



Supplementary regulations for the application, selection and funding of Dioscuri Centres of Scientific Excellence in the Czech Republic¹

Application for a Dioscuri Centre of Scientific Excellence

1. Before the formal call announcement, MEYS invites all Czech universities and Czech research institutions to provide declarations of commitment as potential future Host Institutions in the framework of the Dioscuri Programme. A list of Czech research organizations that submitted expressions of interest is available on the MEYS website: <https://www.msmt.cz/research-and-development-1/dioscuri-programme-1/list-of-czech-scientific-institutions>
Applications with Host Institutions not included in this list are also welcome.
2. The applicant (leader of the proposed Dioscuri Centre) must submit all required application documents to MPG within the established application deadline via the following application platform: <https://dioscuri.cloud.opencampus.net/> Applications must be complete as specified in the call text. All application documents shall be written in English.
3. After submitting the application via the application platform, applicants must send all application documents (as a .zip file) to the prospective host institution. The host institution must submit a package of all application documents (.zip file) plus a form to be filled by the host institution (in Czech) via the MEYS' databox. For more information, please check the MEYS website: <https://www.msmt.cz/vyzkum-a-vyvoj-2/vyzva-k-podani-zadosti-o-poskytnuti-dotace-ze-statniho-1?lang=1>

Evaluation and Selection Procedure

- a. The Dioscuri Programme is governed by a Scientific Committee (hereinafter referred to as 'Dioscuri Committee') which is responsible for the overall review and selection process for the establishment of Dioscuri Centres of Scientific Excellence.
- b. The Dioscuri Committee is composed of renowned scientists from European universities and European research institutions from outside the Czech Republic that have been nominated by the President of MPG. Furthermore, one renowned Czech scientist is member of the Dioscuri Committee in a consultative capacity.
- c. Applications are made up of a short research concept and a full research concept and are subject to a formal eligibility check and subsequently to peer review. The eligibility check is carried out by MPG and MEYS.
- d. The review of all eligible applications is based solely on the scientific merit of the applicant and the scientific quality of their research concept. Members of the Dioscuri Committee shall maintain objectivity of judgement and impartiality, apply uniform assessment criteria and avoid conflicts of interest.
- e. All decisions made by the Dioscuri Committee are binding collective decisions. The proceedings of the Dioscuri Committee remain confidential, individual feedback will not be provided.
- f. In a first stage, the Committee reviews all eligible application and selects up to around 15 applications based on short concepts.

¹ These regulations supplement the main document "First Call for Dioscuri Centres of Scientific Excellence in the Czech Republic".



- g. In the second stage, the remaining applications are subject to external peer review based on full research concepts. The Dioscuri Committee subsequently selects up to around 6 applicants for interviews.
- h. In the third stage, the remaining applicants are invited for selection interviews and up to three applicants are selected for funding. Applicants selected in the third stage receive recommendations for the establishment of their DC from the Dioscuri Committee.
- i. All applicants are informed about the outcome of the Committee's decisions after every stage of the evaluation process by MPG.

Negotiations

1. After the selection by the Scientific Committee, the designated DC leader negotiates specific conditions, e.g. provision of infrastructure, career perspectives etc. with representatives from the respective Czech Host Institution and, if needed, the MEYS.
2. Negotiations should be concluded within several months of the Committee's final decision. Operations of the DC should ideally start within less than a year after the funding decision. The precise starting date of the DC will be set during the negotiations.

Funding

1. The Dioscuri Programme in the Czech Republic is mutually funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and the Czech Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MEYS).
2. The funds are transferred to the Host Institution by the MEYS, as described in the funding decision issued by MEYS (*Rozhodnutí o poskytnutí podpory*). During the negotiations, the leader of the DC shall provide an updated budget table based on the specific starting date of the DC.
3. The rules for annual and final reporting requirements will be included in the funding decision issued by MEYS (*Rozhodnutí o poskytnutí podpory*).
4. The funding period is five years beginning from the date of the establishment of the respective Dioscuri Centre. Upon positive evaluation by the Scientific Committee and subject to the availability funding, the funding period may be extended once for another five years.

Partner from Germany / Scientific Advisory Board

1. Applicants shall designate a senior scientist from a German university or research institution as their Partner from Germany (a natural person, not an organization).
2. The Partner shall be well suited to advise on the scientific and structural development of the DC (i.e. in managerial questions such as hiring of team members, networking, strategic decisions, application for international funding). Applicants are responsible for identifying and securing a Partner.
3. Joint activities with the Partner are eligible for funding within the Dioscuri Programme and might take various forms (e.g.: collaboration on research projects, exchange of PhD-students or post-docs, mutual research stays, joint organization of workshops/conferences etc.)
4. An international Scientific Advisory Board shall be constituted for each Dioscuri Centre, in which the Partner will become a member. Regulations concerning the establishment of a Scientific Advisory Board will be provided after the funding decision.



General Items for Review during the Evaluation and selection Process

1. A Dioscuri Centre (DC) goes beyond the scope of a project grant. It is built around a distinguished researcher position and is expected to become a lighthouse of scientific excellence according to international quality standards.
2. Bearing this in mind, the scientific quality of the leader of a DC and her/his ability to conduct innovative, internationally competitive research is the most important criterion for review.
3. Dioscuri Centres shall be scientifically ground breaking and flexible. They should take up innovative topics, follow a sustainable approach, and involve excellent researchers (the applicant as well as collaborating scientists).
4. The clear goal and the ability to build up and develop the Dioscuri Centre and to integrate it into the regional and international research landscape, including co-operation with the Partner from Germany, is indispensable.
5. The DC will be funded with up to € 325,000 p.a., while infrastructure and scientific equipment will be provided additionally by the respective Host Institution. The leader of the DC will be encouraged to apply for additional funding from Czech and European/international sources.

Evaluation and Selection Process: Evaluation Form for External Reviewers

<u>I. Review of the research concept</u>				
Is the topic ground-breaking and innovative, does it raise new and creative questions that go beyond the state of the art, in Poland as well as in international comparison?				
Is the proposal dealing adequately with the proposed subject?				
Is the proposal in line with the attached criteria for a Dioscuri Centre, i.e. a lighthouse of scientific excellence according to international quality standards? Does it follow an innovative and sustainable approach?				
Is the proposed structure of the Dioscuri Centre (DC) suited to connect the DC to the local research landscape while simultaneously positioning the leader of the DC in the respective field?				
Is the proposed Budget Plan reasonable and convincing?				
Research Concept	<input type="checkbox"/> (4) outstanding	<input type="checkbox"/> (3) excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> (2) good	<input type="checkbox"/> (1) average
<u>II. Review of the envisaged leader of the Dioscuri Centre</u>				
Is the applicant an experienced and outstanding research personality?				
Does the applicant exhibit an outstanding or excellent publishing record?				
Research performance of the applicant	<input type="checkbox"/> (4) outstanding	<input type="checkbox"/> (3) excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> (2) good	<input type="checkbox"/> (1) average
<u>III. Review of proposed collaborations</u>				
Will the proposed DC stimulate scientific collaboration with partners in Germany?				
Will the proposed DC stimulate scientific collaboration in the region?				
Please comment on the expected benefits of the collaboration with the Partner from Germany and within the region.				
<u>IV. Overall recommendation and concluding remarks</u>				
Concluding remarks in light of points I. to III.				
Overall recommendation for funding				
<input type="checkbox"/> I fully support this proposal for funding.				
<input type="checkbox"/> I support this proposal with some reservations.				
<input type="checkbox"/> I do not support this application.				