

NEUES ENTDECKEN
TALENTE FÖRDERN
IDEEN UMSETZEN

FWF

Der Wissenschaftsfonds.

In accordance with its [Funding Guidelines](#) of 1 January 2022
(as last amended), the FWF has issued the following

**Application Guidelines
for Research Groups (FG)
(1st Stage – Draft Proposal,
valid from 1 March 2022)**



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1. General information

1.1. Aim of the programme

The main objective is to support joint multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary projects of particularly productive researchers. Medium-term research cooperation on a complex topic is carried out in mixed teams of researchers at Austrian research institutions.

1.2. Definition

The most essential terms used in the application guidelines are explained below:

Term	Definition
<i>Lead research institution</i>	Austrian research institution that submits the application and where the coordinator is employed
<i>Collaborating research institution</i>	Austrian research institution that is involved in the application and where the participating researchers work
<i>Researchers</i>	3–5 scientists/scholars of the FWF project incl. coordinator
<i>Young researchers</i>	Scientists/scholars with at least 2 years of national/international postdoctoral research experience or experience in carrying out their own research project (for instance, an FWF project), who themselves lead a research area in the research group (hereinafter referred to as FG for <i>Forschungsgruppe</i> , or research group)
<i>Project-area leader</i>	Researcher or young researcher who is responsible for leading an FG project area
<i>Project area</i>	Research unit in the FG that is described and budgeted by the individual project-area leader and can only be implemented in conjunction with other project areas of the FG. Each project area must be assigned a project-area leader. Each researcher (incl. coordinator) may lead no more than one project area; the project management must be the responsibility of one person and may not be shared.
<i>Coordinator</i>	Researcher who is responsible for the management of the research activity of the FG as well as the entire FG. He or she is appointed by the lead research institution as a representative of the research institution within the framework of the project implementation of the grant agreement.
<i>Coordination project</i>	The coordination project is a project area of the FG and also includes project-specific travel expenses and any other funding needed for the coordination of the project. The coordinator manages the coordination project of the FG.

Term	Definition
<i>Staff</i>	Research staff in the research group who are financed by the approved FWF funding for the FG (PhDs, postdoc positions, technical personnel)
<i>Members</i>	All researchers and staff in the FG
<i>Own position</i>	Salary of the researcher which is financed by funds of the approved FWF funding of the FG
<i>Statutes</i>	Agreement between the researchers. They must be drafted during the second stage, i.e., in the course of preparing the full proposal. They describe the tasks and competences of the coordinator and regulate the cooperation between the researchers as well as decision-making processes.

1.3. Deadlines

The deadline for submission (application approved and submitted by the research institution) is **30 September 2022 (2 pm local time, Vienna/Austria)** online at <https://elane.fwf.ac.at>.

1.4. Who is eligible to apply?

All Austrian research institutions are eligible to apply. There is no limit to the number of applications that can be submitted by a research institution. The research question of an FG is to be linked to or newly established at Austrian research institutions. The research group working on this question will be concentrated at one location or link several researchers at different locations throughout Austria.

The research group for which funding is requested must consist of **at least three and no more than five** researchers, with one-third coming from the underrepresented gender; in the context of the evaluation procedure, the composition of the team is defined as a decision-making criterion. These are internationally outstanding (young) researchers from all disciplines, especially from the humanities, social sciences, and cultural studies.

The researchers are generally employed at Austrian research institutions and are either funded by the research institution or financed by the project as part of their *own position* (see [section 2.6.2.](#)). If they are employed part-time at the start of the project, it is possible to increase their employment to full-time as part of the project.

In addition, it is possible for an international researcher who conducts research abroad and at the same time is employed at least 25% at an Austrian research institution to participate in the project.¹

One researcher from the team assumes the tasks of the coordinator. The researchers (including the coordinator) act as the leaders of the project areas. Each researcher may only participate in one research group. If a researcher is already involved in an FG project as a project-area leader, the researcher may not participate in any other FG draft proposals. This rule applies for the application and implementation stage of the research group.

Restrictions on the number of projects: In addition to participation as a researcher in the research group, it is possible to serve as the principal investigator in three projects that differ in terms of content from the research group in the categories of Stand-Alone Projects, International Programmes, Clinical Research, and the Programme for Arts-based Research. Researchers may not submit a proposal for a Schrödinger project and participate as a researcher in a research group at the same time.

1.5. What types of projects can be funded?

Applications can be submitted for carrying out a **joint multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary² project** that aims at gaining scientific/scholarly knowledge. The project duration is limited to a maximum of 60 months.

In all cases, research groups should pursue scientific/scholarly objectives that as a rule go beyond established disciplinary boundaries and therefore require the collaboration of several researchers with different specialisations. Owing to the multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary issues involved, these projects can only be worked on jointly from different perspectives and thus open up unusual new fields of research. The research group establishes an innovative topic in Austria or expands or supplements the existing research priorities at research institutions.

Aspects of a research group that go beyond the realm of science and scholarship may be mentioned in the application, but they will not play a part in the assessment of whether the project should be funded. Double funding is not permitted (see [Funding guidelines](#)).

¹ Potential researchers are considered eligible in cases where they have a genuine part-time contract of employment (extent of employment is at least 25%) which is not funded by the FWF and which is guaranteed for the planned duration of the project. Before submitting an application, researchers are required to submit evidence of such an employment arrangement and a brief description of the project, including a plan for its execution, information on the researcher's presence on site, rules of representation, etc., for approval by the FWF.

² Definition: "Interdisciplinary" refers to the integration-oriented interaction of people from at least two disciplines with regard to common goals and results, with the disciplinary perspectives being brought together to form an overall view.

1.6. What requirements must be met to apply?

All researchers participating in the proposal are eligible to apply if their publication record over the last five years has been internationally visible and if their current career stage is commensurate with the career progression expected in their field. The following criteria are decisive in assessing their publication record—documented in the *Publication list* attachment (see [section 2.5.](#))—and in initiating the review process:

- **Quality assurance:** Most relevant in assessing the researcher's 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 researcher must provide a link to the publisher's website, describing the respective quality assurance procedure. If no description should be available, it is the researcher's responsibility to provide evidence that the publication has been subject to a quality assurance in accordance with the standards of the field.
- **International visibility:** Most of the researcher's publications 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 researcher's publications must be commensurate with the expected career progression and the field concerned. At least two publications must have undergone a quality assurance procedure and must be internationally visible with a substantial and independent contribution on the part of the researcher. In the life sciences, at least one first-, last-, or corresponding authorship is required.

Should a researcher fail to meet one or more of the above criteria, the researcher must include an explanation with the application. In cases of doubt, the decision-making bodies of the FWF shall decide whether the research qualifications are adequate.

1.6.1. Consideration of career breaks

The FWF will take justified career breaks (e.g., parental leave, caring for a family member, long-term illness, or research position in the non-academic sector) into consideration in assessing the researcher's eligibility to apply. Relevant information can be included in the academic CV and thus also be available to the reviewers.

1.6.2. Inclusion of disabled and chronically ill people

The FWF will also take any exceptions to typical career paths due to disability and/or chronic illness into consideration in assessing the researcher's eligibility to apply. Relevant information can be included in the academic CV and thus also be available to the reviewers.

1.7. What types of funding can be requested?

Project-specific costs are eligible for funding. These include personnel and non-personnel costs that are necessary for carrying out the project (max. EUR 1,500,000.00 for 5 years incl. 5% general project costs, benchmark EUR 300,000.00 per year) 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.

For information on requesting funding for the personnel costs of the researcher (= own position), see [section 2.6.2](#).

Please note that exaggerated costs may represent a reason for rejecting an application, even one that is considered excellent in terms of content.

2. Application content and form

2.1. Sections of the application

For an application to be complete, it must contain the following sections:

1) Academic abstract in English comprising no more than 3,000 characters (incl. spaces; no formulas or special characters). The academic abstract will be used to inform potential reviewers about the project. The abstract must be subdivided into the following sections using the given English terms:

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

Where options are given (indicated by slashes), please choose an option that is appropriate for your project.

2) Project description

- Cover sheet: project title, lead research institution (address and director) and name and institution address of the coordinator; list of the collaborating research institution(s) (address and director), including details of the researchers working there (name and institution address)
- Table of contents
- Project description

on no more than 25 pages for 5 researchers

on no more than 24 pages for 4 researchers

on no more than 23 pages for 3 researchers

(excluding cover page and table of contents, with consecutively numbered pages), including list of abbreviations, headings, figures, captions, tables, footnotes, etc.

The following content is expected:

- Description of the multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary innovative research programme (on no more than 14 pages)
- Quality and composition of the research team (team description on no more than 3 pages, individual description per person on no more than 1 page)
- Wider impact (on no more than 1 page)
- Organisation and financing (on no more than 2 pages)

3) Annexes

Please note that **annexes are a part of the application**, and they must be attached to the project description in the order listed below:

- Annex 1: List of literature cited in the application (References) on no more than 5 pages
- Annex 2: Information on research institution(s) and justification of requested funding
- Annex 3: Academic curriculum vitae (CV) and description of previous research achievements of all researchers and staff members from the postdoc level and up (funded by the project) participating in the application (no more than 3 pages per person)
- Annex 4 (optional): Confirmations (collaboration letters) of national and international cooperation partners (no more than 1 page per letter)

4) Attachments to be uploaded individually:

Mandatory:

- For each researcher and staff member from the postdoc level and up, a list must be prepared of all publications over the last 5 years, broken down into "quality assured publications" and "other publications" (see also [section 2.5.](#)); all lists are to be uploaded together in one PDF document as *Publication_list.pdf*.

Where applicable:

- Cover letter
- Only for young researchers (with at least 2 years of research experience): PDF scan of the doctoral certificate and proof of 2 years of postdoctoral research experience
- List of reviewers to be excluded
- Response(s) to reviews in the case of resubmissions

- For resubmissions, an overview of all changes made in the resubmitted application

5) Completed forms

- Required forms: *Academic abstract*, *Application form*, *Contact form*, *Programme specific data form*, *Cost breakdown form*, and *Co-authors form*
- Optional forms: *National/International cooperation arrangements form*

2.2. Formal requirements and submission of the application

2.2.1. Language of application

To allow applications to be reviewed by international experts, applications must be submitted in English **without exception**.

2.2.2. Formatting

The continuous text in the project description, annexes 1–3, and the attachments must be written in 11 pt. font with 1.5 line (15-20 pt.) spacing and at least 2 cm margins. Researchers must comply strictly with all upper limits (e.g., number of pages, attachments, etc.).

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/it consistently throughout the application. If available, a [DOI address](#) or another [persistent identifier](#) should be used for the literature cited.

2.2.3. Submitting the application

The FG programme is a PROFI programme. The application must be submitted online at <https://elane.fwf.ac.at>. To submit the application online, the coordinator is required to register (one time only) at the address shown above. All the necessary forms must then be filled out online; additional documents such as the project description can be uploaded. For additional information, see the "[User manual elane electronic application system](#)".

1) Required parts of the application

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 5 years, broken down into “quality-assured publications” and “other publications”)

b) Forms:

- *Academic abstract in English*
- *Application form*
- *Contact form*
- *Programme specific data form*
- *Cost breakdown*
- *Co-authors* (mandatory information)
- *National and international cooperation arrangements* (optional)

2) File uploads (if applicable)

- *Cover_Letter.pdf* (= accompanying letter)
- *PhD_certificate_name_researcher.pdf* (= PhD certificate of the young researcher)
- *Postdoc-research_experience_researcher.pdf* (= proof of postdoc experience of the young researcher)
- *Negative_list.pdf* (= list of reviewers who should be excluded)
- *Overview_Revision.pdf* (= in the case of resubmission, overview of all changes made in the resubmitted application)
- *Revision.pdf* (= in the case of resubmission, an overall response to all the reviewers or, if preferred, a short response to each reviewer saved in a separate file: *Revision_A.pdf*, *Revision_B.pdf* etc.)

The coordinator must complete the applications in time for the responsible lead research institution to approve and submit the applications by **30 September 2022 (2 pm local time, Vienna/Austria)**.

2.3. Project description

The project description (corresponds to [section 2.3.1.](#) to [2.3.4.](#) on a max. of 25/24/23 pages for 5/4/3 researchers) must address the following areas:

2.3.1. Research programme

(no more than 14 pages)

- State of research on which the research group is based
- Innovative,³ multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary⁴ research approaches in the research programme of the research group
- Description of the shared objectives and research questions in the research group; in the case of an interdisciplinary research approach, please include:
 - Description of the common language (coherent and consistent terminology)
 - Description of the research areas to be investigated
 - Description of the relevant research challenges
 - Description of the merging of the various disciplinary theories into a common theoretical approach
 - Description of the shared methodologies used
 - Description of how a synthesis will be formed—shared “language,” theoretical basis, individual contributions
- Concise description of the innovative and cutting-edge character of the research topic as well as the significance of the research results for the international scientific/scholarly community. The most important national and international cooperation arrangements are to be listed, the persons to be cooperated with are to be specified, and the subject of the intended cooperation(s) or the contribution to the project is to be defined. All of the national and/or international cooperation arrangements that were stated to be essential in the project description should be listed on the *Cooperation arrangements* form and may be evidenced by a collaboration letter.
- A description of the thematic coherence and the expected innovation value through cooperation in the research group
- All potential sex-specific and gender-related issues⁵ in the planned project. How are they integrated into the research approach? These must be addressed briefly in the text in a separate section even if the researchers believe the project does not raise any sex-specific and gender-related issues.

³ Questions to the reviewers: How does the proposal advance frontier research and unconventional scientific approaches? Does the proposed project have the potential to question and/or change existing paradigms in the fields involved or beyond?

⁴ Definition: “Interdisciplinary” refers to the integration-oriented interaction of people from at least two disciplines with regard to common goals and results, with the disciplinary perspectives being brought together to form an overall view.

⁵ Positioning and reflecting on the research approaches in the planned for the project in terms of sex-specific and gender-related issues, for instance: 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 checking the relevance of sex-specific and gender-related issues to a project, see <https://www.fwf.ac.at/en/about-the-fwf/gender-issues/fix-the-knowledge/fix-the-knowledge-detail/>).

- All potential ethical, safety-related, or regulatory aspects⁶ of the submitted project and how the researchers plan to deal with them must be described in a separate section. These questions should be addressed briefly in the text even if the researchers believe the project does not raise any ethical issues.

2.3.2. Quality and composition of the research team

- For the team (description of the team on no more than 3 pages):
 - Description of the cooperation and communication structure in the team
 - Description of the team structure including the proportion of junior researchers
 - Description of the proportion of women
 - Description of an internationalisation strategy to connect with the international scientific/scholarly community
 - Short description of the situation of junior researchers⁷ at the research institutions
- For each researcher (individual description per person on no more than 1 page):
 - Description of qualifications
 - Description of expertise and scientific/scholarly potential
 - Description of experience with multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary projects
 - Description of time resources and scientific/scholarly vision
 - Description of international cooperation arrangement(s)

2.3.3. Wider impact on the Austrian research system

(no more than 1 page)

- Dissemination strategies and science communication: measures with regard to the visibility of the research group as well as preparation of the results for the public

2.3.4. Organisation and financing structure

(no more than 2 pages)

- Summary table showing the total costs requested, broken down by the categories of personnel costs, equipment costs, material costs, travel costs, and other costs

⁶ For instance, the European Commission's [Ethics for Researchers](#) or [The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity](#) can serve as a guide here.

⁷ Once the draft proposal has been approved, the full proposal (i.e., the second stage of the procedure) must include comments on the situation of female researchers and young researchers. Ideally, these should be provided by the research institution and should contain the following content: number of female researchers, young researchers, objectives in the women's promotion plan, objectives in the area of the promotion of young researchers at the research institution(s); including sources and references to the corresponding documentation.

- Outline of the internal communication, cooperation, and information structures of the FG in order to define the decision-making process on financial and personnel matters

Within the framework of the second stage (full proposal of the FG) of the procedure, it will be necessary to draw up statutes regulating the internal cooperation between the researchers, which must be brought to the attention of the lead research institution and the collaborating research institution(s).

2.4. Annexes to the project description

Annexes are not included in the maximum page limit for the project description and must be attached to the project description in the specified order.

2.4.1. Annex 1: References

List of literature cited in the application on no more than 5 pages

2.4.2. Annex 2: Description of financial aspects

The template for the description of projected costs can be found in [Appendix I](#). Information on the research institution(s):

- Existing personnel (not financed by the FWF; usually, the researchers and the research personnel at the research institutions)
- Existing infrastructure
- Information on the funding requested:
 - Explain briefly why the personnel requested is needed (type(s) of requested position(s), job descriptions, extent of employment, and duration of involvement in the project)
 - Explain briefly why the non-personnel costs applied for are justified (equipment, materials, travel, and other costs). If funding for equipment is requested, the researchers must explain why this does not constitute part of the basic equipment of the given research environment (see [section 2.6.3](#)).

2.4.3. Annex 3: CVs and description of previous research achievements

The academic CVs and research achievements (for all participating researchers as well as staff from the postdoc level and up who are expected to be financed by the project) should be described on no more than three pages per person.

2.4.3.1. *Required contents for academic CVs*

- Name and contact details of the person, address of the research institution, and relevant websites. It is also required to provide a publicly available link (hyperlink) to a list of all published publications; the use of [ORCID](#) is expressly recommended for this purpose.
- List of academic milestones and relevant positions held to date (with a brief explanation of any career gaps, if applicable)
- Main areas of research and short statement of the most important research results achieved to date

2.4.3.2. *Required description of previous research achievements*

- Academic publications: list of no more than ten of the most important published or accepted academic publications (journal articles, monographs, edited volumes, contributions to edited volumes, preprints, proceedings, etc.); for each publication, if available, either a [DOI address](#) or another [persistent identifier](#) should be indicated. In accordance with the [San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment \(DORA\)](#), journal-based metrics like the journal impact factor should not be included.
- Additional research achievements: list of no more than ten of the most important scientific/scholarly research achievements apart from academic publications, such as awards, conference papers, keynote speeches, important research projects, research data, software, codes, exhibitions, knowledge transfers, science communication, licenses, or patents

2.4.4. **Annex 4 (optional): Collaboration letters**

- Confirmations (each no more than 1 page) of national and international cooperation partners that are convincingly stated as being essential for the implementation of the project in the project description but are not members of the FG

2.5. **Mandatory appendix: Publication list**

A list of all published publications of the last five years⁸ (divided into “quality assured publications” and “other publications”, see [section 1.6.](#)) is to be compiled for all researchers for whom an academic curriculum vitae is enclosed, as well as for all research project staff from the postdoc level and up for whom personnel costs are requested. These lists are to be merged into one document (*publication_list.pdf*) and then uploaded. This list—which will not be forwarded to the reviewers—is used to assess researchers’ eligibility and helps the FWF to speed up the process of finding reviewers who do not have a conflict of interest.

⁸ 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.” reference can be used.

2.6. What project-specific costs can be funded?

The regulations of the respective research institution must always be taken into account when applying for funding (such as for personnel and contracts for work and services).

The requested funding for the entire FG must be described in Annex 2 (see [section 2.4.2.](#)) and summarised in a spreadsheet (a spreadsheet must be drawn up in the *Cost breakdown* form).

Funding may only be requested for the following cost categories.

2.6.1. Personnel costs

Only those personnel may be applied for who are needed in addition to the existing personnel resources for the realisation of the project and only to the extent required for the project.

The available legal categories of employment are contracts of employment for full-time or part-time employees and marginal employment. A part-time (50%) contract of employment (for “student assistants”), which equates to 20 hours per week, may be requested for researchers who have not yet completed a master’s or diploma degree programme in the relevant subject area.

The standard personnel costs that can be applied for within the framework of PROFİ (project funding via research institutions), including a fixed percentage increase for the subsequent year to compensate for wage rises, can be found on the [FWF’s website](#). Please note that contracts of employment of no more than 75% (which equates to 30 hours per week) may be requested for doctoral students.

2.6.2. Own position

The FWF understands *own position* to mean that the researcher’s salary is financed from the funds of the research project.

Applying for funding (including partial funding) of one’s own position is possible for every researcher, regardless of whether they are in fixed-term or indefinite employment at the time of application. A senior postdoc rate can be requested for one’s own position (correspondingly aliquoted in the case of partial funding):

Female project-area leaders who finance themselves to the extent of at least 50% through their own position have the additional option of applying for up to EUR 2,000.00 per year in the category of “other costs” for personal coaching and further training measures that directly contribute to the career development of the researcher. Coaching is understood to mean person-centred counselling and support processes in the professional context. Continuing education measures with eligible costs include

courses to acquire scientific—in particular, subject-specific—competences (e.g., courses to acquire methodological competences) and personnel development measures such as those offered at some research institutions (e.g., in the areas of teaching, writing scientific texts and applications—in particular in English—personnel management and project management, conflict and problem solving, scientific organisation as well as vocation training and other seminars directly related to career development, e.g., as part of the promotion of women).

2.6.3. 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 institution's existing infrastructure. "Infrastructure" is considered to include all equipment (and components for the equipment) that must be available in a modern research institution to conduct basic research in the relevant discipline at an internationally competitive level. Thus, items such as computers (laptops, etc.) are considered to be part of the standard infrastructure and therefore no funding will be approved for these items. Please note that if such equipment or components are requested nonetheless, doubts may be raised whether it is possible to conduct leading-edge basic research in such an environment (and indeed how it was possible to carry out the preliminary work related to the project in the first place). This may have an impact on the funding decision.

In this context, "equipment" includes scientific instruments, system components, self-constructed devices (generally assembled from smaller pieces of equipment and materials), and other tangible fixed assets as well as intangible assets such as licenses, industrial property rights, and licenses derived from such rights, whose acquisition cost per item exceeds EUR 1,500.00 (incl. VAT, unless the research institution is entitled to deduct VAT) and where said equipment is financed primarily (more than 50% of the total costs of the specific item) from FWF funds. A corresponding vendor quote must be uploaded with the full proposal (2nd stage of the evaluation) for each piece of equipment whose acquisition cost (including VAT) exceeds EUR 5,000.00.

For items of equipment which are required specifically for the project and whose acquisition cost (including VAT) is EUR 24,000.00 or higher, the lead research institution must confirm with the *Affirmation of the lead research institution form* that they have verified that no comparable equipment that could be used or shared is available within a reasonable distance, and that the possibility of (co-)financing by third parties has been explored. The research institution to which the device belongs must also ensure that they are aware of any possible costs that could arise from the use, maintenance, and repairs of the equipment.

The coordinator is to instruct his/her research institution to order the equipment and effect payment accordingly. In all equipment purchases, the research institution's procurement guidelines are to be observed. Each item of equipment is to be recorded in the institution's inventory and the acquisition costs are to be reimbursed from the respective project budget in accordance with the relevant agreement between the research institution and the FWF.

2.6.4. Material costs

“Materials” encompasses consumables and small pieces of equipment (cost per item is below EUR 1,500.00 incl. VAT). The calculation of requested funds for project-specific material costs should be justified with reference to the timelines, work plans, and experiment plans. Experience from previous projects should be considered in making the calculation.

2.6.5. Travel costs

Funding may be requested for project-specific travel and accommodation, field work, expeditions, etc. The project description must include a detailed travel plan broken down by project participant. This plan must indicate which persons, for what purpose, when (in which year of the project), for how long and where they will be travelling, and how much this 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 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. When travelling by air, it is strongly recommended to make a carbon offset contribution,⁹ which can be requested as part of the travel expenses or funded through the budget for general project costs. A carbon offset contribution can be requested for up to 15% of the ticket price.

Travel expenses for researchers from other Austrian and foreign research institutions can only be granted in exceptional cases and require detailed justification.

The calculation of travel and accommodation costs should generally be based on the federal regulations governing travel costs (RGV). The current RGV rates for travel abroad can be found in the following [document](#).

For longer stays, a transparent and appropriate budget should be prepared; in general, this budget will be lower than the costs calculated based on RGV rates.

Researchers must not request funding for the presentation of project results at conferences; the costs associated with attending such conferences should be covered by the “general project costs.”

⁹ The amount of a carbon offset contribution for flights can be calculated, for example, using the [CO2 calculator](#) on the website of Climate Austria.

2.6.6. Costs as part of national and international cooperation arrangements

In the case of cooperations, the costs arising from the scientific cooperation at the respective research institution shall also be borne by this research institution.

Within the context of cooperation arrangements, funds may only be transferred to a cooperation partner (whether or not they are based abroad) if they are clearly limited contracts or services and directly necessary for carrying out the Austrian project. These costs are to be uploaded in the 2nd stage of the procedure by submitting a vendor quote with the full proposal and can be requested under “other costs”. This does not apply to [cooperation arrangements with researchers from developing countries](#).

2.6.7. Other costs

- Independent contracts for work and services (costs for work of clearly defined scope and content carried out by individuals, provided that they are justified in terms of research and economical)
- Costs for the preparation, archiving, open access, and reuse of research data in repositories in accordance with the FWF’s [Open Access Policy](#)
- Costs that cannot be included under personnel, equipment, materials, or travel costs, for example:
 - Coverage of costs for the use of research facilities, e.g., costs for the project-specific use of available equipment (i.e., project-specific “equipment usage time”) or of large research facilities; if the costs exceed EUR 5,000.00 including VAT, vendor quotes must be provided with the full proposal (in the 2nd stage of the procedure); please upload a PDF scan. Where the costs exceed EUR 10,000 not including VAT (over the entire term of the project), each vendor quote must be accompanied by the corresponding calculation basis. This calculation must include information on the nature and scope of the services for which project-specific costs are incurred (according to internal charging procedures, e.g., based on usage days or hours, or based on the number and type of measurements/analyses performed, etc.) and may not contain any infrastructure-related costs like equipment depreciation, supplementary charges for overhead, costs of research premises, etc.
 - Costs for any laboratory animals necessary for the project
 - Costs for project-specific work carried out outside the researcher’s research institution (e.g., for analysis carried out elsewhere, interviews, sample collection, etc.); in case the costs exceed EUR 5,000.00 including VAT, vendor quotes must be provided with the full proposal (in the 2nd stage of the procedure); please upload a PDF scan
 - Costs for the disposal of project-specific hazardous waste

2.6.8. General project costs

For reasons of simplicity, general project costs refer to all those costs that are generally permitted but cannot be requested individually. These include, for example, costs for conference travel, dissemination activities as well as smaller, unforeseen costs necessary for the project. General project costs should not be understood in the sense of “overhead costs” of the research institution.

General project costs must 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 the project description.

Up to three years after the completion of the project, researchers can apply for additional funds for publications resulting from projects supported by the FWF as part of its [Peer-Reviewed Publications](#) programme.

2.7. Forms

All required forms must be completed in their entirety. In order for the application to be legally binding, the FWF requires as part of the process of the lead institution approving and submitting the application, a completed application form including the *Declaration of the lead research institution and the collaborating research institution(s)*.

- *Application form* (affirmation of the lead research institution and the collaborating research institution(s))
- *Contact form* (names and particulars of the responsible persons)
- *Programme specific data form* (particulars of the participating researchers)
- *Cost breakdown* (FG total costs)
- *Co-authors form*: All persons who have made substantial research-related contributions to the conception and writing of the application should be named as co-authors. A brief description of the nature of each contribution should be included; where there are no co-authors, researchers should state this explicitly on the form.

2.8. Additional attachments

In addition to the project description incl. annexes and the forms, the following attachments should be uploaded, where applicable:

- Cover letter
- Only for young researchers (with at least 2 years research experience): PDF scan of the doctoral certificate and proof of 2 years of postdoctoral research experience
- List of reviewers who should be excluded

- For the attachments needed when a rejected application is revised and resubmitted, see [section 2.9](#)
- Vendor quotes¹⁰ for the requested pieces of equipment whose acquisition cost (including VAT) is EUR 5,000.00 or higher. (Please provide one quote from one company for each piece of requested equipment. These quotes may be submitted in German.)
- Vendor quotes¹¹ for any relevant items requested under “Other costs” if the costs exceed EUR 5,000.00 including VAT (e.g., use of research facilities)

It should be noted that any annexes or attachments in addition to the ones mentioned above shall not be considered in further stages of the process (such as letters of recommendation, forthcoming publications, etc.).

2.9. Revising a rejected application (“resubmission”)

A resubmission is defined as the revision of a rejected application which—regardless of the programme category—deals with the same or similar research questions. Where a researcher submits an application on the same or very similar research questions yet does not consider it to be a resubmission but an entirely new project, the researcher must submit a separate accompanying letter to the FWF Office explaining how the research questions have in fact changed. 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 decision-making bodies of the FWF shall decide.

- An accompanying letter containing an overview of all changes made in the resubmitted application must be submitted to the FWF. This overview will not be passed on to the reviewers.
- Response(s) to reviews: the researcher can decide whether the response(s) should be passed on to the relevant previous reviewer concerned or to all reviewers (see [section 3](#)). These response(s) should address the suggestions and criticism expressed in each review of the previous application and point out the changes made on that basis. Such responses are not necessary in the case of reviews written by persons who are to be excluded from the review process for the resubmitted application. However, such exclusions must be justified and will also be counted toward the list of reviewers who are to be excluded for the resubmission.

If all the reviewers are to receive this response, the researcher must submit a single document containing an overall response. If these responses are to be passed on only to the

¹⁰ Vendor quotes for equipment must only be uploaded as an annex in the full proposal, i.e., in the second stage of the procedure.

¹¹ Vendor quotes for other costs must only be uploaded as an annex in the full proposal, i.e., in the second stage of the procedure.

reviewers who were previously involved, the researcher should include a short response to each review in a separate document.

Resubmissions must show changes. If an application has been rejected for the reasons for rejection C3, C4, and C5, these changes need to be substantial (based on the comments in the reviews). If such changes are not made, the application will be returned without review by the decision-making bodies of the FWF.

3. Processing and decision on the application

All applications approved and submitted by the research institutions by **30 September 2022 (2 pm local time, Vienna/Austria)** will be formally examined by the FWF Office.

For the evaluation of the draft proposal, three independent reviews will be obtained. In the spring of the following year, the FWF Board will decide on the draft proposal on the basis of these reviews and, if the decision is positive, the researchers will be invited to submit a full proposal. This full proposal must be submitted within 8 weeks.

The full proposal (second stage of the procedure) will be evaluated by international experts. Corresponding information will be provided in time. The FWF Board will decide on the awarding of funding in November of the same year based on this evaluation. The research institutions are informed of the decisions in writing.

Requests for changes and returning applications without review

Please note that no changes can be made after the deadline. Any remediable errors can only be corrected after the FWF Office has prepared and sent a list of formal errors. The researchers have 10 days from when the list is sent to correct the errors. If the problems have not been resolved within this period of time, the decision-making bodies of the FWF will return these proposals without review. Similarly, the decision-making bodies of the FWF will return without review applications that have been previously rejected by the FWF and resubmitted without appropriate revisions.

All applications that conform with the FWF's regulations will be sent out for review. The reviewers (generally persons working outside of Austria) will be selected by members of the FWF Board and confirmed by the FWF's decision-making bodies.

Once the review process has begun, no more changes can be made to the application. Any changes in the research team must be notified to the FWF immediately during the evaluation period and the FWF's approval must be obtained.

Reasons for rejection

The reasons for rejecting an application will be assigned one of five categories (C1–C5) and will be sent to researchers along with the reviews. A detailed description of the categories can be found in the [General principles of the decision-making procedure](#).

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 second review. However, please note that all resubmissions are also evaluated by new reviewers.

Proposal bans

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

Applications that have been submitted three times 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 of decision); rejections for reasons C1 or C2 do not count towards this total.

It is only ever topics that are temporarily banned according to these rules, and not researchers.

Exclusion of reviewers

A list of reviewers whom the researchers believe may have a conflict of interest and whom the researchers therefore do not wish to review the application may be uploaded as an additional document with the application in the attachments section. This list may include up to three potential reviewers whom the researchers believe may have conflicts of interests. This selection must be briefly justified. If the reasons for exclusion are professionally and technically sound, the FWF will generally fulfil such requests and will 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 possible reviewers from researchers.

4. Compliance with legal requirements and standards of research integrity

The FWF would like to point out that the lead research institution must comply with all legal requirements and safety provisions (e.g., Federal Disabilities Act) that apply for their FG project and obtain all the necessary permits (e.g., from the Ethics Commission, the Commission for Animal Experimentation, the Federal Monuments Authority Austria, or the relevant foreign authorities).

The [Guidelines for Good Scientific Practice](#) of the Austrian Agency for Research Integrity (ÖAWI) are to be observed. If there is reason to believe that an applicant has failed to comply with these standards, the FWF will carry out a plausibility check in accordance with its [procedure](#). Depending on the circumstances, the FWF can arrange for the Austrian Agency for Research Integrity (ÖAWI) to carry out an investigation. 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.

5. Publication of project data and results

The FWF would like to point out that should the project be approved, the FWF will publish on its website a summary of the project in German and English for public relations (PR) purposes—which must be sent to the FWF when returning the grant agreement—as well as the amount of funding granted and, on project completion, summaries of the final report of the project. The researchers should ensure that these summaries are written in such a way as to safeguard legitimate interests of secrecy for reasons of national defence and patent law, and that trade secrets are appropriately protected. Guidelines for writing PR summaries can be found [here](#).

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

For any kind of project results (e.g., scholarly publications, research data, conference papers, and media reports), researchers must comply with the relevant requirements on acknowledging the FWF as the funding institution and the FWF's [Open Access Policy](#).

Appendix I

Template: Information on the research institution(s) and description of financial aspects

The information on the research institution(s) and the description of financial aspects must be provided in **English** using the following structure and appended to the project description as Annex 2. The costs must be broken down and adequately justified for each point below. The list and justification of the costs requested must be in accordance with the costs indicated on the *Cost breakdown* form.

(a) Details on the lead research institution and the collaborating research institution

- Existing personnel (not financed by the FWF, usually the researcher and research personnel at the research site(s))
- Existing infrastructure

(b) Information on the funding requested

- Explain briefly why the personnel requested is needed for the project (type(s) of requested position(s), job descriptions, extent of employment, and duration of involvement in the project)
- Explain briefly why the non-personnel costs applied for 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 2.6.3](#).

List and justification for

Personnel costs:

Equipment costs:

Material costs:

Travel expenses:

Other costs (including independent contracts for work and services):

Appendix II: Notes and questions for reviewers in the Research Groups Programme¹²

The FWF actively supports equal opportunities and fair treatment for all researchers. The FWF does not put researchers at a disadvantage for non-research-related reasons (such as age, gender, etc.) and therefore asks all reviewers to apply the same standards. For example, when assessing researchers' qualifications, please disregard their actual age, but consider their academic age instead.

Our commitment to equal opportunities also means taking into account breaks or delays in researchers' research careers (e.g., due to parental leave, long-term or chronic illness, disability, caring responsibilities, etc.), which may have led to publication gaps, atypical career paths, or limited international research experience.

Only the ten most important academic publications and the ten most important additional research achievements of the researcher are to be considered when evaluating the application. As a signatory to the [San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment \(DORA\)](#), the FWF also emphasises that, in assessing research performance, reviewers should refrain from using journal-based metrics such as the Journal Impact Factor.

Please review the present application¹³ using the following nine assessment criteria: 1) level of innovation, 2) scientific/scholarly quality of the research programme, 3) multi-or interdisciplinary approach, methodology, and execution of the project, 4) research-related qualifications of the researchers and gender balance, 5) impact of implementing the internationalisation strategy, 6) significance of the project for the career development of young researchers, 7) organisation of the research group, 8) ethics and gender, and 9) overall evaluation. For each of these criteria except 8, we ask you for both written comments and a rating on a scale from "excellent" to "poor". Please be aware, however, that the FWF's funding decision will be based primarily on the reviewers' written assessments rather than the ratings assigned.

Please keep in mind that sections 1 and 2 will be forwarded to the researchers in their entirety and in anonymous form.

¹² Further information on the FWF's corporate policy and mission or the application guidelines for Research Groups can be found on our website at <https://www.fwf.ac.at/en/about-the-fwf/corporate-policy> and <https://www.fwf.ac.at/en/research-funding/fwf-programmes/research-groups/>.

¹³ The project proposal must meet the FWF's formal requirements. Please bear these in mind when writing your review. (Key formal requirements: project description including figures and tables on max. 25/24/23 pages for 5/4/3 researchers, list of literature relevant to the project on max. 5 pages, CVs and description of the previous research achievements of all researchers including the 10 most important publications on max. 3 pages each.) For further details, see [Research Groups \(fwf.ac.at\)](https://www.fwf.ac.at).

Section 1 (forwarded to the researchers in its entirety):

- 1) Level of innovation and potential of the proposal to change existing paradigms in the fields of research involved and beyond
- 2) Scientific/scholarly quality of the proposal
- 3) Multi- or interdisciplinary approach, methodology, and execution of the project
- 4) Research-related qualifications—in relation to the lengths of their careers—of the researchers as well as the gender balance among the researchers
- 5) Impact of implementing the internationalisation strategy of the research group
- 6) Significance of the project for the career development of the young researchers
- 7) Organisation of the research group
- 8) Ethics and gender

Ethics: Have ethical considerations been addressed satisfactorily?

Gender: Researchers are required to address any relevant sex-specific and/or gender-related elements inherent in their research questions and/or research design. Please assess whether their treatment of these components is adequate.

- 9) Overall evaluation with regard to the key strengths and weaknesses and the final funding recommendation

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.

Section 2 (optional remarks to the researchers)

If you are in favour 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 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 wish to be conveyed to the researcher(s). Feel free to also give us feedback about the evaluation process and your interactions with us.