FWF Austrian Science Fund

Pursuant to its Funding Guidelines (as amended), the FWF has issued the following Application Guidelines for

PEEK

Program for Arts-Based Research

Effective as of February 24, 2026, version 1.0

Discovering what matters.

FWF Austrian Science Fund

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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

This document has been prepared in German and English for your convenience. In the event of a dispute, the German version shall prevail.

1.1 Program objective

The aim is to fund clearly defined research proposals (hereinafter referred to as “projects”) of high artistic and academic quality at an international level in the field of arts-based research. This is a type of basic research that aims at increasing the existing knowledge base and developing new methods by means of aesthetic and artistic processes of knowledge production rather than those of pure science and scholarship. One individual researcher (hereinafter referred to as applicant or principal investigator) is responsible for managing the Arts-Based Research (PEEK)[1] project at an Austrian research institution. The principal investigator can collaborate with associated research partners, national, and/or international cooperation partners as part of the project. In addition to legal regulations, FWF’s regulations on international collaborations also apply (see the FWF website for more information).

1.2 What types of projects can be funded?

Funding may be requested for arts-based research projects that are clearly defined, innovative, with plausibly described objectives and methods, and are limited in duration (up to 48 months).

Proposals featuring one or more of the following attributes are considered innovative basic research: (i) research on new ideas and/or an investigation of new arts-based research questions, (ii) the development or application of new arts-based research methods, new technologies, or original approaches to solving research questions, or (iii) the application or modification of existing arts-based methods, technologies, or approaches to new research questions. Please note that next logical steps or the incremental further development of published data is not considered to be innovative or original.

If the structure and the content of the project are such as to potentially require subsequent projects, please refer to the supplementary information on long-term projects (also applies to PEEK).

1.3 Submission

There are no submission deadlines for this program; applications can be submitted at any time. All proposals must be submitted online using the elane digital application portal. Project funding is administered through the research institutions (PROFI); this means the application

[1] The acronym PEEK is derived from the German “**P**rogramm zur **E**ntwicklung und **E**rschließung der **K**ünste”.

must be approved for submission by both the applicant and the respective research institution (= lead research institution).[2] 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 lead research institution. For additional information, please see the elane user manual.

1.3.1 Who is eligible to apply?

All Austrian **research institutions** are eligible to apply.[3] The intended research must be carried out in Austria and under the auspices of the applying Austrian research institution. Applications are submitted by the research institution where the project is to be carried out.

The research institution appoints a principal investigator to carry out the project. Neither a specific academic degree nor Austrian citizenship is required to act as principal investigator. The principal investigator must, however, have appropriate artistic, scientific, scholarly, and/or arts-based research qualifications (see section 1.4) and sufficient time resources to carry out the proposed research. The research institution must provide the necessary infrastructure.

The principal investigator must be employed at the lead research institution to an extent of at least 5 hours/week[4] at the time the project is scheduled to begin and throughout the entire duration of the project (subject to an employment contract/*Dienstvertrag*[5]). Their salary is financed either by the research institution or by the project as a grant-salaried researcher (see section 2.3.1.1). 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 100%.

Researchers whose main institutional research focus (more than 50%) is outside of Austria at the time of application and who plan to maintain their main research focus abroad during the project are excluded from applying as principal investigators.

1.3.2 Can multiple applications be submitted simultaneously?

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

It should be noted, however, that for **principal investigators**, the number of ongoing/approved projects in the Principal Investigator Projects, International, Clinical

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2 Approval for submission by the research institution may be waived by the research institution if it has authorized the applicant to approve it themselves.

3 Research institutions must be registered in the FWF's research institution portal.

4 Exceptions are permitted only in justified individual cases if the principal investigator cannot be employed at the lead research institution for organizational or legal reasons (e.g., employment regulations in state hospitals). In this case, a written affiliation/cooperation agreement regulating institutional affiliation, infrastructure access, assignment of responsibilities, and publication and IP framework conditions is required..

5 Freelance service contracts or independent contractor agreements are not sufficient..

Research, and Arts-Based Research programs is limited to a maximum of 3 projects. For further information on restrictions concerning the permissible number of applications and ongoing projects, please see the restrictions on the number of projects restriction on the number of projects.

1.4 What are the requirements for applicants?

1.4.1 General requirements

Applications within the Program for Arts-Based Research (PEEK) must be headed by applicants of good standing, as judged by international standards, whose research involves the development and exploration of the arts. Applicants must show that they possess the qualifications needed to carry out the project by means of relevant artistic, scientific, scholarly, and/or arts-based research achievements over the last five calendar years commensurate with their career stage, which establish their international visibility.

If there is any uncertainty about general application requirements or about accounting for career interruptions (see sections 1.4.3 and 1.4.4), the FWF recommends that the applicant contact the FWF Office or the FWF Equal Opportunities and Diversity in Research Funding unit in good time before submitting the 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.

1.4.2 Equal opportunities, diversity, and inclusion

The FWF Strategy for Equal Opportunities and Diversity of Researchers applies. This means that breaks or delays in applicants' 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 on career interruptions

1.4.3 Consideration of career breaks

The FWF will take justified, documentable career breaks or delays (e.g., due to pregnancy, childcare,[6] caregiving obligations,[7] military or civilian service, flight, and asylum) into consideration when assessing eligibility to apply.

[6] Childcare includes parental leave periods, if applicable.

[7] 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.

1.4.4 Inclusion of the disabled and chronically ill

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

1.4.5 Data protection notice

When assessing eligibility, all personal data provided to the FWF by an applicant on a voluntary basis that relates to the information provided in sections 1.4.3 and 1.4.4 above shall be taken into account exclusively to the applicant's 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 CV, making it available to the reviewers. A general explanation, including the duration of the interruption or delay, is sufficient.

1.5 What types of funding can be requested?

Project-specific costs are eligible for funding. These include personnel and non-personnel costs that are needed to carry out the project and that are not included in the infrastructure provided by the research institution. The FWF does not finance the infrastructure or basic equipment of research institutions.

In addition, funding may be requested for project-specific work at associated research institution(s) where associated research partner(s) work. Associated research partners are researchers working on a project-specific basis at other Austrian research institutions (associated research institutions) and who are making a significant artistic, scientific, scholarly, and/or arts-based research contribution to the project. The *Associated research partner* form must be completed for these researchers, if applicable. Funds are disbursed from the lead research institution to the associated research institution(s).[8] Associated research institutions report directly to the FWF to account for funds used at their institution.

For information on applying for personnel costs for the principal investigator's own salary, please see section 2.3.1.1.

[8] Associated research institutions must be registered in the FWF's research institution portal. Once a proposal has been approved, the lead research institution must enter into a collaboration agreement with the associated research institution.

Please note that exaggerated cost projections may be grounds for rejection, even if a proposal is otherwise excellent. The number of reviews required before a proposal can be approved is based on the amount of funding requested (see section 3.3).

Multiple funding is not permitted (see the FWF Funding Guidelines). This means that you are required to inform the FWF immediately if an application which is thematically related to the FWF proposal has been or will be submitted by you or anyone else to the FWF or another national or international funding organization or has been approved by that organization, either before the FWF proposal was submitted, at the time of submission, or at any time during the decision-making process. If your FWF proposal is approved, this requirement to provide information remains in effect until the project is completed.

2 Application

2.1 Sections of the application

When preparing application documents, please note that pursuant to the Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment, metrics such as journal impact factors, Article Influence Scores, or the h-index may not be included.

A complete application must include the following sections:

2.1.1 Academic abstract

The arts-based 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 reviewers about the project. The abstract must use the English headings provided below and be entered into the designated form provided for this purpose on elane.

- Wider arts-based research context / theoretical framework
- Hypotheses / research questions / objectives
- Approach / methods
- Level of originality / innovation
- Primary researchers involved

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

2.1.2 Project description

Project descriptions are limited to 20 consecutively numbered pages, including the table of contents (required), and where applicable, a list of abbreviations, headings, figures, captions, tables, footnotes, etc.

The project description must also include Annexes 1–3 and if applicable 4 on additional pages:

- Annex 1: List of literature cited in the application (References) on no more than 5 pages
- Annex 2: Details of the lead research institution and any associated research institutions and a plausible justification of the funding requested
- Annex 3: Arts-based CVs and descriptions of previous research achievements (no more than 3 pages per person)
- Annex 4 (optional): Collaboration letters from national and international cooperation partners (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:
  - Publication and/or work list 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 and or works 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 (*Revision.pdf*) and an overview of all changes made in the resubmitted application *(Overview_revision.pdf)* must be uploaded.
  - 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*, *Contact*, *Application*, *Cost breakdown*, *Abstract*, and *Co-authors*
- Where applicable: *Associated research partner*, *Other cooperation*

2.2 Application content and form

2.2.1 Application language

To allow applications to be reviewed by international peers, applications must be submitted in English. If desired, a version in German or another specialist language may be added as a supplement.

2.2.2 Project description: Scope and formatting requirements

The project description may not exceed 20 pages. It must contain a table of contents with page numbers. Optional elements, such as a list of abbreviations, figures, figure legends, tables, footnotes, etc. are to be included in the 20-page limit.

The continuous text in the project description, Annexes 1–3, the publication and/or work lists, and the additional documents specified in section 2.1.3 where applicable, must be written, without exception, in 11 pt. font with 15–20 pt. spacing and at least 2 cm margins. 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 any documents not prepared by the applicant, 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). The choice of citation conventions or style guide is up to the applicant, but must be implemented 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 20 pages including the table of contents and must include the following sections, each designated by headings:

1) Table of contents

2) State of the art of relevant international research (including own preliminary work, if applicable) and relation of the project to this context

3) Clearly defined aims and hypothesis/hypotheses or arts-based research question(s) of the project

4) Description of the project's anticipated level of originality or arts-based innovation

5) Methods

6) Work plan and timeline

7) Associated research partners (if applicable): Description of the contributions of the associated research partners (see section 1.5) to the proposed research; associated research partners must be named in the *Associated research partner* form.

8) National and/or international collaboration partners (if applicable): Please specify the intended cooperation partners and the subject of the intended collaboration(s) or the planned contribution to the project. All national and/or international cooperation arrangements named in the project description must be listed on the *Other cooperation* form (one form must be completed for each cooperation partner). Cooperation partners named in the description who make a significant contribution to the research project can be confirmed by means of a collaboration letter.

9) Research qualifications of the researchers involved

10) All potential ethical, safety-related, or regulatory aspects[9] of the proposal and how applicants plan to deal with them must be described in this section. These questions need to be addressed briefly in the text even if the applicant believes the project does not raise any such issues.

11) Any potential sex-specific and gender-related aspects[10] 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 briefly addressed, even if the applicant does not feel that the project involves any such aspects.

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 the research institutions of associated research partners where applicable

[9] For instance, the European Commission's Ethics for Researchers or The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity can serve as a guide here.

[10] Sex-specific and gender-related aspects in the research approach refers to the content of the planned research, not the number of women on the research team or the composition of the team. Key questions: Is the research approach likely to produce sex-specific and gender-related findings? Are there already findings on sex-specific differences in the field of research? If so, what findings? How and where are these integrated into the research approach? (Further information is available on the FWF website.)

  - Existing project participants (not financed by FWF project funds – usually the principal investigator and artistic, scientific, scholarly and/or arts-based project staff at the research institutions)
  - Available infrastructure
- Information on the funding requested
  - Explanation of why the personnel requested is needed (type[s] of requested position[s], job descriptions, extent of employment, and duration of involvement in the project)
  - Concise justifications for non-personnel costs (equipment, materials, travel expenses, and other costs); if funding for equipment is requested, applicants must explain why this does not constitute part of the basic equipment of the given research environment – see section 2.3.2).

Annex 3: CVs and description of previous research achievements

The arts-based CVs and research achievements (for the principal investigator as well as a maximum of 3 other key project participants) should be described on no more than 3 pages per person.

Arts-based 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. In addition, please provide a publicly accessible link to a list of all published publications.
- *Education:* List of artistic, scientific, scholarly, and/or arts-based milestones
- *Position(s)*: List of 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 1.4.2)
- *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 (if applicable). This is intended to make it easier for the reviewers to assess the principal investigator's qualifications in term of academic age
- *Research interests*: Description of the main areas of research and the most important research results achieved to date
- *Arts-based publications and/or works*: List of no more than ten 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, art works, etc.); for each publication, either a DOI address or another persistent identifier should be indicated, if available.

- *Additional artistic, scientific, scholarly and/or arts-based research achievements*: List of no more than ten of the most important artistic, scientific, scholarly and/or arts-based research achievements aside from arts-based publications and/or works; examples of such research achievements include freely accessible research datasets including software and code, awards, conference contributions, keynote lectures, significant research projects, peer review activities, open peer review, the promotion of early-stage researchers, exhibitions, initiatives for interaction with society (including citizen science or transdisciplinary activities), science communication activities, knowledge transfer activities, licenses, or patents. Please present each research achievement individually, i.e., one award is listed as one research achievement, acting as a reviewer for a journal is another research achievement, one science communication initiative is another research achievement, etc. If available, a persistent identifier or a link to the respective research achievement must be provided.

Annex 4 (optional): Collaboration letters

Collaboration letters (each no more than 1 page) from national and international collaboration partners who are named in the project description as being essential for the implementation of the project and whose role is plausibly described

2.2.4 Publication output

The following separate upload is required:

- *Publication_list.pdf:* A list of all research publications and/or works over the last five calendar years[11] (categorized as “quality-assured publications” and “other publications,” see section 1.4) by all project participants for whom a CV has been submitted, as well as for all project staff members for whom personnel costs are requested, in *one* PDF file; 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. The principles of economy, efficiency, expediency, and environmental sustainability apply when calculating planned procurements.

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

[11] Publication lists must include: all authors, complete title of the publication, 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.

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 associated research institutions.

VAT is an eligible expense only if a research institution is 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.

Funding may only be requested for the cost categories specified below.

2.3.1 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.

2.3.1.1 Grant-salaried principal investigators

The FWF understands "grant-salaried" to mean that the principal investigator's salary is financed by the funds of the research project.

Applying for funding (including partial funding) for one's own position is possible for every principal investigator, regardless of whether they are in fixed-term or long-term employment at the time of application. A senior postdoc salary[12] may be requested for the grant-salaried position (pro-rated accordingly in the case of partial funding).

Woman principal investigators 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

[12] The senior postdoc rate can only be requested to fund the principal investigator's own position; the postdoc salary rate applies for project staff members at the postdoc level.

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 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:

- Artistic, scientific, scholarly, and/or arts-based instruments
- System components
- 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 principal investigator is to instruct their research institution to order the equipment and effect payment accordingly The principles of economy, efficiency, expediency, and environmental sustainability apply. The procurement guidelines of the research institution and the provisions of the Federal Procurement Act 2018 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, funding for repairs can be requested instead of 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.

2.3.3 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 can be considered in making the calculations.

2.3.4 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 Austrian and international research institutions other than the lead research institution or associated research institutions 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 lead or associated research institution’s individual travel expenses policy. If no such policy is in place at the research institution, the federal regulations governing travel costs (*Reisegebührenvorschrift des Bundes* 1955, RGV) as amended apply.

2.3.5 Costs as part of national and international collaborations

Unlike when cooperating with associated research partners (see section 1.5), costs arising in the context of an arts-based research collaboration with an external research institution are to be borne by that research institution. This does not apply to cooperation arrangements with researchers from developing countries (see section 2.3.6).

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 are directly necessary for carrying out the Austrian project.

2.3.6 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 arts-based research project)
- 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 do not fall into any of the categories 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
    - Costs for necessary project-specific artistic events (funding for these costs shall only be granted in the amount considered by the reviewers to be absolutely essential for carrying out the project)
    - Costs for project-specific public relations work intended to make PEEK and its results visible to a wider audience than the specialized field
    - 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

The procurement guidelines of the research institution and the provisions of the Federal Procurement Act 2018 as amended apply.

2.3.7 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, 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. General project costs impact the number of reviews required for the proposal (see section 3.3). No justification for general costs is needed in Appendix A.

2.3.8 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 addressing the same or similar arts-based research questions as a proposal the FWF has previously rejected, regardless of the program category. If an application is submitted on the same or a very similar arts-based research question and if, in the view of the applicant, 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 (*Overview_revision.pdf*) must be submitted to the FWF. This overview will not be passed on to the reviewers.

- A response to all reviews of the rejected application (*Revision.pdf*) 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. A limit of 3 pages per review applies, however, the FWF only checks the *maximum number of pages* in the case of 2 or more reviews (e.g., 2 reviews = 6 pages, 3 reviews = 9 pages). In these cases, the number of pages *per review* does not necessarily have to be adhered to, as long as the total number of pages is not exceeded. The response should be written objectively and respectfully, avoiding false claims and any offensive statements,

and may not include any recommendations for actions or assessment. The format requirements specified in section 2.2.2 apply.

While no deadlines for the resubmission of a rejected application apply, the respective application requirements do need to be complied with. 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 1-3 and where applicable 4, with PDF bookmarks, at least for the major sections)
- *Publication_list.pdf* (publication list of all the key project participants for the last five calendar years, categorized into “quality assured publications” and “other publications”)

b) Forms:

- *Research institution assignment*
- *Contact*
- *Application*
- *Cost breakdown*
- *Abstract* (in English)
- *Co-authors*
- *Associated research partners* (if applicable)
- *Other cooperation* (if applicable; for national and international collaboration partners)

2.5.2 File uploads, if applicable

- *Cover_letter.pdf* (accompanying cover 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 amendments

All of the files and forms specified above must be uploaded in full to elane. Once an application has been officially submitted, the research institution and the applicant can make no further changes to the application themselves. All applications are checked for completeness and any formal errors by the FWF Office.[13] The decision-making bodies of the FWF reserve the right to return any applications that do not meet the formal criteria without review. The most common reasons why applications are returned without review are (a) the application does not address specific hypotheses or arts-based research questions (see section 2.2.3), or (b) 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 research institution and the applicant, giving them the opportunity to correct the problems within a reasonable period of time (generally 3 weeks). The requested amendments are to be submitted to elane as a supplementary application and approved for submission by the lead research institution if applicable. If the **requested amendments** 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 applicant must briefly explain why these reviewers should be excluded. If the reasons for exclusion are professionally and academically sound, the FWF will generally fulfil the applicant'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.

[13] The FWF checks applications and reviews for plagiarism and the use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools on a random basis and in cases of suspected violations of academic standards. The use of any AI tools in preparing the proposal must be briefly described in the Co-authors form.

3.3 Number of reviews required

The number of reviews required for funding approval depends on the amount of funding requested. For funding requests of up to €450,000, at least two reviews are needed; for each additional €200,000, at least one further review is required (e.g., from €450,000 to €650,000 at least three reviews will be required, and so on). The average processing time increases significantly with an increase in the number of required reviewers.

3.4 Decision-making process

A detailed description of on 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 **review process** for PEEK is conducted by an international jury established for PEEK. Information on the average duration of the review process can be found online on the FWF Dashboard.

When the review process is completed, the Scientific Board decides (usually twice per year; see FWF website for more information), whether the proposal should be funded. The lead research institution and the applicant will be informed in writing of the FWF's decisions.

3.5 Grounds for rejection

The reasons for rejecting an application are assigned to one of five categories (C1–C5) and communicated to the applicant and the lead research institution; the applicant 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.

3.6 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.

3.7 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

corresponding resubmissions) are also barred for 12 months (from the date the applicant was officially notified of the decision). Rejections for grounds C1 or C2 do not count towards this total. In general, only research topics are banned, not applicants 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 regulations and sanctions (e.g., Dual-Use Regulation [EU] 2021/821) that apply for the implementation of the PEEK 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. Research institutions are required to report any cases of suspected serious violations of the standards 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 (*Forschungsorganisations-gesetz*, 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 Women, 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

Please note that if a grant is awarded, a PR proposal summary in German and English – to be submitted to the FWF when the Grant Agreement is returned – 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 principal investigator 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., artistic, scientific, scholarly, and/or arts-based 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 associated research 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. The description should be strucured as follows:

a) Details on the applicant's research institution and – if applicable – of associated research partners

- Existing personnel (not financed by the FWF, usually the principal investigator and research personnel at the research institution[s])
- Existing infrastructure

b) Information on the funding requested:

- Explain briefly why the personnel requested is needed for the project (number and type of requested positions, job descriptions, extent of employment, and duration of involvement in the project)
- Explain briefly why the non-personnel costs requested are justified (equipment, materials, travel, and other costs). If funding for equipment is requested, applicants must explain why this does not constitute part of the basic equipment of the given research environment – see also section 2.3.2.
- Please list and provide justifications for the following:
  - Personnel costs
  - Equipment costs
  - Material costs
  - Travel costs
  - Other costs (including independent contractor agreements)

6.2 Appendix B: Notes and questions for reviewers in the Program for Arts-Based Research (PEEK)[14]

The FWF actively supports equal opportunities and equal treatment in all of its programs. The review of a proposal must not put researchers 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 arts-based research achievements and the length of his/her research career.

Our commitment to equal opportunities also means considering breaks or delays in applicants' arts-based 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 artistic, scientific, scholarly, and/or arts-based publications and/or works and the ten most important additional artistic, scientific, scholarly and/or arts-based research achievements of the applicant 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 metrics such as journal impact factors, Article Influence Scores, or the h-index.

Please review the current proposal[15] based on the following six assessment criteria: 1) innovation and novelty, 2) quality of the proposed research, 3) approach/methods and feasibility, 4) qualification of the researchers involved, 5) ethical, sex-specific, and gender-related aspects, and 6) overall evaluation. For each of these criteria except 5) 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 applicant in full and in anonymous form. If the proposal is approved, the research institution may have access to the anonymized reviews forwarded to the applicant.

[14] For more information please visit our website: FWF's mission statement and values and the Application Guidelines for PEEK

[15] The project proposal must meet the FWF's formal requirements. Please bear these in mind when writing your review. (Key formal requirements: 20 pages max. for the project description including figures and tables; 5 pages max. for the list of references; 3 pages max. for each academic CV, including a description of previous research achievements and the ten most important publications. For further details, please see the Application Guidelines for PEEK.)

Section 1:

1. Innovation or novelty

Is the proposed research innovative? Does it make an original contribution to its field?

2. Quality of the proposed research

Are the arts-based research questions formulated clearly? Are they timely, challenging, and likely to lead to relevant insights?

3. Approach/methods and feasibility

Is the arts-based research design well-conceived, clearly formulated, and suitable for answering the arts-based research question(s)? Is there a well-organized work plan? Have the methods been chosen well and does the proposal describe them in sufficient detail?

4. Qualification of the researchers involved

How well are the researchers qualified to carry out the proposed research? How would you assess the artistic, scientific, scholarly, and/or arts-based qualifications of the applicant, their team and any cooperation partners? In evaluating their qualifications, please consider their career stage, taking unorthodox career paths and circumstances that may have slowed down their progress (e.g., parental leave, long-term or chronic illness, disability, caregiving responsibilities) into account.

5. Ethical, sex-specific, and gender-related aspects

Ethics: Have ethical considerations been addressed satisfactorily?

Sex-specific and gender-related aspects[16]*:* Applicants are required to address any relevant sex-specific and/or gender-related elements inherent in research questions and/or research design. Please assess whether the treatment of these components is adequate.

6. Overall evaluation

What is your overall impression of the proposal? Specifically, what would you consider its key strengths and weaknesses? Please give reasons for your answers, taking as much space as you need.

[16] Reflecting on sex and gender-relevant aspects in the research approach is about the research content, not about the participation of women in the research team or the composition of the team. Key questions include: Is the research approach likely to produce sex-specific and gender-related findings? Does the research topic already include findings on gender-specific differences? If so, what are they? How and where are they integrated into the research approach? (Further explanations can be found on the FWF website).

Section 2: Optional recommendations for the applicant

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.