

In accordance with its Funding Guidelines dated January 1, 2022  
(as amended), the FWF has issued the following  
Application Guidelines for

# #ConnectingMinds Workshops (CMW) Phase 1

Effective as of November 1, 2024

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**Please note:** Explanations of the terms used in the Application Guidelines can be found in the [Definition of terms](#) (PROFI mode).

# 1 General Information

## 1.1 Program objective

The #ConnectingMinds program aims to support consortia working on cooperative research projects combining both academic and social knowledge and applying this knowledge to help tackle the social, technological, ecological, and economic challenges we face today.

Transdisciplinary researchers deliberately seek out this integrative exchange of knowledge, not only to contribute to scientific discourse, but also to actively shape social transformations and stimulate technical and social innovations. This call is inviting proposals for projects on the topics listed in [section 1.3](#).

The #ConnectingMinds program pursues the following objectives:

- Initiating cooperative research projects that combine scientific knowledge and practical expertise (transdisciplinary research)
- Supporting research on highly relevant topics affecting society both today and tomorrow, and which is searching for solutions for complex challenges
- Strengthening the dialog between science and society as well as the transfer of research results into practice (supporting the “third mission” concept)
- Capacity building of researchers in the field of transdisciplinary research

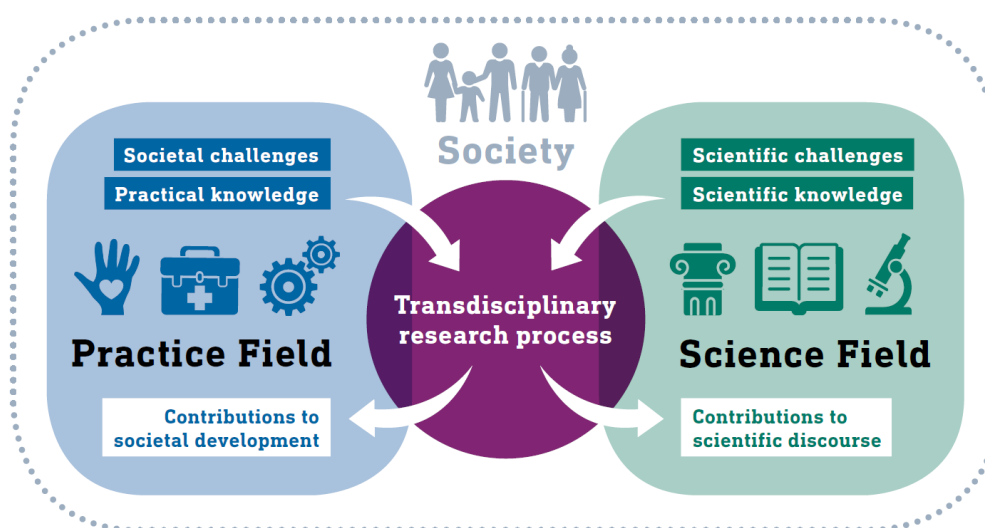


Figure 1- Source: FWF

The #ConnectingMinds program provides teams of two to five researchers with grants of up to €1.25 million for projects with a duration of three to five years. Among other conditions, this transdisciplinary research project should involve practitioners, i.e., non-academic participants (see also [section 1.5](#)). Practitioners can be, for example, representatives of organizations outside the higher education and research system who are involved with and

integrated into the research project. These are organizations or institutions that are affected by or have an influence on a complex social problem. Examples include NPOs/NGOs, associations, public administration, companies, healthcare or educational institutions (but not private individuals). The main condition is that the research project addresses complex social issues and facilitates the use of a methodologically sound, transdisciplinary research process. Activities that will facilitate the exchange of the knowledge generated in the project with other societal stakeholders – beyond those directly involved in the project – and with various target groups are also to be described in detail.

The program is divided into a **#ConnectingMinds Workshop** and a **#ConnectingMinds Project** (see [section 1.2](#)).

## 1.2 What types of projects can be funded?

The program is divided into two phases:

In the first phase, consortia of two to five researchers can apply to conduct a **#ConnectingMinds Workshop** through the lead research institution; the coordinator must be employed at the lead research institution. If their proposal is approved, the researchers can use this workshop to work together with the other project participants (including non-academic participants) to develop and advance their project idea, identify any problems, and plan their transdisciplinary research process for a **#ConnectingMinds Project**. The maximum funding amount for a workshop is €12,000.

In the second phase, the application for a **#ConnectingMinds project**, which is based on the results of the workshop and further elaborates the research project, can be submitted through the lead research institution. The **#ConnectingMinds project** has a duration of three to five years with a maximum funding amount of €250,000 per year.

The following requirements apply for the planned workshop:

A maximum of €12,000 can be requested as project-specific costs for the **#ConnectingMinds Workshop**.

The following requirements apply for the **#ConnectingMinds Project** to be outlined at the workshop:

- The research project must address current or future socially significant issues and challenges. Research questions can be based on the examples of topics listed in [section 1.3](#). The **#ConnectingMinds project** must aim to generate new research or arts-based research findings and indicate possible solutions to a complex social problem.
- The proposal must address not only how the bodies of knowledge/groups of people are to be involved and integrated into the project, but also how the research activities, results, and knowledge gained are to be transferred to the public as part of a dialog between science and society.

- Commercial exploitation of the research results during the project period is not an objective of the program, so exploitation strategies are not part of the funding.
- The use of a transdisciplinary methodological approach, the cooperation of all project participants, and the resulting procedural nature of the research project (for example: How are the results generated? Who will be integrated when? What are the key milestones of the project? How and when is the knowledge transferred within the group of project participants and to the outside?) are highly important.

### 1.3 Thematic focus

For this call, the FWF is supporting innovative projects with funding provided by the Fonds Zukunft Österreich as part of the thematic groups of the [EU Missions](#) (topics: cancer, climate, cities, soil, and waters). Proposals should demonstrate a thematic relevance to one or more of the thematic groups named above.<sup>1</sup> In this case, when applying (see [section 1.4](#)), first select the appropriate program (CMW – #ConnectingMinds Workshops), then choose “EU-Missionen” from the drop-down menu. Thematically open applications are also being accepted for this call. In this case, applicants need only select the relevant program (CMW – #ConnectingMinds Workshops) (see [section 1.4](#)). In Phase 1, 15 workshops are expected to be funded, followed by three projects on EU Missions and one thematically open project in Phase 2.

Research or arts-based research questions can be based on the examples of topics listed in [section 1.3.1](#).

#### 1.3.1 EU Missions

Exploiting the potential of excellent research or arts-based research for the implementation of EU missions in Austria is an important contribution to major social transformation. The thematic focus serves to anchor the topics of the missions and perspectives for their implementation in a social context.

Research or arts-based research questions can address topics such as those listed below. See the [Implementation Framework for the EU Missions in Austria](#) for further examples of topics for this thematic focus.

- **Mission Cancer: Conquering Cancer – Mission Possible**
  - Research into the causes of cancer in an interdisciplinary and participatory approach with patients
  - Oncological therapy and care using practice-proven procedures with the involvement of patients (or patient organizations) in new research or arts-based research questions

<sup>1</sup> Based on the thematic relevance (to be specified in the *Program-specific thematic relevance* form), the FWF will decide whether the submitted project meets the thematic requirements of the current call.

- **Mission Climate: A Climate-Resilient Europe**
  - Generation of basic knowledge in the research initiative "Climate change risk assessment," including the further development of methods for measuring risk factors (hazards, exposure, and vulnerability; incl. resilience capacities such as adaptation and coping)
  - Broad sectoral anchoring of adaptation measures in relation to climate change and avoiding maladaptation
  - Promoting adaptation to climate change through the development and implementation of nature-based solutions (NbS)
- **Mission Cities: 100 Climate-Neutral Cities by 2030 – by and for the Citizens**
  - Development of climate-neutral and smart cities as centers of experimentation and innovation
  - Further development of the national "climate-neutral city" mission
- **Mission Soil: Caring for Soil is Caring for Life**
  - Strengthening the field of research through the planned national research initiative "A Soil Deal for Europe" with a focus on land use, soil sealing, soil compaction, nutrients, soil microbiome, strengthening soil health and soil fertility, organic pollutants and microplastics in soil, carbon storage, establishment of a research platform, etc.
- **Mission Starfish 2030: Restore our Ocean and Waters**
  - Sustainable strengthening of knowledge transfer on water conservation through research-led approaches by means of the national research initiative "Restore our Ocean and Waters"

## 1.4 Submission deadline

All proposals must be submitted online using the [elane](#) digital application portal. The deadline for submission is **February 13, 2025 (2:00 pm local time Vienna)**. Project funding is administered through the research institutions ([PROFI](#)); this means the application must be approved for submission by both the coordinator and the respective research institution (= lead research institution) before this deadline.<sup>2</sup> All forms required for the application must be completed online; other required documents such as the project description, including annexes and any additional documents, must be uploaded in full before the application can be approved for submission by the research institution. Applications submitted after the deadline will be returned without review, regardless of the circumstances. For additional information, please see the [elane user manual](#).

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<sup>2</sup> Approval for submission by the research institution may be waived by the research institution if it has authorized the coordinator to approve it themselves.

## 1.5 Who is eligible to apply?

All Austrian **research institutions** are eligible to apply.<sup>3</sup> The intended project must be carried out in Austria or under the auspices of the applying Austrian research institution. The application is submitted by the research institution where the coordinator works. The research institution appoints the coordinator to carry out the project.

The research or arts-based research question addressed in a #ConnectingMinds Project is to be explored more deeply or newly consolidated at an Austrian research institution. The consortium working on this question will be concentrated at one location or link several researchers at different locations throughout Austria.

The consortium members must possess the relevant qualifications, sufficient time resources, and have access to the infrastructure necessary to carry out the proposed project. All the persons involved in the realization and implementation of the project must be indicated appropriately. The coordinator must confirm that all the participants involved in the realization of the #ConnectingMinds Workshop (and consequently the #ConnectingMinds Project) agree to the submission of the application.

The consortium for which funding is requested must consist of **two to five researchers**. One-third of the consortium should be made up of the underrepresented gender; the composition of the consortium is one of the deciding factors in the review and evaluation process. Consortium members should be internationally outstanding researchers and, if applicable, junior researchers from all academic disciplines, especially from the humanities, social sciences, and cultural studies.

The consortium members must be employed at the lead or partner research institution at the time the project is scheduled to begin. Their salary is financed either by the research institution or by the project as grant-salaried researchers (see [section 2.3.2.1.1](#)). If the principal investigator is employed part-time at the start of the project, project funds can be used to increase the extent of employment to full time. All research institutions that employ consortium members must be listed as either the lead research institution or as a partner research institution on the title page of the application.

Researchers who are predominantly working abroad during the project may act as consortium members (not as coordinators) if they are employed at the Austrian research institution applying for funding at the time of application and for the entire duration of the project. The extent of employment at the Austrian research institution not funded by the FWF must be at least 25%.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Research institutions must be [registered](#) in the FWF's research institution portal.

<sup>4</sup> Proof of employment must be submitted to the FWF with the application.



The submission of an application for phase 1 of #ConnectingMinds and the approval of the workshop by the FWF are the prerequisites for applying for phase 2 (full proposal #ConnectingMinds Project).

### 1.5.1 Can multiple applications be submitted simultaneously?

There is no limit to the number of applications that can be submitted by a research institution.

The following applies to both the proposal phase and the implementation phase of the project:

- Each consortium member (including the coordinator) may participate in only one #ConnectingMinds Project. If a researcher is already involved in an ongoing or pending #ConnectingMinds Project as a consortium member, they may not participate in a further #ConnectingMinds Workshop.
- A researcher may apply for the position of coordinator or serve as coordinator in no more than one collaborative program (Clusters of Excellence, Emerging fields, Special Research Areas, Research Groups, Young Independent Research Group, #ConnectingMinds, doc.funds, or doc.funds.connect).
- Other consortium members may apply for the position of coordinator or lead a project as a coordinator in one additional collaborative program.
- This does not apply to programs in the excellent=austria initiative. The following provisions apply to these programs: Members of the Board of Directors of an ongoing or pending Cluster of Excellence cannot act as coordinator of an ongoing or pending Emerging Fields project. The coordinator of an ongoing or pending Emerging Fields project cannot act as a member of the Board of Directors (including the Director of Research) of an ongoing or pending Cluster of Excellence.

## 1.6 Who is eligible to apply?

### 1.6.1 General requirements

The publication records of all consortium members over the last five years must be internationally visible and commensurate with the expected career path in their field. The following criteria apply for the assessment of an applicant's publication record and initiation of the review process:

- **Quality assurance:** Most relevant in assessing the publication record are those publications that have undergone a quality assurance procedure in line with international standards (peer review or an equivalent procedure; in the natural and life sciences, peer review is expected). Journals must usually be listed in Web of Science, Scopus, or the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ). In the case of journals that are not listed in

these databases, or in the case of monographs, edited volumes, contributions to edited volumes, or other publication types, the respective consortium member must provide a link to the publisher's website, describing the quality assurance procedure applied. Should no such description be available, it is the consortium member's responsibility to provide evidence that the publication has been subject to a quality assurance procedure in accordance with the standards of the field.

- For proposals dealing with arts-based research, consortium members who are active in the field of arts-based research must have excellent qualifications according to international standards and must have a connection to the development of the arts. This qualification is to be documented based on artistic, scholarly, and/or arts-based achievements of the last five years commensurate with the consortium member's career path and which demonstrate their international visibility.
- **International visibility:** The majority of the consortium members' publications/artistic works must have a wider than national reach. In the natural sciences, life sciences, and social sciences, most of the publications listed must be in English.
- **Number/scope and quality** of the publications must be commensurate with the researcher's expectable career path and the respective discipline. At least two publications must be quality-assured and internationally visible publications with a substantial and independent contribution on the part of the consortium members. At least one publication with first, last, or corresponding authorship is required, with the exception of publications in journals (or disciplines) that rank authors alphabetically. If any such publications are included in the required document *PI\_publication.pdf* (see [section 2.2.4](#)), the individual consortium members' contribution must be specified.

If there is any uncertainty about general application requirements or about accounting for career interruptions (see [section 1.6.3](#) and [1.6.4](#)), the FWF recommends that consortium members contact the FWF Office or the [FWF Equal Opportunities in Research Funding office](#) in good time before submitting their application to confirm that all requirements are met and that any career interruptions can be accounted for. In cases of doubt, the appropriate decision-making bodies of the FWF shall decide on applicants' eligibility.

## 1.6.2 Equal opportunities, diversity, and inclusion

The FWF Strategy for Gender Equality and Diversity of Researchers applies. This means that breaks or delays in consortium members' research careers that have led to publication gaps, unorthodox career paths, or limited international research experience can be taken into consideration. For further details on accounting for career breaks, please refer to the [information sheet on career interruptions](#).

### 1.6.3 Consideration of career breaks

The FWF will take justified, documentable career breaks or delays (e.g., due to pregnancy, childcare,<sup>5</sup> caregiving obligations,<sup>6</sup> military or civilian service, flight, or asylum) into consideration when assessing eligibility to apply.

### 1.6.4 Inclusion of the disabled and chronically ill

The FWF will also take any exceptions to and interruptions of typical career paths due to disability and/or long-term illness into consideration when determining whether an applicant meets the application requirements.

### 1.6.5 Data protection notice

When assessing eligibility, all personal data provided to the FWF by a consortium member on a voluntary basis that relates to the information provided in [sections 1.6.3](#) and [1.6.4](#) shall be taken into consideration exclusively to their benefit (to compensate for disadvantages). Please complete the required [form](#) and give your explicit consent to data processing on the last page. If you wish to submit further supporting documents in addition to those listed in the form, please submit them directly to the FWF Office. These will not be visible to your research institution. All information provided in this regard is used solely to check the application requirements and is not made available to reviewers.

Relevant information, without sensitive or personal data, can be included in an individual's academic CV, making it available to the reviewers. A general explanation, including the duration of the interruption or delay, is sufficient.

## 2 Application

### 2.1 Sections of the application

A complete application must include the following sections:

#### 2.1.1 Academic abstract

The academic abstract must be written in English, may not exceed 3,000 characters (including spaces, no formulas or special characters) and will be used to inform potential

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<sup>5</sup> Childcare includes parental leave periods, if applicable.

<sup>6</sup> Immediate family members and/or persons living in the same household: Spouses, registered partners, parents, children, adopted, step, and foster children, siblings, parents-in-law, and children-in-law.

reviewers about the project. The abstract must use the English headings provided below and be entered into the designated form on elane.

- Wider research context / theoretical framework
- Hypotheses / research questions / objectives
- Approach / methods
- Level of originality / innovation
- Primary researchers and other participants

Where alternatives are indicated between slashes, please select the alternative that applies to your project.

## 2.1.2 Project description

- Title page: Project title, lead research institution (address and head), name and institutional address of the coordinator, collaborating research institution(s) (address and head), including details of the consortium members employed there (name and institution address)
- Table of contents
- Project description on no more than 11 consecutively numbered pages (not including the title page and table of contents), including where applicable a list of abbreviations, headings, figures, captions, tables, footnotes, etc.

The **following contents** are expected:

- Description of the proposed research
- Description of the project-specific workshop
- Quality and composition of the consortium
- Research management

The project description must also include the following annexes on additional pages:

- Annex 1: List of literature cited in the application (*References*) on no more than 5 pages
- Annex 2: Information on the lead research institution and any partner research institutions where applicable, a plausible justification for the funding requested for the workshop, and an overview of the planned funds needed for the #ConnectingMinds Project
- Annex 3: Academic or arts-based research CVs and description of previous research achievements for all consortium members involved in the application (no more than 3 pages per person)
- Annex 4:
  - Collaboration letters from non-academic participants (required; no more than 1 page per letter)

- Where applicable, collaboration letters from national and international cooperation partners (optional; no more than 1 page per letter)

The entire project description, including these annexes, must be uploaded as one file entitled *Proposal.pdf*. The FWF will send this document to the reviewers.

### 2.1.3 Additional documents

- Required forms:
  - Two publications written by each consortium member must be named, documenting fulfillment of the general application requirements (publication record, see [section 1.6.1](#)) – for internal FWF use only
  - Publication lists for internal FWF use to assess eligibility to apply and to check for conflicts of interest with potential reviewers (see [section 2.2.4](#))
- Where applicable:
  - Results or final project report: If the project submitted is the continuation of an FWF-funded project (follow-up application), a report on previous results or a final project report and a list of publications resulting from the project must be uploaded in the language of the application (no more than 6 pages).
  - Additional documents in the case of resubmission: If the application is a revised version of a previously rejected application (see [section 2.4](#)), a response to the reviews and an overview of all changes made in the resubmitted application must be uploaded (*Overview revision*).
  - Cover letter accompanying the application (optional)
  - List of up to 3 researchers (optional) – including, if applicable, reviewers of a rejected proposal – who are to be excluded from the review process (see [section 3.2](#)), with a brief justification

Any additional documents (e.g., recommendations for potential reviewers, letters of recommendation, forthcoming publications) will not be considered in further stages of the application process.

### 2.1.4 Forms to be completed

- Required forms: *Research institution assignment form*, *Contact form*, *Application form*, *Program-specific data form*, *Cost breakdown form*, *Academic abstract form*, and *Co-authors form*
- Where applicable: *Program-specific thematic relevance form*, *Other cooperation form*

## 2.2 Application content and format

### 2.2.1 Application language

To allow applications to be reviewed by international experts, **all** applications must be submitted in English.

### 2.2.2 Project description: Scope and formatting requirements

The project description may not exceed 11 pages (not including the required title sheet and table of contents; must be consecutively numbered). Optional elements, such as a list of abbreviations, figures, figure legends, tables, footnotes, etc., must also be included in the 11-page limit.

The continuous text in the project description, Annexes 1–4, the publication lists, and the additional documents specified in [section 2.1.3](#) where applicable, must be written, without exception, in an 11 pt. font with 1.5 line (15-20 pt.) spacing and at least 2 cm margins. Applicants must comply strictly with all upper limits given (e.g., number of pages). A standard, easily legible font must be used for the body text. The formatting requirements (font type and size, line spacing, and margins) of the project description also apply for the additional documents, except for documents not prepared by the consortium members, such as collaboration letters.

Citations in the text and the list of works cited (*References*) in the application must be in line with the conventions of the respective discipline, preferably according to a widely used style guide (e.g., Chicago Manual of Style, APA Publication Manual). Researchers are free to choose the citation conventions or style guide they prefer, but they must apply them consistently throughout the application. If available, a [DOI address](#) or another [persistent identifier](#) should be used for the literature cited.

### 2.2.3 Project description and annexes

The project description may not exceed 11 pages (not including the required title sheet and table of contents) and must be based on the aspects indicated in [section 2.2.3.1](#) to [2.2.3.4](#).

#### 2.2.3.1 Proposed research (no more than 5 pages)

- Description of the research question with regard to the social challenge: What social issue does the project address and what transformation potential does this offer? Why is it relevant? What is the specific challenge being dealt with? What is the potential contribution of the research project?
- Clearly defined aims and hypothesis/hypotheses or research questions or arts-based research question(s) of the project

- Description of the project's anticipated level of originality or scientific/scholarly or arts-based research innovation
- Relevance to current international state of research
- Methods: Brief (working) definition of transdisciplinarity as a frame of reference for the proposed research; especially with regard to the quality and method of integrating practical expertise (description of the co-design process); planned approach and activities with regard to knowledge transfer and the dialog between science and society; brief justification of the relevance and roles of researchers and non-academic participants for the research project
- All potential ethical, safety-related, or regulatory aspects<sup>7</sup> of the proposal and how applicants plan to deal with them must be described in this section. Grounds must be provided for why the researchers believe the project does not raise any such issues, if this is the case.
- Any potential sex-specific and gender-related aspects<sup>8</sup> of the proposal must be detailed. To what extent are sex-specific and gender-related aspects considered in the proposal? How will they be integrated into the research approach? These questions must be addressed briefly, even if the researchers do not feel that the project involves any such components.

#### 2.2.3.2 Description of the project-specific workshop (no more than 2 pages)

- Specific objectives and the anticipated results of the event
- Methodology and implementation of the event
  - Overview of the agenda and program of the event in table form
  - Potential list of participants, planned location, and date

#### 2.2.3.3 Project participants (no more than 2 pages)

- Description of the relevant academic or arts-based research qualifications for the project (commensurate with their career stage) of the participating researchers

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<sup>7</sup> For instance, the European Commission's [Ethics for Researchers](#) or [The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity](#) can serve as a guide here.

<sup>8</sup> Positioning and thoughts on the research approaches in the project in terms of sex-specific and gender-related aspects could include: Is the research approach likely to produce sex-specific and gender-related findings? If so, what findings? How and where are these integrated into the research approach? (For information on determining the relevance of sex-specific and gender-related issues please see the [FWF website](#).)

- Description of participants' experience and how their areas of expertise might complement each other in aspects such as the implementation of a transdisciplinary research project
- National and/or international cooperation partners (if applicable): Please specify the intended collaboration partners and the subject of the intended collaboration(s) or the planned contribution to the project. All national and/or international cooperation partners mentioned by name in the project description (if the cooperation partner works at a research institution) must be listed in the *Collaborations* form with the relevant details. Cooperation partners named in the description who make a significant contribution to the research project can be confirmed by means of a collaboration letter.
- Involving non-academic participants: Please specify the intended non-academic participants and the subject of the intended collaboration(s) or the planned contribution to the project. The participation of all non-academic participants specified as essential in the project description must be confirmed in a collaboration letter.

#### 2.2.3.4 Research management (no more than 2 pages)

- Work plan and timeline/coherent plan for the implementation of the #ConnectingMinds Project
- Summary table showing the total costs requested, broken down by categories for the #ConnectingMinds Workshop
- Summary table showing the planned total costs for the #ConnectingMinds Project
- Organization and cooperation: description of the consortium's internal communication, cooperation, and information structures

#### 2.2.3.5 Annexes to the project description

Annexes are not included in the page limit for the project description. They must be attached to the project description in the *Proposal.pdf* file in the specified order.

**Annex 1:** List of literature cited in the application (*References*) on no more than 5 pages

**Annex 2:** Financial aspects

The template for the description of projected costs can be found in [Appendix A](#).

- Information on the lead research institution and of partner research institution(s) where applicable
  - Existing project participants (not financed by FWF project funds) (usually the consortium members and project staff at the research institutions)



- Available infrastructure
- Information on the funding requested
- Concise justifications for the funding requested

### **Annex 3:** CVs and description of previous research achievements

The academic (arts-based research) CVs and the research achievements of the consortium members must be described on no more than 3 pages per person. Please note that pursuant to the [Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment](#), journal-based metrics such as journal impact factors, Article Influence Scores, or the h-index may not be included in academic CVs.

Academic CVs must be structured as follows:

- *Personal details:* Personal data (name, researcher unique identifier[s] such as ORCID, research ID, etc., no photos), address of research institution, and relevant websites; please also provide a publicly accessible link to a list of all the researcher's publications.
- *Education:* List of academic milestones
- *Position(s):* List of academically relevant positions (with the extent of employment in the case of part-time employment)
- *Career breaks* (if any): List of career breaks or delays (see also [section 1.6.3](#))
- *Net research experience* (optional): The length of time (in years and months) that has actually been used in net total for research – calculated in such a way as to be equivalent to full-time employment – and broken down into the time before and after completion of the applicant's doctoral degree. This is intended to make it easier for the reviewers to assess the researcher's qualifications in terms of academic age.
- *Research interests:* Description of the main areas of research and the most important research results achieved to date
- *Academic publications and/or (arts-based) research publications and/or works:* List of no more than 10 of the most important published or accepted publications and/or works (journal articles, monographs, edited volumes, contributions to edited volumes, proceedings, concerts, exhibitions, installations, performances, artworks, etc.); for each publication, either a [DOI address](#) or another [persistent identifier](#) should be indicated, if available.
- *Additional (arts-based) research achievements:* List of a maximum of ten of the most important (arts-based) research achievements outside of academic publications. Please present each research achievement individually (e.g., one project = one research achievement, two projects = two research achievements, etc.). Examples of such

research achievements include freely accessible research data including software and codes, awards, contributions to conferences, keynote lectures, significant research projects, peer review activities, promotion of junior researchers, exhibitions, interactions with society (including citizen science or transdisciplinary activities), science communication, knowledge transfer, licenses, or patents. If available, a persistent identifier or link to the research achievement must be provided.

#### **Annex 4: Collaboration letters**

- Collaboration letters (each no more than 1 page) from those non-academic participants named in the project description as being essential for the implementation of the project and whose role is plausibly described
- Where applicable, collaboration letters from national and international cooperation partners (optional, no more than 1 page per letter); consortium members are not cooperation partners.

### **2.2.4 Publication output**

The following two separate uploads are required:

- *PI\_publication.pdf*: Two publications written by each consortium member must be named, documenting fulfillment of the general application requirements (see template [PI\\_publication](#)). The FWF will determine eligibility to apply based on these publications.
- *Publication\_lists.pdf*: List of all academic publications published in the last 5 years<sup>9</sup> (categorized into “quality-assured publications” and “other publications”) for all consortium members and postdocs who are to be funded by the project, in *one* PDF document; this publication list helps the FWF to determine if there are any potential conflicts of interest with reviewers. It will not be forwarded to the reviewers.

## **2.3 Eligible project-specific costs**

When requesting funding, the regulations of the respective research institution and the FWF guidelines apply.

If a research institution for which funds are requested is entitled to deduct value-added tax (VAT), the funds should be applied for without value-added tax (net). This applies to the lead research institution and, if applicable, to any partner research institutions.

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<sup>9</sup> Publication lists must include: all authors, complete titles, journal, year, and page numbers. For each publication, if available, either a [DOI address](#) or another [persistent identifier](#) should be indicated; for publications with more than 20 authors, an “et al.” citation can be used.

VAT is an eligible expense only if the research institution(s) is/are not entitled to deduct it and it is demonstrably and finally borne by the research institution(s). Recoverable VAT is ineligible for funding, even if it is not reclaimed or recovered by the funding recipient.

Multiple funding is not permitted (see [FWF Funding Guidelines](#)).

### 2.3.1 #ConnectingMinds Workshops (phase 1)

The requested funds must be summarized in the elane *Cost breakdown* form.

A maximum of €12,000 can be requested for project-specific costs related to the #ConnectingMinds Workshop, which include travel costs (national and international) as well as locally incurred costs necessary to carry out the workshop and that go beyond the resources provided by the infrastructure of the research institution. The FWF does not finance the infrastructure or basic equipment of research institutions.

The following costs for the #ConnectingMinds Workshop are eligible for funding:

- Hotel costs (for participants from Austria and abroad)
- Costs of meals/catering for the participants
- Travel costs
- Rental costs for seminar rooms (only if the research institution does not make suitable rooms available; reasons must be provided)
- Material costs (if these are not allocable to infrastructure)
- Other costs (for example, costs for event moderation, costs for services rendered by non-academic participants, etc.; reasons or a description of the service must be provided)

Lump sums or flat-rate costs are not accepted.

### 2.3.2 #ConnectingMinds Project (phase 2)

For the planning of the #ConnectingMinds Project, funding may only be requested for the following cost categories.

#### 2.3.2.1 Personnel costs

Funding may only be requested for staff needed in addition to existing personnel resources for the realization of the project and only to the extent required for the project.

Full- or part-time employment contracts (*Dienstverträge*, DV) and contracts for marginal employment (*geringfügige Beschäftigung*, GB) are available for project staff. The [FWF's standard personnel costs](#) apply. These include a fixed percentual increase set by the FWF for subsequent years to compensate for wage increases.

Employment contracts for doctoral students may not exceed 75% employment (up to 30 hours per week). A part-time (50%) employment contract of 20 hours/week for student employees may be requested for researchers who have not yet completed a graduate degree program in the relevant subject area.

### 2.3.2.1.1 Grant-salaried positions

The FWF understands “grant-salaried” to mean that the consortium members’ salary is financed by the funds of the research project.

Applying for funding (including partial funding) of one’s own position is possible for every consortium member, regardless of whether they are in permanent or long-term employment at the time of application. A senior postdoc salary<sup>10</sup> may be requested for the own position (pro-rated accordingly in the case of partial funding).

Women consortium members whose own position is funded to the extent of at least 50% have the additional option of applying for up to €2,000 per year in the category of “Other costs” for personal coaching and further training measures that directly contribute to their career development. Coaching is understood to mean person-centered counselling and support processes in a professional context. Continuing education activities eligible for funding include courses on scientific – in particular, subject-specific – skills (e.g., courses on methodological skills) and personnel development measures such as those offered at some research institutions (e.g., in teaching, academic writing, writing funding applications, especially in English, personnel management and project management, conflict- and problem-solving skills, academic organization, and vocational training and other seminars directly related to career development, including programs for the advancement of women).

### 2.3.2.2 Equipment costs

Funding for equipment may only be requested if it is specifically required for the project and if it is not part of the existing infrastructure of the participating research institution(s).

“Infrastructure” is defined to include all equipment (and components thereof) that a modern research institution needs to conduct basic research in the relevant discipline at an internationally competitive level. This means that equipment such as computers, laptops, etc. are considered part of the standard infrastructure and no funding will be approved for these items.

Equipment eligible for funding includes:

- Scientific instruments
- System components

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<sup>10</sup> The senior postdoc rate can only be requested to fund the consortium member’s own position; the postdoc salary rate applies for project staff members at the postdoc level.

- Self-constructed devices (generally assembled from smaller pieces of equipment and materials)
- Other durable goods
- Intangible assets such as concessions, industrial property rights, and licenses derived from such rights

Equipment with an acquisition value in excess of €250,000 can only be financed through depreciation. Only the percentage of costs that are incurred during the project period can be requested and financed. The depreciation rules of the research institution acquiring the equipment apply.

If funding is requested for a piece of equipment which is required specifically for the project, the lead research institution confirms upon submission that they have verified that no comparable equipment that could be used or shared is available within a reasonable distance, and that third-party (co-)financing options have been explored. The research institution that owns the equipment must also ensure that any possible costs arising from the use, maintenance, and repairs of the equipment are covered.

The coordinator is to instruct their research institution to order the equipment and effect payment accordingly. The principles of economy, efficiency, and expediency apply to any acquisition. The procurement guidelines of the research institution and the provisions of the [Federal Procurement Act 2018](#) (*Bundesvergabegesetz*) as amended apply.

In order to determine the equipment costs (incl. VAT, unless the research institution is entitled to deduct input tax) to be requested, vendor quotes must be obtained before the application is submitted pursuant to the research institution's procurement guidelines. Vendor quotes are submitted to the FWF only upon request.

If a specific piece of equipment is required that is available at the research institution but is in need of repair, funds for repair can be requested instead of funds for a new purchase. The same applies here: The prerequisite for eligibility is that the equipment may not be part of the research institution's infrastructure and is not used for other purposes.

### 2.3.2.3 Material costs

"Materials" is defined as consumables and small items of equipment (cost per item less than €1,500 incl. VAT).

The calculation of funds requested for project-specific material costs should be justified based on the project's schedule, work plans, and experimental schedule. Experience from previous projects should be considered in making the calculations.

#### 2.3.2.4 Travel costs

Funding may be requested for project-specific travel and accommodation, field work, expeditions, etc. The project description must include a detailed itinerary, broken down by project staff members. This plan must indicate which staff members will be travelling, the destination, for what purpose, when (in which year of the project), for how long, and how much the travel will cost.

When planning travel in connection with a project, researchers should always carefully consider whether travel is absolutely necessary or whether the relevant information can be exchanged virtually.

If a project requires travel, transportation by train is generally preferred to travel by air as a contribution to environmental sustainability. Funding can be requested for any resulting extra costs such as an additional overnight stay.

Travel expenses for researchers from national and international research institutions other than the lead research institution and/or the partner research institution(s) can only be granted in exceptional cases. Grounds for the exception must be provided in detail.

Travel and accommodation costs are generally calculated according to the individual travel expenses policies of the lead or partner research institution(s). If no such policies are in place at the research institution, the federal regulations governing travel costs ([Reisegebührevorschrift des Bundes 1955, RGV](#)) as amended apply.

#### 2.3.2.5 Costs as part of national and international collaborations

In the case of cooperation arrangements, costs arising within the context of a research cooperation at the respective research institution are to be borne by that research institution. This does not apply to [cooperation arrangements with researchers from developing countries](#) (see [section 2.3.2.6](#)).

Funds may only be transferred directly to a cooperation partner (in Austria or abroad) upon presentation of an invoice and only if they are in payment for clearly defined commissions or services and immediately necessary to carry out the Austrian project.

#### 2.3.2.6 Other funding available

- Independent contractor agreements (costs for work of clearly defined scope and content carried out by individuals, provided that they are cost-efficient and justified in the context of the research or arts-based research project)
- Consortium members can apply for additional funding for capacity-building measures in the field of transdisciplinary research. This funding may not exceed a total of €8,000 per

year. These measures can include coaching and mentoring, knowledge management, networking, or project-specific training.

- Remuneration for services rendered by non-academic participants involved, for example fees, reimbursement for person-days (the services rendered must be disclosed and specified concisely and in detail); when requesting funding for these costs, please bear in mind that non-academic participants may be subject to VAT.
- Costs for the preparation, archiving, open access, and reuse of research data in repositories in accordance with the FWF's [Open-Access Policy for Research Data](#)
- Costs that cannot be included under personnel, equipment, materials, or travel costs, for example:
  - The use of research facilities, e.g., costs for the project-specific use of available equipment (project-specific "equipment usage time") or large research facilities
  - Any laboratory animals necessary for the project
  - Project-specific work carried out outside the researcher's research institution (e.g., for analyses carried out elsewhere, interviews, sample collection, etc.)
  - Disposal of project-specific hazardous waste
  - [Cooperation arrangements with researchers in developing countries](#)
  - [Equality measures](#): The consortium can budget a maximum of €20,000 per year for equality measures over and above the maximum budget.

The procurement guidelines of the research institution and the provisions of the [Federal Procurement Act 2018](#) (*Bundesvergabegesetz*) as amended apply.

### 2.3.2.7 General project costs

The approved grant sum includes 5% general project costs that are permitted for funding but cannot be requested individually using the abovementioned cost categories. They are subject to the [FWF's Funding Guidelines](#) and the costs must be eligible for funding. These include, for example, costs for conference travel, dissemination activities, and minor unforeseen costs necessary for the project.

Overhead costs for the research institution are not included in general project costs.

General project costs are to be entered in the appropriate field in the *Cost breakdown* form and calculated as 5% of the total funding requested. No justification for general costs is needed in [Appendix A](#).



### 2.3.2.8 Publication costs

Publication costs cannot be requested as part of the application process. Information on funding options for publications resulting from FWF-funded projects can be found on the FWF website under [Funding Portfolio: Communication](#).

## 2.4 Resubmitting a previously rejected application

A resubmission is defined as the revision of an application which the FWF has rejected with the same or similar research or arts-based research questions, regardless of the program category. If an application is submitted on the same or a very similar research or arts-based research question and if, in the view of the consortium, this application is not a resubmission but a completely new project, this must be explained in a separate accompanying letter to the FWF Office. For example, changes in research methods alone are not sufficient for a proposal to qualify as a completely new project. In cases of doubt, the appropriate decision-making bodies of the FWF shall decide.

Resubmissions must show changes from the rejected application. If an application has been rejected for the standardized grounds for rejection C3, C4, or C5, these changes need to be substantial (based on the comments in the reviews). If no such changes are made, the FWF's decision-making bodies will return the application to the applicant without review.

When resubmitting an application, the following documents must be uploaded:

- An accompanying letter containing an overview of all changes made in the resubmitted application must be submitted to the FWF (*Overview revision*). This overview will not be passed on to the reviewers.
- A response to all reviews of the rejected application must be provided, even if one of the reviewers is to be excluded from reviewing the resubmitted application (see [section 3.2](#)). This response, consolidated into *one* document, will be forwarded to all reviewers assessing the resubmission and should address the recommendations and criticisms included in the previous reviews as well as describe the resulting changes made.

While no deadlines for the resubmission of a rejected application apply, the respective application requirements apply. Resubmissions must be submitted as described in [section 2.1](#), i.e., as a separate, new application and not as a supplementary application to the previously rejected proposal.

## 2.5 File formats, file names, and online forms

The following sections provide an overview of all files and forms to be submitted.



### 2.5.1 All applications must include the following parts:

#### a) **Files:**

- *Proposal.pdf* (project description incl. Annexes 1-4 in *one* file, with PDF bookmarks, at least for the major sections)
- *PI\_publication.pdf* (two publications written by each consortium member must be named, documenting fulfillment of the general application requirements)
- *Publication\_lists.pdf* (list of all academic publications published in the last five years for all consortium members and postdocs to be funded by the project, categorized into “quality-assured publications” and “other publications”)

#### b) **Forms:**

- *Research institution*
- *Contact*
- *Application*
- *Program-specific data* (list of no more than four other consortium members in addition to the coordinator)
- *Cost breakdown*
- Where applicable: *Program-specific thematic relevance* (description of the relevance of the submitted proposal for the thematic focus, see [section 1.2](#))
- *Academic abstract* (in English)
- *Co-authors*
- *Other cooperation* (if applicable; for national and international cooperation partners)

### 2.5.2 File uploads, if applicable

- *Cover\_letter.pdf* (= accompanying letter; optional)
- *Negative\_list.pdf* (= reviewers who should be excluded; optional)
- *Follow.pdf* (= result report or final project report of the previous project for follow-up applications; will be forwarded to the reviewers)
- *Overview\_revision.pdf* (= for resubmissions, overview of all changes made in the resubmitted application)
- *Revision.pdf* (= for resubmissions, response to all reviews of the previously rejected application)

## 3 Processing and Decision on the Application

### 3.1 Submission and requests for changes

All of the documents specified above must be uploaded in full to [elane](#). Once an application has been officially submitted, the research institution and the coordinator can make no further changes to the application themselves. All applications that have been approved by the lead research institution on or before the deadline of **February 13, 2025, 2:00 pm, Vienna local time** will be checked for completeness and any formal errors by the FWF Office. The decision-making bodies of the FWF reserve the right to return applications that do not meet the formal criteria without review. The most common reasons why applications are returned without review are (a) that the consortium member's publication record does not meet the requirements (see [section 1.6.1](#)), (b) that the application does not address specific hypotheses or research questions (see [section 2.2.3](#)), or (c) that resubmissions have not been sufficiently revised (see [section 2.4](#)).

If the FWF Office identifies issues with the application that it considers to be rectifiable, it will notify the lead research institution and the coordinator, giving them the opportunity to correct the problems within a period of 10 working days. The requested changes are to be submitted to [elane](#) as a supplementary application and approved for submission by the lead research institution if applicable. If the **requested changes** are not submitted before the deadline, the decision-making bodies at the FWF will return the application without review.

Once the review process has begun, no more changes can be made to the application.

### 3.2 Excluding reviewers

A list of up to 3 potential reviewers who should not be consulted to review the proposal due to a possible conflict of interest can be uploaded as an additional document. The coordinator must give reasons why they wish to exclude these reviewers. If the reasons for exclusion are professionally and academically sound, the FWF will generally fulfill the coordinator's request and exclude those reviewers from the review process. A detailed description of the FWF's policy on conflicts of interest can be found in the [General Principles of the Decision-Making Procedure](#).

Please note that the FWF does not wish to receive, nor will it consider a list of potential reviewers from applicants.

### 3.3 Decision-making process

A detailed description of the decision-making process, the criteria for selecting international reviewers, and detailed rules concerning conflicts of interest and the composition of juries and review panels can be found in the [General Principles of the Decision-Making Procedure](#).

The decision-making process for #ConnectingMinds consists of two phases.

### 3.3.1 Phase 1 – #ConnectingMinds Workshop

All applications meeting the FWF's formal criteria will be sent out for review. The reviewers (persons working outside of Austria) are members of the jury established for the selection procedure for the #ConnectingMinds program. The specific nature of the requirements (transdisciplinary research) justifies the use of a jury.

For the evaluation of the #ConnectingMinds Workshop proposal, at least two written reviews will be obtained from international members of the #ConnectingMinds jury. In June 2025, the Executive Board and the Scientific Board will decide on the application on the basis of these reviews; if the decision is positive, applicants will be invited to conduct the workshop and to prepare their proposal for the #ConnectingMinds Project. The workshop must be concluded before October 15, 2025, since the content and results of the workshop must be incorporated into the full proposal (deadline: November 4, 2025).

### 3.3.2 Phase 2 – #ConnectingMinds Project

The full proposal for the #ConnectingMinds Project will be evaluated on the basis of written reviews by international experts. Three independent reviews from international experts and the international jury will be obtained for the evaluation of #ConnectingMinds Projects. Based on these written reviews, the FWF Scientific Board will meet in May 2026 to draw up a shortlist of consortia to be invited to a hearing with the multidisciplinary jury, scheduled to be held in June 2026. The international #ConnectingMinds jury will discuss the project with the consortia and the non-academic participants during the jury session and, on the basis of the presentations and discussions, prepare a recommendation for the Scientific Board (in a closed session, i.e., in the absence of the Scientific Board). Based on the jury's recommendation, the Scientific Board will decide on the awarding of funding in June 2026. The lead research institution and the coordinator will be informed of the FWF's decision in writing.

## 3.4 Grounds for rejection

The reasons for rejecting an application are assigned to one of five categories (C1–C5) and communicated to the coordinator and the lead research institution; the coordinator is also sent anonymized copies of the reviews. A detailed description of the grounds for rejection can be found in the [General Principles of the Decision-Making Procedure](#).

## 3.5 Reviewing resubmissions

If the application is a **resubmission** of a previously rejected proposal, the FWF will generally contact those reviewers who provided *constructive* criticism on the previous application.

Reviewers who gave entirely positive or negative comments will generally not be contacted for a repeat review. Resubmissions are, however, usually also evaluated by new reviewers.

### 3.6 Proposal bans

Applications that are rejected for reason C5 will be barred for 12 months (from the date the applicant was officially notified of the decision) and cannot be resubmitted during that period.

Applications that have been submitted three times to the same program and rejected for reasons C3 or C4 (with the “three times” referring to the original application and two resubmissions) are also barred for 12 months (from the date the applicant was officially notified of the decision). Rejections for reasons C1 or C2 do not count towards this total. In general, only topics are banned, not consortium members or applying research institutions.

## 4 Compliance with Legal Requirements and Standards of Research Integrity

### 4.1 Legal regulations

Please note that research institution(s) and all persons involved in the project must comply with all legal requirements and safety provisions (e.g., Federal Disabilities Act, Federal Equal Treatment Act) and all embargo and sanction regulations (e.g. Dual-Use Regulation [EU] 2021/821) that apply for the implementation of the project and must obtain all the necessary permits (e.g., from the Ethics Committee, the Animal Testing Commission, the National Heritage Agency, or the relevant foreign authorities).

### 4.2 Academic integrity

The [Guidelines for Good Scientific Practice](#) of the [Austrian Agency for Research Integrity \(OeAWI\)](#) apply.

Where a breach of these standards is suspected, the ombud of the respective research institution is responsible for investigating the issue. The research institution must report any cases of suspected serious deviations to the OeAWI. The FWF reserves the right to suspend, in part or in whole, any procedures related to applications or ongoing projects until this check or investigation has been concluded. For more detailed information, please see [FWF procedure in cases of suspected violation of the standards of good research practice](#).

## 5 Data Protection and Publication of Project Data and Results

### 5.1 Data protection

Pursuant to Art. 6 (1) item a of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), in conjunction with § 2g of the Austrian Research Organization Act (*Forschungsorganisationsgesetz*, FOG), the FWF processes and publishes personal data (e.g. the title of the submitted project, research institution, academic abstract, PR summaries) necessary for the administration of the funding by the FWF – while safeguarding business and trade secrets – for the purposes of research policy (e.g., presentation of the development of basic research in Austria, economic analyses, funding impact reports, etc.) and for public relations work (publication of excerpts in the FWF annual report, on the FWF website, in press releases, media collaborations, etc.). If necessary, these data are also transmitted to third parties (e.g., for the preparation of research policy studies, on the basis of supervisory duties, in particular §§ 2d and 3a of the Research and Technology Funding Act [*Forschungs- und Technologieförderungsgesetz*, FTFG], to bodies and agents of the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research and, in particular, pursuant to § 3 [2], § 4 [1], and § 13 [3] of the Court of Audit Act 1948 [*Rechnungshofgesetz* 1948 RHG], to the Austrian Court of Audit as well as to bodies and institutions of the European Union in accordance with European legal provisions). Transmission of data is also based on § 6 (1) item c of the GDPR in conjunction with § 2g of the FOG.

Further information on the data privacy rights of the applicant or applying research institution as well as the contact details of the FWF's data protection officers is available [here](#).

### 5.2 Publication of project data and results

Proposal summaries must be submitted to the FWF when the grant agreement is returned. Please note that if a grant is awarded, a PR proposal summary in German and English will be published on the FWF website, as well as the grant amount and later, PR results summaries of the project's findings in German and English. The coordinator must ensure that these texts are worded in such a way that legitimate interests of secrecy for reasons of national defense and patent law are safeguarded and business secrets are protected appropriately. [Guidelines for writing PR summaries](#) can be found on the FWF website.

In addition, the FWF requires a data management plan (DMP) for all approved projects. This plan should also be sent to the FWF when returning the grant agreement. The [template for the DMP](#) can be viewed and downloaded on the FWF website.

The guidelines specified in the grant agreement on acknowledging the FWF as the funding institution and the FWF's [Open-Access Policy](#) apply for any publication of project results (e.g., academic publications, research data, conference papers, and media reports).

## 6 Appendices to the Application Guidelines

### 6.1 Appendix A: Information on the research institution and description of financial aspects

Information on the lead research institution and any partner institutions and the description of project finances must be presented **in English** and appended to the project description as Annex 2. Costs must be broken down and adequately justified for each point below. The list of and justification for the requested funds must correspond to the costs indicated in the *Cost breakdown* form and may not exceed a total of €12,000. The description should be structured as follows:

(a) Details on the lead research institution and the partner research institution(s) where applicable

- Existing personnel (not financed by the FWF, usually the consortium members and research personnel at the research institution(s))
- Existing infrastructure

(b) Information on the funding requested:

- Explain briefly why the costs requested are needed (see also [section 2.3.1](#)) for the **#ConnectingMinds Workshop**

Please list and provide justifications for the following:

- Hotel costs (for participants from Austria and abroad) / catering for seminar participants
  - Travel costs
  - Rental costs for seminar rooms (only if the research institution does not provide suitable rooms; justification required)
  - Other costs (e.g., costs for event moderation, etc.; justification required)
- Overview of the costs of the **#ConnectingMinds Project**

Please provide a general estimate of the costs of the planned #ConnectingMinds Project (for the applicable description of costs, see [section 2.3.2](#)). In addition to the standard cost categories, #ConnectingMinds Project funding can be requested for remuneration for services rendered by non-academic participants as well as for coaching, career development, and capacity building measures for the consortium.

## 6.2 Appendix B: Notes and questions for jury members of the #ConnectingMinds funding program<sup>11</sup>

In all of its programs, the FWF actively supports equal opportunities and equal treatment. The review of a proposal must not put consortium members at a disadvantage for non-research-related reasons such as age, gender, etc. For example, the review of applications should not focus on the researcher's actual age, but on the relation between the researcher's previous research achievements and the length of his/her research career.

Our commitment to equal opportunities also means considering breaks or delays in applicants' research careers (e.g., due to parental leave; long-term or chronic illness; disability; caregiving responsibilities; etc.), which may have resulted in gaps in a researcher's publication record, unorthodox career paths, or limited international research experience. Please also see our information for reviewers on [Unconscious bias in the decision-making process](#).

Only the ten most important academic publications and the ten most important additional research or arts-based research achievements of the consortium member are to be considered when evaluating the application. As a signatory to the [Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment](#), the FWF also emphasizes that, in assessing research performance, reviewers should refrain from using journal-based metrics such as journal impact factors, Article Influence Scores, or the h-index.

Please review the present proposal<sup>12</sup> using the following seven assessment criteria: 1) Quality of the proposed research, 2) transformation potential, 3) transdisciplinary approach, 4) quality of the planned workshop, 5) quality and composition of the consortium, 6) ethical, sex-specific, and gender-related aspects, and 7) final assessment. For each of these criteria except 6) we ask you for both written comments and a rating on a scale from "outstanding" to "poor." Please be aware, however, that the FWF's funding decision will be based primarily on reviewers' written assessments rather than the ratings assigned.

Please keep in mind that sections 1 and 2 will be forwarded to the coordinator in full and in anonymous form. In the event of approval, the research institution will be allowed to read the anonymized reviews forwarded to the coordinator.

### Section 1: Forwarded to the researchers in full

#### 1) Quality of the planned research

<sup>11</sup> Further information can be found on the FWF website: [Mission statement and values](#) or the [Application Guidelines for #ConnectingMinds](#)

<sup>12</sup> The proposal must meet the FWF's formal requirements, and we ask you to please bear these in mind when writing your review. Please bear these in mind when writing your review. (Key formal requirements: no more than 11 pages for the project description including figures and tables; no more than 5 pages for the list of references; no more than 3 pages for each academic CV, including a description of previous research achievements and the ten most important publications. For further details, please see the [#ConnectingMinds Application Guidelines](#).)



Are the research questions formulated clearly? Are they timely, challenging, and likely to lead to relevant new insights? Is the proposed research innovative? Does it make an original contribution to its field?

2) Transformation potential

What social issue does the project address and what transformation potential does this offer? What is the relevance of the proposed research? What specific challenge does it address? How do you assess the project's contribution and impact?

3) Transdisciplinary approach

Is the research design well-conceived, and is the transdisciplinary approach and (working) definition of transdisciplinarity clearly formulated and suitable for answering the research question(s)? Is there a well-organized work plan? Are the methodology (including for the integration of practical knowledge and the description of the co-design process), knowledge exchange activities and dissemination strategies, relevance and roles of consortium members and non-academic participants well-suited for the proposed research and are they described in sufficient detail in the application?

4) Quality of the planned workshop

Is the workshop well thought out with regard to the concept, content, and methodology?

5) Quality and composition of the consortium

How well are the researchers qualified to carry out the proposed research? How would you assess the academic qualifications, experience, and complementary expertise of the researchers involved (especially in the context of the implementation of a transdisciplinary research project)? When assessing qualifications, please consider the respective career stage, taking into consideration atypical career paths and circumstances that may have slowed down their progress (e.g., parental leave, long-term or chronic illness, disability, or caretaking responsibilities). How would you rate the gender balance among the researchers? How would you rate the quality of existing and planned collaborations and the feasibility of the project (cooperation, quality of the research project's process, research management)?

6) Ethical, sex-specific, and gender-related aspects

- *Ethics*: Have ethical considerations been addressed satisfactorily?
- *Sex-specific and gender-related aspects*: Researchers are required to address any relevant sex-specific and/or gender-related aspects inherent in research questions and/or research design. Please assess whether the treatment of these components is adequate.

7) Overall evaluation

What is your overall impression of the proposal? Specifically, what would you consider its key strengths and weaknesses? Please give a clear recommendation in favor of or against funding the project. Please give reasons for your answers, taking as much space as you



need.

## **Section 2: Optional recommendations for the researchers**

If you are in favor of the project being funded, you may want to add to the formal assessment in section 1 by making further and perhaps more informal comments or suggestions here. However, please note that these remarks, too, may also have an impact on the FWF's funding decision, especially if they amount to substantive criticism of the project.

## **Section 3: Confidential remarks to the FWF**

Please use this space to make any comments that you do not want submitted to the applicant. Feel free to also give us feedback about the review process and your interactions with us.