
‘Excellence Initiative – Research University’ programme

Information for potential candidates for members of an international team of experts

1. The IDUB programme

"The Excellence Initiative – Research University" (Polish acronym: IDUB) programme is one of the key initiatives introduced by the new Act of 20 July 2018 – Law on Higher Education and Science, the aim of which is a comprehensive reform of the Polish higher education and science system. The aim of the IDUB programme is to encourage the best Polish universities to be on a par with the leading European universities in the field of research, thereby increasing the international importance of their work.

The programme has allowed to select 10 universities, from among 20 universities entitled to participate in the competition. Ten winning universities are receiving additional funding (equals 10% of a regular subvention from the public budget) for a period of 7 years (2020–2026) for the implementation of development plans included in applications submitted to the competition. The funding is granted based on a performance agreement. The implementation of the development plans will be subject to assessment. The first mid-term assessment will be carried out in 2023, and the final assessment in 2026.

2. The first IDUB competition

In 2019, the Ministry of Education and Science held the first competition under the IDUB programme. The selection of the winners of the first IDUB competition was a turning point for the higher education system and science.

Twenty best universities in the country were qualified to participate in the first IDUB competition. All of them met the statutory conditions regarding scientific categories obtained during the last comprehensive assessment of scientific units in relation to the number of fields of study and disciplines in which a university conducts scientific activity. Furthermore, a negative assessment of the Polish Accreditation Committee for any of the fields of study developed at a university was regarded as disqualifying. All applying universities presented a 6-year development plan in which they declared objectives and related activities resulting in significant enhancement of: research impact on world science, international collaboration with world-class research centres, quality of higher education and doctoral training as well as quality of management. The plans identified priority research fields that are the target of intensified efforts as the plan is implemented.

Each of the 20 universities was assessed by 15 outstanding experts. Among them were rectors, presidents or vice-rectors of leading European universities, including University of Göttingen, University of Amsterdam, Aarhus University, University of Manchester, and University of Southampton. The team was composed of scientists of high standing in the international scientific community. In the expert selection process, participation of representatives of each field of science was ensured. The team members had professional

experience in institutions from various countries, including Germany, the U.K., France, Spain, the Benelux, Scandinavia, Switzerland and Hungary.

Applications were assessed against 4 criteria:

- overall quality of an application, i.a. its conciseness, quality of SWOT analysis;
- relevance and sustainability of the objectives defined in the development plan, including the degree to which they allow for meeting the programme's expected outcomes;
- adequacy and feasibility of planned actions, including their relevance in the context of the objectives;
- potential of the applying university in terms of research, international collaboration, educational provision and doctoral training, as well as management and HR policy.

3. Mid-term evaluation

The universities have presented an action plan for the coming years. **The implementation of this plan will be subject to assessment.** The mid-term evaluation will be carried out in the second half of 2023. All of ten research universities selected in first competition are obliged to submit, by July 3, 2023, self-assessment reports on the implementation of the Plans (in Polish and English). The self-assessment reports will cover a detailed account of implementation in case of activities, for which the starting date indicated in the Plan fell in the period of 2020-2022. The report should also include an assessment of the extent to which the implementation of the development plan so far has contributed to the achievement of the overall plan's objectives, and conclusions regarding the plan's implementation in the remaining period.

The evaluation ends with a positive or negative assessment. In the event of a negative result of the mid-term evaluation of the plan implementation, the team of experts presents recommendations for changing the plan.

4. Appointment of the international team of experts

In order to perform the mid-term evaluation, the minister of education and science will appoint an international team of experts. Candidates for team members may be proposed by the the Council of Scientific Excellence (Polish acronym: RDN), General Council for Science and Higher Education (Polish acronym: RGNiSW), the Conference of Rectors of Academic Schools in Poland (Polish acronym: KRASP), Science Policy Committee (Polish acronym: KPN), the Council of the National Centre for Research and Development (the NCBiR council), the Council of the National Science Centre (the NCN council) and national scientific associations.

The Ministry is searching for candidates who:

- have strong expertise and outstanding achievements in policy development and implementation in the field of higher education and science, at university or national levels, or

- are research leaders with a recognised track record of outstanding research achievements in different fields of science (including research on higher education).

The Ministry is searching for candidates who are (or used to be) employed outside Poland at an internationally renowned university or research centre, or at an institution acting for the higher education and science system. Preference will be given to candidates with experience in evaluating higher education reforms or university strategies, or in assessing applications in programmes similar to the Excellence Initiative.

A candidate must not be employed at a university eligible for this competition.

The received candidatures will be analysed and the selected experts will be proposed to the Minister for approval in order to appoint the team in the form of an order of the Minister. The final list of team members to be included in the order will be determined by the Minister, who will take into account the candidatures submitted by the above-mentioned entities as well as individual declarations of candidates submitted in response to the invitation issued by the Minister.

5. Team members' main tasks and working methods

The main task of the members of the international team of IDUB experts will be the analysis of the submitted self-assessment reports in accordance with the procedure developed and adopted in the order of the minister appointing the team. As part of the evaluation, experts will participate in study visits to the assessed universities (the number of tasks and their assignment to individual experts will be decided within the team).

Self-assessment reports will be submitted and assessed via a secure electronic system used by the Ministry of Education and Science in Poland to handle grant applications and reports. Assessment tasks, as well as preparatory team meetings, can be performed remotely via communication systems. Study visits will take place in the second half of 2023, after the assessment of the submitted reports, and they will require experts' arrival to Poland.

Each expert will be remunerated for preparing the assessments of the Self-assessment reports according to the number of assessments performed and allocated within the work of the team. Detailed information on the amount of remuneration will be provided at a later stage of the recruitment process. During the study visits, the costs of transportation, accommodation and other necessary expenses will be covered by the Ministry.

Further information on the mid-term evaluation will be posted on the website:

<https://www.gov.pl/web/edukacja-i-nauka/ewaluacja-srodkresowa-idub-2023>

More information about The first IDUB competition:

<https://www.gov.pl/web/science/the-first-idub-competition>