

# Guidelines

for Reviewing Proposals in the Major Research  
Instrumentation Programme as per Art. 91b GG



## I. What Are We Asking You to Do?

We are asking you to provide a written review that will serve as a basis for the funding decision regarding the attached proposal that has been submitted as part of the Major Instrumentation Programme as per Art. 91b GG.

- **First, please make sure that you feel you have the necessary scientific expertise.**  
If you do not feel that you have the expertise required to evaluate the subject matter, please return the proposal as quickly as possible. In this case we would be grateful if you would assist us by suggesting other possible reviewers.
- **Please examine whether circumstances exist that could be interpreted as your having a conflict of interest.**  
For more information on apparent conflicts of interest, see section IV.3.
- **Please treat the documentation confidentially and do not make it available to third parties.**
- **Please base your assessment on the proposal documents you have received.**  
You may additionally refer to the publications cited in the proposal; however, the bibliography of cited works and the manuscripts are not per se the subject of the review.

The proposal also includes two lists of publications:

- a list of the applicant's 10 most important publications in the curriculum vitae, and
- an overview of the most important publications by the working group from the last five years in accordance with the Supplement on Research.

Please consider both lists of publications in your assessment.

If you need additional information regarding existing instrumentation/equipment at the proposed host institution, please contact the DFG Head Office. We would be happy to share any information we have.

- **If you have any questions about the proposal, please contact the DFG Head Office exclusively.**
- **Please limit your review to two pages or less.**
- **Please provide a clear recommendation as to whether you believe the project should be funded by grading it in terms of funding priority. Your recommendation will be used in a comparative review.**

## **II. What Criteria Should You Use?**

### **1. Qualifications of the Applicants**

Do the researchers' scientific activities and proposed projects justify the acquisition?

- Applicants' scientific credentials
- Soundness of the preliminary work
- Quality of publications and the results obtained to date in both a national and international context

### **2. Scientific Justification**

Do research purposes alone justify the purchase and use of the instrumentation? Is this evidenced by outstanding scientific quality?

- Originality of the proposed project
- Expected advancement of knowledge (or development of new methods where applicable)
- Scientific significance

### **3. Use of the Proposed Instrumentation**

Is the acquisition necessary considering the existing equipment?

- Opportunities for using existing equipment
- Adequacy of the number of people who will be using the instrumentation

- Are the usage management plans (for example within the context of core facilities) convincing?
- Should the instrumentation also be made available to other individuals and/or working groups?

#### **4. Choice of Vendor and Instrumentation, Features and Costs**

Are the selected product, features and price appropriate? Have follow-up costs been calculated realistically?

- Necessity of the proposed features and performance class
- Necessity of the proposed accessories
- Sufficient market research
- Calculation of operating and other follow-up costs (e.g. repairs, personnel)

### **III. What Happens with Your Review?**

As a rule, each proposal is evaluated independently by two reviewers. On the basis of these reviews, the DFG Head Office prepares an award recommendation.

The documentation is then sent to members of the Committee on Scientific Instrumentation or the Commission for IT Infrastructure, two decision-making bodies elected by the DFG Joint Committee. They are responsible for the quality of the review process and for preparing the funding recommendation for the Joint Committee.

All reviewers participating in the process will be informed of the final decision.

The DFG will anonymise reviewer comments and share them with the applicants. These anonymised comments will also be made available to the other reviewers taking part in the review process. Please note that the DFG Head Office may shorten reviews as necessary.

## **IV. What Else Is Important?**

### **1. Confidentiality**

All proposals submitted to the DFG, the correspondence with reviewers, the reviews, and the identity of the reviewers and other participating committee members must be treated confidentially. We ask that you not identify yourself as a reviewer to the applicant or to any third party. This entails that the responsibilities of a reviewer may only be undertaken personally and may not be delegated to third parties.

The scientific content of the proposal may not be exploited for personal and/or other scientific purposes.

### **2. Obligation to Follow Rules of Good Scientific Practice**

The rules of good scientific practice also apply to reviewers. A violation of these rules can result in a charge of scientific misconduct. In particular, any infringement against the principle of confidentiality as per IV.1. is considered scientific misconduct.

### **3. Conflicts of Interest**

The DFG Head Office is not able to investigate all circumstances that could be interpreted as a conflict of interest. Therefore, the DFG relies on your assistance so that, if necessary, another reviewer may be found at an early stage to participate in the written review process.

Should circumstances exist that may be interpreted as conflicts of interest, please inform the responsible DFG division before submitting your written review. If you submit a written review to the DFG without first having contacted the DFG about a possible conflict of interest, the DFG assumes that, to the best of your knowledge, no apparent conflict of interest exists. If, after submitting a written review, or during or following a meeting, you realise that there may be – or may have been – an apparent conflict of interest, you should also contact the DFG Head Office immediately.

The DFG Guidelines for Avoiding Conflicts of Interest (DFG form 10.201) can be found at

[www.dfg.de/formulare/10\\_201](http://www.dfg.de/formulare/10_201)