

Invaluable support



The Finance & Grants team

At the LCSB, the Finance & Grants team plays a key role: They help the centre's principal investigators (PI) navigate the funding and financing process for their research projects, ensuring that they can focus on their scientific endeavours while making the most efficient use of available resources.

In order to best support the researchers, the team's approach covers every stage of a project's lifecycle, starting at the very beginning: "Once a PI expresses interest in submitting a funding proposal for a project, our research facilitators can guide them toward the best-suited funding opportunities," explains Mounir Maaoui, team leader of Finance & Grants. "While our grants experts give some helpful input during the proposal writing process, our financial controllers provide assistance in estimating various costs, be it staff salaries, consumables or larger one-off purchases."

Once a project has been approved, a kick-off meeting is held with the PI, the researchers working on the project and the Finance & Grants team to set out the scientific expectations and the precise budget framework. The team's support continues throughout the project, including monthly or quarterly budget reviews and regular meetings. "These meetings help us establish a trusting

relationship between the PIs and their dedicated research facilitators and financial controllers. This enables smooth communication and allows us to stay on top of potential issues," details Mounir Maaoui.

The importance of the Finance & Grants team becomes even more apparent in the pre-closing phase, when remaining budgets are assessed and measures are taken to ensure that these funds remain available for necessary purchases. The team's proactive involvement in reallocation and budget management comes into play. "Keeping up to date with a project's progress and remaining funds, especially towards the end, helps to ensure that resources are used efficiently," adds Mounir Maaoui. "By thoughtfully managing finances, we also maintain the LCSB reputation and high standing with funding bodies, that can trust that the resources they provide are used according to their expectations."

The LCSB Finance & Grants team is a cornerstone of the support offered to researchers at the centre. The team's expertise allows a balance to be struck between providing the necessary flexibility in spending to enable researchers to achieve their scientific goal and providing clear and auditable accounts to funding partners in Luxembourg, Europe and beyond. ■