

# Guidelines and Supplementary Instructions

## Open Access Publication Funding



Disclaimer: The English translation of this document is provided for informational purposes. In the event of a discrepancy between the English and the German versions, the German text takes precedence.

# **I Programme Information**

## **1 Objectives and Scope of Funding**

### **1.1 Background**

Open access enables researchers in Germany to make their research results freely available worldwide and to publish them in a reusable form without legal or technical barriers. Fees are often charged for primary open access publication (initial publication via open access). These are increasingly being covered by the central departments of a research institution – such as the library – or managed at such central points. Structurally consolidated management of these fees can provide a better overview of an institution's expenditures and resources for information provision and publishing. It also enables a better overall view of cost developments. This overview is not only relevant to individual institutions, but also to obtaining an overall assessment of the future development of open access publication costs in Germany.

### **1.2 Objective**

Open Access Publication Funding is a set allowance granted to institutions for the publication of research results via open access. It recognises that open access plays a functional role in improving research communication and that its pricing should reflect this purpose. The overall objective of open access publication funding is to facilitate structures for financing open access transformation while improving transparency with regard to the costs involved for the publication of research results in open access.

The programme's aims are threefold. First, research institutions whose funding model has changed to publication-based accounting may receive funding to help facilitate this shift. Second, the provision of funding will help institutions supported through this programme to create adequate structures or undergo structural adaptations to enable them, as far as possible, to identify the number and costs of publications in an automated and standardised manner. The programme supports the institutions with the introduction and development of such structures by awarding allowances to offset the open access publication fees of their researchers. These funds must be managed in a central department at the institution, generally the library.

Open access transformation ultimately requires structural adaptations to the entire system for financing the costs of scholarly publishing. The third aim of the programme is therefore to create a transition to open access funding in which research funders assume financial responsibility for the publications arising from the research they fund. In the long term, the DFG will only cover the costs of publications resulting from DFG-funded research. The programme has

been divided into two phases to facilitate this transition. The second phase in particular paves the way for open access publication charges to be met by the DFG.

### 1.3 Scope of funding

Research institutions can apply for funds for their researchers' open access publications. In the **first proposal phase (proposals received 2021 to 2023)**, funding needs should be calculated according to an institution's total number of open access articles in which the corresponding author affiliated with the applicant institution, or the first author, is required to pay fees and the articles appear in quality-assured open access publication channels, or in journals to which open access transformative agreements<sup>1</sup> apply. A set allowance of €700 per article is available for the publication of research articles in this first funding phase.

In the **second proposal phase (2024–2027)**, funding needs should be calculated according to the number of open access publications arising from DFG-funded research in which the corresponding author or first author affiliated with the applicant institution is required to pay fees and the articles appear in quality-assured open access publication channels, or in journals to which open access transformative agreements apply. Funding acknowledgements can generally be used to determine the number of articles and cost estimates resulting from DFG-funded research. The use of funding acknowledgements is regulated in the DFG's funding guidelines.<sup>2</sup> A set allowance of €1,400 per article is available for the publication of research articles in this second funding phase.

The following applies to **both proposal phases**: Funding requests can also be submitted for open access monographs or open access books, but only for those where it can be demonstrated that they result from a DFG project and that the author is employed by the applicant institution. Funding of up to €5,000 per title can be requested for the publication of open access books. Open access books also include anthologies, provided these will not be funded by another source (for example through conference or membership fees). In the case of anthologies, only editors can receive funding, not individual contributors. Funds can also be requested for publications involving research data or other primary publications in open access (e.g. enhanced publications, preprints – i.e. preliminary versions of articles appearing in open access, or articles only appearing via publication server without prior peer review) insofar as the costs

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<sup>1</sup> An overview of these agreements can be found in the ESAC registry: <https://esac-initiative.org/about/transformative-agreements/agreement-registry/>

An overview can also be found in the guidelines applicable to Plan S.

<sup>2</sup> DFG Funding Guidelines, form 2.00, section 13.1: [www.dfg.de/formulare/2\\_00](http://www.dfg.de/formulare/2_00)

per publication can be determined. In the case of consortia open access models or membership fees, proposals can be submitted for allowances at the stated rates of €700 or €1,400 per article or €5,000 per book. Double funding of the same publication in different aggregation forms (e.g. preprint and journal article, contribution to an anthology and journal article) is not permissible.

Publication fees can be covered for open access publications that undergo a recognised quality assurance procedure. Open peer review, post publication peer review and community peer review, etc. are generally recognised as being such a procedure, provided that the process includes verification and correction opportunities either before or after publication.<sup>3</sup>

Calculation of the funding needs is to be distinguished from use of the approved funds. Granted funds are earmarked for open access. They may also be used in both phases for articles that do not result from DFG-funded research. They can be used for all articles that appear in eligible outlets. A link between the funded publication and DFG project funding must only be guaranteed in the case of open access books. The Publication Grants Programme (DFG form 51.10) can be used for all other open access books.

Open access publication funding complements the funding of open access infrastructures, for which the Infrastructures for Scholarly Publishing programme (DFG form 12.11) is available.

## 2 Proposals

### 2.1 Eligibility

Proposals may be submitted by higher education institutions and non-profit institutions under private law, including non-university research institutions and German research institutions abroad that are publicly funded or are non-profit organisations and that permit their members to publish their research outputs in a generally accessible format. Proposals must be submitted by the institution's management or a duly authorised individual. University hospitals are eligible via the university's management. The duty to cooperate (DFG form 55.01) does not apply for non-university institutions.

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<sup>3</sup> Quality assurance for Open Access Gold should be based on the titles in the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ). An individual review should be conducted in the case of journals that are not listed. Decisions at the level of publishers can be based on membership in the Open Access Scholarly Publishers Association (OASPA). In the case of books, it is also possible to check whether the publisher is listed in the Directory of Open Access Books (DOAB). Think.Check.Submit should also be consulted; book publishers can now also be checked there.

## 2.2 Funding conditions

- Procedures should be established or planned to ensure that, where necessary, authors can receive funds for open access publications in a simple and uncomplicated manner if no framework agreements, transformative agreements or other central mechanisms for covering the costs apply.
- The authors are obliged to make all publications and project results, including research data, source codes and metadata of the publications, permanently available for reuse by the public free of charge in a legally secure manner. In cases where copyrights or related rights apply, the authors are required to grant appropriate open licences. The DFG recommends using a CC-BY license for articles and a CC-BY-SA license for monographs (in exceptional cases CC-BY-ND). Source codes should be licensed with an open source license. This includes comprehensive documentation according to common standards.
- The institution must strive to gain an overview over decentralised funds that are used for publications. These could be funding budgets at individual institutes and departments or in decentralised libraries in a two-tier system. Insights should in particular be obtained about the use of funds acquired for publications via the basic module in DFG research projects or as direct project funding in DFG coordinated programmes.
- All content available online that is financed using DFG funding must be prepared, indexed and/or disseminated in a manner that guarantees the maximum potential for retrieval, e.g. through appropriate metadata. Metadata must meet relevant standards for it to be integrated into international subject-specific or other cataloguing systems. Where possible, publications should be assigned a DOI and be linked to an author's ORCID profile.
- Funded institutions must generally agree to make publication metadata (including the cost data for the overall costs of publications) openly accessible via an infrastructure proposed by the DFG. They should also agree to participate in measures aimed at standardising the recording of open access costs and to follow all relevant standards.
- Institutions must secure the long-term archiving of the publications they finance.

## 2.3 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](http://www.dfg.de/formulare/12_01)

Please refer to the supplementary guidelines below under section **V.** regarding the specifics of submitting a proposal under the Open Access Publication Funding Programme.

## 2.4 Submission deadline

Proposals must be submitted by 4 May of each year in the period from 2021 to 2027. Proposals may be submitted in the second phase if a proposal was not submitted in the first phase.

## 3 Duration

Initial funding can be approved for up to three years. The overall duration of funding may not exceed six years. Special proposal conditions apply to new and renewal proposals in the years 2024 to 2027 (see above, section 1.3 Objectives and scope of funding).

It is possible to apply for a maximum of three years in the first and second phase each.

## II Funding

Only publication funding can be requested through this programme.

## III Obligations

In submitting a proposal to the DFG, you

1. agree to adhere to the **principles of good research practice**.<sup>4</sup>

The principles of good research practice include, among others: maintaining professional standards, maintaining strict honesty with regard to one's own contributions and those 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)** as legally binding.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> The principles of good research 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).

<sup>5</sup> [DFG Rules of Procedure for Dealing with Scientific Misconduct, DFG form 80.01](#)

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.

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 Data Protection

Please note the DFG's Data Protection Notice on research funding, which can be viewed and downloaded at [www.dfg.de/privacy\\_policy](http://www.dfg.de/privacy_policy). If appropriate, please share this information with individuals whose data is processed by the DFG due to the fact that they are involved in your project.

[www.dfg.de/privacy\\_policy](http://www.dfg.de/privacy_policy)

## V Supplementary Instructions

Please base your proposal on the Proposal Preparation Instructions for Project Proposals in the Area of Scientific Library Services and Information Systems (LIS) (DFG form 12.01).

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

In addition, refer to the information in these supplementary instructions on submitting proposals for open access publication funding. The section titles below are based on the titles in the proposal preparation instructions. Proposals must be submitted via elan.

[elan.dfg.de](http://elan.dfg.de)

### Part B Project Description:

#### 1. State of the art and preliminary work

- Describe how your institution currently determines the number of publications, both for articles and for books and monographs. What processes are used to support the monitoring of publications? What organisational and technical policies have already been established for this?
- Do you obtain publication data externally (e.g. Open Access Monitor) or do you provide data about open access to third parties (e.g. OpenAPC)?
- Explain how your institution currently determines cost data. Are publication costs systematically collated? If so, what systems and procedures are currently in use? What costs are collated (PAR fees, APC, page and colour charges, etc.)? If publication costs are not yet being collated, please indicate the status of your plans.
- Where and how are open access funds currently being managed at your institution? Are the funds centrally budgeted or are they made available locally or both centrally and

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locally? Are you implementing or planning to implement the integration of open access costs into your budget allocation model?

- Describe the types of payments supported at your institution (memberships, deposits, framework agreements, transformative agreements, open access consortia, preprint infrastructures, etc.). Indicate which providers have received the largest payments for open access publication over the past three years.

### **2.3 Work programme and proposed research methods**

- Indicate what processes are to be established or expanded at your institution during the funding period to collate institution-wide information on the number of publications by members of the institution and the costs of these publications. Please elaborate on the use of ORCID at your institution.
- Explain how and what measures will be implemented to provide a central overview of all resources available for open access publications at your institution. Please also refer to decentralised funds that are paid for open access (and for other publication costs if possible).
- Comment on the transaction costs for processing invoices and on other processes relating to open access financing.
- Provide information on what measures are taken at your institution to ensure the inclusion of funding acknowledgements in publications resulting from third-party funding.
- Indicate whether and, if so, how the resources available for open access are to be allocated fairly, for example with regard to the needs of individual research areas, different career stages of authors and/or other relevant aspects.

### **4.3 Measures to meet funding requirements and handle project results**

- What are your institution's procedures for assuming publication costs if these costs are not incurred through centrally managed agreements? Explain what processes are used to pay for open access publications that do not have a centrally managed agreement.
- It is recommended that the funded publications be made available independently of the provider, for example via your own institutional repository or a subject or discipline repository. Explain the referencing systems that will be used to make the funded publications available.
- Long-term accessibility to publications must be ensured. Funded institutions do not have to provide long-term storage themselves: this can also be provided by third parties. Indicate how long-term accessibility to publications funded through the programme will be ensured.
- Where possible, invoice data and other data relating to the publication should be available in a standardised, machine-readable format and automatically collated. Refer to your institution's processes for recording and paying costs.

### **4.4 Formal assurances**

- Please confirm in your proposal that “the publications resulting from the project as well as relevant metadata will be made available in open access and will be available to third parties for their extensive use”.
- Confirm that the funded publications are CC licensed.
- Declare that long-term storage is being provided.
- Confirm your agreement to deliver metadata for the funded publications to a data collection centre and to make them publicly available.

## **5.9 Financial contributions**

As an allowance is granted to offset the full costs (see section 1.3 Objectives and scope of funding), a set financial contribution by the institution is not required. Note, however, that applicants are required to provide sufficient funding to enable publication of all open access publications that demonstrably arise from a DFG project.)

## **6.1 Requested funding**

Indicate the annual costs of open access (total costs including VAT) in the last three years prior to the submission of your proposal. Also include in the proposal an overview of the funds available for open access publication at your institution (central and local / budget funds and third-party funds). Indicate the number of publications (by publisher if possible) and the amount required for the proposed funding period. Differentiate between **all** open access publications, open access publications **subject to fees** and **open access publications that may be used to calculate the funding amount (open access publications arising from DFG-funded research)**. Please set out this information in tables for the years 2023-2025 (proposals in 2026). For open access publications that may be used to calculate the funding amount, please distinguish between golden open access publications and publications based on transformation agreements, as well as other open access models, where applicable. Name the sources on which your presentation of the publication figures is based.

When requesting funding, note the following:

- An institution can only receive funds to the amount of the sum that is incurred for open access publications, arising from DFG-funded research, by its members. The funds can be used for publications whose authors are to be regarded as members of the institution at the time of publication (publication date) and are subject to payment.
- When determining the number of publications, a distinction must be made between different types of publications (research article, non-research article). Calculations may only be based on research articles, not for other article categories.
- You cannot apply for funds to cover administrative fees and minimum participation fees (e.g. in the case of DEAL agreements), even if these fees can be attributed to individual articles or books. Charges incurred in addition to the open access publication fee (e.g. fees for licenses, colour images, number of pages, etc.) cannot be funded. In general, additional fees should not apply. Submission Charges and article development charges may also not be requested. nor can funds be proposed for or used to finance publications

that could have appeared in open access but have not appeared there due to opt-out regulations.

- To be able to request funding for open access monographs or open access books, it must be possible to determine the number of previous or potential open access books by authors funded through the DFG. For proposals for funding open access books, the publisher must transparently disclose the service providers associated with the payment of fees; these are to be reviewed by the institution. Authors or their institutions should ideally obtain two comparative quotations from publishers. Compliance with the quality standards for open access monographs defined by the university publishers working group (AG Universitätsverlage) is mandatory.<sup>6</sup> The DFG allowance is particularly intended for quality assurance procedures, for proof-reading and for findability. Open access books that are published in parallel in a print version can also be funded, provided that the DFG allowance is only used for the freely accessible, easily findable, citable digital version. Funds for anthologies can only be proposed for the editors having to pay the entire volume, not for individual contributions.
- Funding needs for the proposed funding period should be calculated based on the publication volume to date (previous three years). The entire term of the current agreement can be used as the basis when proposing funds for open access transformative agreements, i.e. funds can also be requested retrospectively providing that accounting is publication-based and the relevant (subsequent) payments are made. Funds can only be requested retrospectively for publication-based compensation payments in the years 2021 to 2023. For proposals submitted in the second programme phase starting in 2024 this will no longer be possible.
- Please allocate the (assumed) number of publications to the publishers or other publication channels (e.g. platforms, preprint servers) in the proposal as far as possible. Please note the tables in DFG form 12.211.

[www.dfg.de/de/formulare/12\\_211](https://www.dfg.de/de/formulare/12_211)

## Part C Appendices:

- Should the institution's management want to delegate submission of a proposal to someone within the institution, the corresponding DFG form (12.201) must be submitted.

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<sup>6</sup> Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Universitätsverlage (2022). Qualitätsstandards für Open-Access-Bücher (Quality standards for open access books) (Version 2). Zenodo. <https://zenodo.org/records/7075761>

## VI Information

For further information, please contact:

- Formal and organisational queries  
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