

**Agreement between FWO and NAFOSTED on the Executive framework
for bilateral scientific research cooperation projects**

the following executive framework for bilateral scientific cooperation projects between researchers from Flanders and Vietnam is agreed upon:

CHAPTER I. PROCEDURE

Art. 1

§1 In principle, every three years, starting in 2022, researchers in Flanders and Vietnam will be presented with the opportunity to submit proposals under the bilateral scientific cooperation framework between the Research Foundation - Flanders (FWO) and the National Foundation for Science and Technology Development (NAFOSTED). These joint projects, which will have the duration of two (2) to three (3) years, may be situated in any scientific domain of basic research covered by both FWO and NAFOSTED.

§2 The opening and closing dates of the calls for proposals, the first of which will be in 2022, will be jointly determined by FWO and NAFOSTED.

§3 The Flemish call text will be made available through the website of the Research Foundation - Flanders [<http://www.fwo.be/>].

§4 The Vietnamese call text will be made available through the website of NAFOSTED [<http://www.nafosted.vn/>].

Art. 2

In order to be eligible, a proposal must meet the following criteria:

- it must be submitted at FWO by the Flemish promotor according to the regulations of the Research Foundation - Flanders (FWO);
- and it must be submitted at NAFOSTED by the Vietnamese promotor according to the regulations of NAFOSTED;
- it must be submitted before the deadline jointly determined by FWO and NAFOSTED;
- it must be submitted in English, including all basic information and research details of both sides, using the appropriate application forms, which are available:

- in Flanders: through the websites of FWO
- in Vietnam: through the website of NAFOSTED

Art. 3

After the deadline, the Research Foundation - Flanders (FWO) and the National Foundation for Science and Technology Development (NAFOSTED) will check whether the proposals have been submitted simultaneously in Flanders and Vietnam. They will inform each other of the results. If a proposal is submitted only in one country and/or received after the deadline, it is *de facto* ineligible.

Art. 4

§1 The proposals received by the deadline, and which are deemed eligible after the eligibility check by both NAFOSTED and FWO, will be evaluated by a joint scientific committee, nominated by FWO and NAFOSTED.

§2. The joint scientific committee consists of an equal number Flemish and Vietnamese scientists. The members will be chosen by their qualification and experience according to the research fields of all proposals received. The scientific committee will be chaired by a scientist or administrator from the host country.

Each party will select two peer reviewers for each project proposal. The reviews must be sent to the executive office of either FWO or NAFOSTED before the date of the selection meeting. At the meeting, the joint scientific committee will discuss and evaluate the project proposals, taking into account on evaluations of selected peer reviewers.

The outcome of the selection meeting is a ranked list of proposals which consists of three parts:

- proposals in first order: to be funded with the highest priority, to the extent that the budget allows for it;
- proposals in second order: to be funded if the budget is available ("reserve list");
- "not ranked proposals": deemed to be of insufficient quality or not corresponding to the objectives of the bilateral scientific cooperation mechanism; not to be funded.

In each part, the proposals will be ranked in decreasing order of priority.

§3. The joint scientific committee will hold the selection meeting in the head office of either NAFOSTED in Hanoi or FWO in Brussels.

The host foundation will be responsible for the costs to organize the meetings, accommodation and other hosting expenses. The travel expenses of scientific committee members are paid by their respective organization.

Art. 5

The FWO and NAFOSTED will discuss and decide on the final list of funded projects, respecting the ranked list of proposals and budget availability.

Art. 6

The final list of funded projects will be submitted to the Board of FWO and the Board of Trustees of the NAFOSTED for approval. The final decision will depend on the agreement of both Boards.

CHAPTER II. EXECUTION AND FINANCIAL PROVISIONS

Art. 7

The projects are funded bilaterally by Flanders and Vietnam:

§1 The Flemish part of the project budget can only be used for one or more of the following cost categories:

- scientific staff;
- equipment;
- to cover travel costs of Flemish researchers going to Vietnam;
- to cover accommodation, meals and local travel costs of Vietnamese researchers staying in Flanders;
- to cover production costs of joint publications;
- to cover expenses for material and consumables.

§2 The Vietnamese budget should primarily be used for one or more of the following cost categories:

- scientific staff;
- equipment;
- to cover travel costs of Vietnamese researchers going to Flanders;
- to cover accommodation, meals and local travel costs of Flemish researchers staying in Vietnam;
- to cover costs of travel insurance for Vietnamese researchers staying in Flanders;
- to cover production costs of joint publications;
- to cover expenses for material and consumables.

§3 Researchers from Flanders and Vietnam, who undertake a period of mobility in the context of the bilateral project, must be covered by travel insurance.

Art.8

The Parties provide the necessary insurance as follows:

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- Social and health security remains a responsibility of the home country (or sending country).
- During its stay abroad and travel from and to Belgium/Vietnam, taking place in the frame of an approved joint NAFOSTED-FWO project, all researchers involved in an allocated NAFOSTED-FWO project and independent of nationality, can rely on a travel and assistance insurance and repatriation covered by FWO. This insurance is NOT a health insurance. Social and health security remains a responsibility of the home country (or sending country).

Art.9

Periodic evaluation and result evaluation will be carried out following each party's regulations.

Art.10

The partnership agreement between researchers and their institutions is mandatory to ensure the effective protection and correct distribution of intellectual properties resulting from projects funded under this Framework Agreement. Researchers and their institutions have to submit their partnership agreement within nine (09) months after the start of the project.

CHAPTER III. CONCLUDING PROVISIONS

Art. 11

The list of projects to be funded, as well as the size of the Flemish and the Vietnamese budget, will be listed in a separate protocol.

Art. 12

§1 This framework agreement is valid for six (6) years, as from the date of its signature, and will be subject to regular evaluation by FWO and NAFOSTED.

§2 The denunciation of this agreement shall not affect the programs and projects undertaken in the scope of this agreement and not totally concluded at the moment of its expiration. In this case, FWO and NAFOSTED will provide, in their budgets, funds for the full completion of the projects not totally concluded.

§3 Cooperation under this MoU shall at all times be subject to the applicable national laws and regulations of the Parties.

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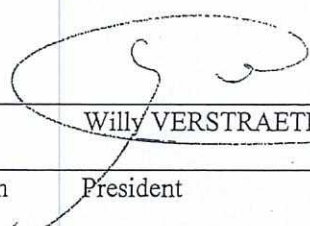
Art. 13

The provisions of this executive framework are valid for all projects to be selected from 2022 onwards.

Concluded on 21 August 2022.

On behalf of **FWO**:

Signature



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