

Guidelines

General Guidelines for Reviews



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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Your participation in the review process serves as an important basis for the DFG's decision-making process. We will notify you of the review outcome.

The DFG will share your written statement or the vote of the review panel with the applicants **in anonymised form**. The DFG will also share the written reviews from all the reviewers involved with all reviewers in anonymised form. This also includes your review.

Please treat the proposal documents confidentially. To ensure the confidentiality of the review process but also for reasons of data protection, only you as the reviewer may have access to the proposal documents. The contents may not be forwarded to third parties – including third parties within your department/work area.

The main **review criteria** include:

- **Quality of the project**
- **Objectives and work programme**
- **Applicants' qualifications**
- **Work and research environment**

These criteria generally apply to all proposals; note, however, that some funding instruments may have programme-specific criteria and considerations. Therefore, please use the relevant guidelines when preparing your review.

Please also provide a **clear recommendation** as to whether the proposal should be approved and, if so, whether the requested funds are appropriate.

Important information:

The **principles of good research practice** must also be observed during the review process. Detailed information can be found in the DFG [Code of Conduct "Guidelines for Safeguarding Good Research Practice"](#).

A violation of these principles can result in a charge of scientific misconduct in accordance with the DFG's [Rules of Procedure for Dealing with Scientific Misconduct](#) (Verfahrensordnung der DFG zum Umgang mit wissenschaftlichem Fehlverhalten – VerfOwF).

Please examine whether any circumstances exist that might give rise to an appearance of **bias, favouritism or conflict of interest** on your part. For more information, please refer to the Guidelines for Avoiding Conflicts of Interest (DFG form 10.201)

www.dfg.de/formulare/10_201

In the proposal you will find a project- and subject-related list of publications, and also a list of scientific results in the curriculum vitae. The DFG provides clear guidelines regarding the structure of publication lists in a proposal. To find out more, see our Guidelines for Publication Lists (DFG form 1.91). Please include the publication lists in your assessment, especially the highlighted papers in the proposal's list of publications.

www.dfg.de/formulare/1_91

Assessment of the achievement of a researcher must be carried out in its entirety and based on **substantive qualitative criteria**. In addition to the publication of articles, books, data and software, other dimensions can be taken into account, such as involvement in teaching, academic self-administration, public relations or knowledge and technology transfer. Details of quantitative metrics such as impact factors and h-indices are not required and are not to be considered as part of the review.

We ask you to consider a researcher's **individual career stage** when evaluating the qualification of the applicant and to assess his/her achievements on this basis. In some cases, this may mean that preliminary work specific to the project cannot necessarily be expected.

Please also take into account that some researchers may have pursued **individual career paths** in a business or non-university context.

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.

For more information about diversity in the research system and **equal opportunities**, please refer to

www.dfg.de/diversity

The individual procedural steps are summarised under

[How does the DFG decide on funding proposals?](#)

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 destroy it in a safe manner when it is no longer required. This should be done safely (in the case of printed documents not by disposing of them in a waste paper 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
- Cyber attacks 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/en/privacy_policy