

# Guidelines

## Infrastructure for Electronic Publications and Digital Scholarly Communication



## I Programme Information

### 1 Objective

As part of its Scientific Library Services and Information Systems Programme, the DFG funds projects at research institutions and other research service and information centres in Germany. The aim is to set up nationwide efficient research information systems.

The funding programme "Infrastructure for Electronic Publications and Digital Scholarly Communication" aims to accommodate the changes in the way research is published and science is communicated with appropriate infrastructure that will support research and shape the transformation process. The background to this objective is the observation that the results of research are being distributed increasingly in the form of electronic publications and that these publications are freely accessible and able to be used in many different ways. Furthermore, the presentation and methods of research are also changing. Texts are enhanced with audio-visual material and research data of different kinds; to make science more accessible, the whole research process, from initial ideas to the dissemination of results, is increasingly designed to allow every form of data to be openly accessible and freely used; the boundaries between formal and informal scholarly communication are blurring; the traditional publication of essays and books is being supplemented by elements of social media; content is also prepared specifically for computer-based analysis and processing. These developments are being driven forward by many researchers, by information infrastructure institutions and by the publishing sector. They manifest themselves in different ways and at different speeds in various research disciplines.

The funding programme aims to present research findings in such a way that they are both openly accessible (open access) and readily available, contextualised through their inclusion in many different networks and rendered as reusable as possible. Funding is available for projects that test solutions for the production, dissemination and use of publications that are as openly accessible as possible (publication is used here in its broadest possible sense) and establish them throughout a subject area, possibly with the active participation of the relevant scholarly society which, as a rule, is represented by the applicants. Initiatives to establish appropriate information infrastructures can be independent or take the form of collaboration with publishing houses or other commercial service providers.

To *produce* scientific content, funding is available to create new publication and communications platforms if these broadly address a particular subject area and make high-quality research results available. This includes start-up assistance, for example, to establish open access journals and monographs, but can also encompass completely new forms of publication such as composite publications (publications that require several different types of media for a comprehensible presentation of research findings), enhanced publications (publications with additional material), publications in social media (such as blogs or wikis), or complementary forms of publication (such as data journals or online encyclopaedias).

The systematic development of existing scientific journals can be funded to *disseminate* research results. This might include optimisation of the publication infrastructure or organisational forms that support them or converting existing journals to open access. Projects to disseminate research findings via social media are also eligible.

In order to make electronic publications convenient to *use*, funding is available for projects involving the systematic development of federated archiving and repository systems. This might include subject-specific value-added services, or the development and implementation of new organisational or business models to offer high-quality content, possibly in collaboration with commercial suppliers of this content via repository networks. Funding also covers the networking of repositories with social media. In addition, it includes projects that network existing content on the Semantic Web (such as thesauri, research data, bibliographic data as linked open data).

Multidisciplinary projects can be funded if the infrastructures or methods developed with them can be used in different contexts. Topics might include the development of appropriate tools with which to best create and potentially collaborate on purely digital publications, the establishment of research-friendly business models for electronic publications, or the development of methods, tools and processes with which to ensure the long-term availability of electronic publications.

Funding is also available for *pilot and model projects*, in which research communities, research universities and research institutions develop and test reusable model solutions and best practices for the production, dissemination and use of open access content.

Finally, funding can be granted for *experimental projects* in which innovative concepts for introducing, designing and implementing open access are developed and tested in order to reflect its highly dynamic nature. The focus here is on uncovering the potential for new subject-specific, research-dynamical, organisational, technical or financial approaches to research that can effectively facilitate the transformation of scholarly communication into open access. The projects proposed can relate to any aspect of the production, dissemination, usage, evaluation or impact of open access research findings.

The creation of *supporting studies* to examine the sociological, technical, functional or economic effects of the transformation into open access can only be funded if the study's design is clearly intended to identify necessities in the development of infrastructure.

## 2 Proposals

### 2.1 Eligibility

In general, members of non-profit research information infrastructure facilities such as libraries, archives, museums, computing centres and media centres are eligible to submit proposals. Researchers in Germany or those working at a German research institution abroad who have completed their academic training (generally by obtaining a doctorate) are also eligible to apply.

In general you are not eligible to submit a proposal if you work at an institution that is not non-profit or one that does not allow immediate publication of research findings in a generally accessible form.

Since funding provided in the area of scientific library services and information systems is intended to achieve improvements to nationwide information infrastructures, and its results benefit research as a whole, institutes and member organisations of the Max Planck Society, the Fraunhofer Society, the Helmholtz Association, the Leibniz Association, and publicly funded research institutions associated with these organisations, and German sections of international information infrastructure institutions are also eligible to apply.

### 2.2 Proposal requirements and funding conditions

When the aim of DFG project funding is to set up a longer-term nationwide structure, it is expected that the proposal be submitted and supported by or in conjunction with a

publicly funded institution that is able to maintain the project findings and ensure their sustainability.

The establishment of new publication and communications platforms can only be funded if it can be shown qualitatively or quantitatively that there are no adequate options in the relevant subject area to disseminate research results and make them widely available for reuse, or if the new platforms would be so significantly different from existing options as to offer potential for the adequate acquisition of high-quality contributions.

Printed journals can also be funded under this programme provided they are essential for the subject area and offer significant benefits compared to electronic journals.

### 2.2.1 Project requirements

Applicants must acquire a comprehensive overview of international developments and include them in their plans. Relevant national and international standards must be taken into consideration. Thorough research of existing methods, procedures or reusable tools is an essential requirement.

Provided the aim of the project is not *per se* an infrastructural innovation, the proposal must show that existing standard solutions cannot be used or implemented in the context of the proposed project, and give reasons.

If the proposed project aims to develop a service, an information offering or a tool, the proposal should explain how financing and maintenance of the project results will be ensured after DFG funding expires. For projects with a strong experimental orientation, where the long-term prospects of successful broad-based implementation cannot be fully assessed until the project is completed, the question of how the project results can be maintained in the long term may be initially disregarded.

### 2.2.2 Project results

The content created in the projects and all publications resulting from projects must be made available via the internet to users from all over the world as open access content and remain permanently accessible. Wherever possible, licences indicate clearly to what extent the reusability of publications or parts thereof is guaranteed.

This open access requirement is limited only if the funding is used for the development of a printed journal or of an existing journal that might be produced in collaboration with a publishing house and is *not* a completely open access journal. However, if this is the case, the editors must ensure that all the articles in the journal, after a reasonable embargo period of up to six months (for journals in the natural, engineering and life sciences) or a maximum of twelve months (in the humanities and social sciences), are made publicly accessible via a suitable form of infrastructure (such as a specialised open access repository or the publishing house's journal platform). Furthermore, the editors, and where relevant the publishers, must always permit the authors to deposit their articles into discipline-specific or institutional repositories. Applicants must therefore ensure that contracts are drawn up with authors to grant them fixed, permanent and non-exclusive usage rights to the electronic publication of their journal articles so that these can be used free of charge.

All content produced with DFG funding and made available over the internet must be edited, indexed and, where relevant, advertised in such a way as to ensure that it will be as easy to find as possible. Appropriate metadata must meet library standards and must be suitable for integration in international subject-specific indexes or other cataloguing systems.

Compliance with and application of existing standards and procedures to ensure the necessary interoperability in the area of networked research infrastructure (such as metadata standards for long-term archiving, creative commons licences for open access publications, DINI certificates, DRIVER or OpenAIRE guidelines for the federation of repositories) are essential.

Projects concerning the establishment and development of federated repositories should be linked to existing publication platforms (such as repository software) available in Germany and where possible be based on an appropriate developer community and be clearly focussed on specific user groups where relevant.

The tools, methods, organisational forms and business models developed during the course of the project must be potentially transferable to other contexts, unless the project is of a very experimental nature. All project findings must be announced to the relevant community and made available for use free of charge, also to third parties. Disclosure of

any source code produced is mandatory; project results must be made available as an open source in a suitable location. This also applies to comprehensive documentation.

### 2.2.3 Financial contribution

Applicants are expected to make a reasonable financial contribution to the project, e.g. in the form of personnel and direct project costs; they are expected to make a more significant contribution towards dedicated infrastructure projects than towards experimental projects.

## 2.3 Format and deadline

### 2.3.1 Proposal structure

Proposals must be structured in accordance with the Proposal Preparation Instructions under the Scientific Library Services and Information Systems Programme.

[www.dfg.de/formulare/12\\_01](http://www.dfg.de/formulare/12_01)

Please base your proposal on the outline in this template and also address the following items:

#### Item 2.2 of the project description (Objectives)

- Please describe the specific requirements of a research community addressed by your proposed infrastructure and, where relevant, provide qualitative and quantitative information to explain why it is required.
- If you are submitting a proposal to fund a new open access journal, please describe in detail how it will be different from existing journals in the relevant subject area (analysis of competition).
- Please explain how and in which way a new publication platform, the development of an existing journal or its transformation to open access will affect scholarly communication in the community concerned and, where relevant, describe how the new infrastructure will help to raise the profile of scholarly communication.
- If you are proposing a very experimental project, explain in detail in what respect the planned development should be considered innovative and the risks that can be expected in the realisation of the project.

Item 2.3 in the project description (Work programme and proposed research methods):

- Please describe in detail how the proposed project will feed back into the relevant communities (including where appropriate the relevant scholarly societies).
- State whether relevant standards or best practices are already established for the project and how these are taken into account.
- For proposals to fund a scientific journal, please describe in detail which tasks must be carried out once within the framework of the project and which tasks must be undertaken and financed in the long term, beyond the funding period.

Item 2.4 of the project description (Measures to meet funding requirements and handle project results):

- Please describe in detail actions that will ensure that the infrastructures developed with DFG funding will continue to be reliable and sustainable. For proposals for scientific journals, please describe how the editorial tasks will be funded in the long term.
- If your proposal is very experimental in nature, please state what criteria can be used to evaluate whether the project, on or after its completion, has fulfilled expectations in terms of the solution developed, whether this solution should be widely adopted and implemented, and possibly what measures would be suitable to accomplish this.

Item 5.4 of the description of the project (Formal assurances):

- Please confirm that "publications resulting from the project and any relevant documentation will be available via open access, making them widely accessible for use by third parties".
- Give a formal declaration that the "source code for the software developed under the project will be documented in accordance with the principles of open source and made available for use by third parties".

### 2.3.2 Additional information and data sheets

If the proposal is submitted by members of a research information infrastructure facility, the applicant must enclose a declaration of the facility's director stating that:

- the long-term accessibility of the texts and/or objects to be made available and/or digitalised is ensured;



- the financial contribution required within the scope of the programme has been made;
- the results of the project will be supported once DFG funding has expired.

[www.dfg.de/formulare/12\\_141](http://www.dfg.de/formulare/12_141)

If the proposal is for funding to establish a new scientific journal or to develop or transform an existing one, you must submit a calculation, showing income and expenditure, that justifies the need for funding from the DFG; if the journal is produced in collaboration with a publishing house, then its calculation must also be taken into account.

Please also state how the journal is to be financed after the DFG funding has expired and give details of any measures that could further reduce the costs of production and distribution.

If you are applying for funding to establish, enhance or transform a journal, attach the "Scientific Journals Data Sheet" to your proposal. The data sheet is available for further digital processing at the following link:

[www.dfg.de/formulare/53\\_39\\_elan](http://www.dfg.de/formulare/53_39_elan)

If the communication or publication platform is to be published or produced in collaboration with a publishing house or service provider, please include the relevant sections of the agreement with this partner.

### 2.3.3 Submission deadline

Proposals may be submitted to the DFG at any time.

Please note that under the funding programme, additional funding opportunities may be announced in the form of time-limited calls for proposals aimed at particular topics. As long as a grant procedure of this kind is not completed, no more proposals concerning the same topic can be submitted after the submission deadline.

## 3 Duration

Initial funding can be approved for up to three years. The total funding period should not exceed six years.

## II Proposal Modules

Under this funding programme, you may submit one or more of the following modules. For more details, please see the respective guidelines for each module.

### 1 Basic Module

Use the basic module to request funding for direct project costs, project-specific staff, and instrumentation necessary to carry out the project. It is also possible to request funding to pay for services provided by publishing houses in collaborative projects under the heading of "Other".

[www.dfg.de/formulare/52\\_01](http://www.dfg.de/formulare/52_01)

### 2 Project-Specific Workshops

If you would like to conduct workshops as part of your project, you may request funding to help you do so. Please note that this module cannot be submitted separately but only in conjunction with the proposed project.

[www.dfg.de/formulare/52\\_06](http://www.dfg.de/formulare/52_06)

## III Obligations

In submitting a proposal for funding under this programme, you agree to:

1. adhere to the **rules of good scientific practice**.<sup>1</sup>

The general principles of good scientific practice include, among others: maintaining professional standards, documenting results, rigorously questioning all findings, and attributing honestly any contributions by partners, competitors and predecessors.

Scientific misconduct is defined as the intentional and grossly negligent statement of falsehoods in a scientific context, the violation of intellectual property rights or impeding another person's research work. The circumstances of each case will be considered on

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<sup>1</sup> The rules of good scientific practice are presented in detail in the white paper entitled „Safeguarding Good Scientific Practice“ and in the [Funding Guidelines - General Terms and Conditions of DFG Grants](#) (DFG form 2.00).

an individual basis. In cases where scientific misconduct has been established, the DFG may impose one or more of the following sanctions, depending on the nature and severity of the scientific misconduct:

- issuing a written reprimand to those involved;
- exclusion from the right to apply for DFG funds for a period of one to eight years, depending on the severity of the scientific misconduct;
- revoking funding decisions (complete or partial cancellation of the grant, recalling granted funds, demanding repayment of funds spent);
- demanding that those concerned either retract the discredited publications or correct the falsified data (in particular by publishing an erratum), or appropriately indicate the DFG's retraction of funding in the discredited publications;
- exclusion from acting as a reviewer or from membership in DFG committees for one to eight years, depending on the severity of the scientific misconduct;
- denying voting rights and eligibility in elections for DFG statutory bodies and committees for one to eight years, depending on the severity of the scientific misconduct.

By accepting funding, the recipient agrees to:

2. use the grant exclusively and in a targeted manner to realise the funded project. The use and accounting of funds must conform to the relevant regulations of the DFG.
3. submit progress reports on the research according to the dates specified in the award letter and to present financial accounts to the DFG detailing the use of funds.

The DFG expects that the findings of the projects it funds be made available to the public.

#### **IV Publication of Data on Grant Holders and Research Projects**

The data necessary for processing your proposal will be stored and processed electronically by the DFG.

By submitting a proposal you agree that, if the proposal is approved, your work address and contact details (name, institution and location, phone, fax, e-mail and website) as well as information about the content of the project (e.g. topic, summary, keywords, subject area, DFG

programme, funding period, international connections) will be published in the GEPRIS information system

[gepris.dfg.de/en](https://gepris.dfg.de/en)

and may be published in other, non-commercial publications and databases created in cooperation with the DFG.

You may withdraw your consent to full/partial publication at any time, without affecting the lawfulness of any processing carried out prior to your withdrawal. If you would like to withdraw your consent, please notify the responsible DFG programme contact, preferably in electronic form.

## V Information

For further information, please contact Dr. Johannes Fournier (e-mail: [Johannes.Fournier@dfg.de](mailto:Johannes.Fournier@dfg.de); Tel.: +49 228/885-2418). A detailed overview of contact details, responsibilities and funding opportunities in the DFG's Scientific Library Services and Information Systems Programme is available on the DFG website at

[www.dfg.de/lis/en](https://www.dfg.de/lis/en)