

Guidelines

Open Access Publication Grant



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.

I Programme Information

1 Objectives and Scope of Funding

The Open Access Publication Grant programme provides a fixed allowance towards the publication of research articles and scholarly books in open access. The allowances awarded can be used to cover the total publication fees incurred by an institution for open access publications. Through this funding, the DFG assumes its share of the financial responsibility within the framework of (virtual) information or publication budgets.

Allowances of a specified amount can be requested for articles and books and are calculated based on publications resulting from DFG-funded research¹. For proposals submitted in 2027, the allowance amounts to €1,400 per article. Up to €5,000 per book title can be requested for open access books demonstrably resulting from a DFG-funded project. The DFG may adjust the allowance amounts annually.

2 Proposals

2.1 Eligibility

Firstly, proposals may be submitted by higher education institutions and non-profit institutions under private law, including non-university research institutions and German research institutions abroad that are wholly publicly funded or are non-profit organisations and that permit their members to publish their research outputs in a generally accessible format. University hospitals are eligible to submit proposals through the university management. The duty to cooperate (DFG form 55.01) does not apply for non-university institutions.

Secondly, proposals may be submitted by individual researchers who receive DFG funding but are not affiliated with an eligible institution or who have additional requirements such as image licensing costs.

¹ For further information on funding acknowledgements, see: <https://www.dfg.de/en/research-funding/proposal-funding-process/acknowledgements>

2.2 Proposal structure, deadlines and funding duration

Depending on the applicant's circumstances, the programme offers three proposal procedures:

1. Simplified procedure: Research institutions that, by 31 December 2027, will have received funding under the predecessor "Open Access Publication Funding" programme for a total of six years can use DFG form 53.42 to request allowances. A detailed proposal is not required; the proposal consists primarily of the funding calculation and confirmation that the funding conditions will be observed. The proposal is checked by the DFG Head Office. Funding is provided for one year. Proposals are submitted for the following calendar year in each case.
2. Procedure for institutions requesting funding to establish open access structures: Research institutions that have not yet received funding under the predecessor programme for a total of six years can request funding for open access publications by their members. In this case, a detailed proposal using DFG form 53.42 is required. For details of the proposal procedure for institutions that have not yet received funding – or have not yet received the full six years of funding – under the predecessor programme, please refer to DFG form 53.42. Funding is provided for one year. Proposals are submitted for the following calendar year in each case.
3. Procedure for individual researchers: Individuals who receive DFG funding but are not affiliated with an eligible institution, or who have specific, demonstrable additional requirements such as image licensing costs, can likewise use DFG form 53.42 to request funding for their open access publications. This does not include additional costs such as editing, graphic design or translation. For each publication included in the calculation, the DFG-funded project from which it resulted must be clearly identified. Individual applicants can request allowances towards the costs of publications resulting from their research project for up to two years after the project has ended.

Institutional applicants must submit their proposals via the [elan portal](#) by 4 May of the relevant year. Supplementary proposals for monographs can be submitted at any time, providing an institutional proposal for allowances towards articles has been approved. Funding for monographs can also be requested as part of the main proposal.

Proposals may be submitted by individuals at any time. Proposals must be submitted via the [elan portal](#).

2.3 Calculation of funding that can be requested

A clear distinction must be drawn between the calculation of the funding requested in the proposal and the use of the funds awarded². The allowance that can be requested is calculated based on open access publications resulting from DFG-funded research.³ In addition, a payment obligation must exist in respect of first authors or corresponding authors affiliated with the applicant institution. The publications must appear in quality-assured open access publication media⁴ or in journals covered by open access transformative agreements or publish-and-read agreements.

The funding is calculated based on the number of articles resulting from DFG-funded research at the institution in the three years preceding submission of the proposal. Allowances for books can be requested at any time once the need for funding becomes apparent. Individuals can request additional funding on presentation of evidence of the anticipated costs, for example image licensing costs. Funding must be requested before the relevant invoices are paid.

2.4 Funding conditions

2.4.1 Funding conditions for applicant institutions

On receiving the funding, applicants undertake to provide sufficient overall funding to enable the publication of all open access publications demonstrably resulting from a DFG-funded project.

The allowances must be administered centrally within the institution, generally by the library. Procedures should be established to ensure that, where necessary, authors can receive funds for open access publications in a simple and uncomplicated manner if no framework agreements, publish-and-read agreements, transformative agreements or other central mechanisms for covering the costs apply. Funding procedures should be as straightforward as possible and should treat the various open access models equally. The institution must be able to track

² The use of the funds awarded is specified in the DFG funding guidelines; see DFG form 2.00 – 01/27 (to be published in 2027).

³ Funding acknowledgements can generally be used to determine the number and estimated cost of articles resulting from DFG-funded research. The use of funding acknowledgements is governed by the DFG funding guidelines. See here for further information: www.dfg.de/en/research-funding/proposal-funding-process/acknowledgements

⁴ The titles listed in the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) should be used as a guide for the purposes of quality assurance. An individual review should be conducted in the case of journals that are not listed. Decisions at the level of publishers can be based on membership in the Open Access Scholarly Publishers Association (OASPA).

funds spent on publications across its decentralised units. These could be funding budgets at individual institutes and departments or in decentralised libraries in a two-tier system.

All content available online that is created using DFG funding must be prepared, indexed and/or disseminated in a manner that guarantees maximum discoverability, e.g. through appropriate metadata. Metadata must meet relevant standards for it to be integrated into international subject-specific or other cataloguing systems. Metadata should be made openly available wherever possible. Wherever possible, publications should be assigned a DOI and can be linked to the authors' ORCID profiles.

The DFG recommends using a CC BY licence for articles and a CC BY-SA licence for monographs.

Funded institutions must agree to make publication metadata openly accessible via an infrastructure proposed by the DFG, including data on the total costs of the publications. They must also agree to participate in measures aimed at standardising the recording of open access costs and to take account of any applicable standards (such as the OpenCost metadata schema).

The institution must ensure the reliable long-term archiving of the publications it finances in a suitable repository, for example by using certified long-term archives (such as those certified by nestor), depositing the publications with the German National Library (DNB) or referring to existing dark archives at research institutions. Merely storing the publications in the institution's own catalogue database, for example, is not sufficient.

Institutions undertake to continue improving the structures they have established for monitoring publications and costs, managing publication costs and maintaining a (virtual) information budget.

Compliance with the quality standards for open access monographs defined by the university publishers working group (AG Universitätsverlage) is mandatory.⁵

⁵ Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Universitätsverlage. (2022). Qualitätsstandards für Open-Access-Bücher (Quality standards for open access books) (Version 2). Zenodo. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.7075761>

2.4.2 Funding conditions for individual applicants

Funding requested by individuals can only be used for publications resulting from a DFG-funded project conducted by the individual concerned.

Wherever possible, the authors are obliged to make all publications and project results permanently available for reuse by the public free of charge in a legally secure manner, including research data, source codes and metadata of the publications. In cases where copyrights or related rights apply, the authors are required to grant appropriate open licences. The DFG recommends using a CC BY licence for articles and a CC BY-SA licence for monographs.

II Requested Funds

Only publication funding can be requested under this programme.

III Obligations

In submitting a proposal to the DFG, you

1. agree to adhere to the **principles of good research practice**.⁶

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 DFG's **Rules of Procedure for Dealing with Scientific Misconduct** (Verfahrensordnung zum Umgang mit wissenschaftlichem Fehlverhalten – VerfOWF)⁷ 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

⁶ 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).

⁷ [DFG Rules of Procedure for Dealing with Scientific Misconduct](#), DFG form 80.01

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;
- 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 for Research Funding, which you can access 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.

V Information

For further information, please contact:

- Formal and organisational queries
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