

Skolkovo Foundation Might Sue Ponomaryov, Vekselberg Says

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The Skolkovo Foundation might sue State Duma Deputy Ilya Ponomaryov, if an inquiry into his work for the foundation reveals that he acted in bad faith, the foundation's president, Viktor Vekselberg, said Thursday.

"Most likely we will go to court. We will assess the damage to the foundation and will seek to return [the money]," billionaire businessman Vekselberg told RIA-Novosti.

Vekselberg said Ponomaryov had given no explanation for accusations that he improperly received \$750,000 of the foundation's money and failed to declare the earnings in his income declaration form.

If the opposition lawmaker falsified his income declarations, it would be a "nightmare," Vekselberg added.

Investigators said last week that Alexei Beltyukov, vice president of the Skolkovo Foundation, was the man responsible for paying Ponomaryov the \$750,000 for lectures and research work.

A criminal investigation was launched to check the legality of the payments as well as the subject, content and academic value of the deputy's 10 lectures, for which he was paid \$300,000.

Ponomaryov denies any wrongdoing. The deputy said he had provided even more services to the Skolkovo Foundation than was required by the contract.

Ponomaryov is one of a handful of Duma deputies with close ties with the protest movement.

He has also been active in the opposition-driven campaign to reveal top officials' undeclared income and property.

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