

NEUES ENTDECKEN

TALENTE FÖRDERN

IDEEN UMSETZEN

FWF

Der Wissenschaftsfonds.



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Forschungsgesellschaft

In accordance with its [Funding Guidelines](#) of 1 January 2021
(as last amended), the FWF has issued the following

**Application Guidelines for the
Programme for Cooperative Doctoral
Education Between Universities of
Applied Sciences and Universities**
doc.funds.connect



Introduction

Science & research, tertiary education, and research-generated innovations are key elements in ensuring a future-oriented Austria. The quality and excellence produced at and by Austrian universities and universities of applied sciences in the fields of research and teaching are essential components in achieving this ambitious goal.

For the purpose of enhancing their respective profiles and taking advantage of the resulting synergies, the Federal Government has committed itself through its government programme for 2020-2024 to funding a cooperative doctoral programme between universities (*Universität* in German) according to University Act 2002 (UG) and universities of applied sciences (*Fachhochschule* or *FH* in German) according to FHStG based on the common basis of the integration of basic research and applied research with the aim of establishing an application-oriented basic research.

The first call for applications should be regarded, on the one hand, as a personnel development measure for research staff, primarily at universities of applied sciences, and, on the other hand, as a step towards developing closer cooperation between universities and universities of applied sciences by supporting relevant cooperative projects between public universities and universities of applied sciences that goes beyond the already existing successful collaboration between universities and universities of applied sciences in the education and training of doctoral candidates. The funded cooperative projects will be jointly developed and implemented by the higher education partners, where each higher education institution will contribute its specific expertise and unique aspects of its university culture and jointly ensure the quality of the doctoral education and training offered as part of the programme.

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1. General information

1.1. Aims of the programme

The main objective of the *doc.funds.connect* programme is to fund the excellent scientific/scholarly or arts-based research education and training of doctoral candidates as part of a cooperative doctoral programme between universities according to University Act 2002 (UG) and universities of applied sciences (FHStG). To accomplish this aim, universities and universities of applied sciences will establish and facilitate doctoral programmes, jointly developed and organised based on international standards. The *doc.funds.connect* programme endeavours to integrate both scientific/scholarly-theoretical education and practical training as well as basic research and applied research with the aim of establishing an application-oriented basic research. The common use of university and university of applied sciences infrastructure contributes to creating a stimulating research environment for excellent young researchers and thus further increases the attractiveness of Austria as a location for research.

At the same time, the funding programme should also promote the development of research staff at universities of applied sciences according to the Universities of Applied Sciences Studies Act (FHStG) and combine different research cultures. In the long term, *doc.funds.connect* should contribute to the creation of sustainable cooperative education & training and research structures and promote collaboration between universities of applied sciences and universities in general. The programme should also help universities and universities of applied sciences to further highlight their research activities and scientific/scholarly or arts-based research priorities.

The *doc.funds.connect* programme is initially being run as a pilot programme. The programme will also strive to serve as a role model with regard to improving the quality of cooperative doctoral education and training.

1.2. Definitions

The most important terms used in these guidelines are defined below:

<i>Applicant = Lead research institute</i>	Austrian university according to Universities Act 2002 (UG) or Austrian university of applied sciences according to Universities of Applied Sciences Studies Act (FHStG) that submits the application and where the coordinator is located
<i>Collaborating research institution</i>	Austrian research institution that is involved in the application and where participating faculty members work
<i>Research institute</i>	Austrian university according to UG and Austrian university of applied sciences according to FHStG

<i>Faculty member</i>	Scientific or arts-based researcher participating in the application, doctoral candidate supervisor, and person involved in carrying out the FWF-funded project
<i>Faculty</i>	Community of all faculty members
<i>Coordinator</i>	The faculty member mainly responsible, head of the faculty and of the FWF-funded project, and person working 100% within Austria appointed by the research institute
<i>Doctoral candidate</i>	A person enrolled in and actively pursuing doctoral studies at an Austrian university according to UG

1.3. Deadlines

The deadline for submission (i.e., approval by the lead research institute) is **1 March 2022 (2 p.m. Vienna local time)** online via the electronic application portal <https://elane.fwf.ac.at/>.

1.4. Who is eligible to apply?

All Austrian universities according to UG and all Austrian universities of applied sciences according to FHStG are eligible to apply.

There is no limit to the number of applications that can be submitted by a research institution. Grant agreements will be concluded exclusively with the lead research institute.

1.5. For what types of projects can funding be requested?

Funding may be requested for proposals for **establishing or facilitating structured doctoral programmes** which are submitted and supported jointly by at least one **university according to UG** and at least one **university of applied sciences according to FHStG**. The cooperative research project, which must be clearly defined, convincingly described in terms of objectives and methods, and limited in time (no more than 48 months), aims to integrate basic research and applied research and establish an application-oriented basic research. The planned project should be designed in such a way that excellent dissertations based on state-of-the-art international research can be expected.

Double funding is prohibited (see [Funding guidelines](#)).

Any other support or grants relating to the subject of the application that have been requested or awarded by the FWF or other funding agencies (e.g., the EU, the Austrian National Bank [OeNB], government ministries, etc.) must be disclosed (see *Application form* in [elane](#)).

Additional funding from the *doc.funds.connect* programme may be requested **for ongoing FWF-funded doctoral programmes** (DK or *doc.funds* projects) **only if** the scheduled duration of the FWF-funded DK or *doc.funds* project ends on or before the deadline for

doc.funds.connect applications (**1 March 2022**). In all other cases, no additional funding may be requested for ongoing FWF-funded DK or *doc.funds* projects.

1.6. What requirements must be met to apply?

1.6.1. General framework

doc.funds.connect provides funding for cooperative projects between universities according to UG and universities of applied sciences for the purpose of establishing or facilitating structured doctoral programmes. Applications **must be submitted and, in the case of approval, implemented jointly** by the participating partners (consisting of at least one university of applied sciences and at least one university), where each research institute will contribute its specific expertise and unique aspects of its university culture and jointly ensure the quality of the doctoral education and training offered as part of the programme.

The application should include a description of the inter-university cooperation including a plan for implementing the joint doctoral education and training programme. It should also address how it will be ensured that the doctoral candidates, though at different locations, will have regular (and not merely) virtual contact and interaction with the faculty members or doctoral candidates not found at their location.

Doctoral candidates should be **supervised** jointly, i.e., **by research staff of the universities and the universities of applied sciences**. Doctoral candidates should preferably be employed at the research institute with the best conditions for the success of the dissertation based on the content of the research project. At the same time, it must be ensured that there is a **balanced ratio of employment** between the university and the university of applied sciences. Courses of the doctoral programme should be held up in somewhat equal numbers at universities and universities of applied sciences. Both should be specified in a cooperation agreement.

The academic degree (PhD), however, will be conferred by the participating university.

The following requirements apply for the **structured doctoral programme defined jointly** by the university according to UG and the university of applied sciences according to FHStG:

1.6.2. Structured doctoral programme

Structured doctoral programmes are embedded in a focused and consistent research framework and require the existence of procedures or structures and commitments that ensure the quality of the research as well as optimal and adequate scientific/scholarly or arts-based research support for the doctoral candidates.

To achieve this, specific minimum standards of structuring must be fulfilled: confirmation of supervision; dissertation agreement; progress reports; separation of supervision and evaluation personnel for the dissertation (if compliant with study-law regulations); subject-

specific education and supporting measures (transferable skills, etc.); supervision teams rather than exclusively individual supervision; supervisor development; facilitation of mobility; as well as specific funding models for doctoral candidates.

In particular, contexts must be created for doctoral candidates and supervisors in which mentoring and appropriate discussion can take place as part of a peer culture (see 2.3.4). These contexts should have their own institutional structure and be clearly located in the respective research organisation (at the university/university of applied sciences, faculty, or departmental level). The doctoral candidates are regarded by the university and university of applied sciences as early-stage researchers or early-stage artists.¹

The aim is to ensure independent and high-quality scientific or arts-based research by the doctoral candidates, to integrate them into the institutional (university or university of applied sciences) research activities, and to lead them to a degree through the active mentoring/supervision of one supervisor from the university and one supervisor from the university of applied sciences.

1.6.3. Faculty

The lead research institute must appoint a coordinator for the submitted proposal, who must be a scientific or arts-based researcher working 100% in Austria. This person will be the head of the project if the funding application is approved. As it concerns a cooperative project between universities according to UG and universities of applied sciences according to FHStG, the project may be headed by two coordinators. The second coordinator must be appointed by a research institute other than the lead research institute.

The doctoral programme for which funding is requested must involve **at least 5** faculty members (including the coordinator), with **40% of the members from the underrepresented gender**. An explanation must be provided if the percentage is lower than 40%. In addition, a description should be provided of the efforts made to increase the proportion of the underrepresented gender. In the context of the evaluation procedure, the composition of the team is defined as a decision-making criterion.²

If the project intends to include faculty members who do not work 100% within Austria, the following guidelines apply: at the time of submission of the application by the research institute, the faculty member concerned must prove that he/she has a genuine employment contract with the research institute, guaranteed for the planned duration of the project and not financed by the FWF, with a minimum employment rate of 25%. Applicants are required to submit evidence of such an employment arrangement and a brief description of the

¹ Exceptions are provided for doctoral candidates whose degree, which officially allows them to pursue a doctoral degree, is older than four years because they have worked, for example, for several years in the industry.

² See document "[Background information on the target ratio](#)"



project, including a plan for its execution, information on the researcher's presence on site, substitution arrangements, etc., for advance approval by the FWF.

1.6.4. Research or arts-based research qualifications

All of the faculty members involved in the application must have proven experience in the (co-)supervision of doctoral candidates or the assessment of dissertations, possess excellent research qualifications and/or meet international standards of arts-based research, and demonstrate a connection to the development and exploration of the arts (EEK).

The research qualifications of **all** faculty members involved in the application must be evidenced by means of a publication record over the **last 5 years** commensurate with their career stage, which demonstrates their international visibility, or, where appropriate, by forms of art practice over the **last 5 years** which have been explicitly informed by research and which have been recognised and evaluated internationally. The following criteria are decisive for the assessment of the scientific/scholarly or arts-based research qualifications of each faculty member and in determining whether a review procedure will be initiated:

- **Quality assurance:** Most relevant in assessing the publication record are those publications that have undergone a quality assurance procedure in line with international standards (peer review or an equivalent procedure; in the natural and life sciences, peer review is expected). Journals must usually be listed in Web of Science, Scopus, or the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ). In the case of journals that are not listed in these databases, or in the case of monographs, edited volumes, contributions to edited volumes, or other publication types, the respective faculty member must provide a link to the publisher's website, describing the respective quality assurance procedure. If no description should be available, it is the faculty member's responsibility to provide evidence that the publication has been subject to an appropriate quality assurance procedure.

For faculty members where examples of his/her **arts practice and critical reflection on it** are presented, the items submitted must have been made publicly available. Their quality is to be documented in a verifiable manner and thus be comparable with the research results published in internationally renowned journals. To be accepted as part of the application, the (arts-based) research dimension as well as the underlying research questions must be described individually in a brief statement. This must be written by the respective faculty member and included in the publication or works list. Where appropriate, a list of all lectures and talks (in galleries, theatres, or similar forums) about the artistic work are also to be included.

- **International visibility:** Most of the faculty member's publications/work lists 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 faculty member's publications/work lists 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 faculty member. At least one publication with first, last, or corresponding authorship in the life sciences is required.

Should a faculty member fail to meet one or more of the specified criteria, the applicant must include a justification with the application (attachment: *Statement on publication record.pdf*). In cases of doubt, the decision-making bodies of the FWF shall decide whether the research qualifications are adequate.

The *Programme-specific data* form must include the *persistent digital identifier* [ORCID](#) of **each** faculty member.

1.6.5. 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.

1.6.6. Inclusion of disabled and chronically ill people

The FWF will also take any atypical 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.

1.6.7. Multiple participation

Researchers can participate in a **maximum of two *doc.funds.connect* applications** per call and subsequently in a **maximum of two ongoing *doc.funds.connect* projects** as faculty members. If a researcher serves as a faculty member in two ongoing projects, he/she cannot participate in any additional applications.

A researcher may serve as coordinator in no more than one *doc.funds.connect* project.

The coordinator of a *doc.funds.connect* project cannot simultaneously act as a speaker of a Special Research (SFB), Doctoral Programme (DK) or *doc.funds* project. This applies to both the application and the implementation phase of a project.

As a result, a researcher cannot submit an application for a *doc.funds.connect* project if he/she is already serving as the speaker or coordinator in an ongoing *doc.funds*, *doc.funds.connect*, SFB, or DK project, or if he/she has already applied to be the speaker or coordinator of a *doc.funds*, SFB, or DK project.

1.7. What types of funding can be requested?

Funding can be requested for project-specific costs, such as 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. Please note that exaggerated costs may represent a reason for rejecting an application, even one that is considered excellent in terms of content.

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

1.7.1. Personnel costs

Funds can be requested to cover personnel costs for a maximum of 5 doctoral candidates in accordance with the currently applicable [FWF personnel costs and salaries](#). In the application, the research institute must briefly provide reasons for the number and scope of the doctoral candidate positions requested.

The personnel costs and salaries that can be applied for within the framework of PROF1 (project funding via research institutions), including a fixed [percentage increase](#) from the second planning year onwards to compensate for wage rises, can be found on the [FWF website](#).

1.7.2. Costs for education and training

In this category, the maximum amount per doctoral candidate and year amounts to €5,000 and is broken down into consumables, travel costs, and other costs. No additional costs can be requested.

These amounts are intended to cover the costs of scientific/scholarly events specific to the doctoral programme (e.g., retreats, thesis committees); costs for study stays abroad; “generic skills” courses (e.g., project management, English academic writing, etc.); costs for the announcement of funded doctoral candidate positions; interview invitations; and the costs of conference travel. In addition, the funds may be used to invite visiting researchers or seminar speakers. All applications must include a brief explanation of how grant funds would be used to cover education costs.

1.7.3. General project costs

For reasons of simplicity, general project costs refer to all those costs that are generally eligible for funding but cannot be requested individually. These include, for example, the costs of additional conference/congress travel, dissemination of scientific/scholarly results, and smaller, unforeseen expenses specific to the project. General project costs should not be understood in the sense of “overhead costs” of the research institution.



General project costs should 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.

Applicants can apply up to 3 years after the completion of the project for additional funds for publications resulting from projects supported by the FWF as part of its [Peer-Reviewed Publications](#) programme.

2. Application content and form

2.1. Sections of the application

For an application to be complete, it must contain the following sections 1-5:

1) Abstract

written in **English** comprising no more than 3,000 characters (incl. spaces; no formulas or special characters). The 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
- Faculty
- Doctoral programme
- Added value

2) Project description

- Cover sheet: Project title, research institutes submitting the application (address and head of institution), and name and institution address including information on the coordinator(s)
- Table of contents
- Project description of **no more than 30 pages** (with consecutively numbered pages), incl. list of abbreviations, headings, figures, captions, tables, footnotes, etc.; this description should **address the following points**:
 - Description of research framework (max. 9 pages)
 - Description of faculty (max. 4 pages)
 - Description of education programme (max. 9 pages)
 - Organisational structure and contribution of research institute (max. 4 pages)
 - Description of added value (max. 4 pages)



3) Annexes

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

- Annex 1: List of literature cited in the application (*References*) on no more than 5 pages
- Annex 2: Information on and justification of requested funding
- Annex 3: Academic curriculum vitae (hereinafter referred to as CV) and description of previous research achievements for all faculty members involved in the application (no more than 3 pages per CV)
- Annex 4 (optional): Confirmations (*collaboration letters*) of national and international cooperation partners (no more than one page per letter)

4) Attachments

The following attachments are to be uploaded individually:

Required attachments:

- Attachment 1: Description of the planned dissertation projects on no more than one page and in a structured form addressing hypotheses/aims, approach/methods, time frame, and participating faculty. Please note that the number of described dissertation projects must correspond with the number of doctoral candidate positions requested.³
- Attachment 2: Table with an overview of all doctoral candidates (co-)supervised and all the dissertations assessed by the faculty members over the last 5 years (2016-2021), listed separately for each faculty member and including the following information: name of supervisor/co-supervisor, name of doctoral candidate, title/topic of dissertation, start date, and date of doctoral degree or on-going.
- Attachment 3: Publication or works list for the last 5 years (2016-2021), broken down into “quality assured publications” and “other publications” (see also, [Section 2.5.3](#))

Attachments to be uploaded where applicable:

- Cover letter (in the case of an ongoing FWF-funded DK or *doc.funds* project or where two or more members of the faculty are closely related to an FWF-funded DK or *doc.funds* project; in the event that no Annex 1 is uploaded)
- List of reviewers to be excluded
- Statement on one’s own publication record
- For resubmissions: overview of all changes made in the resubmitted application and response(s) to reviews

³ If the description of the dissertation projects is integrated into the maximum 30-page project description, Attachment 1 may be omitted. This must be briefly noted in the cover letter to the FWF.



5) Completed forms

- Required forms: *Academic abstract*, *Application form*, *Contact form*, *Programme-specific data form*, *Cost breakdown form*, and *Co-authors form*
- Optional forms: *Other Cooperation*

2.2. Form requirements

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, line spacing 15–20 pt., and at least 2 cm margins. The document must be created in such a way that it is searchable in PDF format and the formatting can be reviewed.

The structure provided in section [Section 2.3](#) and all upper limits (e.g., number of pages, attachments, etc.) must be strictly followed, without exception.

Citations in the text and the list of works cited (References) in the proposal 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

Applications must be submitted exclusively online via the electronic application portal [elane](#).

To do this, both the user accounts of the coordinator as well as the responsible research institute must be registered in the electronic application portal (see [Information](#)). All the forms required for the application are to be filled in afterwards online; the other documents such as the project description and the attachments are to be uploaded as separate files.

The researchers must complete the application in time to ensure that the responsible research institute has sufficient time to approve and submit the application by **1 March 2022 (2 p.m. Vienna local time)**.

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)
- *Dissertation_topics.pdf* (description of the planned dissertation projects on no more than 1 page, in structured form; with PDF bookmarks, at least for the major sections)
- *Supervision_list.pdf* (overview of all doctoral candidates (co-)supervised and dissertations assessed over the last 5 years)
- *Publication_list.pdf* (publication/works list of all the faculty members for the last 5 years, broken down into “quality assured publications” and “other publications”)

b) Forms:

- *Academic abstract in English*
- *Application form*
- *Contact form*
- *Programme-specific data form (one for each faculty member)*
- *Cost breakdown*
- *Co-authors (mandatory information)*
- *Other Cooperation (where applicable)*

2) Optional file uploads:

- *Cover_Letter.pdf* (= accompanying letter)
- *Negative_list.pdf* (= list of reviewers who should be excluded)
- *Statement_publication_record.pdf*
- *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.)

2.3. Project description

The project description must indicate how the requested budget will be used over a period of up to four years: What topics or research questions defined jointly by the university according to UG and the university of applied sciences according to FHStG will the doctoral candidates work on? How will the planned research efforts fit in with the existing research? To what extent will those efforts serve to strengthen the programme's research basis and make a sustainable contribution to the cooperation between the research institutes and the

integration of basic research and application-oriented research? The basis for the funding application is the planned structured doctoral programme, the research conducted in the programme, its education and training structures, and the added value of the planned cooperation arrangement. All of those elements will be subjected to review and must therefore be described in the application.

The project description (**no more than 30 pages**) must include the following contents:

2.3.1. Research framework (max. 9 pages)

As a basic prerequisite, the proposed doctoral programme must be embedded in a focused, consistent research framework on par with the highest international standards. In this regard, the application must address the following points:

- Description of excellent research according to international standards conducted at the participating research institutes (university according to UG and university of applied sciences according to FHStG) with (brief!) reference to the state of the art in international research.
- Description of the research framework that serves as the basis for the planned doctoral programme. The framework must be focused, consistent, and developed jointly by the university according to UG and the university of applied sciences according to FHStG.
- Description of the research topics/questions to be addressed by the doctoral candidates at both the university according to UG and the university of applied sciences according to FHStG. A structured presentation of the planned dissertation projects must be given in [Attachment 1](#) (no more than one page per project).
- Explanation of the expected advances in research due to the planned project, its innovative potential, and the significance of the resulting research outcomes for the international scientific community.
- Description of existing procedures or structures to ensure the quality of research (e.g., internal peer review, mentoring, academic integrity standards, etc.) as well as the involvement of doctoral candidates in the research framework.
- All potential ethical, safety-related, or regulatory aspects⁴ of the planned research project and the planned handling of them must be described briefly in a separate section. This aspect should be addressed briefly in the text even if the applicants believe the project does not raise any ethical issues.

⁴ For instance, the European Commission's [Ethics for Researchers](#) or [The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity](#) can serve as a guide here.

- All potential sex-specific and gender-related aspects⁵ in the planned research 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 applicants believe the project does not raise any sex-specific and gender-related aspects.

2.3.2. Faculty (max. 4 pages)

The proposed doctoral programme must be run by a team of at least 5 researchers. **All of the researchers (i.e., faculty members) involved in the application** must have experience in the (co-)supervision of doctoral candidates or assessing dissertations as well as one outstanding academic or arts-based research qualification that **as a minimum** meets the criteria defined in [Section 1.6.4](#). The selection criteria for the admission of researchers must also be described.

The quality and composition of the faculty must be described as follows:

- Brief description of the academic or arts-based research profile of the faculty members involved in the funding application and their experience in the training and supervising of doctoral candidates.
A list of all the doctoral candidates supervised/co-supervised and/or dissertations assessed by the faculty over the last 5 years (2016-2021) should be given in [Attachment 2](#).
- Proportion of the researchers from the underrepresented gender, which should be at least 40%. If this percentage is not achieved, reasons must be provided and it will be taken into account in the review of the application.
- The selection criteria for the admission of researchers into the doctoral programme.

2.3.3. Education and training programme (max. 9 pages)

In addition to outstanding research, a high-quality education and training programme based on international standards (see e.g., [The Seven Principles of Innovative Doctoral Training, Charter & Code for Researchers | EURAXESS](#), [Salzburg I and II Recommendations](#)) must be established together by a university and a university of applied sciences in the proposed doctoral programme, which likewise fulfills the requirements of a structured doctoral programme defined in [Section 1.6.2](#). Ideally, the education and training programme should be tailored to the research conducted in the doctoral programme (i.e., “education through research”).

⁵ Positioning and reflecting on the research approaches in the planned for the project in terms of sex-specific and gender-related issues, for instance: Is the research approach likely to produce sex-specific and gender-related findings? If so, what findings? How and where are these integrated into the research approach? (For information on checking the relevance of sex-specific and gender-related issues to a project, see <https://www.fwf.ac.at/en/about-the-fwf/gender-issues/fix-the-knowledge/fix-the-knowledge-detail/>)

The structure of the education and training programme as well as procedures for ensuring the quality of supervision of the doctoral candidates must be described in the application. In particular, it must address subsections 2.3.3.1–2.3.3.4:

2.3.3.1. *Content*

- Subject-specific education (content and workload, e.g., number of (required) courses, ECTS credits, etc.)
- (Existing) opportunities for the acquisition of additional qualifications (transferable skills), for interdisciplinary collaboration, and for the exchange of ideas within the doctoral programme (among the doctoral candidates, and between candidates and the participating researchers at the university and university of applied sciences, e.g., journal clubs, retreats, PhD seminars, lab rotations, etc.) and with the business world, public administration, the arts, culture, NGOs, etc.

2.3.3.2. *Selection of doctoral candidates*

- International advertisement of the programme, and transparent application and selection procedures
- Process of matching doctoral candidates to supervisors

2.3.3.3. *Supervision (including monitoring) of doctoral candidates and their integration into the research framework*

- Rules on supervision, mentoring, and assessment (dissertation agreements, regular progress reports, team supervision instead of exclusively individual supervision, etc.) as well as conflict resolution mechanisms
- Support for international networking and promotion of mobility, including opportunities for research stays abroad (over several months), budget allocations for conference attendance, lab visits, invitations to visiting researchers, organisation of PhD conferences, etc.
- Working conditions (incl. infrastructure) for doctoral candidates: description of employment contracts (duration, extent of employment, any options for extension) and funding models for doctoral candidates, available infrastructure, and any special equipment or facilities at the research institute

2.3.3.4. *Criteria and assessment procedures to ensure a top-notch international doctoral degree*

- Requirements for completion (both formal and content-related)
- Assessment procedures (with involvement of external researchers; separation of supervision and assessment functions, if compliant with study-law regulations)

2.3.4. Organisational structure and contribution of research institutes (max. 4 pages)

The participating research institutes (university according to UG, university of applied sciences according to FHStG) must commit to providing all the necessary infrastructure (equipment, workstations, workspace, supplies, etc.) at least for the funding period of four years and ensure that the doctoral programme is integrated into the research institutes' regular activities. These contributions on the part of the research institutes are an integral part of the proposed project.

In this context, the following information must be provided:

- Institutional organisation and structures as well as integration of the doctoral programme into the research institutes: Organisational structure and responsibilities (co-heads are possible), faculty members' right and obligation to participation, decision-making structures and bodies (equal representation), quality assurance and internal control, incorporation into the research organisation, integration in the teaching system of the university and university of applied sciences
- Facilities and equipment already available (rooms/space, equipment, supplies, etc.) at the participating research institute(s) as well as the infrastructure for doctoral candidates
- Contribution of the research institutes, for instance, provision of rooms and workstations, supplies, infrastructure, any potential funding of visiting professors, training opportunities for supervisors, etc.

It is recommended to define the provisions regulating the division of responsibilities, the decision-making process, and the handling of financial, personnel, and organisational aspects in the statutes. The statutes are to be regarded as a kind of agreement between all the faculty members and the coordinator and, in the case of approval, can be included as a part of the agreement with the FWF.

2.3.5. Added value (max. 4 pages)

The proposed doctoral programme must differ from the general doctoral education and training in the relevant discipline and go beyond a mere thematic "bundling" of researchers at universities according to UG and universities of applied sciences according to FHStG.

In this context, the applicant must discuss the following:

- The unique characteristics of the planned doctoral programme (with regard to research and training) and how it differs from general doctoral education and training
- The specific added value for doctoral candidates, the faculty, and the research institutes,
- The added value for research arising from the integration of basic research and applied research

- The contribution to strengthening the programme's research basis at the participating research institutes and to strengthening the research transfer
- The contribution towards strengthening the cooperation between universities of applied sciences and universities in general
- The contribution towards promoting the personnel development of research staff at universities of applied sciences
- The measures for ensuring the sustainable network between the participating research institutes during and after the funding period

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: List of references

List of literature cited in the application (*References*) on no more than 5 pages

2.4.2. Annex 2: Information on and justification of requested funding

The description of financial aspects shall be presented using the following structure and appended as Annex 2 to the project description. The list and justification of the requested funding must be in accordance with the costs indicated in the *Cost breakdown* form.

- Information on the funding requested
 - Concise justification for the number of doctoral positions requested (where appropriate, with reference to the planned dissertation projects) and description of which research institute the doctoral candidates will be working at.
Please note that doctoral candidates should preferably be employed at the research institute with the best conditions for the success of the dissertation based on the content of the research project. At the same time, it must be ensured that there is a balanced ratio of employment between the university and the university of applied sciences.
 - Justification for and description of the planned use of requested funding for education and training (education and training costs).

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

The academic CVs and previous research achievements (publication/works list) must be attached for **all** faculty members and should be described on no more than 3 pages per faculty member.

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 accessible link (hyperlink) to a list of all published publications/works of art; 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*

- **Publications/work lists:** 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.) **or work lists**; for each publication, either a [DOI address](#) or another [Persistent identifier](#) must be indicated, if available. In accordance with the [San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment \(DORA\)](#), journal-based metrics like the journal impact factor should not be included. For faculty members where examples of his/her arts practice and critical reflection on it are presented, these must be accessible to the public.
- **Additional research achievements:** List of **no more than ten** of the most important research achievements apart from scientific/scholarly or arts-based publications, such as awards, conference papers, keynote speeches, important research projects (e.g., projects approved by peer review such as CD Labor, EU H2020 projects, COMET projects, etc.), research data, software, codes, preprints, exhibitions, knowledge transfers, science communication, licenses, or patents.

2.4.4. **Annex 4: Collaboration letters**

If applicable, confirmations (each no more than one page) of national and international cooperation partners that are convincingly stated as being essential for the implementation of the project in the project description can be attached to the application.

2.5. **Required attachments (uploaded separately)**

2.5.1. **Attachment 1: Planned dissertation projects**

With reference to the [Section 2.3.1 Research framework](#), a description of the planned dissertation projects must be attached to the application as Attachment 1. The description should be no longer than one page per project, be written in structured form, and address the

hypotheses/aims, approaches/methods, time frame, and the participating faculty members.⁶ Please keep in mind that the number of the described dissertation projects must correspond with the number of doctoral candidate positions requested. Please note also, that the description of the theoretical framework and the incorporation of the dissertation projects into the research programme must be included in the project description.

2.5.2. Attachment 2: List of doctoral candidates supervised over the last 5 years by the faculty

Table with an overview of all doctoral candidates (co-)supervised and all dissertations assessed by the faculty members over the last 5 years (2016-2021), listed separately for each faculty member and including the following information: name of supervisor/co-supervisor, name of doctoral candidate, title/topic of dissertation, start date, and date of doctoral degree or on-going.

2.5.3. Attachment 3: Publication or works list for the last 5 years

A list of all published publications or works of the last 5 years⁷ (2016-2020, broken down into “quality assured publications” and “other publications”) of all faculty members for whom an academic CV is enclosed (merged into the document *Publication_list.pdf*). This list—which will not be forwarded to the reviewers—is used to assess applicants’ eligibility and helps the FWF to speed up the process of finding reviewers who do not have a conflict of interest.

2.6. Forms

All required forms must be completed online.

- *Academic abstract*
- *Application form*
- *Contact form*
- *Programme-specific data form:*
- *Cost breakdown form*
- *Co-authors form:* All persons who have made substantial research-related or arts-based research 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.

⁶ If the description of the dissertation projects is integrated into the maximum 30-page project description, Attachment 1 may be omitted. This must be briefly noted in the cover letter to the FWF.

⁷ Publication lists must include: all authors, complete titles, journal, year, and page numbers. For each publication, 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.

In order for the application to be legally binding, the FWF requires the fully completed forms and the “Affirmation of the research institution” given during the approval and submission of the application.

2.7. Additional attachments

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

- Cover letter: In case of an ongoing FWF-funded DK or *doc.funds* project running parallel to the planned/proposed doctoral programme or where two or more faculty members of the proposed doctoral programme are involved in a FWF-funded DK or *doc.funds* project, the difference between the FWF-funded projects and the proposed doctoral programme must be presented and comprehensively justified. If the description of the dissertation projects is already integrated into the maximum 30-page project description, Attachment 1 can be omitted. This must be pointed out in the cover letter..
- List of reviewers who should be excluded
- Statement on one’s own publication record
- For the attachments needed in the case of revising a rejected application (resubmission), see [Section 2.8](#)

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

2.8. Revising a rejected application (“resubmission”)

A resubmission is defined as the revision of an application which has already been rejected with the same or similar research questions, regardless of the programme category. 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 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.

If the project submitted is a resubmission of a rejected application,

- an *accompanying letter* containing an overview of all changes made in the resubmitted application must be submitted to the FWF (*Overview_Revision.pdf*); this overview will not be passed on to the reviewers.
- *response(s) to reviews* is (are) to be made: the applicant can decide whether the response(s) should be passed on to the relevant previous reviewer or 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 should be excluded for the resubmission.

If all the reviewers are to receive this response, a document containing an overall response must be submitted.

If these responses are to be passed on only to the reviewers who were previously involved, a short response to each review in a separate document should be included.

Resubmissions must show changes. In the case of resubmissions of applications that have been rejected for the standardised reasons C3, C4, and C5, the changes need to be substantial (based on the comments in the reviews). If such changes are not made, the application will be returned without review by the decision-making bodies of the FWF.

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 [Section 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 and decision on the application

All applications approved and submitted by the research institutions by **1 March 2022 (2 p.m. Vienna local time)** will be subjected to a formal check by the FWF Office.

The review process takes about ten months.⁸ The FWF Board decides on the awarding of funds once per year (End of November 2022) on the basis of at least 3 international reviews.

If the number of submissions is more than 15 applications, there will also be a meeting of the international *doc.funds.connect* jury in addition to the written reviews. Approximately 4 weeks before the jury meeting, the FWF Board will prepare a shortlist of the most promising applications on the basis of at least 3 substantive reviews; those candidates will then be invited to a hearing. The hearings will take place on the first two days of the meeting of the international *doc.funds.connect* jury (which is expected to take place at the beginning of November 2022). After the hearings, the international jury will hold a closed session to

⁸ Information on the average duration of the review process can be found on the [FWF-Dashboard](#).

prepare its recommendations.⁹ The jury's recommendations are based on the written reviews by international experts and a hearing of promising applications.

The research institutions will be notified of these decisions in writing. Research institutes whose applications are not selected for a hearing will receive a decision letter along with the reviews received (in anonymous form) prior to the meeting of the international jury.

Selected representatives of the Christian Doppler Research Association (CDG) accompany the entire decision-making process in an advisory capacity.

Requests for changes and returning applications without review

Incomplete applications or those which do not comply with the FWF's regulations or which contain formal errors (in particular, those which exceed the permitted length) will be returned. If the problems identified by the FWF in an application are not rectified within a reasonable period of time (**no more than ten working days** after notification of the problems), the decision-making bodies of the FWF will return these applications 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 meeting the FWF's formal criteria will be sent out for review. The reviewers (generally persons working outside of Austria) are selected by the reporter teams of the FWF Board and the senate of CDG and confirmed by the decision-making bodies of the FWF. 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 assigned one of five categories (C1–C5) and will be sent to applicants along with the reviews.

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.

⁹ A detailed description of the criteria for selecting international reviewers as well as the detailed rules on conflicts of interests and the composition of expert juries and boards can be found in [General Principles of the Decision-making Procedure](#).



Applications that have been submitted three times and rejected for reasons C3 or C4 (i.e., the original application and the respective resubmissions) are also barred for 12 months (from the date of decision); rejections for reasons C1 or C2 do not count towards this total.

Only topics are ever temporarily banned according to these rules, not applicants.

Exclusion of reviewers

Applicants may include a separate document with a list of reviewers who should not be asked to review the application due to possible conflicts of interest. A detailed description of the FWF's rules concerning conflicts of interests can be found in the [General principles of the decision-making procedure](#).

This list may include **up to 3 potential reviewers** whom the applicant believes 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.

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

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 the *doc.funds.connect* 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 research institute is also responsible for ensuring that the guidelines for [Good Scientific Practice](#) of the Austrian Agency for Research Integrity (ÖAWI) are complied with when submitting the application and carrying out the project.

If there is reason to believe that there have been deviations from these standards, an investigation must be carried out at the respective research institution or the [Austrian Agency for Research Integrity](#) (ÖAWI) is to be informed of this suspicion. At any rate, the research institute must report any cases of suspected serious deviations to the ÖAWI. The FWF reserves the right to suspend, in part or in whole, any procedures related to applications or ongoing projects until these investigations have been concluded. More detailed information can be found on the [FWF website](#) and in the document [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 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 summaries are to be written in such a way as to safeguard the legitimate interests of secrecy for reasons of national security and patent rights and to guarantee that trade secrets are protected appropriately. 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 [here](#).

In presentations and publications of project results (for example, scholarly publications, research data), applicants must comply with the relevant requirements on acknowledging the FWF as the funding institution and the FWF's [Open Access Policy](#).



ANNEX: Notes and questions for reviewers in the *doc.funds.connect* programme¹⁰

In all of its programmes, the FWF actively supports equal opportunities and equal treatment. The review of an application must not put applicants at a disadvantage for non-research-related reasons such as age or gender. For example, when assessing the qualifications of faculty members, 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 faculty members' 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/work lists and the ten most important additional research achievements of the faculty member 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 proposal,¹¹ using the following seven assessment criteria: 1) quality of the research, 2) quality and composition of the faculty, 3) quality of the doctoral programme, 4) contribution of the research institutes, 5) added value, 6) ethics and gender, and 7) 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 the referees' written assessments rather than the ratings assigned.

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

¹⁰ Further information on the FWF's corporate policy and mission or the application guidelines for the *doc.funds.connect* programme of the FWF 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/docfundsconnect>.

¹¹ **Form requirements:** Project description incl. figures and tables, no more than 30 pages; list of literature cited no more than 5 pages; academic CVs and description of previous research achievements of the faculty members incl. the 10 most important publications, no more than 3 pages each.

Section 1: forwarded to the applicant in its entirety

1) Quality of research

Relation to current state of the art, innovation potential, thematic focus and coherence, international visibility and competitiveness

- of the planned project / the planned dissertation projects
- of the previous research achievements

2) Quality and composition of the faculty

Quality of (arts-based) research, reputation and international networks of faculty members, as well as their experience in educating/training- and supervising doctoral candidates; diversity (e.g., gender balance, complementary expertise at the participating universities and universities of applied sciences in basic research and application-oriented research, percentage of young researchers) among the faculty

3) Quality of the doctoral programme

Quality of the education/training and supervision programme

- Academic or arts-based research curriculum incl. integration of application-oriented aspects/elements, opportunities to acquire additional qualifications
- Selection procedures, supervision structures, procedures for assessing dissertations, gender-sensitive design of programme, mentoring
- Institutional integration and structures

4) Contribution of the research institutes

Adequacy of the contribution of the participating research institutes (infrastructure and own contribution to funding the programme)

5) Added value

If the programme is focused and coherent, and if it will create an added value for

- research
- education/training
- doctoral candidates and participating research institutes (i.e., university and university of applied sciences)
- strengthening the existing research basis at universities and universities of applied sciences
- strengthening the cooperation between universities of applied sciences and universities, taking into account the staff development aspects of universities of applied sciences



- the sustainable integration of basic research and applied research and the strengthening of the knowledge transfer

If synergy effects are to be expected due to this cooperation in comparison with independent efforts.

6) Ethics and Gender

Ethics: Have ethical components been satisfactorily addressed?

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

7) 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 1b (optional remarks to the applicant)

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.

8)

Section 2 (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.