

Guidelines and Supplementary Instructions

Discipline-Specific Information Services



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

Kennedyallee 40 · 53175 Bonn, Germany · Postal address: 53170 Bonn, Germany
Tel.: + 49 228 885-1 · Fax: + 49 228 885-2777 · postmaster@dfg.de · www.dfg.de



I Programme Information

1 Objectives and Scope of Funding

1.1 Background

The Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG, German Research Foundation) funds the establishment of efficient nationwide research information systems. Discipline-specific information services (Fachinformationsdienste für die Wissenschaft, FID) constitute an important foundation in the provision of information nationwide. They contribute to an improvement in the provision of discipline-specific information across different sites and thus to better structural framework conditions for research. The FID funding is granted with the aim of focusing on a need expressed by research. The focus is therefore on providing discipline-specific information and service offerings which are relevant from a research perspective in alignment with the subject-related requirements of the relevant research communities. The funding supports the establishment, optimisation and consolidation of these subject-specific information infrastructures as well as their networking and collaborative sharing of responsibilities, and therefore has structural benefits.

1.2 Objectives

With the “Discipline-Specific Information Services” (FID) programme, the DFG funds the establishment and expansion of discipline-specific information services as information infrastructures supporting research. The DFG's primary aim is to develop a sustainable information infrastructure which provides information aligned to the special needs of research subject areas, principally in digital form and irrespective of location. Discipline-specific information services are designed to focus on the special need¹ of the research community in each discipline, and provide subject-specific information services at a national level which go beyond basic provision² and which supplement the services and information infrastructures available at local level. Working in close cooperation with the research communities, a differentiated provision

¹The special needs of a subject area are very heterogeneous due to the respective characteristics of this subject area. It can for instance be served differently by a regional information service than by one aligned towards a specific research discipline. Special needs can only be defined in concrete terms in relation to the subject area and by taking account of the already existing discipline-specific information services, infrastructures and research practice within the academic community, as well as with regard to the individual discipline-specific information service. A broad definition is therefore inadequate. Special needs can relate both to the content provided as well as the services offered.

² As with special need, the basic provision may also vary very significantly depending on the subject area. It is the responsibility of the applicants to define how the specific situation should be presented for individual discipline-specific information services.

of information and service offerings is created whereby the emphasis can be on the provision of discipline-specific information, the offer of technology-based subject-specific services, or community building – depending on the requirements of the subject area in question.

Alongside funding individual discipline-specific information services, the programme also pursues the strategic objective of turning the individual discipline-specific information services into an overarching and networked overall FID structure. Research is increasingly interdisciplinary and therefore requires cross-disciplinary access to subject-specific information and information services. Networking and close cooperation between the discipline-specific information services is indispensable in order to ensure the interoperability of nationwide offerings as well as their national and international compatibility. Through close cooperation, knowledge transfer and the separation of roles, particularly at a technical level, the aim is to achieve the joint development and establishment of cross-FID services and standards as well as synergy effects and the reuse of technologies. At the same time, the discipline-specific information services are supported in forming binding cooperations and connections for the further development of a networked, powerful and user-oriented overall FID structure based on the principles of self-governance and self-organisation.

1.3 Scope of Funding

Discipline-specific information services are usually operated by academic libraries and infrastructure facilities. As part of the funding programme, funds are provided to the facilities to carry out their tasks in managing and further developing a discipline-specific information service. Due to the differences in needs and research practices between subject areas within the research communities, no uniform content requirements will be explicitly stated. The participating facilities are responsible for designing the tasks, taking three basic funding principles into consideration:

- (1) When designing the discipline-specific information services, the focus is to be on the need of the research community. The services provided are aimed at the subject- and discipline-related special needs of the research community in the relevant discipline and are adjusted and evaluated in response to a continuous and systematic exchange on the nature of these requirements between the discipline-specific information service and the research community.
- (2) The services offered must clearly differ from the general tasks of academic libraries and infrastructure facilities and provide a clear added value compared to basic provision in the subject area. The added value can relate both to the content provided as well as the services offered.

(3) The discipline-specific information services work together towards the development of an overall FID structure. Knowledge transfer, the reuse of technologies and increased interoperability of the services is ensured through networking and cooperation between the discipline-specific information services.

The tasks of providing research-oriented information across different sites include the nationwide provision of discipline-specific information in a user-friendly cataloguing and search environment as well as making content available in open access. Furthermore, the tasks may include additional subject-specific and user-oriented information services, such as for example research capacities, technology-based services and specific software developments, services in the field of open access publishing, small-scale digitisation services, support in research data management and nationwide consultancy services. At the same time, the aim is to continuously improve the quality of the discipline-specific information services in a way which meets the current requirements of the users within the scope of consolidating and further developing their service offerings. The funding therefore also covers technical innovations within the scope of user-friendly and needs-oriented further development based on the latest methods and technologies.

Funding is also provided for exchange and systematic feedback with the research community, as well as for supporting networking and cooperation between the discipline-specific information services. At the same time, discipline-specific information services are expected to maintain an ongoing exchange with academic libraries in a related field as well as other relevant infrastructure facilities and research institutions in a national and international context; this is also eligible for funding. Working closely with academic libraries in particular can contribute towards a better dissemination of discipline-specific services. In order to support the establishment and development of the overall FID structure, regular coordination and collaboration activities between discipline-specific information services are also eligible for funding; however, these should be accompanied by a proportionate financial contribution on the part of the applicant.

2 Proposal submission

2.1 Eligibility

Members of non-profit research information infrastructure facilities such as libraries, archives, museums, research collections, research data centres or computing and information centres are eligible to submit proposals.

For joint projects, the following applies for potential cooperation partners: Researchers in Germany, or those working at a German research institution abroad, who have completed their academic training (generally by obtaining a doctorate) are eligible to apply.

Since the funding provided is intended to result in improvements to nationwide information infrastructures, and its results benefit research as a whole, researchers working at the institutes and member organisations of the Max Planck Society, the Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft, the Helmholtz Association and the Leibniz Association are also eligible to apply. This also applies to members of publicly funded research institutions associated with these organisations, as well as members of German sections of international information infrastructure facilities.

2.2 Funding conditions

- Proposals are only considered for facilities whose institutional stability, continuity and efficiency is guaranteed by the financing from the respective institution's own funding sources. The essential requirements are an adequate and safeguarded budget which is made available on an ongoing basis and adequate personnel resources and information technology infrastructure.
- It is assumed that the long-term accessibility and usability of the project results will be consistently ensured by the applicant institution(s) even after the project expires. Established processes for long-term archiving must be applied in order to ensure the long-term verifiability and availability of publications, discipline-specific information and services. The proposal must specify which long-term archiving processes and standards are used.
- A project proposal to establish a discipline-specific information service can only be submitted if no equivalent with a similar content focus exists at the time of proposal submission (see also [Overview of funded discipline-specific information services \(in German only\)](#)).
- The need of the respective research communities for special subject-specific services which go beyond the general tasks of an academic library must be demonstrated as a requirement for the funding.
- Tasks and services that can stand alone and for which there are separate DFG funding opportunities – e.g. digitisation projects, establishment of publication platforms, innovative

technological projects and the funding of fees for open access publications – are to be proposed separately under the respective LIS programmes. This is possible irrespective of the funding periods of the discipline-specific information service. Should there be work packages for which separate programmes cannot be meaningfully delimited and their funding is therefore proposed under the “Discipline-Specific Information Services” programme, then uniform funding conditions will be ensured by evaluating and funding these special services based on the same principles as under the respective LIS funding programme.

- The requirements for the acquisition and licensing of publications are set out in the “Guidelines for the Purchase of Publications in DFG-Funded Discipline-Specific Information Services”:

www.dfg.de/formulare/12_101

Licences for digital resources should be purchased in the context of ensuring the widest possible access, whereby the national licence model should be applied as a standard licence wherever this is possible or reasonable. The granting of archive and hosting rights is defined as standard and deviations from this are subject to justification. It is strongly recommended to make use of the Competence Centre for Licensing (Kompetenzzentrum für Lizenzierung, KfL), and a justification must be given for any decision not to do so.

- The digital form of a publication – if it is available – should always be preferred in accordance with an e-preferred policy. As part of an open access-preferred policy, content is expected to be made available in open access wherever possible.
- DFG-funded information resources, both in print and digital form, must be made accessible to all interested research users via suitable delivery mechanisms as far as possible and must be archived on a permanent basis. Content must be made available in a manner that guarantees the maximum potential for retrieval. The publications and information acquired are expected to be made available in accordance with the relevant respective standards, and the metadata is expected to be integrated into the relevant nationwide cataloguing systems. Metadata must meet relevant standards for it to be integrated into international subject-specific or other cataloguing systems. The archiving of print media must be indicated in nationwide databases.
- If open access publications are produced within the framework of FID (e.g. via publication infrastructures), they must be made available to the general public free of charge for permanent reuse in a legally secure manner. In cases where copyrights or related rights apply, the authors are required to grant appropriate open licences. The DFG recommends using a CC-BY license for articles and a CC-BY-SA license for monographs (in exceptional cases CC-BY-ND). Where possible, publications should be assigned a DOI and be linked to an

author's ORCID profile. Metadata from open access publications is expected to be integrated into international subject-specific or other cataloguing systems.

- The resulting data (for example metadata, digital copies) must meet the FAIR criteria (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable) in order to ensure the optimal long-term usability of project results.
- Technical developments must be announced and must be made available for reuse in a suitable location free of charge as open source by disclosing any source code produced.
- By accepting the grant, the FID facilities commit to working together through a process of self-organisation to ensure that their services are interoperable and are designed in a way that makes them suitable for use by researchers. In particular, in the context of joint developments and consolidations to form openly accessible systems, FID facilities agree to strive to achieve standardisation of data export, develop interoperable data models and enable the multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary use of resources.
- By accepting the grant, FID facilities undertake to actively participate, through self-organisation, in the further development and consolidation of the overall FID structure. This includes the implementation of measures agreed within the framework of the overall FID structure and participation in the overarching FID governance structure. Likewise, they commit to collecting data which is relevant for the purpose of evaluating the development of the overall structure. This also includes providing data to the relevant institutions and services, for example to an office which coordinates the mapping of FID offerings and technical infrastructures, or to the KfL, which combines the procurement of commercially available digital resources and the handling of related technical processes as well as the associated reporting.

2.3 Proposal structure

Proposals for projects in the Scientific Library Services and Information Systems area must be structured in accordance with the relevant proposal preparation instructions.

www.dfg.de/formulare/12_01

Please refer to the supplementary instructions under **V** below regarding the specifics of submitting a proposal under the "Discipline-Specific Information Services" (FID) programme.

2.4 Submission deadline

The proposal must be submitted by **15 April** or **15 September** in the year preceding the commencement of funding. Submission of a binding letter of intent by **15 February** of the same year is a prerequisite for submitting a proposal. The letter of intent should indicate the planned

submission date for the proposal, the intended subject focus of the discipline-specific information service, the arrangements agreed with other discipline-specific information services, the cooperation partners to be involved and any other academic representatives who are to be involved in the project at a conceptual level. Letters of intent must be submitted via elan under the section “Letter of Intent / Declaration of Interest”.

3 Duration

Initial funding can be approved for up to three years. Renewal proposals can be submitted. The total funding duration is a maximum of twelve years.

II Proposal Modules

Under this funding programme, you may submit one or more of the following modules. For details, please see the module descriptions.

1 Basic Module

Use the basic module to request funding for direct project costs, project-specific staff, and instrumentation necessary to carry out the project.

www.dfg.de/formulare/52_01

2 Module Acquisition Funding

This module provides funding to support the acquisition of special research literature, from the costs of purchasing a book from a normal supplier to licence fees and other costs associated with a purchase:

www.dfg.de/formulare/52_16

The conditions governing the use of funding for acquisitions are set out in the “Guidelines for the Purchase of Publications in DFG-Funded Discipline-Specific Information Services”:

www.dfg.de/formulare/12_101

3 Module Project-Specific Workshops

If you would like to conduct workshops as part of your project, you may request funding to help you do so. Please note that this module cannot be submitted separately but only in conjunction with the proposed project.

www.dfg.de/formulare/52_06

The hosting of **round-table talks** may also be funded for the purpose of strategic planning, nationwide collaborations in the sense of self-organisation processes and networking measures for communities and infrastructure facilities, as well as the further development of funding arrangements. Please contact the responsible DFG programme contact if you have any questions.

III Obligations

In submitting a proposal to the DFG, you

1. agree to adhere to the **principles of good research practice**.³

The principles of good research practice include, among others: maintaining professional standards, maintaining strict honesty with regard to one's own contributions and those of third parties, documenting results and rigorously questioning all findings.

2. recognise the **Rules of Procedure for Dealing with Scientific Misconduct**

(Verfahrensordnung zum Umgang mit wissenschaftlichem Fehlverhalten – VerfOwF)⁴ as legally binding.

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:

³ The principles of good research practice can be found in detail in the DFG [Code of Conduct Guidelines for Safeguarding Good Research Practice](#) and in the [Funding Guidelines: General Terms and Conditions of DFG Grants](#) (DFG form 2.00).

⁴ [DFG Rules of Procedure for Dealing with Scientific Misconduct](#), DFG form 80.01

- 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;
- exclusion 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.

By accepting funding, the recipient agrees to:

3. use the grant exclusively and in a targeted manner to realise the funded project. The use and accounting of funds must conform to the relevant regulations of the DFG.
4. submit progress reports on the research according to the dates specified in the award letter and to present financial accounts to the DFG detailing the use of funds.

The DFG expects that the findings of the projects it funds be made available to the public.

IV 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. If appropriate, please share this information with individuals whose data is processed by the DFG due to the fact that they are involved in your project.

www.dfg.de/privacy_policy

V Supplementary Instructions

Please base your proposal on the Proposal Preparation Instructions for Project Proposals in the Area of Scientific Library Services and Information Systems (LIS).

www.dfg.de/formulare/12_01

In addition, refer to the information in these supplementary instructions on submitting proposals for the “Discipline-Specific Information Services” programme. The section titles below are based on the titles in the proposal preparation instructions. Proposals must be submitted via elan:

elan.dfg.de

In addition to the provisions on the length of the proposal⁵ set out in the Proposal Preparation Instructions, where there is more than one applicant, each additional applicant is entitled to five additional pages, which may be allocated across the sections as required.

Guidance on the drafting and length of project reports is provided in the Guidelines for Project Reports in the Area of Scientific Library Services and Information Systems (DFG form 12.02) and the current version of the accompanying template for a final report under infrastructure funding.⁶

Over and above the maximum length specified there for reports, each additional applicant is entitled to two additional pages.

Part B Project Description:

1. State of the art and preliminary work

- Please describe how the project fits into the existing information and infrastructure landscape of the subject area. Please elaborate on the fulfilment of the funding principles “focus on subject- and discipline-related needs” and “Differentiation of Tasks with Regard to General Tasks”.

⁵ Cf. DFG form 12.01, Proposal Preparation Instructions – Project Proposals in the Area of Scientific Library Services and Information Systems, Section B “Project Description”.

⁶ www.dfg.de/formulare/12_02

- Please describe the essential communications processes, needs analyses and the results of the continuous and systematic feedback with the research communities. Define your target group(s) as precisely as possible.
- Please explain your current acquisition profile and state how, to what extent and according to which criteria and core areas the media and data will be purchased, developed and made available, and how this differs from basic provision. This information can also be stored on your FID portal or project website. Please provide more details on the implementation of the e-preferred policy, and where applicable also on the provision of content in open access and/or the provision of research data.
- Please list the specialised information service facilities with which binding cooperations (content-related/organisational/technical arrangements) exist and in what form the cooperation is organised. Where applicable, list which services from other specialised information services you will reuse and which services from your specialised information service will be reused by other specialised information services or can be used by them in principle.
- Please also elaborate on any existing cooperations with other facilities, as well as collaboration with academic libraries in a related field and other infrastructure facilities. List any international cooperations and involvements in international networks which are incorporated into developing the portfolio of service offerings.

For renewal proposals only:

- For renewal proposals it must be evaluated whether previous objectives from the perspective of the discipline-specific information service have been achieved. If necessary, explain to what extent the formulated objectives have not been achieved.
- Please describe and evaluate the current use and level of acceptance of the services. In light of this, the data sheet regarding the use of services and the content provided (Part C Attachments) must be filled in. When performing your evaluation and technical contextualisation, refer to the information in the data sheet wherever appropriate. This can be complemented by additional information, services and key figures which prove the efficiency of the discipline-specific information service. Please send the data sheet by e-mail in Excel format to the responsible persons named in Section VI, “Formal and organisational questions”.
- Please explain through which other channels outside the FID-specific portals the FID's services have been made available to users to date. This includes non-public search portals. A project report must be enclosed with the renewal proposal in the form of a status report on the current funding period. When drafting the report, please follow the Guidelines for Project Reports in the Area of Scientific Library Services and Information Systems

(DFG form 12.02). Deviations from the requirements in the above-mentioned guidelines are set out in **Section V** of these guidelines.

2.2 Objectives

- Please list the objectives in terms of both the strategic overall development of the discipline-specific information service as well as the (further) development of specific services and their use. Please explain the value added by the services to the communities addressed.
- Please also state what criteria you use to evaluate the success and the efficiency of the discipline-specific information service after the initial duration of the funding has expired.

2.3 Work programme and proposed methods

- Please divide your work programme into your core areas. A core area covers at least one work package and possibly several. Please list the specific results desired for each respective work package and explain the respective criteria for success for your subsequent self-evaluation.
- Please also give detailed and systematic information on the activities for which funding is required within the context of each work package, such as for example funding for staff in person months.
- Please indicate which services require in-house development from the ground up and which services can build upon services established or offered in cooperation with other FIDs or infrastructure facilities. If applicable, please also state the overarching tasks for which the discipline-specific information service undertakes a coordinating role within the overall information structure.
- If your institution is responsible for several discipline-specific information services, please explain the synergies within the organisation and explain how double funding is avoided.

4.4 Formal assurances

Please state in a formal declaration that the requirements for funding exist and the financial contributions required will be made:

We confirm that

- the print and digital resources purchased will be permanently archived;
- the project results will be made publicly available in the long term even after DFG funding has expired;

- the source code for the software developed within the project will be documented in accordance with the principles of open source and made available for reuse by third parties;
- we participate in an overarching governance structure for discipline-specific information services as well as measures introduced for networking and cooperation.

5.9 Financial contributions

The following financial contributions on the part of the applicant are mandatory for FID funding:

- Costs of licensing digital media: The institutions contribute at least 15% to the costs of licensing digital media. Licensed media has to be made available in digital form nationwide.
- A financial contribution of 30% applies to the purchase of all other media.

In addition to this mandatory financial contribution, an appropriate financial contribution must be provided by the applicant for project-specific costs.

A more substantial contribution than for universities is expected from institutions whose general tasks include the provision of information nationwide – for example state libraries or institutions belonging to the Leibniz Association.

The following tasks are to be understood as general tasks. They may not be stated as an object of funding, nor may they be counted as the applicant's own financial contributions:

- Personnel expenses for activities relating to expanding library collections which would be part of the regular operations of academic libraries;
- Formal cataloguing and subject indexing services as well as catalogue enrichment;
- Regular coordination and collaboration activities in discipline-specific information services;
- Activities that relate to ensuring the ongoing operation to provide information, including, but not limited to, maintaining a suitable technical infrastructure;
- Interlibrary loan services, document delivery services and Subito delivery services;
- Ensuring the long-term traceability and availability of the publications (print and electronic) and discipline-specific information which has been acquired through funding or through the specified financial contribution;

6.1 Requested modules/funds

- If you are applying for acquisition funding, please also state the extent to which the “Guidelines for the Purchase of Publications in DFG-Funded Discipline-Specific Information Services” (DFG form 12.101) are observed. Please divide the acquisition funding applied for into meaningful categories, among other things also whether the licences are for new acquisitions or continuations, and give a justification for the subject-related relevance, the differences to basic provision and the allocation of funding. You must also explicitly state the financial contributions you will make as part of the purchase. Please attach a statement from the KfL when applying for a licence.
- Services related to interlibrary loans, the delivery of documents and Subito deliveries form part of the general tasks of an academic library and are therefore not eligible for funding. The costs involved cannot be included in the calculation of own funds.
- When requesting funding for technical (new) developments, please describe in the proposal how exactly they will be used, which environmental analyses have been carried out, why existing technologies cannot be reused or adjusted and to what extent the risk of parallel developments can be excluded.
- All requested funds must be presented in the Excel spreadsheet “Funding Allocation – Discipline-Specific Information Services and FIDplus” (DFG form 12.111, only available in German) and submitted together with the proposal. The spreadsheet lists all modules that may be applied for under the FID funding programme, differentiated by staff, direct project costs and acquisition costs, and separated for each co-applicant in a separate worksheet. The aim here is to ensure that the funds applied for in elan correspond to the presentation in the proposal and that the results of the review and evaluation can be implemented correctly.

Part C Attachments:

Additional information and data sheets

- The data sheet on the “Discipline-Specific Information Services” programme must be attached to your proposal:

www.dfg.de/formulare/12_231

Please send the data sheet by e-mail in Excel format to the responsible persons named in Section VI, “Formal and organisational queries”.

- The spreadsheet “Funding Allocation – Discipline-Specific Information Services and FIDplus” must be attached to your proposal:

www.dfg.de/formulare/12_111

Please send the “Funding Allocation” by e-mail in Excel format to the responsible persons named in Section VI, “Formal and organisational queries”.

- If measures have been planned to digitise printed texts, please also include the data sheet for “Digitisation and Indexing” with the proposal:

www.dfg.de/formulare/12_152

- If the proposal is submitted by members of a research information infrastructure facility, the applicant must include a formal assurance from the director of the institution with the proposal.

www.dfg.de/formulare/12_141

- Further proposals may be submitted in line with the Proposal Preparation Instructions. If you wish to submit supporting letters as an attachment, bundle them together into a single document along with a table of contents with the title “Anlage_LOIs”. Please choose the name “Anlage_Stellungnahme_KfL” for the statement from the Competence Centre for Licensing on the products to be licensed.

VI Information

For further information, please contact:

- Formal and organisational queries

Katharina Mizerski (e-mail: Katharina.Mizerski@dfg.de, Tel.: +49 228 885-2481)
Alicia Neu (e-mail: Alicia.Neu@dfg.de, Tel: +49 228 885-3384)

- Queries on proposal submission

Michael Kassube (e-mail: Michael.Kassube@dfg.de, Tel.: +49 228 885-2699)
Dr. Franziska Limbach (e-mail: Franziska.Limbach@dfg.de, Tel.: +49 228 885-2094)

A detailed listing of contact details, responsibilities and funding opportunities in the programme area of Scientific Library Services and Information Systems can be found on the DFG website at

www.dfg.de/lis/en