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FWF

Der Wissenschaftsfonds.

excellent = austria

In accordance with its [Funding Guidelines](#) dated 1 January 2022
(as amended), the FWF has issued the following

Application Guidelines for the Emerging Fields (EF) Programme (valid starting 15 September 2022)



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1 General Information

1.1 Programme objective

The Emerging Fields (EF) programme is aimed at teams of outstanding researchers who are doing pioneering work in basic research and are prepared to depart from established approaches. The aim of the programme is to give researchers the opportunity to pursue particularly innovative, original, and/or high-risk ideas that are often not sufficiently supported by traditional funding instruments. The chosen approaches can vary widely. For example, researchers can directly challenge fundamental elements of traditional models or approaches in their field, combine theories and methods from different disciplines, or harness new technologies to identify new problems or look at old ones from a new perspective. Ultimately, researchers' ideas must have the potential to transform a field of research and/or create a paradigm shift within or between disciplines.

The programme is particularly open to interdisciplinary teams and also to researchers involved in arts-based research who apply aesthetic and artistic methods, as well as to transdisciplinary approaches that involve non-academic participants from outside the scientific community.

A principal investigation team of 3 to 7 outstanding researchers (including the coordinator) is responsible for implementing the EF project. Project staff at one or more Austrian research institutions and, if applicable, national or international cooperation partners and non-academic participants are also involved.

Clinical research projects can be co-financed as long as the co-finance agreement is defined in an appropriate statement. Co-financiers are not permitted to appear as sponsors pursuant to [ICH-GCP guidelines](#). All rights to data and intellectual property remain with the researchers, subject to legal and contractual regulations.

Basic research proposals submitted to the EF Programme are dedicated to the expansion and consolidation of fundamental knowledge or the development and appreciation of the arts. This means that these research proposals are intended to generate new knowledge and are not profit-oriented.

1.2 Submission

The deadline for submission (i.e. approval of the application by the research institution) is **1 February 2023 (2:00 pm CET)**. All proposals must be submitted using the [elane](#) online portal. Project funding is administered through the research institution ([PROFI](#)); for this reason, the submission must be approved in the application portal both by the coordinator of the principal investigation team and by the respective lead research institution. All the forms required for the application must be completed online; any additional documents (see [section 2.2–2.4](#)) must be uploaded before approval by the lead research institution.

Proposals submitted past the deadline will be returned without review, without exception. For more information, please see the [user manual for the electronic application system elane](#). EF proposals are submitted in a one-step procedure and undergo a three-stage review process (see [section 3.2](#)).

1.3 Who is eligible to apply?

All Austrian research institutions are eligible to apply. There is no limit to the number of proposals that can be submitted by a research institution. The intended project must be carried out in Austria or under the auspices of the Austrian lead research institution. In addition to the lead research institution, a maximum of six other Austrian research institutions can be involved as partner research institutions. Each of the partner research institutions must be represented by at least one researcher in the principal investigation team.

EF proposals are submitted by a principal investigation team of at least three to a maximum of seven outstanding researchers who, if granted funding, are employed to an extent of at least 50% at the lead research institution or a partner research institution at the start of the project. One researcher from the team takes on the role of coordinator and is employed at the lead research institution.

If not employed or only employed part-time at the start of the project, the coordinator and all other members of the principal investigation team may be hired on or increased to 100% employment in their current position (see [section 2.6.2](#)).

The number of men in the principal investigation team is limited to a maximum of roughly two thirds of the total number of team members.¹

1.4 Can several proposals be submitted simultaneously?

The following applies to both the proposal phase and the implementation phase of the project:

- Researchers may be involved in a maximum of two EF proposals as members of the principal investigation team (except as coordinator, see below).
- Researchers can only act as coordinator in *one* ongoing EF project or pending proposal.
- The coordinator of an ongoing EF project *or* pending proposal cannot be a member of the principal investigation team of another ongoing EF project *or* pending proposal.
- The person named as coordinator in an EF proposal cannot also be the coordinator or spokesperson of an ongoing *or* pending proposal for any of the following programmes: Special Research Programmes, Research Groups, Young Independent Research Groups, #ConnectingMinds, Doctoral Programmes, doc.funds, doc.funds.connect

¹ The limits are set as follows: max. 5 men out of 7 team members, or 4 out of 6, 3 out of 5, 2 out of 4, and 2 out of 3. Grounds for any deviations from these ratios must be provided in a written statement (in English). In convincingly justified exceptional cases, project teams exceeding these ratios may be approved after consultation with the international jury.

- The reverse also applies: The person named as coordinator in an ongoing *or* pending proposal for any of the above-mentioned programmes is not eligible to apply for the EF programme as a coordinator.
- The same applies to the entire Board of Directors (BOD) in the Clusters of Excellence (COE) programme: BOD members, including the Director of Research, of an ongoing COE *or* pending proposal are not eligible to apply for the EF programme as coordinator.

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

1.5 What requirements must be met when submitting a proposal?

1.5.1 General requirements

Each member of the principal investigation team must fulfil the application requirements listed below.

Members of the principal investigation team are eligible to apply if their publication record over the last five years has been internationally visible and their career stage is commensurate with the expected career path in their field. The following criteria are decisive in assessing their publication record – documented in the *Publication list* (see [section 2.4.1](#)) – and in initiating the review process:

- **Quality assurance:** Most relevant in assessing the applicant's publication record are those publications that have been subject to 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). The journals must usually be listed in the Web of Science, Scopus, or the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ). For journals not listed in those databases, or for monographs, edited volumes, contributions to edited volumes, or other publication types, the team member must provide a link to the publisher's website which contains a description of the applicable quality assurance procedure. Should no such description be available, it is the team member's responsibility to provide evidence that the publication has been subject to a quality assurance procedure in accordance with the standards of the field.
- **International visibility:** Most of the team member's publications must have a wider than national reach. In the natural sciences, life sciences, and social sciences, most of the publications listed must be in English.
- **Number/scope and quality** of the publications must be commensurate with the expected career path and the respective discipline. At least two publications must be quality-assured and internationally visible publications with a substantial and independent contribution on the part of the team member. In the life sciences, at least one publication with first, last, or corresponding authorship is required.

Should an applicant fail to meet one or more of the above criteria, an explanation is to be included with the application. In cases of doubt, the respective bodies of the FWF decide whether the research qualifications are adequate.

1.5.2 Requirements for arts-based research

For proposals dealing with arts-based research, members of the principal investigation team who are active in the field of arts-based research must be very well qualified according to international standards and must have a connection to the development of the arts. This qualification is to be documented based on artistic, scholarly, and/or arts-based achievements of the last five years commensurate with the researcher's career path, demonstrating the team member's international visibility.

1.5.3 Consideration of career breaks

The FWF will take justified career breaks (e.g., parental leave², caregiving obligations, long-term illness, or scientific work in the non-academic sector) into consideration when assessing the applicant's eligibility to apply as based on publication record. Relevant information can be included in the applicant's academic CV, so that it is also available to reviewers.

1.5.4 Inclusion of the disabled and chronically ill

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 applicant's academic CV, so that it is also available to reviewers.

1.6 What types of funding can be requested?

Project-specific costs are eligible for funding. These include personnel and non-personnel costs that are necessary for carrying out the project (min. €3 million and max. €6 million for five years incl. 10% general project costs) and that are not included in the infrastructure provided by the research institution. The FWF does not finance the infrastructure or basic equipment of research institutions.

Please see [section 2.6.2](#) for details on requesting funding for the principal investigation team (= own position).

Please note that exaggerated cost projections may be grounds for rejection, even if a proposal is otherwise excellent.

Funding is administered only through the lead and partner research institutions. Any third parties, such as the organisations of non-academic participants or freelance artists, must charge for the services they provide through service contracts or independent contractor agreements concluded with the lead or partner research institutions.

An interim evaluation will be conducted after three years to decide on the continuation of the project, and the research work can then, if necessary, be adapted to any changes in the research environment.

² Child-raising periods are taken into account (up to three years per child; men must provide proof of having actually cared for the child/children).

2 Application content and form

A complete application must include the elements listed in [section 2.1](#) through [section 2.4](#).

2.1 Academic abstract

The academic abstract must be written in English, may not exceed 3,000 characters (including spaces, no formulas or special characters), and is used to inform potential reviewers about the project. The abstract must use the English headings provided below and be entered into the form provided in [elane](#) for this purpose.

- Wider research context / theoretical framework
- Pioneering aspects of the research and transformative potential
- Hypotheses / research questions / objectives
- Approach / Methods
- Principal investigation team

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

2.2 Synopsis

The three-page synopsis describes the transformative and innovative idea behind the research proposal. The first review stage is based solely on this synopsis; here, an international, multidisciplinary jury examines whether the proposal has the potential to fulfil the high level of innovation described as the project's objective. There is no prescribed structure for the synopsis. Please be sure to take the evaluation criteria ([Appendix 2](#)) into account when writing the synopsis. A description of the expertise within the team is particularly important. Applications that do not fulfil these criteria or fulfil them only in part will already be rejected in this first review stage. Proposals that meet the criteria will be subjected to a written evaluation process by international peer reviewers in the second review stage (see [section 3](#) and [Appendix 3](#)).

The synopsis must be uploaded as a separate file entitled *Synopsis.pdf* and will be forwarded to the jury *without* any other application documents (abstract, project description including annexes, and any attachments).

2.3 Project description and annexes

2.3.1 Project description

A project description may not exceed 30 pages (consecutively numbered), incl. the table of contents, a list of abbreviations, headings, figures, captions, tables, footnotes, etc.

There is no prescribed structure for the project description. International reviewers will evaluate the EF proposal in writing using the questions provided for the reviewers (see [Appendix 3](#)).

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

- Annex 1: List of works cited ([section 2.3.2](#))
- Annex 2: Financial aspects ([section 2.3.3](#))
- Annex 3: CVs and description of previous research achievements ([section 2.3.4](#))
- Annex 4 (optional): Cooperation letter ([section 2.3.5](#))

The entire project description, including these annexes, must be uploaded as *one* file entitled *Proposal.pdf*. In the second review stage, the FWF sends this document together with the abstract and the synopsis to international reviewers (see [section 3.2](#)).

2.3.2 Annex 1: List of references

A *list of references* cited in the proposal (max. 5 pages) must be attached to the project description.

2.3.3 Annex 2: Financial aspects

Details on eligible costs are provided in [section 2.6](#). The template for the description of projected costs can be found in [Appendix 1](#).

- Details of the research facilities:
 - Existing staff (not funded by the FWF) (usually the principal investigation team and research facility staff)
 - Available infrastructure
- Information on the funding requested
 - Concise justifications 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 costs applied for are justified (equipment, materials, travel, and other costs). If funding for equipment is requested, applicants must explain why this does not constitute part of the basic equipment of the given research environment – see [section 2.6.3](#).

2.3.4 Annex 3: CVs and description of previous research achievements

The academic CVs and research achievements of the members of the principal investigation team should be described on no more than three pages per person.

2.3.4.1 Guidelines for (arts-based) academic CVs

- Name and contact details, address of the research institution, and relevant websites. Applicants are also required to provide a publicly available link to a list of all publications;

the use of [ORCID](#) (Open Researcher and Contributor ID) is expressly recommended for this purpose.

- Academic career details and list of previous positions (if applicable, brief reasons for career interruptions to enable reviewers to assess academic age)
- If applicable, brief description of scientific or arts-based research activity in the non-academic sector
- Main areas of research and brief presentation of the most important research results achieved to date

2.3.4.2 Requirements for presentation of previous research achievements

- (Arts-based) 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, arts-based research work, etc.); where available, either a [DOI address](#) or another [persistent identifier](#) must be indicated for each publication. In accordance with the [San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment \(DORA\)](#), journal-based metrics like the journal impact factor should not be included.
- Other research achievements: List of no more than ten of the most important (arts-based) academic research achievements outside of academic publications, for example awards, conference contributions, keynote lectures, significant research projects, research data, software, codes, exhibitions, knowledge transfer, science communication, licences, patents, etc.

2.3.5 Annex 4 (optional): Collaboration letters

A further annex may contain collaboration letters from international cooperation partners (max. 1 page per letter).

2.4 Attachments

2.4.1 Publication list

Please upload a list of all the principal investigation team members' academic publications from the last five years³ (categorised into "quality-assured publications" and "other publications") in *one* PDF document entitled *Publication_list.pdf*. This list, which is not forwarded to the reviewers, is used by the FWF to check the eligibility of the principal investigation team and facilitates the FWF's search for reviewers without conflicts of interest.

³ Publication lists must include: all authors, complete titles, journal, year, and page numbers. Either a [DOI address](#) or another [persistent identifier](#) should be indicated for each publication; for publications with more than 20 authors, an "et al." reference can be used.

2.4.2 Total costs

Details on eligible costs are provided in section 2.6. If more than one research institution is involved in the project, the requested funding must be broken down by lead and partner research institutions (see excel spreadsheet [total-costs.xlsx](#)). The total amount must be the same as named in the elane “Cost breakdown” form and the percentage distribution of the funding must match the percentages given in the elane “Programme-specific data” forms.

2.5 Formal requirements

2.5.1 Language

To allow applications to be reviewed by international (arts-based) research experts, all proposals must be submitted in English.

2.5.2 Format

The synopsis may not exceed 3 pages and the project description may not exceed 30 pages. The project description must contain a table of contents with page references. Desired components such as a list of abbreviations, figures, captions, tables, footnotes, etc. are to be included in the 30-page limit.

The body text in the synopsis and the project description as well as all other components (excluding vendor quotes and collaboration letters) must be written, without exception, in 11 pt. font with 1.5 line (15-20 pt.) spacing and at least 2 cm margins. A standard, easily legible font must be used for the body text.

If a smaller font, line spacing, or margins are used, the application must be revised and, if necessary, shortened to rectify formal errors.

Citations in the text and the list of works cited (“List of 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). The choice of citation conventions or style guide is left to the applicant, but must be implemented consistently throughout the entire proposal. Where available, a [DOI address](#) (DOI = Digital Object Identifier) or another [Persistent Identifier](#) should be provided for the literature cited.

2.6 Eligible project-specific costs

When requesting funding, the regulations of the respective research institution and the FWF guidelines (General Terms and Conditions of Grant Agreements [*Allgemeinen Vertragsbedingungen*] as amended, FWF personnel costs) apply.

The requested funds must be summarised in the elane *Cost breakdown* form. Funds may only be requested for the cost categories mentioned below.

2.6.1 Personnel costs

Funding may only be requested for staff needed in addition to existing personnel resources for the realisation of the project and only to the extent required for the project.

Full- or part-time employment contracts (*Dienstverträge*, DV) and contracts for marginal employment (*geringfügige Beschäftigung*, GB) are available. [FWF's standard personnel costs](#) apply.

The following provisions apply:

- Employment contracts for doctoral students may not exceed 75% employment (up to 30 hours per week).
- One administrative support position can be included per EF. Please apply for BMA-level⁴ funding from the FWF's standard personnel costs for these positions.
- A part-time (50%) employment contract of 20 hours/week for student employees may be requested for researchers who have not yet completed a graduate degree programme in the relevant subject area.
- Researchers from international research institutions who are working on the project for a limited period of time are entitled to the postdoc-level salary of the FWF's standard personnel costs. Researchers must be on leave from their home institution abroad for the duration of their stay at the Austrian research institution. Any overpayments must be paid from the 10% general project costs.

When requesting funding for [PROFI \(project funding via research institutions\)](#)-eligible standard personnel costs, a fixed percentual increase must be included for the subsequent year to compensate for wage raises (see [Standard personnel costs and salaries for PROFI projects 2022](#)).

2.6.2 Grant-salaried principal investigators

The FWF defines "own position" to mean that the researcher's salary is financed by the funds of the research project. For EF projects, this includes the members of the principal investigation team.

Members of the principal investigation team can apply for funding to finance or partially finance their own positions if they do not hold fully funded positions during the project period. A senior postdoc salary may be requested for the own position (pro-rated accordingly in the case of partial funding). At the start of the project, each member of the principal investigation team must be employed to an extent of at least 50% at the lead or partner research institution (if applicable, financed by the FWF as an own position).

⁵ *Biomedical analyst (BMA)* acts as a reference value in this context, and is not meant as a specific job profile.

2.6.3 Equipment costs

Funding for equipment may only be requested if it is specifically required for the project and if it is not part of the existing infrastructure of the participating research institutions.

“Infrastructure” is defined to include all equipment (and components thereof) that a modern research institution needs to have to conduct basic research in the relevant discipline at an internationally competitive level. This means that equipment such as computers (laptops, etc.) is considered to be part of the standard infrastructure and no funding will be approved for these items.

“Equipment” eligible for funding includes:

- Scientific instruments
- System components
- Self-constructed devices (generally assembled from smaller pieces of equipment and materials)
- Other durable goods
- Intangible assets such as concessions, industrial property rights, and licenses derived from such rights

If funding is requested for a piece of equipment which is required specifically for the project, the lead research institution must submit the *Affirmation of the lead research institution* form to confirm that they have verified that no comparable equipment that could be used or shared is available within a reasonable distance, and that third-party (co-)financing options have been explored. The research institution that is responsible for the equipment must also ensure that any possible costs arising from the use, maintenance, and repairs of the equipment are covered.

The coordinator or members of the principal investigation team are to instruct the respective research institution to order the equipment and effect payment accordingly. The procurement guidelines of the research institution and the provisions of the Federal Procurement Act 2018 (*Bundesvergabegesetz 2018, BVergG 2018*) apply.

2.6.4 Material costs

“Materials” is defined as consumables and small items of equipment (cost per item less than €1,500.00 incl. VAT) specifically needed for the project. The calculation of requested funds for project-specific material costs should be justified based on the project’s schedule, work plans, and experimental schedule. Experience from previous projects should be considered in making the calculations.

2.6.5 Travel expenses

Funding may be requested for project-specific travel and accommodation, field work, expeditions, etc. A general but plausible overview of these costs must be submitted for this purpose. The overview must also document how the travel is relevant to the project.

When planning travel in connection with a project, researchers should always carefully consider whether travel is absolutely necessary or whether the relevant information could be exchanged virtually.

If a project requires travel, transportation by train is preferred to travel by air as a contribution to environmental sustainability. Funding can be requested for any resulting extra costs such as an additional overnight stay. When travelling by air, it is strongly recommended to make a carbon offset contribution,⁵ 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 international research institutions can only be granted in exceptional cases. Grounds for the exception must be provided in detail.

Travel and accommodation costs are generally calculated according to the research institution's individual travel expenses policies.

2.6.6 Other costs

Funding may be requested for the following additional costs:

- Independent contractor agreements (costs for work of clearly defined scope and content carried out by individuals, provided that they are cost-efficient and justified in the context of the research project)
- 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:
 - Monitoring and other support measures for studies
 - Patient insurance
 - Any laboratory animals needed for the project
 - Project-specific work carried out outside the researcher's research institution (e.g., for analyses carried out elsewhere, interviews, sample collection, etc.)
 - Disposal of project-specific hazardous waste
 - Equal opportunity measures - the principal investigation team can apply for a maximum of €10,000 per year for this as part of the current project
- Remuneration for services rendered for non-academic participants involved in transdisciplinary research, e.g. fees, reimbursement for person-days (the services rendered must be disclosed and specified concisely and in detail)

⁵ The amount of a carbon offset contribution for flights can be calculated using, for example, the [carbon calculator](#) on the [Climate Austria](#) website.

- Art-related events required specifically for the project (these costs are only eligible to the extent that they are necessary for the implementation of the project in the reviewers' opinion)
- [Co-operations with researchers in developing countries](#)

The procurement guidelines of the research institution and the provisions of the Federal Procurement Act 2018 apply.

2.6.7 General project costs

The approved grant sum includes 10% general project costs that are generally permitted for funding but cannot be requested individually using the abovementioned cost categories. They are subject to the [FWF's Funding Guidelines](#) and the costs must be eligible for funding.

Overhead costs for the research institution are not included in general costs.

2.7 Additional funds for publications upon approval

Up to three years after the completion of the project, applicants can apply for additional funding for publications resulting from FWF-funded projects as part of the [Peer-reviewed Publications](#) programme. For this reason, this type of publication costs cannot be included when calculating the requested funding in the application.

2.8 Revising a rejected application (resubmission)

A resubmission is defined as the revision of a rejected application which addresses the same or similar research questions, regardless of the programme category. If an application is submitted on the same or a very similar research question and if, in the view of the principal investigation team, this application is not a resubmission but a completely new project, this must be explained in a separate accompanying letter to the FWF Office. 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 respective bodies of the FWF shall decide.

This means that resubmissions must show changes. In the case of resubmissions of applications that have been rejected for the reasons C3, C4, and C5, these changes need to be substantial (based on the comments in the reviews). If no such changes have been made, the FWF's decision-making bodies will return the application to the applicant without review.

If the application is a resubmission of a previously rejected application, 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.

An accompanying letter to the FWF must include an overview of all changes made in the resubmitted application; this overview will not be forwarded to the reviewers.

Response(s) to reviews: The principal investigation team can decide whether the response(s) should be forwarded only to the previous reviewer concerned or to all reviewers. These response(s) should address the suggestions and criticism expressed in each review of the previous application and describe the corresponding changes made. No response is required to reviews written by individuals 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 to be excluded* (see [section 3](#)) for the resubmission.

If responses are intended for all the reviewers, the principal investigation team must submit a document containing this overall response. If individual responses are submitted intended only for the reviewers who were previously involved, the principal investigation team should include a short response to each review in a separate document.

While no deadlines for the resubmission of a rejected application apply, the respective application requirements do need to be taken into account (e.g. with regard to publication record, see [section 1.5.1](#)). Resubmissions must be submitted using [elane](#) as a separate, new application and not as a supplementary application to the previously rejected proposal.

2.9 File formats, file names, and elane forms

2.9.1 Mandatory parts of the application

a) Files:

- *Synopsis.pdf* (= short project description in relation to the programme objective)
- *Proposal.pdf* (= project description incl. annexes 1-3 and if applicable 4, with PDF bookmarks for at least the major sections)
- *Publication_List.pdf* (= publication list of all members of the principal investigation team for the last five years, categorised into "quality-assured publications" and "other publications")
- [Total-costs.xlsx](#) (if more than one research institution is involved in the proposal)

b) Forms:

- *Research institution assignment*
- *Contact form*
- *Application form* (to be completed by the coordinator)
- *Programme-specific data* (to be completed by the coordinator and all members of the principal investigation team; if multiple research institutions are involved, the percentual distribution of funding per research institution must be entered here)
- *Cost breakdown*
- *Co-authors*
- Academic abstract in English
- *Other cooperation*: National and international cooperation arrangements (if applicable)

2.9.2 Optional file uploads

- *Cover_Letter.pdf* (= accompanying letter)
- *Negative_List.pdf* (= list of reviewers to be excluded)
- *Overview_Revision.pdf* (= in the case of resubmission, overview of all changes made in the resubmitted application, see [section 2.8](#))
- *Revision.pdf* (= in the case of resubmission, an overall response to all reviewers or, if preferred, a short response to *each individual* reviewer, each saved in *separate* files: *Revision_A.pdf*, *Revision_B.pdf* etc., see [section 2.8](#))

3 Processing and decision-making

3.1 Submission and requests for changes

All of the documents specified above must be uploaded in full to [elane](#).

All applications that have been approved by the lead research institution on or before the deadline of **1 February 2023, 2:00 pm CET** will be checked for completeness and any formal errors by the FWF Office.

After the submission deadline, the principal investigation team can no longer make changes to the application. If the FWF Office, however, identifies issues with the application that it considers to be rectifiable, it will notify the lead research institution and the coordinator, giving them the opportunity to correct the problems within a period of 10 working days. Failure to make the **requested changes** within this period will cause FWF decision-making bodies to return these applications without review. The requested changes are to be submitted as a supplementary application via [elane](#) and approved by the lead research institution.

Once the review process has been initiated, no further changes can be made to the application.

3.2 Decision-making process

The decision-making process consists of the submission phase and three review stages. Submissions must include a project description, a three-page synopsis, all the above-mentioned forms, and any other attachments needed.

Stage 1: The first review stage is based solely on the synopsis. At this stage, an international, multidisciplinary jury examines whether the proposal has the potential to fulfil the high level of innovation described as the project's objective. Their evaluation is based on the evaluation criteria described in [Appendix 2](#). Applications that do not fulfil these criteria or fulfil them only in part will already be rejected in this first review stage.

Stage 2: The proposals that appear suitable to fulfil the objectives of the programme will be advanced to stage 2. In this stage, each of the complete proposals (synopsis and project description) will be evaluated in detail by three international reviewers. At least three reviews are required before a proposal can advance to stage 3. In exceptional cases, a rejection is permitted on the basis of only two reviews if a third review would not be able to compensate for the overall negative assessment given by the first two reviewers. Based on this evaluation, the FWF Board decides which applicants will be invited to a hearing.

Stage 3: In the third stage, based on the written reviews, the FWF Board draws up a shortlist of teams to be invited to a hearing with the multidisciplinary jury. Based on the jury's suggestions made after considering the results of the hearings, the FWF Board will decide on the approval of Emerging Fields proposals in late 2023/early 2024. Projects must commence within 3–6 months of approval.

If approved for funding, the principal investigation team must enclose a set of statutes with the funding agreement specifying the coordinator's responsibilities and competences and setting out the rules of cooperation among the members of the principal investigation team.

3.3 Reasons for rejection

In stage 1 of the review process, three final evaluation criteria are assigned by two jury members: *fully recommended*, *recommended with reservations*, *not recommended* (see [Appendix 2](#)). Proposals that are rated with *not recommended* will be rejected. If the level of competition is particularly high, the FWF reserves the right to reject applications rated as *recommended with reservations* in the first review stage, as this indicates that they are only conditionally suitable for the programme.

Proposals rejected in the second and third review stages are assigned to one of five categories (C1-C5) and the grounds for rejection are sent to the coordinators together with the reviews and, if applicable, the jury's comments. A detailed description of the categories can be found in the [General Principles of the FWF Decision-making Procedure](#).

Proposals that fall into rejection category C5 will be barred for this programme's next call and may not be resubmitted during this time. Proposals that have been submitted three times and rejected for reasons C3 or C4 (i.e. the original proposal and corresponding resubmission) are also barred for this programme's next call. Rejections for reasons C1 or C2 do not count towards this total. In general, only topics are banned, not applicants.

3.4 Excluding reviewers

A list of a maximum of three potential reviewers who should not be consulted to review the proposal due to a possible conflict of interest can be uploaded as an additional document. The coordinator must briefly explain why specific reviewers should be excluded. If the reasons for exclusion are professionally and academically sound, the FWF will generally fulfil the coordinator's request and exclude those reviewers from the review process. A detailed description of the FWF's policy on conflicts of interest can be found in the [General Principles of the FWF Decision-Making Procedure](#).

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

3.5 Data protection

Regarding personal data, pursuant to Art. 6 (1) item a of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), the applicant or applying research institution consents to the processing of personal data and other data (e.g., title of the project submitted, research institution, abstract) necessary for the administration of the funding by the FWF – while safeguarding business and trade secrets – for the purposes of research policy (e.g., presentation of the development of basic research in Austria, economic analyses, funding impact reports, etc.) and for public relations work (publication of excerpts in the FWF annual report, on the FWF website, press releases, media collaborations, etc.) and to the passing on of this data to third parties (e.g., for use in research policy studies). This consent can be revoked at any time in full or in part in writing to the FWF with effect for future data processing. Further information on the data privacy rights of the applicant or applying research institution as well as the contact details of the FWF's data protection officers can be found [here](#).

4 Compliance with legal requirements and standards of research integrity

The research institution must comply with all legal requirements and safety provisions (e.g., the Federal Disability Equality Act [*Bundes-Behindertengleichstellungsgesetz*, BGStG]) that apply to the project and obtain all the necessary permits (e.g., from the Ethics Committee, the Animal Testing Commission, the Austrian Federal Monuments Office, or the relevant foreign authorities).

The [OeAWI Guidelines for Good Scientific Practice](#) of the Austrian Agency for Research Integrity (OeAWI) apply.

Where a breach of these standards is suspected, the ombud of the respective research institution is responsible for investigating the issue. Research institutions are required to report any cases of suspected serious violations of the standards to the OeAWI. The FWF reserves the right to suspend, in part or in whole, any procedures related to proposals or ongoing projects until any such investigation has been concluded. For more detailed information, see the [FWF procedure in cases of suspected violation of the standards of good research practice](#).

5 Publication of project data and results

Please note that if a grant is awarded, a summary in German and English will be published on the FWF website for public relations purposes, as well as the grant amount and later, summaries of the final project report. Summaries must be submitted to the FWF when the grant agreement is returned. The principal investigation team must ensure that these

abstracts are worded in such a way that legitimate interests of secrecy for reasons of national defence and patent law are safeguarded and business 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 proposals. This plan should also be sent to the FWF when returning the grant agreement. The template for the DMP can be viewed and downloaded [here](#).

The guidelines specified in the funding agreement on acknowledging the FWF as the funding institution and the FWF's [Open Access Policy](#) apply for any publication of project results (e.g., academic publications, research data, conference papers, and media reports).

6 Appendices

6.1 Appendix 1: Template: Information on the research institution and description of project finances

The information on the research institution and the description of project finances must be presented **in English** using the structure below and attached to the project description as [Annex 2](#). Costs must be broken down and adequately justified for each point below. The list and justification of the requested funds must correspond to the costs indicated in the elane *Cost breakdown* form.

a) Details on team members' research institutions

- Existing personnel (not financed by the FWF, usually the principal investigators and research personnel at the research institutions)
- Existing infrastructure

(b) Information on the funding requested:

- Explain briefly why the personnel requested is needed for the project (type(s) of requested position(s), job descriptions, extent of employment, and duration of involvement in the project);
- Explain briefly why the non-personnel costs applied for are justified (equipment, materials, travel, and other costs). If funding for equipment is requested, applicants must explain why this does not constitute part of the basic equipment of the existing research environment—see also [section 2.6.3](#)

List of and justification for

Personnel costs:

Equipment costs:

Material costs:

Travel expenses:

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

6.2 Appendix 2: First assessment stage – Notes and questions for the international jury

A. General information

The Emerging Fields (EF) programme is aimed at teams of outstanding researchers who are doing pioneering work in basic research and are prepared to depart from established approaches. The aim of the programme is to give researchers the opportunity to pursue particularly innovative, original, and/or high-risk ideas that are often not sufficiently supported by traditional funding instruments. The chosen approaches can vary widely. For example, researchers can directly challenge fundamental elements of traditional models or approaches in their field, combine theories and methods from different disciplines, or harness new technologies to identify new problems or look at old ones from a new perspective. Ultimately, researchers' ideas must have the potential to transform a field of research and/or create a paradigm shift within or between disciplines.

The programme is particularly open to interdisciplinary teams and also to researchers involved in arts-based research who apply aesthetic and artistic methods, as well as to transdisciplinary approaches that involve non-academic participants from outside the scientific community.

Proposals are evaluated in a three-stage review process. In stage 1, the principal investigation teams submit a project description together with a three-page synopsis outlining the objectives of the project, its innovative potential, and the qualifications of the principal investigation team. This synopsis is addressed to the multidisciplinary jury of international experts. In the first step, the jury assesses whether the proposal is suitable for the Emerging Fields Programme, especially with regard to its high level of innovative potential. The proposals that appear suitable to fulfil the objectives of the programme will be advanced to stage 2. In this stage, each of the complete proposals (synopsis and project description) will be evaluated in detail by three international reviewers. Based on these initial reviews, the FWF Board draws up a shortlist of proposals, and the teams are invited to a hearing with the multidisciplinary jury. Following these hearings, the jury makes a funding recommendation to the FWF Board in stage 3, based on a comparative analysis of the written reviews and the jury's assessments from the hearings.

B. Questions for the jury

To assess the project's suitability to advance to stage 2, please evaluate the three-page synopsis by answering the following questions. In each case, please give detailed reasons for your answers. Should the project be rejected, the reasons you have given will be forwarded in their entirety to the applicants.

1. The project

- To what extent does the research project address a highly innovative and original idea?
- How strong is the project's potential to transform the research field(s) concerned and/or lead to a genuine paradigm shift, within a discipline or across disciplines?
- Which features of the project make it "high-risk, high gain"? Do the applicants describe what the risks are and what knowledge would be generated even if the project failed?
- Is the chosen research design likely to achieve the project's goals?
- If the project has a transdisciplinary, interdisciplinary and/or arts-based component, has this component been integrated suitably into the research design?

2. The research team

- Do the team members have the necessary, complementary expertise to reach the project's goals?

3. Overall assessment and final recommendation

Please answer the following questions, drawing on your comments in sections 1 and 2:

- In your view, is the proposed research likely to fulfil the aims of the Emerging Fields Programme?
- Do you recommend it for stage 2 of the review process? Please choose one of the following three options: A, B, or C.

A - Fully recommended; i.e., the project meets the programme objectives and I fully recommend it for stage 2 of the review process.

B - Recommended with reservation; i.e., I recommend the project for stage 2 of the review process, but I have some concerns about one or several aspects of the synopsis and/or the research team.

C - Not recommended; i.e., I have major concerns about the proposal's potential to fulfil the objectives of the Emerging Fields Programme.

6.3 Appendix 3: Second review stage – Notes and questions for the international reviewers

A. General information

The Emerging Fields (EF) programme is aimed at teams of outstanding researchers who are doing pioneering work in basic research and are prepared to depart from established approaches. The aim of the programme is to give researchers the opportunity to pursue particularly innovative, original, and/or high-risk ideas that are often not sufficiently supported by traditional funding instruments. The chosen approaches can vary widely. For example, researchers can directly challenge fundamental elements of traditional models or approaches in their field, combine theories and methods from different disciplines, or harness new technologies to identify new problems or look at old ones from a new perspective. Ultimately, researchers' ideas must have the potential to transform a field of research and/or create a paradigm shift within or between disciplines.

The programme is particularly open to interdisciplinary teams and also to researchers involved in arts-based research who apply aesthetic and artistic methods, as well as to transdisciplinary approaches that involve non-academic participants from outside the scientific community.

Proposals are evaluated in a three-stage review process. In stage 1, the principal investigation teams submit a project description together with a three-page synopsis outlining the objectives of the project, its innovative potential, and the qualifications of the principal investigation team. This synopsis is addressed to the multidisciplinary jury of international experts. In the first step, the jury assesses whether the proposal is suitable for the Emerging Fields Programme, especially with regard to its high level of innovative potential. The proposals that appear suitable to fulfil the objectives of the programme will be advanced to stage 2. In this stage, each of the complete proposals (synopsis and project description) will be evaluated in detail by three international reviewers. Based on these initial reviews, the FWF Board draws up a shortlist of proposals, and the teams are invited to a hearing with the multidisciplinary jury. Following these hearings, the jury makes a funding recommendation to the FWF Board in stage 3, based on a comparative analysis of the written reviews and the jury's assessments from the hearings.

The FWF actively supports equal opportunities and fair treatment in all of its programmes. The review of a proposal must not put researchers at a disadvantage for non-research-related reasons such as age, gender, etc. For example, instead of considering the applicant's actual age, the review process should focus on how the length of the individual's research career corresponds to their research achievements to date. 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, caregiving responsibilities, scientific work in a non-academic sector, etc.), which may have resulted in gaps in a researcher's publication record, unorthodox career paths, or limited international research experience.

When reviewing a proposal, only the ten most important scientific publications and other research achievements of the members of the principal investigation team should be taken into account. In accordance with the [San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment \(DORA\)](#), journal-based metrics like the journal impact factor should not be included.

B. Questions for reviewers – Stage 2

Please review the proposal, addressing the specific questions listed in the three sections below. In each case, we will ask you for both written comments as well as a rating using the scale presented at the end of each section. The five-point scale ranges from “excellent” (1) to “poor” (5). Please make sure that your written comments correspond to the rating given. Your identity will not be revealed, but your review will be forwarded to the applicants (except for any remarks made in the section headed 'Confidential remarks to the FWF').

Section 1:

1) The project

Please assess the extent to which the underlying research idea has the potential to fundamentally challenge a field of research or an established notion of research, such that a transformation or paradigm shift is likely to emerge within a discipline or across disciplines.

Specifically, please address the following:

Nature and quality of research

- a) The clarity and relevance of the research question(s).
- b) The extent to which the research project addresses a particularly original idea.
- c) The project's potential to shape a research field.
- d) The appropriateness of the chosen research design towards achieving the project's goals. Have the chosen methods been described clearly in the proposal?
- e) If the project has transdisciplinary, interdisciplinary and/or arts-based components, have these been integrated suitably into the research design?

Risk and risk management

- f) To what extent is the project “high-risk, high gain”?
- g) Do the applicants spell out what the risks are and what knowledge would be generated even if the project failed?
- h) Have the applicants proposed an appropriate plan for managing the risks involved?

Ethics and Gender

- i) Have all ethical considerations relevant to the proposed research been properly addressed?
- j) Independently of the gender balance among the research team (see 2 below), the research questions being asked may require recognition of important differences

based on gender or sex. If so, does the proposed research adequately address those relevant differences?

2) The researchers involved

Please evaluate the following:

- a) How qualified are the researchers involved to carry out the proposed research? (In assessing each researcher's career path and publication record, please account for unorthodox career paths and circumstances that may have slowed a researcher's progress, such as parental leave, long-term or chronic illness, disability, or caregiving responsibilities)
- b) Is the composition of the research team appropriate to achieve the project's goals?
- c) Have the international cooperation partners been well chosen and are they likely to make an important contribution?
- d) How effective are the planned measures for research communication within the team, and between the team and the international cooperation partners?
- e) Is the gender balance of researchers in the team appropriate, or have they missed opportunities to improve that balance?

3) Governance and finance

- a) Have the applicants submitted a convincing plan describing the governance structure and leadership roles within the EF?
- b) Is the proposed budget well justified and have the applicants provided a clear financial management plan?

4) 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.

Please also submit a final ranking according to the following scale.

<input type="checkbox"/>		<i>Excellent⁶</i>	Funding is highly recommended
<input type="checkbox"/>		<i>Very Good⁷</i>	Funding is recommended
<input type="checkbox"/>		<i>Good⁸</i>	Resubmission is recommended after revisions
<input type="checkbox"/>		<i>Average⁹</i>	Before resubmission, major revisions are required
<input type="checkbox"/>		<i>Poor¹⁰</i>	Rejection is recommended

Section 2: Confidential remarks to the FWF

Please use this space to make any comments that you do not wish to be forwarded to the applicants. Feel free to also give us feedback about the evaluation process and your interactions with us.

⁶ **Excellent = funding is highly recommended**

The proposed research project is among the best 5% in the field worldwide. It has the potential to break new ground and make a major contribution to knowledge. The applicant and the researchers involved possess exceptional qualifications by international standards.

⁷ **Very Good = funding is recommended**

The proposed research project is among the best 15% in the field worldwide. It is at the forefront internationally, but minor improvements could be made. The applicant and the researchers involved possess very good qualifications by international standards.

⁸ **Good = resubmission is recommended after revisions**

The proposed research project is internationally competitive but has some weaknesses, and/or the applicant and the researchers involved possess good qualifications by international standards.

⁹ **Average = major revisions required before resubmission**

The proposed research project will provide some new insights but has significant weaknesses and/or the applicant and the researchers involved possess sufficient qualifications by international standards.

¹⁰ **Poor = rejection is recommended**

The proposed research project is weak, and/or the applicant and the researchers involved are insufficiently qualified by international standards.
Rejection is recommended.

6.4 Appendix 4: Definitions

<i>Annex</i>	Annexes are part of the document <i>Proposal.pdf</i> , which consists of the project description and the appendices (e.g. academic CVs).
<i>Attachment</i>	Attachments are any documents that need to be uploaded separately during the application process (e.g. the publication list).
<i>Appendix</i>	Appendices are part of the application guidelines (e.g. "Template: Information on the research institution and description of project finances" or these definitions).
<i>Coordinator</i>	This researcher is responsible for managing the project and is named in the funding agreement to represent the lead research institution during implementation of the project.
<i>Lead research institution</i>	The Austrian research institution that has submitted the proposal and where the coordinator is employed. The lead research institution is responsible for concluding consortium agreements with the partner research institutions.
<i>National and international cooperation partners</i>	National and international (research) cooperation partners are all those individuals who are named in the project description as being essential to the implementation of the project and whose required involvement appears plausible, but who do not draw on project funds.
<i>Non-academic participants</i>	In the context of transdisciplinary research, this refers to representatives of organisations outside the higher education and research sector who are involved in the research project (but are usually not private individuals). These are organisations / associations / institutions that are affected by or have an influence on a complex social problem. Lead research institutions are responsible for accounting for funds by providing bills for services, independent contractor agreements, and other invoices. Funds cannot be transferred directly to non-academic participants, so there is no direct settlement between non-academic participants and the FWF.
<i>Partner research institution</i>	Austrian research institution that is involved in the application and where the participating researchers are employed There must be at least one researcher per partner research institution in the principal investigation team.
<i>Principal investigation team</i>	The principal investigation team consists of 3-7 scientists/scholars involved in the FWF project, incl. the coordinator. The principal investigation team is responsible for the EF's entire research programme. If the proposal is

	approved for funding, the team is required to provide a set of statutes when the funding agreement is concluded.
<i>Project description</i>	<p>A project description may not exceed 30 pages (consecutively numbered), incl. the table of contents, a list of abbreviations, headings, figures, captions, tables, footnotes, etc.</p> <p>There is no prescribed structure for the project description. International reviewers will evaluate the EF application in writing using the questions provided for the reviewers (see Appendix 3).</p>
<i>Project staff</i>	Project staff are employed at the lead research institution or at a partner research institution. They are funded either by the FWF or by the research institution.
<i>Statutes</i>	If approved for funding, the principal investigation team must enclose a set of statutes with the funding agreement specifying the coordinator's responsibilities and competences and setting out the rules of cooperation among the members of the principal investigation team.
<i>Synopsis</i>	The three-page synopsis describes the transformative and innovative idea behind the research proposal. The first review stage is based solely on this synopsis; here, an international, multidisciplinary jury examines whether the proposal has the potential to fulfil the high level of innovation described as the project's objective.