Proposal Preparation Instructions
Proposals to Establish Research Units
I. General Instructions

Funding proposals\(^1\) are to be submitted jointly by all researchers involved in the Research Unit. They are jointly responsible for the scientific conduct of the project. One of the researchers in the Research Unit assumes the position of spokesperson and represents the Research Unit in dealings with the DFG and other bodies.

The proposal process takes place in two stages:

1. In the first stage the participating researchers submit a draft proposal to the DFG Head Office. This should outline the Research Unit's research programme in accordance with the questions set out under item 3. (approximately 10 pages in length) and include a summary (about 1 to 2 pages in length) for each of the proposed individual projects.

To illustrate and enhance your presentation you may refer to your own and others' publications. Indicate whenever you are referring to other researchers' work and explain your own preparatory work. Please list all cited publications in your bibliography. This reference list is not considered your list of publications. Any unpublished work must be included with the proposal. However, note that reviewers are not required to read any of the works you cite. Reviews will only be based on the text of the actual proposal.

Please note that the DFG may reject any proposals not in compliance with these rules.

Furthermore, the draft proposal must include information on the project leaders (for each project leader, submit a CV and a list of up to ten of his/her most important publications; plus one project-specific list of publications per individual project. Follow the Guidelines for Publication Lists.

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Please include a cost estimate as well.

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\(^1\) The language in which the funding proposal may be submitted should be agreed upon with the relevant programme division prior to submission.
The draft proposal, which may be submitted at any time, is sent to reviewers. If the draft proposal is approved, the applicant may submit a full funding proposal for the second stage of the proposal process.

2. The full proposal should particularly describe the proposed research work, relevant preliminary work and the type and nature of the cooperation between the applicants, in accordance with the questions set out under 3.a) to g) and in a format suitable for peer review. This full framework proposal can only be submitted by the Research Unit’s spokesperson via elan

https://elan.dfg.de

The coordination proposal, too, may only be submitted via elan by the spokesperson. Please use the relevant template in elan, available in German or English, for the framework proposal’s project description and to justify funds as part of the coordination proposal.

www.dfg.de/formulare/53_02_elan
www.dfg.de/formulare/53_03_elan

Individual project proposals within the Research Unit should be submitted in accordance with the instructions on submitting project proposals.

www.dfg.de/formulare/54_01

A review panel evaluates the proposal to establish a Research Unit, usually at the site of the proposed unit, and develops a funding recommendation for the appropriate decision-making bodies at the DFG.

3. The following questions apply to the Research Unit as a whole:

a) What is the specific relevance and topicality of the joint research project and what are the objectives? Is the collaboration based on an innovative and coherent concept? Can the stated objectives only be achieved through the proposed cooperation? Do you intend to involve all of the relevant disciplines necessary to work on the topic?
b) What are the specific areas of qualification of the participating scientists/working groups with regard to the project? What preliminary work has contributed towards this? If applicable, why is a working group from another European country or a commercial or industrial company involved, and how is this of particular importance to the Research Unit as a whole?

c) What are the expected benefits of the collaboration between the participating scientists? How is the collaboration structured, especially in cases where Research Units are situated at more than one location? Are the locations proposed justified and appropriate in terms of establishing a research priority and/or facilitating local collaboration with the university?

d) In the case of Research Units located at multiple locations, how are the opportunities afforded by network communication (such as the internet) used? What other forms of communication will be used in addition to this? If appropriate, how will information and communication technology be used within the research work itself, other than for communication between the participants? (Examples may include interactive planning and conduct of experiments, data sharing for division of work or comparative analysis.)

e) How do you plan to integrate and promote early career researchers?

f) Gender equality measures
   How will the female researchers be integrated into the network and what funding opportunities are envisaged?
   What kind of family-friendly options do you have?

g) What key results do you expect in the short to medium term? What long-term results are anticipated?

II. Obligations

In submitting a draft or full proposal to the DFG, you agree to:
1. **adhere to the rules of good scientific practice.**

   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 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;
   - denying voting rights and eligibility in elections for DFG statutory bodies and committees.

By accepting funding, the recipients agree to:

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2 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).
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.