

Proposal Preparation Instructions

Draft Proposals and Proposals to Establish or Renew Centres for Advanced Studies in the Humanities and Social Sciences



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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DFG

I General Instructions

A proposal for funding a Centre for Advanced Studies in the Humanities and Social Sciences is prepared jointly by several researchers (generally two to three); they are responsible for the scientific conduct of the centre as a whole. One of the applicants assumes the position of spokesperson and represents the centre in dealings with the DFG and other bodies.

The proposal process takes place in two stages. We recommend consulting with the DFG Head Office prior to submitting a proposal.

II Instructions for Preparing a Draft Proposal

Draft proposals to set up Centres for Advanced Studies in the Humanities and Social Sciences can only be submitted in response to annual calls for proposals and within the deadlines stipulated in the calls. Draft proposals must be submitted in accordance with the structure and items listed and must summarise the centre's research programme and corresponding objectives as well as any additional measure (section 1 to 3 may not exceed 8 pages in length).

A draft proposal to establish a centre can only be submitted by the spokesperson via the DFG's elan portal.

elan.dfg.de

Please use the relevant elan template, available in German or English, to prepare your draft proposal in accordance with the format provided (minimum Arial 11 point font, 1.2 line spacing):

www.dfg.de/formulare/53_23_elan

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 4).

Indicate clearly throughout the draft 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 draft 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 draft proposal. For more information, see the “[Research Integrity](#)” portal.

Draft proposals will be evaluated by a review panel including members of DFG review boards. On the basis of their assessment, the DFG Senate will advise whether applicants should be invited to submit a proposal to establish the centre.

The draft proposal should be structured as follows:

1 Research programme of the proposed centre

State and describe the topic area of the proposed centre and its methodical approach. Explain how the members’ different areas of expertise will facilitate cooperation over an envisaged period of eight years.

This should relate in particular to the centre’s objective and focus within the working area and anticipated contributions to the current state of research.

Describe how the principal investigators (i.e. applicants) will be involved and the anticipated benefits of interactions between the local researchers and fellows. Explain why the collaborative working methods are especially suitable for pursuing the centre’s objectives.

Describe what measures or activities are planned to attain national or international visibility.

2 Design of the fellows programme

A core element of a Centre for Advanced Studies in the Humanities and Social Sciences is its fellows programme. The draft proposal should list (envisaged) fellows and how they will be integrated in the centre. Describe what experience and expertise will be required of the (junior/senior) fellows, how long they will take part in the centre, and how they will be integrated in the documentation and publication of research outcomes (such as joint publications).

3 Other information

Describe whether any discussions have taken place with the university management regarding support for the centre (particularly with regard to the provision of adjoining office space and infrastructure for the fellows). If arrangements have been agreed upon, please note that no documentation of such must be provided during this proposal stage.

Please indicate whether additional institutions/facilities, stakeholders, and/or non-university partners will be involved.

If other programme elements are planned, such as setting up a professorship within the centre, public relations work, or transfer projects, please describe these aspects and how they will be incorporated within the centre.

Centres for Advanced Studies in the Humanities and Social Sciences are not designed to specifically support researchers in early career phases. However, should you plan to include researchers in early career phases in the centre to a limited extent and with their own independent projects, please explain what plans will be pursued.

Describe what measures are planned for handling **research data** within the unit. How will this be supported by the institutions participating in the project? Further information on this topic and a corresponding questionnaire are available via:

www.dfg.de/proposal_process/research_data

Outline how you plan to address gender equality for researchers, diversity in research and the compatibility of research and family (including care) throughout the centre, including the fellows programme, and what measures are planned in this regard.

4 Project- and subject-related list of publications

This list should **only** contain those works that you **cited** in sections 1 and 2.

The font used for the publication list should not be less than Arial 9 point.

For both new proposals and renewal proposals, 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.

A maximum of ten of your own publications that are most relevant to the project can be **highlighted** in bold or some other way. Even if there are several applicants, the maximum of ten highlighted works may not be exceeded.

Note that reviewers are not required to read any of the works you cite.

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

www.dfg.de/formulare/1_91

5 Estimated overall costs of the proposed centre

Please provide a cost estimate for the centre as a whole, divided into the first and second funding periods (four years each).

6 Researchers with whom you have 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.

ATTACHMENT

The proposal must include each applicant's **academic curriculum vitae**. The template provided (DFG form 53.200) must be used for this purpose:

www.dfg.de/formulare/53_200_elan

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

www.dfg.de/formulare/1_91

Note that the DFG may reject any proposals not in compliance with these rules.

III Instructions for Preparing Proposals to Establish or Renew a Centre

Proposals to establish or renew a centre must be submitted in accordance with the structure and items listed and must describe the nature of the research task, any preliminary work and the type and form of cooperation within the centre. A proposal to set up or renew a centre encompasses both a joint proposal and a coordination proposal. Both can only be submitted by the spokesperson via the DFG's elan portal.

elan.dfg.de

In the **coordination proposal**, the spokesperson requests funding for the centre as a whole (such as network funds or funds for equity and diversity). Please use the relevant template, available in elan in German or English.

www.dfg.de/formulare/53_03_elan

The coordination proposal can only be submitted by the spokesperson. In the event of a planned transfer of the role of spokesperson during the total funding period, it is possible to include the new spokesperson as a co-investigator in the coordination proposal (see section III 9.2).

In the **joint proposal**, the group of researchers jointly request the amount of funding they need individually to implement the centre; the overall description of the centre is also included in the joint proposal. The spokesperson submits the joint proposal together with the coordination proposal. Please use the relevant template, available in elan in German or English.

www.dfg.de/formulare/53_04_elan

All parts of a proposal to establish (max. 30 pages) or renew (max. 40 pages) a centre are evaluated by a review panel, which makes a funding recommendation to the relevant DFG decision-making bodies.

In sections 1 and 2 as well as 6 and 7 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 8).

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.

The following structure applies to the overall project description contained in the joint proposal:

1 Starting point

1.1 State of the art and preliminary work

Please explain briefly and precisely the state of the art in your field in its direct relationship to your project. This description should indicate the joint project's relevance and topicality to your field of research and in what areas the centre intends to make a unique, innovative, promising contribution. This description must be concise and understandable without referring to additional literature.

Describe the (joint) preliminary work and the qualifications of the participating researchers with respect to the project.

1.2 For a renewal proposal: Report on the progress to date

For renewal proposals, please report on your previous work and outcomes achieved. This report should also be understandable without referring to additional literature.

2 Centre objectives and cooperation

2.1 Objectives and research plan

Describe what objectives will be pursued by the centre. Explain what strategy will be used to facilitate cooperation between the applicants and all centre participants, particularly the fellows.

Explain the qualifications of the participating researchers and to what extent the combined expertise is essential in ensuring the centre's success.

What key results do you expect after four years (and after eight years)? What long-term results are anticipated?

2.2 Organisation of cooperation and design of the fellows programme

Describe how collaboration among participating researchers (including fellows) will be structured and what working methods are envisaged for the collaboration. If participating researchers will be exempted from teaching obligations, please describe their importance to the centre. If applicable, please also comment on the significance of the proposed professorship.

Describe the design of the fellows programme, the significance of the fellows to the centre, their integration in the centre, and how they can remain involved with the centre following their stay. Describe what criteria will be used to select the fellows and indicate their qualifications.

The description should demonstrate the added value of the collaborative working methods as opposed to working within (individual) projects.

3 Research and structural environment

To enhance the discursive character of the centre, expertise must be bundled at one site. Describe the proposed centre's significance to the applicants' university. What research focus should be achieved or enhanced?

Describe what support the university management will provide to the centre (particularly with regard to the provision of adjoining office space and infrastructure for the fellows). Please include documentation of any arrangements that have been made.

If you plan to include institutions working in the same field or in neighbouring fields (universities and/or non-university institutions), or if others will participate or cooperate in the centre, please describe this here.

4 Involvement of researchers in early career phases and promotion of equity and diversity

4.1 Involvement of researchers in early career phases

Centres for Advanced Studies in the Humanities and Social Sciences are not designed to specifically support researchers in early career phases. However, should you plan to include researchers in early career phases in the centre to a limited extent and with their own independent projects, please explain what plans will be pursued.

4.2 Promotion of equity and diversity

Explain what measures are planned within the Centre for Advanced Studies in Humanities and Social Sciences to promote gender equality for researchers (please highlight separately), diversity in research and the compatibility of research and family (including care). Discuss measures adopted by the participating university and liaise with the departments responsible for equity and diversity if required. For renewal proposals, please also report on measures already adopted.

Take into account the substance of the DFG's Research-Oriented Equity and Diversity Standards:

www.dfg.de/equity_diversity_standards

A Standard Allowance for Equity and Diversity can be applied for to fund measures to promote equity and diversity in the centre (see coordination proposal).

www.dfg.de/equity/allowance

5 National and international visibility

Describe what measures are planned to enhance the national and international visibility of the centre.

6 Handling of research data

Describe what measures are planned for handling **research data** within the unit. How will this be supported by the institutions participating in the project?

Further information on this topic and a corresponding questionnaire are available via:

www.dfg.de/proposal_process/research_data

7 Relevance of sex, gender and/or diversity in the research project

Where applicable, please describe whether and if so to what extent the sex, gender and/or diversity

- of persons under study,
- of individuals affected by the implementation of research results,
- of animals under study,
- with regard to samples taken from humans or animals,
- of researchers,
- or in other respects

is relevant to the research project (methods, work programme, objectives, etc.).

The relevance may vary depending on the subject area, project topic or methods and according to the different stages of the research project (ranging from the development of research questions through to application), for instance.

Additional information is available at:

www.dfg.de/diversity_dimensions

8 Project- and subject-related list of publications

This list should **only** contain those works that you **cited** in sections 1 and 2 as well as 6 and 7.

The font used for the publication list should not be less than Arial 9 point.

For both new proposals and renewal proposals, 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.

A maximum of ten of your own publications that are most relevant to the project can be **highlighted** in bold or some other way. Even if there are several applicants, the maximum of ten highlighted works may not be exceeded.

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

9 Supplementary information on the research context

9.1 Ethical and/or legal aspects of the project

9.1.1 General ethical aspects

Taking into account the discipline-specific standards and ethical regulations relevant to your project, indicate whether you anticipate any risks and/or harm to individuals or groups and/or the potential for other negative effects that might be posed by your research. If so, how do you intend to address these issues within the project?

In general, applicants should examine whether their projects require a statement by an ethics committee.

9.1.2 Descriptions of proposed investigations on humans, human materials or identifiable data

Please describe the ethical and legal aspects of your investigation(s):

- criteria for the selection of test persons,
- justification of the number of test persons or sample size,
- description of potential risks and precautions taken,
- explanation provided for test persons and method of informed consent.

Note that in addition to accepting the formal obligations, an ethics committee vote may have to be included as well. The use of human material obtained for diagnostic purposes also requires a statement to be issued by the local ethics committee.

9.1.3 Descriptions of proposed investigations involving experiments on animals

Note that in addition to accepting the formal obligations in part A with regard to compliance with the regulations and provisions of the German Animal Welfare Act and the German Experimental Animals Ordinance, the planned animal experiments must be described. Please explain how the principle of the 3Rs (replacement, reduction and refinement) will be implemented with regard to various aspects of scientific validity. If you have addressed these topics in previous sections, reference them here.

Additional information and guidelines are available in the publication Animal Experimentation in Research: [The 3Rs Principle and the Validity of Scientific Research](#).

9.1.4 Descriptions of projects involving genetic resources (or associated traditional knowledge) from a foreign country

For research conducted abroad involving biological materials (or associated traditional knowledge) or research on biological objects originating from outside Germany, note that such projects may be subject to the regulatory requirements of the Nagoya Protocol under the Convention on Biological Diversity and the access and benefit-sharing (ABS) portions contained therein. Guidance on conducting such projects can be found, for example, in the publication “Proposals for Research and/or Development Projects Involving Access to Genetic Resources and/or Traditional Knowledge Associated with Genetic Resources”, published by the DFG Permanent Senate Commission on Fundamental Issues of Biological Diversity:

www.dfg.de/en/dfg_profile/statutory_bodies/senate/biological_diversity

Please comment on the ABS requirements that affect your project and indicate any steps you have taken or plan to take to fulfil these requirements. Discuss the role of your project’s cooperation partner with regard to the provider country (the country providing access to the material/traditional knowledge). Explain what materials may be transported to Germany. Note that in addition to access and benefit-sharing agreements with the provider country, a declaration of due diligence may also be required in line with the German law “Gesetz zur Umsetzung der Verpflichtungen nach dem Nagoya-Protokoll und zur Durchführung der Verordnung (EU) No 511/2014 sowie zur Änderung des Patentgesetzes”.

9.1.5 Explanations regarding any possible safety-related aspects

9.1.5.1 “Dual Use Research of Concern”; foreign trade law

Please check whether there are indications in your planned research project that possible research results could produce knowledge, products or technologies that might be directly misused for significant harmful purposes (Dual Use Research of Concern, DURC).

If there are such indications, please familiarise yourself with the recommendations issued by the DFG and Leopoldina on handling security-relevant research, which you can find on the web page linked in the next paragraph. In your proposal, describe how the risk/benefit ratio is to be assessed and what measures are planned to minimise the risk.

If due to the regulations at your university or research institution, a committee for ethics in security-relevant research (KEF) or a comparable body is to be involved in advance and asked to issue a statement on the project, please include this statement with the proposal. For further information, see the DFG website on [handling security-relevant research](#).

Research must comply with foreign trade regulations (especially the War Weapons Control Act [Kriegswaffenkontrollgesetz], EC Regulation No. 428/2009 [EC Dual Use Regulation], the Foreign Trade and Payments Act [Außenwirtschaftsgesetz], the Foreign Trade and Payments Ordinance [Außenwirtschaftsverordnung] or embargo regulations) relating to the non-proliferation strategy and the handling of potentially critical goods, including technologies, software and sensitive knowledge transfer; applicants are advised to examine their projects accordingly. Information for researchers is available on the website of the German Federal Office for Economic Affairs and Export Control (BAFA)¹.

If you require further clarification, please contact BAFA directly. For projects subject to licensing, please note that licences must be obtained from the responsible authority prior to beginning research on the project.

¹ https://www.bafa.de/DE/Aussenwirtschaft/Ausfuhrkontrolle/Academia/academia_node.html

9.1.5.2 Risks in international cooperation

International scientific cooperation is one of the basic principles of research. However, it is essential, particularly in the case of cooperation with researchers in countries where misuse of certain research results is to be suspected², to take potential opportunities for abuse seriously, place them in perspective with the benefits of such cooperation and make informed trade-off decisions. Use this space, where applicable, to reflect on how the risk/benefit ratio is to be assessed with regard to the research subject, research partners and research conditions, and what measures are planned to minimise risks. In doing so, please refer to the recommendations on “Dealing with Risks in International Research Cooperation” (www.dfg.de/risiken_int_kooperationen_en) and the aspects of assessment and reflection recommended in this paper.

9.1.6 Considerations on aspects of ecological sustainability in the planning and implementation of the project

In research as well, there is an urgent need for a further shift towards sustainable practices. Use this space to reflect on how sustainability considerations are taken into account in the research processes proposed. Here, you are expected to provide a brief statement that refers specifically to the strategy that will be used to facilitate cooperation and to the network-specific plans. Research quality is the pivotal factor for the funding decision, however, so this is the priority in terms of planning the research; for this reason, resource-saving and emission-reducing measures should not result in restrictions in the desired knowledge gain. If increased funding is required due to more sustainable research approaches, this can be taken into account when applying for funds. For further information, see the cross-disciplinary catalogue of guiding questions:

www.dfg.de/reflection_sustainability

9.2 Employment status information

For each applicant, state the last name, first name, and employment status (including duration of contract and funding body, if on a fixed-term contract).

If the position of spokesperson is planned to be transferred to another person during the total funding duration, this person may be included as co-investigator for the

² Indications concerning these states can for instance be derived from information issued by the Federal Foreign Office or reports released by the German domestic intelligence services, but also from national and international regulations and agreements, as well as from detailed guidelines relating to export restrictions.

coordination proposal. It is not possible for this person to apply for funds on their own within the coordination proposal or for the spokesperson to request funds within the coordination proposal for this person to fulfil coordination tasks. If applicable, please provide a short justification of the planned transfer here. As the co-investigator cannot be assigned in elan, this will be done by the DFG Head Office after proposal submission.

9.3 Researchers with whom you have 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.

9.4 Project-relevant cooperation with commercial enterprises

If you will be conducting your project in cooperation with a commercial enterprise, please note the EU guidelines on state aid.³ Depending on the circumstances, it may be necessary to conclude a contract with the company or submit a declaration to the DFG. Please refer to DFG form 4.02 “Guidelines on the Participation of Commercial Enterprises in Research Projects”. If applicable, please contact your research institution in this regard.

www.dfg.de/formulare/4_02

If you are planning to cooperate with an application partner on a transfer project, i.e. a project that tests the results generated by a DFG-funded research project or develops basic-research findings into prototypes or exemplary applications, note the supplementary instructions contained in DFG form 54.014.

www.dfg.de/formulare/54_014

9.5 Project-relevant participation in commercial enterprises

Please indicate if you are the owner of a commercial enterprise or a stakeholder in one (e.g. a director). If so, please state how your research project is linked to the company's production branch or activities. Please refer to DFG form 4.03, “Information on Work Results and Usage Rights in the Event of an Association with a Company“.

https://www.dfg.de/formulare/4_03

³ Framework for State Aid for Research and Development and Innovation (2022/C 414/01)

9.6 Scientific equipment

List larger instruments that will be available to you for the project. These may include large computer facilities if computing capacity will be needed.

If you are applying for instruments that are available at your institution, but are not at the project's disposal, please explain why this is the case.

9.7 Other submissions

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

9.8 Other information

Please use this space for additional information you feel is relevant which has not been provided elsewhere. If other programme elements are planned, such as public relations work or transfer projects, please describe these aspects.

10 Proposal Modules

Explain each item for each applicant (stating last name, first name).

A list of the modules that can be applied for can be found in the centre guidelines. Note additional instructions on submitting proposal modules in the relevant module guidelines.

If you will be applying for gender inclusion funding for spokespersons, please describe what measures are planned and explain how these funds were used during the current funding period.

For electronic proposal submissions, please note that euro amounts will automatically be rounded to the nearest hundred, which could result in slight discrepancies in the staffing amounts.

ATTACHMENTS

The proposal must include each applicant's **academic curriculum vitae**. The template provided (DFG form 53.200) must be used for this purpose:

www.dfg.de/formulare/53_200_elan

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.

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

www.dfg.de/formulare/1_91

Note that the DFG may reject any proposals not in compliance with these rules.

- a) Submit a **list of other individuals participating in the centre** who will not be financed through the centre.
- b) Include a **list of envisaged fellows**. stating their names, home institution, research area and status (envisaged, contacted, accepted).

Please give appropriate consideration to diversity when composing the Centre for Advanced Studies in Humanities and Social Sciences. Written explanations on diversity characteristics of individuals are expressly not desired within a draft proposal or proposal. Additional information can be found under

www.dfg.de/diversity/en

- c) A **letter by the university** guaranteeing what types of support it will provide to the centre must be included with the proposal. Should replacement costs be requested, the university must also confirm in writing exemption from teaching obligations.

- d) For renewal proposals, please include a **complete list of publications or scientific results brought forth by the centre.**
- e) In addition, include any **additional documents**, such as ethics statements, research papers, etc.

For **proposals submitted electronically via elan**, you will be asked to upload the required documents. 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.

Naming Protocol for Proposal Documents

Document	Document name
project description (Beschreibung des Vorhabens)	Beschreibung_des_Vorhabens
ethics statement (Ethikvotum)	Ethikvotum
complete list of publications by the centre (Gesamtliste der aus der Kolleg-Forschungsgruppe hervorgegangenen Publikationen)	Publikationsliste_gesamt
list of centre participants (Liste der Beteiligten an der Kolleg-Forschungsgruppe)	Liste_KFG-Beteiligte
list of envisaged fellows (Liste der vorgesehenen Fellows)	Liste_Fellows
letter of support by the university (Unterstützungsschreiben der Hochschule)	Unterstützungsschreiben_<name of university>
curriculum vitae with a list of scientific results (Wissenschaftlicher Lebenslauf mit Verzeichnis wissenschaftlicher Ergebnisse)	CV_PubList_<person's last name>
accepted manuscripts (Zulässige Manuskripte; erforderliche Annahmebestätigung)	<year>_<last name_author>_<keyword> Bestätigung_<year>_<last name_author>_<keyword>