

# Transferring projects to/from abroad ("Money follows Researcher")

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## 1 Introduction

If a principal investigator (PI) relocates abroad, the FWF may, under certain conditions, facilitate a continuation of the project at the new location. This applies both to ongoing projects and projects that have been approved but not yet started. Project transfers are possible for FWF Principal Investigator Projects both in ad personam mode (program code “P”) and in PROFI mode (program code “PAT”) as well as for International Projects (for ad personam with the program code “I,” for PROFI with the program code “PIN”). The **principle of reciprocity** applies: This means that projects can only be transferred to those countries with research funding organizations that also permit the transfer of projects to Austria. This option is based on an [agreement](#) drawn up by Science Europe, the umbrella organization of European research funding and sponsoring organizations. The FWF currently allows transfers of approved FWF projects to the following countries:

- Germany
- Denmark
- Netherlands
- Switzerland
- United Kingdom

Different regulations apply for ongoing projects than for approved but not yet started projects:

## 2 Transferring ongoing projects abroad

For ongoing projects, a transfer to a research institution abroad can be requested from the FWF. The following general conditions apply:

- The remaining duration of the project must be **at least 6 months**
- Cooperations with **associated research institutions** (PROFI projects) or **national research partners** (ad personam projects) remain eligible.
- The PI’s **salary** (grant-salaried position) abroad **cannot be funded by the FWF**.
- **Equipment** acquisitions abroad are only permissible up to an upper limit of **€1,500** (incl. VAT).

Please note that the administrative steps differ depending on whether the project is an ad personam project (funding pursuant to § 26 of the Universities Act 2002) or a PROFI project (funding pursuant to § 27 Universities Act 2002).

## 2.1 Ad personam projects (“P” and “I” programs)

The PI must submit an application to the FWF addressed to the project officer in charge of the project (see contact details in the grant agreement). The application must include the following:

- Completed ***Ad personam project transfer abroad form*** (*German version / English version*). This form must be signed by the PI and an authorized signatory of the new research institution abroad. If the original document is sent to the FWF by post, the form must be hand-signed and stamped by the research institution. If the form is sent to the FWF by email, it must be signed with a qualified electronic signature.
- **Cover letter** from the PI addressing the following:
  - Effects of the relocation on the project’s progress
  - Impact on existing project staff
  - Details of the new research institution (including details of project-relevant infrastructure at the new research institution)
  - Relocation schedule
  - In the case of relocation of equipment owned by the Austrian research institution: Confirmation of the Austrian research institution that the ownership rights will be transferred to the new research institution

To allow sufficient time for the FWF Executive Board to make a decision, it is advisable to apply for a project transfer early on, i.e. several months before the planned relocation date.

## 2.2 PROFI projects (“PAT” and “PIN” programs)

- 1.) **Registration of the new research institution with the FWF:** The new research institution abroad will need to register on the FWF's research institution portal. [Registration information](#) and the required [form](#) are available on the FWF website.
- 2.) **Application for a project transfer:** The PI or the research institution in Austria has to submit a supplementary application on elane to transfer the project to a research institution abroad. The application consists of two parts:
  - **Cover letter from the principal investigator:** The cover letter must address the points provided in [section 2.1.](#)
  - Completed ***PROFI project transfer abroad form***

To allow sufficient time for the FWF Executive Board to make a decision, it is advisable to apply for a project transfer early on, i.e. several months before the planned relocation date.

Once the application has been approved by the FWF, the new research institution abroad will receive an FWF grant agreement.

### **3 Transfer of approved but not yet started projects**

For projects that have been approved but not yet started, the requirements specified in [section 1](#) above apply. Some regulations differ depending on the destination country:

#### **3.1 Transfer to a partner country**

##### **3.1.1 Transferring an FWF project that has not yet been started to Germany, to Switzerland**

If a researcher plans to transfer a project that has been approved by the FWF but has not yet started, the project funding can be transferred to the partner funding organizations in Germany (DFG - German Research Foundation) or in Switzerland (SNSF - Swiss National Science Foundation). Prerequisite is a letter from the PI to the FWF project officer, requesting a transfer to the DFG or the SNSF. The FWF then forwards the relevant documents (application, review, grant agreement) to the DFG or the SNSF. The PI must then submit a formal funding application to the DFG or the SNSF. Project costs will have to be recalculated according to the DFG or SNSF guidelines. The decision-making bodies of the DFG or the SNSF subsequently decide on the application on the basis of the documents provided by the FWF. As soon as the application has been approved by the DFG or the SNSF, the PI will be issued a new grant agreement from the respective funding organization. FWF funding will then be withdrawn.

##### **3.1.2 Transferring an FWF project that has not yet been started to Denmark, the Netherlands, or the United Kingdom**

If a researcher plans to transfer a project that has been approved by the FWF but has not yet started to Denmark, the Netherlands, or the United Kingdom, the FWF will finance the project for a maximum duration of one year abroad. During this time, the PI can apply for continued funding from the local funding organization. The application process is the same as for transferring ongoing projects (see [section 2.1](#) or [2.2](#)). A decision on transferring the project abroad will be made by the FWF Executive Board. To allow sufficient time for the Executive Board to make a decision, it is advisable to apply for a project transfer early on, i.e. several months before the planned relocation date.

## 3.2 Transferring to Austria

### 3.2.1 Transferring an ongoing DFF/DFG/NWO/SNSF/UKRI project to Austria

When transferring an ongoing project funded by the Danish funding organization DFF (Danish Council for Independent Research), the German Research Foundation (DFG), the Dutch funding organization NWO (Dutch Research Council), the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF), or the British funding organization UKRI (UK Research & Innovation), the regulations of these funding agencies apply. If you have any questions about transferring your project, please contact the funding organizations directly. The FWF is not involved in the funding of these projects in Austria.

### 3.2.2 Transferring a DGF/SNSF project that has not yet been started to Austria

When transferring a project to Austria that has already been approved by the DFG or the SNSF but not yet started, the PI must first request a transfer of the project to Austria from the DFG or the SNSF. After the documents have been forwarded to the FWF by the DFG or the SNSF, the Austrian research institution and the PI must submit an application to the FWF under the program category "PAT - Principal Investigator Projects" or, if part of the project remains in Germany or Switzerland, under the program category "PIN - International Programs" (Call "Weave: external lead"). Project costs must be recalculated in accordance with FWF guidelines for Principal Investigator Projects. A decision on whether to fund the project will be made by the Scientific Board. To allow sufficient time for the Scientific Board to make a decision, it is advisable to submit the application early on, i.e. several months before the planned relocation date.

### 3.2.3 Transferring a DFF/NWO/UKRI project that has not yet been started to Austria

When transferring a project funded by the Danish funding organization DFF (Danish Council for Independent Research), the Dutch funding organization NWO (Dutch Research Council), or the British funding organization UKRI (UK Research & Innovation) that has not yet been started, the regulations of these funding agencies apply. If you have any questions about transferring your project, please contact DFF, NWO, or UKRI directly. The FWF is not involved in the funding of these projects in Austria.