

Guidelines

Scientific Networks with Proposal Preparation Instructions



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.

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Guidelines

I Programme Information

1 Objective

Scientific networks offer researchers at all career stages the opportunity to engage in multi-year scientific exchange and cooperation on a topic area of their choice across locations. A network consists of a set group of individuals who, over a defined period, will work on the common topic area to attain a specific outcome.

Scientific networks may be used

- to promote national and international networking between researchers at an early stage of their careers. Supporting researchers in early career phases is especially important to the DFG.
- to promote networking between researchers who want to work on new interdisciplinary or strategic research questions in a results-focused approach and require a flexible organisational framework in which to do so.
- to promote networking between researchers who want to address topic areas of a strategic nature where the exchange of ideas at international level appear to be particularly productive. To be eligible for funding, either the research must be expected to produce important impetus for Germany or the research policy aspect of the cooperation with individuals in the chosen country or countries must play an essential role.

The proposal must explain what scientific and/or research policy outcome the network members aim to achieve through the exchange (e.g. preparation of joint research, publication of jointly produced results, impetus for the further development of scientific methods, or plans for the development or optimisation of subject-specific infrastructure).

2 Proposals

2.1 Eligibility and membership

2.1.1 Eligibility

Researchers in Germany, or those working at a German research institution abroad, who have completed their academic training (a doctorate as a rule) are eligible to apply for the funding required for the network.

In general, individuals who 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 are not eligible to apply.

The network may be coordinated by multiple individuals, but the funding proposal may only be submitted by one person. One individual may also be named as co-applicant.

2.1.2 Membership

A network generally consists of 10-20 individuals. Women should be represented to an appropriate degree corresponding to their general representation in the relevant subject area.

All researchers who are eligible to submit proposals to the DFG can be members of a network. Researchers from non-university institutions as well as doctoral researchers can also be admitted. Since the objective is to promote the development of networks across locations, within Germany as well as internationally, members must not all belong to the same research institution; no more than half of the members may be based in research systems outside Germany.

2.2 Format and deadline

Proposals may be submitted to the DFG at any time.
Please follow the proposal instructions below.

3 Duration

The maximum funding period is three years.

II Requested Funds

1 Travel

Funding for travel may be requested for working meetings of the network members (full group or individual members).

Topically relevant guests may also be invited to individual meetings.

Meetings should normally be held in Germany. In justified individual cases, a meeting may be held outside Germany.

2 Other

Funds may be requested to support coordination. Consideration should especially be given to funding for staff (normally student assistants) who assist the coordinator in organising meetings.

3 Publication expenses

To subsidise the costs of the publication of the network's research findings, funding of up to €750 per year may be granted and used for any form of publication (with the exception of "grey literature"). If proper publication of findings calls for a book format with high production costs, an increased publication grant of generally up to €5,000 per year may be awarded based on an appropriate justification in the proposal.

III Obligations

In submitting a proposal to the DFG, you

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

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)² 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;

¹ 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).

² [DFG Rules of Procedure for Dealing with Scientific Misconduct, DFG form 80.01](#)

- 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:

- 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.
- 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 for Research Funding, which you can access 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

Proposal Preparation Instructions

A proposal to establish a scientific network consists of the following three parts:

A - Proposal Data and Obligations

B - Project Description

C - Appendices (academic curriculum vitae with a list of the coordinator's most important scientific results)

To complete an electronic proposal form, and to transmit your proposal data and related documents securely, please use elan, our electronic proposal processing system:

elan.dfg.de

Proposals can only be submitted via elan.

Proposals may be submitted either in German or in English.

A Proposal Data and Obligations

Here you are asked to enter information on the project and accept the required formal obligations. The project information must contain a summary in German and in English.

Please enter this information via the DFG's electronic proposal form provided in elan:

elan.dfg.de

B Project Description

For the description of your project, please use the appropriate template in German or English provided in elan. Your project description may not exceed 20 pages in length.

In sections 1 and 2 you may refer to an unlimited number of your own works and those of others that are publicly available. Please list the publications you cite here in the Project- and subject-related list of publications (section 3).

Indicate clearly throughout the proposal whenever you are referring to your own work or that of other researchers. The absence of any such indication may constitute a breach of good research practice, and in individual cases may constitute scientific misconduct according to

the Rules of Procedure for Dealing with Scientific Misconduct (VerfOwF). Your own preliminary work, if publicly available, is to be listed with the date of publication. If this preliminary work was based on DFG funding, please refer to the respective stage of a funding period in the text of the proposal.

If, in preparing your proposal, you used artificial intelligence (AI) in the form of generative models for text and image creation, please disclose this fact in a scientifically appropriate manner in your proposal. For more information, see the [“Research Integrity” portal](#).

Template instructions:

1 State of the art and preliminary work

Network topic area and its relevance in current scientific discourse

Describe the network’s topic area taking into account its relevance in current scientific discourse and any research policy aspects.

This description must be concise and understandable without referring to additional literature.

2 Objectives and work programme

2.1 Anticipated total duration of the network

Please state the proposed duration of the network (maximum three years).

2.2 Proposed outcome of the network

Explain the research objectives and the intended outcome of the network (see I.1).

2.3 Network members

List the proposed members of the network (including name, research institution, research area and employment status – for fixed-term contracts, include the duration of the contract) and explain each person’s relevant expertise and anticipated contribution to the network.

2.4 Proposed number of meetings and their research topics

State the proposed number of working meetings and briefly describe the research topics that will be addressed. Please relate this to the proposed outcome of the network.

2.5 Envisaged guest experts at meetings

If you plan to invite guest experts to individual meetings, name the envisaged individuals here, if possible (including name, research institution, research area and employment status), and outline their anticipated contribution to the network.

2.6 Other information

Please use this section for any additional information you feel is relevant which has not been provided elsewhere.

3 Project- and subject-related list of publications

In this list of publications, list only the works you cited in your presentation of the state of the art. The font used for the publication list should not be less than Arial 9 point.

You can refer to your own works and those of others; there is no limit to the total number of publications listed. Works which are not in the public domain are not considered publications and cannot be cited. An exception is made for papers that have already been accepted for publication, in which case the manuscript and the editor's confirmation of acceptance must be enclosed.

Per network member, a maximum of two of their own publications that are relevant to the project can be highlighted in bold or some other way.

Note that reviewers are not required to read any of the works you cite. This also applies to review sessions that are held by reviewers on site. Here it is possible to provide manuscripts and publications created prior to the review session in order to be able to explain progress reports at the meeting so that reviewers can view them if necessary. However, reviews are only ever based on the text of the actual proposal.

Please note the "Guidelines for Preparing Publication Lists" (DFG form 1.91):

www.dfg.de/formulare/1_91

4 Requested funds

4.1 Travel

When calculating travel and maintenance costs, please take into account the planned number of meetings and the number of guest experts you intend to invite. To estimate costs, please refer to the public travel expenses regulations. If meetings are to be held outside Germany, please justify the choice of venue.

4.2 Other

If you require funding to support the coordination of the network (normally funding for student assistants), please state the requested amount and what tasks these staff will perform.

4.3 Publication expenses

If you wish to request publication funding, state this here. If you require more than the standard amount of €750 per year, you must submit a separate justification in accordance with item II.3 of the guidelines above.

5 Researchers with whom the coordinator has collaborated scientifically within the past three years

This information will assist the DFG's Head Office in avoiding potential conflicts of interest during the review process.

6 Other submissions

List here any grant proposals for this project previously submitted to a third party.

C Appendices

The proposal must include the applicant's academic curriculum vitae with a list of their most important scientific results. The template provided (DFG form 53.200) must be used for this purpose.

www.dfg.de/formulare/53_200_elan

Please also submit the academic CVs of all members of the network, in a single document.

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To enable reviewers to assess an applicant's scientific track record appropriately, applicants may indicate in their CVs any circumstances that might have hampered their scientific work, for example, periods in which they were unable to work continuously due to childcare obligations or due to prolonged serious illness or disability.

Each academic curriculum vitae must include the list of the most important publications or published results of the applicant in question. The information can relate to the person's entire academic career; the publications need not be directly related to the proposed project. The list is to be divided into two parts:

- The first **mandatory** category (A) may contain articles in peer-reviewed journals, peer-reviewed contributions to conferences or anthology volumes, and book publications; a maximum of ten publications.
- The number of publications listed in the second **optional** category (B) is like-wise limited to a maximum of ten. Any other form of published results can be cited here (e.g. non-peer-reviewed contributions to conferences or anthology volumes, articles on pre-print servers, data sets, protocols of clinical trials, software packages, patents applied for and granted, blog contributions, infrastructures or transfer). You may also indicate other forms of academic output here, such as contributions to the (technical) infrastructure of an academic community (including in an international context) and contributions to science communication.

Please note the "Guidelines for Preparing Publication Lists" (DFG form 1.91):

www.dfg.de/formulare/1_91

For **proposals submitted electronically via elan**, you will be asked to upload the required documents before submission. Please make sure that the security settings for the PDF documents allow your documents to be read, copied and printed, and note the maximum size of 10 MB per document.