

NILS SCIENCE AND SUSTAINABILITY CALL FOR APPLICATIONS BILATERAL RELATIONS

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 NFP).

This document regulates the call for proposals, launched by UCM, addressed to fund bilateral relations activities within the frame of NILS Science and Sustainability programme.

2. Eligible activities, eligible applicants and requirements

- a. Eligible activities shall be: networking, exchange, sharing and transfer of knowledge, technology experience and best practices between promoters and entities in Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein, organization of workshops, organization of advanced training such as summer courses and similar, related to the scope of the programme and to the general topic of science and education policies. Such activities must have a bilateral character.
- b. Eligible applicants and requirements:
 - project promoters (holding projects awarded within NILS Science and Sustainability programme)
 - project partners (of projects awarded within NILS Science and Sustainability programme), and
 - higher education institutions, public research institutions, associations of scientists, organizations of higher education institutions, organizations of research institutions and similar organizations in Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein.
 - 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 side. Legal representatives of all involved institutions must support the application. Leading institution shall be called project promoter. Non – leading institutions shall be called project partners. This rule does not apply to applicants for summer courses, workshops or similar organized by the programme operator.

- Spanish beneficiary institutions must comply with articles 13 and 14 of Ley General de Subvenciones.
- Involved institutions shall respect all the terms of the measures and the applicable regulation (see 12), and must provide the administrative, communication and logistic support needed for carrying out the activities granted.

3. Call budget, eligible costs and amounts, implementation period

- a. Initial budget available for this call is 72,700 euro. Any fund remaining from preparatory visits call for applications within NILS Science and Sustainability programme may be transferred to the present call.
- b. Eligible costs shall be: real travel costs; subsistence costs; organization costs (such as location of rooms, publicity measures, material for its distribution; organized meals; translation costs; invited speakers, etc.); costs of conferences, seminars, workshops, meetings; external consultancy fees.
- c. Maximum allocation shall be 6 000 euro per activity.
- d. Activities funded within this call may last from the day after the agreement is signed until 30 November 2015.

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

- a. Administration, information and communication issues shall be handled by UCM.
- b. Evaluation of proposals shall be structured as follows: eligibility and administrative compliance assessment by Nils Direction; quality assessment by NILS Management Service and SIU; evaluation and awarding decision by Steering Committee.
- c. Evaluation criteria shall be:
 - Compliance with the objectives of NILS Science and Sustainability (40%).
 - Topics and institutions to be addressed (30%).
 - Expected feasibility of the proposed activity (30%).
- d. Applications shall be evaluated every 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.

5. 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 on the following website: www.nilsmobilityproject.es.

Applications shall be sent both by regular mail (one original) 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 and telephone number +34 91 394 4385.

6. Deadline for the presentation of the applications

The call shall be continuously open until 31 March 2015 (at 17:00 hours, Madrid local time), or until the complete allocation of the budget, whichever occurs first. Applications shall be submitted at least two months prior to the planned activity. Evaluation and selection of applications shall take place every two months.

7. 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 person proposing the activity.

8. Acceptance of the grant, agreement with UCM

- a. Upon accepting the grant award, project promoters shall sign an agreement with the UCM in which grant conditions, responsibilities, procedures and communication requirements shall be included.
- 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 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.

9. 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. Projects beginning after the beginning of one of these periods shall start reporting at the end of the following period.
- e. Reports will be assessed by UCM. 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.

10. Publicity

Applicants commit themselves to use the communication items provided by FMO and UCM (logo, acknowledged 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.

11. 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.

12. 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, Spanish General Grant Law 38/2003, of 17 November, of public aids. Arts. 13, 14 and 36 to 43. (available <http://www.boe.es/boe/dias/2003/11/18/pdfs/A40505-40532.pdf>) and Royal Decree 881/2006, Regulation of General Grant Law.
- The call text.

Madrid, 3 July, 2014

Signed: Andrés Arias Astray
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