

## **Partnership in Research (PiR): A special funding programme sponsored by the CDG in cooperation with the FWF**

### **Programme description**

#### **1. Introduction**

The transfer of research insights from basic research into the development of new products and methods is one of the key challenges facing every modern technology- and knowledge-based society today. The Partnership in Research funding programme is a special anniversary initiative launched by the Christian Doppler Research Association (CDG) to mark its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary. In this one-off programme, the CDG will make a total of EUR 1 million in research funding available for a limited time period. In doing so, the CDG wishes to encourage new partnerships between the science and research community and the business world.

The programme will be carried out jointly by the CDG and FWF: Through the FWF, the programme will leverage new potential in the science and research community, while the involvement of the CDG will create new opportunities for cooperation with businesses. The CDG and FWF see rich long-term prospects for the principle underlying this special funding programme.

#### **2. Programme objectives**

The programme is designed to encourage scientists and researchers at universities, universities of applied sciences (FHs) and non-university research institutions in Austria to undertake basic research projects which may give rise to partnerships with businesses in new areas of cooperation. In each project, the researchers are to establish contact with businesses in order to explore the potential for future Christian Doppler Laboratories (CD Labs) or Josef Ressel Centres (JR Centres). The long-term objective of the programme is to lay the foundation for closer long-term cooperation arrangements between the science and research community and the business world, especially in the form of CD Labs or JR Centres.

#### **3. Target group**

The programme mainly targets younger scientists and researchers from all disciplines in Austria who have not yet launched cooperation projects with businesses in a given field of research. According to the general rules defined by the CDG, the heads of CD Labs or JR Centres are not eligible to apply. Eligibility is limited to natural persons; however, independent researchers<sup>1</sup> are not eligible to apply. PiR projects will be awarded on an *ad personam* basis (at universities: Article 26 grants pursuant to the Austrian Universities Act 2002).

#### **4. Eligible projects**

In order to be eligible for funding, projects must involve basic research and must be planned for a limited time period (12 to 36 months). The proposals submitted must be of high scientific quality by international

<sup>1</sup> "Independent researchers" are principal investigators whose salary is derived partly or entirely from the grant funds awarded for a project.

standards and offer realistic prospects of being attractive to businesses. In line with the objectives of the special programme, PiR projects are expected to lay the groundwork for later cooperation between the science and research community and the business world in the form of CD Labs, JR Centres or other arrangements.

## **5. Type of grant**

Grants will be paid out in the form of non-repayable subsidies.

## **6. Grant amount**

### **6.1. Project budget**

The amount of funding granted will be determined by the extent to which the proposed research is deemed worthy of funding and by the planned duration of the project. The budget will be between EUR 100,000 and EUR 250,000 over the planned duration of each project. This figure represents a maximum amount and must not be exceeded.

The funding rate will be 100% of recognised direct project costs. No financial or in-kind contributions are required of the planned business partner.

### **6.2. Personnel costs and basic equipment**

The personnel costs for the principal investigator are to be borne by the scientific institution where the researcher is based (i.e. "independent researchers" are not eligible); likewise, these institutions are also required to provide – free of charge – the basic equipment necessary to carry out the project. The FWF guidelines on eligible costs also apply to PiR projects (see Annex I).

## **7. Procedure**

### **7.1. Applications**

Funding applications are to be submitted in response to a one-off call in accordance with the published guidelines (see Section 2).

### **7.2. Project administration and support**

On behalf of the CDG, the FWF will handle the overall administration of the PiR special programme, which is also subject to the FWF's standards. In this context, the FWF's role will include the following:

- Preparation of application documents
- Launch of call
- Advising of applications (coordinated with CDG)
- Formal review of applications received
- Administration of international peer-review procedure
- Convening the meeting of the expert panel
- Cooperation in the selection of projects to be recommended by the expert panel
- Support and administration of approved projects (including final reviews)
- Support for the CDG in evaluating progress in approved projects

The CDG will assume an advisory role in the PiR projects, especially with regard to establishing contact with businesses and establishing CD Labs or JR Centres, as well as other funding programmes relating to cooperation between the science and research community and the business world (e.g. the Bridge Programme or K-Projects).

### **7.3. Call schedule**

According to the preliminary schedule, the call will be opened at the beginning of November 2015. The deadline for applications is slated for mid-February 2016, and decisions on funding approvals are to be issued between June and September 2016 (depending on the number of applications received).

#### **7.4. Review procedure**

For each application, at least two reviews from independent experts based outside of Austria are to be obtained. The review requirement can be waived in cases where an applicant has received FWF approval for a project in the subject area addressed by the PiR project in the last five years. This decision is to be made by the FWF.

#### **7.5. Expert panel**

A specially appointed expert panel will issue funding recommendations and rank the proposals on the basis of the international peer reviews. This panel will consist of 12 members, one-third of whom will be appointed from the CDG Executive Board, one-third from the FWF Board, and one-third will be external experts. These experts will possess the appropriate scientific expertise in one or more research fields addressed in the proposals and/or will have experience in research cooperation with the business world. The CDG and FWF will coordinate their selections and will each nominate four experts from their own decision-making bodies and two external experts.

The CDG Executive Board will decide on the composition of the expert panel in consultation with the FWF.

#### **7.6. Award decisions**

Decisions will be issued by the CDG Executive Board on the basis of the recommendations submitted by the expert panel.

### **8. Administration of approved projects**

#### **8.1. General**

The administration of approved projects (payout of grant funds, accounting, reporting and audits/reviews) will generally be handled according to FWF standards. The duration of a PiR project may be extended by a maximum of three months on the condition that no additional costs are incurred by such an extension.

Should a concrete idea for a CD Lab or JR Centre arise in the course of a project, the corresponding funding application is to be submitted to the CDG in cooperation with the corporate partner. If the application is approved, the PiR project will be discontinued (early) once the CD Lab or JR Centre is launched.

If, in the course of the PiR project, a business expresses interest in cooperating with the scientist/researcher in specific research efforts which go beyond the scope of this special programme, then the cooperation should be undertaken outside of the approved PiR project, for example in the form of a regular commission issued to the scientific institution by the corporate partner (at universities: commissioned research pursuant to Article 27 Universities Act 2002).

With regard to the eligibility of costs, the project funded by the CDG must be clearly separated and delineated from any other cooperation arrangements in connection with commissioned research or other grants.

#### **8.2. Reporting**

No interim report is required in the case of projects with a duration of 12 months.

For projects which last longer than 12 months, an interim progress report on the research effort and the establishment of contact with businesses is required halfway through the project's planned duration. The interim report should enable the CDG to take supportive action, especially with regard to contacting companies and other business undertakings.

The final report required after the completion of the project is to provide a comprehensive overview of the project's development and results over its entire duration.

The CDG Executive Board will be responsible for evaluating the progress and results of projects, if necessary with assistance from specific members of the expert panel.