

## **RULES AND REGULATIONS**

**INCENTIVE GRANT FOR SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH (MIS**

**- MANDAT D'IMPULSION SCIENTIFIQUE)**

**CREDITS AND PROJECTS CALL 2022**

**ADOPTED BY**

**THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE F.R.S.-FNRS**

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## CHAPTER I: SCOPE

### Article 1

The rules and regulations hereinafter are only applicable to the Incentive Grant for Scientific Research (MIS – Mandat d'Impulsion Scientifique) instrument enabling the funding of research programmes within the framework of the Credits and Projects Call of the Fund for Scientific Research - FNRS<sup>1</sup> (F.R.S.-FNRS).

Instrument	Duration	Characteristics	Co-promoter participation
MIS	3 years	The MIS is intended for an individual researcher.	No

### Article 2

The goal of the funding granted within the framework of the MIS consists in supporting young permanent researchers who seek to develop a scientific unit focusing on a future-oriented area within their university.

The research programme should be characterised by its originality and its innovativeness as well as by its scientific autonomy from the works of the laboratory where the applicant is involved. This programme should eventually enable the researcher to acquire their independence in a "flagship" laboratory.

### Article 3

The research programme is meant to be carried out within a university of the French-speaking Community of Belgium listed in [Appendix 1](#).

### Article 4

The promoter is the person who assumes the scientific responsibility and is in charge of the administrative management of the funded research programme.

## CHAPTER II: APPLICATION

### II- A.: THE PROMOTER

#### Article 5

The promoter-applicant to a MIS must be:

- Either a Research Associate (CQ), a Senior Research Associate (MR) or a Research Director (DR) of the F.R.S.-FNRS who genuinely carries out the fellowship at the latest by 15<sup>th</sup> November of the year when submitting the application,
- Or Senior assistant (Premier assistant), Head of Works (Chef de travaux) or member of the academic personnel in a university of the French-speaking Community of Belgium and must meet the following conditions altogether:

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<sup>1</sup> The Fund for Scientific Research - FNRS shall be understood as the F.R.S.-FNRS and its Associated Funds.

- Be permanently appointed on a full-time basis to an academic or scientific position or on probation in that university.
- This appointment must have a final and conclusive assent from the competent body to legitimize this appointment in accordance with the Law or the university regulations at the latest by 15<sup>th</sup> November of the year when submitting the application.
- This academic or scientific position must be effective at the latest by 15<sup>th</sup> November of the year when submitting the application.

#### Article 6

The promoter-applicant to a MIS must have obtained a Ph.D. after the defence of a thesis and delivered by a university for maximum 12 years. This period of time shall expire on the validation deadline set for the academic authorities (rectors) to validate applications, at the latest.

The maximum period of time set in paragraph 1 is extended for one additional year per childbirth and/or adoption.

#### Article 7

Applicants may not apply for a MIS more than three times.

Researchers who have already benefited from a MIS can no longer apply for this fellowship.

Applicants who have been already granted with an Ulysse Incentive Grant for Mobility in Scientific Research (MISU) may not apply for a MIS application.

## **II- B.: ACCUMULATION RULES**

#### Article 8

Any promoter must comply with all the accumulation rules as detailed [here](#) as well as those regarding the [PDR-Weave](#) instrument.

## **II- C.: SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION**

#### Article 9

The Credits and Projects Call is opened once a year and is published on the F.R.S.-FNRS website.

The application can be submitted in French or in English. It must only be submitted on [e-space](#), the online platform dedicated to the calls for proposals.

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, as well as the Scientific Commission SHS-2, to submit their application in English<sup>2</sup>.

All MIS applications are submitted to a procedure including two successive electronic validations on the dates that will be indicated when the call is published.

- The validation by the promoter: It accounts as a confirmation that the application file is complete.

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<sup>2</sup> Should the application file be submitted in French, the F.R.S.-FNRS may require the applicant to provide a translation in English for the purpose of conducting [the ex-ante evaluation](#).

- b. The validation by the research administration (or Board of Education) of the university of the French-speaking Community of Belgium, the Authority to which the application file is transferred following the validation by the promoter. This Authority may accept or refuse the application. The validation deadline set for the rectors puts a final end to the call for applications.

Applications that have not been validated within the time-frame of the call cannot be taken into account.

The validation dates are available in the mini-guide.

#### Article 10

For all new MIS application:

- a letter of support from the Rector of the host university must be communicated to the F.R.S.-FNRS by the time of the validation deadline set for the academic authorities (rectors) at the latest;
- in their electronic form, applicants must provide the contact details of 3 recognised foreign experts<sup>3</sup> who have no recent collaboration with the applicant and who will be contacted by the F.R.S.-FNRS to provide a recommendation (reference letter).

## CHAPTER III: NATURE AND DURATION OF THE FELLOWSHIP

### III- A.: ELIGIBLE AND NON-ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

#### Article 11

As part of the MIS the allocated fund can cover 3 types of expenses:

- Personnel
- Operating
- Equipment

#### Article 12

Some expenses are capped:

- MRI ≤ 3 Tesla at € 350/hour
- MRI > 3 Tesla at € 500/hour
- MEG at € 300/hour

#### Article 13

The following operating costs are not authorised:

- Payment and reimbursement of rents
- Payment of the heating, light and telephone
- Costs for facilities maintenance and building costs
- Costs for equipment maintenance and repairing
- Costs for furniture
- Office supply costs (except for justified computer or computer equipment costs)

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<sup>3</sup> Applicants shall contact the reference persons prior to mentioning their contact details in the application form if they want to make sure that they 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 of them in due course. No information will be communicated to the applicant on the receipt of the letters to ensure confidentiality.

- Restaurant costs and expenses for foodstuffs (coffee, sugar, softs...) not related to missions or shift trips
- Visa fees for residence permits
- Insurance for appliance(s) or vehicle(s) belonging to the institution
- Thesis related expenses (printout, jury's invitation)

### **III- B.: FUNDING CHARACTERISTICS AND PROVISIONS**

#### Article 14

The MIS is applicable for 3 years.

The MIS starting date is set for the 1<sup>st</sup> January following the allocation decision date and the ending date for the 31<sup>st</sup> December.

The promoter who, when starting their MIS and because of scientific activities abroad, is 100% on unpaid leave for a maximum of 2 years may request the approval of the F.R.S.-FNRS to freeze their MIS and start it at the end of their unpaid leave.

#### Article 15

A MIS application enables to apply for funding of maximum € 150,000-, **on an annual average**.

If the research project includes the training of a doctoral student, the promoter-applicant of a MIS may request Doctoral Researcher personnel for a maximum duration of 4 years, at a steady budget, in order to enable them to finish their thesis.

The grants obtained by the promoter of a MIS are personal and shall not be transferable.

#### Article 16

Categories of personnel<sup>4</sup> are detailed in the table hereafter.

Categories	Activity	
	Part time	Full time
Doctoral Researcher – Grant	n/a	x
Postdoctoral Researcher <sup>5</sup>	x	x
Non-doctoral Researcher – Salary (capped)	x	x
Technician – Salary (capped)	x	x

n/a = not applicable

<sup>4</sup> *For all personnel, the promoter shall contact the relevant department of their host university to determine their status and obtain an estimate of the total personnel costs involved based on the scientific seniority.*

**Amounts cannot be changed after submitting the application.**

*Non-doctoral Researcher and Technician categories are subject to an annual limit, calculated in proportion to the number of days worked. Limitations in force for the first year of funding are detailed in the Credits and Projects Call mini-guide.*

<sup>5</sup> *The promoter shall contact the relevant department of their host university in order to determine the Postdoctoral Researcher's status (Mobility situation, grant, employee...) and the work time.*

The promoter of a MIS is allowed to recruit personnel **for a minimum of one month** and the duration may not exceed the maximal duration of the funding agreement, except when the personnel of the Doctoral Researcher category is concerned.

The identity of the personnel is not required when submitting a MIS application. However, the category of the personnel must be specified.

#### Article 17

On the date of the hiring by the host university, Doctoral Researchers must have obtained one of the following degrees:

- 1° a master degree for a value of at least 120 credits awarded by a Higher Education Institution within the French-speaking Community of Belgium;
- 2° a master degree for a value of at least 120 credits awarded by a Higher Education Institution within the Dutch-speaking Community, German-speaking Community or from the Royal Military Academy;
- 3° another degree as referred to in Article 115 of the French-speaking Community of Belgium Decree of 7<sup>th</sup> November 2013 that defines the landscape of Higher Education and the academic studies organisation.

#### Article 18

On the date of the hiring by the host university, Postdoctoral Researchers must have obtained a doctoral academic degree after the defence of a thesis.

#### Article 19

Holders of a Master's degree (or equivalent) or a Ph.D. are not eligible under the Technician category.

Holders of a Master's degree (or equivalent) are eligible for Non-doctoral Researcher category. The Non-doctoral Researcher cannot, under any circumstances, start any personal research work leading to a Ph.D. during the working hours devoted to this function.

#### Article 20

No compensation can be granted to the promoter of a MIS.

## **CHAPTER IV: EXAMINATION OF APPLICATIONS**

#### Article 21

Criteria that will be taken into account for the evaluation of the MIS applications are the following:

CRITERIA
Quality of the promoter: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ CV and publications</li><li>➤ International recognition</li><li>➤ Main research achievements</li></ul>

## CRITERIA

Quality of the research programme:

- Feasibility
- Methodology and relevance
- Originality
- Collaborations

The adequacy of the requested budget with regard to the submitted research programme will also be evaluated. The Scientific Commission may reduce the requested budget up to a maximum of 15%. If the adequacy between the research programme and the requested budget is not justified and appears to require a reduction of more than 15%, the research programme will not be deemed fundable.

### Article 22

In addition to the criteria as referred to in Article 21, the following criteria will also be taken into account as part of the MIS:

- originality and novelty of the project,
- possibility to launch a new research unit,
- scientific autonomy with respect to any existing research laboratory,
- future-oriented theme (development prospects of the field of study),
- 3 recommendations from foreign experts.

### Article 23

The Board of Trustees of the F.R.S.-FNRS allocates funds according to the budget that is available. It decides on the granting or rejection, and where provided for, on the amounts to be granted.

## CHAPTER V: FINANCIAL PROVISIONS

### Article 24

Funding granted through the MIS instrument is subject to a research agreement.

This agreement shall bear the signature of the following parties:

- **the promoter** commits to carrying out the funded research;
- **the F.R.S.-FNRS** commits to allocating grants covering the personnel, operating and equipment costs, each year covered by the agreement. No transfer between those 3 expense items may be accepted;
- **the host university.**

The agreement provides for unilateral termination clauses, which must include a period of notice.

### Article 25

Any change made to the planned expenses must receive the prior written approval of the F.R.S.-FNRS.

The budget devoted to the personnel is available only for the duration of the research agreement, which may be extended for maximum 6 months in case of postponement of personnel hiring expected although not effective on the starting date of the agreement, and is divided according to the provisions of the agreement.

Concerning the Doctoral Researcher hired for a duration superior to that of the agreement (see article 15 § 2), the budget is available for the same duration as planned for the Doctoral Researcher (maximum 4



years), from the starting date of the MIS, which may be extended for maximum 6 months in case of postponement of hiring expected although not effective on the starting date of the agreement, and is divided according to the provisions of the agreement.

The budget devoted to operating and equipment costs can be used for the duration of the agreement, with an additional 12-month period.

Concerning the Doctoral Researcher hired for a duration superior to that of the agreement (see article 15 § 2), the budget devoted to operating and equipment costs can be used for the duration of the agreement, with an additional 24-month period.

The unspent amount will be recovered by the F.R.S.-FNRS.

#### Article 26

Grants at the disposal of the promoters are managed by the financial department of the host university, to which they are attached.

The financial department of the host university shall send the supporting documents to the F.R.S.-FNRS as soon as possible.

For the personnel costs relevant to a given calendar year, the supporting documents must be sent before the 1<sup>st</sup> March of the following year.

The supporting documents justifying operating and/or equipment costs must be sent before 1<sup>st</sup> March directly following the deadline to use the concerned budget.

#### Article 27

The promoter has to inform the F.R.S.-FNRS of any personnel hiring.

The replacement of personnel among the Doctoral Researcher category is not authorised during the last 6 months of the personnel employment period.

The personnel hiring which was expected although not effective on the starting date of the agreement may be delayed. However, postponement shall be equivalent to the lost employment duration and not exceed by more than 6 months the end date of the agreement or the employment period of the Doctoral Researcher planned for a duration superior to that of the agreement (see article 15 § 2). The duration of the employment initially allotted may not be exceeded.

#### Article 28

Scientific and technical personnel is to be recruited in accordance with the scales and regulations in force within the host university.

As for Non-doctoral Researcher and technical personnel, the F.R.S.-FNRS contribution is subject to an annual limit assigned from the Fund and is calculated in proportion to the number of days worked.

#### Article 29

The F.R.S.-FNRS shall reimburse personnel costs up to the total amounts indicated in the research agreement, while observing the Personnel categories.

Concerning Personnel categories there is some flexibility in terms of annual costs and duration, should the granting duration and maximum amount not be exceeded. Also for categories which are annually capped, this annual limitation shall not be exceeded, on the understanding that employment may not exceed the ending date of the agreement, except:

- in case of a Doctoral Researcher hired for a duration superior to that of the agreement (see article 15 § 2) and,
- in case the hiring has been postponed as provided for in article 27 § 3.

The financial participation of the F.R.S.-FNRS is limited to the global amount indicated in the agreement.

## CHAPTER VI: MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

### Article 30

Any device acquired with a credit from the F.R.S.-FNRS becomes the property of the host university to which the beneficiary of the credit is attached.

The purchase of any device must be done with due respect for the provisions defined by the relevant department of the host university.

This institution commits, however, to putting the mentioned device at the disposal of the researchers involved for the time needed in order to conduct the research, which led to its purchase in the first place. In addition, the host university commits not to alienating or lending the equipment without the prior written approval of the F.R.S.-FNRS.

In the event that the device was purchased with the provision of an additional funding, the Board of Trustees of the F.R.S.-FNRS will settle the ownership issue with the competent authorities.

### Article 31

Grants are exclusively allocated for the execution of the research programme approved by the F.R.S.-FNRS. The promoter is required to use them solely for that purpose. Any fundamental change in the ongoing research programme must obtain the prior written approval of the F.R.S.-FNRS.

## CHAPTER VII: RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF THE PROMOTER

### Article 32

Any funded research programme must comply with the legal provisions in force regarding ethics.

### Article 33

Promoters must submit to the rules imposed by the academic authority of the host university where they work and observe its regulations. In addition, regarding the F.R.S.-FNRS, they must adhere to the regulation on property, protection and promotion of the results from the research carried out within the institution.

### Article 34

Three months after the end of the research agreement, a request for a final report is sent to the promoter.

The promoter must upload this final report on their personal page [e-space](#) within two months following the request.

### Article 35

Pursuant to the [Regulation](#) on the application of the Open Access policy to scientific publications resulting from research programmes supported by the F.R.S.-FNRS and its Associated Funds, any scientific publication resulting partially or fully from the funding of the MIS instrument shall mention the source of this funding as follows:

*“This work was supported by the Fonds de la Recherche Scientifique-FNRS under Grant(s) n° [agreement number]”.*

## APPENDIX 1

Relevant institutions giving access to the funding of the F.R.S.-FNRS

MIS Instrument

Credits and Projects Call

**Instrument Mandat d'Impulsion Scientifique / Incentive Grant for Scientific Research**

(MIS)

<p><b>Candidat promoteur d'une université CFB / Promoter-applicant of a CFB university</b></p>	<p>➤ <b>Universités de la Communauté française de Belgique (CFB)</b> <b>Universities of the French-speaking Community of Belgium (CFB)</b></p> <p>Université Catholique de Louvain (UCLouvain) Université Libre de Bruxelles (ULB) Université de Liège (ULiège) Université de Mons (UMons) Université de Namur (UNamur) Université Saint-Louis - Bruxelles (USL-B)</p>
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