WWTF

Vienna Science
and Technology Fund

Supplementing Measures

Call Specifications

NEXT22 – <u>N</u>ew <u>ex</u>citing <u>t</u>ransfer projects

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1. About this document

This document specifies the process, criteria, and instrument of a specific WWTF call. It is aimed at applicants wishing to submit a proposal for supplementing measures, namely for the call NEXT22 – New exciting transfer projects. For further information regarding the thematic scope of the call, funding and submission guidelines, as well as references to WWTF policies, please also consider the following documents:

Call Fiche	Summarizes the most important aspects of the call	https://wwtf.at/funding/pro-grammes/ei/#NXT22
Submission Guideline	Guide to entering and uploading information into the Funding Portal	https://wwtf.at/funding/pro-grammes/ei/#NXT22
WWTF Funding Guideline	General Guideline for WWTF funding activities	https://www.wwtf.at/up-load/WWTF_Richtlinie_081121.pdf.pdf
Guideline for Good Scientific Practice	Guidelines by the Austrian Agency for Research Integrity	https://www.wwtf.at/up-load/broschure_gwp-richt-linien_web_2017.pdf
Open Science Policy	Open Science Policy of WWTF	https://www.wwtf.at/up-load/wwtf_open-science-pol-icy_09032022.pdf
Gender Equality Strategy & Plan	Detailed information about gender mainstreaming at WWTF	https://wwtf.at/upload/wwtf-gender-equality-strategy-and-plan_final.pdf
Reporting and Accounting Guideline	Specifies reporting and accounting for funded projects	https://www.wwtf.at/up-load/anhang_ber-ichtswesen_und_abrechnungs-modalitaeten_04112020.pdf

2. Thematic scope of the call

This call is issued within the WWTF instrument "supplementing measures" ("Ergänzende Instrumente") specified in the ⬜ WWTF Funding Guideline.

The goal of the NEXT call is to help create ideas which show how results from WWTF funded research can be transferred to the next level of exploitation and utilization. The call supports one of WWTF's missions: i.e. the medium-term application perspective. The goal is to support the contribution of cutting-edge research to solving relevant societal problems and to raising economic potentials.

This small extra funding call addresses previously funded WWTF researchers that are in the middle or at the end of their project time who want to implement innovative activities with the goal to reach new stakeholders

and to spread the acquired scientific knowledge to a broader audience. It should help research organizations (and researchers) to better valorise their ideas and intellectual property.

NEXT-funded activities…

- …go beyond the scientific project and results that were generated via WWTF funding (with or without commercialization),
- …have the potential for additional societal and/or economic benefit,
- …include the description and inclusion of a new target group that could be interested in the exciting scientific results (not the scientific community itself), the benefit to this new target group and how this target group can be addressed.

A NEXT project should focus on **one** specific main transfer activity. The potential activity depends on the nature of the research (field), the status quo of research results, the individual expertise and the qualifications of the project members. The options are manifold and include:

- economically exploitable ideas such as prototypes, spin-offs, patents, licences, new industry co-operations.
- projects that aim at disseminating the acquired knowledge to new societal players and user groups such as trainings, guidelines, counselling, and social businesses.

Not within the scope of the call are:

- classical science communication projects (open lectures, media coverage, media cooperations,…)
- mere continuation of existing activities of the scientific project itself and already established collaborations (it is not about reaching the next scientific publication!).

Furthermore, there should be an awareness of existing funding schemes of other agencies like Wirtschaftsagentur Wien, FFG or AWS (Patentscheck, Prototypenförderung,…). The same activities cannot be subject to double funding.

The thematic scope of the call is outlined in detail in the ☐ Call Fiche. To get ideas about potential NEXT-topics, please also consult already funded projects under this programme (the list is just a reference frame and not limited to these examples): https://wwtf.at/funding/programmes/ei/

3. Steps of the application process

For applicants, the application includes the following steps:

1. **Submission of a proposal:** concise proposals demonstrating concrete transfer idea and project
2. **Funding recommendation** through a jury and **formal decision** by WWTF boards

4. Submission

Applications must be submitted via the **online submission system** within the deadlines defined on the 🗋 Call Fiche.

- Applications can only be made upon invitation by one of the original WWTF funded and contributing researchers. He*she must provide the necessary data and files.

- The structure and content of the application are described in more detail in the 🗋 Submission Guideline.

- Important: Signatures of the PI ("affirmations") and the authorized signatory at each institution ("authorization") are required in the application process. Please contact your institution's research service and inform yourself about your institute's internal processes and timelines.

- All application information will be processed through the online system. No hard copies of documents are required.

- The application must be written in English.

5. Eligibility of applicants and roles in the project

The general eligibility of applicants is specified in the 🗋 WWTF Funding Guideline.

Eligible for submission are already WWTF funded **Principal Investigators (PIs)** with an affiliation at a Viennese research institution upon invitation only.

- Their original WWTF funded projects must be half-way through the project duration until shortly after the end of the project. For the NEXT22 call, this applies to the project calls Environmental Systems Research 2017 (ESR17), Life Sciences 2017 (LS17), Cognitive Sciences 2018 (CS18), Life Sciences 2018 (LS18), Information and Communication Technology 2019 (ICT19), Life Sciences 2019 (LS19) and the Vienna Research Groups Leaders of the years 2017-2019 that are still based in Vienna and funded by WWTF.

- Primarily the original PIs are eligible to submit a NEXT-project. The PI can transfer this right to the other core team members or team members. However, in this case an agreement with the PI is necessary and the new PI needs to register in the system separately. In this case, please contact WWTF office.

- Only **one NEXT-project can be submitted by each funded WWTF project**.

- Each NEXT-project must have a **minimum of one LOI of a new target group**.

Additional **project partners and collaborators** are possible as team members.

- Project partners can be affiliated to institutions in or outside Vienna (including international partners). Partners outside Vienna are optional and not a requirement for application. Industry partners are not eligible for funding but can be part of the project.

- Project partners outside of Vienna may receive up to 20% of the total requested funding.

WWTF especially encourages young and female scientists to apply as PI.

6. Content and structure of the proposal

The content and structure of the proposal are defined and specified in the online submission system. Please register to learn more about the details.

For more details, please see 🗎 Submission Guideline.

7. Funding and evaluation criteria

The following criteria are used in the evaluation.

- **Scope**: is the project within the scope of the call as described in the call specifications? Projects which are not within the thematic scope will be immediately rejected by the jury, regardless the possible scientific quality, i.e. the NEXT-project must be based on results of an already funded WWTF project.

The key criterion in the evaluation of proposals is **the concrete transfer activity**. In detail this means:

- **Innovative and focused idea/step towards valorization:** Does the project tackle a specific and concrete innovative idea how to (re)use scientific results? The mere continuation of the scientific work (e.g. publications etc.) or add-ons of the already running project is not within the scope.
- **Feasibility and implementation:** Are the work plan and time schedule feasible? Are the stated goals adequate and the process to reach them traceable?
- **New target group(s):** Is the project able to reach a concrete new target group and if possible, to foster and increase the spread of exploitable research results? The scientific community is NOT a possible target group in this sense. Is there a basic understanding of the market of this new target group and potential competitors?
- **Resources:** Are the personnel and non-personnel costs in regard to the idea adequate. Is there evidence of a minimum amount of in-kind contributions (<35% of funding volume). Do the qualifications of the team members fit to the project?

Further criteria:

- **Additionality:** Does the project support additional benefits arising from the WWTF funding (increase in quality, scope,…)?
- **Relevance, impact and sustainability:** Is there an impact of the proposed work on the target group and/or generally on society and economy (commercialization potential, market value,…) and what is the grade of sustainability?
- **Consideration of gender aspects**: The relevance of potential sex-specific and gender-related aspects of the proposed projects should be considered and explained throughout the proposal.

8. Eligible costs

The total WWTF funding volume of the NEXT call is € 400,000. The maximum funding volume per project is € 75,000 and the minimum is € 25,000. The project duration can be between 6 and 18 months.

All costs that are directly attributable to the project and are regarded as commonly required in the respective field are eligible for funding. Costs that incurred before the funding was granted and overhead costs cannot be applied for. Please also consider your organization's internal guidelines for eligible expenses/costs.

8.1. Personnel costs

- Eligible forms of employment contracts are full-time and part-time contracts as well as marginal employments ("Arbeitsvertrag"). Contracts for services ("Werkvertrag") are only permitted if the nature of the work means that it cannot be performed through employment contracts.

- All persons employed through a WWTF-funded project should receive a fair employment contract with at least a minimum wage according to the "Kollektivvertrag" (collective agreement) of the Austrian Universities / extra university research institutions or – for staff employed at institutions with no collective agreement – according to the standards of the Austrian Science Fund (FWF, wage scheme available online).

- Salaries higher than those stipulated in the collective agreement are possible, subject to the agreement from the host institution and justification due to experience of the researcher.

- The budget calculation in the submission systems automatically includes an inflation adjustment of 6% p.a.

- Applications for personnel costs must be in one of the following categories:

  - **Senior Personnel:** highly qualified scientists, usually permanently employed
  - **Post Doc:** or equivalent qualification, including Senior Postdocs
  - **PhD Student:** or equivalent qualification level
  - **Diploma Student:** Bachelor or Master students
  - **Office/Technician:** administrative or technicians (proportional funding only)

- Personnel costs cannot be claimed for permanent senior staff who are already fully financed by the institution. Exceptions are in cases (e.g. non-university research institutions and Universities of Applied Sciences) where senior staff has to acquire third party funding for co-financing their own position. In these cases, permanently employed senior staff may claim up to 20% of their annual salary from WWTF.

8.2. Non-Personnel costs

- Running costs for basic infrastructure (telephone costs, rents) as well as costs for the acquisition of infrastructure and basic equipment are not eligible for funding as it falls under the category overhead costs.

- **Equipment:** Smaller equipment can be purchased within the scope of the grant. General office software is not eligible for funding. This includes devices up to 1,500 € each as well as software specific to

the projects. Funding by WWTF under this scheme is not intended to cover investment in general and larger infrastructure, however *pro rata* depreciation rates over the project duration for equipment necessary to the project may be funded.

- **Consumables**: Costs for project-related expenses like consumables. WWTF does not fund consumables that are general and not project-specific (e.g., paper, printer toner)

- **Travel costs**: Costs for travel and accommodation for scientific meetings and conferences, field work, expeditions may be funded. Please also consider the regulations of your organization for travel costs.

- **Publication costs:** costs incurred for publication activities, e.g., printing costs, article processing charges (for open access), etc. This also includes costs for archiving research data in open repositories. Please also consider the ⧉ Open Science Policy.

- **Data management**: Costs for data access as well as for conducting surveys and panels can be covered to a small amount. The grant also covers costs incurring for data preparation in order to make the data accessible via a repository.

- **Workshop/conferences/…**: Costs for organizing events, workshops, and conferences as well as invitations are eligible.

- **Other costs**: e.g., third-party costs, namely, for external collaboration, consulting, studies, and software development may be funded to a small degree. In general, it is assumed that the funding of individuals will be predominantly through employment contracts at the participating institutions and not through other types of employment.

8.3. In-kind contributions

The applicant's in-kind contributions have to be at least 35% of the funding volume. These in-kind contributions have to be described in detail.

Basic infrastructure as office premises equipped with telephone, internet, laboratory etc. do not count as in-kind contributions and are covered by overheads. They must be available anyhow, so that work can be taken up upon signing of the contract. Other categories are in-kind working capacity, consumables/software or monetary contributions.

9. Assurance of confidentiality

WWTF assures confidentiality of all data for the whole evaluation and funding process. Any information about projects (including project results) will be kept strictly confidential and can only be accessed by the evaluation jury that is bound to WWTF confidentiality rules. Project contents (for example on the WWTF homepage) will only be published in agreement with the Principal Investigator (PI). Please state in the application how confidential your proposal idea is.

10. Selection and decision process

Applications must be submitted via the online submission system in the specified timeframes specified on the 🗋 Call Fiche. Submissions after the deadline will not be considered.

The following paragraphs explain the processes in more detail.

The core element of WWTF's decision making processes is a **jury** mandated to make a funding recommendation to the WWTF boards. The jury consist of national and international experts in the field of transfer activities.

- Members of the jury will be published after the WWTF Board of Directors finalize the formal funding decision.

- Please note that WWTF does not allow the opportunity for rebuttals to recommendations by the jury or decisions by the WWTF Board of Directors

10.1. Formal eligibility check by WWTF

WWTF office conducts a formal eligibility check of the proposal based on the criteria outlined in the 🗋 WWTF Funding Guideline, the 🗋 Call Fiche and this document. This includes:

- All required signatures from the appropriate persons are uploaded.
- Minimum in-kind contributions stated.

Substantial deficiencies and missing items in the application will lead to the exclusion of funding applications from further evaluation and rejection on formal grounds. The strict timelines of the call do not allow for proposals to be sent back to the applicants for improvements and supplements.

10.2. Evaluation of proposals

- Each proposal is independently assessed by at least two jury members based on the evaluation criteria.

- The jury decides in a meeting (on-site or online) if a proposal should be recommended for funding. The result is a recommendation for each project: "to be funded" or "not to be funded".

10.3. Formal funding decision

The jury recommendation will be **formally confirmed** by the WWTF boards.

- Applicants will be promptly informed about the decision.

- The decision may include budget cuts as well as additional conditions and recommendations.

- Unsuccessful applicants will receive a short statement by the jury explaining the main reasons why the project was not selected for funding.

11. Funding contract

In case of funding, WWTF office will contact the PI to draw up the funding contract.

- The PI will be provided with the necessary documents for the contracts.

- Projects may start immediately but should not start later than 6 months after the formal funding decision by the WWTF Board of Directors has been made.

- The formal funding contract will be signed between WWTF and the host institution of the PI (for universities according to §27 of the Universities Act 2002). The contract provides the PI with the responsibility and financial authority for conducting the project.

12. Monitoring and reporting

Funded teams are committed to delivering reports and participating in evaluation and monitoring. WWTF offers the possibility to adapt the work plan according to project needs. For details see the ⧠ Reporting and Accounting Guideline.