

## Transferring a project abroad - “Money Follows Researcher”

If a principal investigator (PI) relocates abroad, the FWF may, under certain conditions, facilitate a continuation of the project in the new country / at the new location. This applies both to ongoing projects and projects that have been approved but not yet started. Project transfers are possible for FWF Principal Investigator Projects (previously Stand-Alone Projects; program code “PAT,” previously “P”) as well as for International Projects (program code “PIN,” previously “I”). The principle of reciprocity applies: This means that projects can only be transferred to those countries with research funding organizations that also permit the transfer of projects to Austria. This option is based on an agreement drawn up by Science Europe, the umbrella organization of European research funding and sponsoring organizations. A current list of funding agencies that have signed this agreement is available [here](#).

Different regulations apply for ongoing projects than for approved but not yet started projects:

### 1. Transferring ongoing projects

For ongoing projects, a transfer to a research institution abroad can be requested from the FWF. The following general conditions apply:

- Remaining duration of the project must be **at least 6 months**
- The **entire project** will be transferred **abroad**: It is not possible to divide the project into a part carried out abroad and a part carried out in Austria.
- The FWF does **not** fund **independent applicants (PIs applying for funding for their own salary) abroad**. This means that the salary of the PI abroad cannot be funded by the FWF.
- Purchases of **equipment** abroad may not exceed **€1,500** (incl. VAT).

The PI must submit an application to the FWF addressed to the project officer in charge of the project (see contact details in the grant agreement). The application must include the following:

- **Completed *Project transfer abroad form***: This form must be signed by the PI and an authorized signatory of the new research institution abroad. If the original document is sent to the FWF by post, the form must be hand-signed and stamped by the research institution. If the form is sent to the FWF by email, it must be signed with a qualified electronic signature.
- **Cover letter** from the PI addressing the following:
  - o Effects of the relocation on the project's progress
  - o Impact on existing project staff
  - o Details of the new research institution (including details of project-relevant infrastructure at the new research institution)
  - o Relocation schedule

- In the case of relocation of equipment owned by the Austrian research institution: Confirmation of the Austrian research institution that the ownership rights will be transferred to the new research institution

To allow sufficient time for the FWF Executive Board to make a decision, it is advisable to apply for a project transfer early on, i.e. several months before the planned relocation date.

## 2. Transferring approved but not yet started projects

For projects that have been approved but not yet started, the requirements specified in section 1 above apply. Some regulations differ depending on the destination country:

- **Transferring a project to Germany or Switzerland:** If a researcher plans to transfer a project that has been approved by the FWF but has not yet started, the project funding can be transferred to the partner funding organizations in Germany (DFG - *Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft*) or in Switzerland (SNF - *Schweizerischer Nationalfonds*). Prerequisite is an informal letter from the PI to the project officer, requesting a transfer to the DFG or the SNSF. The FWF then forwards the relevant documents (application, review, grant agreement) to the DFG or the SNF. The PI must then submit a formal funding application to the DFG or the SNSF. Project costs will have to be recalculated according to the DFG/SNF guidelines. The decision-making bodies of the DFG or the SNSF subsequently decide on the application on the basis of the documents provided by the FWF. As soon as the application has been approved by the DFG or the SNSF, the PI will be issued a new grant agreement from the respective funding organization. FWF funding will then be withdrawn.

When **transferring** a project **to Austria** that has already been approved by the DFG or the SNF but not yet started, the PI must first request a transfer of the project to Austria from the DFG or the SNF. After the documents have been forwarded to the FWF by the DFG/SNF, the PI must submit a formal funding application to the FWF under the program category "PAT - Principal Investigator Projects" (previously "P - Stand-Alone Projects") or, if part of the project remains in Germany or Switzerland, under the program category "PIN - International Programs" (previously "I") (Call "Weave: external lead"). Project costs must be recalculated in accordance with FWF guidelines for Principal Investigator Projects. A decision on whether to fund the project will be made by the FWF Board. To allow sufficient time for the FWF Board to make a decision, it is advisable to submit the application early on, i.e. several months before the planned relocation date.

- **Other countries (see the list of signatories to the Science Europe):** If a researcher plans to transfer a project that has been approved by the FWF but has not yet started to one of the other Science Europe partner countries, the FWF will finance the project for a maximum duration of one year abroad. During this time, the PI can apply for continued funding from the local funding organization. The application process is the same as for transferring ongoing projects (see section 1 above). A decision on transferring the project abroad will be made by the FWF Executive Board.

To allow sufficient time for the FWF Executive Board to make a decision, it is advisable to apply for a transfer early on, i.e. several months before the planned relocation date.