

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
Special Research Programmes (SFB)
(1st Stage – Draft Proposal;
valid from 1 March 2022)**

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1. General Information

1.1. Aim of the programme

Research networks based on international standards are to be established through autonomous research concentration at a single university location or, under certain circumstances, at several university locations. The funding in the SFB programme serves to build up extremely productive, closely networked research units for long-term inter/multidisciplinary work on complex research topics.

1.2. Definition

The most important terms used in these 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>	5–15 scientists/scholars of the FWF-funded 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 subproject in the SFB
<i>Subproject leader</i>	Researcher or young researcher of the SFB who is responsible for leading a SFB subproject
<i>Subproject</i>	Research unit in the SFB that is described and budgeted by the individual subproject leader and can only be implemented in conjunction with other subprojects of the SFB. A subproject leader must be assigned to each subproject. Each researcher (incl. coordinator) may lead no more than one research subproject; the project management must be the responsibility of the subproject leader and may not be shared. The coordinator may lead a maximum of one research subproject and manages the coordination project of the SFB.
<i>Coordinator</i>	Researcher who is responsible for the management of the research activity of the SFB as well as the entire SFB. He or she is appointed by the lead research institution as a representative within the framework of the project implementation of the funding agreement; formerly, spokesperson of the SFB. A researcher may only hold the position of coordinator in one SFB project. The coordinator of an SFB project cannot serve simultaneously as the coordinator in a doc.funds or doc.funds.connect project or a

Term	Definition
	doctoral programme (DK). The management of such projects cannot be applied for in parallel.
<i>Coordination project</i>	The coordination project is a subproject of the SFB and also includes all project-specific travel expenses and any other funding needed for the coordination of the project.
<i>Administrative coordinator position</i>	Full-time coordinator position (to be requested at a postdoc rate) to provide administrative support to the coordinator; ideally, this person has experience in science/research management
<i>Staff</i>	Research staff in the SFB who are financed by the approved FWF funding for the SFB (PhDs, postdoc positions, technical personnel)
<i>Members</i>	All researchers and staff in the research group
<i>Own position</i>	Salary of the researcher which is financed by the funds of the approved FWF funding of the SFB
<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; describe the tasks and competences of the coordinator; and regulate the cooperation between the researchers as well as the decision-making processes.

1.3. Deadlines

The deadline for submission (approval and submission of applications 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 SFB is to be deepened at Austrian research institutions. The SFB that deals with this question is concentrated at one location or, under certain circumstances, several locations¹ (but with at least 50% of the subprojects at one location).

The SFB for which funding is requested must consist of **at least 5 and no more than 15 researchers**, with one third coming from the underrepresented gender; in the context of the

¹ Research location = all research institutions located in a city/municipality; all research institutions within a maximum radius of 80 km (as the crow flies) that regularly cooperate with the research institution directly located at the site are also considered to be the same research location.

review procedure, the composition of the team is defined as a decision-making criterion.² These are internationally outstanding researchers or young researchers from all disciplines, especially from the humanities, social sciences, and cultural studies. When building an SFB, there must already be a research potential, and the group of researchers must be sufficiently large and well qualified to be able to establish and run a special research programme of international standing within the research profile of the participating research institution(s).

The researchers are as a rule 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 time of the start of the project, an increase to full employment through the project is possible.

In addition, the participation of an international researcher who is employed at least 25% at an Austrian research institution is possible.³

One researcher from the team assumes the task of coordinator (formerly referred to as “spokesperson”). The researchers (incl. coordinator) are leaders of subprojects. The coordinator represents the SFB publicly, leads his or her own subproject, and manages additional funds for the coordination of the SFB. The position of coordinator can only be exercised in a maximum of one SFB project. The coordinator of an SFB project cannot serve simultaneously as the coordinator in a doc.funds or doc.funds.connect project or a doctoral programme (DK).

In the case of an SFB with 5 researchers, at least three groups must be concentrated at one research location; otherwise, the rule of at least 50% of the groups at one location applies. This rule also applies for subprojects from Germany that are financed on the basis of an [LAV agreement](#) (see below “Researchers from Germany”).

Multiple participation in the SFB programme: Each researcher may only participate in a maximum of 2 SFB applications per call (which also includes participation in an SFB funded by the DFG in Germany). If a researcher is already involved in 2 SFB projects (in Austria or Germany), he or she may not participate in an SFB draft proposal. This applies both for the application as well as the implementation stage of a project. Each researcher may lead a maximum of 1 research subproject within an SFB.

Researchers from Germany can be involved in the SFB by means of international cooperation (LAV agreement). Their integration into the SFB must take place according to the rules of the FWF and must be agreed with the FWF before the draft proposal is

² See [Background information on the target rate in the SFB programme](#).

³ Potential researchers are considered eligible in cases where they have a genuine part-time contract of employment (extent of employment: 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.

submitted. The DFG funding organisation must also be notified in advance of this integration into the SFB.

Restrictions on the number of projects: In addition to participation in the SFB programme, it is possible to serve as the principal investigator in three projects that differ in terms of content from the SFB in the categories of Stand-Alone Projects, International Programmes, Clinical Research, and Programme for Arts-based Research.

1.5. What types of projects can be funded?

Applications can be submitted for the implementation of a **joint multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary⁴ project** that aims at gaining scientific/scholarly knowledge. The project duration is limited to a funding period of 48 months. The project description must include a detailed description of the first funding period and an overview of the long-term perspective (long-term/short-term research objectives). A Special Research Programme can be funded for a maximum of eight years.

In all cases, SFBs should pursue scientific/scholarly objectives that as a rule go beyond established disciplinary boundaries and therefore require the collaboration of several researchers from 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. SFBs are intended to extend an innovative topic in Austria, build on an existing research potential, and supplement existing research priorities at research institutions.

Aspects of an SFB that go beyond the realm of science and scholarship may be mentioned, 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](#)).

1.6. 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

⁴ Definition: "Interdisciplinarity" 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.

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 researchers must provide a link to the publisher's website, describing the respective quality assurance procedure. If no description should be available, it is the researchers' responsibility to provide evidence that the publication has been subject to an appropriate quality assurance procedure.

- **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 publication with 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 (benchmark EUR 1,000,000.00 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 cost calculations 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 institute address of the coordinator; list of the collaborating research institution(s) (address and director), including details of the researchers working there (name and institute address)
- Table of contents
- Project description on no more than 15 consecutively numbered pages (excluding cover sheet and table of contents), including a list of abbreviations, headings, figures, captions, tables, footnotes, etc.

The following content is expected:

- Description of the innovative multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary research programme;
 - Human potential of the SFB;
 - Wider impact on the Austrian research system;
 - Organisation and financing of the SFB.
- In addition, **one abstract on each subproject** (max. 3,000 characters incl. spaces and special characters)

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 for each researcher and staff member from the postdoc level and up (funded by the project) (no more than 3 pages per person);
- Annex 4 (optional): Collaboration letters of national and international cooperation partners (no more than 1 page per letter);

4) Attachments to be uploaded individually:

Mandatory:

- Attachment 1: A list of all publications in the last five years, broken down into “quality assured publications” and “other publications” (see [section 2.5.](#)) must be prepared for each researcher and staff member from the postdoc level and up; all lists are to be uploaded together in one PDF document as *Publication_list.pdf*;
- Attachment 2: Commitment of all participating research institutions.

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 SFB 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 *Quick reference* guide at <https://elane.fwf.ac.at>.

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”)
- *Appendix A_B_research institution A* (commitment of the participating research institution; to be prepared for each research institution)

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_name researcher.pdf* (= proof of the 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 application in time for the responsible 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 [sections 2.3.1. to 2.3.4.](#), on a max. of 15 pages, plus [section 2.3.5.](#) with one abstract per subproject) must address the following areas:

2.3.1. Research programme

- Description of the excellent, innovative, and scientific/scholarly research to be carried out as part of the programme according to international standards; description of the state of research, the expected research progress, the significance of the research results for the international community, and how the work of the SFB fits in the context of the relevant national and international research 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.

- Definition of the long-term objectives (8 years) of the research programme, which is generally interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary in scope and may also include high-risk elements; definition of the specific objectives of the first funding period (4 years).

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 how the various disciplinary theories are to be combined into one common theoretical approach,
 - Description of the shared methodologies,
 - Description of how the synthesis is formed—shared “language”, theoretical basis, building on the individual contributions.
- Description of the coherence of the subprojects with regard to creating a harmonious interaction between the researchers’ different fields of expertise and work; description of the synergies and added value of the cooperation between all groups.
 - 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.
 - 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. Human potential of the SFB

Well-connected, highly productive researchers, building on their existing expertise, form an excellent research unit in terms of the SFB programme with long-term objectives. The quality and the composition of the research team must be described as follows:

- Description of the personnel basis of the SFB: previous research achievements of the individual researchers involved, including their role in the research programme of the SFB (within the individual subprojects), including
 - A description of the proportion of women in the SFB (failure to achieve 30% participation of women must be justified),

⁵ Positioning and reflecting on the research approaches 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/>)

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

- A brief description of the situation of young researchers⁷ at the research institution(s);
- Description of an internationalisation strategy to connect with the international research community;
- Description of the involvement of young researchers (doctoral students and postdocs) in the research work; description of the training concept for young researchers. In addition to the internal SFB training, cooperation with a doctoral programme can and should be sought in conjunction with an SFB; possible considerations in this direction must be mentioned;
- Description of the institutions involved (possibly comments on special equipment) and their contribution.

2.3.3. Wider impact on the Austrian research system

- Science communication: planned publications and conference participations as well as strategies for making the SFB visible in the international scientific community, including a suitable open access policy—see <https://www.fwf.ac.at/de/forschungsfoerderung/open-access-policy/>; also strategies to increase the visibility in the Austrian public sphere.

2.3.4. Organisation and financing structure

- Summary table showing the total costs applied for, broken down by the categories of personnel costs, equipment costs, material costs, travel costs, and other costs for the first funding period;
- Outline of the internal communication, cooperation, and information structures of the SFB in order to define the decision-making process on financial and personnel matters;
- Description of the gender-equitable working environment and a description of measures to reconcile work and family life.⁸

Within the framework of the second stage (full proposal of the SFB) of the procedure, it will be necessary to draw up statutes regulating the internal cooperation between the

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 are provided by the research institution and address the following points: number of female researchers and 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.

⁸ If the draft proposal is approved, detailed descriptions of the planned measures must be included in the full proposal during the second stage of the procedure. Further information on the funds eligible for these measures in the ballpark of EUR 20,000.00 per year will be provided at the Proposers' Day for the full proposal stage.

researchers which must be brought to the attention of the lead research institution and the collaborating research institution(s).

2.3.5. Abstracts of the subprojects

An abstract for each research subproject with no more than 3,000 characters (incl. spaces; no formulas or special characters). 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
- Contribution of the subproject to the overall project, synergies with other subprojects
- Primary researchers involved

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

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: 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 of 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, 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 and 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 SFB.

2.5. Mandatory Attachments

- **Attachment 1:** A list of all research publications⁹ over the last five years (divided into “quality assured publications” and “other publications”, see [section 1.6](#)) must 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 merged into one document (*publication_list.pdf*) are to be 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.
- **Attachment 2:** Commitment of all participating Austrian research institutions: description of the planned support by the respective research institutions. Each participating research institution must provide the necessary human resources (Appendix A) and equipment (Appendix B) for the SFB (see comments on [Attachment 2](#)).

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 whole SFB must be described in Annex 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. A full-time coordinator position (postdoc rate) may be requested to assist the coordinator.

⁹ 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.

The standard personnel costs that can be applied for within the framework of PROFI (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 part-funding) of one's own position is possible for every researcher, regardless of whether they are in permanent or long-term employment at the time of application.

A senior postdoc rate can be applied for one's own position (correspondingly aliquoted in the case of partial funding):

- Female subproject 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 “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 didactics, 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 the said equipment is financed primarily (more than 50% of the total costs of the specific item) from FWF funds. A vendor quote from a company (PDF scan) 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,¹⁰ 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”.

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:

¹⁰ The amount of a carbon offset contribution for flights can be calculated, for example, using the [CO2 calculator](#) on the website of Climate Austria.

- 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 times”) 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 10,000.00 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 overheads, 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 analyses 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;
- Costs for equal opportunities measures—the SFB can budget a maximum of EUR 20,000.00 per year for this type of measure within the framework of the current project; a justification of the costs must be included in the full proposal, provided that the draft proposal has been approved and the project has been invited to submit a full proposal.

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 form* (SFB 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;
- Additional commitment of all participating Austrian research institutions (see [Attachment 2](#), please create Appendix A, B per research institution);
- List of reviewers who should be excluded;
- For the attachments needed when a rejected application is revised and resubmitted, see [section 2.9.](#);
- Vendor quotes¹¹ for the requested pieces of equipment whose acquisition cost (including VAT) is EUR 5,000.00. (Please provide one quote from one company for each piece of requested equipment. These quotes may be submitted in German.);
- Vendor quotes¹² for any relevant items requested under “other costs” if the costs exceed EUR 5,000.00 including VAT (e.g., use of research facilities).

¹¹ Quotes for equipment must only be uploaded as an annex in the course of the full application, i.e., in the second stage of the procedure.

¹² Quotes for other costs must only be submitted as an annex in the course of the full application, i.e., in the second stage of the procedure.

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 researchers 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 the response(s), the researchers must submit a single document containing an overall response. If the response(s) are to be passed on only to the reviewers who were previously involved, the researchers 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 no such changes are made, the FWF’s decision-making bodies will return the application to the researchers without review.

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 10 weeks.

International experts will be invited to a hearing/virtual meeting to review the full proposal (second stage of the procedure). This international panel discusses with the researchers and research institutions and, on the basis of the presentations and discussions, prepares a recommendation for the FWF Board (in a closed session, i.e., in the absence of the FWF Board). The FWF Board will decide on the awarding of funding in November of the same year, based on this recommendation. The lead research institutions and the researchers 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 for review. The reviewers (generally persons working outside of Austria) will be selected by the 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 review 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 the 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 SFB 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 in 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 researchers and research personnel at the research site(s))
- Existing infrastructure (Note: A description of the current and future status quo, as it was described in detail in Annex 2, should be included here.)

(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](#).

Listings and justification for:

Personnel costs:

Equipment costs:

Material costs:

Travel expenses:

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

Attachment 2: Commitment of national research institution(s)

(Please describe in Attachment 2 what additional infrastructure is provided by the research institution(s). Attachment 2 can be prepared in German, as it remains with the FWF and is not sent to the reviewers).

Appendix A) – Forschungsstätte A–X

beschreibt die **notwendigen Humanressourcen**, die der SFB an der jeweiligen Forschungsstätte benötigt. Allfällige Modifikationen aufgrund der Begutachtung und Bewilligung durch den FWF sind nachzuverhandeln.

(1) Teilnehmende Personen (seitens der beteiligten Forschungsstätte zur Verfügung gestellte Personen: Ausgangssituation des SFB)

- a. Anzahl der Professor:innen
- b. Anzahl der Assistent:innen
- c. Anzahl der nicht wissenschaftlichen Fachkräfte
Die Personen sind namentlich anzuführen.

(2) Zusätzlich benötigte Personen:

Für jede Forschungsstätte darzustellen:

Für wissenschaftliche Positionen wie Professor:innen/Assistent:innen und auch nicht wissenschaftliche Fachkräfte sollen die folgenden Maßnahmen (Anzahl, Transfer von Positionen, Neu- bzw. Nachbesetzung, Schaffung von neuen Positionen und die Umsetzung bis) beschrieben werden.

Optional:

(3) Finanzierung von Gastwissenschaftler:innen
Anzahl der Wissenschaftler:innen pro Jahr

(4) Finanzierung von Doktorand:innen
Anzahl der Doktorand:innen pro Jahr

Appendix B) – Forschungsstätte A–X

beschreibt die **notwendige Infrastruktur**, die der SFB bei der Schwerpunktbildung an der Forschungsstätte benötigt und die vorrangig zur Verfügung gestellt werden soll.

- (1) Vorhandene Laborplätze bzw. Arbeitsplätze
 - a. Ausmaß
 - b. Qualität und Einrichtung

- (2) Zusätzlich benötigter und seitens der Forschungsstätte zur Verfügung gestellter Raumbedarf des SFB
 - a. Ausmaß
 - b. Qualität und Einrichtung
 - c. Umsetzung bis (*Datum*)

- (3) Spezifikation der Computereinrichtung – Anzahl und Art

- (4) Benötigte Großgeräte – Anzahl und Art
Ankauf bis (*Datum*)

- (5) Integration des durch den SFB entstehenden Lehrangebots in das vorhandene Curriculum der Universität – Anzahl und Art der neuen Lehrveranstaltungen –
Beschreibung des Angebots

APPENDIX II: Notes and questions for reviewers in the Special Research Programme¹³

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 participations and the ten most important additional research achievements of the researchers 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 application¹⁴ using the following six assessment criteria: 1) quality and innovation of the SFB research programme, 2) quality and composition of the research team, 3) wider impacts, 4) organisation and financing, 5) ethics and gender, and 6) overall evaluation. For each of these criteria except 5), 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 reviewers' written assessments rather than the ratings assigned.

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

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

1) Quality of the SFB research programme

- Quality of research on which the SFB is based (international competitiveness, scientific/scholarly innovation potential)

¹³ Further information on the FWF's corporate policy and mission or the application guidelines for Special Research Programmes 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/special-research-programmes-sfb/>.

¹⁴ The application must meet the FWF's formal requirements. Please bear these in mind when writing your review. (Key formal requirements: Project description incl. figures and tables max. 15 pages plus 1 abstract per subproject, list of literature relevant to the project on max. 5 pages; CVs and presentation of the previous research achievements of all researchers incl. the 10 most important publications on max. three pages each. For further details, see [SFB \(fwf.ac.at\)](https://www.fwf.ac.at)).

- Thematic coherence and expected added value of the SFB

2) Quality and composition of the research team

- Researchers: scientific/scholarly potential (quality and international reputation), available time for research
- Gender ratio
- Proportion of young researchers as principal investigators
- Involvement of young researchers as staff

3) Wider impacts

- Dissemination strategies including a suitable open access policy and science communication: quality of the measures with regard to the visibility of the SFB in every respect, also beyond the academic sector (contribution to public awareness of research)

4) Organisation and financing

- Quality of the organisational concept, above all with regard to the organisation of internal coherence, cooperation within the SFB, and consistency with the planned project duration (short- and long-term work planning);
- Quality of network structures (communication and information paths) and the formal framework

5) 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.

6) Overall evaluation

- 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 recommendations for 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 researchers. Feel free to also give us feedback about the evaluation process and your interactions with us.