grant.

Course of the project

How is the PRIME Project structured in Phase I and II?

The Grant under PRIME Project consists of two main phases:

- **Phase I** - The main objective of this phase is to improve the knowledge and competence of the Grant Implementation Team. This phase lasts for 6 months.
- **Phase II** - In this phase, the project Team focuses on verifying the market potential of the commercialisation subject and developing and implementing a commercialisation strategy. Phase II lasts up to 12 months, with the possibility of shortening or extending it.

In both phases, project Team is required to participate in organised events such as Bootcamp and DemoDay.

How should the market interviews and mentoring sessions identified as indicators be documented?

A) Market interviews

Based on the provisions of §5.8(c), the Grantee is required to keep and maintain a summary of the market interviews conducted, which is a key indicator proving the progress of the Grant. The summary must include at least:

- date of interview,
- information about the interviewers (Team members),
- information on the entity (company, person) with whom the meeting was held,
- key findings of the meeting.

Part of each report, submitted to the Foundation every three months, is a summmary describing the Team's activities during that period, including held market interviews and their impact on the verification of hypotheses regarding problems, needs and the planned commercialisation strategy.

B) Mentoring sessions

Mentoring sessions are documented at the reporting stage as part of the report, including the Team members who participated in the meeting and key conclusions and actions resulting from the consultations. There is no need to maintain a separate record of mentoring meetings.

Does every *market interview* have to be with different entity?

No, not every market interview needs to be conducted with different entities. In some cases, one interview may not fully cover the topic or it may be necessary to deepen the conversation – especially when speaking with potential clients. Follow-up meetings with the same entity are then allowed. If these meetings provide new insights or build on an earlier discussion and can be counted as a separate market interview, provided they are properly documented and described in the report.

What is the language of the PRIME Project?

All PRIME project activities, including in particular training sessions, mentoring, Bootcamps and DemoDays, are conducted in English. The grant Application should also be completed in English (except for some fields requiring the use of Polish).

Does at least 75% attendance at the workshop apply to each Team Member individually or is the presence of a representative sufficient?

Yes, each Team member must individually meet the **minimum 75% participation requirement**. This means that the **Scientific Leader, Business Leader, and Technology Transfer Supervisor** must each fulfill this requirement independently. There are separate training tracks for each Team member, covering different thematic areas. However, there are no restrictions preventing, for example, the Business Leader or Scientific Leader from attending a session designed for Technology Transfer Support.

With the exception of training conducted during Bootcamps, all sessions are held on-line using commonly available tools (e.g. Zoom).

What types of workshops are organised during the PRIME Project?

Training sessions covering various levels, types, and stages of commercialisation are a key element of the PRIME Pogramme, divided into different components within each Phase:

- **Team training (online):** Required for the whole Team in each Phase. Each training will conclude with an assignment to be completed independently. Participation in at least 75% of the training is required.
- **Individual training (online):** Tailored to the specific needs of each member of the Team.
- **On-site workshops:** organised during the Bootcamp in Poland and the site visit in Oxford.

Online sessions are interactive (e.g. by Zoom) and require active involvement from participants.

Do participants have to cover the costs of accommodation and meals during the Bootcamp in Poland?

No, participants do not bear any costs for accommodation, meals or the program's content. The PRIME Project fully covers the participation costs for Teams members both in Poland and the UK. Applicants are only responsible for covering the travel expenses for their Team to Warsaw (Bootcamp in Poland) and Oxford (Bootcamp in the UK).

How does the onsite meeting with business mentor in Phase I look like?

The onsite meeting with the Mentor assigned to the Team in Phase I takes place at the Grant's place of implementation. The PRIME Project fully covers the mentor's transportation, accommodation and food costs. The Team and the Mentor set the date and course of the meeting individually and coveniently for both sides. The purpose of such a meeting is to get to know each other better, to deepen collaboration, to analyze the Grant in detail and to discuss the best path for the Mentor to support the Team.

How does the cooperation and selection of a Business Mentor look like?

Each Team participating in the PRIME Project will have the opportunity to work with an experienced business and commercialisation mentor, selected from Oxentia's international group of experts. Mentoring will begin in Phase I and mentors will act as the main point of contact throughout the project. Their role includes regular meetings with the Team, supporting progress and helping to apply the knowledge gained during training to the Team's commercialisation activities.

For the best matchmake, each Team will be introduced to 4 mentors, selected according to the specialisation and nature of the Grant. Teams will then have 7 days to meet and talk to the proposed mentors, after which they will select the two individuals they would like to work with. On this basis, the PRIME Project will make the final selection, assigning one of these mentors to the Team. In motivated cases, each time at the request of the Grantee, the Team will be able to make one change of Mentor within 4 weeks from the date of the date of assignment of the Business Mentor to the Team.