SUMMARY REPORT ON THE PROM PROJECT

INTERNATIONALIZATION AND ACADEMIC STAFF DEVELOPMENT



Date of preparation: October 2026
Subject of the report: synthesis of the results of two-way academic exchange within the PROM project – a report including an analysis of the outbound mobility of Polish researchers, evaluation of host centers and perspectives of sustainability, as well as the results of inbound mobility of foreign scientists to IBB PAS.

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1. Introduction and Main Assumptions of the Project

The PROM project constituted a key initiative supporting two-way international academic exchange, directed to the scientific community of the Institute of Biochemistry and Biophysics PAS (IBB PAS) and foreign researchers coming to the Institute. Its overarching goal was to increase research competencies, learn and transfer modern laboratory techniques, present research results in the international arena, and build lasting scientific networks and consortia. This report synthesizes the structure of the completed trips of Polish scientists (N=56), arrivals of foreign researchers to IBB PAS (N=12), and analyzes in detail the degree of goal realization, qualitative effects, and satisfaction based on evaluation surveys of both groups.

Key Metric	Outbound Mobilities	Inbound Mobilities	Total / Description
Number of participants / mobilities	**56**	**12**	**Total 68 mobilities** completed within the project.
Number of partner countries	**15 destination countries**	**9 countries of origin**	Extensive international network (Europe, USA, East Asia).
Share of PhD students	75.0% (42 people)	75.0% (9 people)	Main emphasis on supporting the early stage of academic career.
Overall project rating (surveys)	**4.73 / 5.0**	**4.82 / 5.0**	Exceptionally high satisfaction in both supported groups.

2. Description of Supported Groups (Outbound Mobilities)

The PROM project provided outbound support to 56 participants. The structure of the participants was divided into two main groups according to academic status:

2.1. PhD Students

- **Number:** 42 people, which constitutes **75.0%** of the entire outgoing cohort.
- **Gender structure:** Clear predominance of women (67.9% in the whole cohort, 38 people in total).
- **Characteristics:** Participants of the Doctoral School at various stages of their dissertation, for whom the trip abroad was a foundation for obtaining unique research results, methodological consultation with foreign experts, and building first relations in the international scientific environment.

2.2. Academic Staff and Young Researchers ("Others")

- **Number:** 14 people, which constitutes **25.0%** of the outbound target group.
- **Decomposition of the "Others" group by Career Stage Analysis:**
    - **Fresh Post-docs (≤ 3 years after PhD):** 7 people (**50%** of the "Others" group). Building an independent scientific record and searching for foreign postdoctoral internships.
    - **Young PIs / Project Leaders:** 5 people (**36%** of the "Others" group). Research team leaders (PhD obtained up to 12 years earlier) aiming to increase the international visibility of their own groups.
    - **Established Post-docs:** 1 person (**7%** of the "Others" group). Consolidation of methodological knowledge before submitting independent grant applications.
    - **Pre-PhD Researchers (MSc):** 1 person (**7%** of the "Others" group). Young researchers before PhD directing their own grants (e.g. PRELUDIUM).

3. Goals of Outbound Mobilities

3.1. Goals of PhD Students' Mobilities

Based on application forms, PhD students identified the following key priorities:

1. **Improving the quality of the doctoral dissertation (49 indications):** Achieving a scientific and substantive level impossible to achieve without access to foreign *know-how* and research facilities.
2. **Familiarization with modern research methods (42 indications):** Learning advanced procedures and research protocols directly in recognized foreign centers.
3. **Acquiring skills in operating modern equipment (16 indications):** Direct training and performing measurements on equipment unavailable in the home unit.
4. **Preparation of a joint international publication (10 indications):** Using the trip as a platform for the integration of research results and the preparation of scientific articles.
5. **Development of assumptions for research projects (4 indications):** Developing concepts for grant applications submitted individually or in international cooperation.
6. **Building foundations for a postdoctoral career (Post-doc):** Presentation of results at conferences, discussion with experts, and searching for research groups for future *post-doc* internships.

3.2. Goals of Academic Staff Mobilities

The choice of goals among scientists from the "Others" group closely corresponded to the stage of their professional development:

- **Young PIs / Project Leaders (83% participation in conferences):** Building the international recognition of the team, establishing networking contacts, and presenting the latest results without the need for a long absence from the home laboratory.
- **Fresh Post-docs (60% conferences / 40% internships):** Obtaining offers of foreign postdoctoral internships and acquiring new research techniques necessary for scientific independence.
- **Established Post-docs & Pre-PhD Researchers (100% internships and visits):** Mastering unique methodologies, conducting key measurements, and collecting preliminary data required to prepare grant applications (e.g., NCN, Horizon Europe).

4. Structure and Typology of Outbound Mobilities (N=56)

4.1. Choice of Activity Forms by PhD Students (N=42)

Form of activity chosen by a PhD student	Number of mobilities	Percentage share (%)
Active participation in a foreign conference	14	33.3%
Training / courses / workshops	8	19.0%
Research internship	4	9.5%
Combined form: Conference + Training / Workshops	4	9.5%
Combined form: Research internship + Study visit	3	7.1%
Study visit	3	7.1%
Combined form: Research internship + Equipment testing / Measurements	2	4.8%
Combined form: Training + Research internship + Obtaining materials	1	2.4%
Summer / winter school	1	2.4%
Unidentified type in the application	2	4.8%
TOTAL PHD STUDENTS	**42**	**100.0%**

Among PhD students, conferences (33.3%) and dedicated training and workshops (19.0%) dominate, which reflects their need to present their first mature results and acquire unique research skills. The significant share of combined forms (internships with training or a study visit) indicates the desire of young scientists to maximize the use of their stay abroad and build comprehensive competencies before defending their doctorate.

4.2. Choice of Activity Forms by Academic Staff / "Others" (N=14)

Career stage in the "Others" group	Foreign conferences	Research internships / Study visits	Total
Young PIs / Project Leaders	5 (83%)	1 (17%)	**6**
Fresh Post-docs (≤ 3 years after PhD)	3 (60%)	2 (40%)	**5**
Established Post-docs	0 (0%)	2 (100%)	**2**
Pre-PhD Researchers (MSc)	0 (0%)	1 (100%)	**1**
TOTAL STAFF	**8 (57%)**	**6 (43%)**	**14 (100%)**

The choice of mobility form in the staff group is strongly correlated with the stage of scientific career. Team leaders (Young PIs) emphasize conferences (83%), which serves to build the international visibility of the research group. In contrast, younger and experienced researchers more often chose longer experimental work in foreign partnerships.

4.3. Summary (N=56)

Type / Form of completed mobility	PhD Students (N=42)	Staff / Others (N=14)	Total (N=56)	Share %
Active participation in a conference	14	10	**24**	42.9%
Training / courses / workshops	8	4	**12**	21.4%
Research internship	4	2	**6**	10.7%
Combined form: Conference + Training	4	0	**4**	7.1%
Study visit	3	0	**3**	5.4%
Summer / winter school	1	1	**2**	3.6%
Combined form: Internship + Study visit	2	0	**2**	3.6%

Type / Form of completed mobility	PhD Students (N=42)	Staff / Others (N=14)	Total (N=56)	Share %
Combined form: Internship + Equipment testing	2	0	**2**	3.6%
Combined form: Internship + Training + Materials	1	0	**1**	1.8%
Unidentified type in the application	2	0	**2**	3.6%
TOTAL OUTBOUND COHORT	**42**	**14**	**56**	**100.0%**

In total, in the project over 42.9% of outbound mobilities constituted participation in leading world conferences, and 21.4% in dedicated courses and workshops. Over 35% of all trips directly involved participants in laboratory research (internships, measurements, study visits, and combined forms), which guarantees both an immediate increase in the practical skills of researchers and long-term knowledge transfer to the home unit.

5. Summary of Outbound Mobilities and Destination Countries

Mobilities within the PROM project were carried out in 15 destination countries, including 39 renowned foreign scientific and research institutions and organizers of international conferences.

Destination Country	Number of mobilities	Scale of mobilities (markers)	Abbreviated names of host institutions and events
Spain	**9**	🔴🔴🔴🔴🔴	• CIC bioGUNE (Ubiquitin Lab) • IBMCP (CSIC-UPV) • Health Research Institute La Fe (Univ. Valencia) • IBMCP (Plant Small RNA Lab) • IUNICS (GMOT Palma) • *Conferences:* Plant Lipids, Antibiotics 2026, Extracellular Vesicles GRC, Thiol-Based Redox GRC
France	**8**	🔴🔴🔴🔴⚪	• CEA Saclay (ISVJ) • ENS - PSL University • Curie Institute (Research Center & PATHEX) • IGBMC (Strasbourg) • IPREM (Univ. Pau) • *Conferences:* Euromit 2026, Ceneuro 2026
Germany	**7**	🔴🔴🔴🔴⚪	• Leibniz Institute DSMZ • Leibniz Inst. of Plant Biochemistry (IPB) • ZMBH (Univ. Heidelberg) • EMBL Advanced

Destination Country	Number of mobilities	Scale of mobilities (markers)	Abbreviated names of host institutions and events
			Training Centre • Goethe Univ. Frankfurt / ISEH Meeting • PC-College Berlin • German Society of Virology
Great Britain	**5**	🔴🔴🔴⚪⚪	• Univ. of Edinburgh (MRC Human Genetics Unit) • EMBO • *Workshops:* Plant Pathology 2026 (PPATH), EMBO RNA 3' ends
Italy	**5**	🔴🔴🔴⚪⚪	• CERM (Univ. of Florence) • EMBO • SEB Annual Conference (Florence) • 14th International Copper Meeting (x2)
Switzerland	**4**	🔴🔴⚪⚪⚪	• Univ. of Bern (Inst. of Cell Biology) • SIB Swiss Inst. of Bioinformatics • Salt & Water Stress GRC • ICMRBS 2026 Conference
USA	**4**	🔴🔴⚪⚪⚪	• Weill Cornell Medicine (Biochemistry) • Univ. of Iowa (Microbiology) • ISMB 2026 • RNA Gordon Research Conference
Greece	**3**	🔴🔴⚪⚪⚪	• IMBB-FORTH / Univ.

Destination Country	Number of mobilities	Scale of mobilities (markers)	Abbreviated names of host institutions and events
			of Crete • Anargyrios & Korgialenios School (Spetses) (x2)
Belgium	**2**	🔴⚪⚪⚪⚪	• Cell Symposia (Host-Microbiome) • CPAT Cell Press Symposia
Czech Republic	**2**	🔴⚪⚪⚪⚪	• CEITEC MU (Masaryk Univ., Brno) • Czech Biotech Association / ISVM
Netherlands	**2**	🔴⚪⚪⚪⚪	• LCAM (van Leeuwenhoek Centre) • EuroBIC 18 (Groningen)
Norway	**2**	🔴⚪⚪⚪⚪	• Univ. of Oslo (Valen Group) • 12th SCAR Open Science Conference
Austria	**1**	⚪⚪⚪⚪⚪	• IMBA Vienna BioCenter
Japan	**1**	⚪⚪⚪⚪⚪	• EMBO CoB Workshop (Neurodevelopmental Disorders)
Singapore	**1**	⚪⚪⚪⚪⚪	• TransCODE Consortium / ncPP Summer School

Within the project, a total of 56 mobilities were completed in 15 destination countries, encompassing cooperation with 39 renowned foreign scientific and research institutions and conference organizations. The trips were characterized by a clear dominance of European directions, with a particular focus on Spain (9 mobilities), France (8), and Germany (7). These three countries combined for a total of 42.9% of all departures, while after including Great Britain and Italy (5 trips each), the top five destination countries accounted for 60.7% of the implemented program. A significant component was also non-EU mobilities (30.4%), including 6 intercontinental trips to leading centers in the United States (4), Japan (1), and Singapore (1). The geographical and institutional structure confirms the high substantive level of the completed

trips. The choice of leading scientific centers – such as CEA Saclay, Curie Institute, EMBL, or Weill Cornell Medicine – and participation in prestigious events (e.g., Gordon Research Conferences and EMBO workshops) proves the participants' desire to build relations with the global research vanguard. At the same time, the dispersion of 56 mobilities across as many as 39 separate entities and events proves the high flexibility of the project and the broad thematic scope of the carried out work. This allowed for comprehensive internationalization of the staff in diverse research areas and effectively marking the unit's presence in key world scientific centers.

6. Evaluation of Host Institutions

The evaluation of the quality of support offered by host institutions is based on collected evaluation survey questionnaires (N=52):

Area of assessment of conditions in the host institution	Very good	Good	Average	Poor / Very bad
Integration with the research team / Work atmosphere	**66.7%**	30.6%	2.8%	0.0%
Scientific support / Quality of mentoring	**62.2%**	29.7%	8.1%	0.0%
Access to research infrastructure and equipment	**51.4%**	34.3%	14.3%	0.0%
Administrative support on site	**50.0%**	39.5%	7.9%	2.6%
Assistance in accommodation and logistics	**37.5%**	40.6%	15.6%	6.3%

Main Conclusions from the Evaluation of Host Institutions:

- **Atmosphere and integration:** As many as **97.3% of respondents** assessed integration with the foreign scientific team and the work atmosphere as good or very good (66.7% very good). This indicates a high level of openness and academic culture in international partnerships.
- **Substantive mentoring: 91.9% of participants** expressed high satisfaction with scientific supervision from supervisors and leaders in host centers (62.2% very good ratings), which confirms the high level of engagement of the hosting staff.
- **Research infrastructure: 85.7% of respondents** assessed the equipment facilities of foreign laboratories as very good or good. Access to advanced technological platforms allowed testing unique measurement procedures.
- **Administrative and logistics support:** On-site administrative support was assessed positively in **89.5% of cases**. Accommodation assistance received 78.1% very good and good ratings – the lower percentage resulted from objective difficulties in local housing markets in large metropolises (e.g., London, Paris, New York), which constituted an organizational challenge for some scholarship holders.

7. Summary of Outbound Mobilities: Goal Achievement, Sustainability, and Satisfaction

The final evaluation indicates a very high impact of the completed trips on the scientific development of the beneficiaries and the internationalization of the Institute. Detailed results of the evaluation survey (N=52) indicate:

- **Degree of realization of scientific and professional goals:**
  - **80.8% of participants** declared that the trip allowed them to achieve their goals to a **Large (57.7%)** or **Very large (23.1%)** extent.
  - The remaining **19.2%** realized their goals to a moderate extent; none of the respondents indicated a lack of realization of assumptions.
- **Main substantive effects of mobility:**
  1. **Methodological and workshop development:** Obtaining unique research protocols, mastering the operation of modern laboratory equipment, and collecting empirical material directly used in doctoral dissertations and high-scoring journals.
  2. **Building international scientific networks (Networking):** Establishing direct scientific relations with opinion leaders and foreign research teams.
- **Increase in openness to international cooperation:**
  - **100% of respondents** confirmed that the trip increased their openness to international cooperation (including **84.6% who answered "Definitely yes"**).
- **Long-term sustainability of results (Project sustainability):**
  - **82.7% of participants** declared that the trip will result in further mobilities, joint publications, or the preparation of joint grant applications (15.4% "Yes", 67.3% "Maybe").
- **Overall assessment of support and satisfaction:**
  - The average rating of overall participation in the PROM project was **4.73 on a scale of 1–5**.

7.1. Voice of Outbound Participants – Quotes from Post-Mobility Surveys

The following direct statements of participants collected in the survey best illustrate the real impact of the PROM program on their career paths and international relations:

"The mobility grant greatly supports early-career researchers in enhancing their skill sets."
— Outbound participant / PROM Project (General comment)

"I would recommend this mobility to anyone who would like to extend their scientific and laboratory-like knowledge. Being allowed to experience this knowledge transfer means a lot to me, as I have learned not only new techniques, but also built a strong relation with another foreign scientific group... I strongly believe, that we will be able to form very promising international project..."
— Research internship participant (Recommendation and sustainability)

"The most important effects of my mobility were gaining a better understanding of DNA damage and repair, as well as learning new quantitative methods and data analysis tools that are relevant to my PhD project. It also gave me the chance to discuss my research with leading experts, which helped me broaden my scientific perspective..."
— Outbound participant / PhD student (Substantive effects)

"My main motivation for further trips abroad is to continue improving my research skills, learn new methods that can be applied to my PhD work, and exchange ideas with international experts in the field... I sincerely hope the institute gets access to such programs in the future as well."
— Outbound participant / PhD student (Motivation and development)

8. Inbound Mobilities – Foreign Researchers at IBB PAS

The PROM program also included a significant component of internationalization of the IBB PAS laboratories themselves by hosting foreign researchers. In total, **12 scientists** representing **9 European countries** came to the Institute.

8.1. Number, Country of Origin, and Profile of Inbound Participants

Based on official application data (N=12), the structure of inbound participants was as follows:

- **Structure by academic status:**
  - **PhD Students (First stage researchers / PhD students):** 9 people (**75.0%** of the entire inbound group).
  - **Academic staff and experienced researchers ("Others"):** 3 people (**25.0%**), including laboratory/department heads (Professors / Heads of Department) and independent scientists (Independent researchers).
- **Countries of origin of participants:**
  - **Czech Republic:** 3 people (25.0%) – Masaryk University (Brno), Charles University (Prague), Palacký University (Olomouc).
  - **Ukraine:** 2 people (16.7%) – Zabolotnyi Institute of Microbiology and Virology NASU, Yuriy Fedkovych Chernivtsi National University.
  - **Spain:** 1 person (8.3%) – Instituto de Biología Molecular y Celular de Plantas (IBMCP, Valencia).
  - **Ireland:** 1 person (8.3%) – University of Galway.
  - **Hungary:** 1 person (8.3%) – Semmelweis University (Budapest).
  - **Greece:** 1 person (8.3%) – University of Crete.
  - **Netherlands:** 1 person (8.3%) – Radboud University Medical Centre (Nijmegen).
  - **France:** 1 person (8.3%) – Paris-Saclay University / CNRS (I2BC).
  - **Germany:** 1 person (8.3%) – Heidelberg University (ZMBH).

8.2. Typology of Activities and Duration of Inbound Mobilities

Visits of foreign scientists to IBB PAS laboratories were characterized by a focus on practical transfer of research methods and the initiation of joint grant projects:

Type of activity carried out at IBB PAS	Number of participants	Share %	Average duration of mobility
Participation in a scientific internship	**9**	75.0%	21 – 30 days (intensive laboratory work)
Participation in a study visit	**2**	16.7%	5 – 7 days (exchange of experiences and methodology)
Preparation of an	**1**	8.3%	7 days (strategic

Type of activity carried out at IBB PAS	Number of participants	Share %	Average duration of mobility
international grant application			planning of cooperation)
TOTAL INBOUND	**12**	**100.0%**	**On average 22.3 days / mobility**

The vast majority of inbound participants (75%) participated in long-term research internships lasting from 3 to 4 weeks. This allowed for conducting full experimental cycles on unique IBB PAS equipment, testing specialized research procedures, and generating material for joint scientific publications.

8.3. Degree of Realization of Scientific Goals and Qualitative Evaluation

The results of the survey conducted among inbound participants (N=11, which constitutes 91.7% of the questionnaire return rate) unequivocally confirm the very high substantive and organizational level of the Institute:

- **Degree of realization of assumed scientific and professional goals:**
  - **100% of respondents** declared achieving their goals to a high degree.
  - **45.5% (5 people):** Very large extent.
  - **54.5% (6 people):** Large extent.
  - No respondent indicated a moderate or low degree of plan realization.
- **Sustainability of established cooperation:**
  - **63.6% (7 people)** definitely confirmed that the visit will result in lasting, continued cooperation with IBB PAS (preparation of joint international grants, e.g., MSCA, EMBO, NCN, and joint publications).
  - **36.4% (4 people)** assessed the prospect of further cooperation as probable (*Maybe*).
- **Overall assessment of participation in the project:**
  - The average rating of the overall stay and support at IBB PAS was **4.82 on a scale of 1–5** (81.8% of top ratings "5" and 18.2% of ratings "4").

8.4. Voice of Foreign Participants – Quotes from Evaluation Surveys

The following direct reflections of foreign scientists perfectly illustrate the substantive value of internships at IBB PAS, the high level of hospitality, and the organizational efficiency of the Institute's staff:

"My scientific goal was to gain hands-on expertise in seed-optimised H3K27me3 ChIP in Arabidopsis, particularly for low-input seed material... The most important effects of the mobility were the successful acquisition of hands-on expertise, generating validated material for downstream ChIP-seq analysis. The visit strengthened collaboration with the IBB group, contributing to ongoing joint work on chromatin dynamics and establishing a basis for continued research and publication."

— Research internship participant from Ireland (PhD student, University of Galway)

"The main scientific goal was to explore how artificial small RNA technologies developed in my laboratory could be applied to study plant–pathogen interactions... The mobility strengthened the collaboration between IBMCP and Dr. Magdalena Krzymowska (IBB PAS) and laid the groundwork for a future international grant proposal and joint publication."
— Professor / Head of Department from Spain (IBMCP, Valencia)
"What worked best was the availability, responsiveness and helpful attitude of the IBB staff throughout the preparation and implementation of the mobility... I also greatly appreciated the welcoming atmosphere at the host laboratory: colleagues were exceptionally kind, approachable and generous in sharing their knowledge and practical experience."
— Experienced researcher from Hungary (Semmelweis University)
"My primary scientific goal was to successfully establish the plaNET-Seq method in the seed model... Professionally, my goals were to initiate planning for joint postdoctoral grant proposals (EMBO, MSCA) with Dr. Świe¼ewski and to present my research via a seminar at the IBB... The most important part was establishing fruitful collaboration."
— Internship participant from the Czech Republic (Charles University, Prague)