

Guidelines

Major Instrumentation Initiative 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.

I Programme Information

1 Objective

The aim of the Major Instrumentation Initiative Programme is to fund costly major instrumentation and equipment with outstanding or novel technology for use in research. The early provision of a technology enabled through a major instrumentation initiative should have a positive and tangible effect on the relevant fields of research and be a prerequisite for a wide range of research projects of high originality and excellent quality. Major instrumentation initiatives are aimed at universities as applicant institutions. The awarding of funding in this programme obliges the recipient to make a proportion of capacities of the technology available for external research use and represents an institutionally relevant component of infrastructure profiling for the applicant institution.

2 Process

The DFG can launch major instrumentation initiatives in response to recommendations from the research community. Ideas for a major instrumentation initiative are submitted in the form of concepts.

Once a year, the Committee on Scientific Instrumentation and Information Technology evaluates the concepts received in a comparative process. Expert reviews may be sought in advance, and other DFG bodies may also participate.

At the recommendation of the responsible bodies, and based on concepts that have been evaluated positively, the DFG will set up the initiative and will invite proposals using the Information for Researchers format. Following a review process and assessment, the Joint Committee of the DFG decides on the proposals.

II Submission of Concepts

1 General Information

A concept provides justification as to why the DFG should implement the recommended major instrumentation initiative. It explains why the availability of the proposed outstanding instrument technology is necessary for knowledge-driven research and defines the target group within the research community. A concept describes the extent to which the proposed instrument technology is distinct from currently available and accessible technologies and explains the particular relevance, originality and topicality of research projects that would be made possible through a DFG major instrumentation initiative. It defines an approximate budget for a funded project and an appropriate funding duration. The concept also includes an estimation of the type and number of institutions that might submit proposals within the initiative. It specifies the prerequisites and requirements that the institution would have to meet for the operation of an approved item of equipment.

2 Format and deadline

Concepts for a major instrumentation initiative can be submitted by researchers. A responsible person must be named for the concept. The names of individuals who submit concepts are not published and they do not play a particular role or fulfil any other function in the remainder of the process.

Concepts are submitted by e-mail only to the following address:

wgi@dfg.de

Concepts can be submitted at any time.

The concept for the implementation of a major instrumentation initiative comprises a document of no more than ten pages which is based on the template "Concept to issue a Call for a Major Instrumentation Initiative" (DFG form 21.71).

www.dfg.de/formulare/21_71

It may be supplemented by supporting letters (e.g. from researchers, university administrations, scientific and academic associations or companies), combined into a single document.

III Major Instrumentation Initiative

1 Proposals

1.1 General Information

Proposals for funding in a major instrumentation initiative can only be submitted in response to the specific call for proposals that is issued at the beginning of a major instrumentation initiative and defines the deadlines, research topics and instrumentation specifics. In particular, proposals must satisfy the requirements specified in the call for proposals in relation to form and content, even if these exceed or differ from those in the guidelines or template.

The focus of a major instrumentation initiative is on the funding of major instrumentation. The applicant institution must fulfil the requirements for the operation of the instrumentation. A confirmation to this effect must be included in the proposal.

The call for proposals text is the basis for the subsequent evaluation of proposals. The review criteria essentially correspond to those for general research funding (General Guidelines for Reviews – DFG form 10.20), supplemented by the objectives of the major instrumentation initiative as defined in the call for proposals.

www.dfg.de/formulare/10_20

In addition, the review process will take into account the general objectives of the Major Instrumentation Initiative Programme as well as instrumentation-related, infrastructural and strategic development considerations at the applicant institutions.

1.2 Eligibility

Proposals may be submitted by publicly funded universities and non-publicly funded universities in Germany. In the case of universities governed by private law, the (host) institution must be recognised as a non-profit organisation.

1.3 Format and Deadline

Project proposals can only be submitted via elan.

elan.dfg.de

The deadlines and funding duration are specified in the respective call for proposals. Proposals are submitted in English.

The applicant university chooses a person to be responsible for the proposal. This person acts as the spokesperson and handles correspondence relating to the content of the proposal. The responsible spokesperson submits the proposal electronically via elan.

Funding proposals for a major instrumentation initiative must follow the proposal preparation instructions below.

2 Proposal Modules

In a major instrumentation initiative, you may submit one or more of the following modules. For more details, please see the respective guidelines for each module.

Please refer to the call for proposals for details of the modules and funding items that can be applied for. Proposals within major instrumentation initiatives should not ask for funding for the actual research to be performed with the instrumentation, but only for measures that aim at providing the capabilities of the instrumentation to the research projects that, of course, ultimately justify the proposal. For this reason, funding is not offered for doctoral positions.

Funding items may be requested within the following modules:

2.1. Basic Module

Use the basic module to request funding for direct project costs, project-specific staff, and instrumentation necessary to carry out the research project.

www.dfg.de/formulare/52_01

2.2. Replacements

If your project requires that you be released from teaching or administrative duties, you can use this module to request funding for a replacement to take over these responsibilities.

www.dfg.de/formulare/52_03

2.3. Temporary Substitutes for Clinicians

If this project requires that clinicians conduct research, you can use this module to request funding for temporary substitutes to take over their patient-care responsibilities.

www.dfg.de/formulare/52_04

2.4. Start-Up Funding

Promising researchers in early career phases should gain facilitated access to advanced instrumentation and research infrastructures in order to pursue their own research ideas. These can aim to answer research questions but also focus on methodical and technological aspects. The Start-Up Funding module can be utilised for explorative experiments which can serve as the basis for drawing up independent project proposals.

www.dfg.de/formulare/52_11

2.5. Module Project-Specific Workshops

If you would like to conduct workshops as part of your project, you may request funding to help you do so. Please note that this module cannot be submitted separately but only in conjunction with the proposed project.

www.dfg.de/formulare/52_06

2.6. Public Relations

To enable you to present your work to the general lay public, you can request funding for public relations.

www.dfg.de/formulare/52_07

2.7. Standard Allowance for Equity and Diversity

This module enables project leaders to implement targeted measures to promote gender equality for researchers and diversity in research and to make jobs in science and academia more family friendly (including care).

www.dfg.de/formulare/52_14

A total of €1,000 per funding year can be requested.

3 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) as legally binding.²

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;

¹The 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 \(VerfOwF\)](#), DFG form 80.01

- 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 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.

4 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

IV Proposal Preparation Instructions for Funding as Part of a Major Instrumentation Initiative

1 Proposal Structure

1.1 Project description

When preparing the proposal, please refer to the call for proposals for requirements in relation to form and content and other documents to be submitted. Please use form 53.101 (Project Description – Major Instrumentation Initiatives) as a template for the proposal.

www.dfg.de/formulare/53_101_elan

1.2 Curricula vitae

A document containing the academic CVs with a list of the most important scientific results of the key persons involved in preparing the proposal and operating the instrument must be attached to the proposal. The template provided (DFG form 53.200) must be used for this purpose.

www.dfg.de/formulare/53_200_elan

Please note the “Guidelines for Preparing Publication Lists” (DFG form 1.91).

www.dfg.de/formulare/1_91

1.3 Quotes

If possible, itemised, pre-negotiated quotes should be attached to the proposal. Preferred quotes and those provided for comparison are each to be combined in separate documents. If necessary to make the quotes easier to read and compare, one summary page prepared by spokesperson can be added to each set of quotes.

1.4 Supporting letters

Supporting letters, cooperation agreements and expressions of interest can be included with a proposal. These are submitted together as a single document.

1.5 Compliance form

After the proposal has been uploaded via elan, the responsible spokesperson receives a compliance form. This document must be signed by the responsible spokesperson and the university administration and returned to the DFG.

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2 Special Obligations

2.1 Terms of use

If funding is awarded in this programme, terms of use of the instrumentation must be prepared and submitted to the DFG for review. These should specifically include the arrangements for use of the instrumentation by external working groups.

2.2 Financial contributions

If funding is awarded, the applicant institutions are expected to make adequate staff and material core support available for the proposed project, acknowledge their responsibility to bear operating and follow-on costs and confirm the extent of this support in the event of an award within the framework of the proposal. Funding cannot be used for warranty extensions or maintenance contracts.

2.3 Procurement

Instrumentation funded through a major instrumentation initiative are purchased by the DFG. The DFG's general funding guidelines apply (DFG form 2.00).

www.dfg.de/formulare/2_00