Guidelines for Reviewing Knowledge Transfer Projects in Research Training Groups and International Research Training Groups

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 General Information

Transfer projects may be integrated within existing Research Training Groups (RTG). Proposals for transfer projects are reviewed on the basis of a written proposal, which may be submitted either as part of a renewal proposal for a second RTG funding period or as a supplemental proposal while the RTG is in progress.

In your review, please consider the following criteria. The explanations and questions for each criterion are illustrative.

II Review Criteria

1 Quality of the Research Training Group’s prior work and assessment of further developments within a transfer project

- Please evaluate, to the extent relevant for the proposed transfer project, the scientific quality of the findings generated to date by the Research Training Group. How will this expertise be used in the transfer project?
- What is the significance of the project from a technical, economic, cultural, and/or socio-political point of view (also in relation to its cost)?
- To what extent is the transfer project an innovative transfer of the Research Training Group’s findings?

2 Application partner

- Please evaluate the suitability of the application partner in relation to the proposed project.
- Is the application partner’s contribution necessary and sufficient?
- For projects with commercial application partners: Is the transfer project in a pre-competitive area? Give reasons for your assessment.

3 Objectives and work programme

- Does the transfer project provide opportunities for one or more dissertations/theses?
Are the transfer project’s objectives and success criteria plausible? Can they be evaluated?

Will the work programme be jointly supported by both the Research Training Group and the application partner?

Please assess the extent to which the work programme is appropriate to achieve the stated objectives.

4 Working conditions and environment

Please assess whether the staff, institutional, spatial and instrumental resources are adequate to successfully undertake the project.

5 Scope of funding

Does the work programme justify the proposed staffing requirements?

Is the proposed instrumentation, if any, necessary for the transfer project, and will it be fully utilised by it? Can it be considered contemporary core support?

What budget will the project need for consumables, travel and other costs? Please review the individual items in the proposal and suggest an appropriate amount, either for each item or for the total.

6 Added value for the Research Training Group

Is the transfer project expected to have an impact on the Research Training Group? To what extent can the transfer project be linked to other projects or theses in the Research Training Group? To what extent will the other doctoral researchers also benefit from the inclusion of the transfer project?

Does the transfer project enable the participating doctoral researchers to obtain research and professional qualifications? If so, how? Will the participating doctoral researchers be included in the qualification and supervision strategies?

To what extent does the transfer project offer new forms of doctoral training and supervision?

Has the role of the transfer project within the context of the Research Training Group in general been presented in a coherent and persuasive manner?
- Have adequate legal agreements been made to govern matters such as the further use and publication of the data and outcomes generated in the Research Training Group by its doctoral researchers?
- How do you rate the significance and scope of this transfer compared to other collaborations with non-university partners?
- Is a separate transfer project necessary and appropriate?

Please make a clear recommendation as to whether you believe this project should be funded.

III Additional Aspects of the Review

1 Confidentiality

All proposals submitted to the DFG, the correspondence with reviewers, the reviews and the identity of the reviewers and participating review board members must be treated confidentially.

The scientific content of a proposal you review may not be exploited for your own and/or others’ scientific purposes. The contents may not be forwarded to third parties – including third parties within your department/work area.

2 Obligation to Observe the Principles of Good Research Practice

The principles of good research practice must also be observed during the review process. A violation of these principles can result in a charge of scientific misconduct. In particular, any infringement against the principles set out in “Guideline 16: Confidentiality and neutrality of review processes and discussions” is considered scientific misconduct.

3 Conflicts of Interest

The DFG Head Office is not able to investigate all circumstances that could be interpreted as a conflict of interest. The DFG therefore relies on your assistance to

1 The principles of good research practice are presented in detail in the DFG Code of Conduct Guidelines for Safeguarding Good Research Practice.
determine whether your participation in the review meeting would be appropriate and to enable us to contact another reviewer early on if necessary.

Should circumstances exist that may be interpreted as a conflict of interest, please inform the responsible DFG staff before participating in a review meeting. If you participate in a DFG meeting without first having contacted the DFG regarding a possible conflict of interest, the DFG Head Office will assume that, to the best of your knowledge, no apparent conflict of interest exists. If you realise during or after a meeting that there may be or may have been an apparent conflict of interest, you should also contact the DFG Head Office immediately.

The DFG Guidelines for Avoiding Conflicts of Interest (DFG form 10.201) can be found on the DFG website.

www.dfg.de/formulare/10_201

4 Diversity and Equity in Research

In all of its funding programmes, the DFG actively promotes diversity and equity in German science and academia. The review must not be based on non-scientific criteria such as age, gender, family obligations, origin or health restrictions, to the detriment of the applicant. Applicants are encouraged to declare periods of absence and periods of restricted academic activity due to unavoidable delays in their career.

Further information on diversity and equity in research can be found at:

www.dfg.de/diversity/en

5 Important Information on Data Protection

The DFG takes the protection of your personal data very seriously. The proposal documents on which your review is based regularly contain personal data that is protected by data protection laws, particularly by the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). In order to protect this data, we therefore request that you observe the following guidelines on the confidential handling of personal data when preparing your review.
Data protection law stipulates that personal data must be protected by sufficient security measures to prevent any access by unauthorised parties as well as accidental loss. Please take the necessary measures to comply with data protection law, for example by choosing secure passwords, securing PCs, etc. We also ask that you take measures to protect the proposal documents in your home workplace against access by other persons in your household or by other third parties.

If you are working outside the DFG systems (elan), for example saving the proposal documents onto a local end device, please make sure to delete personal data immediately or to securely destroy it when it is no longer required. This should be done in a secure manner (in the case of printed documents, by not disposing of them in a wastepaper basket but by using a paper shredder).

Please help us to recognise and remedy any data privacy incidents, and report all technical difficulties or irregularities to us when using DFG systems (elan), as well as any (potentially) unauthorised access to personal data contained in the proposal documents. Examples of such incidents include:

- Unauthorised use of your elan login data
- Cyberattacks leading to access to personal data contained in the proposal documents by unauthorised parties
- If documents containing personal data relating to the proposal are stolen or read in the event of a break-in
- If USB sticks, mobile phones or laptops containing unencrypted personal data in connection with a proposal document are lost or stolen

In such cases, please contact: datenschutz@dfg.de.

With regard to your own personal data, please take note of the DFG’s data protection notice for reviewers, which can be viewed and downloaded at www.dfg.de/privacy_policy. By taking up your duties as reviewer, you hereby confirm acknowledgement of this data protection notice.

www.dfg.de/privacy_policy