

## Clusters of Excellence Funding Line

### Instructions for preparation and submission of draft proposals for a Cluster of Excellence

#### A General Instructions

The following documents must be submitted to the DFG Head Office electronically via elan by **no later than 4 pm** on the **cut-off date of 31 May 2023**:

- Draft proposal including appendix,
- Research Profiles (CVs) as a single separate document,
- Accompanying letter from the head(s) of the applicant university/universities

An **endorsement by the science or research authority/authorities at state level responsible for the applicant university/universities (Landeszusage)** is also required. The deadline for submission of the endorsement is **16 June 2023**. Preferably, each state authority should submit a single collective letter of endorsement for all supported draft proposals supported, by e-mail to [exzellenzcluster@dfg.de](mailto:exzellenzcluster@dfg.de).

Three printed copies of the draft proposals are also required. Please refer to section E for instructions.

Please ensure that all documents fully comply with the formal requirements detailed below. If the formal requirements are not met, you will be requested to submit a revised version within three working days.

#### B Draft Proposal and Appendix

You are advised to address the funding criteria for Clusters of Excellence in all relevant sections of the draft proposal:

[www.dfg.de/formulare/exstra110](http://www.dfg.de/formulare/exstra110)

The draft proposal must be written in English.

It is mandatory to use the draft proposal template for Clusters of Excellence provided by the DFG:

[www.dfg.de/formulare/exstra120](http://www.dfg.de/formulare/exstra120)

The draft proposal must not exceed 28 pages (DIN A4) in length; the total page count does not include the cover page, table of contents and appendix.

Arial 11pt or a similarly sized font and single line spacing must be used throughout the text. Smaller font sizes may be used for tables, figures, legends and bibliographies.

The draft proposal must be self-contained. Links to websites containing additional information specific to the draft proposal are not permitted.

The draft proposal including the appendix (in elan: “Project Description”) must be submitted as a single PDF file without password protection and without access restrictions for reading, copying or printing. You are kindly requested to use maximum compression for your PDFs.

## **C Research profiles; submission of additional personal information**

### *Research profiles*

Please note that a single PDF file containing the CVs of all principal investigators must be submitted together with the draft proposal. It is mandatory for all principal investigators to use the CV template provided (DFG form 53.200) for this purpose:

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

The CV form distinguishes between mandatory and voluntary information. If any voluntary information (marked as “optional” in the template) is provided in a CV, the respective researcher **must declare their consent** to the processing of these data in connection with the DFG’s review and decision-making process. The tick box at the end of the form must be checked for this purpose.

### *Submission of additional, confidential personal information*

Should one or several of the principal investigators decide to declare relevant, confidential information regarding their personal situation (e.g. illness, disability or other hardship) in the context of the proposal, but do not wish this information to be passed on to reviewers or committee members, this information **must not be included in the respective CV**. Please use DFG form 73.01 instead:

[www.dfg.de/formulare/73\\_01](http://www.dfg.de/formulare/73_01)

Please note that the submission of this type of data is not possible via elan. Instead, the respective principal investigator should send their completed and signed form 73.01, after the proposal has been submitted, referencing the draft proposal reference number (EXC xxxx/0), either by post to

DFG-Geschäftsstelle, Gruppe III-EXF, Kennedyallee 40, D-53175 Bonn

or by e-mail to

[exzellenzcluster@dfg.de](mailto:exzellenzcluster@dfg.de).

## D Electronic draft proposal submission via the DFG elan portal

### Nomenclature of files

For the electronic submission of your draft proposal, please name the documents to be uploaded in keeping with the following nomenclature:

Document	File name
Draft proposal including appendix	"EXC_<abbreviated title of the Cluster>_A_draft proposal"
Research Profiles (CVs)	"EXC_<abbreviated title of the Cluster>_B_Research_Profiles"
Accompanying letter from the head(s) of the applicant university/universities	"EXC_<abbreviated title of the Cluster>_C_University_letter"
Endorsement by the science or research authority/authorities at state level (Landeszusage)	"EXC_<abbreviated title of the Cluster>_D_Landeszusage"

### Submission

The elan portal will be open for draft proposal submissions starting on 17 April 2023.

Please note that all spokespersons must be registered in elan and have their correspondence address verified prior to completing the form.

- To start submission, please log in with your elan account.
- Select "Proposal Submission" → "New Project / Draft Proposal" → "Cluster of Excellence" → "Draft Proposal Cluster of Excellence".
- Start the online form and follow the instructions.
- In the last step, please upload the following mandatory PDF files:
  - Draft proposal including appendix ("Project Description") (please keep the file sizes as small as possible)
  - Research Profiles of the principal investigators (as a single document)
  - Accompanying letter from the head(s) of the applicant university/universities authorising the spokesperson to submit the draft proposal on behalf of the applicant institution(s)
- The following documents are optional:
  - Endorsement by the science or research authority/authorities at state level responsible for the applicant university/universities. Please note that this document can be submitted subsequently and directly by the state authority if not uploaded here (see above for deadline).

- Further documents as a single PDF file, such as manuscripts and the editor's confirmation of acceptance for works which are not yet in the public domain but have been accepted for publication.
- After sending the files specified above, you will receive an automatic confirmation of receipt by e-mail with a compliance form as a PDF file. The compliance form must be printed out and signed by the spokesperson (digital signatures are not accepted).
- The DFG will assign a reference number to the draft proposal for the Cluster of Excellence (EXC XXXX/0). Once the number has been assigned and the draft proposal appears in the overview of your account, please upload the signed compliance form, using the "Correspondence" link.

## E Printed copies

Please send **three** printed and signed copies of the draft proposal including the appendix and the research profiles to the DFG Head Office promptly after electronic submission of the draft proposal. The proposal, appendix and research profiles should be bound together in a single volume. Please send your printed copies to

DFG-Geschäftsstelle, Gruppe III-EXF, Kennedyallee 40, D-53175 Bonn.

## F Further information

In submitting the draft proposal to the DFG, the applicant university/universities and the individuals with a high degree of scientific/academic responsibility (i.e. the principal investigators):

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

These principles can be found in detail in the DFG Code of Conduct Guidelines for Safeguarding Good Research Practice, which came into force on 1 August 2019.

[www.dfg.de/download/pdf/foerderung/rechtliche\\_rahmenbedingungen/gute\\_wissenschaftliche\\_praxis/kodex\\_gwp\\_en.pdf](http://www.dfg.de/download/pdf/foerderung/rechtliche_rahmenbedingungen/gute_wissenschaftliche_praxis/kodex_gwp_en.pdf)

2. recognise the DFG's **Rules of Procedure for Dealing with Scientific Misconduct** (Verfahrensordnung zum Umgang mit wissenschaftlichem Fehlverhalten - VerfOwF) as legally binding. Prior to submission of a draft or full proposal, all principal investigators must sign a Declaration of Obligation of Compliance (see link to recommended DFG template). The applicant university/universities is/are responsible for gathering the signatures for the compliance forms. The forms must be kept on file by the institutions (either centralised at the applicant university/universities or decentralised at the employing institutions). Should allegations of scientific misconduct arise, the spokesperson will forward the relevant

declaration to the DFG Head Office upon request. Please use the Template for Declarations of Obligation of Compliance:

[www.dfg.de/formulare/80\\_02](http://www.dfg.de/formulare/80_02)

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;
- 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.

## **G 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](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.

## **H Contact information**

Contact persons at the DFG Head Office:

Dr. Christine Petry, Tel. +49 228 885-2355, [exzellenzcluster@dfg.de](mailto:exzellenzcluster@dfg.de)



Dr. Florian Bast, Tel. +49 228 885-2205, [exzellenzcluster@dfg.de](mailto:exzellenzcluster@dfg.de)

Dr. Sebastian Granderath, Tel. +49 228 885- 2273, [exzellenzcluster@dfg.de](mailto:exzellenzcluster@dfg.de)

Mailing address: Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, Gruppe III-EXF, 53170 Bonn, Germany

Office address: Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, Kennedyallee 40, 53175 Bonn, Germany

[www.dfg.de/excellence\\_strategy](http://www.dfg.de/excellence_strategy)