

Ponomaryov Ordered to Pay Skolkovo \$82,000 for Lectures

By [The Moscow Times](#)

August 27, 2013



State Duma Deputy Ilya Ponomaryov. **A. Astanova**

Moscow's Gagarinsky District Court has ordered State Duma Deputy Ilya Ponomaryov to pay 2.7 million rubles (\$82,000) to the Skolkovo Foundation for failing to meet contract terms in which he agreed deliver ten lectures.

Skolkovo paid Ponomaryov \$300,000 for the lectures, but he only presented one, the foundation claims. The other nine did not meet the contract guidelines. Four talks were off topic, and one consisted only of a short introduction.

The deputy also had to present lectures in South Korea and the U.S., but he failed to do so.

The foundation's representative also said that in some of the lectures, Ponomaryov presented Skolkovo in a negative light. "As an investor, I wouldn't go to Skolkovo, because there are people there who are incompetent," Interfax reported Ponomaryov saying.

Skolkovo had requested that Ponomaryov, A Just Russia party member, be ordered to pay 9 million rubles when the case opened in April, but the court decided on a lesser amount.

Ponomaryov denied the wrongdoing and said he would appeal the court's decision.

A criminal investigation was opened against Skolkovo's deputy president Alexei Beltyukov on embezzlement charges in April.

Skolkovo's records showed that Ponomaryov had been paid \$750,000 for the lectures, even though he actually received \$300,000. Beltyukov is suspected of having stolen the remaining money.

Ponomaryov was questioned as a witness as part the criminal case and said that the difference in the amount was due to organizational and research costs.

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