

# Guide for Writing a Full Proposal

**LS Call 2014  
IMAGING**

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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 started its funding activities in 2003. According to its statutes, WWTF aims to fund excellent scientific research(ers) following the highest international standards in order to promote Vienna as a city of science and research.

WWTF provides substantial funding for larger multi-annual research projects at home institutions located in Vienna (“Project Funding”), as well as striving to attract excellent researchers from abroad to Vienna (“Science Chairs”, “Vienna Research Groups for Young Investigators”). WWTF runs calls resulting in a tough competition for funding with an average success rate of less than 20% (a rate that varies, however, from call to call).

Currently, WWTF runs the following thematic programmes: “Life Sciences” (\*2003), “Mathematics and ...” (\*2004), “Information and Communication Technology” (\*2008), and “Cognitive Sciences” (\*2011). The financial resources of WWTF originate from the “*Privatstiftung zur Verwaltung von Anteilsrechten*” from which WWTF receives about six to nine million € annually. With 19 Calls so far between 2003 and 2012, about 77 million € have been dedicated to funding 130 research projects and seven science chairs.

In addition, WWTF runs the following funding programmes for the City of Vienna: The “University Infrastructure Programme” (\*2006), “Social Sciences and Humanities in Vienna” (\*2008, 20 projects funded), “Vienna Research Groups for Young Investigators” (\*2010, five groups funded) with a total annual funding volume of about 5 million €.

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 employed in Austria. The main selection criterion for funding is excellent scientific quality according to the highest international standards. For each call, an appropriate international expert jury is established. Additionally, for each proposal a number of written peer reviews are obtained. In a two-day meeting in Vienna the juries formulate 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 governing body is the WWTF Board of Directors. It is complemented by the WWTF Advisory Board composed of Viennese scientists and representatives from the economy, society and politics. The 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](http://www.wwtf.at). The formal criteria for a WWTF IMAGING project include a minimum funding volume of 200.000 € with an upper range of up to 600.000 € 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% of the total funding applied for. Partners outside Vienna are an option; they are neither obligatory nor a formal criterion for acceptance.

For **Universities**, WWTF projects are implemented according to the “Universitätsgesetz 2002” §27; authorized signatures from the university / scientific institution acting as the home institution are therefore mandatory at the submission stage. In case of funding, the institution will be the formal contract partner with the principal organizer taking full scientific and financial responsibility.

WWTF funding may be used for all project-related costs; however, the main focus should be on funding scientific personnel. Everybody employed in a WWTF-funded project should get a fair contract with a *minimum wage* according to the “Kollektivvertrag” (collective agreement) of the Austrian Universities or – for staff employed at non-university institutions – according to the standards of the Austrian Science Fund (FWF) standards available online at [www.fwf.ac.at/de/projects/personalkostensaetze.html](http://www.fwf.ac.at/de/projects/personalkostensaetze.html). A *maximum total employment* is set at 100%. The personnel categories are:

- **Senior Personnel:** highly qualified scientists, usually already in permanent 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)

The funding by WWTF under this scheme is not intended to cover investment in general infrastructure, 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), **travelling costs** (incurred for attending project related scientific events and invitations), **publication costs** (including cost for patent filing and open access publication), **workshops / conferences** (costs incurred by own scientific events), and **other project related costs** (for example third party services, bench fees, sequencing, computational clusters etc.).

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 + indi-

rect costs. A separate project account / SAP number for bookkeeping is necessary for each project and the direct costs must 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.

**Compliance with the rules for good scientific practice** is mandatory even at the proposal stage.

## IMAGING

This WWTF call deals with innovative **biological** and **biomedical applications** of novel imaging technologies. Proposals need to address a clear defined important biological or biomedical problem in the context of imaging addressed with the **newest kinds of imaging technology**. The new imaging methodology should enable novel experiments that have not been possible before using standard techniques and thus deliver new insights.

Teams of scientists, in targeted interdisciplinary research, are invited whose **collaborative projects** bring together competences in imaging and in biological/biomedical research. The roles of the team members/co-applicants in targeted interdisciplinary research should be clearly defined in the application as well as the contributions from different areas of expertise which will be used in the review process. The way the collaboration is formulated is critical.

**Collaboration** between all team members must be absolutely necessary to achieve the aims of the project. Concerted actions, in which each team member performs a self-contained project under a general theme without extensive interaction with other team members, are not considered to be collaborative.

## Funding Criteria

Your proposal will be reviewed by international scientists (peers & jury). For this call an independent jury has been composed already assessing your short proposal. 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:** The proposal must demonstrate that it is of internationally competitive quality.
- **Innovative nature of the project:** Which aspects of the proposed project are especially innovative?
- **Scope of the research:** Proposals must be biologically or biomedically driven and ideally include the development of novel methodological approaches. In addition, projects should make use of the newest generation of imaging technologies.
- **Collaboration:** Each team must involve an expert in the imaging technology/methodology used and someone who would be responsible for the biologically or biomedical question to be addressed. New partnerships across institutions and imaging facilities in Vienna would be desirable but are not mandatory.

- **Potential of the applicant:** Accomplishments and potential of the applicants to conduct the research.

In order to assess and evaluate the interdisciplinary and innovative nature of the research endeavor, the above points need to be clearly outlined within the proposal. Generally, applicants for funding as well as the submitted project proposals need to be characterized by **top scientific quality**.

## Evaluation Process

In this call a **two-stage submission process** is used. Full proposals have to be submitted upon invitation by **08-08-2014 2 pm**.

### Evaluation procedure in detail:

The evaluation of full proposals is carried out through a combination of remote assessment and panels of international experts that convene in Vienna. Two **jury members** are assigned to each proposal which at first undergoes **written peer review** by at least three international reviewers. The objectives of the full proposal must be consistent and in accordance with the successful short proposal, extending it by providing full details about the approach, state of the art, etc.

**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.

**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. **Log in**, choose the call and short proposal
3. **Full 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.
4. **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 Full Proposal

Applications to WWTF undergo an assessment by international scientists, thus all proposals must be written in **English**. Please write precisely and to the point! Note that the appendix is comprised only by the CV's of the project team you are allowed to update if needed.

**A short proposal to WWTF comprises nine parts:** Basic Information, Project Summary, Outline of approach, Innovative Aspects, Collaborative Aspects, Key References, Principal Investigator, Affirmations and Authorization and Appendix.

**A full proposal to WWTF extends the short proposal with the following:**

Some parts of the full proposal must be written offline and then uploaded (as a PDF file to allow images, tables, etc.) 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 11pt. Line spacing should be 1.5**. 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 overall proposal is 5 MB). A maximum of information has been automatically transferred from your short proposal. You should check this. Keep in mind that the full proposal is an extension of the short proposal you have already submitted.

### 1. Project Summary

**1.1. A general description** (max. 1000 characters, online) in German language is mandatory and will be used by WWTF for public relations work in case of funding but will not be visible in the final electronic proposal and print-out. We ask you to use a public style abstract and not simply translate the scientific abstract into German.

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. Applicants may **suggest** up to three peers from a field of competence that enables them to review the proposal. No previous publication activity or research cooperation with the suggested reviewer should be evident. Please provide up to five keywords or phrases that describe the reviewers' fields of competence to enable a balanced set of reviewers to be chosen.

**1.2 The scientific abstract** in English (max. 1500 characters, online) will be the first thing jury members and peer reviewers read.

#### **1.3 State of the art and scientific challenge (max. 3 pages, PDF upload)**

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).

#### **1.4 Project Summary (max. 2 pages, PDF upload)**

Formulate the concrete research question(s) you would like to address in your research project. Summarize the objectives, hypotheses, approaches and research plan. State a clear hypothesis with specific objectives outlined. Describe wherein the leap ahead within the field lies. Remember that the funding criteria address international quality standards and visibility.

#### **1.5 Measuring project success (max. 500 characters, online)**

What are the results and output you finally want to be assessed by after having finished your project? What are your dissemination strategies?

### **2. Research Project**

#### **2.1. Outline of approach (max. 7 pages, PDF upload)**

Describe the detailed research plan including 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. This section, compiled by the Principal Investigator in consultation with the other applicants, should integrate the different research strategies of the collaborators into a single, combined research plan. It should clearly indicate the contribution to be made by each team member to the collaboration.

#### **2.2. Innovative Aspects (max. 1500 characters, online)**

Describe which aspects of the proposal are especially novel/innovative. How and why is the project timely and would deliver new insights (specifically highlight technological or other developments and innovation). How does the project differ from the ongoing research activities of each team member? Stating the expected impact of the successful completion of the research helps the jury to understand its significance

#### **2.3. Collaborative Aspects (max. 1500 characters, online)**

Which collaborative elements are essential for the project to succeed; how is the research allocated to each applicant? What makes the team more powerful than the sum of the individual contributions? How did the idea of collaborating originate? How will the collaboration be conducted? Clearly define the roles of the team members/co-applicants in targeted interdisciplinary research. How will the co-applicants work together in a practical sense?

#### **2.4. References (max. 2 pages, PDF upload)**

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 (extends Principal Investigator, online)

People cannot be added and changes from the initial short proposal project team setup are not allowed.

#### 3.1 Gender Management Policy (max. 750 characters, online)

Please describe how your project deals with gender equality issues during job announcements, recruitment of staff and working environment.

#### 3.2 Plans for Human Resources Development (max. 750 characters, online)

Please describe how your project contributes to human resource development in science (e.g., - providing opportunities for research, staff exchange, teaching and mentoring).

### 4. Project Budget (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**

WWTF requires the Principal Investigator and Core Team Members to sign a print-out of the affirmation form. In addition, WWTF requires that the print-out contains the signatures of the authorized person(s) of all participating institutions to which the persons signing the “Authorization” are affiliated in case of funding.

All signatures are required only on the proposal print-out. Multiple copies might be used for signing. Faxed or scanned and printed pages are accepted.

Note: Hard copy version submission (including signatures) via mail service allowed-post stamp counts and is accepted up to August 8, 2014.

## 6. Appendix

The appendix stays the same as the one you have already submitted for the short proposal. You are allowed to update the individual CV files. Either to include recent developments or to provide additional contextual information like employment intensity or educational/maternity leave accounting for gaps in publication, etc.

## 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.