

Proposal Preparation Instructions

Project Proposals



These guidelines apply to project proposals under the Research Grants, Emmy Noether, Research Units, and Priority Programmes.

A proposal consists of the following three parts:

- A. Proposal Data and Obligations
- B. Project Description
- C. Appendices (Please note that an academic curriculum vitae with a list of the five most important publications must be included for each applicant.)

To complete an electronic proposal form, and to transmit your proposal data and related documents securely, please use elan, our electronic proposal processing system

<https://elan.dfg.de>

for the following programmes:

- Research Grants

If a proposal cannot be submitted via elan, please note the information on page 11 f. in addition to the instructions following immediately below.

Proposals may be submitted either in German or in English.

If applicable, please note the special instructions for Priority Programmes and for Clinical Trials on page 10 f.

A. Proposal Data and Obligations

Here you are asked to enter information on the project and participating individuals and accept the required formal obligations. A template is provided in elan.

B. Project Description

For the description of your project, please use the appropriate template provided in elan. Your project description may not exceed 20 pages in length.

Template instructions:

1. State of the art and preliminary work

For new proposals please explain briefly and precisely the state of the art in your field in its direct relationship to your project. This description should make clear in which context you situate your own research and in what areas you intend to make a unique, innovative, promising contribution. This description must be concise and understandable without referring to additional literature.

For renewal proposals, please report on your previous work. This report should also be understandable without referring to additional literature.

To illustrate and enhance your presentation you may refer to your own and others' publications. Indicate whenever you are referring to other researchers' work. Please list all cited publications in your bibliography under section 3. This reference list is not considered your list of publications. Note that reviewers are not required to read any of the works you cite. This also applies to review sessions that are held on site. In this case, manuscripts and publications that provide more information on the progress reports and are published up to the review panel's meeting may be made available at the meeting to enable reviewers to read through the information. Reviews will be based only on the text of the actual proposal.

1.1 List of project-related publications

Please list your most significant publications that relate directly to the proposed project and document your preliminary work. This list serves as an important basis for assessing your proposal.

Please structure the list as follows:

1.1.1 Articles which at the time of proposal submission have been published or officially accepted by publication outlets with scientific quality assurance, listed in standard format; and book publications. For works that have been accepted for publication but not yet published, the manuscript must be submitted along with the publisher's acknowledgement of acceptance.

1.1.2 Other publications

1.1.3 Patents

1.1.3.1 pending

1.1.3.2 issued

Please note the maximum number of works you may list under a) and b) combined:

- Single applicant: two publications per year of the funding period
- Multiple applicants: three publications per year of the funding period

Please note that these rules refer to the funding duration as currently proposed for new proposals, and to the duration of the previous funding period for renewal proposals. Cf. “Guidelines for Publication Lists”.

http://www.dfg.de/formulare/1_91e/1_91e.pdf

Please note that the DFG may reject any proposals not in compliance with the rules on publication lists.

If you are submitting a proposal to the DFG for the first time (cf. 5.2) and have therefore not published in the proposed project area, please list only the up to five most important publications that are part of your curriculum vitae (see C. Appendices).

2. Objectives and work programme

2.1 Anticipated total duration of the project

Please state

- the project's intended duration¹ and how long DFG funds will be necessary,
- for ongoing projects: since when the project has been active.

2.2 Objectives

Please give a concise description of your project's research programme and scientific objectives.

Please indicate if you anticipate results that may be relevant to fields other than science (such as science policy, technology, the economy or society).

¹ Please refer to DFG form 1.01e for information on long-term projects.

2.3 Work programme including proposed research methods

For each applicant

Please give a detailed account of the steps planned during the proposed funding period. (For experimental projects, a schedule detailing all planned experiments should be provided.)

The quality of the work programme is critical to the success of a funding proposal. The work programme should clearly state how much funding will be requested, why the funds are needed, and how they will be used, providing details on individual items where applicable.

Please provide a detailed description of the methods that you plan to use in the project: What methods are already available? What methods need to be developed? What assistance is needed from outside your own group/institute?

Please list all **cited** publications pertaining to the description of your work programme in your bibliography under section 3.

2.4 Data handling

Improving the handling of research data is a priority both for national and international research organisations and for science in general. In order to enhance the long-term preservation of research data, the DFG funds projects that seek to achieve an efficient and sustained use of research data.

If research data will be systematically produced using DFG project funds, describe what measures will be implemented to ensure their management, curation and long-term preservation for future reuse. Please regard existing standards and data repositories in your discipline where appropriate.

2.5 Other information

If applicable

2.6 Explanations on the proposed investigations

Experiments involving humans or human materials

Please describe the ethical and legal aspects of your project:

- treatment or experiment,
- criteria for selecting test persons,
- description of potential risks and precautions taken,
- method of informed consent.

Note that in addition to accepting the formal obligations in part A, an ethics committee vote must be included as well. The use of human material obtained for diagnostic purposes also requires a statement by the chair of the local ethics committee.

Experiments with animals

Note that in addition to accepting the formal obligations in part A, the planned animal experiments must be described.

2.7 Information on scientific and financial involvement of international cooperation partners

If you will be conducting your project in close collaboration with researchers based outside Germany, please indicate:

- whether the project will be conducted as part of an agreement between the DFG and a partner organisation, cf.
http://www.dfg.de/en/dfg_profile/international_context/int_partners/
- whether the cooperation partner has applied for funding from the partner organisation, and if so, for what amount.

3. Bibliography concerning the state of the art, the research objectives, and the work programme

In this bibliography, list only the works you cite in your presentation of the state of the art, the research objectives, and the work programme. This bibliography is not the list of publications. Non-published works must be included with the proposal.

4. Requested modules/funds

Explain each item for each applicant (stating last name, first name).

Note additional instructions on submitting proposal modules in the relevant module guidelines.

5. Project requirements

5.1 Employment status information

For each applicant, state the last name, first name, and employment status (including duration of contract and funding body, if on a fixed-term contract).

5.2 First-time proposal data

Only if applicable: Last name, first name of first-time applicant.

If this is your first proposal, reviewers will consider this fact when assessing your proposal. Previous proposals for research fellowships, publication funding, travel allowances, or funding for scientific networks are not considered first proposals. If you are submitting a “first-time proposal” and it is part of a joint proposal, please note that your independent project must be distinct from the other projects.

If you have already submitted a proposal as an applicant for a research grant and have received a letter informing you of the funding decision, or if you have led an independent junior research group or project in a Collaborative Research Centre or Research Unit, you are no longer eligible to submit a “first proposal”. If you have submitted a “first-time proposal” and it was rejected, you may resubmit the application, in revised form, as a first-time proposal for the same project.

5.3 Composition of the project group

List only those individuals who will work on the project but will not be paid out of the project funds. State each person’s name, academic title, employment status, and type of funding.

Please list separately the individuals paid by your institution and those paid using other third-party funding (including fellowships).

5.4 Cooperation with other researchers

5.4.1 Researchers with whom you have agreed to cooperate on this project

For clinical trials, please also provide the name of the biometrician or statistician responsible for the trial.

5.4.2 Researchers with whom you have collaborated scientifically within the past three years

This information will assist the DFG's Head Office in avoiding potential conflicts of interest during the review process.

5.5 Scientific equipment

List larger instruments that will be available to you for the project. These may include large computer facilities if computing capacity will be needed.

If you are applying for instruments that are available at your institution, but are not at the project's disposal, please explain why this is the case.

5.6 Project-relevant interests in commercial enterprises

Information on connections between the project and the production branch of the enterprise.

Please indicate if you are the owner of a commercial enterprise or a stakeholder in one. If so, please state how your research project is linked to the company's production branch.

6. Additional information

Mention any funding proposals for this project and/or major instrumentation previously submitted to a third party.

Additional explanations.

C. Appendices

The proposal must include each applicant's academic curriculum vitae including a list of his/her five most important publications.

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To enable reviewers to assess an applicant's scientific track record appropriately, applicants may indicate in their CVs any circumstances that might have hampered their scientific work, for example periods in which a researcher was unable to work continuously due to childcare obligations or due to a prolonged serious illness or disability.

Each CV must include a list of the applicant's five most important publications. These publications need not be related to the proposed project.

Please structure each list of publications as follows:

a) Articles which at the time of proposal submission have been published or officially accepted by publication outlets with scientific quality assurance, listed in standard format; and book publications. For works that have been accepted for publication but not yet published, the manuscript must be submitted along with the publisher's acknowledgement of acceptance.

b) Other publications

Under c) you may list any patent applications you have filed. There is no maximum for this category.

c) Patents, subdivided into pending and issued. Cf. "Guidelines for Publication Lists"

http://www.dfg.de/formulare/1_91e/1_91e.pdf

Additional appendices should be included if applicable (e.g. a statement from the host institution, ethics statements, research papers, etc.).

If you will be submitting your proposal electronically via elan, you will be asked to upload the required documents. Please make sure that the security settings for the PDF documents allow your documents to be read, copied and printed, and note the maximum size of 10 MB per document. If your appendices exceed 200 pages in length, we ask that you also submit two hard copies in addition to the electronic version.

Save PDF documents according to the naming protocol listed at the end of this document to facilitate the processing of your proposal.

Special Instructions

I. Priority Programme

For individual project proposals within an established Priority Programme, note that the funding duration (part A of the proposal) and the funding periods are specified in the call for proposals.

For the project description (part B of the proposal) note the following:

Each proposal must be accompanied by a description of how the project is integral to the Priority Programme, both in terms of subject matter and organisation. This includes a description of the cooperation with others participating within the Priority Programme. The envisaged realisation of the project in cooperation with other applicants may be demonstrated in particular by the joint training of early career researchers, or the use of methods by multiple projects as part of a network.

All applicants involved in submitting a proposal within an established Priority Programme are obliged to promptly provide the overall coordinator with all of the information necessary for drawing up the interim reports and the final report for the Priority Programme.

II. Clinical Trials

For the duration of the DFG-BMBF Clinical Trials Programme, proposals to fund multicentric, interventional clinical trials must be submitted to this programme. Please consult the DFG and BMBF websites for programme announcements and additional information.

Other types of clinical trials (such as non-interventional trials, pilot studies to test hypotheses or calculate sample sizes, monocentric trials, etc.) may be submitted to the Research Grants Programme. In such cases, please describe and justify the chosen trial design and provide the name of the biometrician/statistician responsible for the trial. Such trials also require a study protocol in compliance with GCP guidelines² (including a study synopsis). Please contact the DFG prior to submitting your proposal should you have any questions.

²"Guideline for Good Clinical Practice" of the International Conference on Harmonisation of Technical Requirements for Registration of Pharmaceuticals for Human Use (ICH GCP), <http://www.ema.europa.eu>; chapter 6

Additional Instructions for Submitting Proposals Outside of elan

If your proposal cannot be submitted via elan, please use the available templates (see below) or use the same outlines (same numbering and complete header for each section). In the latter case, your proposal text must be written in Arial 11 pt. font on DIN A4 paper.

Submit your proposal electronically on a CD-ROM, preferably as PDF files (otherwise as RTF files) without password protection or other restrictions; the document security settings should allow your documents to be read, copied and printed.

For A.: Proposal Data and Obligations

Use the Proposal Data and Obligations template.

http://www.dfg.de/formulare/54_011/54_011_en_rtf.rtf

Please only submit this form on paper, with the original signatures of all applicants, along with the aforementioned CD-ROM that includes all the documentation relevant to the proposal.

For B.: Project Description

Use the Project Description template.

http://www.dfg.de/formulare/54_012/54_012_en_rtf.rtf

In addition to the template instructions provided in part B, please note the following:

Requested modules/funds

State which modules you would like to submit for funding. Structure your funding requests according to the module guidelines and state the desired funding amount for each item (e.g. Basic Module: 1. Funding for staff, 2. Funding for direct project costs, 2.1 Equipment up to €10,000, software and consumables, 2.2 Travel expenses, 2.3 Visiting researchers, 2.4 Expenses for laboratory animals, 2.5 Other costs, 2.6 Project-related publication expenses, 3. Funding for instrumentation).

For each module, give subtotals and totals. Then explain your funding requests in detail.

For C.: Appendices

Include all proposal appendices as separate PDF documents (less than 10 MB per document). (If you are applying to the Emmy Noether Programme, submit your university certificates, especially your doctoral certificate, and your doctoral thesis if it is included in any of your publication lists.)

If your appendices exceed 200 pages in length, we ask that you send two hard copies in addition to the electronic version.

Please name PDF documents according to the naming protocol at the end of this document to facilitate the processing of your proposal.

Naming Protocol for Proposal Documents

Document	Document Name
instrumentation quote (Angebote zu Geräten)	Angebot_<instrument type>_<manufacturer>
employment offer (Arbeitsplatzzusage)	Arbeitsplatzzusage
reference (Befürwortung)	Befuerwortung_<last name of person providing reference>
project description (Beschreibung des Vorhabens) (part B of proposal)	Beschreibung_des_Vorhabens
ethics statement (Ethikvotum)	Ethikvotum
staff questionnaire (Fragebogen)	Fragebogen_<last name of respondent>
curriculum vitae and list of most important publications (Wissenschaftlicher Lebenslauf mit Verzeichnis wichtigster Publikationen)	CV_PubList_<person's last name>
certificates (Zeugnisse) in one document	Zeugnisse_<Nachname der betreffenden Person>
accepted manuscripts (Zulässige Manuskripte; erforderliche Annahmebestätigung)	<year>_<last name_author>_<keyword> Bestätigung_<year>_<last name_author>_<keyword>
For proposals submitted outside of elan: proposal data and obligations (Daten zum Antrag und Verpflichtungen) (part A of proposal)	Daten_zum_Antrag_und_Verpflichtungen