

Dear colleagues,

The summer has nearly passed, a bit hectically and, as usual, all too quickly. We have come very close to the planned schedule for releasing new journal issues, and now I am preparing the fifth editorial column on the heels of publishing the previous issue, which had frankly seemed like science fiction in the spring.

September is ahead, almost all nominations of the Russian Science Foundation competitions—the main source of funding for scientific projects—have already been announced. That being said, to the proud word "main" we have to add the sad word "the only one." The fact that, in addition to the usual set of competitions, applied nominations have appeared clearly tells us what the management expects from us: OUTPUT in the form of great discoveries and breakthrough technologies that will be waste-free, energy-saving, atom-economical and, of course, absolutely green. With the current organization of science, all this is difficult to achieve, but we have to try. We have many inspiring examples, such as the story of the frog that fell into a tub of milk, or producing something "that cannot be." To sum up, we have to try.

The important thing, however, when choosing directions for our new projects, is that we must remember that we still have the three letters in the names of our institutes, and with them, a huge responsibility for the fundamental nature of science. It would appear that everything is simple enough. With budgetary funding, which is centrally allocated to institutes under the Program of fundamental scientific investigations, we conduct fundamental research, and with grant funding we conduct exploratory, targeted, heuristic, and now applied research. But everything was smooth on paper, in reality, budgetary funding is only enough for the current expenses of the institute and salaries, which must also correspond to additionally imposed decrees and orders. Seemingly, that's good, as by combining funding, one can satisfy both goals: by isolating a more specific part within the fundamental framework and filing it as a project.

No such luck, the next inspection will accuse you of abuse, namely, the so-called "double funding." God forbid you submit the same article for the RSF project and for the budget topic. You may be asked to return some of the money. The existing system is set up so that each project has only one source of funding. We all understand that this isn't how it works, the fields intersect, intertwine, and weave through one another. However, this is our view, while in the opinion of the officials auditing us, everything is its own thing and it can't be any other way.

In fact, it should be a different way. Right now, it's like business is untouchable, but scientists must dance to the digital music put on by the officials. Therefore, until there is a special decree that science cannot be terrorized either in our difficult times, and that no one except for the main expert body has the right to talk about double funding, duplication, and other intersections, please choose the names of your future projects very carefully. So that small streams of grants merge into a powerful fundamental river, and no one can accuse you of the aforementioned "abuses".

This is especially important for the younger generation with their large number of programs—do not forget to consult with your seniors. This is necessary so that your project is in line with the general direction of your laboratory, department, institute. This is for everyone's benefit.

Sincerely yours,

Editor-in-Chief

Prof., Full Member of RAS

Aziz M. Muzafarov