

Research and Innovation Funding Managed by National Agency for Scientific Research and Innovation

In 2010, the National Agency of Technology and Innovation (NATI) was established as a public institution to support and fund scientific research and innovation in Albania.

In 2016, following the entry into force of the new Law on Higher Education and Scientific Research, the agency was renamed the National Agency for Scientific Research and Innovation (NASRI).

The institution itself remained the same, maintaining the same organizational structure, mission, focus, objectives, and functions. Therefore, the institution was originally established in 2010 and has 16 years of continuous activity and experience in supporting research and innovation in Albania.

- Over the five-year period (2021 – 2025), the National Agency for Scientific Research and Innovation managed a total budget of **ALL 3,175,478,457.20 (EUR 33,343,825.75)** dedicated to research and innovation support.
- The average annual funding managed by NASRI amounted to approximately **EUR 6.67 million**.
- The majority of the budget, 89%, was directed toward funding scientific research and competitive research projects, demonstrating a strong institutional focus on strengthening the national research and innovation ecosystem.
- During the last three years, research and innovation funding increased by approximately **2.5 times**, reflecting Albania's obligations and strategic priorities within the European integration process and alignment with European Union research and innovation policies.

International cooperation and participation in collaborative projects further contributed to the integration of Albanian research institutions into broader European and international innovation ecosystems.

Funding Structure

Category	Amount (EUR)
National programmes (funding; Research and Development Projects; Academia – Business – Others Projects; Research Infrastructure Projects; Doctoral Studies Projects)	EUR 27,587,339.65
International programmes (Bilateral and Multilateral Projects); fee for participation in Horizon Europe (Horizon 2020 before); fee and funding support for EUREKA; COST, CEEPUS, other scientific international projects and activities)	EUR 1,991,740.16
International projects where NASRI participated as partner and beneficiary	EUR 20,914.09

Budget Allocation

Description	Amount (EUR)	Share of Total Budget
Total budget managed	EUR 33,343,825.75	100%
Total allocated to funding scientific research projects and activities	EUR 29,579,079.81	89%

Key Highlights

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DIRECTORATE OF NATIONAL PROGRAMS

The mission of the Directorate of National Programs is to promote scientific research and innovation, through the support, monitoring and evaluation of the National Research and Development Programs (NRDP), the National Centers of Excellence Program (NQF), and the administration and updating of the national database on research and innovation.

The main tasks of the Directorate of National Programs are:

- a) identification of priority areas of scientific research, technology and innovation, approved by the Minister of Education and Sports;
- b) distribution of funds for national scientific research programs, on the basis of projects submitted by institutions of higher education and public and non-public institutions, whose object of activity is scientific research in the fields of natural sciences, engineering and technology, medicine, agricultural, social and human;
- c) the organization, every four years, according to the methodology approved by the decision of the Council of Ministers, of the process of evaluation of the research-scientific activity of the basic units, of the institutions of higher education, ranking them based on this evaluation;
- ç) approval, on the basis of free competition between applicants, of funds for doctoral study projects;
- d) administration and updating of the national database for scientific research in the higher education system, according to the provisions of article 13, of law no. 80/2015, "On higher education and scientific research in higher education institutions in the Republic of Albania", and the legal framework in force for the administration of electronic databases;
- dh) administration and publication of the database, with all projects financed by it, within national and international research and development programs;

Organization chart of the Directorate of National Programs



National Financial Instruments/programs for funding research activities managed by NASRI through National Programs Directory:

- **National R&D program (2010–present)** – NASRI’s earliest funding programme, initiated in 2010 and serving as the foundation of the agency’s research support activities
- **Research Infrastructure Programme (NASRI) (*introduced in 2019*)** – provides funding for research and scientific laboratories in public universities to improve research infrastructure, support advanced scientific activities, and increase institutional research capacity.
- **University- Business Cooperation Programme (*introduced in April 2023*)** – supports joint projects involving universities, businesses, research centres, and public institutions, with the objective of enhancing academia–industry collaboration and innovation-driven development.
- **Doctoral Programme (*introduced in 2025*)** – provides financial support for PhD studies, aiming to encourage young researchers, enhance scientific competencies, and contribute to the development of the next generation of researchers in Albania.

Key Achievements During the Last Five Years _ National Programs _ 2021 – 2025 period

- Overall, 444 national projects funded (out of 798 applications);
- Scientific research funding, including research infrastructure, has increased by 5.5 times;
- The number of national research programs and projects has increased threefold;
- Participation of academic staff, researchers, and students in research projects (basic and applied research) has increased by 5.2 times;
- 2,049 researchers benefited from funding;
- 80 research laboratories established or upgraded in public higher education institutions, with funding of ALL 918,344,575 (EUR 9,602,633);
 - 40 young researchers supported through doctoral funding, with funding amounting to ALL 11,527,078;
 - 347 scientific outputs produced, including articles, conference proceedings, monographs, studies, dictionaries, and other publications;

- 1,175 researchers participated as authors or co-authors in publications;
- 79 scientific articles published in Scopus-indexed journals, with the number expected to increase due to publications from 2024 and 2025 projects still under development.

Scientific and Academic Publications _National Programs

Projects funded through the National Research and Development Program generated a broad range of scientific and academic publications, reflecting significant growth in both the quality and quantity of research outputs.

In total:

- 79 articles were published in Scopus-indexed journals;
- 70 articles were published in other indexed scientific journals;
- 17 manuals, 1 dictionary, and 8 monographs were produced;
- 15 dedicated scientific studies were completed.

Additionally:

- 82 proceeding books and 43 abstract books were published, demonstrating the active participation of Albanian researchers in scientific conferences;
- 22 additional scientific publications further enriched the portfolio of outputs supported by NASRI.

The total number of researchers involved in publications reached 1,175, with a steadily increasing trend:

- 308 researchers in 2021;
- 417 researchers in 2022;
- 450 researchers in 2023.

This trend reflects the expansion of the Albanian research community and growing engagement in scientific production.

Scientific Publications as Outputs of NASRI-Funded National Programs

Year	Scopus Articles	Other Journal Articles	Manuals	Dictionaries	Monographs	Studies	Proceeding Books	Abstract Books	Other Publications	Researchers Involved
2021	11	25	2	1	1	3	25	5	4	308
2022	30	25	10	0	3	6	38	20	7	417
2023	38	20	5	0	4	6	19	18	11	450
TOTAL	79	70	17	1	8	15	82	43	22	1,175

SME Innovation Programmes Administered by NASRI through its National Programmes Directorate

Starting from 2023, the National Agency for Scientific Research and Innovation (NASRI) has been funding the National Technology and Innovation Program through joint academia–business research and innovation projects.

This is a relatively new program and is currently facing challenges that are typical for initiatives of this nature, particularly considering the difficulties associated with establishing effective collaboration between academia and the business sector.

The total funding budget allocated to this program over a three-year period, managed by NASRI, amounted to EUR 2,517,981. The beneficiaries of the program included 40 SMEs.

- The funding budget increased by 1.5 times.
- Total funding allocated: ALL 240,000,000 (EUR 2,517,981).
- 63 projects funded.
- Success rate: 72%.
- 190 scientific researchers involved
- 40 businesses participated.