

F.R.S.-FNRS MINI-GUIDE CREDITS AND PROJECTS CALL 2020

French version: [click here](#).

1. SCHEDULE

Publication of the call: **Thursday 28th May 2020.**

Application form to be submitted on the F.R.S.-FNRS [e-space](#) web-based application.

INSTRUMENTS		CREDITS ET PROJECTS CALL 2020			
		DEADLINE ¹ TO ACCESS E-FORM	ELECTRONIC VALIDATION DEADLINES ¹		
			MAIN PROMOTER	CO-PROMOTERS	RECTOR
Research Credit	CDR	Wednesday July 8 At 2 p.m.	Thursday July 9 At 2 p.m.	Thursday July 16 At 2 p.m.	Thursday July 23 At 2 p.m.
Research Project	PDR				
Equipment	EQP				
Incentive Grant for Scientific Research	MIS				
Interuniversity Institute for Nuclear Sciences²	IISN				

Funding decision will be made by the decision-making bodies of the F.R.S.-FNRS at the end of the calendar year. The Starting date for every instrument is the following: 1st January 2021.

2. INSTRUMENTS

Rules and regulations related to eligible expenses have been defined to meet the specific needs of wide-ranging scientific fields.

- **Research Credit (CDR - Crédit de recherche)**: a funding instrument for operating costs and small equipment intended for an individual researcher (or her/his team). This instrument not only ensures the funding of basic fundamental research and exploratory research, but also promotes the development of new research themes and researchers.
- **Research Project (PDR - Projet de recherche)**: a funding instrument for single or cross-university research projects, supported by a main promoter-applicant, and including operating, personnel and small equipment costs. The promoter is responsible for choosing the personnel to hire.
- **Equipment (EQP - Équipement)**: a funding instrument for equipment. Application can be built around a specific project or general research themes of a team.
- **Incentive Grant for Scientific Research (MIS - Mandat d'impulsion scientifique)**: a funding instrument for specific research projects intended for young researchers with the aim of encouraging their autonomy.

These instruments are summarised in the table below. The eligible expenses are detailed in the regulatory provisions.

¹ All times are Brussels local time.

² IISN Instrument: see Chapter 5, point 5.1 Specific Remarks in this mini-guide.

In accordance with the regulations, the Scientific Commission shall consider the adequacy between the requested budget and the submitted research project. The Scientific Commission may reduce the requested budget up to a maximum of 15%. In case the adequacy of the requested budget with regard to the research programme is not justified and appears to require a reduction of more than 15%, the research programme will not be deemed fundable.

	Duration	Limits	Nature
Research Credit CDR	2 years ³	€5 - 30 k /year	Operating costs, support operating costs, small equipment, conferences...
Research Project PDR	2 years or 4 years	€30 - 80 k /year ⁴	For Single-university PDR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 0 to 1 FTE max., €50 k, no CV ➤ Operating costs, support operating costs⁵, equipment of max. €30 k (or max. €60 k if personnel not requested)
		€30 - 115 k /year ⁴	For Cross-university PDR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 0 to 2 FTE max., €100 k, no CV ➤ Operating costs, support operating costs⁵, equipment of max. €15 k (or €60 k max. if personnel costs minimised, but with a max. limit of €115 k)
Equipment EQP	2 years	€30 – 200 k	For a project or research themes
Incentive grant for Scientific Research MIS	2 years	€150 k /year ⁴	Operating costs, equipment, personnel

3. CHANGES COMPARED TO CALL 2019

3.1 PDR and PDR-SNSF 2020 Granting rule

In order to foster the Lead Agency Procedure (LAP) Agreement between the F.R.S.-FNRS and the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF), promoters who have submitted a PDR application as part of the PDR-SNSF Call 2020 may submit a PDR application while respecting all the accumulation rules as detailed in the Appendix 2 of the [PDR rules and regulations](#).

Regarding granting, both PDR-SNSF submitted project and PDR-FNRS project can be funded. However, given that double funding is not authorised, the Scientific Commission will have access to the PDR-SNSF application file. In case of similarities between both projects, the Scientific Commission will not recommend the funding of the PDR.

3.2 VAT exemption as part of a clinic – university collaboration

The decision of the Board of Trustees of F.R.S.-FNRS of 5th December 2019 concerning research projects involving university clinics will apply to PDR (see budget section).

The implemented measure allows university clinics to invoice their services without VAT when they are involved in the projects as true research partners in their own right. In order to do this, the involvement of the university clinic (CHU) targeted by the collaboration must be described in the scientific part by assigning it one or more tasks.

The involvement of a university clinic requires a collaboration agreement, to be uploaded in the form or sent by e-mail (credits-projets@frs-fnrs.be) at the latest on the validation date by the rector. This agreement must, at least, contain the following elements: name of the 'CHU',

³ For CDR, the allocated grants can be used over a 3-year period.

⁴ On an annual average for the duration of the project.

⁵ Support operating costs are included in the budgetary limitation of the Single or Cross-university PDR and the maximum amount is of €5 k on an annual average for the duration of the project, and per institution involved in the funding application.

clinical department, head of the department concerned, name of the financial director and name of the university with which the CHU is collaborating.

Warning: Only the services of a CHU or a department of a CHU listed in this [appendix](#) are eligible for VAT exemption.

3.3 Personnel category: Technician

Holders of a Master's degree (or equivalent) or a Ph.D. cannot be recruited under the Technician category.

3.4 Personnel category: Non-doctoral Researcher

Holders of a Master's degree can be requested in the Non-doctoral Researcher category. This category is subject to an annual limit mentioned in section 5.2.

The Non-doctoral Researcher is not allowed to be enrolled in a Ph.D. programme and s/he cannot apply for a Ph.D. programme.

4. LEAD AGENCY PROCEDURE (LAP)

4.1 [National Research Fund of Luxembourg \(FNR\)](#)

Following the conclusion of a "Lead Agency Procedure (LAP)" collaboration agreement with the FNR, the F.R.S.-FNRS provides the opportunity to submit collaborative project proposals, as part of the PDR instrument within the framework of the F.R.S.-FNRS Credits and Projects Call 2020, with research institutions established within Luxembourg and eligible for the FNR Luxembourg. Luxembourg partners must comply with the [INTER programme](#) guidelines from the FNR.

5. SPECIFIC REMARKS

5.1 IISN application submission

- The "labo" agreements aim at covering the 'shared services', i.e., technical personnel along with the related operating costs, as well as expenses for inviting lecturers in seminars of general interest, for instance.
- The "project" agreements may cover expenses related to specific scientific projects, e.g., testing, analysis, computing support to an experiment, research-development for a new detector, theoretical research, and scientific missions. Those expenses cannot be claimed via a "labo" agreement.

Expenses claims relating to a scientific project should be elaborated with the most comprehensive possible description of all the expenses.

In particular, the following should be detailed:

- Scientific missions expenses (Belgian researchers travelling abroad, temporary mobility of foreign scientific collaborators as part of the project);
- If applicable, an estimate of the cost for the new equipment to continue the experiment, in case of projects in the long run or a ten-year experiment project for instance⁶.

Details on the expenses should be provided in all applications (new applications, addendum, extension) submitted under Call 2020.

Reminder: All "Interuniversity Institute for Nuclear Sciences" (IISN-New or Add/Ext) IISN projects may be submitted after the ["IISN PROJECT" questionnaire](#) has been duly completed and sent to credits-projets@frs-fnrs.be (specifying in the subject line: PROJET IISN). The main promoter will be given access to 'e-space' after the F.R.S.-FNRS administration has verified the validity of the application.

5.2 Personnel expenditure

For any personnel categories requested the promoter shall contact the relevant service of her/his host academic institution in order to establish an estimate of the staff cost based on the scientific seniority. Amounts cannot be changed after application submission.

⁶ For example: submission of an initial 4-year project with no substantial expenses, however, unless a massive investment is planned, the development and achievement of the project may not be guaranteed.

Short-term Postdoctoral Researcher, Non-doctoral Researcher and Technician categories are subject to an annual limit, calculated in proportion to the number of days worked. Limitations in force in 2021 are the following:

➤ Short-term Postdoctoral Researcher	€52,800- (full time)
➤ Non-doctoral Researcher	€35,400- (part time); €70,100- (full time)
➤ Technician	€30,200- (part time); €59,500- (full time)

As for the MIS, since the F.R.S.-FNRS is the employer of the Postdoctoral researcher, the promoter shall take into account the annual cost provided for in 2021:

➤ Postdoctoral Researcher	€41,100- (part time); €81,800- (full time)
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5.3 Referees (MIS)

Applicants shall contact the reference persons prior to mentioning their contact details in the application form if they want to make sure that their referees are willing to provide a reference letter as part of their application. After submission of the application file, the F.R.S.-FNRS will contact the reference persons referred in the application form and a reminder will be sent to each referee in due course. No information will be communicated to the applicant on the receipt of the letters to ensure confidentiality.

Deadline for receiving letters from the reference persons is Tuesday, 1st of September, 2020.

5.4 Ethical aspects

As from 2018, in order to reduce the Ethics Committees workload and to make the administrative procedures more flexible for applicants, the researchers concerned by ethical questions will be required to submit their questionnaire as well as the opinion of the Ethics Committee to the F.R.S.-FNRS only in case the submitted grant is awarded. Effective granting will be subject to a favorable opinion of the Committee.

5.5 PDR Ex-post

In accordance with the decision of the Board of Trustees of the F.R.S.-FNRS on 25th April 2018, the F.R.S.-FNRS will collect from the promoters some ex-post quantitative indicators related to the funding granted (e.g., number of patents, dissertations and theses, employees), as well as the publications list, instead of the final report usually required from promoters benefiting from a PDR. Collection of those data from the researchers concerned must be done to allow the F.R.S.-FNRS to draw up statistics regarding the impact of funding granted. The ex-post process in place is not an evaluation procedure but quite the opposite, since it aims at highlighting and promoting the results obtained from funding granted by the F.R.S.-FNRS. Details of the indicators to be communicated will be published on the E-Space platform accessible to promoters.

5.6 Open access policy

The F.R.S.-FNRS endorses the principle of Open access to publicly funded research. This support has led to the implementation of an institutional mandate providing Open access to publications from F.R.S.-FNRS funded research projects and researchers under the "Open Access Green Road" business model.

This mandate specifies the conditions under which the F.R.S.-FNRS grant recipients shall store, when possible, all the funded research results of which they are authors or co-authors in their institution's repository.

5.7 Reminder to the research community

Any scientific publication resulting partially or fully from the funding allocated via the instruments as part of the "Credits and Projects" Call shall mention the source of the funding as follows: "This work was supported by the Fonds de la Recherche Scientifique - FNRS under Grant(s) n° [agreement number]". The same procedure applies to open access publications.

6. CONTENT OF A PROPOSAL

Applicants will have the choice to write their proposal either in French or in English. For some fields, using English can broaden the number of experts likely to take part in the evaluations.

It is recommended to applicants who wish to have their application file assessed by Scientific Commissions dedicated to SEN (Exact and Natural Sciences) and SVS (Health and Life Sciences)

fields to submit their application in English. Should the application file be submitted in French, the F.R.S.-FNRS may require the applicant to provide, within five work days, a translation in English for the purpose of conducting the [ex-ante evaluation](#).

First, applicants select the Scientific Commission⁷ they would like the proposal to be evaluated by. Then, applicants will have to choose from 2 to 6 descriptor fields in order of importance (at least 2 descriptor fields⁸ must be relevant to the Scientific Commission selected by the applicant) and they may complete this selection by adding unrestricted keywords (if necessary). The F.R.S.-FNRS will base the selection of 1st-step experts on those pieces of information along with the summary of the project.

The F.R.S.-FNRS insists on **strict compliance with the instructions given for each part of the proposal** (scientific section relevant to the instrument selected, number of pages allowed for documents to be enclosed with the application form...) and stresses again the sovereign consideration of the Scientific Commissions assessing the application file.

NOTICE: no further changes or modification can be made in the proposal after the validation deadline fixed for the main promoter.

The application file contains the main sections described in the table below:

FORM
<p>FRAMEWORK AND DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT</p> <p>➤ CDR/PDR/EQP/MIS/IISN</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> References of the application (for the funded proposals, these data are released and made public on the F.R.S.-FNRS website). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Title, in French and English (max. 200 characters each, including spaces) and, - Summary, in French and English (max. 2000 characters each, including spaces). Selection of descriptors fields Bibliometric indicators + Scientific Curriculum vitae and publications list⁹ (PDF file) Scientific proposal (PDF file) and ethical aspects Referees/Foreign experts (contact details) → MIS only
<p>BUDGET</p> <p>➤ CDR/EQP Description and justification for the resources requested: Operating (CDR), Support operating (CDR), Equipment (CDR/EQP)</p> <p>➤ PDR/MIS/IISN Description and justification for the resources requested: Operating, Support operating (PDR only), Equipment, Personnel</p>
<p>PREVIOUS FUNDING</p> <p>➤ CDR/PDR/EQP/MIS Connection with previous funding applications (submitted or granted)</p>

⁷ Not applicable for the IISN instrument.

⁸ If applicants select only one descriptor field relevant to the Scientific Commission selected, they shall justify the selection of the Scientific Commission in the application form.

Applicants who select the Scientific Commission FORESIGHT, dedicated to research projects relating to sustainable development (covering Nature Sciences, Applied Sciences, Human and Social Sciences), must demonstrate the "sustainable development" part of their research project, including interdisciplinary aspects (2000 characters max.).

⁹ Promoters who have been working for 2 years at least in institutions of the French-speaking Community of Belgium (CFB) that have set up an institutional repository (IR) must submit their publications list in a PDF format, directly created from this repository, and choose the appropriate F.R.S.-FNRS format.

SCIENTIFIC SECTION - PLEASE USE THE TEMPLATE PROVIDED FOR THAT PURPOSE

➤ CDR

[CDR template](#)

1. Brief report on previous works
2. Description of the project
3. Comments on changes in case of resubmission
4. Potential interdisciplinary approach of the project
5. Publications and environment of the promoter
6. Additional comments

➤ PDR

[PDR template](#)

1. Short summary of previous works
2. Description of the project
3. Comments on changes in case of resubmission
4. Potential interdisciplinary approach of the project
5. Publications and environment of the main promoter
6. Publications of the other promoters (for Cross-university PDR only)
7. Interactions and distribution of the tasks among the main promoter and the other co-promoters (for Cross-university PDR only)
8. Additional comments

➤ EQP

[EQP template](#)

1. Brief report on previous works
2. Description of the project
3. Comments on changes in case of resubmission
4. Potential interdisciplinary approach of the project
5. Publications and environment of the main promoter
6. Publications of the co-promoters (if any)
7. Interactions and distribution of the tasks among the main promoter and the co-promoters (if any)
8. Additional comments

➤ MIS

[MIS template](#)

1. Brief report on previous works
2. Description of the project
3. Comments on changes in case of resubmission
4. Potential interdisciplinary approach of the project
5. Arguments of the MIS project
6. Promoter's publications related to the project
7. Additional comments

➤ IISN

IISN templates : [New project \(IISN-ND\)](#) - [Addendum/Extension \(IISN-AV/PR\)](#)

1. Brief report on previous works (IISN-ND) **or** Report on previous work (IISN-AV/PR)
2. Description of the project
3. Publications and environment of the main promoter
4. Publications of the co-promoters (if any)
5. Interactions and distribution of the tasks among the main promoter and the co-promoters (if any)
6. Laboratory staff

ALL DOCUMENTS, GUIDES, RULES AND REGULATIONS AND PRIVACY POLICY ARE AVAILABLE AT [HTTPS://WWW.FRS-FNRS.BE/EN/REGLEMENTS-GUIDES](https://www.frs-fnrs.be/en/reglements-guides) AND [HTTPS://WWW.FRS-FNRS.BE/CHARTE-VIE-PRIVEE](https://www.frs-fnrs.be/charte-vie-privee)