

# Election Regulations

## for the Election of the Members of the Review Boards of the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG, German Research Foundation)

– Valid for the 2027 review board election including all preparatory steps as well as for subsequent terms of office and elections –

Disclaimer: This English translation of the Election Regulations is provided for informational purposes. The English text was carefully translated and reviewed for accuracy. In the event that the English and German versions of the Election Regulations permit different interpretations, the German text shall prevail.

**Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft**

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## Part 1: General Provisions

### § 1 Structure of Review Boards, Election Cycle

1. <sup>1</sup>The subject structure of the review boards is determined by the Senate of the DFG prior to each review board election. <sup>2</sup>The Senate subdivides review boards generally by subject area and determines the number of elected members for each subject area and review board (at least two per subject area). <sup>3</sup>It shall ensure that science and the humanities in all their forms and disciplines are covered by the review boards and that the review boards take their disciplinary research interest and interdisciplinary relationships duly into account. <sup>4</sup>The deciding factors here are as follows:
  - a) the subject-specific structuring of the review boards and subject areas allows for an overarching and integrative evaluation while avoiding excessive differentiation,
  - b) the subject-specific structuring of the review boards and subject areas follows a system that is as consistent as possible so as to avoid both gaps and overlaps, and
  - c) past and anticipated proposal volumes are taken as fundamental indicators for the establishment, continuation and size of a subject area.

<sup>5</sup>All aspects must be appropriately weighted.

2. <sup>1</sup>Members of the review boards are elected for four years by secret ballot. <sup>2</sup>Members may be re-elected once. <sup>3</sup>Succession according to § 1 No. 3 d) or e) sentence 1 is treated like a one-time election. <sup>4</sup>Multiple successions within a term of office are also considered as a single election. <sup>5</sup>Membership in a review board is thus limited to two terms, regardless of the duration of either term. <sup>6</sup>Memberships in review committees prior to the introduction of the review board system in 2003 will not be considered. <sup>7</sup>The term for newly elected members of review boards begins with the inaugural session of the respective review board. <sup>8</sup>The term of the members of the previous review board ends concurrently.

3. a) <sup>1</sup>Candidates are assigned a ranking according to the number of votes they receive or, in the event of a tie, by a random draw. <sup>2</sup>They are elected in the order determined by the ranking until the available places in the subject area or review board are filled. <sup>3</sup>Candidates without any votes will be ranked in last place but are not taken into consideration.
- b) <sup>1</sup>If the number of candidates receiving votes in a subject area is lower than the number of persons to be elected, only these persons shall exceptionally be elected for that subject area. <sup>2</sup>If no candidate receives any votes in a certain subject area, or if all elected members, including all succeeding members in accordance with § 1 No. 3 d), leave before the end of their term, grant proposals assigned to this subject area will be considered by the other subject areas on this review board.
- c) If, after election, any of the personal requirements under § 2 No. 2 or § 2 No. 4 a) sentence 2 cease to apply or if the person is no longer independently engaged in academic research, membership of the review board shall end at the end of the month in which the letter from the President of the DFG is received by the person concerned.
- d) <sup>1</sup>If a member leaves before the end of the term or does not take up office after the election, the candidate who received the next highest number of votes will succeed that member. <sup>2</sup>Candidates who did not receive any votes will not be considered. <sup>3</sup>In consensus with the review board, a succession process may, by way of exception, be refrained from on special grounds if the expected remaining time in office would be disproportionately short.
- e) <sup>1</sup>With the consent of the succeeding member, temporary succession for a period of at least six months is permitted for special non-scientific reasons (especially maternity or parental leave, or serious illness). <sup>2</sup>In the event of permanent succession during a term of office, priority shall be given to temporary successors. <sup>3</sup>Any vacancies of less than six months that may arise are to be bridged by the remaining members of the review board. <sup>4</sup>If the remainder of the term would be less than one year after re-entry, temporary succession is not possible.
- f) <sup>1</sup>The Executive Committee of the DFG may release a member of a review board from their duties for a specified period of time or until the end of the term of office

(suspension) if there is good cause for doing so which, taking into account all the circumstances of the individual case and weighing the interests of all concerned, makes it appear unreasonable to allow the member of the review board to remain in office. <sup>2</sup>The President of the DFG may extend the period of release from review board duties if the reasons for the release from the duties are likely to continue for this prolonged period. <sup>3</sup>The reasons for the DFG's decision shall be communicated to the review board member concerned.

## § 2 Right to Vote

1. To be eligible to vote, candidates must meet personal qualifications and be affiliated with a voting centre according to § 8 No. 2.
2. <sup>1</sup>Individuals personally qualified to vote are:
  - a) researchers who, no later than two months before the start of the voting period,
    - aa) have completed their degree and
    - bb) passed their oral doctoral examination (or a recognised equivalent final examination), and
  - b) professors (including junior professors),provided they are working in academic research on, but not limited to, the first day of the voting period. <sup>2</sup>If this activity is interrupted for a foreseeable period of more than three months, it shall be refutably presumed that academic research activity is no longer being carried out.
3. Affiliation with a voting centre is always established if the academic research is conducted at a research institution according to § 8 No. 2 a) or b) (right to vote by virtue of institutional affiliation).
4. a) <sup>1</sup>Persons according to § 2 No. 2 who on, but not limited to, the first day of the voting period work in academic research but not at a research institution according to § 8 No. 2 a) or b) may be granted the right to vote on an individual basis by the DFG.

<sup>2</sup>Nominees under this provision must be permitted to publish freely the findings of their academic research and must be integrated in the German research system.

- b) <sup>1</sup>Nominations of persons to be granted the right to vote on an individual basis can be submitted to the DFG Head Office up to six months before the beginning of the voting period. <sup>2</sup>Nominations may be submitted by research institutions that conduct academic research and that satisfy the conditions set out in § 8 No. 2 b) aa)-cc). <sup>3</sup>Each eligible institution may propose persons who are actively engaged in academic research and meet the requirements of § 2 No. 2, providing these persons are not conducting research at an institution which has established a voting centre under § 8 No. 2 a). <sup>4</sup>The right to vote on an individual basis will not be granted if more than 100 researchers at the same institution are proposed to the DFG. <sup>5</sup>Reference is made to § 8 No. 2 b). <sup>6</sup>The nominating institutions shall provide the persons whom they intend to propose for the award of the right to vote on an individual basis with the information made available to them in due time by the DFG for the review board election in accordance with Articles 13, 14 of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) before they propose these persons to the DFG for this purpose.
- c) <sup>1</sup>Individuals who have been granted the right to vote on an individual basis are automatically assigned to the DFG voting centre according to § 8 No. 2 c). <sup>2</sup>Changes to the reported institutional affiliation or delivery address must be communicated to the DFG voting centre without delay. If the voting documentation cannot be delivered on time due to failure to report a change or due to a report made after the start of the voting period, there is no longer any entitlement to participate in the election.
5. <sup>1</sup>Individuals are also eligible to vote if they have been granted the right to stand for election by the Senate of the DFG according to § 4 No. 2. <sup>2</sup>These persons are added to the list of individual voters and are therefore assigned to the voting centre for individual voters set up by the DFG according to § 8 No. 2 c).
6. <sup>1</sup>Voters may vote only once, even if they conduct academic research at more than one institution. <sup>2</sup>If they conduct academic research at a member university, they must be registered to vote there.

### § 3 Number of Votes, Vote Splitting

1. <sup>1</sup>Each voter has six votes. <sup>2</sup>A voter may give up to three votes to the same candidate.
2. Votes may be split between candidates for different review boards and/or different subject areas.

### § 4 Candidate Eligibility

1. The eligibility to serve on a review board is granted to all persons who
  - a) have the right to vote according to § 2,
  - b) assure that they have a sufficient understanding of the German language to fulfil the tasks of the review boards,
  - c) are engaged in academic research in connection with a permanent employment relationship or carry out another form of independent academic research activity (e.g. as the leader or co-leader of third-party funded projects, as the head of an independent junior research group or similar) and
  - d) work in academic research at a research institution according to § 8 No. 2 a) or b).
2. Other independent academic researchers who meet the requirements according to § 2 No. 2 and No. 4 a) sentence 2 and § 4 No. 1 b) and are included in the list of candidates according to the process stipulated in § 7 are granted the right to serve as a candidate upon approval of the list of candidates by the Senate of the DFG according to § 7.
3. If, at the time of submitting the nominations, it is not yet clear whether independent academic research will be carried out on the first day of the voting period and beyond, a candidacy requires a substantive confirmation of the independent research activity to be submitted before the Senate deals with assignments to subject areas according to § 7 No. 1 a).
4. If a candidate leaves the institution at which independent research has been carried out after the list of candidates has been approved by the Senate of the DFG according to § 7, they will retain the right to vote and to serve as a candidate providing the personal

requirements according to § 2 No. 2 and No. 4 a) sentence 2 continue to be met and independent academic research is still being carried out.

## § 5 Incompatibility with Other Offices

1. <sup>1</sup>A person under § 2 No. 2 may only stand for one subject area. <sup>2</sup>If a person is improperly proposed for multiple subject areas, the person is provisionally assigned to the subject area in which they received the most nominations. <sup>3</sup>In the case of an equal number of nominations, the DFG Senate decides. <sup>4</sup>Only the nominations in the provisionally assigned subject area are considered valid for the further process of preparing the list of candidates under § 7; the others are disregarded.
2. Members of the Executive Committee and the Joint Committee, members of the Grants Committees appointed by the Joint Committee, members of the central governing body of a DFG member organisation, liaison officers and DFG liaisons at non-member universities may not concurrently serve on review boards.
3. The Commissioner of the Senate and their deputy according to § 10 may not run for an election which they observe, and members of the committee for the review board election may not run for an election for which they have been appointed by the Senate of the DFG according to § 9.

## Part 2: Candidate Nominations and List of Candidates

### § 6 Candidate Nominations

1. Candidates may be nominated by:
  - a) the member organisations of the DFG, non-subject related;
  - b) the scientific/academic societies and faculty associations<sup>1</sup> that have been granted such a right by the Senate on request for the next election in relation to specific subjects;

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<sup>1</sup> This may also include comparable associations of non-faculty-based units of higher education institutions in Germany.

- c) the Donors' Association for the Promotion of Sciences and Humanities in Germany (Stifterverband für die Deutsche Wissenschaft), non-subject related
  - d) the DFG Senate under mandatory supplementation pursuant to § 7 No. 1 c) and under optional supplementation pursuant to § 7 No. 1 e).
2. The right to nominate candidates according to § 6 No. 1 b) may be granted to scientific/academic societies and faculty associations under consideration of the following points:
- a) the scientific/academic society or faculty association has been officially established,
  - b) its member structure is also research-oriented,
  - c) it is integrated into the German research system,
  - d) its mission is also research-oriented, and
  - e) its mission and members adequately represent the subject area in which the right to nominate is sought, at least in substantial areas.
3. <sup>1</sup>A renewed request for the granting of a subject-specific nomination right is not required if the Senate granted such a right to the scientific/academic society or faculty association for the immediately preceding election and this right was generally exercised in the same specific subject area. <sup>2</sup>In the event of changes to the structure of a subject area, this only applies if the requirements of No. 2 e) are still met.
4. <sup>1</sup>Institutions with the right to nominate candidates according to § 6 No. 1 a) and c) may nominate up to the same number of persons as to be elected in the relevant subject area. <sup>2</sup>Institutions with the right to nominate candidates according to § 6 No. 1 b) may nominate a maximum of twice the number of persons as to be elected in the relevant subject area.

5. Candidate nominations meeting the requirements under § 4 should also be submitted in consideration of the following points:
  - a) academic and personal qualification of the nominees, ideally for the subject area as a whole and with a thorough overview of related disciplines,
  - b) balanced consideration of all subject areas,
  - c) adequate consideration of gender equality and diversity,
  - d) adequate consideration of researchers at different stages of their careers.
  
6. <sup>1</sup>Each candidate nomination must pertain to a specific person in a specific subject area in accordance with the relevant nomination rights. <sup>2</sup>For each nominee, the DFG must receive a declaration of consent from the individual concerned. <sup>3</sup>In principle this has to be appended to the nomination. <sup>4</sup>Only nominations received by the deadline can be included in the process of drawing up the list of candidates. <sup>5</sup>The nominating institutions shall provide the persons they will propose for candidacy with the information made available to them in due time by the DFG for the review board election in accordance with Art. 13, 14 of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) before proposing these persons to the DFG for candidacy.

## § 7 List of Candidates

1. <sup>1</sup>The Senate of the DFG shall approve the list of candidates according to the results of the steps in § 7 No. 1 a) to e). <sup>2</sup>A cut-off date for updates according to § 7 No. 2 and for changes of personal information following approval of the list of candidates will be observed and announced on the website of the DFG.
  - a) The Senate may change the subject areas assigned to the candidate nominations if this serves the purposes of § 1 No. 1 sentence 3.
  - b) <sup>1</sup>For each subject area, the number of candidates must be at least twice the number of persons (minimum number) and generally no more than three times the number of persons (maximum number) to be elected. <sup>2</sup>In the circumstances de-

scribed in § 7 No. 1 e), within the supplementation procedure, the Senate may exceed this maximum to the extent described there if there are not yet at least as many female and male candidates as there are positions to be filled in the subject area.

- c) If, after assignment to a subject area according to § 7 No. 1 a), the minimum number is not reached in a given subject area, the Senate shall nominate additional persons until the number corresponds to twice the number of persons to be elected (mandatory supplementation).
  - d) <sup>1</sup>If, after assignment to a subject area according to § 7 No. 1 a), the maximum number is exceeded in a given subject area, a limitation procedure must take place in which the nominees will first be ranked by the number of nominations received. <sup>2</sup>Nominations in a subject area with more than five nominations form the highest ranking group, within which no further ranking takes place. <sup>3</sup>If this ranking would result in the inclusion of only one person or several persons of a ranking group in the list of candidates, the candidates in this ranking group only will be selected by random draw. <sup>4</sup>The draw must be carried out in a way that promotes gender equality by striving to ensure that each gender is represented with at least one-third of candidates, if possible.
  - e) After having supplemented (§ 7 No. 1 c)) or limited (§ 7 No. 1. d)) the number of candidates where necessary, the Senate may nominate additional persons at the subject-area level such that women and men are represented by a number of candidates corresponding to the number of persons to be elected in a subject area (optional supplementation).
2. <sup>1</sup>If reasons precluding a person's candidature become known after the Senate of the DFG has approved the list of candidates, but before the cut-off date according to § 7 No. 1 sentence 2, such persons will be removed from the list. <sup>2</sup>Such reasons may be, for example: withdrawal of candidature, death.

## Part 3: Organisation of the Election

### I. General Regulations

#### § 8 Voting Centres

1. Voting centres will be set up for the election; they are solely responsible for the proper conduct of the election according to the Election Regulations and hold decision-making responsibility in this respect.
  
2. <sup>1</sup>A voting centre is generally set up by
  - a) the member organisations of the DFG, with the exception of scientific associations AiF, GDNÄ and DVT<sup>2</sup>;
  
  - b) on request, other research institutions at which more than 100 persons who meet the requirements of § 2 No. 2 conduct academic research, provided these institutions
    - aa) are integrated in the German research system,
    - bb) are funded on a non-profit or entirely public basis,
    - cc) allow their members to freely publish research results in a generally accessible form.

<sup>2</sup>The request must generally be submitted by a deadline announced in ample time by the DFG. <sup>3</sup>Upon approval by the DFG, the institution must establish the voting centre.

  - c) the DFG for voters according to § 2 No. 4 and 5, who do not belong to a research institution according to § 8 No. 2 a) or b) (individual voters).

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<sup>2</sup> The German Federation of Industrial Research Associations (AiF), Cologne, the Society of German Natural Scientists and Physicians (GDNÄ), Bad Honnef, and the German Federation of Technical and Scientific Associations (DVT), Berlin.

3. The obligation to set up a voting centre according to § 8 No. 2 a) or b) may only be disregarded in specially justified exceptional cases.
4. Each voting centre is solely responsible for determining the number of researchers who are eligible to vote there and communicates this to the DFG Head Office by the requested date.
5. <sup>1</sup>The DFG Head Office provides the voting centres with the documentation necessary to conduct the election. <sup>2</sup>The documentation required for online elections is specified in § 14, for paper elections in § 17.
6. <sup>1</sup>Each voting centre is solely responsible for forwarding the voting documentation provided to it to the researchers who have the right to vote there with the request that they cast their ballots within the period determined by the Executive Committee of the DFG. <sup>2</sup>The voting centre must ensure that each person eligible to vote through the relevant institution firstly has the opportunity to participate in the election and secondly receives only one set of voting documentation.
7. <sup>1</sup>Each voting centre is solely responsible for drawing up an election report according to the forms provided by the DFG. <sup>2</sup>This report must be forwarded to the DFG Head Office by the date set by the DFG.

## **§ 9 Committee for the Review Board Election**

1. <sup>1</sup>The Senate of the DFG shall establish a committee for the review board election (hereinafter “the Committee”) prior to the start of the voting period. <sup>2</sup>The Committee decides on the cancellation of an election under § 11 No. 4 and prepares the Senate decision under § 20 No. 2 in the case of an election verification.
2. <sup>1</sup>The Committee consists of two Senate members and three external legal experts. <sup>2</sup>Deputies may be appointed.
3. <sup>1</sup>The chair of the Committee is held by a member of the DFG Executive Committee. <sup>2</sup>The chair has no voting rights.

4. <sup>1</sup>The Committee is quorate if at least three members are present, including at least one Senate member and two external members. <sup>2</sup>The rules of procedure for decision-making on DFG committees apply.

## § 10 Commissioner of the Senate

1. <sup>1</sup>The Senate appoints an independent external commissioner and a deputy (hereinafter “Commissioner”). <sup>2</sup>The Commissioner observes the election in terms of its lawful conduct according to the Election Regulations, including compliance with the general principles of a universal, direct, free, equal and secret election (hereinafter “Election Principles”). <sup>3</sup>The Commissioner also performs the duties listed in No. 2. <sup>4</sup>The Commissioner is supported by the DFG Head Office.
2. The Commissioner
- a) is involved in the President’s decisions to postpone, interrupt or extend the voting period under § 11 No. 3,
  - b) must be consulted in the event of an election cancellation under § 11 No. 4,
  - c) reports to the Senate under § 12 No. 2,
  - d) has the right under § 16 No. 3 to verify the proper functioning of the electronic voting system in online elections,
  - e) monitors the vote counting in paper elections under § 18 No. 6,
  - f) has the right to raise objections under § 19 No. 3,
  - g) should be consulted in the case of an election verification under § 20 No. 2.

## § 11 Decision on the Voting Procedure, Voting Period

1. <sup>1</sup>The voting procedure will be conducted online (voting through the internet). <sup>2</sup>If this is not possible for a regularly scheduled election, the Executive Committee of the DFG may decide to hold the election by paper ballot (paper election).
2. <sup>1</sup>The Executive Committee of the DFG determines the first and last day of the voting period (first and last date on which ballots may be cast) prior to each election. <sup>2</sup>The voting period will be four weeks for an online election and two weeks for a paper election.
3. <sup>1</sup>After consulting the Commissioner under § 10, the President of the DFG may postpone, interrupt or extend the election period at short notice for particularly important reasons. <sup>2</sup>Interruptions of less than 24 hours may be ordered by the DFG Secretary General without prior consultation with the President.
4. The Committee under § 9 may cancel the election at the initiative of the President after hearing the Commissioner under § 10 if it appears sufficiently likely that the election would otherwise be declared invalid during a subsequent verification procedure under § 20 No. 5.
5. <sup>1</sup>The voting procedure for an online election is governed by the provisions in §§ 13–16, and the voting process for a paper election is governed by the provisions in §§ 17–18. <sup>2</sup>The regulations set out in §§ 8–12 apply to both voting procedures.

## § 12 Announcement of Election Results

1. <sup>1</sup>After all votes have been counted, the President of the DFG will announce the preliminary result on the website of the DFG. <sup>2</sup>The date of the announcement must be stated on the website.
2. <sup>1</sup>The Senate of the DFG determines the final election result after the deadline for challenging the election under § 19 No. 2 d) has expired or once the election verification procedure under §§ 19–20 is concluded. <sup>2</sup>This is generally based on a report by the Commissioner under § 10.

3. Information as to which institutions nominated which candidates and how many institutions submitted nominations will be published at the same time the preliminary and final election results are announced.

## **II. Special Regulations for Online Elections**

### **§ 13 Requirements of the Electronic Voting System**

<sup>1</sup>The electronic voting system to be used should correspond to the current state of the at the time of the public tender . <sup>2</sup>This may be ensured, among other things, based on the relevant recommendations issued by the Federal Office for Information Security concerning online elections. <sup>3</sup>The requirements in terms of security and technology relating to the specific online election concerned must be defined and documented.

### **§ 14 Voting Documentation**

<sup>1</sup>Voting documentation consists of the election notification including access information, and instructions on the voting process and the use of the voting system. <sup>2</sup>The voting system allows voters to cast votes by electronic ballot via the internet.

### **§ 15 Casting of Ballots and Counting of Votes**

1. After voters have authenticated themselves by entering in the voting system the access information provided in the election notification, they may complete and cast their electronic ballot.
2. The ballot is considered cast when the online voting system displays a confirmation stating that the voting process is finished.
3. Abstentions will be counted as invalid votes.
4. Electronic ballots that have not been properly completed will be deemed invalid.
5. The DFG is solely responsible for the voting system.
6. Votes are counted electronically after the voting period has expired.

## § 16 Monitoring

1. The provider of the voting system must be instructed to monitor the online voting system according to the DFG's specifications.
2. The DFG checks the proper functioning of the online voting system at regular intervals.
3. <sup>1</sup>The Commissioner under § 10 has the right to check the proper functioning of the online voting system. <sup>2</sup>If anomalies are detected during the monitoring of the voting system, the Commissioner must be appropriately involved.

## III. Special Regulations for Paper Elections

### § 17 Voting Documentation

The voting documentation consists of a ballot, a copy of the Election Regulations and a list of candidates.

### § 18 Casting of Ballots and Counting of Votes

1. The ballot must be completed according to the instructions printed on it.
2. The casting of the ballot is considered complete when the sealed envelope is received by the voting centre.
3. The voting centres are solely responsible for verifying whether each cast ballot is in compliance with the regulations and documenting this with a note on the voter list.
4. The voting centres must send the cast ballots, together with the election report according to § 8 No. 7 by the deadlines specified by the DFG, to the DFG Head Office.
5. <sup>1</sup>Votes will be counted after the deadline for challenging the election according to § 19 No. 2 b) sentence 2 has passed under the sole responsibility of the DFG. <sup>2</sup>Only properly completed ballots enclosed in the proper envelopes and received by the DFG Head Office by the deadline will be included in the vote count.

6. The Commissioner under § 10 monitors the vote counting and decides in case of doubt on the validity of the ballot.

## Part 4: Formal Election Verification

### § 19 Admissibility

1. Election verification will take place only in response to election challenges or objections.
2. Election Challenges
  - a) Any natural person or legal entity who claims a violation of a right to which they are entitled under the Election Regulations or Election Principles may challenge the election.
  - b) Those eligible to nominate candidates under § 6 No. 1 cannot challenge the election based on possible errors during the submission of nominations if the DFG previously granted them an opportunity to object.
  - c) Challenges must be submitted to the DFG in writing or by e-mail, with justification.
  - d) <sup>1</sup>Challenges must be submitted within three weeks after the preliminary election results have been announced on the DFG website according to § 12 No. 1. <sup>2</sup>In the case of paper elections, challenges due to errors that have occurred before the end of the voting period may only be raised within three weeks after the last date of the voting period according to § 11 No. 2.
  - e) The DFG will reject inadmissible challenges.
3. Objections

The President of the DFG and the Commissioner under § 10 may raise objections up to the announcement of the final election result if there are concrete indications of potential violations of the Election Regulations or Election Principles.

#### 4. Withdrawal

If a challenge or objection is withdrawn, the election verification procedure is terminated.

### § 20 Justification

1. The DFG Senate decides on admissible challenges and objections.
2. <sup>1</sup>The Senate's decision is prepared by the Committee under § 9. <sup>2</sup>The Committee is to hear the Commissioner under § 10. <sup>3</sup>It may also hear other persons. <sup>4</sup>It submits a proposed decision to the Senate.
3. If the Senate finds that no violation of the Election Regulations or Election Principles occurred, it rejects the challenge or objection as unfounded.
4. If a violation of the Election Regulations or Election Principles is found to have occurred, the Senate establishes an election error.
5. <sup>1</sup>In line with the principles for verifying federal elections, the Senate also decides in the case of mandate-relevant errors whether the election is to be declared wholly or partially invalid and therefore repeated. <sup>2</sup>A partial repetition of the election is only considered if it can be limited to specific voting centres.

### § 21 Retention Periods

1. DFG retention periods
  - a) If the election is by paper ballot, the ballot envelopes and ballots may not be destroyed until the final election result has been announced according to § 12 No. 2.
  - b) If the election is by online ballot, the raw electronic data of the ballot count may not be destroyed until the final election result has been announced according to § 12 No. 2.
  - c) The documented final election result is to be retained permanently in the case of both voting methods.

## 2. Retention periods at the voting centres

<sup>1</sup>In principle the voting centres are responsible for determining retention and deletion periods under data protection law. <sup>2</sup>However, the documents and records created at the voting centres for the respective election as well as the data collected may under no circumstances be destroyed before the DFG has determined the final election results according to § 12 No. 2.