

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

of the Call for Proposals on Research Projects of the National Research Foundation of
Ukraine

‘Excellent Science in Ukraine 2026-2028’

I. GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE CALL FOR PROPOSALS

1.1. Title of the Call for Proposals: ‘Excellent Science in Ukraine 2026-2028’ (hereinafter – the Call).

1.2. The purpose of the Call is to select projects for a collective grant support for cutting-edge fundamental research that involves the formulation and solution of urgent scientific issues by a group of leading and early-career researchers to ensure Ukraine's competitiveness in the world, promote the developments of the national research potential and its integration into the global research area.

The competitive selection is carried out in accordance with the Procedure for Competitive Selection and Financing of Projects by the National Research Foundation of Ukraine, approved by the Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine of December 27, 2019, No. 1170.

1.3. Thematic areas of the Call

The thematic areas of the projects are to correspond to the priority areas of science and technology developments (in accordance with clause 2 of Article 3 of the Law of Ukraine ‘On Priority Areas of Science and Technology Development’ <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/2623-14#Text>) and at least one of the thematic areas outlined for basic research on the most important issues of development of scientific, technical, socio-economic, socio-political, human potential to ensure Ukraine's competitiveness in the world and sustainable development of society and the state in the Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine of 30 April 2024 No. 476 <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/476-2024-%D0%BF#Text>

Intellectual property rights created in the course of research at the expense of grant support from the National Research Foundation of Ukraine (hereinafter referred to as the NRFU/Foundation) belong to the grantee and/or project implementers, except for the cases provided for in part two of Article 11 of the Law of Ukraine 'On State Regulation of Activities in the Sphere of Technology Transfer’.

Applications which contain information that constitutes a state secret (in accordance with the Law of Ukraine ‘On State Secrets’) **shall not be accepted** for consideration at the Call.

The fact of the absence of information constituting a state secret in the Application materials **must** be indicated in the consent of the institution (organization, enterprise) on behalf of which the application for grant support is submitted (hereinafter - the Application), signed by its head ([link](#)).

The head of the institution (organization, enterprise) participating in the Call is responsible for the inclusion of information constituting a state secret in the Application materials.

1.4. Duration of the projects to be selected based on the results of the Call:

The projects are expected to be implemented in 2026-2028 (subject to the availability of appropriate budget allocations*). Project implementation involves three stages:

- the first stage of project implementation (tentatively 9 months, March-November 2026);
- the second stage (tentatively 9 months, March-November 2027);
- the third stage (tentatively 9 months, March-November 2028).

The end of each stage correlates with the end of the respective budget year.

The start of project implementation is planned from March 2026. Implementation of projects in 2026-2028 will be carried out taking into account and in accordance with budget revenues in the respective year.

**Planning the duration of the project implementation stages shall be guided by the deadlines for processing the reporting documentation provided by the grantee to confirm the completion of each stage of the project (14 calendar days from the date of completion of each stage of project implementation). The duration of the project implementation stages planned in the Application may be adjusted at the time of the conclusion of the grant agreement (hereinafter – the Agreement), taking into account and in accordance with budget revenues in the respective year).*

II. REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPANTS OF THE CALL, PI AND PROJECT IMPLEMENTERS*

[*The requirements are formulated in accordance with the Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment](#)

2.1. General requirements. Participants of the Call (institution/organization/enterprise) on behalf of which the Application is submitted, may be institutions of higher education, research institutions (organizations/enterprises) of any legal form and form of ownership that meet the terms and conditions of this Call, and that have expressed a desire to participate in the Call, and have submitted the Application and documents required for participation in the Call, who agree to conduct research on their own premises, as well as to approve the related research results.

Legal entities of any legal form and form of ownership whose founders, beneficial owners and participants are citizens of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Belarus, as well as legal entities operating in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine, **may not enter the Call**. The restriction on entry into this Call also applies to individuals and legal entities subject to restrictive measures (sanctions) imposed by the National Security and Defense Council of Ukraine.

The terms and conditions of the Call do not provide for the involvement of a partner(s) in the preparation of the Application and project implementation.

Groups of project authors (a PI and at least two authors) are eligible to submit Applications, with at least one of them being an early-career researcher (as of the date

of the submission of the application via the Electronic System ‘The NRFU Call for Proposals’) and at least two (including the PI) having a research degree obtained or recognized in Ukraine. If the group of project authors consists of four or more researchers (including the PI), at least two of them shall be early-career researchers (as of the date of the submission of the application via the Electronic System ‘The NRFU Call for Proposals’). The PI must work at the main place of work in the institution (organization, enterprise) on behalf of which the Application is submitted. Other project authors may work in the same or different institutions (organizations, enterprises). It is allowed to involve support staff, including (but not limited to) higher education students, in the project group. Support staff is not personified at the time of submission of the Application.

One individual cannot be represented in more than one Application submitted to this Call. The PI and authors may be implementers of another successful project of another call of the Foundation, the funding of which is ongoing or has not started due to the incomplete procedure for concluding an agreement with the grantee. At the same time, the PI cannot be presented in the application for this Call if he or she is already the PI of a project that has been successful in another call of the Foundation, the funding of which is ongoing or has not been started due to the incomplete procedure for concluding an agreement with the grantee.

Note: an early-career researcher is a researcher under the age of 35 years, inclusive, who has a higher education degree of at least the second (Master's) level, or a researcher under the age of 40 years, inclusive, who has a doctoral degree (age at the time of submission of the Application through the Electronic System 'The NRFU Call for Proposals').

Authors shall have a research degree (except for postgraduate students) obtained or recognized in Ukraine, scientific publications in the field related to the project theme.

Project implementers cannot work in a foreign institution at their main place of work.

The PI and project author may not be employees of the Foundation's Directorate, members of the Foundation's Scientific Council, the Scientific Committee of the National Council for the Development of Science and Technology, members of the Call Commission, or reviewers involved in the scientific and scientific and technical review of projects under this Call.

Persons who authored and signed the final report on the implementation of projects to which clauses 1-2 of the Restrictive Measures applied to the authors of projects and/or project implementers whose grant support was terminated by the decision of the Scientific Council of the NRFU due to improper implementation of research and developments, and based on the results of the assessment of the quality of project implementation and publication/dissemination of its results, are not eligible to participate in the Call until the Scientific Council of the NRFU makes a decision on the information and relevant documents provided.

The PI is responsible for the accuracy of the information contained in the application and the documents attached to it.

The consequence of providing false information is the withdrawal of the Application from consideration in the course of the entire competitive selection period.

When submitting an Application for the Call and implementing the project, the project authors (implementers) shall follow the norms of [The Regulations on Compliance with the Principles of Research Ethics and Conflict of Interests Prevention during competitive selections, scientific and scientific-technical reviewing of projects and consideration of applications for grant support submitted to the National Research Foundation of Ukraine](#) which include a section on the prevention of cooperation with representatives of the aggressor country and temporarily occupied territories.

Violation of these requirements shall be grounds for rejection of the Application.

2.2. The PI of a project in Mathematical, Natural, Biological, Agricultural and Medical Sciences may be a researcher who has a research degree obtained or recognized in Ukraine, works **at the main place of work** in the institution (organization) submitting the Application for participation in the Call, and meets the first criterion and at least three other criteria in the Project PI questionnaire. PIs who belong to the category of early-career researchers (as of the date of the submission of the application via the Electronic System ‘The NRFU Call for Proposals’) are have a research degree obtained or recognized in Ukraine, **work at their main place of work** at the institution (organization) applying for participation in the Call, and meet only the first criterion in the Project PI Questionnaire.

Note: this information shall be clearly stated in the Application and in the following documents attached thereto (upload in separate files and to be evaluated by reviewers):

- CV according to the approved form (in [Ukrainian](#) and [English](#));
- a questionnaire of the Project PI according to the approved form (in [Ukrainian \(Social Sciences and Humanities and Mathematical, Natural, Biological, Agricultural and Medical Sciences\)](#) and [English \(Social Sciences and Humanities and Mathematical, Natural, Biological, Agricultural and Medical Sciences\)](#))).

The PI of a project in Social Sciences and Humanities may be a researcher who has a research degree obtained or recognised in Ukraine, works **at the main place of work** in the institution (organisation) applying for participation in the Call, and meets the first criterion and at least two other criteria specified in the questionnaire of the Project PI.

Note: this information shall be clearly stated in the Application and in the following documents attached thereto (upload in separate files and to be evaluated by reviewers):

- CV according to the approved form (in [Ukrainian](#) and [English](#));
- a questionnaire of the Project PI according to the approved form (in [Ukrainian \(Social Sciences and Humanities and Mathematical, Natural, Biological, Agricultural and Medical Sciences\)](#) and [English \(Social Sciences and Humanities and Mathematical, Natural, Biological, Agricultural and Medical Sciences\)](#))).

2.3. Implementation of the project

During the implementation of the project, the PI or project implementers may work in foreign institutions with monetary remuneration (compensation) for no more

than three months in total per year and during this time cannot receive remuneration or other payments from the Foundation's grant funds. In the event of such circumstances, the PI shall inform the NRFU of the terms and conditions of such work.

A project submitted for participation in this Call cannot be simultaneously submitted for participation in another call to be funded. Nor may a project be submitted for participation in this Call that is or has been funded from any other source.

The fact that the project is funded by the NRFU at the expense of the state budget, the project number and its title shall be indicated in all publications, official announcements, media coverage, social media, other open sources, and in presentations speeches of research results at scientific events.

Grantees shall take all available measures to promote the project to the general public and the results obtained during its implementation.

The Scientific Council of the Foundation considers scientific pseudo-conferences (including congresses, symposia, seminars, etc.) and relevant publications (conference proceedings, abstracts, etc.) to be unacceptable forms of approbation of the results of the research work of project implementers if their organizers/publishers are commercial non-academic structures whose main activity is to implement such events and publications on a paid basis and in absentia. Such events and publications only imitate scientific events and publications and are a profanation of scientific platforms for substantive professional scientific discussion, they discredit scientists and projects supported by the Foundation. Therefore, the Scientific Council of the Foundation does not allow their inclusion in research reports on project implementation and will not take into account such conferences/publications as indicators of the implementation of the Terms of Reference and Calendar Plan. The Scientific Council of the Foundation invites project implementers to present the results of scientific work within the project at events and in publications organized by institutions of higher education, research institutions, and specialized professional associations of researchers (in a respective research area).

2.4. Requirements for the results of interim stages of project implementation and the final result of the project

The Application and Terms of Reference (clauses 4.1-4.2) must contain clear and **realistic** quantitative and qualitative indicators of the implementation of the project's goals and objectives, in particular – the number and format of planned research publications, specific characteristics/parameters of other research products that will be the result of research activities for each stage of project implementation and at its conclusion.

The indicators of the **quality** of the completed project (specified in clause 4.1 of the Terms of Reference) should be research publications of the highest level of research results, namely: for **Natural, Mathematical, Biological, Medical and Agricultural Sciences** – articles in international professional publications that belong to Q1-Q2 according to the Scimago Journal & Country Rank classification; for **Social Sciences and Humanities** – articles published in professional periodicals that are indexed in international scientometric databases and in category B publications in Ukraine, collective monographs or research publications in book format, as well as electronic research resources/products (electronic databases, e-archives, e-catalogs, e-libraries, e-depositories, etc.).

Expected results should include hypotheses, theories, new methods, discoveries of laws of nature, previously unknown phenomena or properties of matter, as well as the identification of patterns in the development of society. These may include, for example, new models of ecosystems or theoretical frameworks for the analysis of social or political processes.

The justification for research novelty (innovation) shall be set out in clauses 3.3 and 4.2 of the Terms of Reference and should contain a thorough comparison of the proposed research and its expected project results with analogues existing in world science.

The Terms of Reference (clause 4.3) shall outline the short-term, medium-term, and long-term impact of the proposed research on the development of the relevant research area. It should be justified how the expected results will contribute to the formation, developments, and strengthening of current trends in the relevant field of knowledge, for example, through the creation of theoretical models, concepts, databases, or tools for analysis.

The Terms of Reference (clause 4.4) must contain a clear description of the potential socio-economic impact that the implementation of the planned research will lead to, indicating the direct and indirect beneficiaries of the project both in Ukraine and internationally; the potential number of research partnerships (in Ukraine and abroad which will continue or be formed as a result of the project). The areas and methods of expected use/application of the project results in a practical context (including in the economy, social sphere, education, for launching new applied projects etc.) and specific institutions (bodies, organizations) with which cooperation in this direction is envisaged.

The Terms of Reference (clause 4.1) shall indicate the methods of testing the research results and the ways of disseminating information about the project results (for example, presentations at conferences, public events, social networks, cooperation with the media), indicating the number of such dissemination events and the approximate number of participants.

2.5. Reporting. After completion of each intermediate stage of project implementation specified in the Grant Agreement, the grantee submits to the NRFU a report on the interim results of the project implementation and a financial report on the use of budget funds, which are a prerequisite for making a decision on the continuation or termination of grant support for the project.

When assessing the results of the implementation of tasks of individual stages and overall results, publications that contain references to funding from various budget sources without a clear distribution of such funding according to the results obtained and the authors of the publication will not be taken into consideration.

Based on the results of the work and within the time limits specified in the Agreement, the grantee sends to the Foundation the following:

- a report on the interim results of the project implementation (annotated report) in the structure and form established by the order of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine No. 1495 of 08.12.2023);

- financial report on the use of budget funds – in electronic form and in one paper copy;
- other documentation specified in the Agreement.

The Foundation monitors the grantee's fulfillment of the obligations specified in the Agreement, analyzes reports on the results of project implementation and the use of budget funds allocated for their implementation, and ensures the publication of project implementation results by posting an annotated report (report on interim project implementation results) on the work performed with references to published scientific papers on the Foundation's official website.

The decision to continue or terminate grant support is made by the Scientific Council of the Foundation on the proposal of the Scientific Council of the relevant section of the Foundation, based on the results of consideration of the grantees' reports. Approval of the documents specified in the fourth paragraph of clause 2.5 of these Terms and Conditions is the basis for signing the Act on the implementation of the intermediate stage of the project implementation.

A reasoned decision of the Scientific Council of the NRFU regarding the inappropriate or ineffective use of funds by the grantee and/or improper implementation of the grant support agreement, the project implementation schedule, or the grantee's inability to implement the project is grounds for terminating the provision of grant support.

In the event of termination of grant support by decision of the Scientific Council of the Foundation, a report on the interim results of the project implementation and a financial report on the use of budget funds within the stage are posted on the official website of the Foundation within five working days after approval of the reporting documentation.

After the completion of the project, the grantee submits to the Foundation a final report on its implementation with a description of the research result obtained.

Information on the results of the project implementation, together with the final report, a report on the use of budget funds within the framework of the project implementation and an annotated report on the work performed within the framework of the project implementation, is posted on the official website of the Foundation for free access in the form of open data within five working days in accordance with the Law of Ukraine 'On Access to Public Information'.

If the fact of misuse of budget funds is established within the framework of the project implementation, the amount of funds that were used for purposes other than their intended purpose shall be returned to the Foundation in accordance with the procedure established by law.

The structure and rules for preparing the final report on the project implementation are determined by DSTU 3008:2015 'Information and documentation. Reports in the field of science and technology. Structure and rules for preparation' or another form that will be legally established at the time of conclusion of the Agreement.

In the structure of the final report, the abstract is submitted in Ukrainian and English.

The authors of the project are personally responsible for the results of its implementation. If it is found that the declared research result does not correspond to

the obtained one, the authors of the project may be deprived of participation in the calls of the Foundation for the next 2 years based on the decision of the Scientific Council of the Foundation.

2.6. General ethical aspects of conducting research

Taking into account the standards and ethical norms relevant to the specific research area, the application shall indicate whether the project authors foresee any risks and/or harm to individuals or groups and/or the likelihood of other negative consequences that may be caused by the planned research.

Ensuring gender equality

When forming the composition of the project authors, it is necessary to avoid gender discrimination and provide equal conditions for involvement in the project implementation for researchers regardless of their gender.

Conducting research taking into account environmental safety

When planning and conducting research, it is necessary to foresee and take all possible measures to prevent harm to the environment and to make efforts for the rational use of natural resources and to reduce CO₂ emissions.

Open science practices and dissemination of information about the progress and results of the project

When planning a project, it is recommended to determine how the project will comply with Open Science practices. This applies to open access to publications and open access to FAIR data. It is also recommended to consider how Open science practices will be integrated into the project methodology and workflow.

The project should include a set of actions and strategies aimed at disseminating information about its progress and results in order to maximize its impact on individuals, organizations and communities, including measures to popularize the results obtained. Dissemination of information about the progress and results of the project is an integral part of the project and is carried out throughout its duration, as well as after its completion. Each stage of the project should include communication related to a specific stage of the research progress, the structure and content of the messages to be transmitted, which segments of the population will benefit most from addressing them, and which channels are most suitable for their transmission.

III. CRITERIA FOR THE NUMERICAL ASSESSMENT OF PROJECTS, INDICATING THE ORDER OF PRIORITY AND COEFFICIENTS OF INDIVIDUAL CRITERIA

The selection of projects is carried out in accordance with the procedure defined in the [Procedure for conducting scientific and scientific-technical reviewing of projects and consideration of applications for grant support submitted to the National Research Foundation of Ukraine, approved by the decision of the Scientific Council of the Foundation \(minutes of the meeting No. 21 of 25.08.2023, as amended by the decision of the Scientific Council of the NRFU of 26.10.2023, Minutes No. 28\)](#).

Assessment of projects is carried out by three independent reviewers according to the form and criteria approved by the Scientific Council of the Foundation.

Each project is assessed according to the following aspects with corresponding weighting factors:

- quality of the research planned;
- significance of the project for further development of science / engineering / technologies / society (according to the thematic area of the project);
- quality and feasibility of the proposed project implementation plan;
- research track record of project implementers.

Each of the aspects includes several assessment criteria with their own weighting factors.

The assessment for each criterion is carried out by a reviewer with a 5-point scale and obligatory provision of the appropriate justification.

The number of points for an aspect is calculated as a weighted arithmetic mean of points for the evaluation criteria for this aspect.

The total number of points of the project is calculated as the weighted arithmetic mean of the points by aspects, multiplied by 20.

For project assessment, a 5-point scale with the following points value is used for each criterion:

0	The project does not meet the criterion or cannot be evaluated due to the absence or incompleteness of the information provided for by this criterion.
1 – Unsatisfactory	Information as of assessed criterion is inadequately presented or has critical deficiencies.
2 – Satisfactory	In general, the project meets the criterion, but at the same time there are significant shortcomings.
3 – Good	The project meets the criterion, but there are some shortcomings.
4 – Very good	The project meets the criterion very well, but improvement is possible.
5 – Excellent	The project fully meets the criterion.

The following criteria, weighting factors, and form are used to assess the project:

Assessment criteria	Rating scale	Weight factor
<p>1. Quality of the research planned This section provides an assessment of the justification of the scientific project, its focus on the solution of an actual (urgent) scientific problem, the clarity of the formulation of the goal and tasks, the compliance of the project with the modern world level of scientific achievements, the novelty of the scientific idea, the originality of the scientific hypothesis, the correctness of the choice of methodology and research methods for verification of a scientific hypothesis.</p>	<p>From 0 to 5 The number of points per aspect is calculated as an arithmetic mean weighted points according to the criteria</p>	<p>0,3</p>
<p>1.1. Motivation and validity of the research concept: whether the current state of research and problems that need to be solved are described adequately and with appropriate references.</p>	<p>0-5</p>	<p>0,3</p>
<p>1.2. The novelty of the research ideas (including from the standpoint of interdisciplinarity if the research is multidisciplinary in nature).</p>	<p>0-5</p>	<p>0,3</p>
<p>1.3. Clarity and relevance of the stated goal and objectives of the research.</p>	<p>0-5</p>	<p>0,2</p>
<p>1.4. Adequacy of the proposed research approaches and methods, their compliance with the purpose and tasks of the project.</p>	<p>0-5</p>	<p>0,2</p>
	<p>Weighted average score</p>	

<p>2. Significance of the project for the further development of science / engineering / technology / society (according to the thematic area of the project)</p> <p>Within this section, an assessment of the clarity of the definition and argumentativeness of the prospect of further application of the research results for the purpose of developing science and new technologies, as well as the possibilities of implementing the research results in the economic and social spheres is to be made. The completeness and potential effectiveness of the publication of research results, the possibility of commercialization of the project's achievements are considered.</p>	<p>From 0 to 5</p> <p>The number of points per aspect is calculated as an arithmetic mean weighted points according to the criteria</p>	<p>0,2</p>
<p>2.1. The potential importance of the expected results and the acquisition of new knowledge, the development of new approaches and technologies and/or their importance for solving actual practical scientific / technical / social problems.</p>	<p>0-5</p>	<p>0,5</p>
<p>2.2. Effectiveness and appropriateness of planned ways of publicizing/using research results (expected professional publications, patents, presentations at international scientific conferences, dissemination of research results among the public).</p>	<p>0-5</p>	<p>0,5</p>
	<p>Weighted average score</p>	

<p>3. Quality and feasibility of the proposed project implementation plan Within this section, the reviewer assesses reasonableness of the work plan and the clarity of intermediate goals, their logical sequence; the clarity of the description of the planned tasks with the indication of specific results that can be verified; consistency of the complexity of the tasks with their time frames; compliance of the equipment and materials specified as necessary for the implementation of the project, the realization of its purpose and tasks; the clarity of the description of equipment and materials and the adequacy of their price in the budget.</p>	<p>From 0 to 5 The number of points per aspect is calculated as an arithmetic mean weighted points according to the criteria</p>	<p>0,2</p>
<p>3.1. The validity of the work plan, the compliance of the time frame with the complexity of the formulated stages and tasks, the clarity of intermediate goals, their logical sequence.</p>	<p>0-5</p>	<p>0,25</p>
<p>3.2. Compliance with the need for purchasing equipment and materials specified as necessary for the project implementation, achievement of its goals and objectives.</p>	<p>0-5</p>	<p>0,25</p>
<p>3.3. Balance and reasonableness of the overall project budget.</p>	<p>0-5</p>	<p>0,25</p>
<p>3.4. Availability and reasonableness of assessment of possible risks and prediction of ways to prevent or resolve them.</p>	<p>0-5</p>	<p>0,25</p>
	<p>Weighted average score</p>	

4. Research track record of project authors	From 0 to 5 The number of points per aspect is calculated as an arithmetic mean weighted points according to the criteria	0,3
4.1. The quality of the PI's publications over the past 5 years.	0-5	0,3
4.2. The quality of the publications of the project's authors over the past 5 years	0-5	0,3
4.3. The balance of the team of authors: compliance of the number of authors with the level of their qualifications with the goals and tasks of the project	0-5	0,2
4.4. Participation of the project PI and authors in scientific programs financed by national (home) and international organizations and institutions (in particular, grants) over the past 5 years.	0-5	0,2
	Weighted average score	
	Total score of the project: arithmetic mean weighted scores by aspects, multiplied by 20	

Algorithm for generating the final numerical assessment of applications

The curators analyze the set of reviewers' opinions on the project and report the results at the Panel meeting. For each project, the R-value of the discrepancy between the S_1 , S_2 and S_3 scores assigned by the three reviewers is calculated:

$$R = \frac{SD}{S} \cdot 100\%,$$

where S is the arithmetic mean of the grades assigned, i.e.

$$S = \frac{S_1 + S_2 + S_3}{3},$$

SD - standard deviation:

$$SD = \sqrt{\frac{(S_1 - S)^2 + (S_2 - S)^2 + (S_3 - S)^2}{3}}.$$

1. If the discrepancy R-value does not exceed the critical value of 20%, the final numerical score of the application is determined as the arithmetic mean S of the reviewers' scores.
2. If the discrepancy exceeds the critical value of 20%, then:
 - a) each member of the panel ($j=1, \dots, N$, where N is the number of panel members) determines the degree of validity k_{ij} of each of the reviewers' scores S_i , $i=1, \dots, 3$ in points from **0 (bad) to 2 (good)**;
 - b) the final numerical score of the application is calculated as a weighted average of the reviewers' scores:

$$S = S_1\beta_1 + S_2\beta_2 + S_3\beta_3,$$

where

$$\beta_i = \frac{\sum_{j=1}^N k_{ij}}{\sum_{l=1}^3 \sum_{j=1}^N k_{lj}}, \quad i = 1, 2, 3.$$

IV. TERMS, TIME AND VENUE OF THE CALL

The terms and conditions of the competitive selection are specified in all clauses of this document which are mandatory.

The Call is to be held from 25.04.2025 to 03.11.2025 (tentatively).

Venue: Borysa Hrinchenka Street, 1, Kyiv, Ukraine.

V. PROCEDURE FOR ACCEPTANCE (RECEIPT), REGISTRATION AND PRELIMINARY REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS

Applications for participation are submitted in Ukrainian and English in electronic form on the website of the NRFU (<https://grants.nrfu.org.ua>) (through the Electronic System 'The NRFU Call for Proposals').

No replacement or clarification of the submitted Applications by the participants of the Call after the submission deadline is allowed.

To participate in the call, it is necessary to submit an Application for grant support (in Ukrainian and English), which is certified by a qualified electronic signature of the PI, as well as documents submitted by the participant together with the Application.

Registration of Applications for participation in the Call is performed automatically in the NRFU through the Electronic System 'The NRFU Call for Proposals').

An Application is considered submitted if it is received through the Electronic System 'The NRFU Call for Proposals') and signed with a qualified electronic signature (QES).

It is recommended that the completed Application for grant support be submitted no later than 48 hours before the deadline for submitting the Applications. This will help the participants of the Call avoid technical errors when submitting the Application for participation in the Call.

Within 10 working days from the date of the submission deadline of Applications, the Directorate of the Foundation, as part of the organizational support for the conduct and organization of the NRFU calls, **checks applications for compliance with formal requirements.**

Grounds for rejection of Applications on formal grounds:

- non-compliance of the Application submitted by the Call participant with the form provided for in the terms and conditions (T&C);
- absence of documents required by the T&C;
- absence or incomplete provision of information in the documents submitted by the Applicant required by the T&C;
- inconsistency of the information provided in the Application with the requirements set forth in the T&C, including the fact that the project authors (except for PhD students) have a research degree awarded or recognized in Ukraine;
- the Project PI and/or implementer is included in more than one application submitted to the Call;
- the Project PI is already a PI of a winning project in another call of the Foundation, the funding of which is ongoing or has not started due to the pending procedure of concluding a grant agreement with a grantee (besides individual projects);
- the Project PI and authors are the implementers of more than one successful project in another call of the Foundation, the funding of which is ongoing or has not started due to the pending procedure for concluding a grant agreement with a grantee (besides individual projects);
- execution of documents submitted for participation in the Call in non-compliance with the procedure or form established by the Call or the requirements for execution of documents established by law;
- exceeding the maximum amount of funding specified in the T&C for one project as a whole and for each stage separately;
- exceeding the maximum level of the ratio of indirect costs in general and for each stage separately by 25% or more of the permissible maximum rate (which is 15% of direct costs) established by the T&C of the Call;
- exceeding the recommended maximum level of remuneration for project authors and support staff by 25% or more of the recommended maximum monthly remuneration established by the T&C of the Call, as defined in the Guidelines for planning the estimated cost of a project for the implementation of research (developments) at the expense of the Foundation's grant support;

- exceeding the maximum level of the ratio of remuneration of personnel, in particular, employees of research and organizational, financial, legal, personnel services, procurement departments, etc. who will be involved in servicing the Agreement to the amount of direct costs in general and for each stage separately by 25% of the permissible maximum rate (which is 5% of direct costs) established by the T&C of the Call;

- planning project work beyond the duration of the project provided for in the T&C (clause 1.4 of the T&C);

- violation of the requirements for restrictions on the participation in this Call for Proposals of individuals subject to restrictive measures (sanctions) of the National Security and Defense Council of Ukraine;

- the validity of restrictive measures applied to the PI and/or project authors, as defined by the provisions of the Restrictive Measures that may be applied to project authors and/or project implementers whose grant support was terminated by the decision of the Scientific Council of the National Research Foundation of Ukraine due to improper implementation of the research and developments agreement and/or based on the results of the quality assessment of project implementation and publication/dissemination of the results.

If the Application is rejected on formal grounds, the Directorate of the NRFU shall notify in electronic form of the non-compliance of the documents submitted by the applicant with the terms and conditions of the call, in particular with the criteria for selecting projects determined by the Scientific Council of the NRFU.

The detection of false information in the documents submitted by the applicant is the basis for withdrawal of the application from consideration during the entire period of the competitive selection, by decision of the Call Commission.

The Call Commission organizes and performs its work in three panels:

- Panel of Natural Sciences, Engineering and Mathematics;
- Panel of Biology, Medicine and Agricultural Sciences;
- Panel of Social Sciences and Humanities.

Within 10 working days from the date of completion by the Directorate of the NRFU of the check of applications for compliance with formal requirements of the Call Commission shall conduct **a preliminary review of compliance of applications with the terms and conditions of the Call**, in particular, the criteria set by the Scientific Council of the NRFU, and identify inaccurate information in the documents submitted by the applicant.

Grounds for withdrawal of applications from consideration during the preliminary review:

- inconsistency of the submitted project with the purpose, thematic areas or the T&C (justification for such compliance is to be provided in the text of the Application);
- the applicant provided false information;
- inconsistency of the submitted project with the Regulations on compliance with the principles of scientific ethics and prevention of conflicts of interest during competitive selection, scientific and scientific and technical expertise of projects and

consideration of applications for grant support submitted to the National Research Foundation of Ukraine in the areas of grant support of the National Research Foundation of Ukraine;

- the qualification level of the Project PI and other project authors does not meet the criteria set out in the T&C (see Section II of the T&C).

Based on the results of the preliminary review of applications for compliance with the T&C, in particular the criteria defined by the Foundation's Scientific Council, in case of detection of false information in the documents submitted by the Applicant, the Call Commission approves the list of applications that are withdrawn from consideration. The decision of the Call Commission to withdraw an application from consideration on the grounds of non-compliance with the T&C, in particular the criteria for selecting projects defined by the Foundation's Scientific Council, or the discovery of false information in the documents submitted by the applicant, shall be communicated by the Foundation's Directorate to the concerned applicant in electronic form no later than three business days after such a decision is made.

If the Application complies with the T&C and the documents submitted by the Applicant contain reliable information, the Call Commission shall forward the project to the reviewers for scientific and technical assessment no later than within seven business days.

VI. DEADLINES FOR SUBMISSION AND REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS, SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL ASSESSMENT OF PROJECTS AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE RESULTS OF THE CALL

Date and time of the start of application submission: 25.04.2025, 00:01 Kyiv time.

Date and time of application submission deadline: 28.05.2025, 23:59 Kyiv time.

Period for conducting scientific and technical expertise and announcement of the results of the Call: until 03.11.2025 (tentatively).

Information on the results of the Call shall be posted on the official website of the Foundation and shall include:

1) the decision of the Scientific Council of the Foundation on approval of the results of the Call;

2) the amount of funding for projects recommended for implementation with the Foundation's grant support;

3) the ranking list of projects with the points scored by each project.

The PI is sent a textual justification of the scores received by the project based on the results of the scientific and scientific and technical expertise by email.

After the Foundation makes a decision to award a grant, the Foundation and the successful institution (organization) conclude an Agreement which defines all the necessary terms and conditions for the implementation of the project, including the Grantee's liability and the application of penalties for failure to fulfill or delayed fulfillment of its obligations.

The term for concluding the Agreement shall not exceed 30 calendar days from the date of the decision to award the grant. If the Agreement between the successful institution (organization) and the Foundation is not concluded within the specified period due to the fault of the successful institution (organization), it is considered that the institution (organization) has refused to implement the project.

VII. TOTAL AMOUNT OF FUNDING FOR PROJECTS TO BE SELECTED BASED ON THE RESULTS OF THE CALL

The total amount of funding for the Call in 2026 makes up to UAH 320 mln, in 2027 – up to UAH 250 mln, in 2028 – up to UAH 250 mln (in accordance with budget allocations, taking into account the risk of possible redistribution of funds and the risks associated with the martial law in Ukraine).

The total amount of funding for the Call is up to UAH 820 mln (provided appropriate budgetary allocations are available).

The maximum total amount of funding for one project in case the project:

- plans for purchase of research equipment is up to UAH 7 mln, of which up to UAH 3 mln (but not more than UAH 1.5 mln – for the purchase of research equipment during the first stage of project implementation) can be planned for the first stage of project implementation and up to UAH 2 mln for the second stage and up to UAH 2 mln for the third (final) stage of project implementation;
- doesn't plan the purchase of research equipment - up to UAH 6 mln, up to UAH 2 mln of which in each of the three stages of project implementation.

By submitting an Application for the Call, participants confirm that they have fulfilled the condition that the submitted project cannot be simultaneously submitted for participation in another Call in order to receive funding from the state budget, as well as when such a project is or has been funded at the expense of state budgetary funds based on the results of another call, including those conducted by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine or other entities.

The terms and procedure for funding projects depend on the amount of budget allocations provided in the state budget for the relevant year to finance the activities of the Foundation.

Projects are funded by the Foundation's gradual transfer of funds from its registration account to the grantee's account in accordance with the Agreement concluded between the NRFU and the winning organization of the Call (Grantee), in accordance with the Calendar Plan and the Schedule of Financing the research project, within the limits of the funding actually received by the Grantor.

Unused and/or saved funds during the relevant intermediate stage of the project implementation shall be refunded to the NRFU registration account within seven working days after the completion of the respective intermediate stage of the project.

All costs for each stage of project implementation must be incurred before the completion of the respective intermediate stage of project implementation.

Under this Call the NRFU grant funds may be allocated to the following cost items:

1) Direct costs:

- labor remuneration;
- payroll accruals;
- materials required for the performance of works, except for equipment and facilities;
- equipment and facilities;
- business trip expenses.

2) Indirect costs

The total amount of indirect costs (costs that are not directly related to R&D implementation, but are necessary to ensure the full implementation of the project) cannot exceed 15% of Direct Costs within each stage of project implementation. Such costs may include:

- utility costs;
- remuneration and accruals for the remuneration of personnel, in particular, employees of scientific and organization services, financial services, legal services, HR services, purchase department, etc. who will be involved in servicing the Agreement. Such expenses may not exceed 5% of the total amount of the ‘Direct costs’ cost item.

3) Other costs – costs that are not reflected in the above-mentioned cost items, but are necessary for project implementation, in particular, costs of services. This cost item may include costs for:

- publications,
- obtaining patents,
- access to research equipment for research and scientific and technical (experimental) developments,
- purchase of software,
- organizational fees for participation in scientific conferences and other scientific events,
- access to databases, libraries, etc.

Note: see *‘Methodological recommendations for Planning the Estimated Cost of the Project for the Implementation of Research (Developments) at the Expense of the Grant Support of the NRFU’ (to the terms and conditions of the call ‘Excellent Science in Ukraine 2026-2028’* ([link](#)).

Expenses under all items must be justified.

The project estimate should indicate the employment (in months) of the PI and each project implementer.

If the project involves the purchase of equipment and facilities worth more than UAH 200 ths per unit with the grant of the Foundation, a document containing a detailed feasibility study of the need for such acquisition for the implementation of the project is attached to the Application, namely:

- 1) confirmation that the Call participant does not have the equipment and facilities planned for the purchase;
- 2) detailed justification of the necessity, suitability and effectiveness of using such equipment and facilities for conducting the planned research, taking into account its impact on the research capacity of the Call participant;
- 3) description of the main characteristics of the equipment and facilities necessary for conducting the research;
- 4) detailed confirmation that the participant has the necessary conditions for the installation, operation and maintenance of such equipment and facilities (premises, maintaining the required temperature regime/lighting/humidity/other conditions in it, appropriate qualified technical personnel, etc.). In the event that the equipment and facilities require specially prepared premises/conditions – a description of the costs for which these works will be performed);
- 5) if the application plans for the purchase of equipment and facilities outside Ukraine, it is necessary to provide justification for the impossibility of purchasing such equipment in Ukraine and the possibility of its delivery from abroad within the appropriate period;
- 6) a description of the prospects for using the equipment and facilities planned for purchase after the project is completed;
- 7) commercial offers (from at least 2 different suppliers) detailing the cost, terms and conditions of equipment delivery with a link to the suppliers' websites are attached to the feasibility study. If the equipment is unique (has no analogues on the market), and if it is not possible to provide two commercial offers, an appropriate justification (documentary confirmation of the absence of competition on the market for such equipment) shall be provided.

If the project involves the purchase of equipment and facilities worth more than UAH 200 thousand per unit at the expense of grant support from the Foundation, employees of financial services, structural units responsible for procurement (conducting tenders), and other interested units of the institution participating in the Call must be involved in preparing the feasibility study.

Note: the feasibility study of the need to purchase equipment and facilities for the project is signed by the head of the institution (organization, enterprise) on behalf of which the Application is submitted, the head of the financial department of the institution (organization, enterprise) on behalf of which the Application is submitted, and the PI.

The PI must inform the supplier about the submission of a commercial proposal to the Foundation as part of the Application. The supplier's refusal to confirm the proposal is grounds for rejection of the Application on formal grounds (due to non-compliance with the Terms and Conditions of the Call).

After the announcement of the results of the Call, the winner submits a [declaration](#) (in Ukrainian), in which the head of the winning institution of the Call and the PI confirm that the project will be implemented in the winning institution in full, in

accordance with the Application; the institution has the material and technical base, organizational resources and a team of performers, which allows ensuring the implementation of the project in full; the equipment that will be purchased at the expense of the grant support will be used for its intended purpose (for the purpose of performing the tasks under the project and implementing the project in full).

Grant funds cannot cover: expenses not directly related to the implementation of the project (in particular, payment for intermediary services, purchase of goods, performance of works, provision of services not related to the implementation of the project); payment for goods, works and services that were or will be financed from other sources before or after the signing of the Agreement. The grant cannot be used to purchase: stationery, office equipment and supplies, office computer, multimedia and copying equipment, cartridges, drives, etc. (this is detailed in Section II of the Methodological recommendations for Planning the Estimated Cost of the Project for the Implementation of Research (Developments) at the Expense of the Grant Support of the NRFU’).

The grant funds cannot cover the costs of maintaining institutions (organizations, enterprises), including those that are participants in the Project.

VIII. NUMBER OF REVIEWERS CONDUCTING SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL REVIEW OF THE PROJECT

Scientific and technical review of the project submitted to the Call is performed by 3 reviewers, at least one of which shall be a foreign reviewer.

Members of the Call Commission and authors of projects for this Call may not be involved in scientific and technical review.

IX. DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE CALL

Documents for participation in the Call shall be submitted in Ukrainian and in English in electronic form on the website of the NRFU (<https://grants.nrfu.org.ua>) (through the Electronic System ‘The NRFU Call for Proposals’).

To participate in the Call, it is necessary to submit an Application (in Ukrainian and English), which must be certified by a qualified electronic signature of the PI, as well as documents submitted by the applicant together with the Application.

The documents submitted for participation in the Call in the approved form shall be executed in strict compliance with the form and content of the relevant document.

Documents to be submitted by a participant together with the Application (in the Electronic System ‘The NRFU Call for Proposals’):

1. Consent of the project authors to its implementation (a mark in the Electronic System ‘The NRFU Call for Proposals’ using a qualified electronic signature through the project author's personal account).

2. Consent of the institution (organization) on behalf of which the Application is submitted to the implementation of the project, in the approved form ([in Ukrainian](#)) signed by the head of the institution (organization) (scanned copy).

3. Certificate (scanned copy in Ukrainian) from the place of work of the PI with a mandatory indication that the PI works **at the main place of work** in the institution (organization, enterprise) on whose behalf the Application is submitted. NOTE: the certificate must contain the phrase ‘AT THE MAIN PLACE OF WORK’. [Sample form of the certificate](#).

4. Statement signed by the head of the institution (organization) on behalf of which the application is submitted regarding the participant's compliance with paragraph 5 of the criteria for assessing the admissibility of state aid to business entities for research, technical developments and innovation activities, approved by the Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 118 of February 7, 2018 in the approved form ([in Ukrainian](#)) (scanned copy).

5. CV according to the approved form (in [Ukrainian](#) and [English](#)).

6. Questionnaire of the Project PI, in the approved form (in [Ukrainian](#) ([Social Sciences and Humanities](#) and [Mathematical, Natural, Biological, Agricultural and Medical Sciences](#)) and [English](#) ([Social Sciences and Humanities](#) and [Mathematical, Natural, Biological, Agricultural and Medical Sciences](#))).

7. Feasibility study of the need to purchase equipment and facilities for the project is signed by the head of the institution (organization, enterprise) on behalf of which the Application is submitted, the head of the financial department of the institution (organization, enterprise) on behalf of which the Application is submitted, and by the PI (if the project involves the purchase of equipment and facilities worth more than UAH 200 ths per unit) (scanned copy, in Ukrainian, [sample](#)).

8. Terms of Reference for the research, in the approved form (scanned copies in Ukrainian ([sample](#)) and English ([sample](#))).

9. Calendar Plan, in the approved form (scanned copies, in Ukrainian ([sample](#)) and English ([sample](#))).

10. Economic justification of the estimated cost of the project, in the approved form (scanned copy, in Ukrainian ([sample](#)) and English ([sample](#))).

11. Amount of funding for individual cost items, in the approved form (scanned copy, in Ukrainian ([sample](#)) and English ([sample](#))).

Documents that the winner of the Call submits to the NRFU in paper form (originals certified by signatures and seals):

1. Grant Support Agreement with Annexes.

2. Consent of the institution (organization, enterprise) on behalf of which the Application is submitted to the implementation of the project signed by its head, confirming that the Application does not contain information the content of which constitutes a state secret (in accordance with the Law of Ukraine ‘On State Secrets’), in the approved form [sample](#).

3. A certificate from the place of work of the PI with a mandatory indication that the PI works at the main place of work in the institution (organization, enterprise) on whose behalf the Application is submitted. NOTE: the certificate must contain the phrase ‘AT THE MAIN PLACE OF WORK’ ([sample form of the certificate](#)).

4. A statement signed by the head of the institution (organization, enterprise) on behalf of which the Application is submitted, confirming that the participant complies

with paragraph 5 of the criteria for assessing the admissibility of State Aid to Undertakings for conducting research, technical development and innovation activities, approved by the Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine No. 118 of February 7, 2018, in the approved form ([sample](#)).

5. CV according to the approved form (in [Ukrainian](#) and [English](#)).

6. Questionnaire of the Project PI, in the approved form (in [Ukrainian](#) ([Social Sciences and Humanities](#) and [Mathematical, Natural, Biological, Agricultural and Medical Sciences](#)) and [English](#) ([Social Sciences and Humanities](#) and [Mathematical, Natural, Biological, Agricultural and Medical Sciences](#))).

7. Feasibility study of the need to purchase equipment and facilities for the project is signed by the head of the institution (organization, enterprise) on behalf of which the Application is submitted, the head of the financial department of the institution (organization, enterprise) on behalf of which the Application is submitted, and by the PI (if the project involves the purchase of equipment and facilities worth more than UAH 200 ths per unit) ([requirements](#)).

8. Informed consent of the PI and project authors (in Ukrainian).

9. A declaration in which the head of the successful institution and the PI confirm that the project will be implemented in the institution in full, in accordance with the Application for Grant Support; the institution has the material and technical base, organisational resources and group of performers to ensure the implementation of the project in full; the equipment to be purchased at the expense of the grant support will be used for its intended purpose (to perform the tasks under the project and complete the project in full), in the approved form ([sample](#)).

X. INFORMATION ON THE METHODS FOR SUBMITTING DOCUMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE CALL AND METHODS FOR THE WITHDRAWAL OF AN APPLICATION BY AN APPLICANT BEFORE THE DEADLINE FOR ITS SUBMISSION

To submit an Application the PI and project authors shall undergo a preregistration procedure on the official website of the NRFU. Identification of a person submitting an Application is carried out during registration by using a qualified electronic signature.

A participant has the right to withdraw the application before the deadline for its submission, of which the PI notifies the Foundation by email at support@nrfu.org.ua.

XI. CONTACT INFORMATION

For information related to the competitive selection and submission of projects, please use the following contacts:

Subject matter	Contact department
Non-technical issues related to Application submission	Grant Support Division of the NRFU excellent.2026@nrfu.org.ua

Technical support issues (submission of applications through the Electronic System 'The NRFU Call for Proposals')	support@nrfu.org.ua
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Phone for inquiries: +(38) 044 298 16 29

Email for general inquiries – nrfu@nrfu.org.ua

Note: these communication channels are only available during business hours.

Website: <https://nrfu.org.ua/>

Mailing address: Ukraine, Kyiv, 01001, Borysa Hrinchenka Str., 1

XII. ANNEXES

1. Application form for grant support ([link](#)).
2. Guidelines for filling out the Application ([download](#))
3. Sample form of the Grant Agreement ([download](#)).