



WIENER WISSENSCHAFTS-,
FORSCHUNGS- UND TECHNOLOGIEFONDS

Guide for Writing a Proposal – Project Funding –

WWTF-Office

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About WWTF

The Vienna Science and Technology Fund (WWTF) is the only larger Austrian private non-profit organization established to promote science and research. WWTF has been founded in 2001 and started its funding activities in 2003. According to its statutes, WWTF is funding top scientific research(ers) according to highest international standards in order to support Vienna as a city of science and research.

WWTF provides substantial funding for multi-annual larger research projects at Vienna Home Institutions („Project Funding“) and to bring excellent researchers from abroad to Vienna („Science Chairs“, „Vienna Research Groups for Young Investigators“). WWTF runs calls leading to a tough competition for funding with an average success rate of less than 20% (however varying from call to call). Project applications are accepted only within the scope of an open call. Applications must be sent electronically using the submission system and in paper with original signatures.

Currently, WWTF runs the following thematic programmes: Life Sciences (*2003), Mathematics *and* ... (*2004), SciENCE for Creative Industries/ Cognitive Sciences (*2004), Information and Communication Technology (*2008). The financial resources of WWTF originate from the „Privatstiftung zur Verwaltung von Anteilsrechten“ from which WWTF receives about 7-10 Mio. € annually. With 18 Calls so far from 2003-2011 about 67 Mio. € have been dedicated to funding 120 research projects and six Science Chairs.

In addition to that, WWTF runs the following funding programmes for the City of Vienna: University Infrastructure Programme (*2006), Social Sciences and Humanities (*2008), Vienna Research Groups for Young Investigators (*2010) with a total annual volume of about 5 Mio. €. With 12 Calls so far from 2006-2011 about 22 Mio. € have been dedicated to 20 research projects, three fellowships, five Vienna Research Groups and a variety of infrastructure investments at the nine Vienna Universities.

While the thematic funding programmes are established in close coordination with Viennese RTD policy and initiatives, the review and selection process lies strictly in the hands of international scientists not holding employment in Austria. The main selection criterion is top scientific quality according to highest international standards. For each call an international expert jury is specifically put together. Additionally, for each proposal a number of written peer reviews are obtained. In a two day jury meeting in Vienna the jury formulates a funding recommendation based on the reviews and on their own expertise. This recommendation is then formally accepted by the WWTF Board of Directors.

The decision making body of WWTF is the Board of Directors. The WWTF Advisory Board is composed of a majority of Viennese scientists and of representatives from economy, society and politics. WWTF office manages all funding activities and is the contact point for all applicants.

Important Issues

The **Call Fiche** including contact information of the WWTF call managers is available at www.wwtf.at. The formal criteria for a WWTF project include a minimum funding volume of 200,000 € (upper range can be specified in call fiche) and a planned duration of 2-4 years.

The **Principal Investigator** (PI) of a WWTF project must have a Viennese Home Institution where the project is affiliated. This includes researchers moving to Vienna with a Viennese affiliation and work place in case of funding. Project **partners** may be based worldwide or elsewhere in Austria and may receive funding of up to 20% (30% for new EU member states) of the total funding applied for. Partners outside Vienna are an option and neither a must nor a formal criterion.

For universities, WWTF-projects are according to §27 of the “Universitätsgesetz 2002”, thus authorized signatures of the university/ scientific institution acting as home institution are mandatory already at the submission stage. In case of funding, the institution will be the formal contract partner with the PI entitled with full scientific and financial responsibility.

WWTF funding may be used for all project related costs, but the main focus should be on funding scientific personnel. Everybody employed in a WWTF project should get a fair contract with a *minimum payment* according to Austrian Science Fund (FWF) standards/ “Kollektivvertrag” available online at www.fwf.ac.at/de/projects/personalkostensaetze.html, and a *maximum total employment* of 100%. The personnel categories are:

- „**Senior Personnel**“: highly qualified scientists, usually already a long-term employment
- „**Post Doc**“ or equivalent qualification, including Senior Postdocs
- „**PhD student**“ or equivalent qualification
- „**Diploma student**“: Bachelor or Master students
- „**Office/Technician**“: office staff or technical staff (proportional funding only)

WWTF does not fund general infrastructure through project funding, however pro rata depreciation rates for the project duration are fundable for **equipment** necessary for the project. WWTF funding also covers **materials** (consumables and small devices up to 1,500 €), **travelling costs** (incurred for attending project related scientific events and invitations), **publication costs** (including patent filing costs and costs for open access publications), **workshops/conferences** (costs incurred by own scientific events), and **other project related costs**.

WWTF pays a **maximum of 20% overhead**. Overhead (“indirect costs”) is calculated as 20% of the direct costs of the project. The total funding volume is calculated as direct + indirect costs. A separate project account/ SAP number for bookkeeping is necessary for each project and the direct costs need to be reported to WWTF. The overhead is paid as a flat rate with no strings attached. Kindly stick to the overhead regulations of the involved institutions.

Good scientific practice already at the proposal stage is mandatory.

Funding Criteria

Your proposal will be reviewed by international scientists (peers & jury). For each call an independent jury is composed. Jury members and peers providing written reports must not hold employment in Austria. The evaluation criteria to be considered by peers and jury are:

- **Excellence of the project, methods and theoretically led approach:** proposal must demonstrate internationally competitive quality.
- **Major scientific challenges (within the scope of the call) addressed:** clear focus on furthering the state-of-the-art.
- **Competences of applicants:** Track record of the main persons according to academic (i.e., scientific) age must be internationally competitive.
- **Appropriateness of resource planning:** Human and financial resources and work plan in accordance with proposed project contents.
- **Potential benefit/ commercialisation perspective:** Common criterion for WWTF calls.

Generally, applicants for funding as well as the submitted project proposals need to be characterized by **top scientific quality**. Additionally, as **secondary criteria**, WWTF wants to especially encourage women and young researchers to apply for funding and to act as principal investigators. This means that in case there are more top quality proposals than funding available, those top proposals with women and young researchers as principal investigators will be favoured.

Evaluation Process

1. **Formal eligibility check by WWTF:** Duly submitted | minimum funding 200,000 € | signatures | all necessary parts filled in | If not → Proposal **rejected for formal reasons**.
2. **First qualitative screening by jury:** Is proposal within thematic core of the call? Does proposal meet international quality standards? If not → Proposal can be **C-listed by the jury and rejected at this stage**.

Applicants will be promptly informed about rejections in 1. or 2.

3. Remaining proposals undergo **written peer review:** per proposal at least two **expert peers strictly from abroad**.
4. **Jury meeting** in Vienna: Most significant step in the assessment. Comprehensive evaluation of all proposals on basis of written peer reviews and the jury's own expertise resulting in a recommendation "to be funded" or "not to be funded" for each proposal.
5. **Formal funding decision** (confirmation of jury recommendation) by WWTF Board of Directors.

Applicants will get anonymized full text reviews and a summary of the jury discussion after the formal funding decision.

How to use WWTF's Online Submission System

1. Go to <https://funding.wwtf.at>
2. **Register** with your e-mail address and name: Password will be sent to you by e-mail
3. **Log in**, choose the call, and create a new proposal.
4. **Write proposal**: fill in requested information in *online forms* and *upload requested files* (in PDF format). You can access the system multiple times and modify provided information anytime.
5. **Submit proposal**: the submit button becomes active only after all requested information has been filled in and uploaded; after submission no changes are possible anymore.

Note: The submission system closes at 2 pm on the day of the deadline. The full proposal has a size limit of maximum 5 MB.

Required Structure of a WWTF Proposal

Applications to WWTF undergo an assessment by international scientists (peers & jury), thus all proposals must be written in **English**. A complete proposal should not exceed 40 pages thereof no more than 15 pages for the appendix. Please write precisely and to the point.

A proposal to WWTF must be submitted both **electronically** (via the submission system) and as a **bound paper version** including signatures (to WWTF office at Schlickgasse 3/12, 1090 Wien) within the given call deadline (paper version either personally, or date of post stamp, both no later than day of deadline). The use of the WWTF online submission system at <https://funding.wwtf.at> is mandatory. For upload of files (those parts of a proposal written offline) only PDF files are accepted (compatible to PDF/A, i.e., PDF Version 1.4).

A full proposal to WWTF comprises six parts:

1. Project Summary
2. Research Project
3. Project Team
4. Project Budget
5. Affirmations and Authorization
6. Appendix

1. Project Summary (about 2 pages, online form)

This part must provide a complete project summary and has to be filled in the online forms in the submission system. It includes the **title** of the planned project, **keywords**, and the **project duration** (between 2 and 4 years). Furthermore, the *name* and *full contact information* of the **Principal Investigator** (PI) including the home institution where the PI intends to run the project is required. If applicable this information must also be provided for a Co-PI. However, even in case of a Co-PI the PI is the sole responsible person towards WWTF. Furthermore,

the names and institutions of the *Core Project Team* members (i.e., those persons that will perform substantial scientific work within the project – e.g., dedicate a minimum of 15% of their work time to the project) must be stated. Please avoid pure name dropping.

The **scientific abstract** in English (up to one page / 3000 characters) will be the first thing jury members and peer reviewers read. A *general description* (about 10 lines / 1000 characters) in German language is mandatory, but will only be used by WWTF for public relations work in case of funding and will not be visible in the final electronic proposal and print-out.

Applicants may *exclude* up to three peers without indicating any reasons. The names will be stored in the WWTF database and will not be visible in the electronic proposal and print-out.

Note: The requested WWTF funding indicated at page 1 will be automatically filled in after the information has been provided in part “4. Project Budget”. Furthermore, after the proposal has been submitted it will get a unique project number automatically filled in at part “1. Project Summary” and in the header of all proposal pages.

2. Research Project (about 12-15 pages, upload of a single PDF file)

This part of the proposal must be written offline and then uploaded (as a PDF file) into the WWTF submission system. Please be concise but go into enough detail to allow an evaluation by international peers. You may use the word-processing software of your choice but we kindly ask you to use a font type such as Arial and a font size of 10pt. Line spacing should be at least 1.1pt. Please do not add any header or footer since these (page numbering, proposal number, title of proposal) will be added automatically in the WWTF submission system once the proposal is completed and a single PDF file is generated. You may include images, drawings, tables, etc. to improve the scientific presentation (size limit for the proposal is 5 MB).

The description of the planned research project must follow the structure as provided for download in section “2. Research Project” in the online submission system (referring specifically to the aim of the individual call). The following structure is the basis for any project call:

2.1 State of the art and scientific challenge (about 1-2 pages)

Give a concise review of the state of the art in international research and the scientific challenges the project wants to address in the chosen field(s).

2.2 Research question(s), hypotheses and objectives of the project (about 2-3 pages)

Formulate the concrete research question(s) you would like to address in your research project. Specify your hypotheses as well as the objectives to be achieved. Describe wherein the leap ahead within the field lies. Remember that the funding criteria address international quality standards and visibility.

2.3 Methodological approaches (about 2-3 pages)

Elaborate the methodology you want to use in order to answer your research questions and to test your hypotheses. Describe your basic working principles and why the chosen approach/specific mix of approaches is the most suitable for your project.

2.4 Work plan (about 2-3 pages)

Describe the overall project design and outline a tentative schedule illustrating concrete working steps and linking them with the chosen methods, goals and expected results. Divide the work programme into separate packages and steps in a way that you consider appropriate for a concise demonstration.

2.5 Prospective benefits (about half a page)

Illustrate what the potential prospective benefits of your project are and when they could be envisaged. Also outline what niche your project's results might fill, possibly referring to the mid-term economic and/or social benefits.

2.6 Measuring project success (about half a page)

What are the results and output you finally want to be assessed by after having finished your project? What are your dissemination strategies – which are the major conferences at which you would like to present your research results and which are the prime journals for publishing your expected research results?

2.7 References (about 1-2 pages)

List the relevant references for the proposal and highlight (e.g. in bold face) among those a maximum of ten key publications representing the state of the art in the respective research area(s). References should include: author(s), title, journal or publisher and place, year, page numbers and any other necessary data.

3. Project Team (about 2-3 pages, online form)

This part of the proposal shall be used to clearly describe the role and responsibilities as well as the specific competences of all persons involved in the project. **Note that persons already given in part „1. Project Summary“ will automatically be transferred to this part in the submission system.** However, you may add additional persons here.

For each person describe the **role and responsibilities in the project** (about 500 characters), the **specific competences for the project** (about 500 characters), and choose the appropriate personnel category. *Note that the average yearly time commitment for each person will automatically be filled once this information is provided in „4. Project Budget“.*

Additionally you are asked to describe the *Gender Management Policy* and plans for *Human Resources Development* within the project.

4. Project Budget (about 3-4 pages, online form)

WWTF provides substantial funding for scientific projects covering all project related direct costs plus a maximum of 20% overhead (i.e., „indirect costs“). Thus WWTF requires an explanation of your cost planning principles (about one page, 3000 characters), and a detailed planning of personnel costs (which should comprise the major part of the project related costs) as well as planning of project related costs for equipment, materials, travelling, publications, organization of workshops/ conferences/ ..., and other project related costs.

For cost planning an offline „WWTF Cost Planning Tool“ (Excel file) is available, however, only the numbers provided in Tables 1, 2, and 3 will be considered as requested WWTF funding. Costs are calculated in **thousands of Euro (one decimal position)**.

In **Table 1 (Planning of personnel costs)** the names and staff category of all persons listed in part „3. Project Team“ are automatically filled. Please first choose the funding source (WWTF, in-kind, WWTF & in-kind) and then add the average yearly time commitment for each project year. Finally, for those persons, where WWTF funding is requested, fill in the salary corresponding to a 100% employment in the first project year. The total funding applied for each person will then automatically be computed including a 3% annual salary increase. At the end of Table 1 you will see the total personnel costs applied for from WWTF.

In **Table 2 (Planning of project related costs for equipment, materials, travelling, publications, organization of workshops/ conferences/ ..., and other costs)** please provide a concise description of costs per cost category/ institution as well as the funding applied for.

In **Table 3 (Total funding applied for per institution)** the direct costs will be automatically filled in using the information provided in Tables 1 and 2. Kindly add the overhead percentage (i.e., indirect costs) per involved institution as a numeric value between 0.0 and 0.2. Finally, Table 3 will give you an overview on the total funding applied for from WWTF per involved institution. *Note: Minimum funding volume is 200,000 €. Upper range see call fiche.*

You are also asked to *describe the overhead policy* of each involved institution.

Last but not least you must *disclose other applications for funding* of the same project: Is this project (or parts of it) already subject to ongoing requests for funding?

5. Affirmations and Authorization (2 pages, print-out online form & sign)

WWTF requires the principal investigator(s) and core team members to sign a print-out of part „5a. Affirmations“ (for the statement to be signed kindly see the submission system).

Furthermore, WWTF requires on a print-out of part „5b Authorization“ signatures of authorized person(s) of those institutions, where the persons signing „5a. Affirmations“ will be affiliated to in case of funding (for the statement to be signed kindly see the submission system).

All signatures are needed on a proposal print-out only. Multiple pages (copies) might be used for signing. Faxed or scanned & printed pages are accepted for the submission.

6. Appendix (max. 15 pages, online form)

In the appendix please upload a „Biographical Sketch“ (limited to **max. two pages**) for the Principal Investigator, Co-PI if applicable, and core project team members. For Postdocs and PhD students you may also include a Biographical Sketch if useful for the peer review.

A **Biographical Sketch** must contain the following information (following NSF guidelines):

(i) Contact information at institution: full address, email, webpage, telephone number.

(ii) Higher education including obtained degrees

(iii) Appointments

A list, in reverse chronological order, of all the individual's academic/professional appointments or other work experience.

(iv) Five project related publications

A list of up to 5 publications most closely related to the proposed project. Each publication identified must include the names of all authors (in the same sequence in which they appear in the publication), the article and journal/ book title, volume number, page numbers, and year of publication. If the document is available electronically, identify the website address.

For unpublished manuscripts, list only those submitted or accepted for publication (along with most likely date of publication).

Patents, copyrights and software systems developed may be substituted for publications.

Note: Additional lists of publications, invited lectures, etc., must not be included but a link to such information available on a website may be provided.

(v) Five other significant publications

A list of up to 5 other significant publications, whether or not related to the proposed project.

(vi) Funded projects

A list of up to 3 funded projects with their running time, funding source, funding sum and the role played in each project.

(vii) Other relevant activities/ experience

A list of up to three examples that demonstrate the broader impact of the individual's professional and scholarly activities that focuses on the creation, integration, and transfer of knowledge.

(viii) Collaborators & other affiliations

Collaborators and Co-Editors. A list of all persons in alphabetical order (including their current organizational affiliations) who are currently, or who have been collaborators or co-authors with the individual on a project, book, article, report, abstract or paper during the 36 months preceding the submission of the proposal. Also include those individuals who are currently or have been co-editors of a journal, compendium, or conference proceedings dur-

ing the 36 months preceding the submission of the proposal. If there are no collaborators or co-editors to report, this should be so indicated.

Graduate Advisors and Postdoctoral Sponsors. A list of the names of the individual's own graduate advisor(s) and principal postdoctoral sponsor(s), and their current organizational affiliations.

Thesis Advisor and Postgraduate-Scholar Sponsor. A list of all persons (including their organizational affiliations), with whom the individual has had an association as thesis advisor, or with whom the individual has had an association within the last three years as a postgraduate-scholar sponsor. The total number of graduate students advised and postdoctoral scholars sponsored also must be identified.

Note: You may upload any other proposal relevant documents without exceeding the limit of 15 pages for the whole appendix.

In Case of Funding

The **Formal Funding Contract** will be made between WWTF and the Home Institution of the Principal Investigator (for universities according to §27 of the University Law 2002), the PI has full scientific and financial responsibility. Projects may start shortly (and not later than 6 months) after the formal funding decision has been made. During the project duration WWTF pays funding rates half a year in advance to the PI Home Institution, which is then responsible for distribution to other institutions (if applicable).

WWTF monitoring during the runtime of projects includes annual short reports delivered by the PI to WWTF with an overview on the scientific results achieved, personnel employment and funding spent. WWTF office also makes site-visits to learn about the project progress and working environment of the personnel employed. WWTF offers the possibility to adopt the work plan according to project needs.

After the project has ended a comprehensive final report must be submitted and WWTF organizes an **ex-post evaluation** by international peers („Evaluation Day“) for all projects funded within a specific call.