

Guidelines

for Proposals under the Major Research Instrumentation Programme as per Art. 91b GG with

Instructions

for Proposal Preparation



Guidelines for Proposals**under the Major Research Instrumentation Programme..... 3**

I. Purpose of Funding..... 3

II. Eligibility Requirements..... 3

III. Scope of Funding..... 4

Instructions for Proposal Preparation 5

I. General..... 5

II. Proposal Outline..... 6

1. Cover letter by the applicant institution 6

2. Proposal form..... 6

3. Curricula vitae..... 7

4. Supplements on Research..... 7

5. Supplement on the Operation and Usage Concept..... 7

6. Supplement with Explanation of Performance Class and Product Selection 7

7. Current vendor offers 7

III. Obligations..... 8

IV. Rules of Good Scientific Practice..... 8

V. Publication of Research Findings..... 8

Guidelines

for Proposals under the Major Research Instrumentation Programme

I. Purpose of Funding

In accordance with Art. 91b¹ Grundgesetz (GG, Basic Law for Germany), the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG, German Research Foundation) funds large scientific equipment through its Major Research Instrumentation Programme. Financing is provided in equal parts by the DFG and the university's home state. To be eligible for funding, proposed research instrumentation projects must be of high quality and national importance. The instrumentation must primarily serve research purposes. This criterion is fulfilled if the necessity of the purchase and its usage are based solely on its intended use in research.

II. Eligibility Requirements

German public universities and private, institutionally accredited higher education institutions in Germany are eligible to apply.

The gross investment amount must exceed €100,000 for universities of applied sciences and €200,000 for all other universities. The maximum limit is €5 million.

Proposals for major instrumentation, which can be submitted at any time, are sent to the DFG in accordance with the respective state guidelines. The states and/or universities must guarantee 50% co-financing.

The principal investigator shall serve as the applicant and submit the relevant proposal form and supplements. The proposal is then passed on from the university to the appropriate ministry of research or culture and from there on to the DFG.

¹ [Ausführungsvereinbarung Forschungsbauten an Hochschulen einschließlich Großgeräten \(AV-FuG\)](#)

III. Scope of Funding

Major instrumentation is the sum of the components, including accessories, that form an operational unit for the intended application. A clear relationship should exist between the base unit (including software) and its accessories — which can include methodological and metrological expansions or supplements that are not directly required for operation.

Instructions

for Proposal Preparation

I. General

Proposals for major research instrumentation are handled by the DFG's Scientific Instrumentation and Information Technology Division.

Proposal, supplements and offers should be submitted on hard copy (one per document) and as PDF files (copy-enabled) on one CD-ROM as per item 9 of the proposal form. The DFG will regard the electronic version of the proposal as the official one.

Please note: The DFG has issued statements and published additional information on specific types of instrumentation; these should be considered when preparing proposals. This information can be found at

http://www.dfg.de/en/research_funding/programmes/infrastructure/scientific_instrumentation/statements_information/index.html.

The applicant will be sent an acknowledgement of receipt by the contact person at the responsible DFG department, including a reference number for future correspondence. The current processing status can be checked on the DFG's *elan* portal. If necessary, the acknowledgement of receipt will also include additional questions regarding formal or scientific matters which the applicant must answer before the review can begin.

After the documentation has been checked for formal correctness, it will be forwarded to expert researchers in the relevant subject area for scientific review.

The review will consider the following criteria:

- Do the scientific activities and described projects by the researchers named in the proposal justify the acquisition?
- Do research purposes alone justify the purchase and use of the instrumentation?
- Is the acquisition necessary considering currently existing instrumentation?
- Are the selected product, features and price appropriate? Have follow-up costs been calculated realistically?

After the review has concluded, the responsible statutory bodies of the DFG will be involved. First, the Committee on Scientific Instrumentation, or (for IT systems) the Commission on IT Infrastructure, will evaluate the outcome of the review and consider, if appropriate, additional aspects to prepare an award recommendation. This recommendation will then be presented to the DFG Joint Committee as the final deciding body.

The decision of the DFG will be forwarded to the responsible contact person as well as the relevant state government and university. The university will be in charge of procuring the instrumentation. Depending on state regulations, the necessary funds must be requested from the state or from the university, as well as from the DFG. After the purchase has been completed, the state or the university must submit a proof of usage to the DFG.

Three years after the purchase, the lead applicant must submit a report on the history of the usage and operation of the instrumentation and on the results that have been achieved, or are expected to be achieved, by the projects of the working groups named in the proposal.²

II. Proposal Outline

1. Cover letter by the applicant institution³

Depending on state regulations, the proposal must be submitted by the state or by the university. A letter from the state or the university must be included with the proposal. The proposal documentation must demonstrate that co-financing by the state or the university is ensured.

2. Proposal form

The proposal form (DFG form 21.10) must be completed and signed by the applicant in charge, i.e. generally the leader of the working group that will use the equipment primarily. Co-financing must be pledged explicitly in item 10.2 of the proposal.

The summary should be brief and easy to understand. Abbreviations as well as names of persons, companies and product types should be avoided.

² The form can be found on the DFG website as: *41.35 Verwendungsnachweis Großgeräte für die Forschung*. See: [DFG - Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft - Formulare und Merkblätter](#)

³ If the proposal is submitted in connection with a research building or is itself for a research building (in case of major instrumentation over €5 million), this should be stated explicitly (cf. item 2 ff. of the proposal form).

3. Curricula vitae

The curricula vitae of the participating researchers may list no more than five publications per person.

4. Supplements on Research

For each relevant working group wanting to use the equipment, a Supplement on Research (DFG form 21.101e) must be submitted with the respective working-group leader's signature. The supplements should explain the special significance and utilisation of the equipment for each working group.

5. Supplement on the Operation and Usage Concept

The Supplement on the Operation and Usage Concept (DFG form 21.202e) must be included with the proposal. Depending on the type of usage (operated locally or at a central facility), the individual points should be addressed in appropriate detail. If a central facility (e.g. analytical centre, data processing centre) is involved, the facility leadership should expressly endorse the plan. The university or institution must certify that it will underwrite any follow-up costs.

6. Supplement with Explanation of Performance Class and Product Selection

The requirements on the instrumentation as well as the product specifications and performance class needed for the proposed projects must be justified, and the choice of vendor must be explained based on current offers and, if necessary, market research. It is helpful to list the features of the desired product in tabular form (components, gross unit prices, configuration drawing if necessary) and to compare competing offers by their key-component specifications, cost / benefit ratio, and other criteria (quality, ergonomics, follow-up costs, manufacturer service etc.) (DFG form 21.103e).

7. Current vendor offers

The submission must include vendor offers for the desired configuration as well as alternative offers that have been taken into consideration. Offers should be current as of the submission date, include a price breakdown by key components, and indicate the gross total amounts.

III. Obligations

Approval of the grant will be contingent on matching funding by the university's home state.

The grant must be claimed within 12 months after the award letter has been received.

By accepting the grant, the university undertakes to submit three years after the purchase a report on the results accomplished using the instrumentation. The list of publications made possible by the use of the instrumentation should include no more than the ten most important papers.

A template for such a report (DFG form 21.12) can be found on our website.

IV. 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. 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 the individual case are decisive.

You can find information on the rules of good scientific practice at:

http://www.dfg.de/en/research_funding/legal_conditions/good_scientific_practice/index.html

V. Publication of Research Findings

The DFG expects that the scientific findings enabled by the use of the major research instrumentation be made available to the public.

The data necessary for processing your grant proposal will be stored and processed electronically by the DFG. If a grant is awarded, your contact data (telephone, fax, e-mail, website) as well as information on the content of your research project (e.g. topic, summary, keywords, international cooperation) will be published in the DFG's project database GEPRIIS (<http://www.dfg.de/gepris>) and — in excerpts (name, institution and location of the applicant) — in the “Programmes and Projects” section of the DFG's electronic annual report (<http://www.dfg.de/jahresbericht>). If you want any of this information to be published in a different form than stated in the proposal, or if you do not want it published at all, please notify us in writing no later than four weeks after you receive your award letter.