

NILS SCIENCE AND SUSTAINABILITY CALL FOR APPLICATIONS PREPARATORY VISITS

1. Objectives and motivation

NILS Science and Sustainability aims at improving and deepening academic and research collaboration among Spain on the one side and Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein on the other, by fostering scientific research on strategic fields for Earth Sustainability and Human Well-Being. Within this frame, it promotes inter-institutional mobility projects, both for individual researchers at all levels and for scientific teams of the involved countries, in order to carry out joint research and academic activities.

NILS Science and Sustainability offers the opportunity to scientists in experimental sciences at different stages of their careers to carry out joint research and advanced training activities in subjects related to Earth Sustainability and Human Well Being. Priority shall be given to topics dealing with problems related, among others, to climate change, migration flows, natural resources, health, social dynamics and mathematical methods. Projects with a multidisciplinary approach or a cutting edge mathematical content are particularly encouraged.

NILS Science and Sustainability is funded within the protocol 38b of European Economic Area Financial Mechanism (EEA FM) and the memorandum of understanding signed between Spain on the one side and Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein on the other. Universidad Complutense de Madrid (hereinafter UCM) is the programme operator. The Steering Committee of the programme is formed by representatives from the programme operator. The following organizations shall act as contact points in the involved countries: Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Education (hereinafter SIU), The Icelandic Centre for Research (hereinafter RANNIS), Agentur für internationale Bildungsangelegenheiten (hereinafter AIBA) in Liechtenstein. Representatives from these three institutions, together with representatives from the Spanish Instituto de la Mujer and Spanish General Secretary for University Policy, and from Universidad Complutense de Madrid, form the Cooperation Committee, with an advisory role. The Ministry of Finances and Public Administrations is responsible in Spain for this mechanism, with the competences given to it by the applicable regulation as Focal Point (hereinafter FP).

This document regulates the call for proposals, launched by UCM, addressed to fund preparatory visits related to measures "Individual Mobility of Researchers" and "Coordinated Mobility of researchers", within NILS Science and Sustainability programme.

2. Eligible applicants and requirements

- a. Applications shall be submitted by a higher education institution or university, public or private, or by a public research institution, from Spain, or from Norway, Iceland or Liechtenstein.
- b. End-beneficiaries of these grants shall be academic and research staff from eligible institutions.
- c. Involved institutions shall respect all the terms of the call and the applicable regulation (see 13), and must provide the administrative, communication and logistic support needed for carrying out the activities granted.

3. Call budget, eligible costs and amounts

Initial budget available for this call is 40 000. Eligible costs shall be travel costs and subsistence costs, with a maximum of 3 000 euro per applicant. Travel costs shall be funded based on incurred actual and documented expenditure. Cheapest mode of travel shall be used. Subsistence costs shall be funded up to 300 euro per day and person.

4. Duration of visits and implementation period

Preparatory visits shall last from one to five days. They may take place until July 2014.

5. Management of the call, evaluation, selection and communication

- a. Administration, information and communication issues shall be handled by UCM.
- b. Evaluation procedure shall be structured as follows: assessment of administrative and eligibility compliance by Nils Management Service; evaluation on the basis of qualitative selection criteria by Nils Management Service and SIU; awarding decision and communication by Steering Committee.
- c. Qualitative selection criteria shall be:
 - Content and length: compliance with the objectives of Nils; clear and reasonable aims and activities; topics and institutions to be addressed; realistic length and coherence of the visit; expected feasibility of the proposed activity; relevance of the visit's content for the programme.
 - Participants: appropriate and eligible applicant and host institutions; competences of the participants.
 - Expected results: preparing an application for a measure under the programme.
- d. Applications shall be evaluated each two months. Awarding decision shall be communicated to beneficiaries who, within the following 10 days, may make any claim they may consider or express the acceptance of the grant. Provisional resolution may include a suggestion to reformulate the application as a pre-request for a final approval. The awarding proposal shall be considered accepted if within these 10 days the applicants does not communicate with Nils Management Service.

6. Presentation of applications and further information

Applications shall be addressed to UCM, Nils Science and Sustainability Management Service. Application forms and other needed documents shall be available in the following website: <http://www.nilsmobilityproject.es/>. Applications shall be sent both by regular mail (two copies) and by email to the following address:

nilss@rect.ucm.es

Postal address:

Ciudad Universitaria –Moncloa

Facultad de Ciencias Matemáticas

Nils Science and Sustainability

Plaza de las ciencias, 3-250A

Madrid 28040, Spain

Any information request shall be addressed to nilss@rect.ucm.es.

7. Deadline for the presentation of the applications

The application period shall start on 10 August 2013 and be permanently open until 30 June 2014 at 17:00 hours (Madrid local time) or until the complete allocation of the budget, whichever occurs first.

8. Content of applications

Applications shall include:

- a. Application form.
- b. Formal declaration, signed by the legal representative of the applying institution, supporting the application and committing itself to comply with the applicable regulation.
- c. Copy of the national identity card (Spanish applicants) or Passport (other applicants) of the researcher responsible for the visit.

9. Acceptance of the grant, modification of the visits

- a. Upon accepting the resolution, beneficiary institutions and involved responsible researcher(s) shall sign an agreement with the UCM.
- b. Funded activities must be carried out in the time and manner described in the awarding decision and agreements signed. Nevertheless, specific circumstances affecting initial technical or economic conditions of the visits, may justify a modification request from the beneficiaries. Such modification shall be done via addendums to the signed agreement. Any change on such agreement will respect the following principles: a) It shall not affect the aims of the grant nor its fundamental aspects; b) it must be requested prior to the end of the implementation period and must be explicitly accepted by UCM.

10. Management, justification, monitoring and control

- a. Beneficiary institution is responsible for the management and justification of the funded project, including the payment of any cost, and the justification of all the incurred costs.
- b. Payment of the awarded grant to the project promoter shall be made as follows: 80% after the signature of the agreement mentioned above; 20% after the approval of the final activity reports and economic reports by UCM, by Focal Point and by Financial Mechanism Office. Any payment from UCM to project promoters shall be subject to the availability of funds transferred from EEA Grants to UCM's bank account.
- c. Funded visits shall be monitored and controlled by UCM. Beneficiary institutions shall provide activity and financial reports using predefined reporting forms. Final reports shall be provided no later than one month after the end of the funded activity.
- d. Reports shall be assessed by UCM, specifically by Nils Management Service and if needed by Intervention Department. Incurred expenditure by project promoters must be duly justified. Expenditures are considered to have been incurred when the cost has been invoiced, paid and the subject matter delivered or performed. Costs shall be supported by receipted invoices, or alternatively by accounting documents of equivalent probative value. A report by an independent and certified auditor, certifying that the claimed costs are incurred in accordance to the applicable regulation, the national law and accounting principles of the project partner's country, shall be seen as sufficient proof of costs incurred.
- e. Any irregularity on the use of funds or on the economic justification may cause the partial or total loss of the grant, the stop of the withdrawals and the request to give back any advanced amount.

11. Publicity

Applicants commit themselves to use the communication items provided by FMO and UCM (logo, acknowledge wordings and others) as well as to provide UCM with the information required for the appropriate dissemination of the funded activities, according to the applicable regulation.

12. Communication to the Ministry of Finances and Public Administrations and to the EEA FM Office

UCM shall notify to the Ministry of Finances and Public Administrations and to the EEA Financial Mechanism Office the awarded grants as well as any relevant information on them. Both institutions may require, from UCM or from beneficiary institutions and researchers, information about the implemented projects, funding and financial justifications, including making site visits to projects, at any moment.

13. Applicable rules

- Protocol 38B of EEA Financial Mechanism (2009-2014)
- Regulation on the implementation of the European Economic Area (EEA) Financial Mechanism 2009-2014 adopted by the EEA Financial Mechanism Committee pursuant to Article 8.8 of Protocol 38b to the EEA Agreement on 13 January 2011 and confirmed by the Standing Committee of the EFTA States on 18 January 2011. Including its annexes and guidelines.
- Memorandum of understanding for the implementation of the EEA Financial Mechanism 2009-2014 among the Kingdom of Spain and Iceland, the Principality of Liechtenstein and the Kingdom of Norway.
- Law 38/2003, of 17 November, general of public aids. Arts. 36 to 43.
- The call text.