

NILS SCIENCE AND SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAMME

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

ABEL – INDIVIDUAL MOBILITY (ABEL-IM-2013)

ABEL – COORDINATED MOBILITY (ABEL-MC-2013)

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: Vice-president for International Relations, Vice-president for Research, Programme Manager and a scientist with experience in international programmes. 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 the Spanish General Secretary for Universities, 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 first call for proposals, launched by UCM, within NILS Science and Sustainability (2013-2015), in its measures Individual Mobility of Researchers and Coordinated Mobility of Researchers. Both measures aim at developing and deepening academic and research relations among researchers and institutions in Spain on the one side and Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein on the other, in the areas mentioned above.

2. Measures and budget available

- a. Measure **Abel – Individual Mobility of Researchers** shall promote, within the frame of inter-institutional projects, individual mobility of researchers at different stages of their career, active in public and private universities or in public research institutions in Spain, Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein.
Measure **Abel – Coordinated Mobility of Researchers** shall promote, within the frame of inter-institutional projects, exchanges among teams of researchers active in public and private universities or in public research institutions in Spain, Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein.
- b. The budget available for this call is:
 - Measure Abel – Individual Mobility of Researchers: 1 139 460 euro.
 - Measure Abel – Coordinated Mobility of Researchers: 518 000 euro.

3. Beneficiaries, eligible institutions and requirements

- a. End-beneficiaries of these grants shall be academic and research staff in disciplines as mentioned in 1, at different stages of their careers (senior, postdoctoral and predoctoral), active in public or private universities, and in public research institutions, in Spain, Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein.
- b. Applications shall be presented by a higher education institution or university, public or private, or by a public research institution from Spain, in cooperation with a partner institution either from Norway, Iceland or Liechtenstein. Applications must be fronted by a leading Spanish institution, which shall be called project promoter.
- c. Each application must be supported by at least one institution in Spain on the one side and one institution from Norway, Iceland or Liechtenstein on the other. Legal representatives of all involved institutions must support the application. Non – leading institutions shall be called project partners.
- d. Spanish beneficiary institutions must comply with articles 13 and 14 of Ley General de Subvenciones.
- e. Involved institutions shall abide with 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.

4. Approximate minimum and maximum funding per project, eligible costs, implementation period

- a. Approximate minimum and maximum funding amounts:
 - Measure Abel – Individual Mobility of Researchers: 1200 to 135000 euro per project.
 - Measure Abel – Coordinated Mobility of Researchers: 5000 to 250000 euro per project.
- b. Project grant may cover (totally or in part) the following costs:
 - Travel grant: travel expenses and travel insurance costs are covered based on actual incurred expenditures (invoices and bills documenting costs are required). The most economical mode of travel should be used.
 - Living stipend (stay grant) to researchers. It will be determined according to the following rates:
 - Scientists moving from Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein to Spain: up to 2000 euro/month
 - Scientists moving from Spain to Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein: up to 2500 euro/month
 - Stays shorter than a month shall be funded proportionally
 - Stays shorter than a week shall be funded on the basis of daily rates: up to 300 euro per day.
 - Tax rules of each country will apply.
 - Organization costs. Tuition fees, conference fees and similar, duly justified. They shall be proportionate and directly related to the implementation of the granted activity.
 - Audit costs.
 - Overheads. See Annex 1 of the call for further information.
 - Beneficiaries shall, on their own initiative, use the European health insurance card or equivalent.
- c. Costs shall be eligible provided they are incurred within the eligibility period of the project, which starts the day after the signature of the agreement with UCM mentioned in 9 and ends the day identified as the ending date of the implementation of the project in such agreement.
- d. It is allowed to apply for funding for on-going projects and stays. In this case, the eligibility period for the costs of the funded project must respect what is stated in c, and double funding must be avoided.
- e. Any project activity must be finished by 30 November 2015.

5. Compatibility

- a. Participation in projects funded within Nils Science and Sustainability programme is compatible with salaries, grants or other incomes perceived by applicants from their universities and research centres in eligible countries.
- b. These Grants do not establish any contractual relationship among the beneficiary and the host institution(s).
- c. Double funding of project activities must be avoided.

6. Management of the call, evaluation of proposals and communication issues

- a. Administration, information and communication issues will be handled by UCM.
- b. The following phases shall apply to the evaluation of proposals: eligibility and administrative assessment by Nils Management service; quality assessment by experts; evaluation by Abel Selection Committee; awarding decision by Steering Committee. Cooperation Committee shall act as observer.
- c. Evaluation criteria and their scoring shall be:
 - a. quality of the project proposal (30%)
 - b. scientific record of the involved researchers (20%)
 - c. complementarity of participating researchers and groups (10%)
 - d. feasibility and sustainability of the proposal (20%)
 - e. Relevance of activities proposed regarding the aims and priorities of Nils Science and Sustainability programme (20%)
- d. Abel Selection Committee shall be formed by experts appointed by the Steering Committee, with a minimum of three members, one of them not belonging to UCM.
- e. 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.

7. Submission of applications and further information

Applications are to be submitted to UCM, Nils Science and Sustainability Management Service. Application forms and other needed documents will be available in the website: www.nilsmobilityproject.es. Applications shall be sent both by regular mail (two copies) and by email to the following address: nilss@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@ucm.es or telephone number +34 91 394 4385.

8. Deadline for the presentation of the applications

Application period starts on 8 August and ends on October 20 at 17:00 hours, Madrid local time. Such time will be understood as the time of the reception of the email with the copy of the complete application, as well as the time of sending the hard copies by regular post, which must be shown by the post entity or transport company's stamp on the document.

9. Grant agreement with UCM, Project partnership agreement between partners

- a. Upon accepting the resolution, project promoters, partners and involved responsible researcher(s) shall sign an agreement with the UCM in which grant conditions, responsibilities, procedures and communication requirements shall be included.
- b. According to the regulation, project promoters and partners will sign a complementary agreement stating their respective tasks and responsibilities. Such agreement shall contain the following: a) a description of the roles and responsibilities of the parties; b) provisions on the financial arrangements between the parties, including, but not limited to, which expenditure the project partners can get reimbursed from the project budget; c) provisions on the method of calculating indirect costs and their maximum amount; d) currency exchange rules for such expenditure and its reimbursement; e) provisions on audits on the project partners; f) a detailed budget, with itemized costs and unit prices; and g) provisions on dispute

resolution. This agreement must be submitted to Nils Management Service before the signing of the project contract mentioned in a.

- c. 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 projects, may justify a modification request from the beneficiaries. Such modification will be incorporated via addenda 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. Project management, justification, monitoring and control

- a. Project promoter is responsible for the management and justification of the funded project, including the payment of any cost, payments to be made to project partners 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. Beneficiaries are allowed to make changes on the budget headings approved by the UCM. Changes affecting more than 15% of any budget heading must be communicated to UCM prior to be made. Changes affecting more than 15% of the overall eligible costs of the project must be submitted to UCM for approval.
- d. Funded projects will be monitored and controlled by UCM. Project promoters are required to provide activity and financial reports using predefined reporting forms. As a general rule, reports shall cover activities carried out during predetermined periods: January to April, May to August, and September to December and must be submitted no later than one month after the end of the reported period. Projects beginning after the beginning of one of these periods shall start reporting at the end of the following period. Researchers responsible for the funded activities shall provide final activity reports, and interim activity reports for projects lasting more than 6 months within Abel – Individual Mobility measure, and more than 12 months within Abel – Coordinated Mobility measure. Such reports, to be made using standardized forms, shall be provided no later than 15 days after the end of the reported period.
- e. Reports will be assessed by UCM, specifically by Nils Management Service and if needed by Intervention Department. All incurred expenditure by project promoters and partners must be duly justified. Expenditures are considered to have been incurred when the cost has been invoiced, paid and the subject item 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. Documents which original language is not Spanish must be provided together with a detailed Spanish translation.
- f. Beneficiary institutions may be subject to an external audit, if the Spanish Ministry of Finances and Public Administrations or the EEA Financial Mechanism Office decide to do so.
- g. Any irregularity on the use of funds or on the economic justification may result in partial or total loss of the grant, the stop of the withdrawals and the request of returning any advanced amount.
- h. UCM may make site visits to specific activities in order to assess the implementation of the activities and the use of funds. Institutions responsible for such projects shall be informed in advance about the date and planned content of the visit.

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. Any publication prepared during and with the support the programme must acknowledge such support. Any activity (such as seminars, participation in conferences and similar) carried out during and with the support of the programme must also acknowledge such support and must be reported to UCM before it happens in order to be included in the programme website. It also has to be included in the activity reports.

The project promoter should fulfil two key information and publicity requirements:

- 1) At least two information activities on progress, achievements and results of the granted activity;
- 2) Easily available information on relevant pages of the institutions' website. Information on the web shall include information about the project, its progress, achievements and results, the cooperation with Donor State entities, pictures, contact information and a clear reference to the Programme and the financial mechanism.

12. Communication to the Ministry of Finances and Public Administrations and to the EEA Financial Mechanism 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) (available at www.eeagrants.org)
- 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. (available at www.eeagrants.org)
- 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. (available at www.eeagrants.org)
- For Spanish institutions, Law 38/2003, of 17 November, general of public aids. Arts. 13, 14 and 36 to 43. (available <http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2003/11/18/pdfs/A40505-40532.pdf>)
- The call of the texts and its related documents.

MEASURE ABEL – INDIVIDUAL MOBILITY OF RESEARCHERS

14. Type of grants

Abel Individual Mobility measure includes the following type of grants:

14.1 Abel IM- Predoc

- a. Applicants must be registered in a PhD program on disciplines as described in 1 of one eligible institution. They should preferably be within a 5 year period after having obtained an academic degree allowing to start Ph. D studies. For women having children, this period will be extended up to two years per child. Evidence of strong academic achievement should be provided.
- b. Standard length of stays shall be 2 to 6 months, although other lengths can be considered.

14.2 Abel IM- Postdoc

- a. Applicants must be active in an eligible institution, and have a PhD degree in disciplines as described in 1, obtained within the last five years before the call closure date. For women having children, this period may be extended by up to two years per child.
- b. Standard length of stays shall be 6 to 24 months, although other lengths can be considered.

14.3 Abel IM- Senior

- a. Applicants must be active in an eligible institution, and have a PhD degree obtained prior to five years before the call closure date, or at least 10 years of proven experience, in disciplines as described in 1. For women having children, this last period may be decreased by up to two years per child.
- b. Standard length of stays shall be one month, although other lengths can be considered.

15. Obligations of applicants

- a. To submit a proposal describing the activities to be performed in one or more host institutions during the proposed period of stay, as well as a CV. For evaluation purposes, applicants might be required to provide additional details on their proposals within 10 days of being required for that purpose. Failure to comply may result in being discarded from the call.
- b. Upon approval of the proposal, successful candidates should fulfil the research programme proposed. Grantees are expected to give lectures on their own research topics and are encouraged to participate in postgraduate training by means of courses, seminars and other activities, both as attendees and / or as lecturers. They are also expected to produce scientific papers or reports that could be submitted to international peer reviewed scientific publications.
- c. To stay at the host centre(s) during the period of the grant. Any change in dates must be previously approved by the NILS Management Service.
- d. Within the 15 days following to the end of the stay, grantees will report on the activities carried out during the grant; articles or other publications made or prepared during that time; research programmes or projects started; new contacts made; attendance to training courses and similar; participation in meetings; forecast of future research activities, etc. A specific form will be provided to awarded researchers for this purpose. In the case of stays lasting more than 6 months long, a mid-term report might be required, with similar contents as the final report.
- e. In case of illness or in case of maternity/adoption during the period of the grant, the grantee will be allowed to ask for a deferral of the grant period equivalent and corresponding to the period of interruption. Such deferral will need the approval of the NILS Management Service. A deferral will not result in an increase of the awarded grant.

16. Content of applications

- a. Application form. It shall include: research activity to be carried out during the stay, including the identification of expected results and of the elements that may be considered a risk for attaining such results, as well as a risk mitigation plan.
- b. Applicants' and host researchers' CV, including list of publications.
- c. Formal declaration from at least one host institution, signed by the researcher(s) involved in the proposal and by a legal representative, expressing their interest in the stay and committing themselves to provide office room and other needed facilities for the applicant.
- d. Formal declaration signed by the legal representative of the home institution, endorsing the application and committing themselves to respect all terms of the Grant in case of approval of the application.
- e. Certification of the status of the end-beneficiary at home institution.
- f. Copy of the applicant's identity card (Spain) or passport (Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein).

MEASURE ABEL – COORDINATED MOBILITY OF RESEARCHERS

17. Applicants

- a. Research teams active in public and private universities and in public research institutions in Spain on the one side and in Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein on the other, in disciplines as mentioned in 1. Such groups may include researchers at different stages of their careers: students registered in PhD programmes, postdoctoral researchers and senior researchers active in the institutions mentioned above.

- b. Applications shall be submitted by a leading Spanish principal investigator of a research team. Applications shall be prepared and signed by all the principal investigators of the involved research groups, which shall be responsible for the planned activities.
- c. At least one research group from Spain and at least one research group either from Norway, Iceland or Liechtenstein must participate in an application.

18. Structure and content of the applications

Applications must include:

- a. Application form. It shall describe:
 - Joint scientific (and academic) project, detailing: aims of the project; originality and innovative aspects thereof and how it will enhance the knowledge in the area; conceptual framework, identification of open questions and approaches, including the justification of the importance of the topic to be treated; description of the plan and methods, new technologies or methodologies to be used or created; identification of project outcomes and their impact; description on how the planned cooperation and exchanges will contribute to the success of the project, and how all parts involved will benefit from a project success.
 - CV of the principal investigators of the groups involved. Research record of the participating research groups.
 - Tentative list of participants in each research group, time schedule for exchanges.
 - Detailed budget.
 - Risk assessment and mitigation plan.
 - Dissemination activities planned.
- b. Formal declaration signed by the legal representatives of participating institutions, endorsing the application and committing themselves to respect all terms of the Grant in case of approval of the application.
- c. Certification of the status of the leading researcher at home institution.
- d. Copies of identity cards (applicants in Spanish institutions) passports (applicants in institutions in Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein) of principal investigators.

ANNEX I. CALCULATION OF OVERHEADS

Indirect costs in projects may be identified according to one of the following methods:

1. Based on actual indirect costs
2. Based on a flat rate method

Attention: according to art. 7.4.2. of the Regulation, project promoters and/or project partners that have identified their indirect costs in a manner comparable to the method 1 under the sixth or seventh Framework Programme of the European Commission cannot make use the methods described in 2. They shall calculate their overheads based on method 1.

Indirect costs are all eligible costs that cannot be identified by the Project Promoter and/or the project partner as being directly attributed to the project but which can be identified and justified by its accounting system as being incurred in direct relationship with the eligible direct costs attributed to the project, e.g. rent, telephone, internet, fax, electric power, postal fees, cleaning and maintenance costs, labour costs of supporting employees, top management costs, commonly used assets, etc. This list is not exhaustive, but at the same time its items represent the most common types of indirect costs.

When calculating indirect costs, one of the following methods can be applied:

- The ratio of the number of people working for the project / number of people working in the organization or unit baseline
- The ratio of the number of hours worked on the project / number of hours worked in total in the organization or unit baseline
- The ratio of the surface used by the personnel working for the project / surface of the organization or unit baseline

The applicant must make use of one of the formulas described above. For different kinds of indirect costs different formula is appropriate and it is the role of the applicant (and the independent auditor) to use the one which will calculate the fair apportionment of the given kind of indirect costs. For instance, when calculating the fair apportionment of rent, the third formula shall be used. When calculating the appropriate costs on internet, the first or second formula can be appropriate.

It is not possible to assign relevant formula to each kind of indirect costs. It largely depends on the type of the organization. Therefore, one shall always have in mind that the amount of indirect costs attributed the project must represent a fair apportionment.

When trying to find what the fair apportionment is, the baseline must be selected adequately.

The baseline means the bill (invoice) for electricity or rent, pay check for labour and so on. It is not allowed to purposefully select a baseline which will increase the indirect costs apportionment. For instance, when calculating the telephone indirect costs, only the costs on the given telephone can be used as the baseline, not the entire phone costs of the unit (organization)

Once the applicants use the formula, they will always get a number, which represents the amount of money. When summing up all the indirect costs the applicant may proceed to the calculation of the flat rate.

FLAT RATE

Flat rates shall be calculated from the total direct eligible costs, excluding direct eligible costs for subcontracting and the costs of resources made available by third parties which are not used on the premises of the Project Promoter (hereinafter referred to as without excluded costs).

The maximum flat rate project promoters and partners may apply for shall be 20% of direct eligible costs. As a guideline for promoters, 10% shall be a reasonable overheads flat rate for projects. The amount of applied flat rate within a project shall be fixed in the project contract.

Application of the flat rate method cannot lead to deliberately increased eligible direct costs. The amount of eligible direct costs shall be therefore thoroughly assessed during the selection process.