



WIENER WISSENSCHAFTS-,  
FORSCHUNGS- UND TECHNOLOGIEFONDS

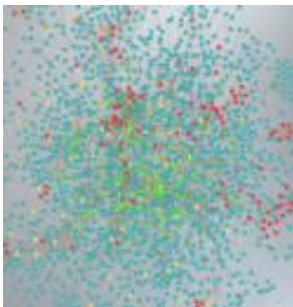
VIENNA SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FUND

**STRENGTHENING VIENNA'S  
EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH**

# Vienna Research Groups for Young Investigators

## Call 2020

Kontakt: Donia Lasinger, [donia.lasinger@wwtf.at](mailto:donia.lasinger@wwtf.at)



# Agenda

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- ▶ Overview WWTF
- ▶ Vienna Research Groups for Young Investigators Call 2020 „Life Sciences – Computational Biosciences“

# WWTF: Distinctive features

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- The only larger Austrian private non-profit organisation in research funding
- Founded in 2001; funding activities since 2003: more than **160 m € have been awarded** (Banking Foundation, City of Vienna)
- WWTF **Mission:**
  - We fund **top scientific research** in Vienna
  - We provide substantial funding for **larger research projects** and bring younger **research group leaders** from abroad to Vienna
  - We **organise competitive calls** according to highest international standards

# The current call (I)

## Thematic programmes



Life Sciences (\*2003)



Information- and Communication Technology (\*2008)



Social Sciences and Humanities (\*2008-2013)



Cognitive Sciences (\*2008)



Environmental Systems Research: Urban Environments (\*2017)

## Instruments

Projects

Vienna Research Groups

Additional instruments

# The current call (II)

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## Call 2020: „LS – Computational Biosciences“

- This group must address substantial **state-of-the-art scientific research questions in the area of computational methods in the life sciences**.
- The call is open for projects that develop and apply novel computational methods to further our understanding of living systems. An application in the field of life sciences is therefore a prerequisite of the current call. The project must address fundamental biological questions with the aim to develop new computational methods, algorithms, tools, concepts or models. This includes, but is not limited to, mining, integration and processing of large biological datasets, the development of mathematical methods for modelling biological systems, large scale analysis as well as the development of predictive and simulation algorithms. Projects merely applying existing tools or methods are not within the scope of this call.

# The current call (III)

- Financed by the City of Vienna, operated by WWTF
- 11<sup>th</sup> call within Vienna Research Groups for Young Investigators Programme
- 2020: up to 2 positions with max. funding of € 1.6 million each

Life Sciences	ICT	Mathematics and ...	Cognitive Sciences	Life Sciences	Computational Biosciences	Complexity Science	Mathematics and ...	ICT	ICT – Interdisc. Data Science	LS – Comp. Biosc.
Funding volume: 4.5 mio. €	Funding volume: 3 mio. €	Funding volume: 3 mio. €	Funding volume: 1.5 mio. €	Funding volume: 4.8 mio. €	Funding volume: 3.2 mio. €	Funding volume: 1.6 mio. €	Funding volume: 3.2 mio. €	Funding volume: 4.8 mio. €	Funding volume: 3,2 mio. €	Funding volume: 1,6 mio. €/group
Funded VRG Leaders: 3	Funded VRG Leaders: 2	Funded VRG Leaders: 2	Funded VRG Leaders: 1	Funded VRG Leaders: 3	Funded VRG Leaders: 2	Funded VRG Leaders: 1	Funded VRG Leaders: 2	Funded VRG Leaders: 3	Funded VRG Leaders: 2	Positions available: 2
2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020

# Characteristics of a Vienna Research Group

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- Typically the first “genuine” group led by a young researcher. The WWTF funding (6-8 years) should enable the group members to take the next step in their career
- **Vienna Research Group leaders...**
  - take responsibility for group members
  - are independent in designing their research work and recruiting their staff
  - try to increase third party funding over the years
  - are coming from abroad and are not employed in Austria at the date of submission and being employed at least 2 years within the last 3 years at a non-Austrian institution
  - are *in general* 2-8 years after PhD (care duties may extend this period)
- **Milestones:** (i) first phase mainly financed by WWTF (4-5 years), (ii) an interim evaluation after the first phase, (iii) increased in-kind contributions of the home institution in the second phase (i.e. years 6, 6-7 or 6-8)



# General key facts

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- The prospective host institution in Vienna must provide a **clear-cut career plan**, in particular the steps leading to a tenured position (for example the exact process of getting a “Qualifizierungsvereinbarung” including time frames).
- The call process comprises the submission of a **concise proposal** and a **hearing** of selected candidates on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> December 2020 in Vienna.
- A job announcement e.g. in a high impact journal that is relevant for the topic and/or via professional societies/ mailing lists is obligatory (for the institution) → we are happy to put the announcement also on our webpage ([www.wwtf.at](http://www.wwtf.at)).
- WWTF especially encourages Vienna-based research institutions to propose female group leaders. The **successful appointment of a woman** will be rewarded with a financial benefit for the Vienna host institution in order to support their gender mainstreaming activities.

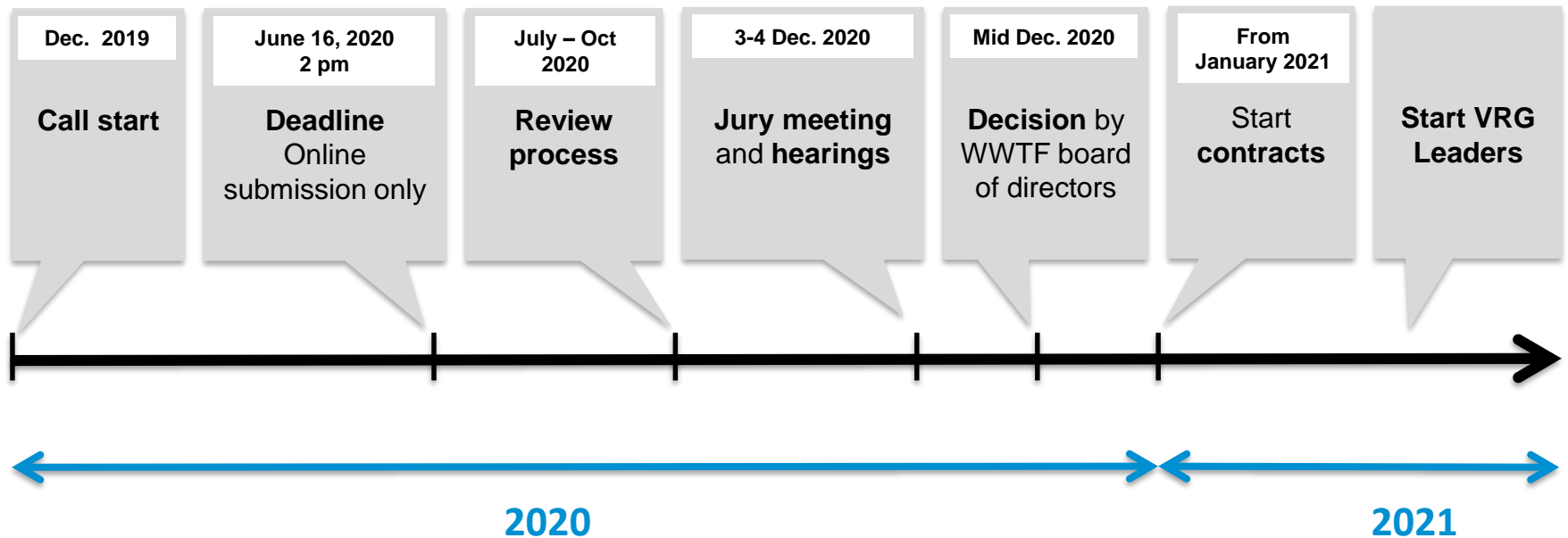
# Key facts - finances

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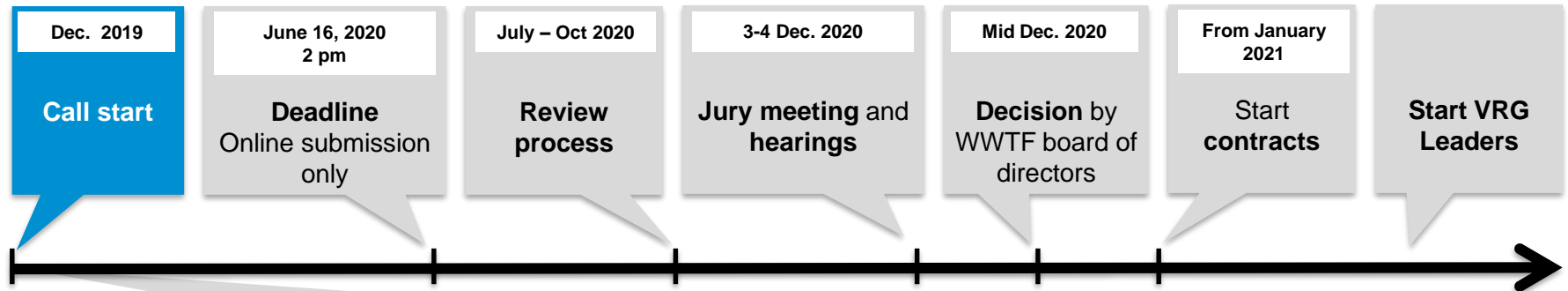
- The financial emphasis should lie on the **funding of scientific personnel** → balance in relation to infrastructure/material costs
- **In-kind vs. overhead**: Basic infrastructure such as office equipment, rent, telephone, internet, basic lab equipment does NOT count as in-kind but is covered by the overheads (paid-out by WWTF)!
- The budgetary allocation with eventual partner institutions has to be specified already at the application stage
- WWTF does **not** cover **any travelling expenses** for candidates who are invited to the hearings. Compensation of travel expenses e.g. via FFG <https://www.ffg.at/career-grants> (Career grants)

# Schedule of the current call

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# VRG jury and applicants



## VRG jury

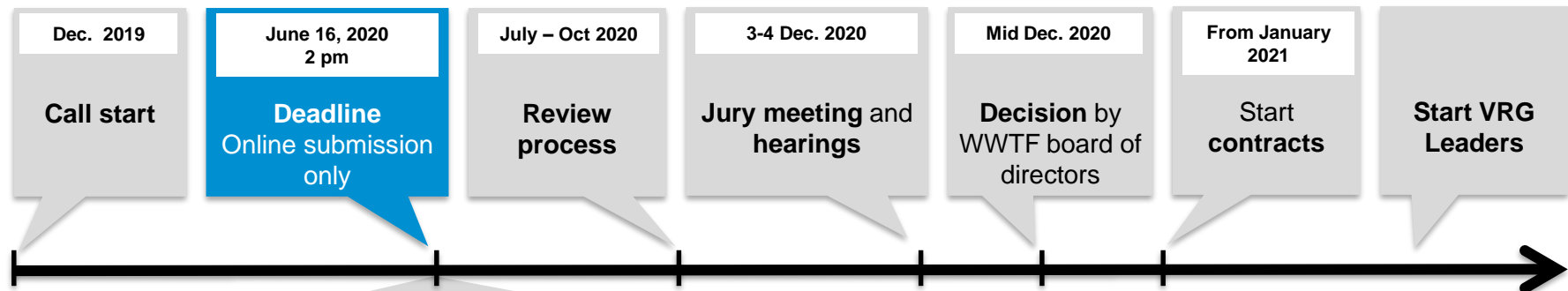
- About 6-7 international excellent scientists/experts with call-relevant expertise
- Duties within the process
  - Selecting proposals to be reviewed
  - Nominating reviewers
  - Inviting candidates to the hearing
  - Evaluating the performance at the hearing
  - Comparative assessment and uttering of the funding recommendation

## Applicants

- Universities and research institutions in Vienna (via a proponent)
- Suggestion of
  - excellent young researchers
  - from abroad<sup>1)</sup>
  - In general 2-8 years after PhD on application date (in case of care duties up to 4 years longer)
- Active search for female researches highly welcome

1) During the last three years at least two years at a foreign research institution and currently (submission deadline) not in Austria

# Submission deadline and formal eligibility check



## Submission

- Submission via WWTF **Online Submission System** → **no hard copy required**
- No funding of private companies
  - Self funded business partners are possible and welcome
  - Project relevant services from companies can be calculated as consumables (if these services can not be provided within the projects with reasonable effort)

## Formal eligibility check

- Timely submission of proposal
- **Submission must include all relevant signatures = Proponent, Host Institution, Group Leader** (not on one page)
- In-kind contribution: >20% of total sum
- Overhead costs: the regulations of the host institutions have to be observed
- Maximum number of pages (limited by characters and uploads)
- Compliance of the academic age
- From abroad
- Active promotion (eg. mailing lists,...)

# Review process and peer review



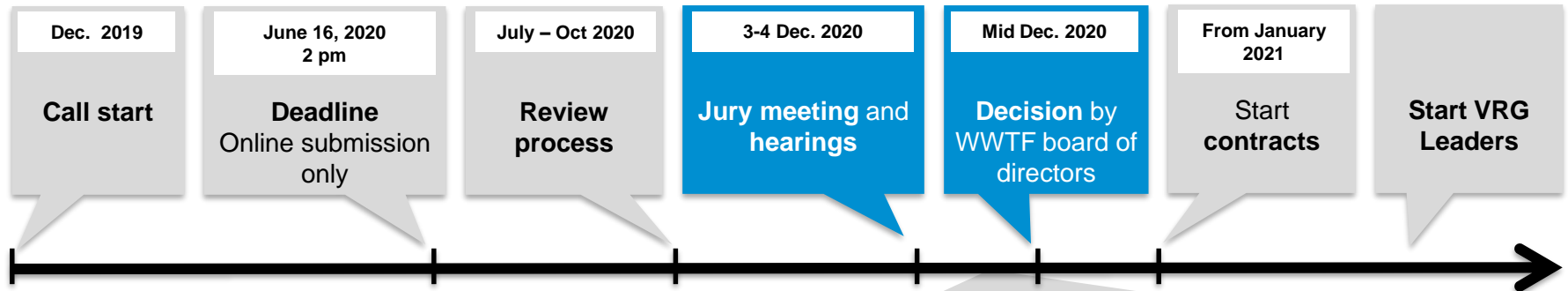
## Review process

- Proposals that lie outside the subject area as well as those where a lack of quality is obvious, are not recommended for the review process by the jury
- Short information of the rejected applicants
- In case proposals are admitted to the review process: reservation of both hearing days absolutely necessary (booking of a flexible ticket)

## Peer review process

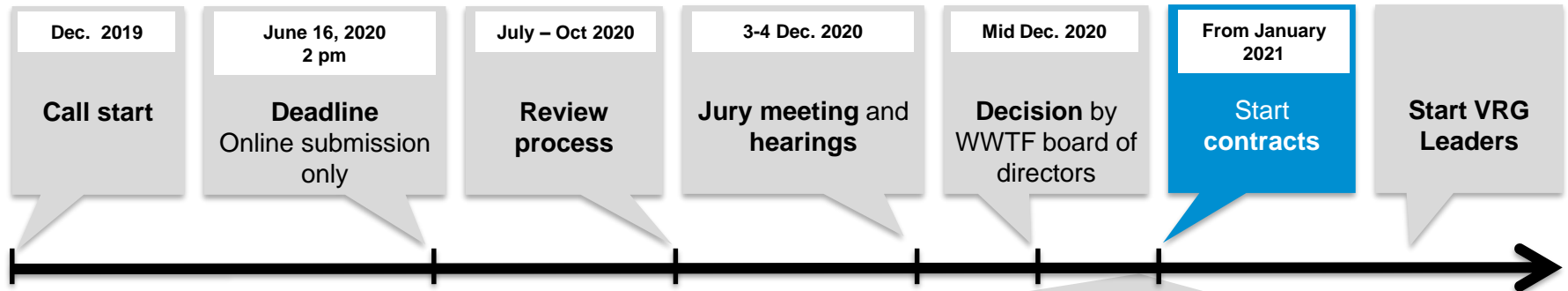
- 2-4 written reviews per proposal will be obtained
- Reviews only by international peers; remain anonymous
- Review reports form the basis of the jury's discussion for the invitation to the hearing as well as the funding decision after the hearing

# Hearing, jury meeting and decision



Hearing	Jury meeting	Decision
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invitation to hearing (selection after review process)</li> <li>• Short-presentation in Vienna</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Main evaluation criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Scientific quality and potential</b> of candidates compared to the competitive international environment</li> <li>• <b>Quality of the research project</b></li> <li>• <b>Integration</b> into research environment</li> <li>• <b>Career perspective</b></li> <li>• ...</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>WWTF does not cover travelling expenses.</b> Compensation of travel expenses e.g. via FFG Career Grants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decision by WWTF board of directors</li> <li>• All applicants receive a decision letter (acceptances and rejections) with anonymous reviews</li> </ul>

# Employment contract and funding contract



## Employment contract

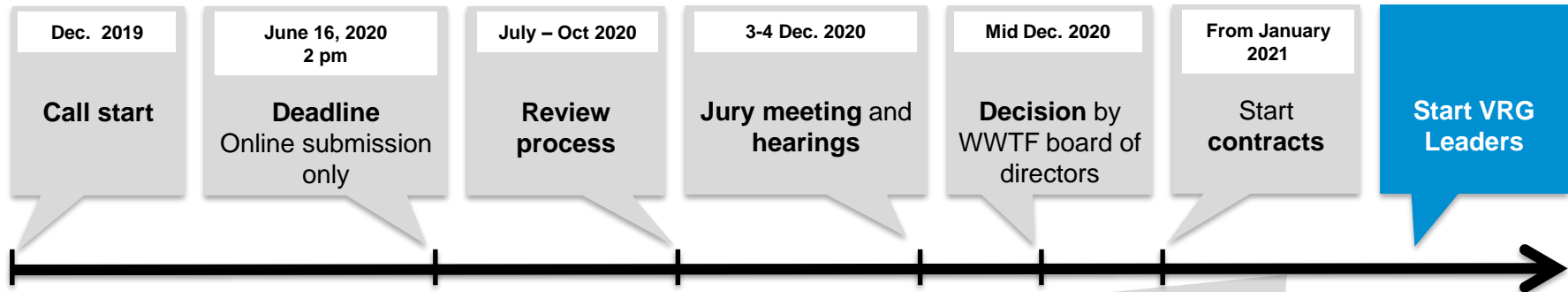
- The employment contract has to be made available to WWTF no later than 2 months after the decision of the WWTF board of directors has been made
- Clarification until when a qualifying agreement will be offered
- Agreement on a coordinated evaluation of the candidate between the host institution and WWTF
- If the employment contract cannot be achieved within 2 months, the funding will be offered to a reserve candidate

## Funding contract

- Funding contract between WWTF and the host institution of the VRG leader (§ 27 according to UG2002 for universities)
- VRG leader has scientific and financial responsibility

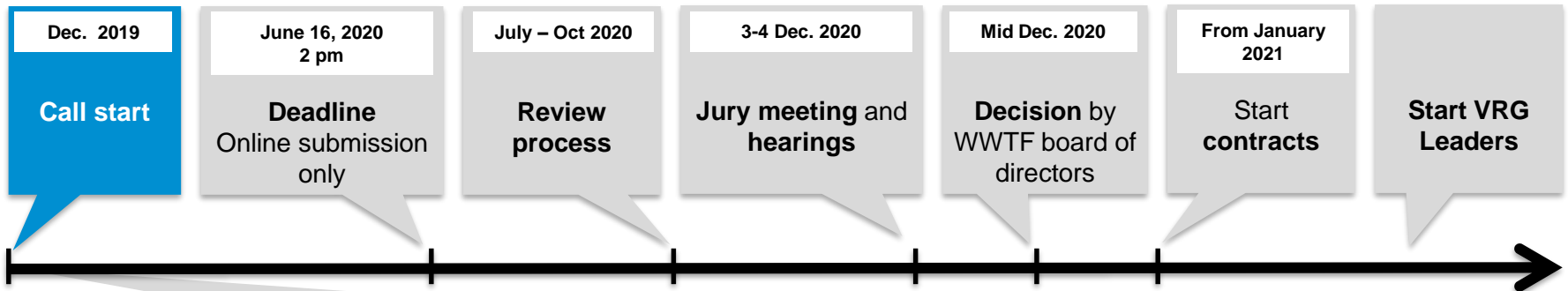


# Project start, project duration, project completion

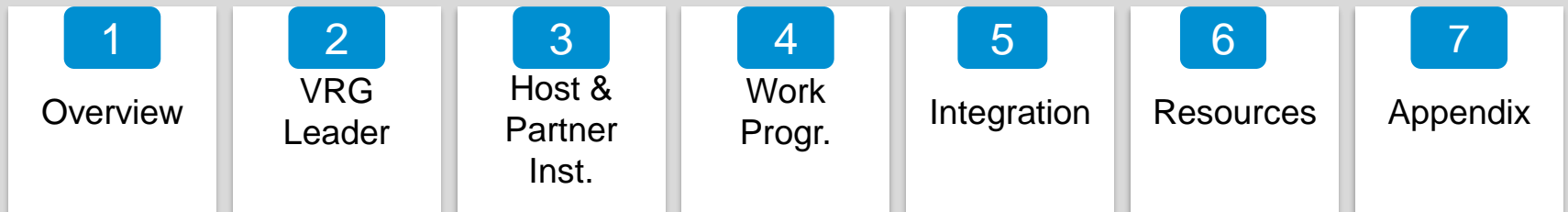


- **Project start:**
  - Latest start date: 18 months after decision by WWTF board of directors
- During **project duration:**
  - WWTF pays funding rates every twelve months in advance to the host institution
  - Short annual electronic reports to WWTF as prerequisite for the release of installments
  - Site visit by WWTF
- After **project completion** :
  - Comprehensive final report

# Online submission system



- Registration with email address and name via <https://funding.wwtf.at>
- Login, select VRG-Call and click „create a new proposal“
- Fill in required data and upload documents (PDFs)
- Submit proposal (one PDF file with project number is generated automatically)
  - Only possible when the proposal is filled completely
  - No changes are possible after the submission
- A complete proposal consists of **7 parts**:



# Overview key facts

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- Complete PDF is generated automatically after the submission based on the input
- Signature sheet can be downloaded at any time (basic data of “Overview” must be inserted)
- For signatures please follow your institutional policies (contact your “Forschungsservice”)
- Signatures do not have to be all on one sheet! Max of 3 pages can be uploaded → signature pages are for WWTF office only to check formal eligibility
- Some useful rules:
  - Keep applications short and precise!
  - Use a language aimed at the scientific community
  - Ambitious but feasible
  - In English
  - Contact the research service at your institution in advance!

# Contact and consultation

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- All documents available at [www.wwtf.at](http://www.wwtf.at)
- Personal consultation upon appointment

Donia Lasinger

[donia.lasinger@wwtf.at](mailto:donia.lasinger@wwtf.at)

T: 01/ 402 31 43 – 16

Michael Strassnig

[michael.strassnig@wwtf.at](mailto:michael.strassnig@wwtf.at)

T: 01/ 402 31 43 – 15

- WWTF office: Schlickgasse 3/12, 1090 Vienna

# Overview

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Overview	VRG Leader	Host&Part ner Inst.	Work Prog.	Integration	Resources	Appendix

- **Basic information:** title of project (proposed field of research), keywords, duration, scientific disciplines
- **Proponent and host institution** details
- **Group leader** details
- **Partner institution(s)**
- **Excluded peer evaluators** (max. 3, optional), **suggested peer evaluators** (up to 5)
  - Only visible for WWTF and jury. Note: only peer reviewers with a non-Austrian affiliation will be considered for peer review
- **Scientific abstract:** will be the first impression jury members and peer reviewers read

Note: requested funding will be displayed based on the data in section 6. The project number will be set automatically after submission

- This section should be filled out by the envisaged VRG leader
- Details to
  - Previous career steps
  - Highlights of recent work
  - Description of (scientific) leadership potential
  - Motivation for application as Vienna Research Group Leader
  - Formal criterion „being from abroad“
- Upload CV of VRG leader
  - Page limit = 4: 2 pages biographical sketch, 2 pages of publications (max. 25 publications per page)
  - PDF format only

# Host / Partner Institution(s)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Overview	VRG Leader	<b>Host&amp;Par tner Inst.</b>	Work Prog.	Integration	Resources	Appendix

- This section should be filled out by the host institution
- Details to
  - Description of host institution (specific department or institute)
  - Motivation of Host Institution to bring the proposed Group Leader to Vienna
  - Description and relevance of partner institutions
    - Role and cash in-kind contributions have to be confirmed by a Letter of Intent (LoI) in the appendix
  - (if applicable) Description of Additional Institutions with which the Group Leader intends to collaborate

- This section should be filled out by the envisaged VRG leader

Details to

- State of the art in the proposed field and scientific challenges in the next years
- Research plan

In total 6 pages; **upload as PDF**, please use template

- Relevant references (max. 20, mark the 10 most relevant references)
- Disclosure of other applications for funding
- Ethical approval necessary or not?



# Integration of group leader

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Overview	VRG Leader	Host&Partner Inst.	Work Prog.	Integration	Resources	Appendix

- Description of the Vienna Research Group Leader's recruiting process including gender management
  - Please include gender mainstreaming/affirmative actions here
- Advertisement procedures
  - The international **publication of a job announcement** and/or distribution via mailing lists/professional societies is obligatory
  - Please upload only one job announcement as an example
- Status of the group leader during the funding period
  - Please explain in detail the **steps leading to a tenure position** (for example the exact process of getting a “Qualifizierungsvereinbarung” including time frames). These details will be the foundation of contractual elaborations in the case of funding
- Description of the interim evaluation of the group leader
- Career perspectives for the group leader after the funding period
- Integration of the group leader

- Details to
  - Description of the envisioned group
  - Description of the equipment and consumables
  - Statement of the monetary and in-kind contributions
    - Please be aware that the cash and in-kind contributions are just the contributions from the host institution. Cash in-kind contributions of potential partners (named in section 1 as additional institutions) need to be documented only in the appendix in the form of Letters of Intent covering items and amounts indicated
  - Overhead policy: max. 20% of the fundable direct costs
- Cost planning: 3 tables
  1. Personnel costs
  2. Non-personnel costs
  3. Cost overview (no data entries)


# Resources II

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Overview	VRG Leader	Host&Part ner Inst.	Work Prog.	Inte- gration	<b>Resour- ces</b>	Appendix


## Table 1 : Planning of personnel costs (in k€) - Example

### Additional persons


In order to prepare the overall budget per Partner Institution in detail in Section 2, you have to add additional persons here.

Additional person 1 

Name: *	Institution: *	Staff category *
<input type="text" value="N.N. 1"/>	<input type="text" value="-- please select --"/>	<input type="text" value="Post Doc"/>

Additional person 2 

Name: *	Institution: *	Staff category *
<input type="text" value="N.N. 2"/>	<input type="text" value="-- please select --"/>	<input type="text" value="Diploma student"/>

 add Additional person

Before you can fill in the personnel, you have to add a row for every person. Please enter the institution and the staff category. They will be automatically numbered (N.N. 1,...)

# Resources III

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Overview	VRG Leader	Host&Part ner Inst.	Work Prog.	Inte- gration	<b>Resour- ces</b>	Appendix

Table 1 : Planning of personnel costs (in k€) - Example

Name	Staff category	Funding source	Average yearly time commitment (from 0 to 100%)								Y1 salary 100% in k€	Funding applied for from WWTF in k€
			Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7	Y8		
Ms. Jane Doe	Group Leader	<input type="radio"/> WWTF	IN KIND 0	IN KIND 0	IN KIND 0	IN KIND 0	IN KIND 0	IN KIND 100	IN KIND 100	IN KIND 100	90.00	IN KIND 322.49
		<input type="radio"/> in-kind	WWTF	WWTF	WWTF	WWTF	WWTF	WWTF	WWTF	WWTF		WWTF
		<input checked="" type="radio"/> in-kind & WWTF	100	100	100	100	100	0	0	0		477.82
N.N. 1	Post Doc	<input type="radio"/> WWTF	IN KIND 50	IN KIND 50	IN KIND 50	IN KIND 0	IN KIND 0	IN KIND 0	IN KIND 0	IN KIND 0	67.00	IN KIND 103.55
		<input type="radio"/> in-kind	WWTF	WWTF	WWTF	WWTF	WWTF	WWTF	WWTF	WWTF		WWTF
		<input checked="" type="radio"/> in-kind & WWTF	0	0	0	0	0	50	50	50		120.04
N.N. 2	PhD student	<input checked="" type="radio"/> WWTF									46.00	
		<input type="radio"/> in-kind	WWTF	WWTF	WWTF	WWTF	WWTF	WWTF	WWTF	WWTF		WWTF
		<input type="radio"/> in-kind & WWTF	75	75	75	0	0	0	0	0		106.64
N.N. 3	Diploma student	<input type="radio"/> WWTF									32.00	
		<input checked="" type="radio"/> in-kind	IN KIND 40	IN KIND 40	IN KIND 40	IN KIND 0	IN KIND 0	IN KIND 0	IN KIND 0	IN KIND 0		IN KIND 39.56
		<input type="radio"/> in-kind & WWTF										
Total personnel costs applied for funding from WWTF in k€												704.50

# Resources IV

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Overview	VRG Leader	Host&Part ner Inst.	Work Prog.	Inte- gration	<b>Resour- ces</b>	Appendix

Table 1 : Planning of personnel costs (in k€)

Will be set automatically

Please avoid short term employments

Minimum wage according to the „**Kollektivvertrag**“ (collective agreement) or following the standards of the Austrian Science Fund FWF!

Name	Staff category	Funding source	Average yearly time commitment (from 0 to 100%)								Y1 salary 100% in k€	Fun app WW
			Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7	Y8		
Ms. Jane Doe	Group Leader	<input type="radio"/> WWTF	IN KIND	IN KIND	IN KIND	IN KIND	IN KIND	IN KIND	IN KIND	IN KIND		
		<input type="radio"/> in-kind	0	0	0	0	0	100	100	100		322
		<input checked="" type="radio"/> in-kind & WWTF	100	100	100	100	100	0	0	0	90.00	477
N.N. 1	Post Doc	<input type="radio"/> WWTF	IN KIND	IN KIND	IN KIND	IN KIND	IN KIND	IN KIND	IN KIND	IN KIND		
		<input type="radio"/> in-kind	50	50	50	0	0	0	0	0		103
		<input checked="" type="radio"/> in-kind & WWTF	0	0	0	0	0	50	50	50	67.00	120
N.N. 2	PhD student	<input checked="" type="radio"/> WWTF										
		<input type="radio"/> in-kind	WWTF	WWTF	WWTF	WWTF	WWTF	WWTF	WWTF	WWTF		
		<input type="radio"/> in-kind & WWTF	75	75	75	0	0	0	0	0	46.00	
N.N. 3	Diploma student	<input type="radio"/> WWTF										
		<input checked="" type="radio"/> in-kind	IN KIND	IN KIND	IN KIND	IN KIND	IN KIND	IN KIND	IN KIND	IN KIND		
		<input type="radio"/> in-kind & WWTF	40	40	40	0	0	0	0	0	32.00	39

Wages above Kollektivvertrag are possible and have to be argued. No additional wages for people who are already 100% employed. An increase of employment up to 100% through WWTF funding is possible.

Attention: Wage for „Studentische MitarbeiterIn“ is calculated by FWF with 20 hours and a „DoktorandIn“ with 30 hours per week

Total funding applied for will automatically be calculated including a **3% annual salary increase**

Increase in cash and in-kind contributions starting from year 5

# Resources V

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Overview	VRG Leader	Host&Part ner Inst.	Work Prog.	Inte- gration	<b>Resour- ces</b>	Appendix

Table 2 : Planning of non-personnel costs (in €)

Description / cost category / Institution	Funding source	Costs stated per year								Funding applied for from WWTF in k€			
		Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7	Y8				
<div> <input type="radio"/> WWTF                     <input type="radio"/> in-kind                     <input checked="" type="radio"/> in-kind &amp; WWTF                 </div>	<div> <input type="radio"/> WWTF                     <input type="radio"/> in-kind                     <input checked="" type="radio"/> in-kind &amp; WWTF                 </div>	IN KIND 0.00	IN KIND 0.00	IN KIND 0.00	IN KIND 0.00	IN KIND 0.00	IN KIND 0.00	IN KIND 0.00	IN KIND 0.00	IN KIND 0.00	<div> <input type="radio"/> IN KIND                     <input type="radio"/> WWTF                 </div>		
Equipment		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		
Vienna Universit		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		
	<div> <input type="radio"/> WWTF                     <input type="radio"/> in-kind                     <input checked="" type="radio"/> in-kind &amp; WWTF                 </div>	IN KIND 0.00	IN KIND 0.00	IN KIND 0.00	IN KIND 0.00	IN KIND 0.00	IN KIND 0.00	IN KIND 0.00	IN KIND 0.00	IN KIND 0.00	IN KIND 0.00	<div> <input type="radio"/> IN KIND                     <input type="radio"/> WWTF                 </div>	
		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		
		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		
Total for funding from WWTF in k€										0.00			

- Funded via:**
- WWTF
  - In-kind
  - In-kind & WWTF

Costs stated per year

**Category:**

- Equipment
- Consumables
- Travelling
- Publication costs
- Workshops/Conferences
- Other

Specify institution

# Resources VI

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Overview	VRG Leader	Host&Part ner Inst.	Work Prog.	Inte- gration	<b>Resour- ces</b>	Appendix

Table 2 : Planning of non-personnel costs (in €)

Description / cost category / Institution	Funding source	Y1
<input type="text"/> Equipment Vienna University	<input type="radio"/> WWTF <input type="radio"/> in-kind <input checked="" type="radio"/> in-kind & WWTF	IN KIND 0.0 WWTF 0.0
<input type="text"/> Equipment Vienna University	<input type="radio"/> WWTF <input type="radio"/> in-kind <input checked="" type="radio"/> in-kind & WWTF	IN KIND 0.0 WWTF 0.0

## Category:

- Equipment
- Consumables
- Travelling
- Publication costs
- Workshops/Conferences
- Other

## • Equipment:

- Devices, instruments, system components and other durable goods (providing the group leader with better infrastructure)
- Special explanation if the purchases planned exceed the amount of € 20,000.- incl. VAT
- Renting, leasing, adaptation also possible
- If bought, pro **rata depreciation rates** can be funded

- Consumables: expendable material; appliances up to € 1,500.- € excl. VAT, software
- Workshops / conferences: organized internally
- Travelling: attending project related scientific events and invitations
- Publication costs such as open access costs
- "Other": This covers all other costs, for example service contracts (paid on a lump sum basis)

- Letter(s) of intent
  - One letter of intent - signed by the responsible director/manager/head – of each partner institution who either receive parts of WWTF funding or provide in-kind contributions (**template available online**)
  - Max. 2 pages per partner/up to 5 partners
  - Do not upload main contents in regard to the work programme here
- Letter of recommendation / additional information
  - Maximum of 4 pages
- Photo of candidate
  - For internal use only
- Affirmations and Authorization = signatures
  - Max of 3 pages, i.e. each signature by host institution, proponent and group leader can be on separate pages