

Guidelines for the Use of Funds

International Research Grants with Guidelines for Final Reports



Disclaimer: The English translation of this document is provided for informational purposes. In the event of a discrepancy between the English and the German versions, the German text takes precedence.

I. Guidelines for the Use of Funds

1. General

These guidelines constitute part of the award. They apply unless the award letter specifically states otherwise. The guidelines become effective with your first request for payment of funds.

The funds approved are to be used exclusively for the purpose stated in the award letter.

The funds are to be used sparingly and economically.

The DFG requests support from your academic/research institution in processing the approved funds.

You, as the funding recipient, are solely responsible for the scientific conduct of the project. You decide how to use the funds, in accordance with these guidelines.

2. Personnel

The DFG provides you with a lump-sum payment to cover staff expenses. This shall be used to pay staff - unless otherwise agreed and stipulated on a case-by-case basis - for the project duration specified in the award letter and at standard local rates, including incidental personnel costs stipulated by law. If staff expenditure within the approved period exceeds the amount of this lump-sum payment, the DFG may provide additional funds, subject to the DFG's international partner organisation confirming that such additional expenditure is necessary and appropriate.

2.1 Selection of personnel and employment contracts

You, as the funding recipient, are responsible for staff selection and appointment.

Employment contracts shall be drawn up in accordance with applicable local regulations.

3. Scientific Instrumentation

Unless otherwise stated, you are responsible for purchasing the necessary instrumentation and equipment. However, before an order is placed quotations must be obtained to find the best offer.

Unless otherwise stated, all instrumentation and equipment will remain the property of the DFG and will be made available for your use for the duration of the research project. Any decision regarding the future location and use of such instrumentation will be made after conclusion of the research project.

The DFG reserves the right to request the transfer of ownership of such instrumentation to a third party or some other form of settlement if, during the period of your research project funded by the DFG, you move to another academic or scientific institution.

The DFG assumes that the institution at which you are conducting your research work will pay the expenses for servicing and repairs that are considered fair wear and tear during the course of normal operation.

4. Consumables and Research Materials

You are responsible for purchasing all necessary consumables and research materials.

The purchasing and property rights for research materials not intended for consumption are subject to the same regulations as those that apply to scientific instrumentation (see section 3 above).

5. Travel

Travel will be calculated at standard local rates.

Travel expenses may also be claimed for travel in order to present research results to the scientific public for further discussion.

6. Non-claimable Expenses

The following expenses cannot be claimed:

- Salaries for project managers
- Secretarial services
- Buildings, furnishings, or rent

- Expenses for general infrastructure (e.g. office furniture, tools, protective clothing), office materials, calculators, postage, and telephone charges
- Operating and maintenance costs (such as electricity, gas, water, coolants) and maintenance contracts
- Premiums for property insurance and travel protection plans
- Expenses incurred for the use of the university's computer facilities
- Expenses for items that are generally considered as belonging to standard modern core equipment in your research area
- Expenses incurred for the extension or repair of equipment that does not belong to the DFG
- Interest charges
- VAT to the extent that it will be refunded by the national tax authorities

7. Reallocation of Approved Funding

Funds are to be used exclusively for the purpose specified in your award. The approved amounts for personnel and material costs may, under certain circumstances, be reallocated or augmented. However, in so doing, funding rejections in the award must not be circumvented.

For any such reallocation or augmentation exceeding 30 percent of the approved amount, the reasons must be recorded in the auditing documents.

8. Administration of the Research Grant

8.1 Correspondence

The DFG requests that you organise correspondence pertaining to each award separately according to the reference number and object number quoted in the award letter. This correspondence must be retained for five years from the date of notification that funding is concluded.

8.2 Accounting, receipts and documents

If the institution where you work is publicly funded, the DFG expects its administration to ensure that you receive the support you need for all administrative matters. Any administrative overheads incurred in providing this support cannot be paid from the funds awarded by the DFG.

Cash records, accounts, and the organisation of receipts and other documents must adhere to the regulations applicable at your institution. All such documents shall remain with the institution.

8.3 Requests for payment of funds

Funds may be requested from the DFG as required for periods of up to three months at a time (see DFG form 41.039e). Funds may only be requested as and when they are needed for payments due in relation to the project for which the funding was approved. Any funds not required within the foreseeable future must be returned to the DFG immediately and without further request (see section I.10, para. 3).

The DFG will only transfer funds to an account held by your institution and only after your institution has submitted a binding declaration that the DFG shall, in the event of your death, recuperate any unused funds.

8.4 Special offers and discounts

All purchases should take advantage of any available special offers and discounts. The DFG can generally only accept invoices for such purchases at the reduced price. Any income from the sale of laboratory animals or of equipment, consumables, and materials, etc. no longer required is to be transferred to the DFG or offset against funding.

9. Accounting and Auditing

9.1 Accounting

Evidence of the use of each grant must be submitted to the DFG separately, quoting the reference number stated in the award letter (DFG form 41.053). These accounts must record all income and expenditure for the current calendar year in which the funds were used (up to 31 December) and must be submitted no later than 15 April of the following calendar year (except for the final accounts, which can be submitted at an earlier date).

The final accounts should be submitted as soon as possible after the last transfer of funds, but no later than 12 months after expiry of the funding period stated in the award letter, beginning with the first transfer of funds for that award. Any unused funds remaining at the end of the funding period and after submission of your report can no longer be used and must be returned to the DFG.

You must confirm that the funds have been used appropriately and solely for the purpose specified in your award. Your institution must confirm the accuracy of the accounts submitted.

9.2 Auditing

The DFG and in Germany the *Bundesrechnungshof* (German Federal Audit Office) may – either themselves or through a third party – audit the use of funds by examining your accounts, records, invoices, etc. either on-site or by requesting submission of such documents for verification.

10. Cancellation, Reimbursement, Interest

The DFG reserves the right to cancel a funding award, either wholly or in part, and to claim reimbursement in the following circumstances:

- If there are substantial grounds to do so. This also applies if the DFG does not receive sufficient funds from its own financial backers.
- If the award was obtained on the basis of false or incomplete information.
- If the requirements were not satisfied, or were not satisfied by the deadline set by the DFG.
- If the funds have not been claimed within a year after the award was granted.
- If the funds were not used exclusively for the purpose specified in the award.
- If the funds paid were not accounted for punctually, properly or fully.

If the DFG considers that you, as the funding recipient, are responsible for causing the circumstances leading to its request for reimbursement, you will be liable to pay interest on the sum in question with effect from the due date and at an annual rate 5 percent above the basic interest rate according to section 247 of the German Civil Code (*Bürgerliches Gesetzbuch*).

If the funds are not used for the specified intended purpose within an appropriate period after they are issued, the DFG reserves the right to charge interest, for the period from when the funds are issued until you start using them as intended, at an annual rate 5 percent above the basic interest rate according to the German Civil Code. This applies whether or not the award is cancelled.

11. Liability

You, as the funding recipient, are liable for any damage incurred to the DFG as the result of your failure to observe any stipulations stated in the award.

You, as the funding recipient, are responsible for ensuring that all applicable laws and regulations are observed when conducting your research project. Particular attention should be paid to the regulations regarding experiments on humans and laboratory animals and genetic experiments. For animal experiments requiring official authorisation, such authorisation must be obtained before research work commences.

See “Supplementary Guidelines and Instructions” (DFG-form 1.19)

http://www.dfg.de/formulare/1_19/

12. Observation of the Rules of Good Scientific Practice

The DFG expects you to adhere to the rules of good scientific practice, as specified in the DFG recommendations (see DFG Website www.dfg.de/en → Research Funding / Legal Framework Conditions for Research), and to implement these in the form of appropriate procedural regulations.

13. Publication of Research Findings

The DFG expects the research results funded by it to be published and to be made available, where possible, digitally and on the internet via open access. To achieve this, the contributions involved should either be deposited in discipline-specific or institutional electronic archives (repositories) following conventional publication, or should be published in a recognised peer-reviewed open access journal.

When entering into publishing contracts scientists participating in DFG-funded projects should, as far as possible, permanently reserve a non-exclusive right of exploitation for electronic publication of their research results for the purpose of open access. Here, discipline-specific delay periods of generally 6-12 months can be agreed upon, before which publication of previously published research results in discipline-specific or institutional electronic archives may be prohibited.

The publications must credit the DFG for funding the project. Credit must state the reference number (individual projects or SPP, FOR etc.) or the project name and funding programme (Collaborative Research Centre, Research Training Group etc.). Publications that do not include this information cannot be recognised as having emerged from this project.

If results are not published in a publication available via normal channels, such as a bookstore, but are presented in the form of a research report, the DFG requests that one copy each be sent to the Special Collection of Research Reports (*Zentrale Sammelstelle für Forschungsberichte*) at the German National Library of Science and Technology (*Technische Informationsbibliothek*) (at: Welfengarten 1b, D-30167 Hannover, Germany) and to the library of the institution at which the project is conducted.

14. Reporting Obligations

You are obliged, at the times specified in the award and without further request, to submit a progress report on your work and any results obtained so far to the DFG. Each such report submitted to the DFG must include an introduction summarising the work; this introduction must be no more than one page in length. The DFG requests that you also send a copy of this summary to the press office of your institution.

Final reports must be compiled in accordance with the guidelines listed under section II.

II. Guidelines for Final Reports

1. General information

- DFG reference number
- Applicant
- Institute/department
- Topic of the project
- Period covered by the report, overall funding period
- List of the most important publications resulting from this project. Please structure this list as follows:
 - a) Articles which at the time of proposal submission have been published or officially accepted by publication outlets with scientific quality assurance, listed in standard format; book publications. For works that have been accepted for publication but not yet published, the manuscript must be submitted along with the publisher's acknowledgement of acceptance.
 - b) Other publications.
 - c) Patents, subdivided into pending and issued.

The number of publications listed under a) and b) may not exceed a certain maximum. This maximum is:

- For one grant recipient: two publications per year of project funding
- For multiple grant recipients: a total of three publications per year of project funding

2. Final progress report (maximum 10 pages of A4)

- Project's initial questions and objectives.
- Project developments – including deviations from the original plan, failures, and problems encountered with project organisation or technical execution.
- Presentation of results and discussion of the relevant research situation in this context, potential perspectives for application, and conceivable follow-up research.
- Statement on whether the results of the project are economically valuable and whether exploitation is already taking place or may be anticipated; if applicable, details regarding patents, industrial joint ventures, etc.

- Who has contributed to the results achieved by the project (national/international partners, project staff, etc.)?
- Qualification of young researchers in the context of your project (for example, first degree, doctorate, post-doctorate, etc.).

The report must be understandable without the need to consult additional literature. To illustrate and enhance your presentation you may refer to your own and others' publications. Make it clear whenever you are referring to other researchers' work and explain your own papers. Please list all cited publications at the end of the section. This reference list is not considered your list of publications. Any unpublished work must be included with the final report. However, note that reviewers are not required to read any of the works you cite. Reviews will be based only on the text of the actual report.

3. Summary (maximum 1 page of A4)

- Presentation, in clearly understandable, everyday language of the key scientific findings and any potential applications.
- Any surprises encountered in the course of the project and in the results obtained.
- Reference to any articles published in the media reporting the success of the project.

4. Publication of data from final reports

The DFG is entitled to publish the summary according to 3. on its websites, especially in the GEPRIS database, and to make reference to the publications listed as per 1. To be included, publications must meet the specifications set forth under 1. and credit the DFG for its financial support.

Upon request, a link to an online list of publications may be included in the database. This list of publications can be updated even after the report has been filed.

If you do not wish the summary to be published, you may request this by sending a letter or e-mail to the responsible department when you file your final report.