

**NEUES ENTDECKEN**

**TALENTE FÖRDERN**

**IDEEN UMSETZEN**

**FWF**

Der Wissenschaftsfonds.

In accordance with its Funding Guidelines of 1 January 2019  
(as last amended), the FWF has issued the following

# **Application Guidelines for the Young independent Researcher Groups (ZK)**



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## 1. General information

### 1.1. Aim of the programme

The primary aim is to fund joint interdisciplinary projects of highly productive young researchers (postdocs from Austria and abroad who completed their doctorate at least 1 and no more than 5 years ago). Mixed teams of researchers from different Austrian research institutions will collaborate on medium-term research projects on a complex and current topic.

### 1.2. Definitions

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

<i>Lead research institution</i>	The Austrian research institution 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 the participating researchers work.
<i>Researchers</i>	3–5 young researchers of the FWF-funded project (at least 1 and no more than 5 years after their doctorate)
<i>Coordinator</i>	This researcher is responsible for the management of the project and is appointed in the funding agreement as the representative of the research institution within the scope of the project implementation.
<i>Staff</i>	Research staff in the Young Independent Researcher Group, financed by the funding approved by the FWF for the Young Independent Researcher Group (PhDs, postdoc positions, technical personnel)
<i>Members</i>	All researchers and staff in the Young Independent Researcher Group
<i>Own position</i>	The salary of the researcher financed by the funds granted for the research project.
<i>Statutes</i>	The statutes are the agreement between researchers. The statutes describe the tasks and competences of the coordinator and regulate the cooperation between the researchers as well as the decision-making processes. The document must be signed by the researchers and is attached to the application.

### 1.3. Deadlines

The deadline for submission is **30 July 2019 (date of postmark)**.

## 1.4. Who is eligible to apply?

All Austrian research institutions are eligible to apply. There is no limit to the number of applications that can be submitted by a research institution. The research question is to be explored more deeply or newly consolidated at a minimum of two research institutions or a minimum of two organisational units of<sup>1</sup> a research institution.

The Young Independent Researcher Group for which funding is being requested must consist of **at least 3 and no more than 5 researchers** (a third of whom should be from the underrepresented gender, as the composition of the team is a decision-making criterion of the review process). These researchers are internationally outstanding young researchers (postdocs from Austria and abroad who completed their doctorate at least one and no more than five years ago<sup>2</sup>) from all scientific & scholarly fields,<sup>3</sup> in particular from the humanities, social sciences, and cultural studies.

The researchers are generally employed at Austrian research institutions and are either funded by the research institution or financed by the project as part of their *own position*. If they are employed part-time at the start of the project, it is possible to increase their employment to full-time as part of the project. Additional employment at a foreign research institution is not permitted. One researcher from the team assumes the task of coordinator. Each researcher may only participate in one Young Independent Researcher Group.

**Restrictions on the number of projects:** In addition to participation as a researcher in a Young Independent Researcher Group, it is possible to act as the principal investigator of up to three projects that differ in terms of content from the Young Independent Researcher Group in the categories of Stand-Alone Projects, International Programmes, Clinical Research, Programme for Arts-based Research, as well as the Meitner, Herta Firnberg and the Elise Richter Programmes. Researchers may not submit a proposal for a Schrödinger project and participate as a researcher in a Young Independent Researcher Group at the same time.

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<sup>1</sup> An organisational unit is an element of an organisational structure, which is usually displayed in the organisation chart. <https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Organisationseinheit> In the context of the FWF, organisational units refer, for instance, to the faculties of universities (<https://www.uni-graz.at/de/die-universitaet/die-universitaet-graz/organisation-struktur/>) or research units of non-university research institutions (<https://www.joanneum.at/lernen-sie-uns-kennen/organisation/organigramm/>)

<sup>2</sup> The effective cut-off date is the date of the doctorate (the date of the doctorate must not be before 30 July 2014 or after 30 July 2018; career gaps will be checked; a scanned copy of the doctoral degree certificate is to be attached to the application).

<sup>3</sup> Participating researchers must have completed a doctorate in a field related to the proposed project. Researchers who have completed their medical studies in Austria are only eligible to apply for a Young Independent Researcher Group if they have completed a degree based on curricula N, O, Q 201 or N, O, Q 094, or based on N, O 790, Q 794 or N 090 (please indicate which one on your CV).

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

Applications can be submitted for carrying out a **joint, interdisciplinary<sup>4</sup> project** that aims at gaining scientific or scholarly knowledge. The research project is limited in duration to a maximum of 48 months.

In all cases, the Young Independent Researcher Groups should pursue scientific or scholarly goals that go beyond established disciplinary boundaries and therefore require the collaboration of several researchers with different specialisations. Owing to the interdisciplinary issues involved, these projects can only be worked on jointly from different perspectives and thus open new, unique fields of research. The Young Independent Researcher Group is intended to newly establish an innovative topic in Austria or expand the existing research priorities at a minimum of two research institutions or two organisational units of a research institution.

Any aspects of the Young Independent Researcher Group that go beyond the realm of science and scholarship may be mentioned, but they will not play a part in the assessment of whether the group should be funded. Double funding is not permitted (see [Funding guidelines](#)).

## 1.6. What requirements must be met to apply?

All researchers participating in the application must prove that they possess the research qualifications needed to carry out the project by means of a publication record over the last 5 years commensurate with their career stage, which demonstrates their international visibility.

The following criteria are decisive in assessing a researcher's publication record and initiating the review process:

- **Peer review:** All the publications listed (or more than half in the case of the humanities) must have been subject to a quality assurance procedure in line with high international standards, which usually means that journals should be listed in the Web of Science, Scopus, or the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ). For journals not listed in those databases, or monographs, edited volumes or contributions therein, or other publication types, the peer-review procedure must be documented on the publisher's website to which researchers should provide a link. Should no such documentation be available on the website, it is the researcher's responsibility to provide evidence that the publication has been subject to an appropriate quality assurance procedure.

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<sup>4</sup> Definition: "Interdisciplinary" refers to the integration-oriented interaction of people from at least two disciplines with regard to common goals and results, with the disciplinary perspectives being brought together to form an overall view. Further literature on the subject can be found at [supplementary information/application/young independent researcher groups](#)

- **Number and quality** of the researcher's publications must be commensurate with his/her career stage. At least two publications must be peer-reviewed and internationally visible publications with a substantial and independent contribution on the part of the researcher.
- **International nature:** In the natural sciences, life sciences, and social sciences, most of the publications listed must be in English. In the humanities and cultural studies, as well as arts-based research, most of the researcher's publications must have a wider than national reach.

Should a researcher fail to meet one or more of the above criteria, the researcher must include an explanation with the application. In cases of doubt, the decision-making bodies of the FWF shall decide whether the research qualifications are adequate.

### **1.7. What types of funding can be requested?**

Project-specific costs are eligible for funding. These include personnel and non-personnel costs that are necessary for carrying out the project (max. €2,000,000 for no more than 4 years, incl. 5% general project costs) 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. 25% of the approved "project-specific costs" will be provided to the research institution(s) in the form of overhead costs. For information on requesting funding for the personnel costs of the researcher (= researcher's own position), see 2.6.2.

## **2. Application content and form**

### **2.1. Sections of the application**

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

- 1) **Academic abstract** in **English** comprising no more than 3,000 characters (incl. spaces; no formulas or special characters). The academic abstract will be used to inform potential reviewers about the project. The abstract must be subdivided into the following sections using the given English terms:
  - Wider research context / theoretical framework
  - Hypotheses/research questions/objectives
  - Approach/methods
  - Interdisciplinary approach
  - Level of originality / innovation
  - Researchers

## 2) Project description:

- Cover sheet: Project title, lead research institution (address and director) and name and institution address of the coordinator; list of the collaborating research institution(s) (address and director), including details of the researchers working there (name and institution address)
- Table of contents
- **Project description:**
  - no more than. 62,500 characters (incl. spaces) on no more than 25 pages for 5 researchers
  - no more than. 60,000 characters (incl. spaces) on no more than 24 pages for 4 researchers
  - no more than. 57,500 characters (incl. spaces) on no more than 23 pages for 3 researchers

(on consecutively numbered pages), list of abbreviations, headings, figures, captions, tables, footnotes, etc.;

**The following content of the project description** is expected:

- Description of the interdisciplinary, innovative research programme (max. 14 pages)
- Quality and composition of the research team (description of team max. 2 pages, individual description per person max. 1 page)
- Wider impact (max. 2 pages)
- Statutes of the Young Independent Researcher Group (max. 2 pages)

## 3) Annexes:

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

- Annex 1: Information on research institution(s) and justification of requested funding;
- Annex 2: List of literature cited in the application (*References*) on no more than 5 pages;
- Annex 3: Academic curriculum vitae (hereinafter referred to as CV) and description of previous research achievements (no more than 3 pages per CV);
- Annex 4: Confirmations (collaboration letters) of national and international cooperation partners (no more than 1 page per letter);
- Attachments to be uploaded individually

**Mandatory:** For each researcher and postdoc expected to be financed by the SFB, a publication list for the last 5 years, broken down into peer-reviewed and non-peer-reviewed see also [Section 2.5](#)), PDF scan of the doctoral degree certificate for each

researcher, PDF scan of the doctoral degree certificate for each researcher, Statutes of the Young Independent Researcher Group (original document).

Where applicable: Cover letter; proof of two years of postdoc research experience when applying for the senior postdoc salary for the researcher's own position; list of reviewers to be excluded; for resubmissions: overview of all changes made in the resubmitted application and response(s) to reviews; vendor quotes for equipment etc.; vendor quotes for equipment, other costs.

#### 4) **Completed forms**

- Required forms: *academic abstract, application form\_coordinator, application form\_researcher, Cost breakdown form and Co-authors form;*
- Optional forms: *International cooperation arrangements form.*

## 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.

### 2.2.2. Formatting

The continuous text in the project description, annexes 1-3, and the attachments must be written in 11 pt. font with 1.5 line (15-20 pt.) spacing and at least 2 cm margins. The beginning of each paragraph should be clearly recognisable (e.g., by indenting the first line and/or spaces between paragraphs). Researchers must comply strictly with all upper limits (e.g., number of pages, attachments, etc.).

Citations in the text and the list of works cited (*References*) in the application must be in line with the conventions of the respective disciplines, preferably according to a widely-used style guide (e.g., *Chicago Manual of Style, APA Publication Manual*). Researchers are free to choose the citation conventions or style guide they prefer, but they must apply them/it consistently throughout the application. If available, a [DOI address](#) or another [persistent identifier](#) should be used for the literature cited.

### 2.2.3. Submitting the application

The application must be complete at the time of submission (see 2.1). The application must be submitted in written form in a single **paper version**, including the **original signatures and original stamps**, and a **data medium** (no protected files; no signatures are necessary in the files).

The **submission of an electronic version of the application** on a data medium facilitates and speeds up the review process. The files should be named as listed below, and they should be kept as small as possible. The total size of all files and forms on the data medium may not exceed 5 MB.

### 1) Required parts of the application:

#### a) Files:

- *Proposal.pdf* (project description incl. annexes 1-3 and where applicable 4, with PDF bookmarks, at least for the major sections)
- *Publication\_list.pdf* (publication list of all the key project participants for the last 5 years, broken down into peer-reviewed and non-peer-reviewed)
- *PhD\_certificate\_name\_researcher.pdf* (= scanned copy of the doctoral degree certificate for each researcher)

#### b) Forms:

- *Academic\_Abstract.docx (in English)*
- *Application form\_coordinatorIn.pdf; application form\_researcher.pdf*
- *Cost breakdowns.xlsx*
- *Co-authors.pdf*
- *International cooperations.pdf (optional)*

#### c) Appendix:

- *Statutes (originally signed)*

### 2) Optional files to be attached:

- *Cover\_Letter.pdf* (= accompanying letter)
- *Postdoc-research experience\_researcher.pdf* (= proof of the 2 year postdoctoral experience of the researcher)
- *Negative\_list.pdf* (= list of reviewers who should be excluded)
- *Overview\_Revision.pdf* (=in the case of resubmission, overview of all changes made in the resubmitted application)
- *Revision.pdf* (=in the case of resubmission, an overall response to all the reviewers or, if preferred, a short response to *each* reviewer saved in a *separate* file: *Revision\_A.pdf, Revision\_B.pdf* etc.)
- *Quotes\_equipment.pdf*
- *Quotes\_other\_costs.pdf*

The lead research institution must submit the application by no later than **30 July 2019** (date of postmark).

## 2.3. The project description

The project description (max. 62,500/60,000/57,500 characters incl. spaces on no more than 25/24/23 pages for 5/4/3 researchers) must include the following contents:

### 2.3.1. Research programme (max. 14 pages)

- State of research on which the Young Independent Researcher Group is based,
- Interdisciplinary, innovative<sup>5</sup> research approaches in the research programme of the Young Independent Researcher Group,
- Description of the common objectives and research questions of the Young Independent Researcher Group including:
  - Description of the common language (coherent and consistent terminology),
  - Description of the research areas to be investigated,
  - Description of the relevant research challenges,
  - Description of the merging of the various disciplines into a common theoretical approach,
  - Description of the shared methodologies used,
  - Description of how a synthesis will be formed – shared theoretical foundation based on the individual contributions.
  
- Concise description of the innovative and cutting-edge character of the research topic as well as the significance of the research results for the international scientific/scholarly community and international cooperation arrangements,
- A description of the thematic coherence and the expected innovation value through cooperation in the Young Independent Researcher Group,
- All potential sex-specific and gender-related aspects<sup>6</sup> in the planned project as well as the planned implementation of these research questions must be described in a separate section. This aspect should be addressed briefly in the text even if the researcher believes the project does not raise any sex-specific and gender-related issues.
- All potential ethical, safety-related, or regulatory aspects<sup>7</sup> of the submitted project and the planned handling of them must be described in a separate section. This

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<sup>5</sup> Questions to the reviewers: *How does the proposal advance frontier research and unconventional scientific approaches? Does the proposed project have the potential to question and/or change existing paradigms in the fields involved or beyond?*

<sup>6</sup> 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/>)

<sup>7</sup> For instance, the European Commission's [Ethics for Researchers](#) or [The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity](#) can serve as a guide here.

aspect should be addressed briefly in the text even if the researcher believes the project does not raise any ethical issues.

### **2.3.2. Quality and composition of the research team**

For the team (description of the team max. 2 pages)

- Description of the cooperation and communication structure in the team, incl. an explanation of why it is necessary for two organisational units at the same research institution to work together on the project

For each researcher (individual description per person max. 1 page)

- Description of qualifications
- Description of expertise and scientific or scholarly potential
- Description of experience with interdisciplinary projects
- Description of time resources and scientific or scholarly vision
- Description of international cooperation arrangement(s)

### **2.3.3. Wider impact on the Austrian research system (max. 2 pages)**

Dissemination strategies and science communication: measures with regard to the visibility of the Young Independent Researcher Group as well as preparation of the results for the public.

### **2.3.4. Statutes of the Young Independent Researcher Group (max. 2 pages)**

The statutes are an agreement between the researchers. They describe the tasks and competences of the coordinator and regulate the cooperation between the researchers as well as the decision-making processes. They must be signed by the researchers and included with the application.

#### **Content of the statutes of the Young Independent Researcher Group**

The rules set down in the statutes of the Young Independent Researcher Group, especially the responsibilities for the decisions taken, are binding for all members of the Young Independent Researcher Group.

Minimum requirements of the statutes:

#### **1. Membership—rights and obligations**

- How does one become a member?
- How can one end their membership?
- What are the rights and obligations of the members?

## 2. Bodies / committees of the Young Independent Researcher Group

- Number, name and task of the committee
- Appointment of the body / committee members
- Requirements to pass a valid resolution

## 3. Settlement of disputes

## 4. Tasks of the coordinator

## 5. Compliance with legal requirements and ethical standards

The lead research institution and the collaborating research institution(s) are to be informed of the statutes established and signed.

## **2.4. Annexes to the project description**

Annexes are not included in the maximum character limit for the project description and must be attached to the project description in the specified order.

### **2.4.1. Annex 1: Financial aspects**

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

- Information on the research institution(s)
  - Available personnel (not financed by the FWF; usually, the principal investigator and the personnel of the research institutions)
  - 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);
  - Concise justifications for non-personnel cost (equipment, materials, travel, and other costs). If funding for equipment is requested, researchers must explain why this does not constitute part of the basic equipment of the given research environment – see [Section 2.6.3](#).

### **2.4.2. Annex 2: List of references**

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

### **2.4.3. Annex 3: CV and description of previous research achievements**

The academic CVs and research achievements (for all researchers and staff from the postdoc level and above) are to be described on a total of three pages per person.

#### *2.4.3.1. Required contents for academic CVs*

- Name and contact details of the person, address of the research institution, and relevant websites. It is also required to provide a publicly available link to a list of all published publications; the use of [ORCID](#) is expressly recommended for this purpose.
- List of academic milestones and relevant positions held to date (with a brief explanation of any career gaps, if applicable).
- Main areas of research and short statement of the most important scientific/scholarly results achieved to date.

#### *2.4.3.2. Required description of previous research achievements*

- Academic publications: list of no more than ten of the most important published or accepted academic publications (journal articles, monographs, edited volumes, contributions to edited volumes, proceedings, etc.), for each publication, either a [DOI address](#) or another [persistent identifier](#) should be indicated. In accordance with the [San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment](#) (DORA), journal-based metrics like the journal impact factor should not be included.
- Additional research achievements: list of no more than ten of the most important scientific/scholarly research achievements apart from academic publications, such as awards, conference papers, keynote speeches, important research projects, research data, software, codes, preprints, exhibitions, knowledge transfers, science communication, licenses, or patents.

### **2.4.4. Annex 4: Collaboration letters**

- Confirmations (each no more than 1 page) of national and international cooperation partners that are stated to be essential in the project description.

## **2.5. Mandatory Appendices**

Appendix 1:

- A list of all publications published in the last five years<sup>8</sup> (divided into peer reviewed and non-peer-reviewed) must be submitted in a PDF document (Publication\_list.pdf) for all researchers for whom an academic curriculum vitae is enclosed, as well as for all essential project members from the postdoc level and above for whom personnel costs are requested. This list helps the FWF to determine if there are any potential conflicts of interest with reviewers and thus speeds up the process of identifying reviewers. This list will not be forwarded to the reviewers.

Appendix 2:

- PhD certificate\_name researcher.pdf (= scanned copy of the doctoral degree certificate for each researcher)

Appendix 3:

- Statutes of the Young Independent Researcher Group (a hard copy of the statutes with the original signatures of the researchers is to be enclosed)

## 2.6. Eligible project specific costs

### Principle on costs

The regulations of the respective research institution must always be taken into account when applying for funding (such as for personnel and contracts for work and services).

The requested costs for the whole ZK shall be described in Annex 1 and summarised in a spreadsheet for each researcher (a spreadsheet shall be drawn up in the *Cost breakdown* form).

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

#### 2.6.1. Personnel costs

The application should include all persons, in addition to the staff already available, who will be needed to carry out the project and will work exclusively to the extent agreed on for this project.

The available legal categories of employment are contracts of employment for full-time or part-time employees and marginal employment. A part-time (50%) contract of employment for “student assistants”, which equates to 20 hours per week, may be requested for researchers who have not yet completed a master’s or diploma degree programme in the relevant subject area.

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<sup>8</sup> 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.

The personnel cost rates that can be applied for within the framework of PROFI, including a fixed percentage increase for the subsequent year to compensate for wage rises, can be found on the [FWF Homepage](#). Please note that contracts of employment of no more than 75% (which equates to 30 hours per week) may be requested for doctoral students.

### 2.6.2. Own position

The FWF defines an “own position” as a researcher position, whose salary is financed by the third-party funds of the research project.

Applying for funding (including partial funding) of one’s own position is possible for every researcher, regardless of whether they are in permanent or long-term employment at the time of application.

Either a postdoc rate or a senior postdoc rate can be requested for one’s own position (correspondingly aliquoted in the case of partial funding):

- Researchers (at least 1 year after receiving their doctorate) can apply for a postdoc salary. A copy of the doctoral degree certificate must be enclosed with the free-form application as proof.
- Researchers who have two years of research experience as postdocs at the time of submitting an application, or researchers who have already successfully served as the principal investigator of their own FWF project, can apply for the senior postdoc rate. As proof, a copy of the doctoral certificate and a confirmation/proof by a third party of a total of at least 2 years of research experience as a postdoc must be added. This is not required if the principal investigator already has two years of research experience as a postdoc in projects funded by the FWF; however, this should be stated in an accompanying letter.
- Female researchers who finance themselves to the extent of at least 50% through their own position have the additional option of applying for up to €2,000 per year in the category of “Other costs” for personal coaching and further training measures that directly contribute to the career development of the researcher. Coaching is understood to mean person-centred counselling and support processes in the professional context. Continuing education measures with eligible costs include courses to acquire scientific—in particular, subject-specific—competences (e.g., courses to acquire methodological competences) and personnel development measures such as those offered at some research institutions (e.g., in the areas of teaching, writing scientific texts and applications—in particular, in English—personnel management and project management, conflict and problem solving, scientific organisation as well as vocation training and other seminars directly related to career development, e.g., as part of the promotion of women).

### 2.6.3. Equipment costs

Equipment may only be requested if it is specifically required for the project and if it is not part of the institution's existing infrastructure. "Infrastructure" is considered to include all equipment (and components for the equipment) that should be available in a modern research institution to conduct basic research in the relevant discipline at an internationally competitive level. Please note that if such equipment or components are requested nonetheless, doubts may be raised whether it is possible to conduct leading-edge basic research in such an environment and how it was possible to carry out the preliminary work related to the project. This may have an impact on the funding decision.

In this context, "equipment" includes scientific instruments, system components, self-constructed devices (generally assembled from smaller pieces of equipment and materials), and other tangible fixed assets as well as intangible assets such as licenses, industrial property rights, and licenses derived from such rights, whose acquisition cost per item exceeds the amount specified in Article 13 of the Austrian Income Tax Act 1988 as last amended, Federal Law Gazette No. 400/1988, which is currently €400.00 (incl. VAT, unless the research institution is entitled to deduct VAT). A vendor quote from a company (PDF scan) must be submitted with the application for each piece of equipment whose acquisition cost (including VAT) exceeds €5,000.00.

For items of equipment which are required specifically for the project and whose acquisition cost (including VAT) is €24,000.00 or higher, the lead research institution must confirm with its signature on the application form (*Affirmation of lead research institution*) that it has verified that no comparable equipment that could be used or shared is available within a reasonable distance, and that the possibility of (co-)financing by third parties has been explored. The research institution to which the device belongs must also ensure that they are aware of any possible costs that could arise from the use, maintenance, and repairs of the equipment.

The coordinator is to instruct his/her research institution to order the equipment and effect payment accordingly. In all equipment purchases, the research institution's procurement guidelines are to be observed. Each item of equipment is to be recorded in the institution's inventory and the acquisition costs are to be reimbursed from the respective project budget in accordance with the relevant agreement between the research institution and the FWF.

### 2.6.4. Material costs

"Materials" encompasses consumables and small pieces of equipment (cost per item is below €400.00 incl. VAT).

The calculation of requested funds for project-specific material costs should be justified with reference to the timelines, work plans, and experiment plans. Experience from previous projects should be considered in making the calculation.

### **2.6.5. Travel costs**

Funding may be requested for project-specific travel and accommodation, field work, expeditions, etc. The project description must include a detailed travel plan broken down by member. This plan must indicate which member, for what purpose, when (in which year of the project), for how long and where they will be travelling, and how much this will cost.

Travel expenses for researchers from other Austrian and foreign research institutions can only be granted in exceptional cases and require detailed justification.

The calculation of travel and accommodation costs should generally be based on the federal regulations governing travel costs (RGV). The current RGV rates for travel abroad can be found in the following [document](#).

For longer stays, a transparent and appropriate budget should be prepared; in general, this budget will be lower than the costs calculated based on RGV rates.

Researchers must not request funding for the presentation of project results at congresses; the costs associated with attending such conferences should be covered by the “general project costs”.

### **2.6.6. Costs as part of national and international cooperation arrangements**

In contrast to national research partners (see [Section 1.6](#)), costs arising within the context of a research collaboration with an external research institution are to be borne by that research institution.

Within the context of cooperation arrangements, funds may only be transferred to a cooperation partner (also abroad) if they are clearly limited contracts or services and directly necessary for carrying out the Austrian project. This does not apply to [cooperation arrangements with scientists or scholars from developing countries](#).

### **2.6.7. Other eligible costs**

- Independent contracts for work and services (costs for work of clearly defined scope and content carried out by individuals, provided that they are justified in terms of research and economical);
- Costs for the preparation, archiving, open access, and reuse of research data in repositories in accordance with the [Open Access Policy](#) of the FWF;
- Costs that cannot be included under personnel, equipment, materials, or travel costs, for example:
  - Coverage of costs for the use of research facilities, e.g., costs for the project-specific use of available equipment (project-specific “equipment time”) or large research facilities; in any case, vendor quotes should be provided. Where the costs exceed EUR 10,000.00 not including VAT (over the entire term of the project), each

vendor quote must be accompanied by the corresponding calculation basis. This calculation must include information on the nature and scope of the services for which project-specific costs are incurred (according to internal charging procedures, e.g., based on usage days or hours, or based on the number and type of measurements/analyses performed, etc.) and may not contain any infrastructure-related costs like equipment depreciation, supplementary charges for overhead, costs of research premises, etc.;

- Costs for any laboratory animals necessary for the project;
- Costs for project-specific work carried out outside the researcher's research institution (e.g., for analysis work performed elsewhere, interviews, sample collection, preparation of thin slices, etc.); vendor quotes should be uploaded;
- Costs for external support of the coordinator in the area of research management (consultants, experts in science communication and the management of research groups, etc.; a quote including a description of services is to be enclosed with the application);
- Costs for the disposal of project-specific hazardous waste.

### **2.6.8. General project costs**

For reasons of simplicity, general project costs refer to all those costs that are generally permitted but cannot be requested individually. These include, for example, costs for conference travel, dissemination activities as well as smaller, unforeseen costs necessary for the project. General project costs should not be understood in the sense of “overhead costs” of the research institution.

General project costs 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.

Researchers can apply up to three 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.

## **2.7. Forms**

All required forms must be completed in their entirety. In order for the application to be legally binding, the FWF requires the original signatures and original stamps of the lead and collaborating research institution(s) as well as the original signatures of the researchers on the:

- *Applications form\_coordinator* (Declaration of consent by the lead research institution)
- *Applications form\_researcher* (Declaration of consent by the collaboration institution)

*Co-authors form*: All persons who have made substantial research-related contributions to the conception and writing of the application should be named as co-authors. A brief

description of the nature of each contribution should be included; where there are no co-authors, researchers should state this explicitly on the form.

## **2.8. Additional attachments**

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

- Cover letter;
- Proof of two years postdoc experience when applying for a senior postdoc salary for the researcher's own position;
- List of reviewers who should be excluded;
- For the attachments needed in the case of revising a rejected application (resubmission), see [Section 2.9](#);
- Vendor quotes for the requested equipment for pieces of equipment whose acquisition cost (including VAT) is EUR 5,000.00 or higher (one quote from one company for each piece of requested equipment; can be submitted in German);
- Vendor quotes for any relevant items requested under "Other costs" (e.g., use of research facilities).

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

## **2.9. 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 a researcher submits an application on the same or very similar research questions yet does not consider it to be a resubmission but an entirely new project, the researchers 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, the researchers should indicate this at the beginning of the project description (e.g., in a footnote).
- An accompanying letter containing an overview of all changes made in the resubmitted application must be submitted to the FWF; this overview will not be passed on to the reviewers.
- Response(s) to reviews: the researchers can decide whether the response(s) should be passed on to the relevant previous reviewer 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, the researcher must submit a document containing an overall response.  
If these responses are to be passed on only to the reviewers who were previously involved, the researcher should include a short response to each review in a separate document.

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.

### 3. Processing and decision on the application

All applications submitted by the lead research institution by no later than **30 July 2019 (date of postmark)** will be subjected to a formal check by the FWF Office.

All applications meeting the formal criteria will be sent out for review. The reviewers (generally persons working outside of Austria) are selected by the members of the FWF Board 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. Any changes in the research team must be notified to the FWF immediately during the evaluation period and the FWF's approval must be obtained.

For the evaluation of the application, 3 independent reviews will be obtained. In the spring of the following year, the FWF Board will make a decision on the application based on these reviews and draw up a shortlist of positively evaluated projects. These projects will be invited to a hearing with an international jury. At this meeting, the jury will discuss the project with the researchers and research institutions and, on the basis of the reviews, presentations, and discussions, prepare a recommendation for the FWF Board (in a closed session; i.e., in the absence of the FWF Board). The FWF Board will then decide on the awarding of funding based on this recommendation. The research institutions and the researchers will be notified of this decision in writing.

#### *Requests for changes and returning applications without review*

Please note that no changes can be made after the deadline. Any remediable errors can only be corrected after the FWF Office has prepared and sent a list of formal errors. The researcher has 10 days from when the list is sent to correct the errors. If the problems have

not been resolved within this period of time, the decision-making bodies of the FWF will return these proposals without review.

Similarly, the decision-making bodies of the FWF will return without review applications that have been previously rejected by the FWF and resubmitted without appropriate revisions.

#### *Reasons for rejection*

The reasons for rejecting a project will be assigned one of five categories (C1–C5) and will be sent to researchers along with the reviews. A detailed description of the categories can be found in the [General principles of the decision-making procedure](#).

#### *Resubmissions*

If the application is a resubmission of a previously rejected proposal, the FWF will generally contact those reviewers who provided *constructive* criticism on the previous application. Reviewers who gave entirely positive or negative comments will generally not be contacted for a second review. However, please note that all resubmissions are also evaluated by new reviewers.

#### *Proposal bans*

Applications that are rejected for reason C5 will be barred for 12 months (from the date of the decision) and cannot be resubmitted during that period. Applications that have been submitted three times and rejected for reasons C3 or C4 (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.

#### *Exclusion of reviewers*

Researchers 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 three potential reviewers whom the researchers 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 researchers.

## **4. Compliance with legal requirements and standards of research integrity**

The FWF would like to point out that the lead research institution must comply with all legal requirements and safety provisions (e.g., Federal Disabilities Act) that apply for their Stand-Alone project and obtain all the necessary permits (e.g., from the Ethics Commission, the Commission for Animal Experimentation, the Federal Monuments Authority Austria, or the relevant foreign authorities).

Researchers must also comply with the guidelines for [good scientific practice](#) of the Austrian Agency for Research Integrity (ÖAWI) when submitting the application and carrying out the project.

If there is reason to believe that a researcher has failed to comply with these standards, the FWF will arrange for the ombudsperson of the respective research institution or the [Austrian Agency for Research Integrity](#) (ÖAWI) to carry out an investigation. The FWF reserves the right to suspend, in part or in whole, any procedures related to applications or ongoing projects until the investigation has been concluded. For more detailed information, see [FWF procedure in cases of suspected scientific misconduct](#).

## **5. Publication of project data and results**

The FWF would like to point out that should the project be approved, the FWF will publish on its website a summary of the project in German and English for public relations purposes – which must be sent to the FWF when returning the grant agreement – well as the amount of funding granted and, on project completion, summaries of the final report of the project. The principal investigator should ensure that these summaries are written in such a way as to safeguard legitimate interests of secrecy for reasons of national defence and patent law, and that trade secrets are appropriately protected.

In addition, the FWF requires a data management plan (DMP) for all approved projects. This should also be sent to the FWF when returning the grant agreement. The template for the DMP can be viewed and downloaded at <https://www.fwf.ac.at/en/research-funding/open-access-policy/research-data-management/>.

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

## **APPENDIX I:**

### **Template: information on the research institution(s) and description of financial aspects**

Note: The information in the research institution(s) and the description of financial aspects shall be presented using the following structure and appended as Annex 1 to the project description. The list and justification of the costs requested must be in accordance with the costs indicated in the form *cost breakdown*.

a) Details on the lead research institution and the collaborating research institution)

- Existing personnel (not financed by the FWF, usually the researchers and research personnel at the research site(s))
- Existing infrastructure

(b) 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);
- Concise justifications for non-personnel cost (equipment, materials, travel, and other costs). If funding for equipment is requested, researchers must explain why this does not constitute part of the basic equipment of the given research environment – see also [Section 2.6.3](#).

List and justification of the personnel costs applied for:

List and justification of the equipment costs applied for:

List and justification of the material costs applied for:

List and justification of the travel expenses applied for:

List and justification of other costs applied for:

## APPENDIX II: Notes and questions for reviewers in the Young Independent Researcher Groups funding programme<sup>9</sup>

In all of its programmes, the FWF actively supports equal opportunities and equal treatment. The review of an application must not put researchers at a disadvantage for non-research-related reasons such as age, gender, etc. For example, the review of applications should not focus on the researcher's actual age, but on the relation between the researcher's previous research achievements and the length of his/her research career. For the FWF, equal opportunities also means taking into account any unavoidable delays in researchers' research careers that have led to publication gaps, less time spent abroad, etc. (e.g., due to well-founded, extended qualification periods; time spent raising children; long-term illness; caring for relatives; etc.).

In writing your review, please keep in mind that your comments in the first section of the review will be forwarded to the researchers and, where applicable, other reviewers, in an anonymous way.

The FWF would like to point out that the length and the form of the project proposal must fulfil the form requirements<sup>10</sup> of the FWF, and therefore we ask that you keep these restrictions in mind when writing your review.

The FWF is obligated to ensure the best possible use of public-sector funds for basic research according to scientific/scholarly research criteria. We therefore ask you to comment on the following aspects of the application in Section 1a. What are the specific strengths of the project? Does it have weaknesses, and if so, what are they?

### Section 1a (forwarded to the researchers in its entirety)

- 1) Scientific or scholarly quality of the proposal (incl. ethical as well as sex-specific and gender-related aspects, where relevant)
- 2) Interdisciplinary approach, methodology, and execution of the project
- 3) Level of innovation and potential of the proposal to change existing paradigms in the fields of research involved and beyond
- 4) Research-related qualifications—in relation to the lengths of their careers—of the researchers as well as the gender balance among the researchers

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<sup>9</sup> Further information on the FWF's corporate policy and mission or the application guidelines for Stand-Alone projects can be found on our website at <http://www.fwf.ac.at/de/ueber-den-fwf/leitbild/> and <https://www.fwf.ac.at/en/research-funding/fwf-programmes/young-independent-researcher-groups/>

<sup>10</sup> Form requirements: Project description incl. figures and tables, no more than 25/24/23 pages for 5/4/3 Researchers, list of literature cited no more than 5 pages; academic CVs and description of previous research achievements of the researchers incl. the 10 most important publications, no more than 3 pages each.

- 5) Organisation of the Young Independent Researcher Group
- 6) Overall evaluation with consideration of the key strengths and weaknesses and final funding recommendation

**Section 1b (optional remarks to the researchers)**

Reviewer's recommendations to the researchers for implementing the project (in the case of approval). The recommendations made here generally should not play a role in the funding decision.

**Section 2 (confidential remarks to the FWF)**

Other comments intended solely for the FWF.