Guidelines

Specialised Information Services

DFG

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 efficient nationwide research information systems.

The specialised information services funded by the DFG contribute to enabling Germany-based researchers of all disciplines, irrespective of where they work, fast and direct access to specialised literature and research-specific information that are not available at every institution in the same scope and in the same quantity. By concentrating on expert publications and on offering information focussed on specific disciplines, specialised information services aim to supplement the local information infrastructure at universities and research institutions by providing services for special demand.

To accommodate the various disciplinary interests, specialised information services are run by several research libraries and other service and information facilities that are nationally significant for the research areas for which they are providing services. The DFG and the facilities are jointly responsible for achieving this objective. The function and principles of the thematic structure of the services are set out in detail in the **Guidelines for Specialised Information Services** (available in German only):

<div align="center">

www.dfg.de/formulare/12_102

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The DFG's primary purpose in supporting specialised information services is to develop a sustainable information infrastructure that serves the interests and needs of research, thus providing an essential component for first-class basic research.

Under this programme, facilities receive funding to maintain such services. A proposal to establish a specialised information service can only be submitted if, at the time of submission, no such service with the same topic is being funded.[1]

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[1] A list of DFG-funded specialised information services can be found in Appendix A of the current version of the programme guidelines (DFG form 12.102, available only in German).

Specialised information services are tasked with supplying expert information to the relevant research communities by providing and archiving relevant printed and digital media and specialised information, by setting up and maintaining user-friendly reference and research systems, and by engaging in the development of information services of general and specialist interest.

Because different disciplines have different needs and expectations, no uniform specifications have been formulated regarding the nature of the maintenance and provision of information services; the participating facilities are responsible for setting up an appropriate structure themselves. However, two fundamental principles must be taken into account:

(1) The services must be designed to focus on the interests of the research community in the relevant discipline. The provision and maintenance of the services must therefore be supervised on an ongoing basis by experts. The facilities must establish systematic feedback mechanisms between the information service and the research community.

(2) The services offered must differ from the general tasks of scientific libraries and information facilities and offer added value compared to existing provision. This means that when they acquire their holdings and develop additional services, the specialised services must concentrate on areas that extend beyond the basic needs of research institutions for the disciplines in question.

As many of the technical/organisational tasks faced by the individual specialised information services will be the same or similar and the implementation of these tasks will entail a high workload and require special expertise, overlapping structures are envisaged that enable these tasks to be combined and carried out together. The establishment of these structures is supported by the DFG with special funding in the form of calls.

2   Proposals

2.1   Eligibility

In general, members of non-profit research information and service facilities (e.g. libraries, archives, museums, computer and media centres and data service centres) are eligible to apply.

For joint projects, please note the following for potential cooperation partners: Researchers in Germany, or those working at a German research institution abroad, who have completed their academic training (generally by obtaining a doctorate) are 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-Gesellschaft, 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 facility that is able to maintain the project findings and ensure their sustainability.

a) Project requirements

Only facilities at which the necessary stability, continuity and efficiency are guaranteed through appropriate financial backing are eligible to manage a specialised information service. A key condition is an adequate, secured and consistently available budget (particularly for acquisition funding), appropriate staffing and a suitable information technology infrastructure.

Setting up and operating specialised information services encourages and requires dialogue and close collaboration with external, non-DFG funded facilities. To fulfil their tasks effectively, the participating facilities and cooperation partners must cultivate ongoing dialogue with the relevant national and international information and research institutions, depending on the subject area.

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b)   Project results

A prerequisite for funding is that the acquired publications funded through the DFG can be made accessible via suitable mechanisms to any researchers belonging to the respective research community and that they are archived and made available for the long term. The acquired publications must be catalogued in accordance with best library practices and the metadata entered into national reference systems.

The requirements for the acquisition and licensing of publications are set out in the "Guidelines for the Purchase of Publications in DFG-funded Specialised Information Services for Research").

www.dfg.de/formulare/12_101

If printed material will be digitised under this programme, the institutions agree to comply with the current version of the "DFG Practical Guidelines on Digitisation".

www.dfg.de/formulare/12_151

c)   Financial contributions

Facilities responsible for a specialised information service must finance the following themselves:

- Personnel costs associated with purchasing acquisitions made in conjunction with regular research library transactions;
- Author, title and subject indexing and catalogue enrichment;
- Regular coordination and collaboration activities in specialised information services;
- Activities that relate to ensuring the ongoing operation to provide information, including, but not limited to, maintaining a suitable technical infrastructure;
- Ensuring long-term verifiability and availability of holdings and information content financed through DFG funding or the facilities' own funds.
- The facilities must contribute 15% of the total licensing costs for electronic media that will be made available digitally nationwide (the remaining 85% is covered by the DFG grant). For the acquisition of all other media, a 30% self-contribution is required.
- The facilities must contribute a third of the total costs of digitisation in accordance with the terms of the DFG funding programme "Cataloguing and Digitisation".

2.3 Format and deadline

a) Proposal structure

Proposals for projects in the area of scientific library services and information systems must be structured in accordance with the relevant proposal preparation instructions:

www.dfg.de/formulare/12_01

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

- Precise definition of the content and focus of the specialised information service and target audience(s)
- Fulfilment of the two basic funding principles (consideration of the interests of research and added-value of the services and how they differ from existing basic services)
- Collaboration with other facilities, including agreements on content and organisation

For renewal proposals:

- Your own assessment of the previous use of the services
- Assessment of the type and results of exchanges with user groups
- Description of the sustainability of the long-term services and/or project work

Where relevant, refer to the information in the data sheet (see I.2.3 b).

For item 5.4 of the project description (Formal assurances), please provide a formal declaration that "the funding conditions have been met and the institution agrees to contribute financing from its own budget".

b) 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

The data sheet "Specialised Information Services" must be completed and submitted with the proposal. The data sheet can be downloaded at:

www.dfg.de/formulare/53_36_elan

If you are proposing measures to digitise printed materials, please include the "Indexing and Digitisation" data sheet with your proposal.

www.dfg.de/formulare/53_37_elan

c)　　Submission deadline and grouping the proposals

Proposals must be submitted by **02 May** of the year which precedes the term of the project.

To facilitate planning of the review, we ask that you inform the DFG Head Office by **01 March** of the same year of your intent to submit a proposal. The letter of intent should describe the thematic focus of the specialised information service, what agreements have been made with other such services, and, if applicable, what cooperation partners will be involved.

3　Duration

Funding is normally approved for three years. The term runs for three calendar years. Renewal proposals can be submitted.

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. This does not include acquisition funding (see below).

www.dfg.de/formulare/52_01

2   Acquisition funding

This module provides funding to support the acquisition of special research literature, from the costs of purchasing a book from a normal supplier to licence fees and other costs associated with a purchase.

www.dfg.de/formulare/52_16

The conditions governing the use of funding for acquisitions under the "Specialised Information Services" funding programme are set out in the "Guidelines for the Purchase of Publications in DFG-funded Specialised Information Services for Research":

www.dfg.de/formulare/12_101

Please categorise your requested acquisition funds and justify the amounts. List the exact amounts that you will be contributing for acquisitions. Using specific examples, illustrate the scope and depth of the service's acquisition profile.

3   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

III   Obligations

In submitting a proposal to the DFG, you

1.   agree to adhere to the **principles of good scientific practice**.[2]

The principles of good scientific practice include, among others: maintaining professional standards, maintaining strict honesty with regard to one's own contributions and those

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[2]   The principles of good scientific practice can be found in detail in the DFG Code of Conduct - Guidelines for Safeguarding Good Research Practice and in the Funding Guidelines: General Terms and Conditions of DFG Grants (DFG form 2.00).

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of third parties, documenting results and rigorously questioning all findings.

2.   recognise the DFG's **Rules of Procedure for Dealing with Scientific Misconduct** (Verfahrensordnung zum Umgang mit wissenschaftlichem Fehlverhalten - VerfOwF)[3] as legally binding.

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 in accordance with its Rules of Procedure, 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 (full or partial termination of the grant contract, 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 serving as a reviewer for a period of one to eight years, depending on the severity of the scientific misconduct;

▪   exclusion from membership in DFG bodies and committees for a period of one to eight years, depending on the severity of the scientific misconduct;

▪   denying voting rights and eligibility in elections for DFG bodies and committees for a period of one to eight years, depending on the severity of the scientific misconduct.

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[3]   DFG Rules of Procedure for Dealing with Scientific Misconduct, DFG form 80.01

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By accepting funding, the recipient agrees to

3.   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.

4.   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

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:
- Formal and organisational queries
  Christoph Dinklage (e-mail: Christoph.Dinklage@dfg.de, phone: +49 228/885-2402)

- Queries on proposal submission

  Dr. Michaela Bilic-Merdes (e-mail: Michaela.Bilic-Merdes@dfg.de; phone: +49 228/885-2857)

  Dr. Kathrin Winkler (e-mail: Kathrin.Winkler@dfg.de; phone: +49 228/885-2201)

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

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