



Writing a DFG Proposal

Individual Grants and Priority Programmes

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Topics

1 | The DFG – About Us

2 | Individual Grants

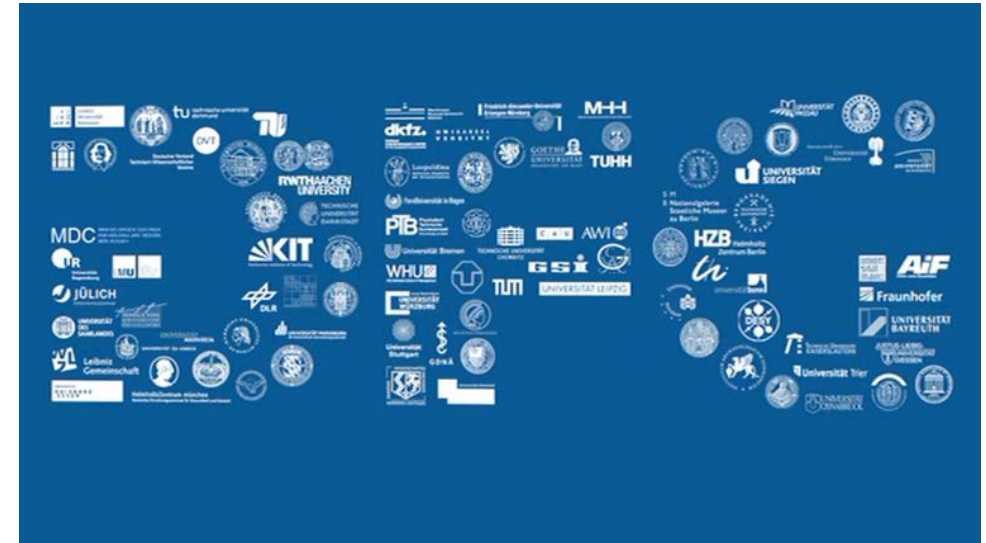
3 | Priority Programmes

4 | General Advice

5 | Links and Resources

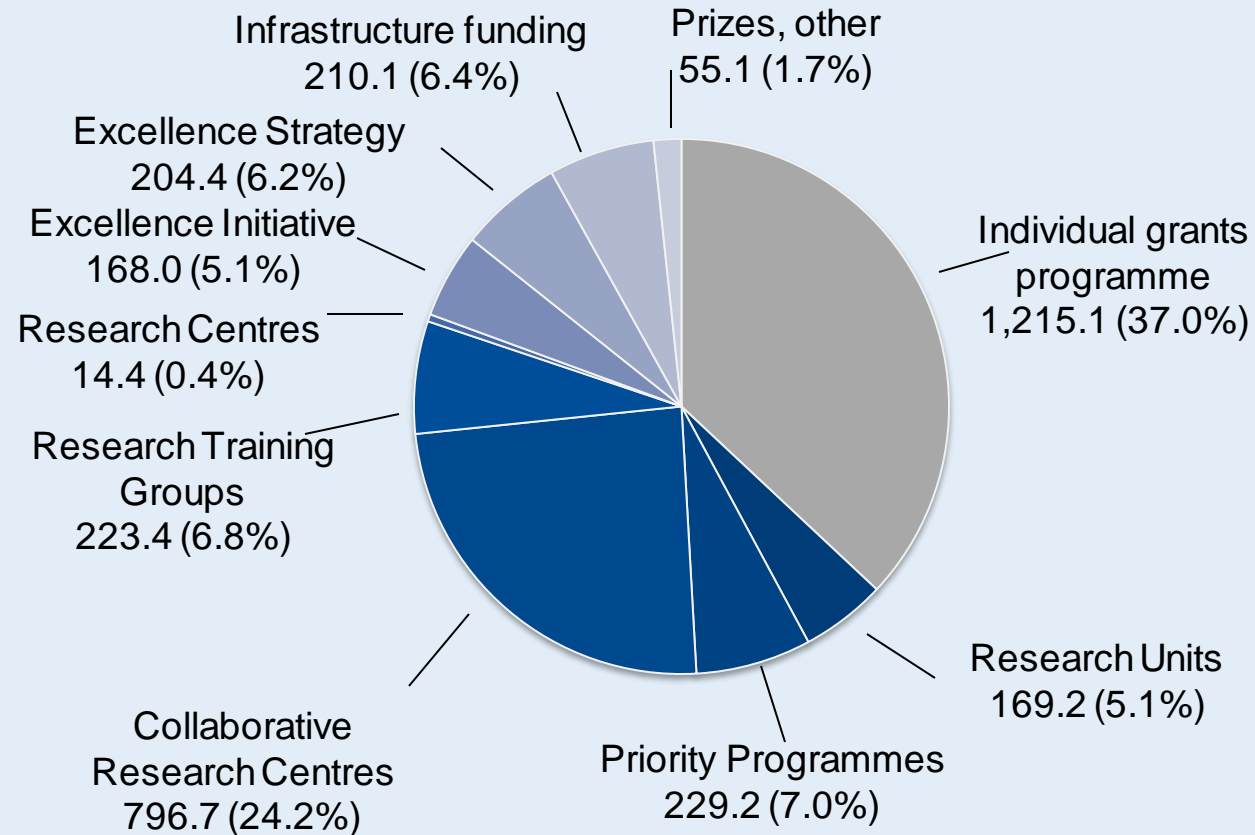
The DFG – About Us

- ▶ The DFG is the largest **independent** and self-governing research **funding organisation** in Germany.
- ▶ It is an **association** under German private law.
- ▶ It serves **all branches** of science and the humanities by **funding research projects**.
- ▶ Mandates: facilitate national and international **cooperation** among researchers, provide scientific **policy advice**, promote **gender equality**, encourage advancement and training of **early career researchers**



Research Funding in 2019 by Programme

Amount of research funding awarded by programme for 2019 (in €m and %)





Researchers

- ▶ who have completed their scientific training, i.e. who hold a **doctorate** and
- ▶ who (would like to) work **in Germany**.

For questions on **eligibility**:

verfahren-nachwuchs@dfg.de

Phone: +49 (0)228 885-3008

Funding Principles

- ▶ Open, bottom-up choice of **research topics**
- ▶ **Basic research** in any field of science and the humanities
- ▶ No **age** restrictions
- ▶ Individual **career phases** and family-related career breaks are considered in the review process
- ▶ No **deadlines***



* excl. Priority Programmes, international calls etc.

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Individual Research Grant

Funding Scheme: Purpose, Requirements

- ▶ Individual Grants offer you an opportunity to pursue **your research project in Germany** with a clearly defined topic and duration, regardless of the subject
- ▶ Funding generally for up to **three years**
- ▶ Flexible **funding modules**:
 - staff
 - consumables
 - travel
 - instrumentation
 - publication funding
 - public relations
 - ...
 - module »**Temporary Position for Principal Investigators**« E13-E14 TVöD/TV-L (your **host institution** becomes your **employer**)



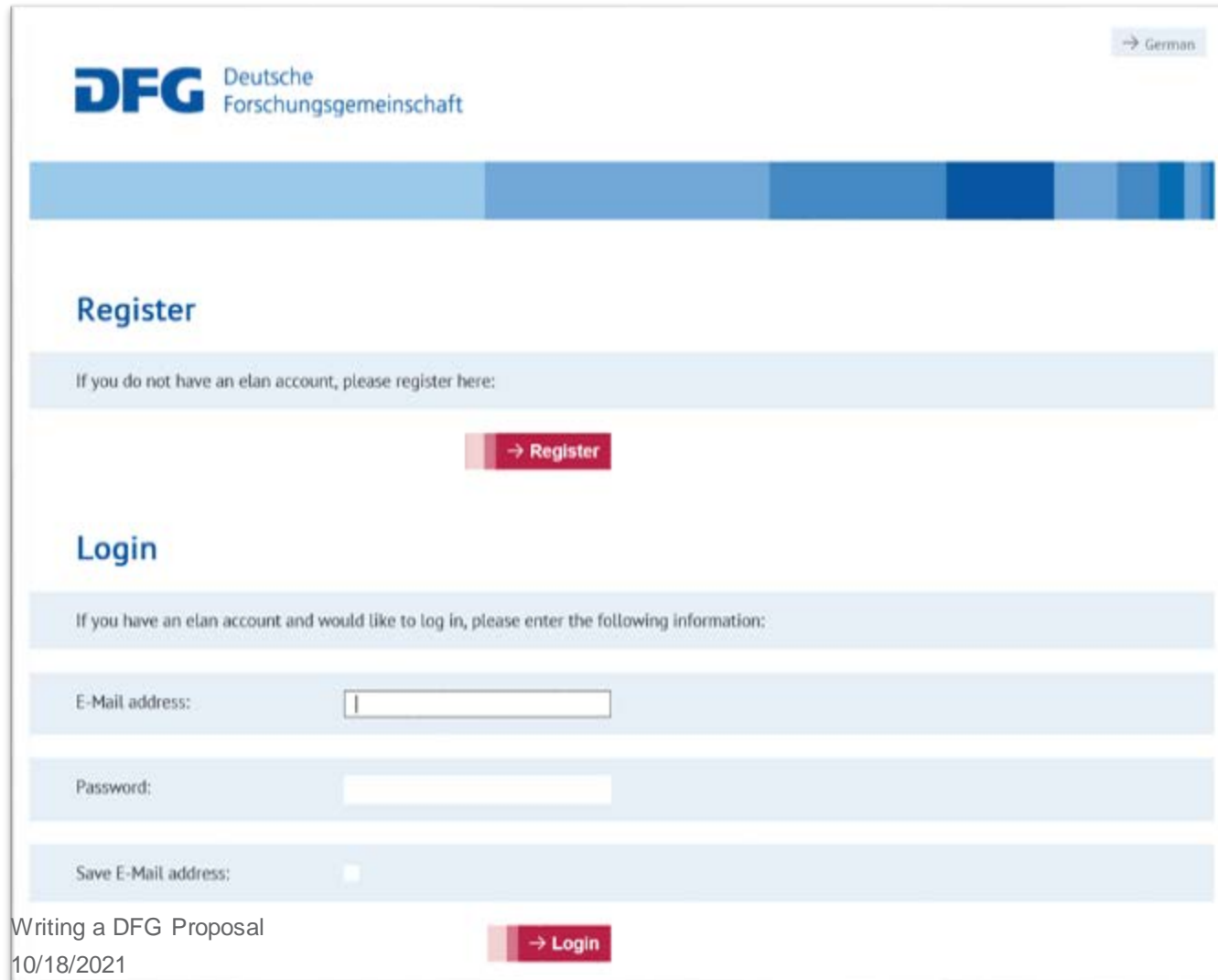
Success Rates: ~30 %

Proposal Requirements

Fulfil Review Criteria According to International Standards

- ▶ Quality of the Project / Qualification of the Applicant
 - **Originality**, expected advancement of knowledge (also in relation to costs)
 - Scientific significance (in its own field and/or across different fields)
 - Soundness of the preliminary work, **quality of publications**
- ▶ Working Environment / Scientific Environment
- ▶ Objectives and Work Programme
 - **Clear working hypotheses**
 - Reasonable limitation of the topic
 - Appropriateness of the methods
 - **Feasibility**, particularly with respect to the proposed timeframe

Submitting Your Proposal via *elan*



The screenshot shows the DFG (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft) elan website interface. At the top left is the DFG logo and the text "Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft". At the top right is a language selector button labeled "→ German". Below the header is a decorative blue bar. The main content area is divided into two sections: "Register" and "Login".

Register

If you do not have an elan account, please register here:

[→ Register](#)

Login

If you have an elan account and would like to log in, please enter the following information:

E-Mail address:

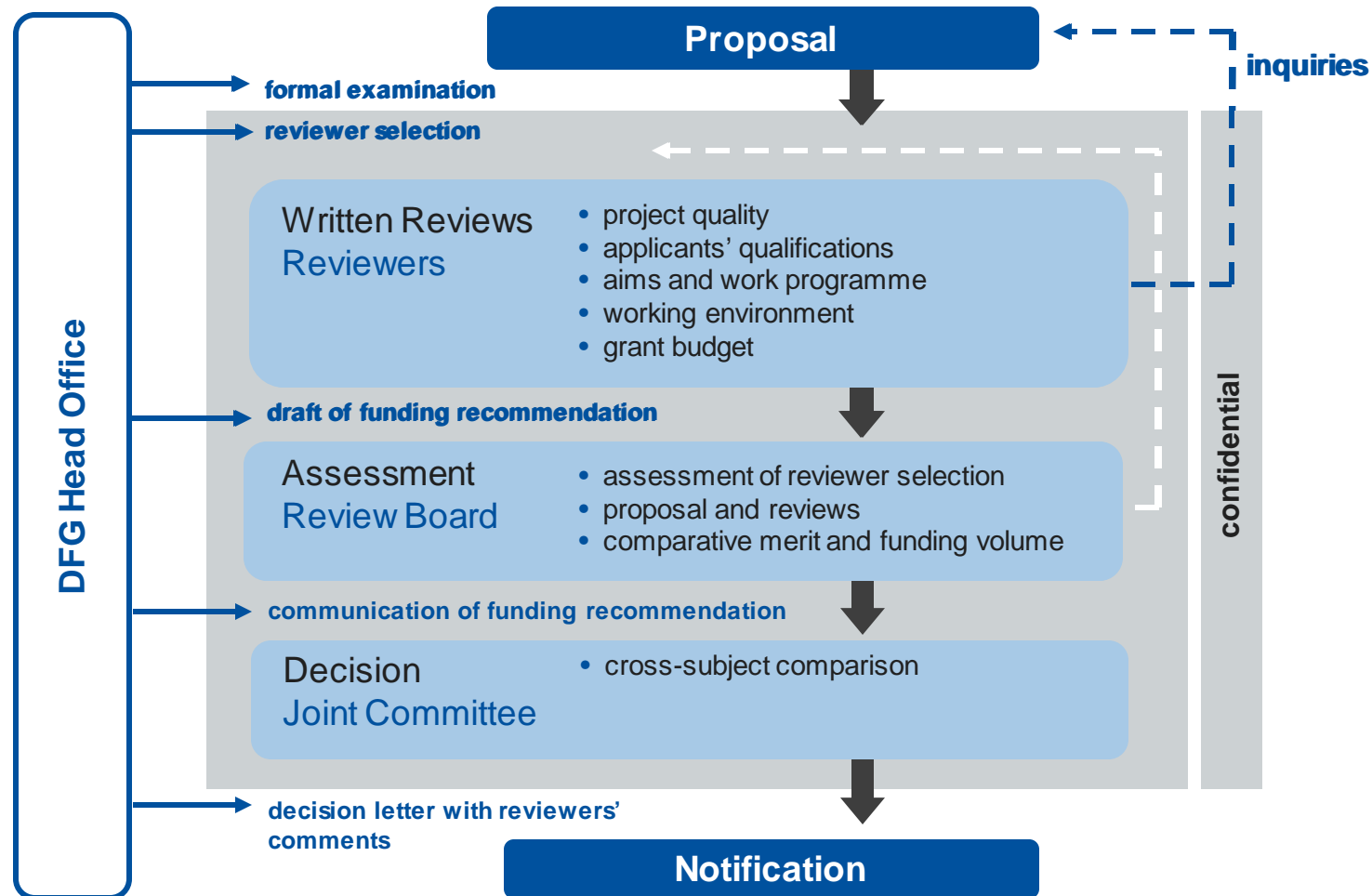
Password:

Save E-Mail address:

[→ Login](#)

For SPP 2364: Register until
December 1, 2021

Review Process in the Individual Grants Programme



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Priority Programmes

Funding Scheme: Purpose, Requirements

► Purpose

- To advance knowledge in an **emerging field of research** through the use of **new methods** and **networking**
- To bring about added value through **interdisciplinary cooperation**

► Requirements

- **Novelty** of the proposed topic both in Germany and in an international context
- Clear short- and medium-term **objectives**
- **Synergy**: Concept and resources to facilitate collaboration
- Measures to **promote early career researchers** and **equal opportunities**
- **International** involvement and **visibility**

Priority Programme

Funding Scheme: Selection Procedure

▶ Topical Selection Procedure

- Annual submission deadline for proposals **to establish** Priority Programmes
 - Typical annual number of proposals: 60 to 80
- Comparative review by members of the DFG Standing Review Boards
- Decision by Senate of DFG
 - Typical annual number of established Priority Programmes: 12 to 15
 - Typical budget: 2.0 €m to 2.5 €m per annum

▶ Call for Proposals and Review

- Submission of **individual proposals**
 - Typical percentage of oversubscription: 300 % to 500 %
- Oral review or written reviews

▶ Funding of the individual proposals

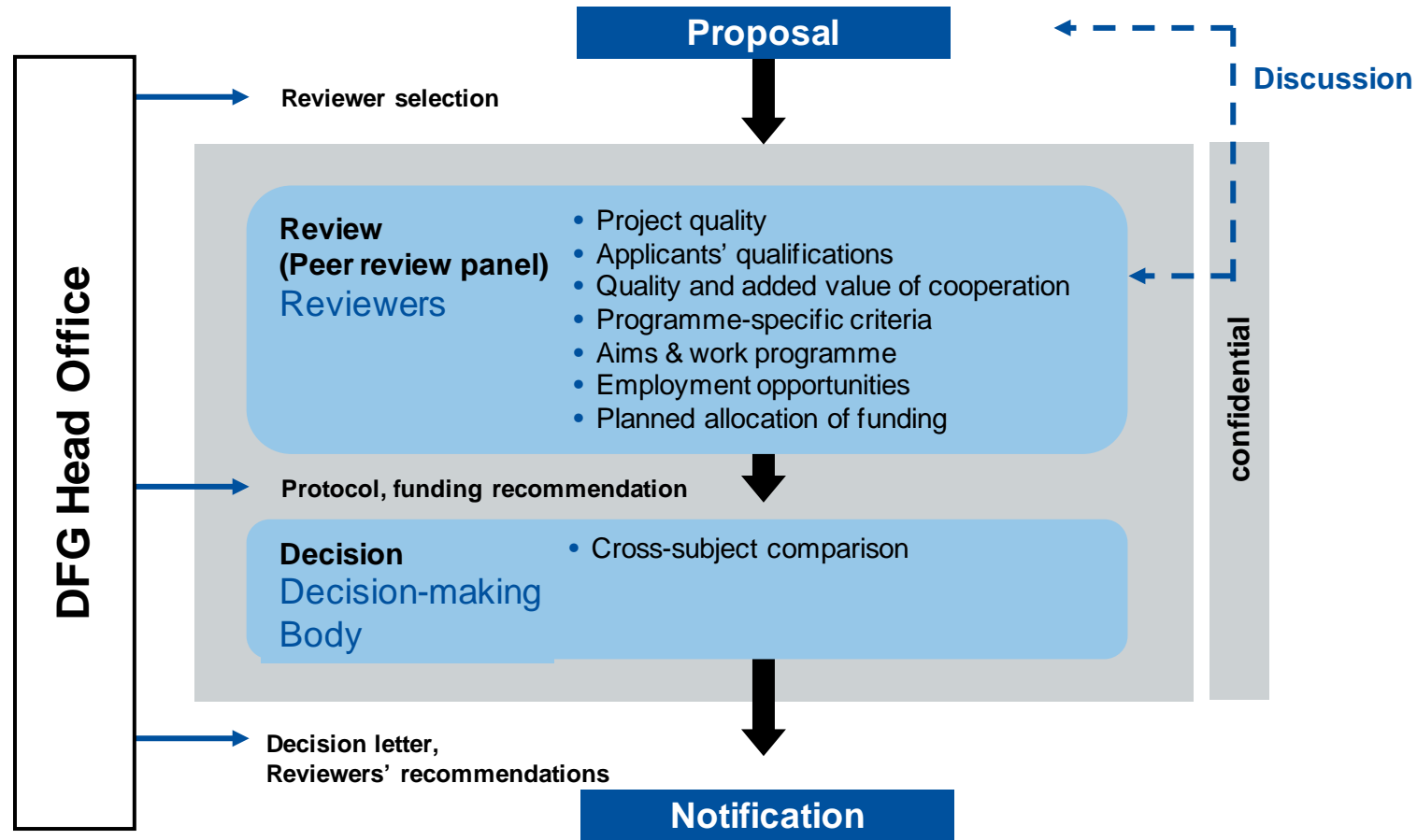
Priority Programme

Special Review Criteria for Individual Proposals in a PP

- ▶ Standard review criteria
 - **Scientific quality** according to international standards for Individual Grants
- ▶ **Additionally:** Matching the call's topical requirements
 - Potential and intention to **significantly contribute** to the Priority Programmes scientific goals
 - Solid **cooperations**

Priority Programme

The Review Process



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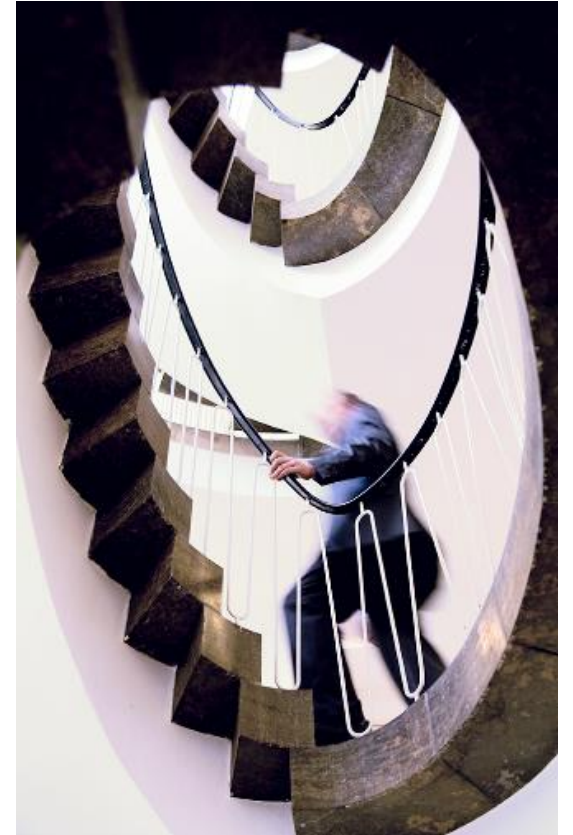
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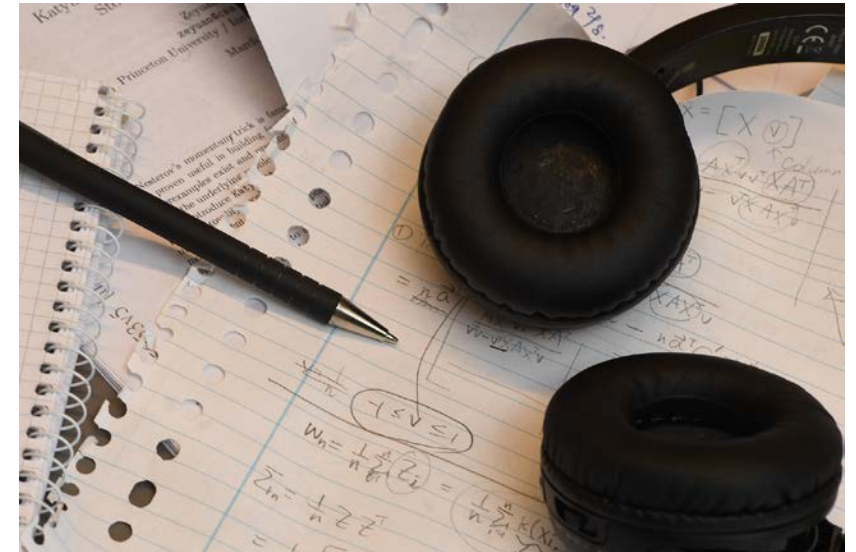
General Advice for Your Research Career

- ▶ Develop your own and independent research profile
- ▶ Publish independently (or with various researchers)
- ▶ Be mobile and find the best environment for your research
- ▶ Build networks of collaboration partners



Preparing Your Proposal

- ▶ Start with smaller projects
- ▶ Carefully read and follow the guidelines and proposal instructions
 - Necessary information can be found on the DFG website
- ▶ Questions? Ask for help
- ▶ Put yourself in reviewers' shoes
- ▶ Seek honest criticism from colleagues
- ▶ Plan on a feasible timeline: on average, time to decision is over six months
- ▶ Decide on proposal language: English or German (if not determined by call)
- ▶ Communicate openly with DFG Head Office staff



Preparing Your CV

- ▶ Clear structure
- ▶ Include prizes, fellowships and awards
- ▶ Mention time away from research relating
For Applications Relating to Special Personal Circumstances /
Hardship Applications see DFG-Form 73.01
- ▶ List up to ten of your most important publications



Grant Budget

- ▶ No upper limits
- ▶ Needs to be realistic and justified by the project
- ▶ Supplemental, project-specific needs vs. existing resources at the higher education institution
- ▶ Seek advice from other grant applicants, recipients, institutions
- ▶ Information on staff amounts provided on the DFG website

10 Golden Rules for Submitting a Proposal

1. The proposal follows the guidelines and instructions and does not exceed the maximum length.
2. The proposal is clear, precise, well structured and understandable even to a non-expert audience.
3. The project idea is original and contributes considerably to our understanding of scientific questions.
4. The scientific aims are focused on central questions and hypotheses.
5. The descriptions of the current state of research are up to date and relate directly to the project's objectives.

10 Golden Rules for Submitting a Proposal

6. The preliminary work and personal track record reflect the qualifications and academic/scientific independence of the applicant.
7. The work programme is clear and follows a realistic timeline.
8. The methods are tailored to address the issues at hand.
9. The proposed budget is consistent with the work programme.
10. Information relevant to the proposal, such as unpublished manuscripts and written agreements with significant cooperation partners, are included.

If Your Proposal Is Not Successful...

- ▶ Don't be discouraged
- ▶ Take the reviewers' comments seriously but not personally
- ▶ Consult the DFG Head Office if you need advice or feel that you have been treated unfairly
- ▶ Consider the reviewer's comments – they might give you some pointers for reworking your proposal



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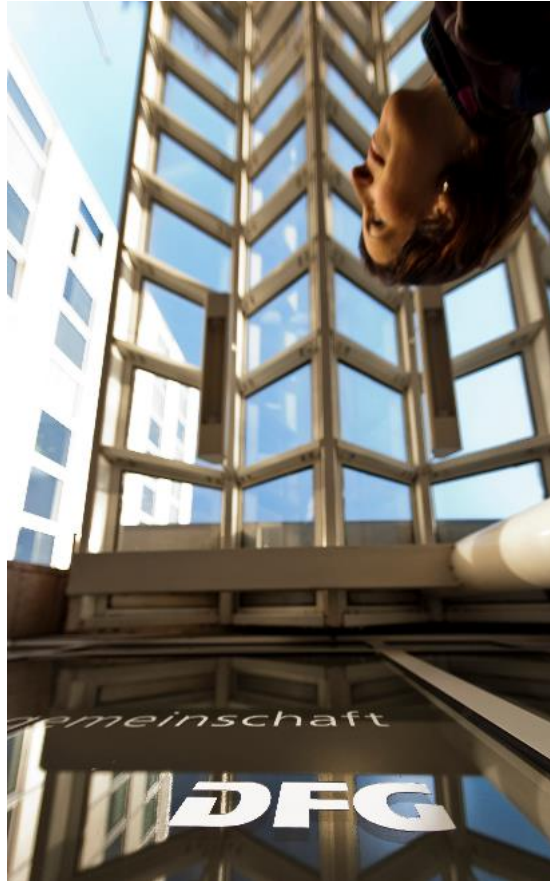
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Links and Resources



- ▶ DFG funding programmes at a glance:
www.dfg.de/en/research_funding/programmes
- ▶ Advice for early-career researchers:
www.dfg.de/research_careers
- ▶ DFG facts and figures:
www.dfg.de/facts-figures
- ▶ GEPRIS – database with all DFG-funded projects:
www.gepris.dfg.de/en
- ▶ GERiT – German research institutions:
www.gerit.org/en
- ▶ General questions about research careers:
info-nachwuchs@dfg.de
- ▶ Contacts:
www.dfg.de/en/dfg_profile/head_office



DFG

For more information

- ▶ on the DFG: www.dfg.de
- ▶ on DFG-funded projects: www.dfg.de/gepris
- ▶ on over 25,000 German research institutes: www.gerit.org