

Leaflet

Integrated Research Training Groups in Collaborative Research Centres

1. Definition

Doctoral researchers who work in Collaborative Research Centre projects, regardless of the funding source, are eligible for participation in an Integrated Research Training Group.

2. Objectives

Promoting young researchers is one of the goals of the Collaborative Research Centre programme. Collaborative Research Centres offer excellent working conditions for doctoral researchers. The newly designed module for structured doctoral training is based on the experiences and structures from the Research Training Group programme. Research Training Groups integrated into Collaborative Research Centres should visibly promote the research independence and further qualification of doctoral researchers. Thus Collaborative Research Centres can become even more attractive to young researchers.

3. Delimitation and Requirements

The establishment of an Integrated Research Training Group within a Collaborative Research Centre should become the norm for all locations currently without an existing structured doctoral programme covering doctoral researchers working at the Collaborative Research Centre. However, a Collaborative Research Centre may also be approved without having proposed, or received a funding recommendation for, an Integrated Research Training Group.

Collaborative Research Centres and Research Training Groups that have largely overlapping topics should not be established at the same location (previously approved funds are exempt from this policy). Further restrictions on flexibility should not be imposed. The goal is to increase efficiency by focusing funding for closely related research projects. For the establishment of Research Training Groups that are not linked to Collaborative Research Centres, the standard procedural rules regarding delimitation from other projects apply. A thematic overlap is acceptable if the Research Training Group's topic and/or structure is sufficiently unique. For instance, the establishment of an International Research Training Group may be considered a unique feature.

The duration and funding of an Integrated Research Training Group are tied to the funding periods for the Collaborative Research Centre. The research programme of the Integrated Research Training Group is based on that of the Collaborative Research Centre.

The qualification programme, which should be embedded in the structure of the university, may include scientific and job-preparatory courses that relate to the research programme, courses on how to communicate research to the expert community and the general public, and instruction on the rules for ensuring good scientific practice. Furthermore it may entail doctoral researchers participating in organising the Collaborative Research Centre's visiting researcher programme, as well as spending periods abroad.

University lecturers who are not members of the Collaborative Research Centre can also participate in the qualification programme.

The system for selecting doctoral researchers should be transparent (international selection procedure, performance-based criteria). There is no requirement for announcing all positions.

Supervisory structures should likewise be transparent. This may entail appointing more than one advisor as well as entering supervisory agreements (including rules on filing intermediate reports, regular communication, and scheduling), unless degree regulations already provide for this. Furthermore, regular progress checks should be planned (taking into account the researchers' publications and presentations in order to promote their research independence and visibility).

In terms of the organisational structure it is recommended that the head of an Integrated Research Training Group also be a member of the executive committee of the Collaborative Research Centre. Furthermore it is important that doctoral researchers be involved in the organisational structure, e.g. by electing a spokesperson.

4. Funding

As before, all funding for staff, equipment and consumables required for the Collaborative Research Centre's activities should be justified and applied for under the project headings.

In addition, some short-term scholarships (lasting up to twelve months) for doctoral researchers and medical doctoral researchers may be requested, e.g. to attract doctoral researchers from other countries, include doctoral researchers who propose their own projects, or create an incentive for medical researchers to undergo doctoral training. The scholarship amount is based on the pay scale for Research Training Groups (see DFG forms 5.01, section 4, and 2.22, section 2.1, along with annexes 1.30w and 1.30o, available in German only).

Furthermore it is possible to request funding for the following items specific to the Integrated Research Training Group: organisation and implementation of the qualification programme, co-ordination, consumables, and travel expenses for short-term scholarship holders.

It is expected that doctoral researchers in an Integrated Research Training Group be able to benefit from the Collaborative Research Centre's budget for visiting researchers, travel, and conferences/colloquiums, and to help decide, via their spokesperson, how a portion of this budget is used.

V. Proposal

Eligibility for proposing an Integrated Research Training Group lies with the university that hosts the Collaborative Research Centre. During the transitional phase (until the end of 2007), integrated Research Training Groups may be established within one year after the beginning of the Collaborative Research Centre's funding period, by submitting a subsequent proposal. Research Training Groups that are active within the immediate environment of a Collaborative Research Centre may be integrated into the latter by submitting a renewal proposal.

The topical description of an Integrated Research Training Group, which covers areas such as the qualification programme, the selection and supervisory concepts, and the organisational structure, should be placed under a separate project heading ("Integrated Research Training Group"). The general part of the proposal should refer to this project under the "Promotion of Young Researchers" heading.

As before, staff funding for doctoral researchers, along with direct project-related funding, should be justified and applied for under the scientific projects.

Funding specific to the Integrated Research Training Group should be justified and applied for under its own project heading ("Integrated Research Training Group").

Additional doctoral-researcher funding for travel, visiting researchers, and colloquiums should be justified and applied for under the main administrative project.

For funding usage and accounting, the usage guidelines for Collaborative Research Centres apply (DFG form 5.01, available in German only).

A renewal proposal for a Collaborative Research Centre must include a report on the usage of funds granted for an Integrated Research Training Group, the elements of the qualification programme, and the status of each doctoral researcher.

For additional information, please refer to the DFG forms available under www.dfg.de/sfb >> Formulare und Merkblätter.

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