



LNEC Welcoming Programme to Sabbatical Leaves

Sabbatical leaves are one of the privileged means to establish scientific exchange between research institutions and researchers, contributing to mutual enrichment and to new lines of research or to enhance and upgrade the work already under development. LNEC has the unique conditions to welcome national and foreign researchers, who are intending to take advantage of its work environment and of its scientific resources to temporarily stay at this institution and carry out studies and research works.

Article 2, no.1, of Decree-law no. 422/91, October 21, establishes that the Laboratório Nacional de Engenharia Civil *“is responsible for carrying out, supervising and promoting, within the principle of freedom of research, scientific research and technologic development, as well as other scientific and technical activities necessary for the realisation and progress of civil engineering”*. Thus, in accordance with article 3 paragraph j) of the same Decree-law, LNEC assignments are, among others, *“to contribute to the upgrading and specialisation of scientific and technical personnel, both Portuguese and foreign, namely through promotion and organisation of training actions, as well as through co-operation with university and research institutions, particularly by providing them with the means and the necessary support to carry out research works”*. Paragraph s) of article 3 establishes that LNEC is also responsible for *“ providing grants and practical training, either subsidised or not, for participating in research and development projects and for obtaining specialisation and upgrading of knowledge, in all its fields of activity”*.

In view of the recognised and increasing importance of this form of temporary mobility, and based on the legal support mentioned above, the LNEC Welcoming Programme to Sabbatical Leaves is established. Mention must be made of the fact that this type of activity has already been taking place at LNEC, but with a situation character without being dully defined in the guidelines. Therefore, the present guidelines are aimed at encouraging the use of that type of mobility, being ultimately intended to take full advantage of its likely benefits for the institution.

Nowadays, there are various means of support to mobility that can be used by researchers, including international, EC and national programmes. Some of these can represent an opportunity to attract researchers and experts of recognised interest for LNEC. Nevertheless, in some cases, it may be useful to consider the possibility of the institution allocating, either by its own financial resources or by resorting to patronage or to scientific sponsorship, grants to support the welcoming of sabbatical leaves, thus providing LNEC with a competitive advantage in terms of its capacity for attracting visitors that are likely to contribute to LNEC purposes.

Therefore, the aim of the present document is to establish in a quick, flexible and simple way, the “LNEC Welcoming Programme to Sabbatical Leaves”, which may include, in some dully justified cases, the allocation of a grant. In all circumstances, the approval of applications is based on a curricular evaluation and on the assessment of the proposed work plan.

Article 1

Scope

1 – The present Guidelines define the applicable rules to the welcoming of experts and to the possible allocation of grants, within the framework of “LNEC Welcoming Programme to Sabbatical Leaves”, hereafter designated as Programme, intended to promote research and studies of subjects relevant for the scientific and technologic upgrading, in areas related with the activity of the Laboratório Nacional de Engenharia Civil (LNEC).

2 – The Programme is aimed at welcoming, at LNEC, researchers and experts of recognised value, in accordance with the terms indicated below, so as to contribute to upgrade and stimulate the capabilities of this institution, particularly in new relevant areas of knowledge, within Civil Engineering and related fields.

3 – LNEC shall be responsible for supervising and conducting the procedures necessary to implement the Programme and to allocate grants, within the framework of its functions and competence referring to training and research, as defined in article 3 of Decree-law no. 422/99, October 21, and in other provisions.

4 – For the purposes established in these regulations, LNEC shall be responsible for welcoming national or foreign personnel, from other research or university institutions, or

from any other type of institution if the curriculum and the work programme meet the requirements that shall be defined by the Board of Directors.

Article 2

Eligibility

The scientific and technical personnel, holding a university degree or a higher academic degree, who are intending to develop a work programme relevant for LNEC, are eligible for the Programme.

Article 3

Deadlines

1 – Applications to the Programme and to the allocation of grants can be submitted at any time, LNEC shall be responsible to consider each application within a 90-day period.

2 – The welcoming period at LNEC shall begin within the next 18 months after submission of the application.

3 – The welcoming period at LNEC shall range from two months to one year. Periods less than one year may, however, be extended up to this limit, where dully justified.

4 – The extension request shall be submitted to LNEC Board of Directors, no later than two weeks before the end of the period initially defined.

5 – LNEC shall publicise the Guidelines of the Programme and shall define priority areas or limit the admission to the Programme to certain research subjects.

Article 4

Documents supporting applications

For admission to the Programme, the applicants must submit their applications together with the documents listed below. Other elements can however be required in the public notices or in other appropriate publicising means:

- a) Curriculum Vitae, which may be presented as a summary;

- b) Proposal of a work plan demonstrating both the relevance and appropriateness to LNEC fields of activity, mentioning the goals and expected results;
- c) Document justifying the application for a LNEC grant, in which all the financing sources for the leave in this institution are mentioned.

Article 5

Evaluation of applications

1 – The evaluation of applications shall take into account the applicant's merit and the work plan, in accordance with the objectives defined for the Programme.

2 – For selection purposes, the jury shall consider the criteria as follows:

- a) Evaluation of the curricula;
- b) Assessment of the work plans and their compliance with the planned research activities under way at LNEC;
- c) Evaluation of expected results and their relevance for LNEC activities, namely as regards surveying of new opportunities and development of emergent areas.
- d) Analysis of associated expenses for LNEC, namely, those arising from allocation of grants;
- e) Interview to applicants, whenever judged relevant by the jury.

3 - Priority shall be given to applications free from expenses for LNEC, namely as a result of having successfully applied for financing tools, whether at a national, EC or at any other level, in support to the mobility of researchers.

Article 6

Jury for evaluating applications

The jury shall consist of the elements as follows:

- a) Chairman – LNEC President, who may delegate.
- b) Members: two Researchers appointed by the Board of Directors and the representatives from possible financing bodies invited to participate in the jury.

Article 7

Notification of results

1 – The applicants shall be notified in written form of the final decision on the evaluation of applications, within 90 days after submission.

2 – Within the fortnight after notification of approval, the selected applicants shall confirm their acceptance in written.

Article 8

Work regimen

1 – During the welcoming period, the participants in the Programme shall report LNEC of the progress of their works, by forwarding a summarised progress report to be presented at mid-term of their staying period.

2 – The participants in the Programme shall neither interrupt their works nor change their research object nor their work plan without previous consent from LNEC.

Article 9

Deadline for submitting the final report

The participants in the Programme shall submit their final report within 60 days after the end of their leave at LNEC.

Article 10

Scientific production

The works carried out within the framework of the Programme, namely scientific articles and technical reports, shall be submitted to LNEC in written, three copies on paper and on electronic version, the dissemination means shall be agreed upon with LNEC.

Article 11

Publication

1 – The intellectual property of works published shall jointly belong to the authors, to LNEC and, where applicable, to the body financing the grant.

2 – The works published as a result of studies done shall always mention LNEC and, where applicable, the body financing the grant.

3 - LNEC shall support the fees related with the publication of works to which the present article of these Guidelines refers, wherever the works conform to the publishing criteria of the institution.

Article 12

Industrial property

The dispositions laid down in article 50 of Decree-law no. 422/99, October 21, shall apply to the results of all works developed within the framework of the grant.

Article 13

Non-fulfilment

If a participant in the Programme fails to comply with the obligations deriving from that participation, without due justification, he/she shall be liable to pay compensation to LNEC and, occasionally, to the financing body, apart from any other applicable liability.

Article 14

Participants' rights

Throughout the welcoming period, LNEC shall make available to the participants the facilities as follows:

- a) General office support (excluding personal secretariat and typing services);

- b) Shared office;
- c) Computer;
- d) Telephone;
- e) Shared fax;
- f) Electronic mail;
- g) Internet access;
- h) Access to the documentation centre;
- i) Access to studies prepared and to data collected by LNEC, in the terms to be defined for each case.