

NEUES ENTDECKEN

TALENTE FÖRDERN

IDEEN UMSETZEN

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

Application Guidelines for the Top Citizen Science Funding Initiative (TCS)



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1. General information

1.1. Aim of the programme

The aim of the “Top Citizen Science” funding initiative (hereinafter referred to as TCS) is to encourage the participation of citizens in research projects. Citizens should contribute to the research results and insights on the basis of their skills, expertise, curiosity, and willingness to participate – without thereby sacrificing the excellence of the research work. The involvement of citizen scientists has the potential to generate new research questions as well as reveal new approaches in the field, expand researchers’ skill sets, and speed up innovation processes. Opening the research projects to citizen involvement need not generate an added value in all the categories listed as examples, but a substantial, additional gain in scientific/scholarly knowledge is expected in every project. Furthermore, the funding initiative also intends to increase public awareness of research processes and the work of researchers and thus break down the barriers between science and society.

As part of the TCS expansion project, new possibilities for participation should be offered online by mid-2023.

1.2. Deadlines

The deadline for submission is 25 April 2022, at 2:00 pm local time Vienna/Austria. Applications must be submitted online at [elane](#).

Once the application has been submitted online, a [PDF cover sheet](#) will be generated. The application shall not be considered officially submitted until the FWF receives the signed and stamped cover sheet (see also [Section 2.2.3.](#)).

1.3. Who is eligible to apply?

Any researcher acting as the principal investigator of a funded FWF project¹ that is not scheduled to end before the funding decision on the TCS expansion project (i.e., the project will end on 30 November 2022 or later). Applications may be submitted only by one individual “natural person.” Institutes, institutions, or companies are not eligible to apply.

Applicants and persons named in the application must have the necessary qualifications, sufficient time resources, and have access to the necessary infrastructure to carry out the project submitted. All persons involved in the realisation and implementation of the TCS expansion project must be indicated in an appropriate manner. The applicant must confirm that all persons involved in the realisation of the TCS expansion project as well as the

¹ The main project may not be a project in the Schrödinger Programme, the Stand-Alone Publications Programme or the Science Communication Programme.

researchers involved in the research project underlying the TCS expansion project (main project), including the principal investigator, agree to the submission of the application. If an international research project which is carried out in different countries (e.g., projects as part of the DACH Agreement) is to serve as the main project, only the Austrian principal investigator is eligible to apply for funding.

1.4. What types of projects can be funded?

Proposals may be submitted for the expansion of funded FWF projects (FWF main projects) that are suitable in terms of content and methods and which are now to be expanded by citizen science components. Projects as part of this funding initiative have a **maximum duration of two years**. This can be extended as long as no additional costs are incurred.

Citizen science includes all activities by persons whose main profession does not consist of generating new research insights.² In this context, citizen science is understood as the active involvement of citizens and their knowledge, commitment, and resources in scholarly research and the generation of new scholarly insights. Citizen science is addressed to all people regardless of age, gender, or social background as well as people with highly specialised knowledge or specialised expertise (knowledge communities); this also expressly includes young target groups.

Depending on the extent of their expertise, their commitment, and/or the resources at their disposal, citizens can get involved in the following categories:

- Crowdsourcing: involvement of citizens in data collection and/or processing
- Distributed intelligence: involvement of citizens in data analysis and interpretation
- Participatory science: involvement of citizens in the further development of methods, tools, and/or products
- Collaborative science: involvement of citizens in the definition of problems, the development of research questions and/or quality criteria

Citizens can be involved at various stages of the planning and implementation of a research project, but please note that 1) citizens must not be involved in all the stages of a project listed below, and 2) the nature of their involvement can change during the course of the project.

- Agenda (identification and definition of topics)
- Data creation (data collection)
- Investigation (research work)
- Dissemination (science communication)

² GEWISS (2016): Green Paper – Citizen Science Strategy 2020 for Germany. URL: https://www.buergerschaffenwissen.de/sites/default/files/grid/2017/11/21/handreichunga5_engl_web.pdf

Note: The involvement of citizens as mere “objects of research” or “sources of data” without relying on their expertise (e.g., as test subjects, participants in questionnaires, etc.) is not consistent with the understanding of citizen science in these guidelines and is thus not eligible for funding.

Double funding is not permitted (see [Funding guidelines](#)).

1.5. What requirements must be met to apply?

The requirement is an approved FWF project that will not end before the decision is made on the expansion project (see section [1.3](#)).

The quality of the research underlying the submitted expansion project is ensured by the project it is based on (FWF main project). The FWF will conduct a review procedure of all TCS expansion projects submitted in order to assess their quality in terms of the expected gain in scientific/scholarly knowledge and additional effects such as social impacts, etc.

1.5.1. Consideration of career breaks

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

1.5.2. 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 applicant’s eligibility to apply. Relevant information can be included in the academic CV and thus also be available to the reviewers.

1.6. What types of funding can be requested?

In general, the rules of the FWF apply. Applicants may submit only one proposal for a TCS expansion project (to be defined in further detail) per underlying research project (main project). The **maximum** amount of funding that can be requested is **€50,000.00 per application (incl. 5% general project costs)**.

Funding may be requested for project-specific costs of the TCS expansion project which are related to the funded research project (main project). These include personnel and non-personnel costs that are necessary for carrying out the project 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.

The principal investigator of the underlying research project must be involved in the TCS activities. The general assumption for the implementation of the TCS expansion project is

that the researchers participating in the project will primarily be involved in developing and implementing the TCS component(s). The infrastructure of the hosting research institutions for the implementation of the project (such as public relations work and science communication, which most universities and large research institutions have at their disposal) will primarily be used for the realisation of the TCS expansion project. Funding to support external persons is permitted (for instance, to acquire specific skills not available at the university or research institution); however, reasons must be given.

For information on requesting funding for the personnel costs of the principal investigator (= applicants who intend their salary to be paid from the grant), see [Information on funding the principal investigator's \(PI's\) salary](#).

The *National Research Partner* form should be completed for costs arising from the collaboration with [national research partners](#) that have to be handled directly between the research institution of the national research partner and the FWF and are not invoiced to the principal investigator.

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
- Primary researchers involved

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

2) Brief information on the FWF main project (no more than two pages):

Page 1: weblink to the FWF main project, project number, project content, objectives, duration, cooperation partners, and funding amount

Page 2: status quo of the research work

3) Project description:

A Project description on no more than 10 consecutively numbered pages, incl. table of contents, list of abbreviations headings, figures, captions, tables, footnotes, etc.;

The project description must also include the following annexes on additional pages:

- 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 CV and description of previous research achievements (no more than three pages per CV);
- Annex 4 (optional): Confirmations (“collaboration letters”) of national and international cooperation partners (no more than 1 page per letter);

The project description including these annexes must be uploaded as a single file called proposal.pdf. The FWF will send this document to the reviewers.

4) Attachments to be uploaded individually:

- Mandatory: publication list for the last 5 years, broken down into quality assured and non-quality assured (see also section 2.4.).
- Where applicable: cover letter; list of reviewers to be excluded; report on results, or final report for follow-up applications; for resubmissions: overview of all changes made in the resubmitted application and response(s) to reviews; vendor quotes for equipment, etc.

5) Completed forms

- Required forms: academic abstract, application form, cost breakdown form and co-authors form;
- Optional forms: national research partners form, national/international cooperation arrangements form.

2.2. Form requirements and submission of application

2.2.1. Language of application

To allow applications to be reviewed by international experts, applications must be submitted in English. If desired, a version in German or another language may be added as a supplement; however, submission solely in German or another project-relevant language other than English is permitted only in exceptional cases. Such exceptions apply exclusively to applications from the fields of linguistic and literary studies which concern only texts in German or languages other than English. In all such cases, it is absolutely necessary to consult the responsible project officers in the FWF [specialist departments](#) prior to application

and then submit an academic abstract of the project and a brief, convincing justification on the grounds of research for submission in a language other than English. The final decision shall be made by the decision-making bodies of the FWF.

2.2.2. Formatting

The continuous text in the project description, annexes 1-3, and the attachments (except for vendor quotes) must be written in 11 pt. font with 15-20 pt. spacing and at least 2 cm margins. Applicants 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*). Applicants 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 application must be submitted online at [elane](#).

To submit the application online, applicants are required to register 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 [elane](#).

1) Required parts of the application:

a) Files:

- *Summary_main.pdf* (description of the main project)
- *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 peer-reviewed and non-peer-reviewed)

b) Forms:

- *Academic abstract in English*
- *Application form*
- *Cost breakdown*
- *Co-authors (mandatory information)*
- *National research partners (optional)*
- *National and international cooperation arrangements (if applicable)*

2) File uploads – if applicable:

- *Cover_Letter.pdf* (= accompanying letter)
- *Negative_list.pdf* (= list of reviewers who should be excluded)
- *Follow.pdf* (= report on results or final report of the previous project in the case of follow-up applications)
- *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.)
- *Quotes_equipment.pdf*
- *Quotes_other_costs.pdf*

Once the application has been submitted, a [PDF cover sheet](#) will be generated. This cover sheet must be signed by hand and stamped by the responsible representative of the applicant's research institute before being sent to the FWF by conventional mail. The application shall not be considered officially submitted until the FWF receives the signed and stamped cover sheet. Alternatively, the signed and stamped cover sheet can be scanned in, signed using the applicant's qualified electronic signature³ (e.g., mobile phone signature), and sent to the FWF (office@fwf.ac.at) by e-mail. Please note that a scanned signed and stamped cover sheet is invalid if it does not have a qualified electronic signature.

2.3. Project description and annexes

The project description must comprise no more than 10 pages and include a table of contents as well as the contents described in [section 2.3.1.](#) to [2.3.3.](#) Annexes must be attached to the project description in the order indicated in [section 2.3.4.](#)

2.3.1. Citizen Science aspects

- Clearly defined objectives of the TCS expansion project as well as reason(s) for choosing the citizen science approach⁴
- Additional value of the TCS expansion project (To what extent is the TCS expansion project a meaningful expansion/complement to the main project? What additional scholarly insights will be gained through citizen participation?)
- Relation of the project to the current international state of research and citizen science activities
- Methodology incl. description of the planned use of technologies (e.g., databases, apps, blogs, websites) as well as a description of the planned methods of participation

³ For example: <https://www.digital.austria.gv.at/citizen-card-concept>

⁴ References and tools on Top Citizen Science: e.g., <https://www.citizen-science.at/literatur/allgemein/item/207-literatur>, <https://www.zentrumfuercitizenscience.at/de/hilfreiche-tools>

- If applicable: Intended cooperation arrangements (national and/or international) as part of the planned project should be explained in the project description. This explanation should specify the people with whom the cooperation arrangement shall take place and the subject of the intended cooperation arrangement(s) or the contribution to the project. 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 be evidenced by a collaboration letter.
- Work plan and timeline (incl. a description of how it is connected to the main project in terms of time)
- All potential ethical, safety-related, or regulatory aspects⁵ of the submitted project and the planned handling of them must be described in a separate section. This aspect should be addressed briefly in the text even if the applicant believes the project does not raise any ethical issues.
- All potential sex-specific and gender-related aspects⁶ in the planned project as well as the planned implementation of these research questions must be described in a separate section. This aspect should be addressed briefly in the text even if the applicant believes the project does not raise any sex-specific and gender-related issues.

2.3.2. Research team, interaction with citizens, and planned handling of data

- Description of all the people involved in the project and evidence of their academic and/or communication-related qualifications regarding citizen science (CVs, publication lists, information on any previous activities in citizen science, science communication, open innovation, science education, etc.).
- Definition and selection of target groups addressed (number of citizens involved, target environments, etc.)
- Description of the communication plan for the envisaged target groups (including support and feedback of participating citizens, etc.)
- What are the potential benefits of the project for the citizens?
- How will the quality of the data be ensured (e.g., training sessions, manuals, etc.)?
- Data protection/privacy issues

2.3.3. Broader effects expected

- Dissemination of research results: planned publications (use of open access channels), events, web presence, media communications, etc.;

⁵ For instance, the European Commission's [Ethics for Researchers](#) or [The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity](#) can serve as a guide here.

⁶ 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/>)

- Description of potential effects on other research disciplines and/or effects of the planned TCS activity on society (social impact, positive effects on public perception of science and research, etc.);

2.3.4. Annex 1: List of references

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

2.3.5. Annex 2: Financial aspects

The template for the description of projected costs can be found in [Appendix I](#).

- Information on the research institution and those of the national research partners
 - Existing personnel (not financed by the FWF; usually, the principal investigator and the 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 cost 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 [Section 2.5.3](#).

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

The academic CVs and research achievements (for the principal investigator as well as a maximum of three other project [participants](#)) and should be described on no more than three pages per person.

2.3.6.1. 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 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.

2.3.6.2. 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 must 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 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).

2.3.7. Annex 4: Collaboration letters (optional)

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2.4. Mandatory appendix: Publication list

A list of all research publications⁷ of the last five years (broken down into “quality assured publications” and “other publications”) of all participants for whom an academic curriculum vitae is enclosed, as well as for all project members for whom personnel costs are requested (merged into the document *publication_list.pdf*). This list – which will not be forwarded to the reviewers – helps the FWF to speed up the process of finding reviewers who do not have a conflict of interest.

2.5. Eligible project-specific costs

The only projected costs eligible for funding are those in the following cost categories.

2.5.1. Personnel costs

Only those personnel may be applied for who are needed in addition to the existing personnel resources for the realization 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 current FWF salary scale (“[Personnel costs and salary scale](#)” or, for graduates of medicine in Austria, “[Personnel costs and salary scale – Graduates of medical studies](#)”), indicates the salaries that may be requested. The FWF grants an annual salary adjustment to compensate for inflation, which is applied automatically to all existing contracts of

⁷ 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.

employment in Stand-Alone projects. Please note that contracts of employment of no more than 75% (which equates to 30 hours per week) may be requested for doctoral students.

2.5.2. Grant-salaried principal investigators

The FWF defines a grant-salaried principal investigator as a principal investigator whose salary is to be paid from the funding provided for the project. Female applicants are also eligible to apply for funding for professional development.

A detailed description of the requirements and application procedure can be found in the [Information on funding the principal investigator's \(PI's\) salary](#).

2.5.3. Equipment costs

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. 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 the amount 1,500.00 EUR (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 application 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, applicants must confirm with their signatures on the application form (*Affirmation of applicant*) 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. Applicants must also ensure that they are aware of any possible costs that could arise from the use, maintenance, and repairs of the equipment.

The principal investigator 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.

2.5.4. 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. In making the calculation, experience from previous projects should be considered.

2.5.5. 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 contribution⁸, 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.

Applicants 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”.

⁸ The amount of a carbon offset contribution for flights can be calculated, for example, using the [CO2 calculator](#) on the website of Climate Austria.

2.5.6. Costs as part of national and international cooperation arrangements

In contrast to national research partners (see [section 1.6.](#)), costs arising within the context of a research collaboration with an external research institution are to be borne by that 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. This does not apply to [cooperation arrangements with scientists or scholars from developing countries](#).

2.5.7. Other eligible 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 are 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 time”) or of large research facilities; if the costs exceed EUR 5,000.00 including VAT, vendor quotes must be provided; 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 applicant's research institution (e.g., for analyses carried out elsewhere, interviews, sample collection, preparation of thin slices, etc.); in case the costs exceed EUR 5,000.00 including VAT, vendor quotes must be uploaded;
 - Costs for the disposal of project-specific hazardous waste.

2.5.8. General project costs

For reasons of simplicity, general project costs refer to all those costs that are generally permitted but cannot be requested separately. 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 are to 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, applicants can apply for additional funds for publications resulting from projects supported by the FWF as part of its [peer-reviewed publications](#) programme.

2.6. Forms

All required forms must be completed in their entirety. For the application to be legally binding, the FWF requires the cover sheet generated automatically at the end of the submission process, including the original signatures and stamps:

- Affirmation of applicant,
- Declaration of consent by the applicant’s research institution,
- Consent of the applicant relating to GDPR
- Affirmation of the national research partner, where applicable,
- Declaration of consent by the research institution of the national research partner, where applicable.

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, applicants should state this explicitly on the form.

2.7. Additional attachments

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

- Cover letter;
- List of reviewers who should be excluded;
- If the TCS expansion project submitted is a continuation of an FWF-TCS-funded project, a report on previous results or a final report and a list of publications resulting from the project must be uploaded in the language of the application (no more than 6 pages);
- For the attachments needed when a rejected application is revised and resubmitted, see [section 2.8](#);

- Vendor quotes for 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 quotes 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 will not be considered in further stages of the application process (such as letters of recommendation, “forthcoming” publications etc.).

2.8. 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 an applicant 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 applicant 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 applicant can decide whether the response(s) should be passed on only to the 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 applicant 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 applicant should include a short response to each review in a separate document.

Resubmissions must show changes. If an application has been rejected for the standardised reasons 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 applicant without review.

There is no deadline within which a resubmission of a rejected application must be submitted, but any relevant application requirements must be considered. Submission of a resubmission follows the application procedure described in 2.2.3., meaning that it is

submitted as a new independent application and not as an additional application to the previously rejected application

3. Processing of and decision on the application

The FWF Office undertakes a formal check of the application. A detailed description of the decision-making process, the criteria for selecting international reviewers, detailed rules concerning conflicts of interest and the composition of expert juries and boards can be found in the [General Principles of the Decision-Making Procedure](#)

Information on the average duration of the review process can be found in the [FWF-Dashboard](#). When the review process is completed, the FWF Board considers the reviews and decides whether the proposal should be supported. The applicant will be informed in writing of the FWF's decision.

The **review procedure** consists of two written reviews by international experts. After completion of the review procedure, the FWF's Board uses the results of the review to decide whether the project should be funded. The applicant will be notified of the FWF's decision in writing.

Requests for changes and returning applications without review

The FWF will not process incomplete applications, those which do not comply with the FWF's regulations or which contain formal errors (in particular, if the maximum length permitted is exceeded), unless and until the applicant has rectified the problems within a reasonable period of time (generally three weeks). If the problems have not been resolved within this period of time, the FWF's decision-making bodies will return these proposals without review. Similarly, applications will not be reviewed if they 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 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.

Reasons for rejection

The reasons for rejecting a project will be analysed and assigned one of five categories (C1–C5). The result will be sent to applicants 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 applicants.

Exclusion of reviewers

As mentioned in [section 2.7.](#), an additional document may be uploaded giving a list of up to three reviewers who the applicant believes may have a conflict of interest and whom the applicant therefore does not wish to review the application. A detailed description of the FWF’s policy on conflicts of interest can be found in the [General Principles of the Decision-Making Procedure document](#).

The applicant must give reasons for why they wish to exclude certain reviewers. If the reasons given hold up to scrutiny, the FWF will generally fulfil such requests and will exclude those reviewers from the review process.

Please note that the FWF does not wish to receive, nor will it consider a list of possible reviewers from applicants.

4. Compliance with legal requirements and standards of research integrity

Applicants must comply with all legal requirements and safety provisions (e.g. the Federal Disabilities Act) that apply to their Stand-Alone 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).

Applicants must also comply with the [Guidelines for Good Scientific Practice](#) of the Austrian Agency for Research Integrity (ÖAWI) when submitting the application and carrying out the project. If there is reason to believe that an applicant has failed to comply with these standards, the FWF will arrange for the ombudsperson of the respective research institution or 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 the investigation has been concluded. For more detailed information, see [FWF procedure in cases of suspected scientific misconduct](#).

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 by the applicant 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 principal investigator 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 publication of project results (e.g., academic publications, research data, conference papers, and media reports), applicants must comply with the guidelines specified in the funding agreement on acknowledging the FWF as the funding institution and the [Open Access Policy](#).

APPENDIX I:

Template: information on the research institution and finances

Note: The information on the research institution and the description of project finances must be presented 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 research institution of the applicant and—if applicable—of national research partners:

- Existing personnel (not financed by the FWF, usually the principle investigator 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 personnel requested (type(s) of requested position(s), job descriptions, extent of employment, and duration of involvement in the project);
- Explain briefly why the non-personnel cost 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 2.5.3](#).

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 Top citizen Science programme⁹

The FWF actively supports equal opportunities and fair treatment for all applicants. The FWF does not put applicants 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 applicants' 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 applicants' research careers (e.g., due to parental leave; long-term or chronic illness; disability; caring responsibilities; etc.), which may have led to publication gaps, unorthodox career paths, or limited international research experience.

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

Please review the present proposal¹⁰, using the following six assessment criteria:

1) innovation and originality, 2) quality of the proposed research, 3) approach and feasibility, 4) researchers' qualifications, 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 referees' written assessments rather than the ratings assigned.

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

Section 1a (forwarded to the applicant in its entirety):

1. Citizen Science aspects
 - a) Relation of the project to the current international state of research and citizen science activities
 - b) Clearly defined objectives of the TCS expansion project as well as reason(s) for choosing the citizen science approach
 - c) Additional value of the TCS expansion project
 - d) What additional scientific/ scholarly insights will be gained through citizen participation?

⁹ Further information on the FWF's corporate policy and mission or the application guidelines for Stand-Alone projects 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/top-citizen-science-funding-initiative>

¹⁰ The project proposal must meet the FWF's formal requirements. Please bear these in mind when writing your review. (Key formal requirements: 20 pages max. for the project description including figures and tables; 5 pages max. for the list of references; 3 pages max. for each academic CV, including a description of previous research achievements and the ten most important publications. For further details see <https://www.fwf.ac.at/en/research-funding/application/stand-alone-projects/>)

- e) Are the methodology, the work plan and time schedule clearly defined and appropriate?
- 2. Quality aspects – Interaction with citizens and handling of data
 - a) Are the following criteria suitable for the target groups addressed? Definition, selection procedures, scope, qualifications etc.
 - b) What is your assessment of the communication plan for the envisaged target group as well as the planned methods of involvement?
 - c) What is your assessment of the potential benefits of the project for the citizens?
 - d) Will the quality of data be ensured appropriately?
 - e) How would you assess the applicant's consideration of data protection/privacy issues?
- 3. Quality aspects – Research team
 - a) How would you assess the composition and qualifications of the research team, in particular with regard to their experience with citizen science?
 - b) If applied: How would you assess the existing and planned cooperations?
- 4. Broader effects expected
 - a) How would you assess the dissemination strategies described?
 - b) What potential effects can the planned TCS activity be expected to have on other research disciplines and/or social areas (social impact, positive effects on public perception of science and research, etc.)?
- 5. Additional aspects:
 - a) Ethical aspects
 - b) Sex-specific and gender-related aspects
- 6. Overall evaluation with consideration of the key strengths and weaknesses. Please give a clear recommendation for or against funding a project.

Section 2: Optional recommendations for the applicant(s)

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 applicant(s). Feel free to also give us feedback about the evaluation process and your interactions with us.