

## **Applying for a cluster of excellence in ongoing cooperative projects (SFB, FG, DK, doc.funds, doc.funds.connect, ZK, and #ConnectingMinds)**

The FWF is making every effort to enable researchers with ongoing cooperative projects to submit a COE proposal. However, it must be ensured that the rules regarding the [Ban on double funding an financing, ban on double submissions](#) are observed.

It must also be ensured that approved projects can continue to be carried out as described in the proposal.

### **1. Simultaneous coordinator roles**

The coordinator (speaker) of an ongoing SFB, ZK, FG, DK, doc.funds, or doc.funds.connect cannot simultaneously serve as the coordinator of a different cluster.

### **2. Applying simultaneously to SFB, FG, and COE**

It is not possible to submit a proposal with overlapping content simultaneously to the SFB, FG, and COE programmes.

### **3. Transition of an ongoing SFB into a Cluster of Excellence**

- It is not possible to carry over individual subprojects from an SFB to a COE.
- An SFB consortium with an approved SFB that runs out in 2023 is eligible to apply for a COE. In the case of short-term overlaps (approx. 2 months) of SFBs and COEs, the funds must be allocated for different activities (no double funding). If the consortium has applied for a cost-neutral extension of the SFB that extends beyond 2023, then the rules for projects that are approved for beyond 2023 apply.
- An SFB consortium that is up for an SFB extension in 2023 and would like to expand its SFB into a cluster can submit a COE proposal. If the consortium is invited to submit a COE full proposal in June 2022, it cannot request an extension of the SFB. However, it does have the option to withdraw its COE proposal. The consent of all participating subproject leaders and research institutions must be submitted together with the pre-proposal.
- An SFB consortium whose SFB has been approved beyond 2023 can submit a COE pre-proposal whose content overlaps with the SFB. In the case of approval, the SFB must be ended prematurely, and the remaining funds must be returned to the FWF before the COE can begin. A COE must begin no later than 6 months after approval, i.e., as planned, by 1 October 2023. The consent of all participating subproject leaders and research institutions must be submitted together with the pre-proposal.

#### **4. Transition of an ongoing Research Group into a Cluster of Excellence**

A Research Group consortium can submit a COE proposal whose content overlaps with that of the Research Group. In the case of approval, the Research Group must be ended prematurely, and the remaining funds must be returned to the FWF before the COE can begin. A COE must begin no later than 6 months after approval, i.e., as planned, by 1 October 2023. The consent of all participating researchers (project-area leaders) and research institutions must be submitted together with the COE pre-proposal.

#### **5. Transition of an ongoing Young Independent Researcher Group or a #ConnectingMinds project into a Cluster of Excellence**

The expansion of an existing Young Independent Researcher Group or a #ConnectingMinds project into a COE is not possible due to the conflicting objectives of the programmes. Individual researchers of a ZK or #CM can be involved in the Board of Directors (BOD) of COEs whose content is clearly different or complementary, but not identical.

#### **6. Doctoral programmes, doc.funds, and doc.fund.connect**

Ongoing DKs, doc.funds, and doc.funds.connects can submit a proposal for a cluster that overlaps in terms of content; however, with a different coordinator or speaker, i.e., unit director. The same research work may not be carried out in the respective projects.

In the case of a grant, it must be ensured that the doctoral students are treated equally in both programmes. The structures of the existing DK, doc.funds, or doc.funds.connect must remain unchanged. Doctoral students who are funded by a DK, doc.funds, or doc.funds.connect cannot receive a grant through the cluster as doctoral students in the Training Unit.

#### **7. Multiple participation: Applying in ongoing SFBs, ZKs, and FGs with subprojects that are clearly different or complementary, but not identical**

If individual or several subproject leaders of these programmes want to apply for a cluster, the topic must be clearly different or complementary— but not identical—to that of the ongoing programme. The decision-making bodies of the FWF will check for this during the pre-proposal stage. Clusters whose content overlaps too much with subprojects of the above-mentioned ongoing programmes, thus violating the ban on double funding, will be rejected without review by the decision-making bodies of the FWF. This therefore excludes the possibility of double funding already approved subprojects or approved parts of these projects.