

Information for applicants

FWF-DFG – Collaborative Programs

Vienna, 22/04/2025

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Important note (January 28, 2025): Starting February 6, 2025, full proposals for FWF-funded participations in DFG collaborative funding programs must be submitted under a new funding category: “KIN – Multilateral Initiatives International.” Applications started under the “PIN” funding category can no longer be completed after February 6, 2025, and must be submitted under the new “KIN” funding category.

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1 General information

The FWF offers, together with the German Research Foundation (DFG), the opportunity for researchers from Austria and Germany to reciprocally participate in the “**collaborative programs**” of the other funding organisation (for information on how to apply for cross-border stand-alone projects, see the “[Weave](#)” [Information for Applicants](#)).

The participation of the researchers is, in some cases (see below), administered by the partner organisations using the “**Lead Agency Procedure**”. In the Lead Agency Procedure, the proposal for bilateral research projects is reviewed by only *one* of the participating funding organisations. The joint proposal must be submitted to the funding organisation that will provide the larger portion of the funding.

The Lead Agency is responsible for reviewing the proposal and making the funding recommendation. The results of the review process and the funding recommendation are communicated to the other participating funding organisations. These usually accept the funding recommendation of the Lead Agency. The individual project parts will then be funded by the respective national funding organisations.

In the case of cross-border participations in collaborative programs that exceed a certain scope, a “**modified Lead Agency Procedure**” is used, meaning that the FWF and the DFG organise a joint review procedure on the basis of which the funding organisations take an independent funding decision (for details, see below).

The following collaborative programs have been opened for use of the Lead Agency Procedure or the modified Lead Agency Procedure:

FWF program:

- [Special Research Programs](#) (SFB)

DFG programs:

- Collaborative Research Centres/Transregio (SFB)
- Research Units (FOR)

*It is **not** possible to fund an Austrian participation in DFG’s “**Priority Programs (SPP)**” through the FWF! For more information on possibilities for researchers at Austrian research institutions to participate in SPP, please contact the DFG directly.*

2 Language of application

Proposals submitted to the DFG or the FWF as part of this cooperation must be written in **English** in accordance with the agreements in place between these organisations. Submission solely in German or another project-relevant language other than English is only permitted in exceptional cases. Such exceptions apply **exclusively to proposals from the fields of linguistic and literary studies** which concern only texts in German or languages other than English and do not attempt to contextualize the texts in an international framework. In all such cases, it is absolutely necessary to consult the responsible project officers of the FWF **prior to submission** of the proposal and then, if necessary, submit an abstract of the proposal (max. 1 A4 page) including a brief **explanation on methodological grounds** why the proposal must be submitted in a language other than English (in electronic form). The decision-making bodies of the FWF shall decide on any exceptions.

3 Participation of researchers from Austria in collaborative programs of the DFG

3.1 DFG's Collaborative Research Centres and Transregio

The participation of researchers from Austria in an SFB or an SFB/Transregio of the DFG is possible under certain conditions. For questions concerning eligibility to apply and cost calculations of Austrian projects, the [FWF's Application Guidelines for SFB](#) apply. The proposal must be submitted to the DFG in accordance with the form requirements of the DFG.

Scope of Austrian participation

The application and review procedure depend on the scope of the Austrian participation. The Lead Agency Procedure is used to administer participations of Austrian researchers of **up to two projects**. A **modified Lead Agency Procedure** is used to administer participations of **five or more Austrian projects** (see Section 5). An Austrian participation of three or four projects is not possible.

Restriction on the number of projects

The **FWF's rules on the maximum number of participations in SFB** apply for Austrian participations in German Collaborative Research Centres (SFB). For more on this, see the relevant information in the FWF's [application guidelines for preparing SFB pre-proposals](#)

Cost calculation

The rules for FWF standalone-projects as well as those for SFB projects apply for the cost calculation of Austrian participations.

Submitting the application

Participations of up to two projects: Proposals for collaborative research centres are reviewed by the DFG in a two-stage procedure.

Austrian applicants must enter, **at the same time as the pre-proposal** (1st stage) is submitted to DFG, the **administrative and financial information** for the Austrian project part as well as the following documents via the **FWF Elane portal** (<https://elane.fwf.ac.at>) using the program category "**PIK – International Programs – Draft-proposal**" and the call "**DFG: SFB Konzeptphase/DFG = Lead Agency**"):

- Copy of the **pre-proposal** submitted to DFG
- **Scientific Abstract** (according to [FWF guidelines](#))
- **CV** of the FWF applicant (according to [FWF guidelines](#))
- proof of the applicant's required **publication record** (**PI_publication.pdf**; cf. section 2.2.4 of the [FWF guidelines](#))

If a **full proposal** (2nd stage) is submitted, the following information must be submitted to the FWF via the Elane Portal at the same time the proposal is submitted to DFG. (program category "**PIN –**

International Programs", call: **"DFG Sonderforschungsbereiche"**; from **6 February 2025** under **"KIN – Multilateral Initiatives International"**):

- **Administrative/financial information** on the Austrian project part (forms)
- **Copy of the full proposal** which was submitted to the DFG
- **Cost justification** for the project part submitted to the FWF for funding (cf. the template in Appendix A of the [FWF guidelines](#))
- **CV** of the FWF applicant (according to [FWF guidelines](#))
- proof of the applicant's required **publication record** (cf. section 2.2.4 of the [FWF guidelines](#))
- **Publication list** of the FWF applicant (according to [FWF guidelines](#))

Participations of five or more projects:

The **modified Lead Agency Procedure** is used to administer participations of five or more Austrian projects (see Section 5). Applicants must submit, **at the same time as submission of the draft proposal to the DFG** (1st stage), the administrative and financial information for an SFB draft proposal in Austria to the FWF via elane ("**G – Draft Proposal Phase**", PROFI program category). The project parts located in Austria thus constitute a separate SFB draft proposal (at least 5 project parts) and, since it concerns a PROFI project, the **research institution of the coordinator is responsible** for submitting the draft proposal. Therefore, it is necessary to contact the research institution(s) because the draft proposal on the Austrian side requires a commitment from the research institution(s) in the form of Appendix A and B (see Application Guidelines for SFP Draft Proposal, p. 9, attachment 2). SFB draft proposals are usually submitted online by 30 September of each year by the research institution of the coordinator.

3.2 DFG's Research Units

The participation of researchers from Austria in a DFG research unit is basically possible. For questions concerning **eligibility to apply** and the **cost calculation** of Austrian projects, the [Application Guidelines for Stand-Alone Projects](#) apply. The proposal itself must be submitted to the DFG in accordance with the form requirements of the DFG.

Scope of Austrian participation

The Lead Agency Procedure is used to administer participations of researchers in Austria of **up to two projects**. Participations of more than two projects are *not* funded by FWF.

Submitting the application

Participations of up to two projects: Proposals for research units are reviewed by the DFG in a two-stage procedure.

Austrian applicants must enter, **at the same time as the pre-proposal** (1st stage) is submitted to DFG, the **administrative and financial information** for the Austrian project part as well as the following documents via the **FWF Elane portal** (<https://elane.fwf.ac.at>), using the program category

“PIK – International Programs – Draft-proposal”, Call “DFG Forschungsgruppen Konzepte / DFG = Lead Agency”)

- Copy of the **pre-proposal** submitted to DFG
- **Scientific Abstract** (according to [FWF guidelines](#))
- **CV** of the FWF applicant (according to [FWF guidelines](#))
- proof of the applicant's required **publication record** (**PI_publication.pdf**; cf. section 2.2.4 of the [FWF guidelines](#))

If a **full proposal** (2nd stage) is submitted, the following information must be submitted to the FWF via elane (“**PIN – International Programs**” program category, call: “**DFG Forschungsgruppen**”; ”; from 6 February 2025 under “**KIN – Multilateral Initiatives International**”):

- **Administrative/financial information** on the Austrian project part (forms)
- **Copy of the full proposal** which was submitted to the DFG
- **Cost justification** for the project part submitted to the FWF for funding (cf. the template in Appendix A of the [FWF guidelines](#))
- **CV** of the FWF applicant (according to [FWF guidelines](#))
- proof of the applicant's required **publication record** (cf. section 2.2.4 of the [FWF guidelines](#))
- **Publication list** of the FWF applicant (according to [FWF guidelines](#))

4 Participation of researchers from Germany in collaborative programs of the FWF

4.1 FWF's Special Research Programs (SFB)

Scope of German participation

The Lead Agency Procedure is used to administer participations of German researchers of **up to two projects**. The modified Lead Agency Procedure is used to administer participations which have attained the **necessary minimum size for establishing an SFB/Transregio** of the DFG (see Section 5.). Applicants must contact the FWF and the DFG *well in advance* of submitting a proposal.

Submitting the application

Participations of up to two German projects: Proposals for special research programs are reviewed by the FWF in a two-stage procedure. German participations **of no more than two project parts** in FWF special research programs are administered in parallel to the procedure for general research funding of the DFG. It is recommended to contact the DFG program officers for the respective subject area at an early stage of preparation.

Proposals are submitted to the FWF according to the usual FWF guidelines for SFB. In addition, a **formal proposal according to DFG guidelines** must also be submitted (see www.dfg.de/lead_agency_dach).

German participations of greater scope: The modified Lead Agency Procedure is used to administer German participations which meet the application requirements for an SFB/Transregio of the DFG (see Section 5.).

5 Modified Lead Agency Procedure

A **modified Lead Agency Procedure** is used to administer large-scale participations of Austrian or German researchers in collaborative programs of the DFG or the FWF. Participations that exceed the limits for the use of the “regular” Lead Agency Procedure are not considered as stand-alone projects by the FWF or the DFG but are established as a **collaborative program** (for instance, the content of an FWF SFB is closely linked to the content of an DFG SFB). These participations are counted towards the national SFB participations (see <https://www.fwf.ac.at/en/research-funding/application/sfbs>).

The limits for the use of this procedure depend on the funding instrument:

Austrian participations in DFG collaborative programs

DFG funding instrument	Lead Agency Procedure	Modified Lead Agency Procedure or applicable FWF funding instrument	Application not possible
SFB/Transregio	Up to 2 Austrian projects	5 or more Austrian projects → SFB of FWF	3 to 4 projects
Research Units	Up to 2 Austrian projects	Not applicable	3 or more projects

German participations in FWF collaborative programs

FWF funding instrument	Lead Agency Procedure	Modified Lead Agency Procedure
SFB	Up to 2 German projects	Large-scale German participations in SFB of the FWF are possible, provided that the DFG’s proposal requirements for establishing SFB of the DFG are met. These require a clear contribution to the development of a priority area and structural development at the participating German institution.

Main features of the modified Lead Agency Procedure

The above-mentioned programs are reviewed in a **two-stage procedure**. **Draft proposal/project outline:** Draft proposals/project outlines for bilateral SFB which are to be administered using the modified Lead Agency Procedure must be submitted to the funding organization from which the larger portion of the SFB is requested. This question must be settled in advance with the FWF and the DFG.

- In any case, an **SFB draft proposal** (PROFI application – G-SFB-draft proposal) must be submitted for the Austrian portion (see also Section 3.1.). Since it concerns a PROFI project, the research institution of the coordinator is responsible for submitting the proposal. Therefore, it is necessary to contact the research institution(s) because the draft proposal on the Austrian side

requires a commitment from the research institution(s) in the form of Appendix A and B (see Application Guidelines for SFP Draft Proposal, p. 9, attachment 2). SFB draft proposals are usually submitted online by 30 September of each year by the research institution of the coordinator.

- For SFB proposals in which the FWF acts as the Lead Agency, applicants may not submit a full proposal unless expressly invited to by the FWF. For SFB in which the DFG acts as the Lead Agency, a **full proposal may not be submitted unless the result of the draft proposal/project outline review is positive**. The **result of the project outline review** is *binding* for bilateral SFB, which is different than the rules that apply for German SFB.
- **Full proposal stage:** full proposals must be submitted to the Lead Agency, with separate guidelines applying for the preparation of bilateral SFB.
- The full proposal review is conducted in a **coordinated procedure** between the FWF and the DFG (joint hearing). Therefore, in the full proposal stage, there is *no longer a Lead Agency*.
- The FWF and the DFG take funding decisions **independently of each other** on the basis of the joint review.
- Austrian proposals must **compete with strictly national SFB proposals**. The decision is taken at the FWF Board meeting in November of each year.
- The responsible decision-making bodies of the DFG take the decisions on the proposals, which also must compete with national proposals.
- Funding is only awarded upon the funding decision of the FWF and the DFG.

6 Contacts

- Special Research Programs (SFB): Dr. Sabine Haubenwallner, phone: 01/505 67 40-8603, email: sabine.haubenwallner@fwf.ac.at
- Dr. Christoph Bärenreuter, phone: 01/505 67 40-8702, email: christoph.baerenreuter@fwf.ac.at
- Dr. Reinhard Belocky, phone: 01/505 67 40-8701, email: reinhard.belocky@fwf.ac.at