



DFG Funding Opportunities for Postdocs

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Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft e.V.

**Germany's largest
independent research
funding organisation**
3.9 € billion annual budget

DFG members

99 leading universities,
non-university research
institutions, scientific
associations, academies

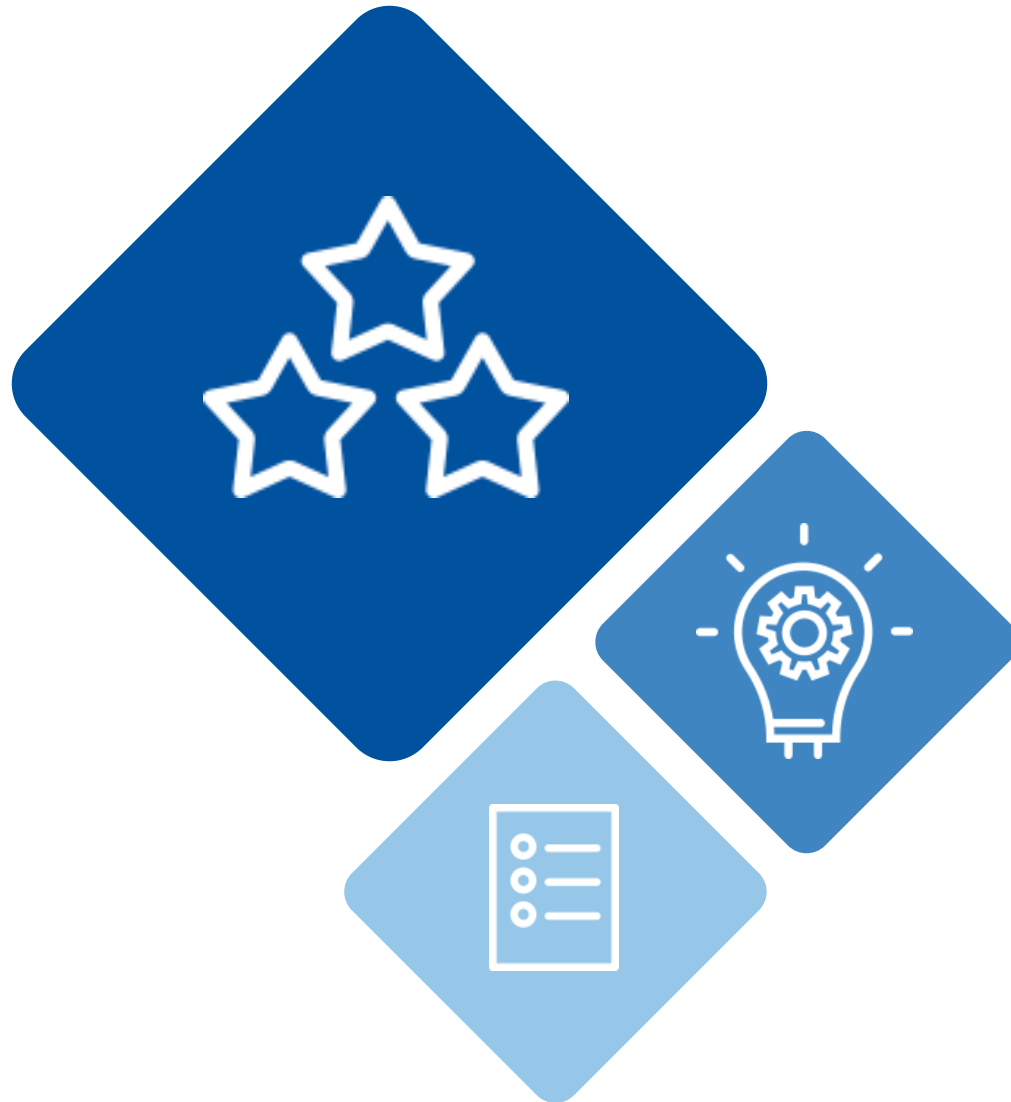
Independent association
under private law



Funding
knowledge-driven
research

**Researchers have
the majority**
in decision-making
committees

DFG's Independence
guarantees academic
freedom



Funding **Investigator-Driven Research**

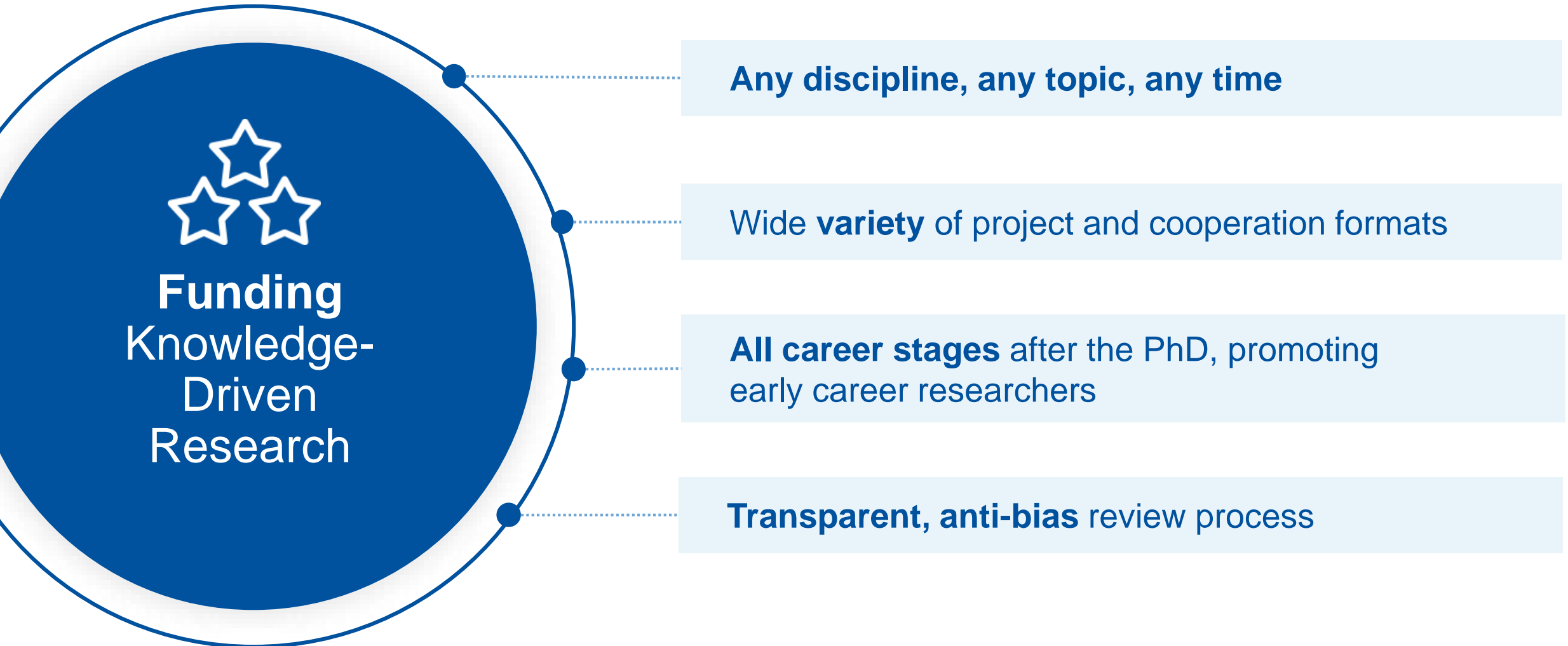
The DFG selects and funds **high-quality research** and enables fair, science-led competition

Strategic (Funding) **Initiatives**

The DFG adopts **strategic funding** initiatives to support specific research fields or to respond to acute research needs

Shaping **Conditions & Standards**

The DFG helps shape sound **conditions and standards** of academic research, e.g. for **Early Career Researchers**



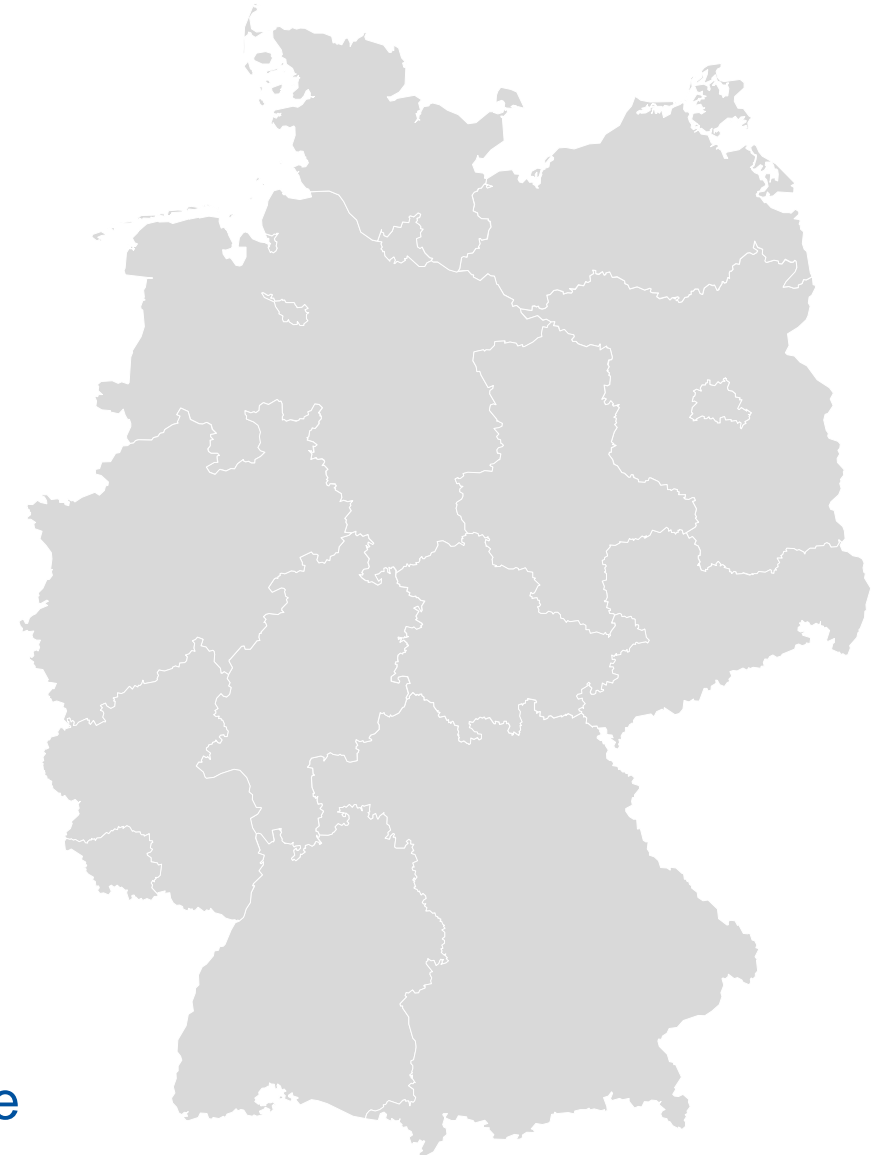
Who is eligible to apply for DFG funding?

Researchers

...who have completed their scientific training,
i.e. **who hold a doctorate***

...who (would like to) work
in Germany

*earliest date: upon submission to the examination office



DFG Funding 2024



30.500
Individual Projects



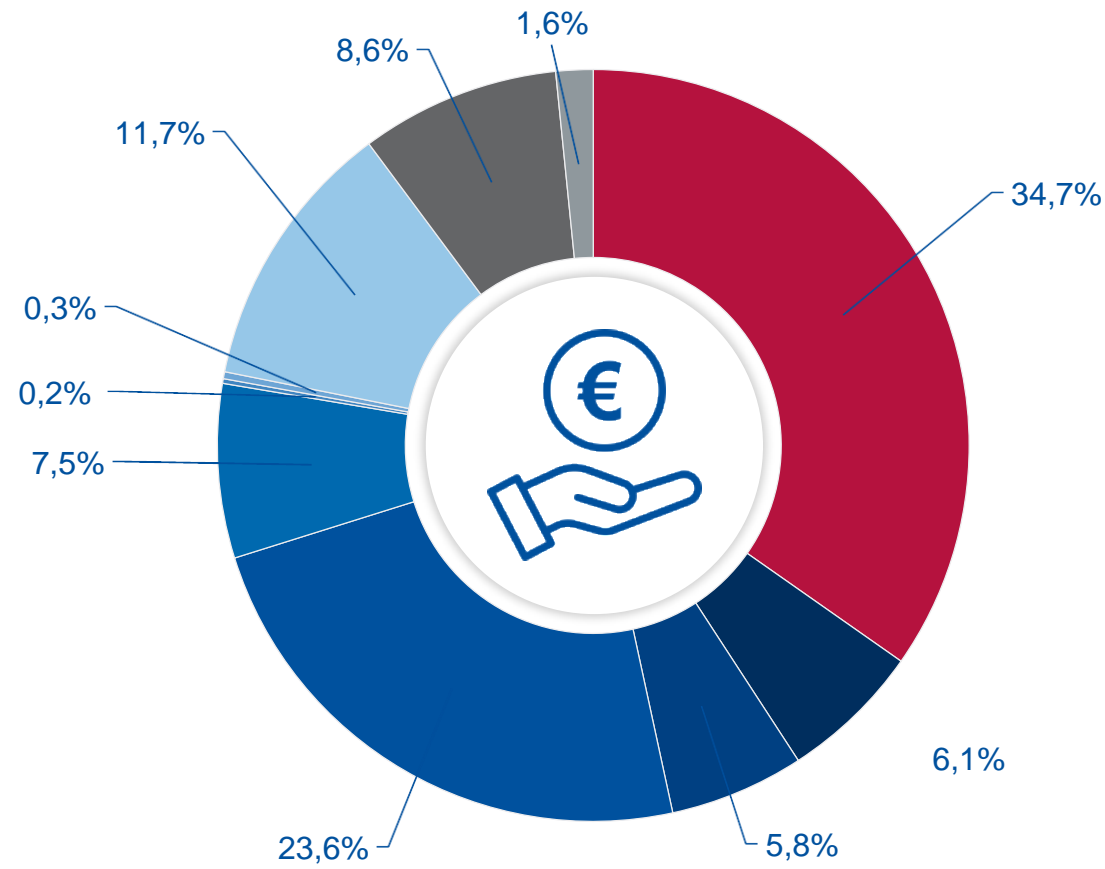
993
Coordinated projects



3,9 Billion €
Budget for research projects

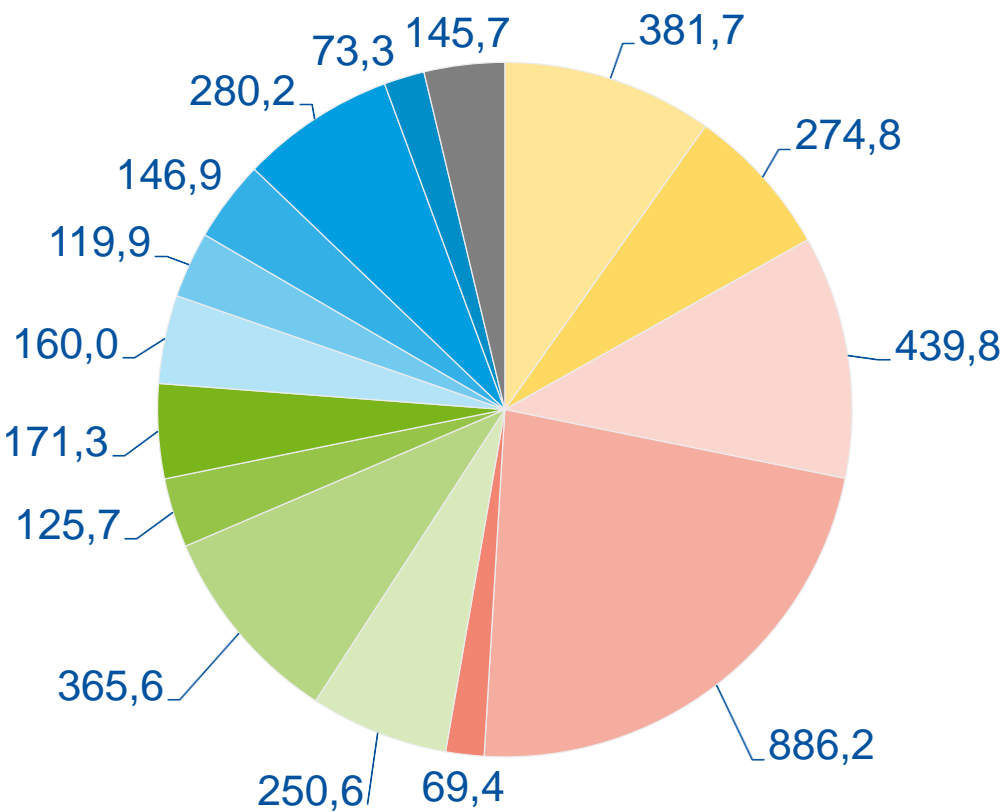
Research funding by programme

for 2024 (in Mio. € und %)



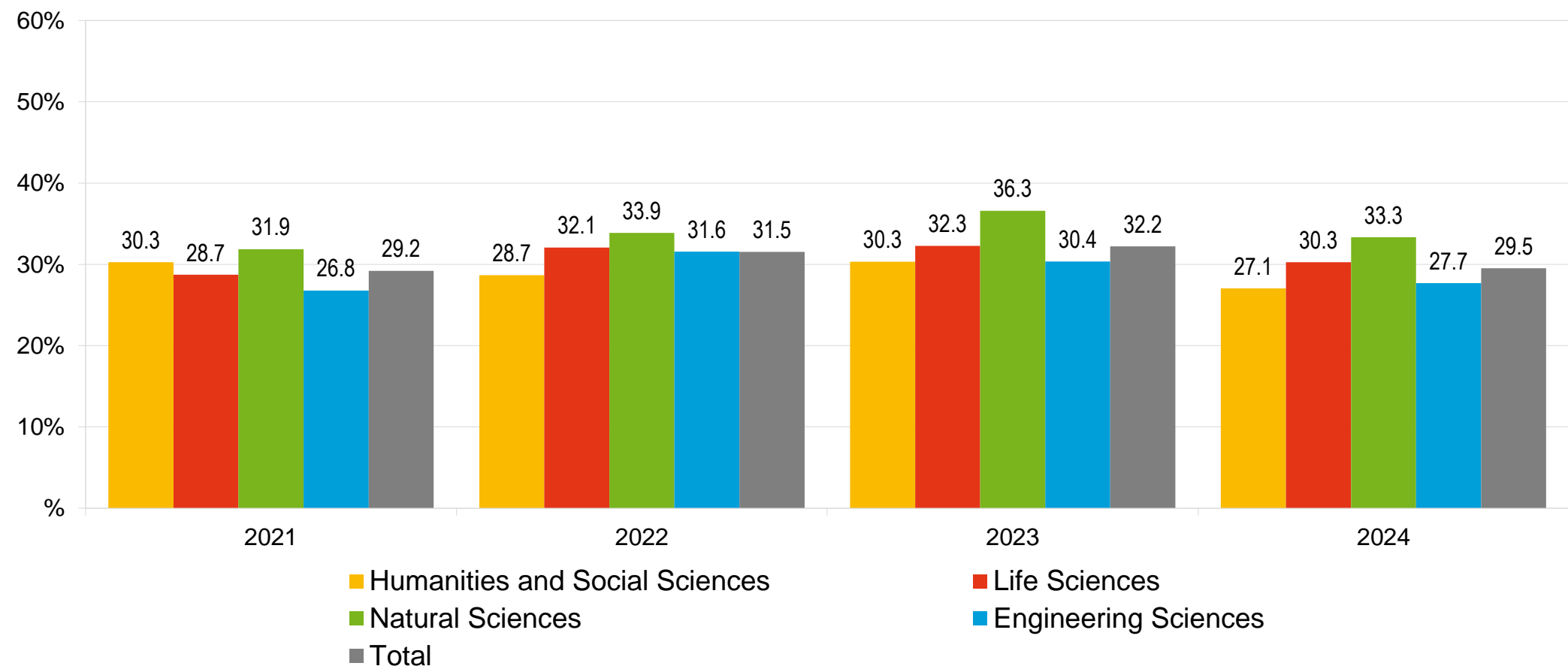
- Individual grants programme: 1352,3 Mio. €
- Research Units: 238,0 Mio. €
- Priority Programmes: 224,2 Mio. €
- Collaborative Research Centres: 917,2 Mio. €
- Research Training Groups: 291,3 Mio. €
- Research Impulses: 7,5 Mio. €
- Research Centres: 12,6 Mio. €
- Exzellenzstrategie: 453,4 Mio. €
- Infrastructure funding: 334,2 Mio. €
- Prizes, other: 60,5 Mio. €

DFG Funding
by Subject Area (in €m)



- Humanities
- Social and Behavioural Sciences
- Biology
- Medicine
- Agriculture, Forestry and Veterinary
- Chemistry
- Physics
- Mathematics
- Geosciences
- Mechanical and Industrial Engineering
- Thermal Engineering/Process Engineering
- Materials Science and Engineering
- Computer Science, Systems & Electrical Engineering
- Construction Engineering and Architecture
- Interdisciplinary

Funding rates* in the individual grants programmes by scientific discipline 2021 to 2024 (in %)



* The funding rate (or success rate) was calculated by dividing the number of awards by the number of proposals reviewed.
Source: New Individual grants



DFG Funding for Early Career Researchers

Position in a DFG-funded project



What?

Position (TV-L) for (post-)doctoral researchers at universities/research institutes in Germany



How long?

Depends on the scope of the project, typically three years



Where to apply?

Directly to the project's PI
(person who receives funding through DFG)



Where to search?

<https://gepris.dfg.de>



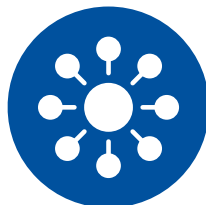
Walter Benjamin
Programme



Emmy Noether
Programme

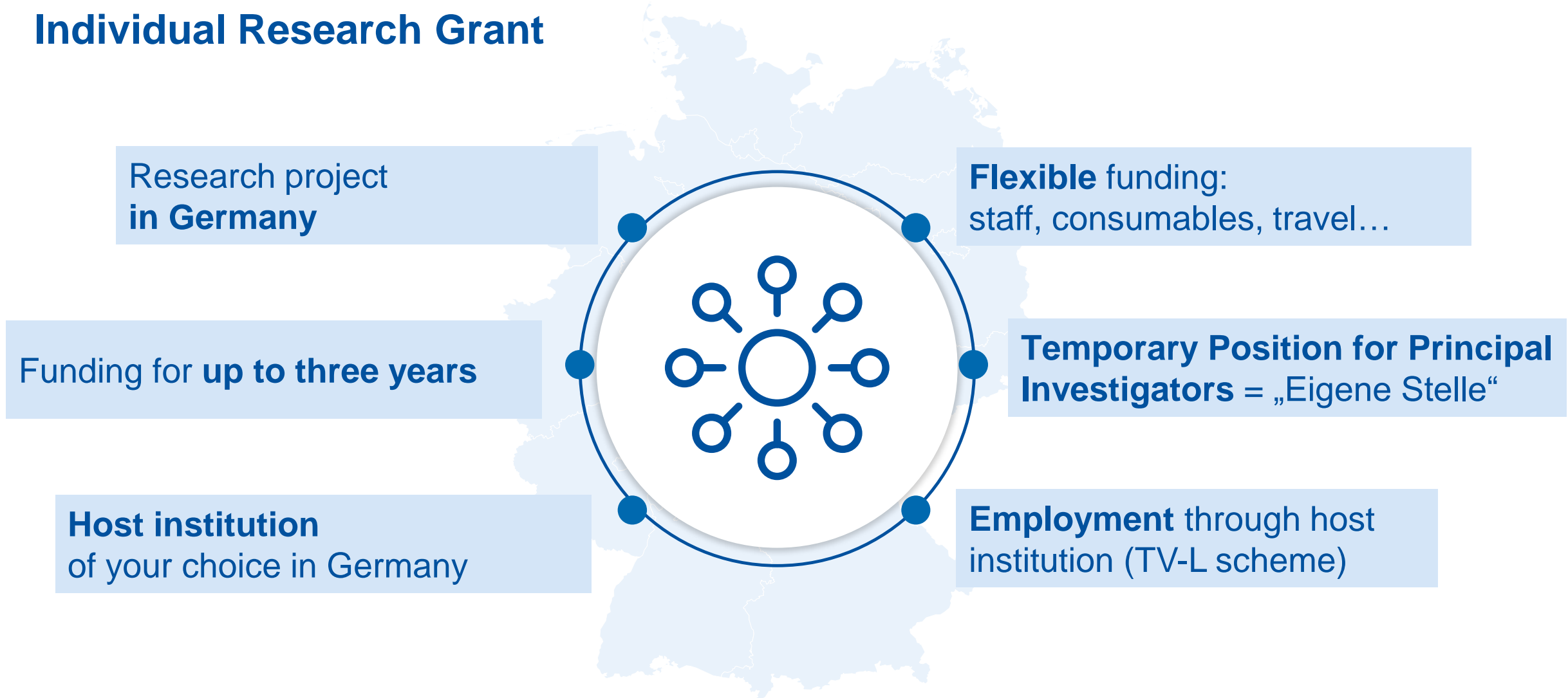


Heisenberg
Programme



Individual Research Grant
with Temporary Position

Individual Research Grant





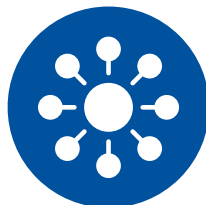
Walter Benjamin
Programme



Emmy Noether
Programme



Heisenberg
Programme



Individual Research Grant
with Temporary Position



Walter Benjamin Programme

Mobility

Move to a new
research institution

Experience
career support

Autonomy

Conduct your own
research project

Come to/stay in **Germany**
or **go abroad** – or both



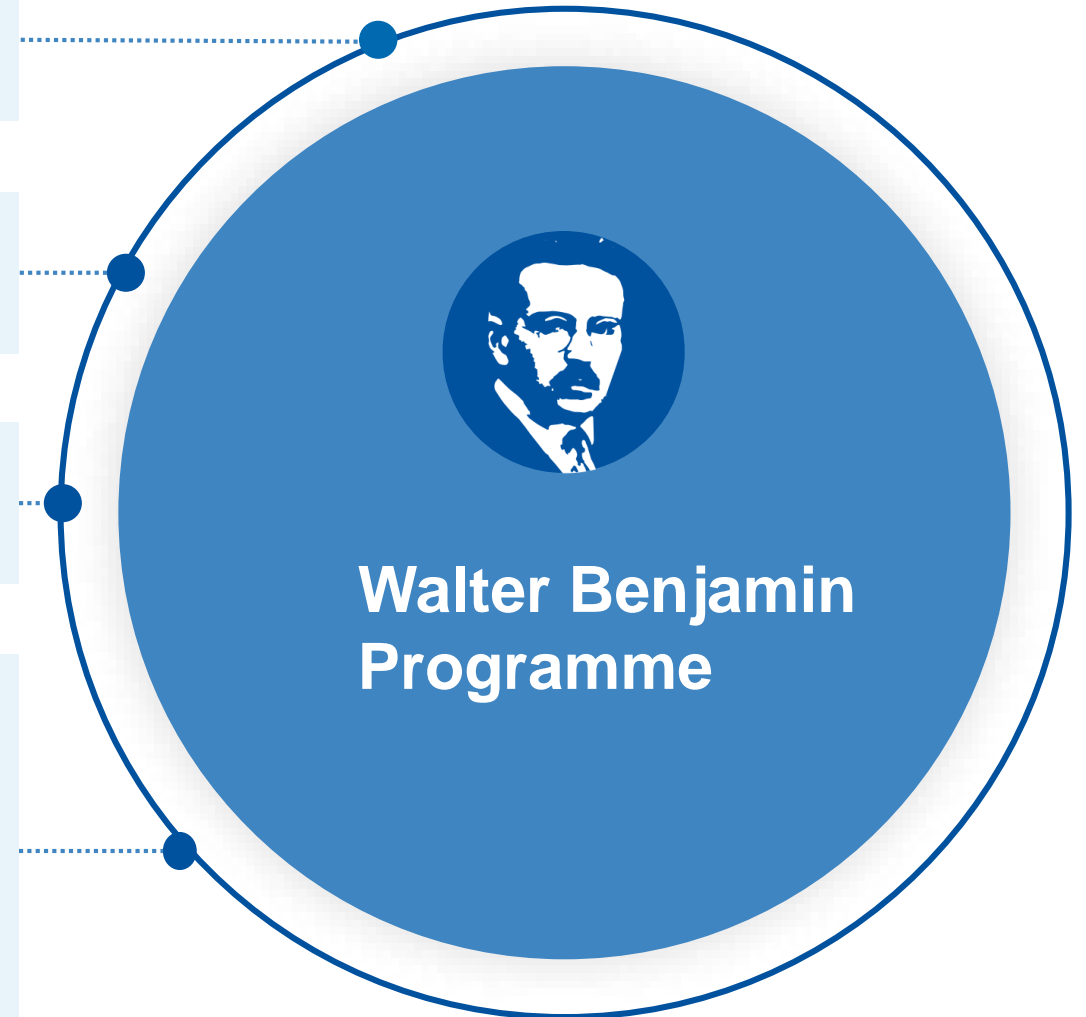
Funding for **up to two years**

Abroad or in Germany
– or combining stays at different places

In Germany: Position at host institution
+ allowance for direct project costs (250€/month)

Abroad: Fellowship (2.187€/month)
+ allowance for direct project costs (312€/month)
+ further allowances for cost of living, purchase
power equalization, children (if applicable)

→ Use the [award calculator](#)





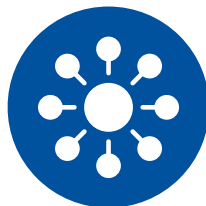
Walter Benjamin
Programme



Emmy Noether
Programme



Heisenberg
Programme



Individual Research Grant
with Temporary Position

Emmy Noether- Programme



Funding Aims

Path to **early academic independence**

Qualification for a **university teaching career**

Eligibility for professorial appointment by leading one's own independent junior research group

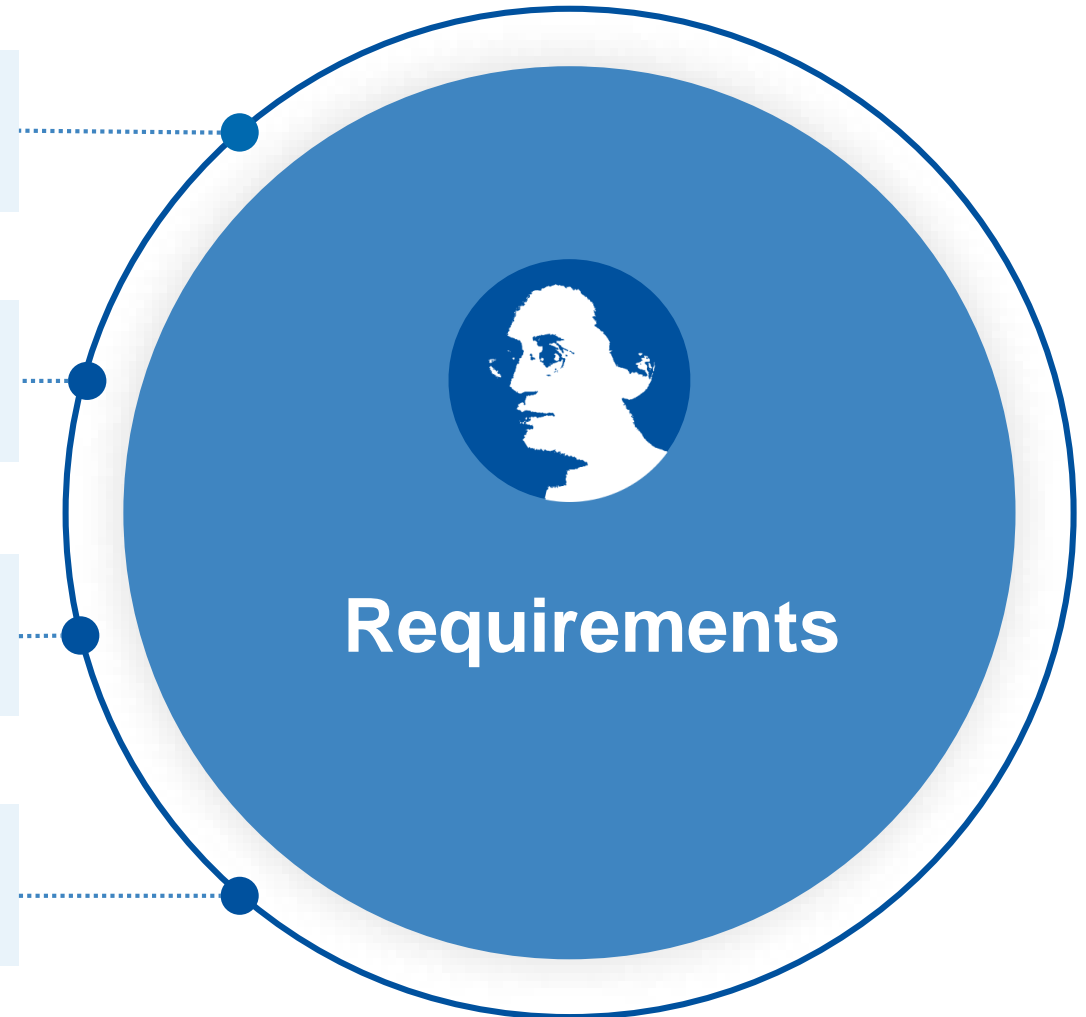


Outstanding **research profile**

2-4 years of **postdoctoral experience**

Excellent **research project**

Substantial **international research experience**



International research
cooperation

International **working**
environment

International
publications

Longer or several
shorter **research**
stays abroad



Emmy Noether Programme

Leading your **Junior Research Group**

Funding for **up to six years**

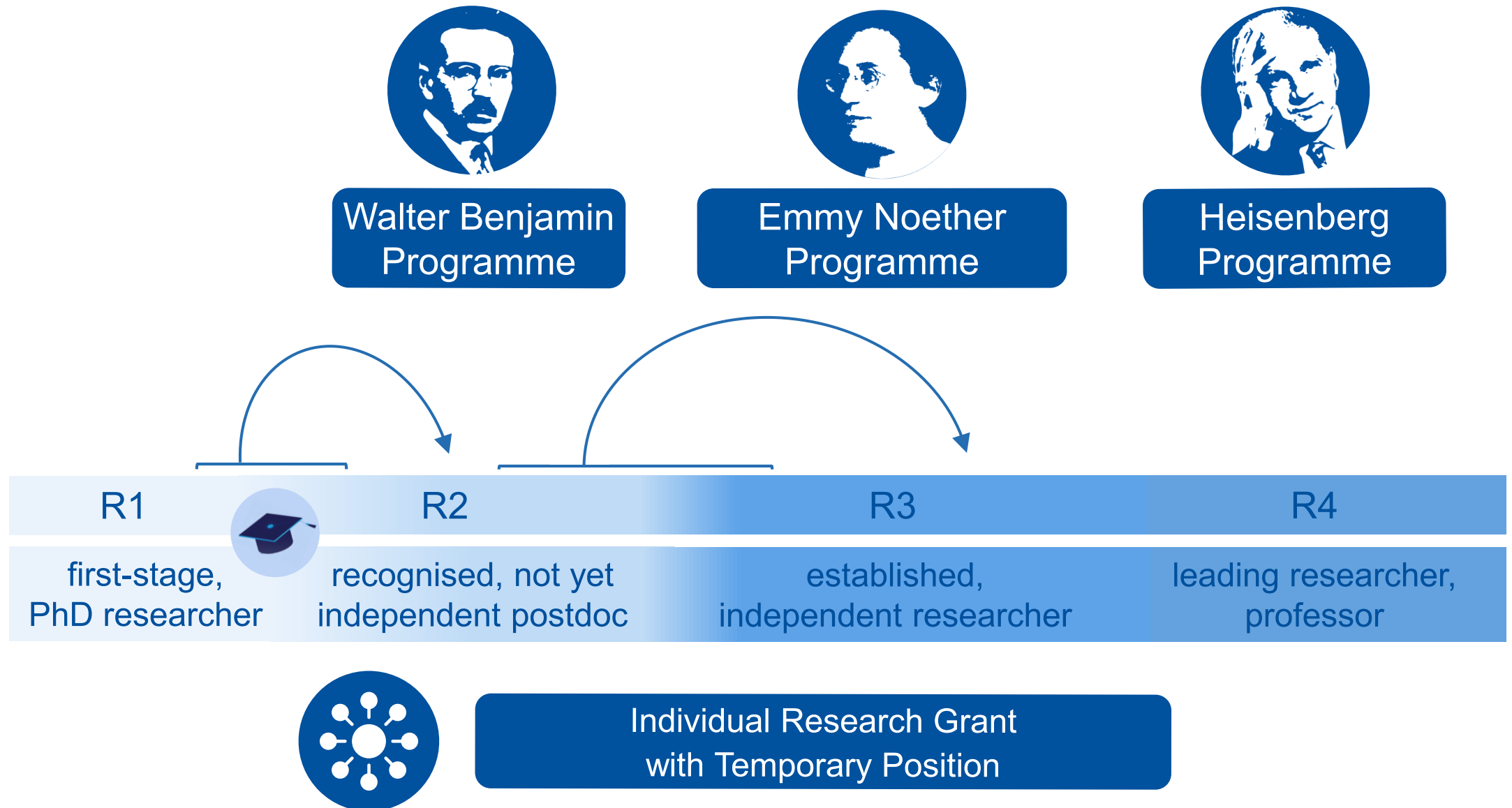
Host institution in Germany
→ name more than one in your proposal → **negotiate**



Employment at host institution
(TV-L scheme or tenure track professorship)

Flexible funding for
staff, consumables, travel...

Family allowance possible





Heisenberg- Programme

Enabling **outstanding researchers**...

...who are **eligible** for professorial
appointment...

...to prepare for a **senior academic role**...

...while **continuing** their research.



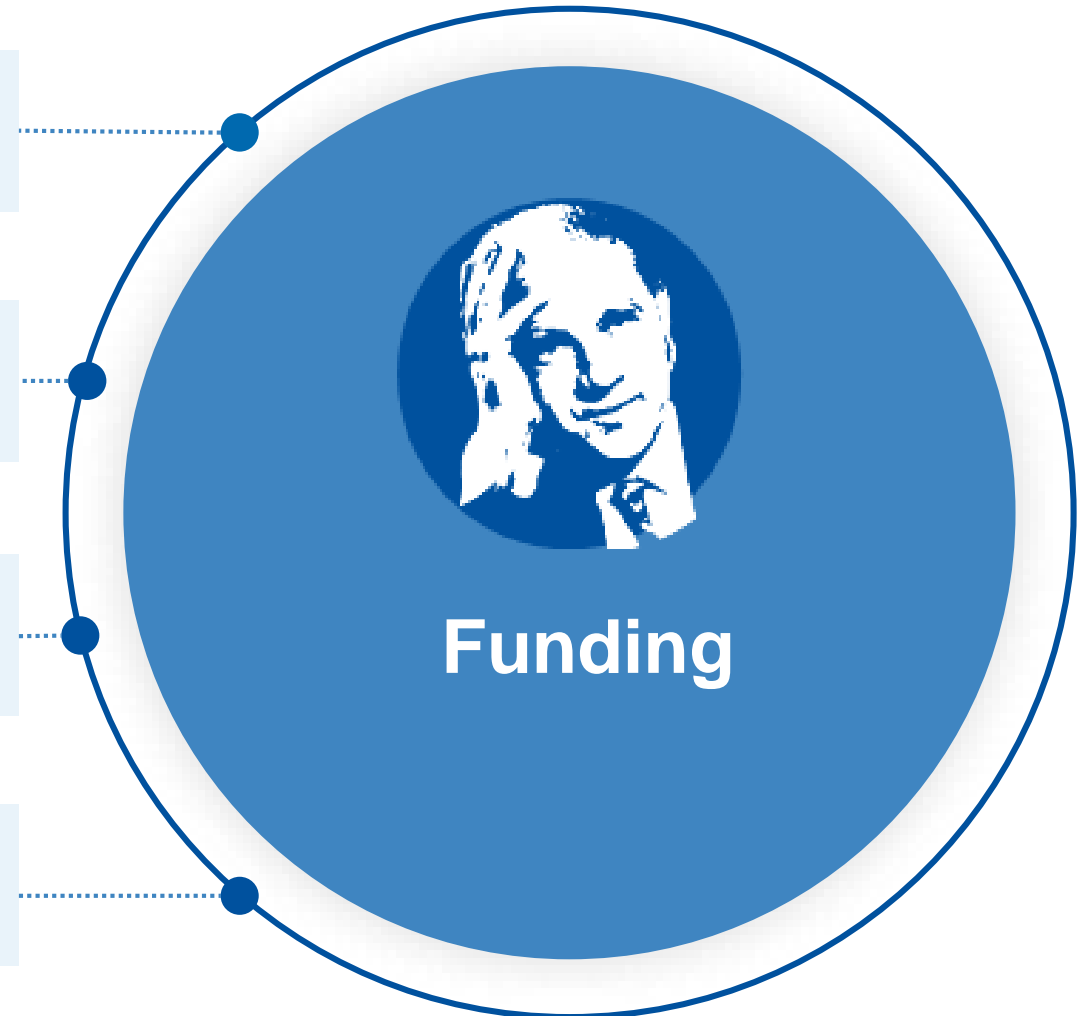
**Aims &
Requirements**

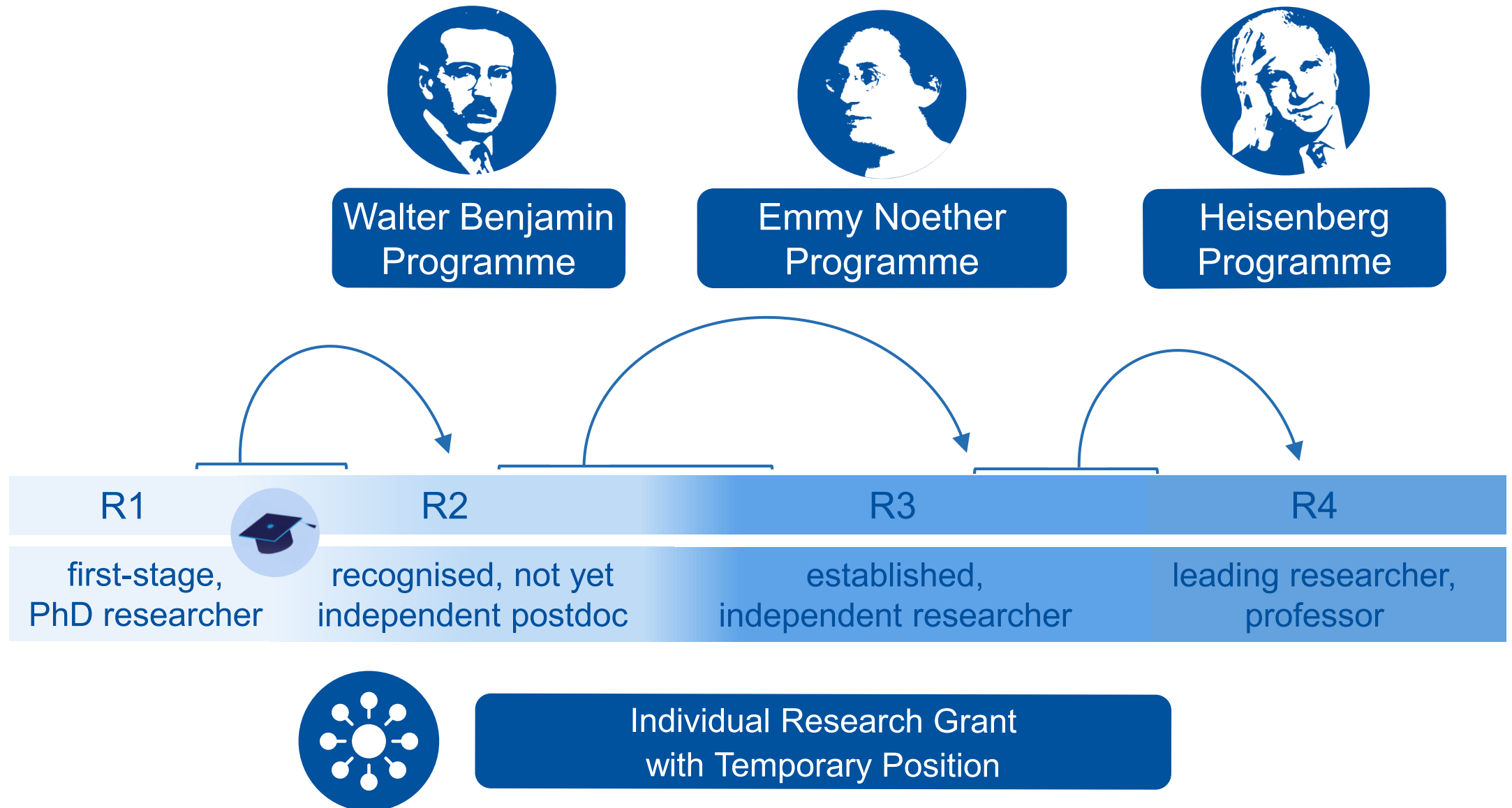
Funding for **up to five years**

Funding options:
fellowship | position | professorship

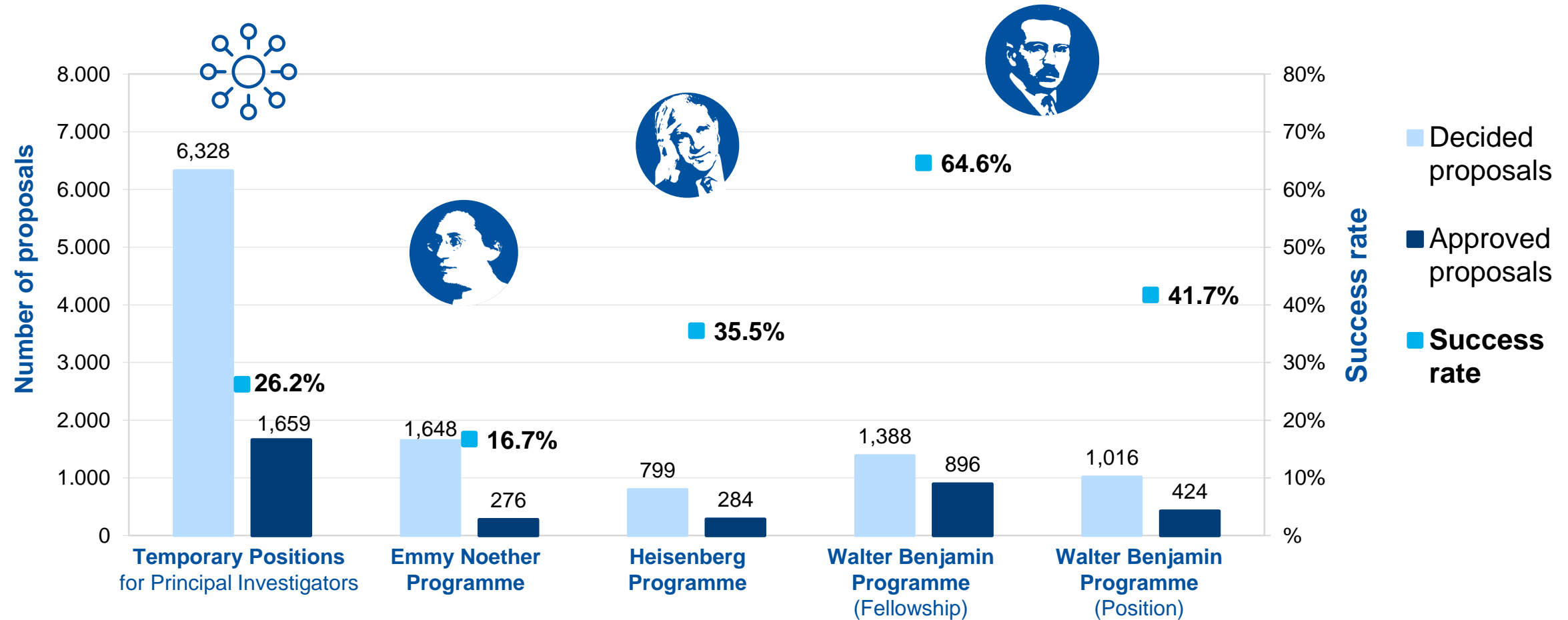
Additional flexible funding €1,000 or €250
per month

Can be **combined** with a **research grant**
proposal





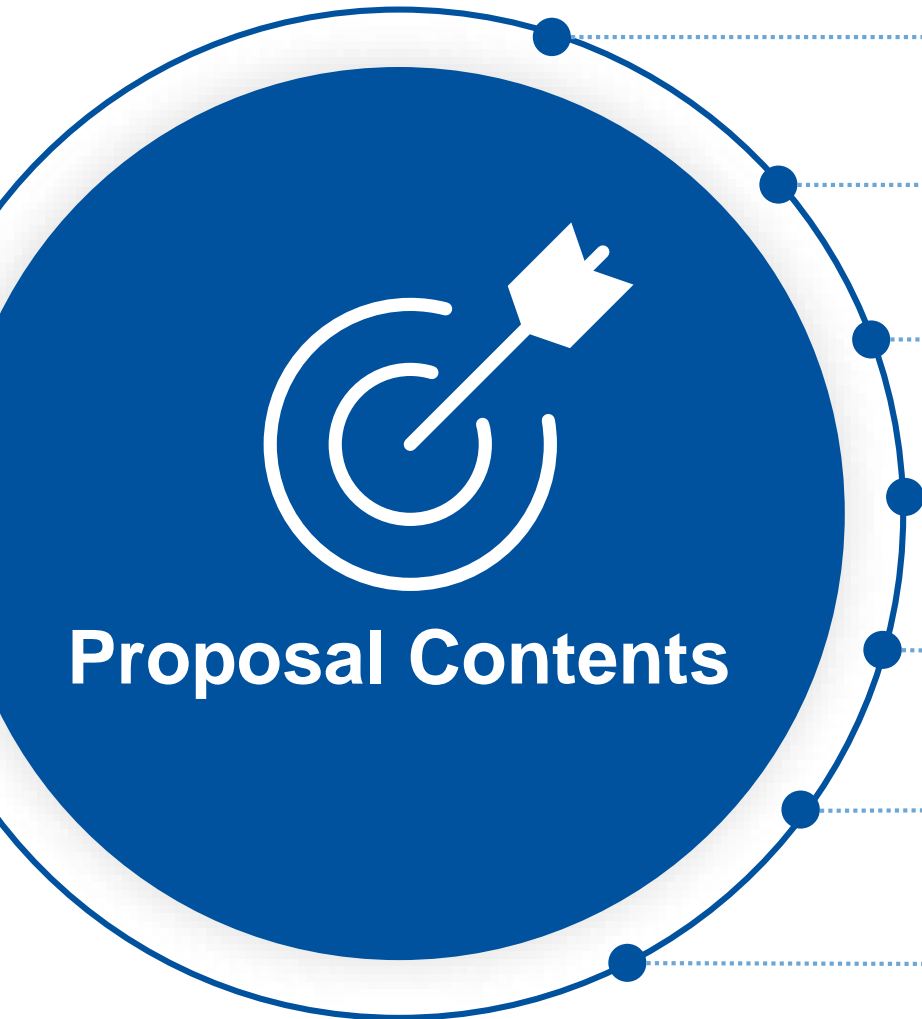
Numbers of Proposals and Success Rates* in Programmes for Early Career Researchers (mean values; 2021 to 2024)



* Base: New proposals.



From Submission to Decision



What is the **knowledge gap** you would like to fill?

Why are the expected results **novel and relevant**?

Who is going to do what? Why?

What's your **concrete, realistic and feasible plan** to answer your research question?

How are you going to manage setbacks? What's your **plan b**?

Why are you the right person to successfully manage this project?

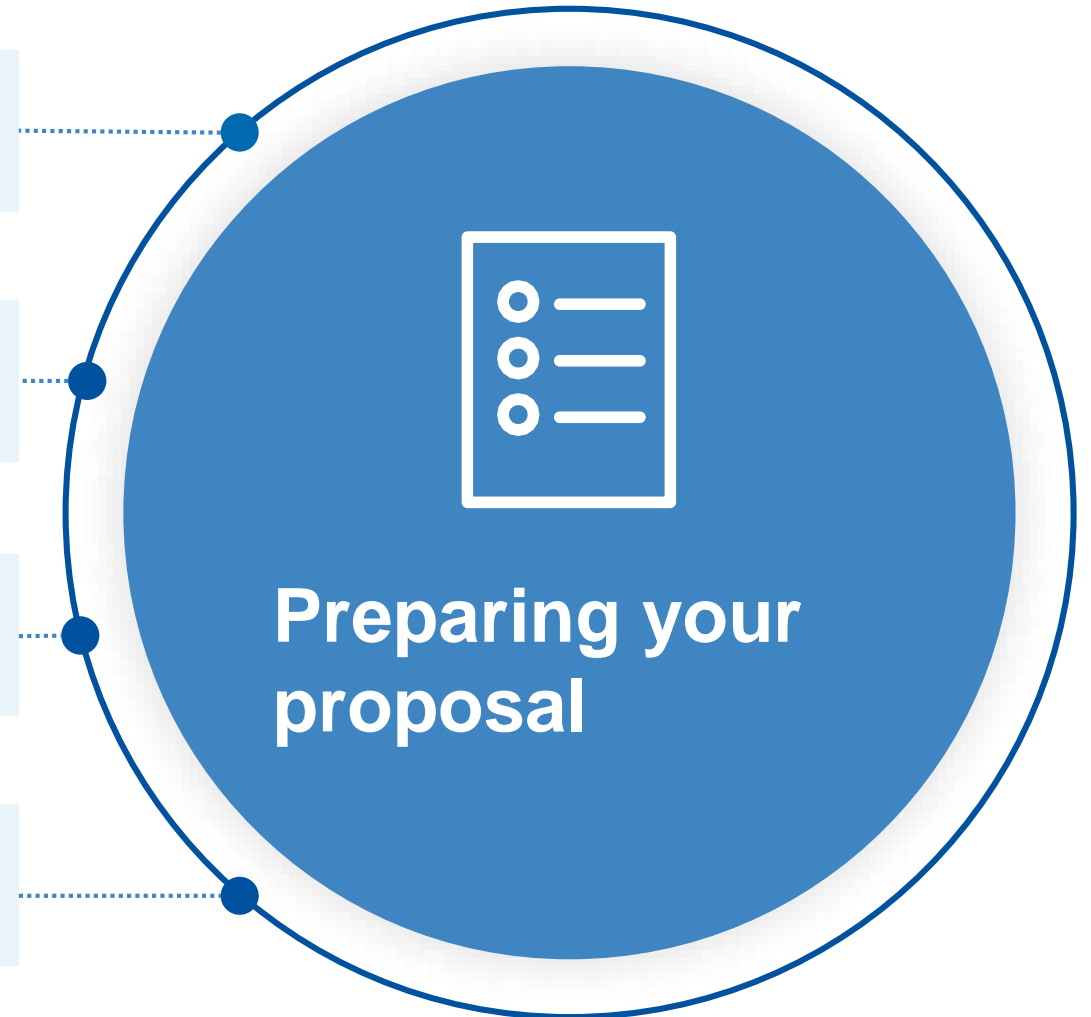
Why is the **host institution** ideal for your project?

Carefully read and follow the guidelines and proposal instructions

Decide on the proposal language:
English or German

Necessary information can be found on the DFG website

Questions? Ask for support



Questions? Ask for help



On Eligibility

procedures-researchcareers@dfg.de

On General Topics

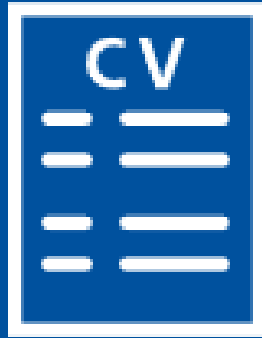
info-researchcareers@dfg.de

On Equity & Diversity

chancengleichheit@dfg.de

With a Subject-Specific Focus

<https://www.dfg.de/en/about-us/head-office/programme-contacts>



Preparing your CV



Follow the [DFG CV Template](#)



Include prizes, fellowships & awards



Mention time away from research

Relating e.g. to family, illness or dependent care; no details required



List up to ten peer reviewed publications

Comment on your contribution if not obvious



No upper limits

Needs to be realistic and justified by the project

DFG funds **only supplemental, project-specific needs** (vs. existing resources at your institution)

Seek advice from other grant applicants, recipients, institutions

List of average personnel rates on DFG website



Before Submission

Put yourself in the reviewers shoes:

Consult the [“General Guidelines for the Written Review”](#) for reviewers



Seek honest criticism

from colleagues



Plan on a feasible timeline:

on average, the time to decision is approx. six months



Inform DFG Head Office

in case a conflict of interest or competitive scenario exists



Care obligations and DFG funding

There are various possibilities for family-related part-time work, periods of absence due to parental leave or caring for children or other relatives. The same applies for long-term illness or disability.

Emmy Noether Programme

Family Allowance
Standard Allowance for Equity
and Diversity



All Positions funded through DFG in Germany

Bundeselterngeld- und
Elternzeitgesetz (BEEG)



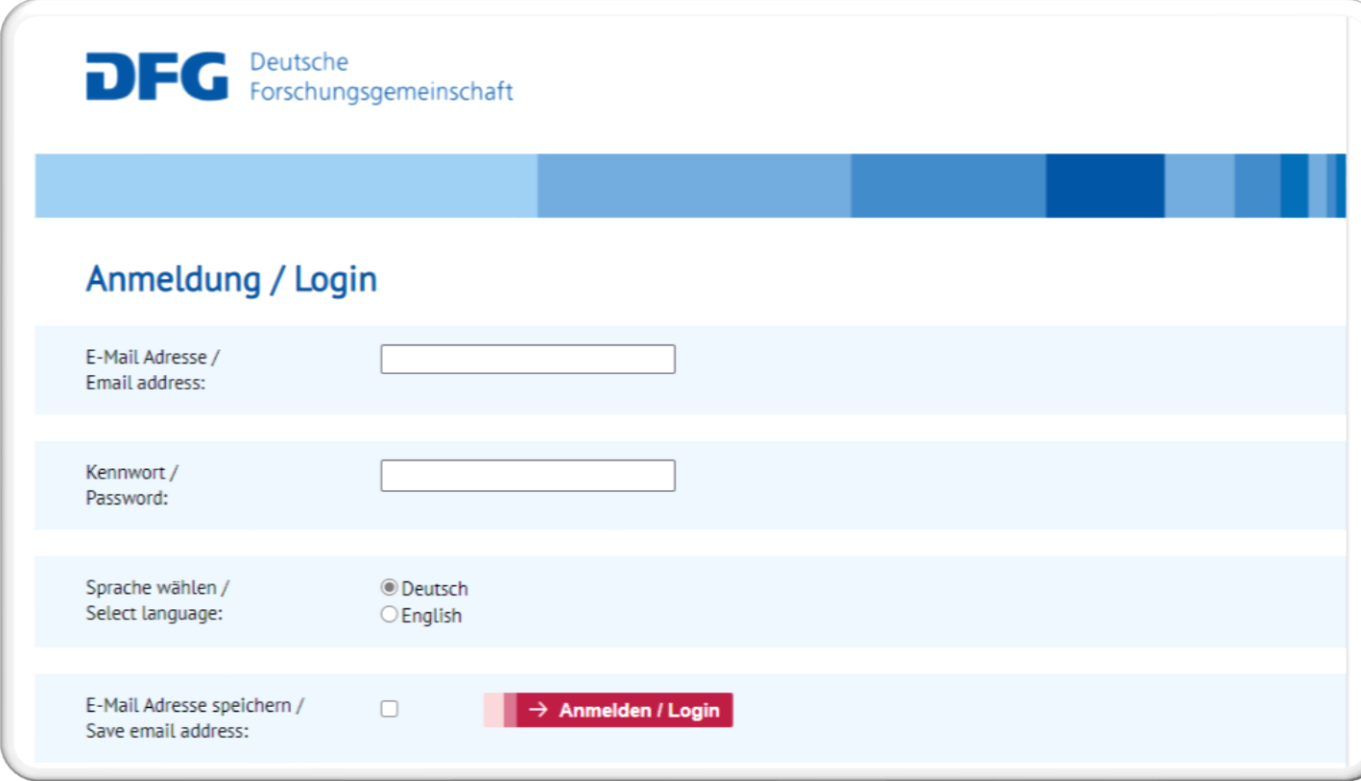
Fellowship abroad

Child allowance
Fellowship extension
Reimbursement of childcare costs
Combination of measures

Individual solutions

Possibility to pause (or not pause)
funding for 6 months
Cost-neutral extension
Support staff...

Submitting your proposal via *elan*



The screenshot shows the login interface of the DFG (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft) elan system. The header features the DFG logo and the text 'Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft'. Below this is a decorative blue bar. The main heading is 'Anmeldung / Login'. The form contains four sections: 1. 'E-Mail Adresse / Email address:' with a text input field. 2. 'Kennwort / Password:' with a text input field. 3. 'Sprache wählen / Select language:' with two radio buttons, 'Deutsch' (selected) and 'English'. 4. 'E-Mail Adresse speichern / Save email address:' with a checkbox. To the right of the checkbox is a red button labeled '→ Anmelden / Login'. The entire form is reflected below it.

DFG Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft

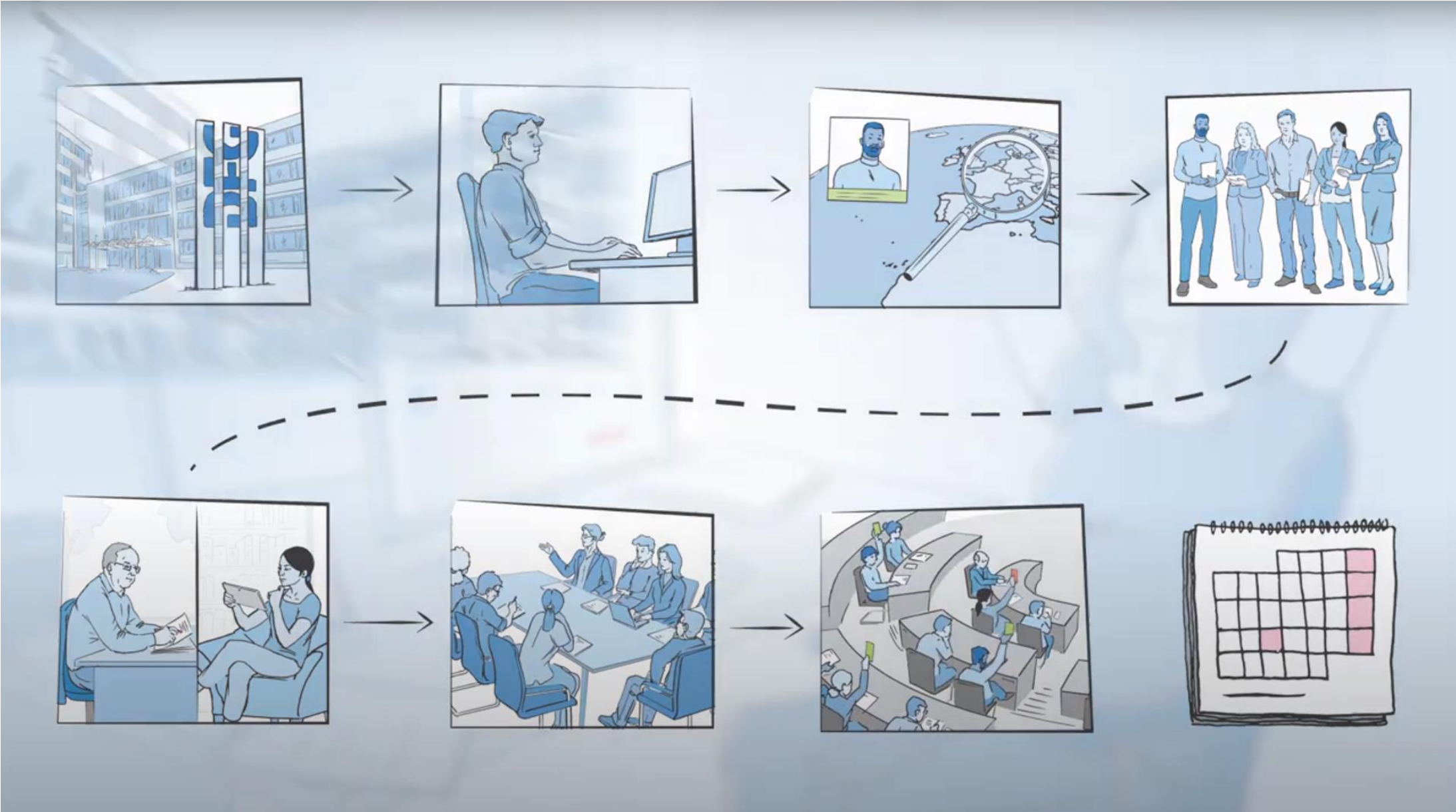
Anmeldung / Login

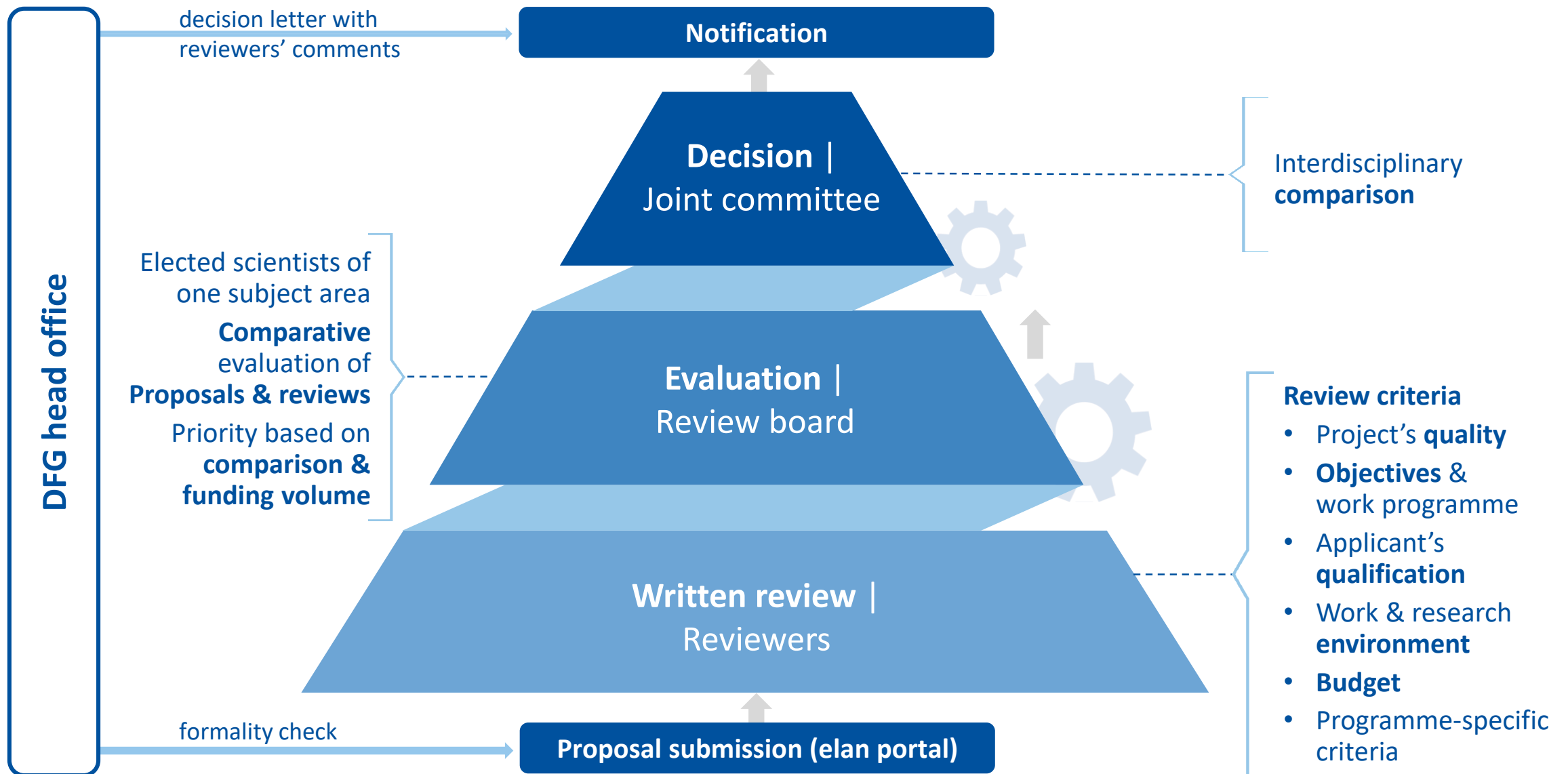
E-Mail Adresse /
Email address:

Kennwort /
Password:

Sprache wählen /
Select language: ☒ Deutsch ☐ English

E-Mail Adresse speichern /
Save email address: ☐







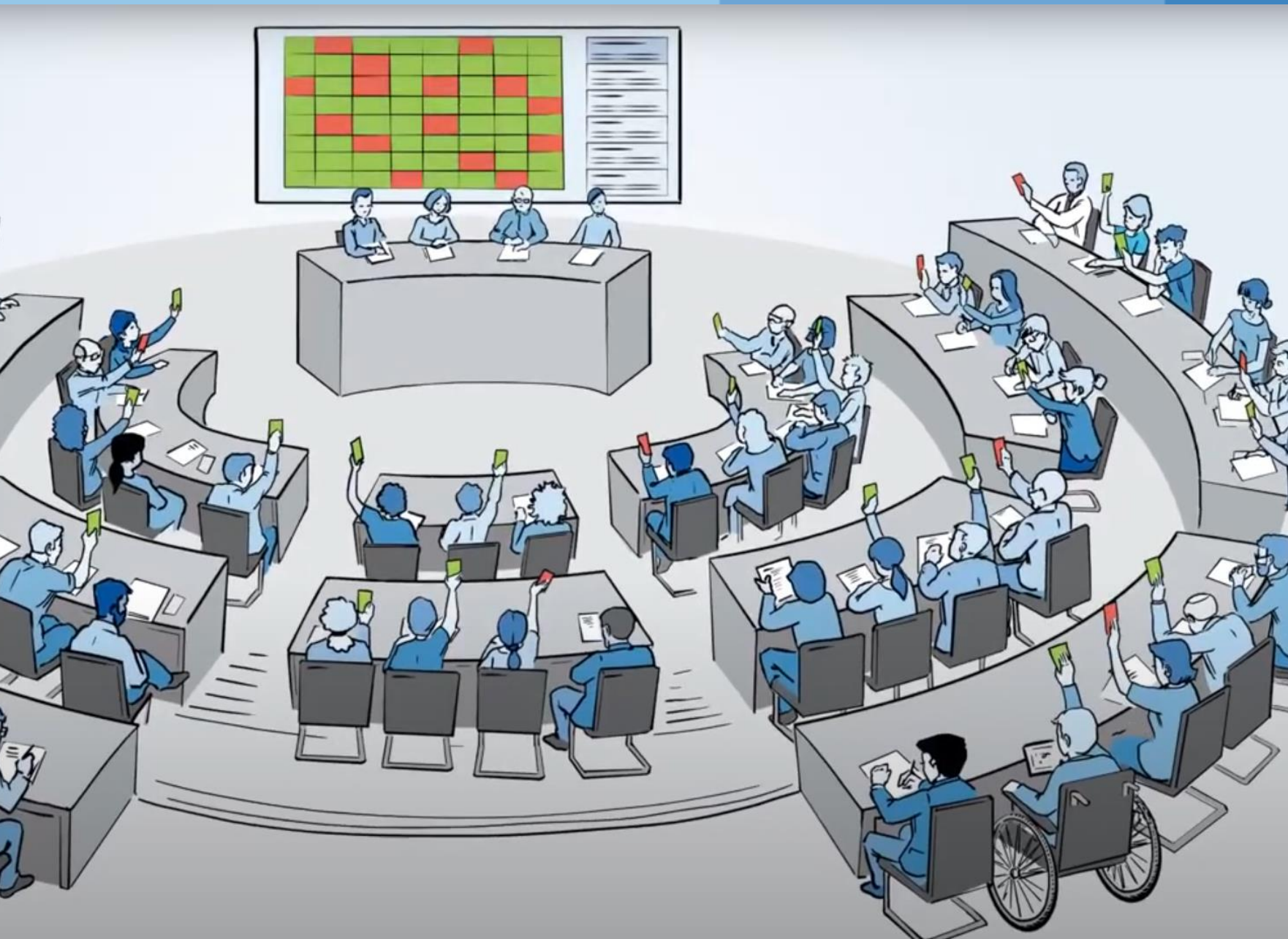
Review Boards

Elections every four years
by the community of
~ 150,000 researchers in
Germany



FACHKOLLEGIENWAHL
2027

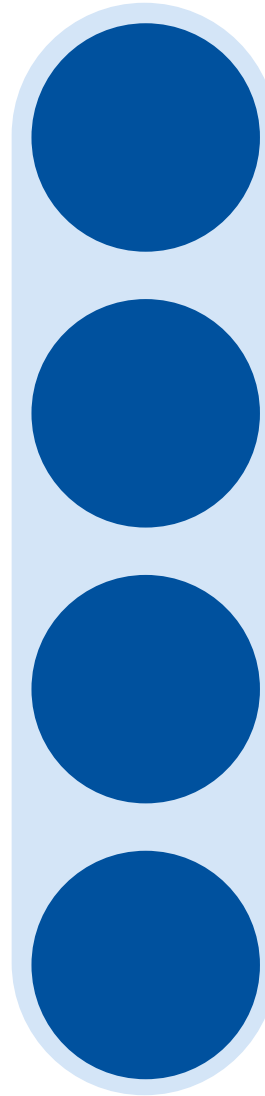
DFG



Joint Committee

- Interdisciplinary committee
- Final decision on all DFG grants

**In case your proposal
is not successful...**



Don't be discouraged

Unfortunately, the majority of proposals cannot be funded.

Take the reviewers's comments seriously, but not personally

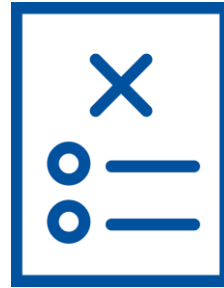
Consider the reviewers comments

They might give you some pointers for reworking and resubmitting your proposal

Consult the DFG Head Office

If you need advice or feel treated unfairly

Common reasons for proposal rejection



- Doubts about the scientific contribution
- Main aspects of research question already answered
- Open questions regarding the work plan / not enough detail
- Concerns regarding the feasibility of the planned project
- Doubts about the suitability of the research methods to achieve the project goals
- Doubts about the applicant's expertise



More questions?

info@researchcareers@dfg.de

Orientation for early-career researchers:

www.dfg.de/research_careers

Proposal Submission – A How-To Guide:

www.dfg.de/en/research_funding/individual_grants_programmes

GEPRIS – database with all DFG-funded projects:

gepris.dfg.de/en

Profiles of 25,000 German research institutes:

www.gerit.org

DFG Deutsche
Forschungsgemeinschaft



www.dfg.de



Bluesky | @dfg.de



Instagram | dfg__public



LinkedIn | Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft
(DFG) – German Research Foundation



Mastodon | @dfg_public



Youtube | @DFGbewegt

Please complete the
PAW survey!

<https://survey.academiccloud.de/index.php/571758?lang=en>

