

# Guidelines

## Proposal Submission in the Collaborative Research Centres Programme



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.

**Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft**

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These guidelines are intended to facilitate the preparation of a proposal under the grant programme for Collaborative Research Centres (CRCs), including the CRC/Transregio variation. A proposal for the funding of a Collaborative Research Centre must provide a complete, self-explanatory description of the research programme and the proposed funding requirement. By submitting the proposal, the applicant university/universities and the participating researchers agree to adhere to the rules of good research practice.

Proposal submission to the Collaborative Research Centres Programme must be preceded by the submission of a draft proposal and a consultation phase. Please refer also to DFG form 60.003.

Costs arising from proposal submission and from the preparation and carrying out of the review process (e.g. for personnel to draft the proposal, catering and room rental, travel and accommodation of CRC or CRC/Transregio members) cannot be covered from project funding awarded by the DFG. The costs of travel and accommodation of members of the review panel, the Grants Committee on Collaborative Research Centres and the DFG Head Office as well as the costs of dinner on the first day of the review will be borne directly by the DFG.

Further information can be obtained from the responsible programme officers in the Collaborative Research Centres division and the Excellence Strategy and Research Impulses division and, for research-related questions, the responsible programme officers in the Scientific Affairs Department. The DFG Head Office may return for revision any proposals deviating from the specifications in these guidelines or the templates mentioned below.

## **A. Preliminary Proposal**

The preliminary proposal should be submitted to the DFG Head Office as early as possible, but no later than seven months before the review date. The preliminary proposal is not reviewed; it merely helps the DFG Head Office to prepare the review and plan finances, as it provides the basis for the selection and composition of the review panel. The sooner these documents are sent to the DFG, the greater the chance of securing reviewers for the review date.

The preliminary proposal contains a complete summary table of all projects that will be submitted for funding. This also includes specific programme modules such as Integrated Research Training Groups, projects concerning information infrastructure and science communication, service projects and transfer projects. For each project, a brief summary of about one-

half page should be provided. In addition, project-related, publicly available papers by the participating researchers should be listed. The maximum number of publications that can be listed is ten.

Furthermore, the preliminary proposal includes the research profiles of all project leaders involved in the proposal. Please preface the profiles by including a table listing all participating project leaders, their gender (m, f, d), the year they obtained their doctorate and the (current) institution at which they are predominantly employed. The research profiles should be prepared according to the same rules as those for the establishment or renewal proposal (see section B.3).

Following the research profiles, a list should be included of researchers in Germany and abroad with whom collaboration or coordination exists or is specifically planned, broken down by project, and with whom the project leaders have collaborated in the past three years on joint research projects. This includes current or former members of the CRC's academic advisory board, if applicable. This is intended to help the DFG Head Office to rule out potential conflicts of interest in the review process.

Finally, for budgetary planning purposes please include an estimate of the CRC's expected funding requirements as part of the preliminary proposal. For this purpose, include a summary table of the grant funding you expect to request (sum of funding for staff, direct project costs, global funds and instrumentation funding for the entire Collaborative Research Centre, broken down by years but not by projects. Depending on the start of funding, either 1 January or 1 July, the requested funds must be distributed across four or five financial years). To calculate staff costs, please use DFG form 60.12.

Furthermore, please specify all major research instrumentation costing more than €50,000 per item for which you intend to request funding. State the name of the instrumentation, the year in which you expect to acquire it, and the expected purchase price including VAT.

Please upload the preliminary proposal via the data exchange portal provided by us. You will receive the corresponding link approximately four weeks before the submission deadline of the preliminary proposal.

## **B. Establishment and Renewal Proposal**

### **1. General instructions**

Proposals should be prepared using the templates provided for establishment proposals (DFG form 60.100) and renewal proposals (DFG form 60.200). The German versions of these templates include detailed instructions, which should be taken into consideration when preparing a proposal in English or German. Be sure to use the current version of the appropriate template. Proposals must be submitted in English. German may be used only in cases where this is justified on a subject-specific basis, after consulting with the DFG Head Office first. For English proposals, use the appropriate English-language proposal templates. The templates that include instructions are only available in German, but must also be considered when preparing English proposals.

The preparation of a proposal to establish a Collaborative Research Centre must be preceded by a consultation phase (see DFG form 60.003). For information on planning a review, be sure to note DFG form 60.022 as well. Guidelines on review criteria can be found in DFG form 60.14.

### **2. Format**

Proposals and research profiles should be submitted in A4 format with Arial 11pt font. Publication lists, captions and tables in proposals may be written in a smaller font size. A proposal must not exceed 400 pages in length (i.e. 200 double-sided A4 sheets), including any appendices. The pages of the printed proposal should be continuously numbered.

Each proposal for an individual project starts on a right page. The previous page should be left blank for notes; ideally, a light-coloured separator sheet (not to be counted towards the maximum number of pages) should be inserted here. For projects, the respective code should be indicated at the top of each page.

On the back of the proposal volume (fourth cover page), a list of all included projects should be printed. For renewal proposals, completed projects should be marked E and new projects should be marked N on the back cover as well (see also the template with instructions, DFG form 60.200 in German).

### 3. Research profiles

Each establishment and renewal proposal includes a separate volume with research profiles. These research profiles should be attached for all project leaders and should include information on each person's career and publication history. Please create each research profile using the CV template in DFG form 53.200.

[www.dfg.de/formulare/53\\_200\\_elan](http://www.dfg.de/formulare/53_200_elan)

### 4. Declarations

Please note that the spokesperson of the Collaborative Research Centre and the administration(s) of the applicant university/universities must submit declarations in the proposal relating to all individuals with a high level of scientific/academic responsibility involved in the proposal – i.e. all project leaders. The declarations confirm that:

- the information in the proposal, including the research profiles, is accurate;
- the Rules of Procedure for Dealing with Scientific Misconduct are recognised as legally binding;
- the regulations regarding the handling of statements by ethics committees are observed;
- the data protection notice has been acknowledged; and
- consent is given to the processing and transfer of special categories of personal data provided.

### 5. Additional proposal documentation

The signatures of the heads of the Collaborative Research Centre and of the applicant university or universities serve as proof of identity and consent. For this purpose, the final page of the proposal containing the declarations with all required electronic signatures must be uploaded via the *Form for Notifications, Requests and Supplements to the Head Office* in the elan portal. The package with the proposal volumes should also contain a USB stick with Documentation for the DFG Head Office. This USB stick should include all of, and only, the following documents (with no reading, copying or printing restrictions on the electronic documents). Each of these items corresponds to a single file, so the USB stick should contain no more than five files:

- 1) The complete grant proposal as a single PDF file (max. 30 MB) Please use a hyperlinked table of contents.
- 2) All research profiles as a single PDF file. Please use a hyperlinked table of contents.
- 3) An overview of the projects as in section 1.1.4 of the proposal as a single Word or RTF file

- 4) The following information in both German and English as a single Word or RTF file:
  - Title of the Collaborative Research Centre
  - Summary of the research programme of the Collaborative Research Centre (max. 3,000 characters including spaces)
  - For each project (excluding completed projects in renewal proposals): title and short summary of the work programme (max. 600 characters including spaces)
  - List of the participating institutions and institutes
- 5) In one single PDF file entitled “Documents not available to the public”: All documents referred to in the proposal volume or the research profiles but not publicly available (e.g. works accepted for publication but not yet published), including any documents of proof. Please add at the beginning of this file a hyperlinked table of contents, sorted by projects (for works cited in the proposal volume) and by people (for works cited in the research profiles).

The summaries of the topic of the Collaborative Research Centre and of all projects will be part of the decision documentation for the Grants Committee on Collaborative Research Centres. The DFG Head Office will provide to the review panellists an electronic copy of the proposal and research profiles as well as the PDF file with publicly unavailable documents via the elan portal.

## **6. Publication of applicant and project data**

Please note the DFG’s Data Protection Notice on research funding, which can be viewed and downloaded at [www.dfg.de/privacy\\_policy](http://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](http://www.dfg.de/privacy_policy)

## **7. Submission of documents**

Please send 20 copies of the printed grant proposal, 20 copies of the corresponding volume with the project leaders’ research profiles, and the USB stick with Documentation for the DFG to: Geschäftsstelle der DFG, Gruppe Sonderforschungsbereiche (SFB), Kennedyallee 40, 53175 Bonn, Germany. The DFG Head Office will forward the proposals to the members of the review panel and the two rapporteurs from the Senate Committee on Collaborative Research Centres.

Two copies each of the grant proposal and the research profiles should be submitted directly by the Collaborative Research Centre to the relevant state ministry or ministries.

### **C. Supplementary Proposals**

Supplementary proposals during a funding period may be submitted by the CRC spokesperson in consultation with the head of the applicant university/universities if

- the new project will be carried out at the applicant university/one of the applicant universities and headed by an individual who was newly appointed to the/an applicant university and whose entry into service precedes the receipt of the supplementary proposal by no more than one year, or
- the new project will be carried out at the applicant university/one of the applicant universities and headed by a researcher in an early career phase who holds a core-funded position at the/an applicant university and has obtained during the current funding period the qualifications that enable them to lead a project independently, or
- the new project is a transfer project and at least one of the individuals suggested as a project leader is a member of the applicant university/one of the applicant universities, or
- the new project is a science communication project and at least one of the individuals suggested as a project leader is a member of the applicant university/one of the applicant universities, or
- unavoidable overspending has occurred, e.g. due to parental leave, or
- this has been explicitly permitted in the award letter or agreed upon with the DFG Head Office in some other way.

Supplementary proposals can generally be submitted up to two years prior to the end of the CRC's current funding period. In justified cases, a supplementary proposal may be submitted for a science communication project whose proposed funding duration extends beyond the end of the current funding period. Supplementary proposals for transfer projects may be submitted up to the end of the total duration of the Collaborative Research Centre. In any case, such a supplementary proposal should be submitted only if the Collaborative Research Centre has already spent or earmarked its lump-sum funds.

A supplementary proposal for a project should generally be based on the same template as a project that is part of an establishment proposal for a Collaborative Research Centre or CRC/Transregio (see DFG form 60.100). The aforementioned formatting rules apply correspondingly. In addition, a research profile of the newly designated project leader should be submitted (see DFG form 53.200).

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Please submit the following proposal documents electronically (with no reading, copying or printing restrictions on the documents), for example on a USB stick, via the DFG's exchange portal or a secure download portal provided by your university, to the responsible programme officer in the Collaborative Research Centres division or the Excellence Strategy and Research Impulses division:

- 1) Cover letter signed by the spokesperson of the Collaborative Research Centre
- 2) The supplementary proposal as a single PDF file
- 3) The research profile as a single PDF file
- 4) The following information in both German and English as a single Word or RTF file: the title of the project and a summary of the work programme (max. 600 characters including spaces)
- 5) All documents referred to in the proposal or the research profile but not publicly available (e.g. works accepted for publication but not yet published), including any documents of proof
- 6) Letter of endorsement by the applicant institution's administration