

Guidelines

for Proposals under the Programme
State Major Instrumentation
with

Proposal Preparation Instructions



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Guidelines

for proposals under the programme State Major Instrumentation

I Objective

Under this programme, major instrumentation is procured for German universities and university clinics and financed by the states/universities. The DFG is commissioned by the federal states to review proposals for major instruments that are to be used for research, teaching and training, or for clinical care. The funds can serve this purpose either directly or indirectly. Major instrumentation also includes central IT systems.

II Eligibility

Universities and university clinics are eligible to apply.

Proposals for state major instrumentation can be submitted to the DFG at any time in accordance with the respective state guidelines. The state and/or university must guarantee financing. The gross acquisition costs must at least be €100,000 for universities of applied sciences and €200,000 for all other universities.

III Scope of Funding

Funding is available for the investment costs of major research instrumentation. A separate proposal must be submitted for each independent major research instrument.

A major research instrument is the sum of the components, including accessories, that form a functional unit for the intended operational purpose. There should be an appropriate relation between the main instrument (including software) and accessory equipment or supplements. Accessory equipment and supplements are not necessarily required to be directly relevant for the main instruments operability. Building measures are not considered part of the equipment.

The necessary criteria for being considered a major instrument can also be met by central IT equipment (computers, storage, network components or software), if their necessity is linked to concepts and they can be reviewed and assessed under a scientific perspective.

The DFG reserves itself the right to reject reviewing and assessing a proposal, if there are doubts about the instrument meeting the necessary criteria for being considered a major instrument e.g.:

- a set of independently operatable devices
- a collection of laboratory equipment, if they do not form accessory equipment or supplements to a major instrument.

Software, Upgrades, accessory Equipment and supplements can by themselves be considered a major instrument if the required investment surpasses the de minimis limit.

Additionally the DFG reserves itself the right to deny accepting proposals, that cannot be reviewed and assessed under a scientific perspective. In particular, these are:

- Technical equipment and installation without scientific function (e.g. tractors / machines for agricultural tasks; clean rooms without an inherent scientific functionality; etc.)
- Library equipment or systems without a scientific functionality (e.g. loan systems)
- Standard IT network equipment of purely infrastructural nature
- Instrumentation for contracted and service examinations without a scientific purpose

IV Obligations

In submitting a proposal to the DFG, you

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

The principles of good scientific 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)² as legally binding.

¹ 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 "[Besondere Verwendungsrichtlinien für Forschungsgroßgeräte nach Art. 91b Abs. 1 S. 1 GG](#)" (DFG form 2.18).

² [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.

V 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. If necessary, please also forward this information to those individuals whose data will be processed by the DFG due to their involvement in your project.

www.dfg.de/privacy_policy

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Proposal Preparation Instructions

I General Information

Proposals may be submitted in German or English.

The university appoints a person as the responsible spokesperson. The responsible spokesperson prepares the proposal and submits it electronically to the DFG via the elan portal. This role, is in most cases assumed by the head of the working group that will primarily use the instrument. The responsible spokesperson also serves as the contact for all content-related queries relating to the proposal.

Following submission, a compliance form is automatically generated by the elan system. This form must be signed by the responsible spokesperson and forwarded to the relevant office in the university administration, which confirms by signature that the proposal has been submitted on its behalf. Finally, the confirmation of co-financing has to be given in accordance with AV-FGH and the relevant state guidelines. The completed and signed original compliance form is then sent to the DFG.

The DFG will begin to process the proposal once we have received the compliance form. An acknowledgement of receipt that will include the project reference number will be sent to the university, the relevant state ministry and the applicant. We ask that this reference number be used in all correspondence relating to the proposal.

Note:

The DFG has issued specific statements and informations with regard to certain kinds of instrumentation technologies. We ask that you review this information as it may be relevant for your proposal (some documents may only be available in german).

www.dfg.de/wgi/notes_information

Please follow the link below to find answers to frequently asked questions regarding scientific instrumentation and information technology (available in German only).

www.dfg.de/.../wgi_faq

Proposals for major research instrumentation are handled by the DFG's Scientific Instrumentation and Information Technology Division.

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The current processing status can be monitored on the DFG's elan portal by the responsible spokesperson. We may contact the responsible spokesperson (by mail oder e-mail) in case of questions regarding formal or scientific matters that require clarification prior to the review.

After the proposals have been verified for formal correctness, they will be forwarded to expert researchers in the relevant area for review.

The review will consider the following criteria, restricted to the intended areas of use:

- Do the researchers' scientific activities and proposed projects justify the acquisition?
- Does the intended use in teaching an training justify the acquisition?
- Do the requirements for clinical care justify the necessity for the proposed instrumentation?
- Is the central project or IT-System necessary and suitable for the intended goals and objectives?
- Is the acquisition necessary considering existing equipment and usage concepts (i.e. core facilities) at the location?
- Are the technical prerequisites for a successful usage met at the site of installation? Is adequately experienced and skilled staff present to ensure the operation?
- Are the selected product, features and price appropriate? Have follow-up costs been calculated realistically?

www.dfg.de/formulare/10_205/

Note that you may be requested to provide additional information and/or clarification during the review.

After the review has concluded, proposals are forwarded to the Committee on Scientific Instrumentation and Information Technology that will evaluate the outcome of the review, potentially considering additional aspects.

The DFG's recommendation will be sent to the university, the relevant state ministry and the applicant.

The responsibility of the procurement of the instrumentation and their operations lies solely with the university and the federal state. The DFG`s recommendation is valid for a period of two years

II Proposal Process and Proposal Structure

The proposal documents may be downloaded via the DFG website.

www.dfg.de/wgi

Information to have prepared for entry within the elan-portal:

The summary of the proposal and its science related goals (maximum of 3000 characters, no special characters) in German and English

1 Project Description (as one document in elan)

The project description has to be done using the template Project Description – for State Major Instrumentation (DFG form 21.20a for major instrumentation).

www.dfg.de/formulare/21_20a

Or in case of central IT-Equipment ((DFG form 21.20b for central IT-Equipment).

www.dfg.de/formulare/21_20b

The information provided within the templates has to be adhered to.

2 Curriculum vitae/curricula vitae (to be uploaded to elan in one document)

The curricula vitae of each scientist that contribute Supplements on Research have to be compiled into one document. Note that a maximum of ten publications is allowed in each curriculum vitae. The Guidelines for Publication Lists (DFG form 1.91) have to be adhered to.

www.dfg.de/formulare/1_91

3 Current quotes or corresponding supplier information (in elan as two documents)

Necessary at the time of submission is to enclose a recent quote or corresponding supplier information for an exemplary/favoured configuration as well as alternative quotes that were taken into consideration. Quotes should include a price breakdown by key components, and indicate the gross total amounts as well as any negotiated discounts. The quotes for the exemplary/favoured configuration and the collection of all alternative quotes should each be the enclosed in one PDF document. If there is a large number of quotes or the quotes are extensive the creation of an index or overview could be considered.

4 Additional attachments (optional)

It might be reasonable to submit additional documents with the proposal (e.g. cooperation agreements, usage rules, central concepts for IT-infrastructures, research data management, or the requested technology, and unpublished scientific manuscripts). The supplements should have a clear connection to the proposal and be of relevance to the review. The project description should make references to the supplements. Essential aspects to the proposal are to be addressed in a self explanatory manner within the project description.