Ocena końcowa - raport

Nazwa konkursu	Inicjatywa doskonałości – uczelnia badawcza
Numer konkursu	2
Podmiot	Uniwersytet SWPS
Numer rejestracyjny	IDUB/2/11/2026
Rodzaj dokumentu	Wniosek

Lp.	Kryteria oceny	Punkty
1)	poziom merytoryczny:	
a)	poziom merytoryczny planu, w tym adekwatność celów w nim określonych w odniesieniu do rozwoju ekosystemu badawczo-dydaktycznego oraz rozwoju kultury organizacyjnej podmiotu	**13** (0 - 15)
	Uzasadnienie The plan is particularly sophisticated and very well constructed. SWPS makes a statement very early on in their documentation that this is not to be seen as a 'remedial' plan, and this is absolutely upheld in the narrative. Indeed, the overwhelming sense is building on established excellence. There are nineteen actions for 2027-2031 organised into a single “selective excellence to durable critical mass” logic. This logic departs from a ‘people first’ approach, also evidenced (and stressed in the interview) by bottom-up involvement of staff in the preparation of the plan. There are just three quite sizeable and focused Priority Research Areas, and the objectives, self-assessment findings and actions for each are tightly cross-referenced throughout; the narrative maintains a consistent argument from the plan summary down to individual action rationales. The narrative is confident, evidence-led (benchmarked citation performance, documented research outcome against a small public subsidy) and appropriately aspirational, which in large part reflects the considerable successes achieved by SWPS since 2017. What is striking is the determination to identify, nurture and support the most outstanding staff and research students, and to ensure that their potential is harnessed. Equally, the determination for SWPS not just to be part of international collaborations but to move towards greater leadership of and within highly esteemed networks is a tangible objective towards which much of the plan's energy is targeted. Overall, there is a congruency between the plan's confident tone and narrative, and the underlying target-setting (see 1d). However, in places the objectives and narrative appear to promise more transformation than the specific indicators actually commit to. This is somewhat inevitable and understandable given the level at which SWPS is now competing and the mitigations at work that will determine success. There are risks related to the limited number of excellence teams and the relatively narrow disciplinary range. The specific nature of SWPS - as a private organisation - also implies that there are limited funds available for its IDUB 2 plan.	
b)	adekwatność osiągnięć wskazanych w autodiagnozie w odniesieniu do celów w zakresie podniesienia poziomu jakości działalności naukowej i poziomu jakości kształcenia oraz poziomu kultury organizacyjnej	**9** (0 - 10)
	Uzasadnienie The self-assessment is used rigorously to build the core objectives and as the platform for the plan's over-arching ambitions relating to research, education and the organisational culture of SWPS, be it that the self-reported organizational cultural achievements are less easily benchmarked. Rather than only listing internal achievements and problems, the plan grounds its diagnosis in explicit comparative benchmarking against five comprehensive IDUB-1 universities, including citations per publication (9.98 versus 1.92-3.13), the share of uncited publications (38% versus 59-65%) and substantial research income sustained against a public subsidy of only ~PLN 6.5M (2025). The self-assessment also adequately contextualises SWPS’ unique position in the Polish higher education system and this position was further elaborated upon during the interview with an emphasis on research and teaching for the ‘real world’. This gives the self-assessment a solid evidence base and lends considerable credence to the strategic choice to concentrate on three POBs rather than disperse effort. The one methodological caveat is that this headline comparison (with other universities) uses raw citations per publication rather than field-normalised citation impact (FWCI), which controls for field, publication year and document type; the plan's own FWCI (1.17, see 1d) shows citations only modestly above what is typical for its field, a considerably less dramatic figure than the raw-citation comparison implies, and the reasons for the gap in the raw figures against the comparator universities are not established by the data presented. Whilst there is no sense of inappropriate hyperbole, the congruency between what has been achieved at SWPS, and that which is planned for 2027-31 must be perfectly aligned.	

Lp.	Kryteria oceny	Punkty
c)	zasadność doboru priorytetowych obszarów badawczych wskazanych w części D wniosku/planu	**8** (0 - 10)
	Uzasadnienie The three Priority Research Areas – Societal Resilience in the Age of Polycrisis (with a strong Central-and-Eaatern-European empirical setting), Individuals, Families and Societies Facing Demographic Changes, and Digital Mental Health & Wellbeing – map closely onto SWPS' disciplinary strengths in social science and humanities and connect clearly to stated IDUB priorities (geopolitics and security, digitalisation and AI, demographic change). The alignment with IDUB priorities is clear. The selection is deliberate and data-backed: POB 1 alone shows 867 publications (2020-2024), 15.3% top-decile share, FWCI 1.33 and 53% international co-authorship, with named partners (Kent, UCL, Essex, Padua, Belgrade). However, POBs 2 and 3 rest on smaller evidence bases than POB 1, and the disciplinary concentration (social sciences, psychology, humanities) limits diversification. The deliberate choice to select only three areas, explicitly justified as necessary for concentration of people, funding and attention, is a strong and entirely defensible selection logic for ensuring the targeting of resource and focus, and for ensuring excellence. However, the reliance on relatively small 'pockets of excellence' is a risk.	
d)	zasadność metodyki wybranej do monitorowania postępów w realizacji planu, a także wartości bazowe i osiągalność obligatoryjnych oraz zdefiniowanych przez podmiot wskaźników docelowych, o których mowa w części G, pkt 1 i 2 wniosku/planu, w kontekście realizacji planu	**13** (0 - 15)
	Uzasadnienie The strongest monitoring methodology of the applications assessed. Its guiding principle - 'monitoring must support decisions, not only reporting' - is implemented through a genuine feedback loop (data - analysis - decision - adjustment - re-measurement), POB Portfolio Management assessing each POB against four explicit criteria (scientific quality, internationalisation, talent, sustainability), stop/go rules, an indicator dashboard with named data owners, and a deliberate separation between the Strategic Area Leader for Science and Art (oversight, not day-to-day implementation) and the Office of Research Strategy and Development (implementation). The mandatory bibliometric indicators appear at first glance to be a rather mixed picture in terms of targets and aspirations. For example, top-decile publication share (12.58%→17.20%, +37% relative) and entity-level FWCI (1.17→1.50, +28% relative) represent genuinely ambitious, well-evidenced targets, and international accreditations (10→16) show a concrete, credible increase. However, several other indicators are considerably somewhat weaker than the plan's confident tone suggests. For instance, the number of international research grants is held flat across all three POBs (10→10, 3→3, 6→6 respectively) – only the funding value rises, not grant volume; this one presumes is a deliberate strategy to capture larger grants and to ensure that support for grant-writing and capture is laser-focused. However, there are risks associated with such an approach, particularly given the emphasis on engaging and retaining early career researchers for whom a smaller award is critical and more realistic). During the interview, SWPS stressed the ‘modest and honest’ approach, stressing their ambition to deliver what is promised. Inventions patented abroad are also flat (2→2), although given the research focus of SWPS this is not particularly surprising. Most notably, the commercialisation revenue target (PLN 36.7 million for 2026-2031) sounds ambitious as a headline figure, but annualised (PLN 6.12 million/year) it is actually below the PLN 7.2 million already achieved in 2025, the final year of the baseline period. On the existing trend, this target would be met without any additional effort (unless the 2025 achievement is generally viewed as exceptional?). In reviewing the methodology for monitoring and the indicators and metrics set, one is certainly inclined to support the judgement of SWPS, who will have an informed understanding of what is appropriate and achievable, not least because the self-assessment is robust and reflective.	
2)	istotność założonych celów dla podniesienia międzynarodowego znaczenia działalności podmiotu:	
a)	stopień, w jakim plan zakłada realizację celów w wymiarze międzynarodowym w obszarze rozwoju ekosystemu badawczo-dydaktycznego oraz rozwoju kultury organizacyjnej	**8** (0 - 10)
	Uzasadnienie International objectives are ambitious in character and not just incremental. Indeed, the plan explicitly targets a shift from participation to coordinator and work-package leadership roles in Horizon Europe, ERC and MSCA consortia (Action 2.2, PLN 6,000,000), moving cooperation from individual researcher contacts to durable institutional partnerships, and scaling joint and cotutelle doctoral pathways. Minor comment are that partnership strategy is stronger on named collaborators than on multilateral network/consortium positioning and that the organization culture elements are somewhat underdeveloped. There are also some concerns about the limited capacity to coordinate multi-institutional partnerships. The plan does not mask the existing variation in success across the university; rather, it is about primarily building on existing strengths. This is precisely the trajectory for entrenching and extending the university's international presence and status. The international-collaboration publication share is targeted to rise from an already-high 48.4% to 55.7% – a comparatively modest relative increase, but one that starts from a relatively strong baseline and is correspondingly more credible than more ambitious-sounding targets set from a lower base.	

Lp.	Kryteria oceny	Punkty
b)	potencjalna trwałość efektów realizacji planu, zwłaszcza w obszarze umiędzynarodowienia, ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem działań przewidzianych do realizacji w ostatnim roku objętym finansowaniem	**4** (0 - 5)
	Uzasadnienie Sustainability is addressed through six dedicated and monitored continuity actions (Excellence Continuity Fund, Global Consortia & Partnership Engine, Research Talent Pipeline 2032, Sustainable Research Careers Framework, POB Governance & Data Integrity, and Impact/Welcome/Well-being Culture) totalling PLN 2,500,000 – around 5% of the total budget. Continuation funding sources are named specifically (own resources, indirect grant costs, a Research Development Fund, partnerships and commercialisation income), which gives the sustainability plan more credibility than a generic statement of intent. However, this does not mask the observation that the total budget is relatively small to be assured of sustained outcomes and impact.	
3)	adekwatność opisanych w planie działań do celów w obszarze rozwoju ekosystemu badawczo-dydaktycznego oraz rozwoju kultury organizacyjnej:	
a)	zasadność doboru działań, w tym działań o przełomowym i innowacyjnym charakterze, dla realizacji celów w obszarze rozwoju ekosystemu badawczo-dydaktycznego oraz rozwoju kultury organizacyjnej	**7** (0 - 10)
	Uzasadnienie The set of actions includes genuinely selective and differentiated instruments rather than only horizontal support mechanisms. Action 1.2, the POB Top Researchers Program, funds contracts for a defined cohort of five senior and five early-career researchers with an explicit stop/go performance-review mechanism built into its milestones – a bespoke, accountable instrument for concentrating support on the strongest talent, which is largely absent from comparable applications. Action 2.2 (Research and International Consortium Leadership) similarly targets a specific, higher-order capability (consortium coordination) rather than general international activity. This differentiation between broad-based and selective instruments is one of the plan's greatest strengths. The POB Competitive Project Fund (PLN 8M; 12-18-month cycles; PLN 50-200k projects; mandatory early-career participation; 'grants for grants' for Horizon Europe/ERC/MSCA) scales an internal-call model refined over 15 years and tested under the Regional Initiative of Excellence. Innovation here is organisational and genuinely evidence-based rather than rhetorical, be it that the actions contain few high-risk, high reward research-content bets. Here, again, the relatively limited amount of funding reserved suggest a serious risk.	
b)	wykonalność zaplanowanych działań w odniesieniu do potencjału podmiotu oraz środków finansowych przeznaczonych na te cele przez podmiot	**2** (0 - 5)
	Uzasadnienie The total budget (approximately PLN 52,500,000 across nineteen main actions and six continuity actions) plausibly proportionate to an institution generating significant own-source revenue (public subsidy of only around PLN 6,500,000 in 2025). The key concern is whether the amount of resources is sufficiently substantive to really live up to the overall IDUB 2 expectations. Costings are, in several cases, tied to specific, named quantities (e.g. five senior and five early-career researcher contracts under Action 1.2) rather than a flat per-POB formula, which gives the budget far more credibility than uniform allocations. Another feasibility risk is that several of the more ambitious instruments appear to rely on continued strong growth in commercialisation and grant income to be sustained beyond the IDUB period, which is not fully interrogated in the plan itself.	
4)	potencjał podmiotu w zakresie:	
a)	wzmocnienia strategii umiędzynarodowienia podmiotu, w tym zwiększenia wpływu prowadzonej działalności naukowej na rozwój światowej nauki oraz wzmocnienia współpracy naukowej z renomowanymi instytucjami w skali międzynarodowej, w szczególności w priorytetowych obszarach badawczych	**4** (0 - 5)
	Uzasadnienie The plan's international ambition is very strong and cogently expressed throughout, even though the absolute scale of international grants and the breadth of institutional partnerships remain relatively low. Also, the international basis within SWPS is relatively small, with 3.4% international staff and a small number of international doctoral students. During the interview, sufficient support was offered for the international attractiveness of SWPS and quality was stressed vis-à-vis quantity. SWPS stresses the idea that the quality of current staff would attract international students. Having highlighted the small caveats, as guiding ambition, internationalisation is salient at every point in the application. The strategy and ambition are anchored in an established and impressive track record of grant income (e.g. approximately PLN 12.6 million won by POB1 alone in 2021-2025, evidenced in an attached grants annex). What is clear and commendable is the intent to move into consortium leadership roles. One slight concern is that the normalised citation impact of internationally co-authored publications is targeted to rise only marginally for POB1 (1.84→1.88, +2%), which sits somewhat at odds with the more ambitious entity-level FWCI target and the fact that POB1 receives the largest share of international grant funding. Again, one assumes this rather cautious target is 'evidence based', but it would be useful to understand the rationale.	

Lp.	Kryteria oceny	Punkty
b)	podniesienia jakości kształcenia studentów i doktorantów, w szczególności na kierunkach i w dyscyplinach naukowych związanych z priorytetowymi obszarami badawczymi	**4** (0 - 5)
	Uzasadnienie Education quality is addressed through a coherent pipeline rather than isolated interventions, which is particularly commendable. For instance, Action 3.1 engages top students in POB research from the MA-thesis stage; Action 3.2 scales and internationalises the Doctoral School (that was positively evaluated) including cotutelle and joint supervision arrangements; and Action 3.3 systematically embeds POB research into curricula. This end-to-end design, connecting undergraduate/MA research involvement through to doctoral internationalisation, strikes what seems to be the correct balance between offering generic support to all and bespoke and targeted nurturing to the very best. During the interview, also other relevant educational activities were highlighted, such as moving towards non-diploma education.	
c)	przygotowania i wdrożenia kompleksowych rozwiązań służących rozwojowi zawodowemu pracowników, w szczególności młodych naukowców w rozumieniu art. 360 ust. 2 ustawy	**4** (0 - 5)
	Uzasadnienie Staff development is tailored clearly to a specific, named risk: the plan identifies the danger of losing early-career researchers once project funding ends, and responds with a dedicated Post-Grant Career Bridging Mechanism (Action 4.3) alongside a Mentoring and Transversal Skills Academy (Action 4.1) and a Research Time Framework Policy providing protected research time (Action 4.2, PLN 5,000,000). This combination of protected time, mentoring and a funding bridge (also elaborated upon during the interview) addresses a genuine structural vulnerability directly rather than offering generic competence-development actions alone. That said, the ambitions here do not sufficiently take into account the relatively high teaching loads of staff and risks of overburdening staff.	
d)	optymalizacji struktury administracyjnej i jakości procedur zarządczych oraz wzmocnienia zarządzania strategicznego podmiotem, jak również innych działań służących rozwojowi kultury organizacyjnej, uwzględniających w szczególności Cele Zrównoważonego Rozwoju określone w Agendzie na rzecz Zrównoważonego Rozwoju 2030 przyjętej przez Zgromadzenie Ogólne ONZ, w dniu 25 września 2015 r.	**4** (0 - 5)
	Uzasadnienie The self-assessment is candid about existing operational weaknesses as well as strengths, and acknowledges the challenges that the plan will engender. Specifically, it identifies "dispersed process ownership and fragmented data tools" and multi-campus inconsistency as genuine implementation risks, warning that without clear governance "the POBs could become loose networks rather than strategic areas of concentration." The plan's proposal to address this shortcoming and future risk is captured in two targeted actions: Multi-Campus Bilingual Digital Integration (Action 5.1), and POB-to-Governance Mapping and Accountability Reform (Action 5.2). Furthermore, Action 6.3 (SDG-Aligned International Rankings & Global Visibility) explicitly maps POB activity to relevant Sustainable Development Goals, be it that the activities remain somewhat abstract. Management optimisation is concrete and decision-oriented (portfolio management, stop/go rules, dashboard, clear separation of oversight and delivery), and organisational culture receives a distinctive, substantive treatment: societal impact and public engagement recognised in academic careers, SDG evidence organised for global visibility, and well-being and gender equality treated as conditions for durable research teams. During the interview, the panel gained also additional insight in SWPS' governance and communication structures, confirming the positive assessment. But concerns regarding fragmentation and differentiated strength/weakness of the campuses.	
		80/100

Podsumowanie oceny

Rekomendacja

Pozytywna

Uzasadnienie

Extremely impressive plan that reflects the considerable achievements in the IDUB1 period. SWPS is a leading research intensive university (albeit relatively small, and strength is limited to 'pockets of excellence') by any measurable standard, and the comprehensive plan for 2027-31 strikes the correct balance between building on existing excellence and ensuring new talent and expertise is nurtured. There is critical reflection and an honesty, but this is always channelled into action and strategy. What particularly stands out is that proposed actions are targeted and extend significantly beyond the provision of generic support and guidance, planned against a clear positioning in the Polish higher education landscape (as emphasized in the interview: 'a non-public university with public goals). The objections submitted by the university regarding the draft assessment report did not, in general, address the core points concerning the plan's strengths and the concerns identified by the assessment panel. Consequently, they did not lead to any substantial revision of the panel's main conclusions. We reiterate the panel's overall positive assessment. The overall key concerns, however, relate, amongst other things, to the amount of funding available - along the IDUB 2 rules, which arguably do not fully match with the peculiarities of a non-public provider - to turn the lofty ambitions and plan into sustained success.