WWTF
WIENER WISSENSCHAFTS-, FORSCHUNGS- UND TECHNOLOGIEFONDS

Guide for Writing a Short Proposal

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Call 2019

NOV 2018

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 ("Vienna Research Groups for Young Investigators"). WWTF runs calls resulting in a strong competition for funding.

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*" and from the City of Vienna.

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. For each call, an appropriate international expert jury is formed. Additionally, for each application entering the full proposal stage a number of written peer reviews are obtained.

Important Issues

This WWTF call aims to support teams of researchers that would like to conduct multi-annual innovative scientific research projects in the field of Information- and Communication Technology and its application in other fields.

Researchers at Viennese universities and non-university research institutions including researchers moving to Vienna as a result of this call are eligible for funding. Young and female scientists are especially encouraged to apply as principal investigators.

The **Call Fiche** including contact information of WWTF call managers is available at www.wwtf.at. The formal criteria for a WWTF ICT 2019 project include a minimum funding volume of € 200,000 with an upper range of up to € 800,000 and a planned duration of 2-4 years. In total, € 5,5 million are dedicated to this call.

The **Principal Investigator (PI)** of a WWTF project must have a Viennese home institution to which the project is affiliated to. This includes researchers moving to Vienna with a Viennese affiliation and work place in case of funding. Project **partners** outside of Vienna 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 treated according to §27 of the 2002 University Act. Therefore, authorized signatures from the university / scientific institution acting as home institution are mandatory for submission. In case of funding, the home institution will be the formal contract partner for WWTF with the principal investigator 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. **Requested funding for non-personnel costs should not exceed 25% of the total budget.** Everybody employed in a WWTF-funded project should get a fair contract with at least 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) available online at www.fwf.ac.at/de/forschungsfoerderung/personalkostensaetze. A maximum total employment is set to 100%. When planning the budget, please use full-time equivalent (FTE) salaries and be aware that the PhD salary listed by FWF is for a 75% position.

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 **consumables,** project related **equipment** (small devices up to €1,500 each), **travelling costs** (incurred for attending project related scientific events and invitations), **publication costs** (including costs for patent filing and open access publication), **workshops / conferences** (costs incurred for

own scientific events), and **other project related costs**. However, non-personnel costs must be balanced, as WWTF focuses on funding people, and should not exceed 25% of the funding volume applied for.

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 + indirect 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 conditions attached. Kindly comply with the overhead regulations of the involved institutions.

Compliance with the rules for good scientific practice including the appreciation of ethical aspects in research is mandatory at the proposal stage.

Please also consider WWTF's open access policy available at www.wwtf.at.

Please note that a researcher can appear in a key role (that is, as PI, Co-PI or Core Team Member) in **two proposals at most.**

Evaluation Process

In this call a **two-stage submission process** is used: in the first stage, a short proposal (character limits are defined in the online submission system) shall be submitted describing the key objectives and motivation for the proposed work. Second, the applicants of successful short proposals are invited to submit a full proposal. Short proposals may be submitted at any time from the opening of the call until the final closing date which is **17-Jan-2019, 2pm**. Upon invitation, full proposals will have to be submitted by **16-May-2019, 2pm**.

Evaluation procedure in detail:

1. Formal eligibility check by WWTF: the proposals will be screened for formal eligibility by the WWTF office based on the following criteria: Principal Investigator is affiliated to a Viennese research institution | duly submitted | funding range between € 200,000 and € 800,000 | required signatures | all required parts filled out | not more than two key roles in different proposals. **Proposals that do not meet the key requirements outlined will not be sent for further evaluation to the core jury.** Applicants of proposals which are deemed ineligible will be informed shortly after the submission deadline.

2. Evaluation of short proposals: If the proposal is formally accepted, it will be evaluated by a core team of the jury (core jury). Each proposal will be assessed independently by several jury members based on the following criteria:

Quality: scientific excellence and originality of the proposed research project.

Innovative character of a project is a major criterion in the assessment of the proposals.

Applicants: accomplishments, scientific track record and potential of the applicants to conduct the research.

Bridging: potential to span across disciplines and to build bridges to application fields.

Economic/social relevance: potential prospective benefits and when they are expected.

Non-successful applicants will be informed promptly about rejections and will be provided with a <u>short</u> jury statement explaining the decision.

3. Evaluation of full proposals: If the short proposal fulfils the requirements, the applicants will be invited to submit a **full proposal** by **16-May-2018, 2pm**. The full proposal must be consistent and in accordance with the successful short proposal, extending it by providing full details. Full proposals should not exceed the size limits indicated in the submission system. A guide for writing the full proposal will be provided in due time. The evaluation of full proposals is carried out through a combination of written international peer review and a panel of international experts that convene in Vienna. In the latter case, the core jury is extended by additional renowned scientists. At least **two jury members** are assigned to each proposal which at first undergoes **written peer review** by at least three international reviewers.

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4. Jury meeting in Vienna in autumn 2019: This is the most significant step in the assessment. There will be a 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.

5. Formal funding decision (confirmation of jury recommendation) by WWTF Boards in October/November 2019.

Applicants that have submitted a full proposal will receive 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. **Register** with your e-mail address and name: the password will be sent to you by e-mail. If you had registered in a previous call, you can use your existing login credentials.
3. **Log in**, choose the call, and create a new proposal.
4. **Short proposal**: Fill in requested information in *online forms* and *upload requested files* (in PDF format). You can save the current status of your proposal at any time, access the system multiple times, and edit the content.
5. **Submit proposal**: The submit button becomes active only after all requested information has been filled in and uploaded (signalled by a green check mark next to the chapter title); Please be aware that after submission no more changes are possible.
   Note: The submission system closes at 2 pm on the day of the deadline. The short proposal has a size limit of maximum 5 MB. No diagrams or pictures are allowed in this stage.

Required Structure of a WWTF Short Proposal

Applications to WWTF undergo an assessment by international scientists, thus all proposals must be written in **English**. The length of the short proposal is determined by character counts and upload limitations in the online submission system. Please write precisely and to the point but include enough detail to allow an evaluation by international peers.

A short proposal to WWTF comprises of the following parts and has to be filled in the online forms:

Principal Investigators and Core Team Members

Name and ***full contact information*** of the Core Team, including the home institutions, where each member intends to conduct the project and their respective ***scientific expertise***. The Core Team is composed of the Principal Investigator (PI) / Coordinator, and up to two Co-PIs and/or Core Team members. Altogether, no more than 3 team members may be listed in this section. The designated PI/Coordinator will be the sole responsible person towards WWTF. A researcher can appear in a key role (that is, as PI, Co-PI or Core Team Member) in **two proposals at most.**

Biographical Sketch (2 pages, PDF upload, mandatory use of the provided CV template)

Curriculum Vitae (1 page):

- Personal Information
- Higher education including obtained degrees and dates when received
- Appointments/Positions: A list, in reverse chronological order, of all the individual's academic/ professional appointments or other work experience.
- Fellowships and Awards
- Selected Memberships

- Funded projects: A list of selected funded projects incl. project duration, funding source, granted amount of money and the role played in each project.
- A list of the most relevant collaborations. Indicate the names and nature of the cooperation.
- Other relevant activities/ experience: A list highlighting the broader impact of the professional and scholarly activities which focus on the generation, integration, and transfer of knowledge.
- If applicable, a list of career breaks.

List of Publications (1 page):

A summary of the publication record.

A list of up to ten selected peer-reviewed publications published. Mark publications, most relevant to the proposed research, with an asterisk (*).

Basic Information

This includes the *Title** of the project, *Keywords** and *Disciplines*.* Furthermore, the **indicative project duration** (between 2 and 4 years) as well as the **indicative budget** (approximate within the range of € 200,000 – 800,000) has to be stated. In the case of an invitation to write a full proposal, there should not be any significant changes in the budget in comparison to the short proposal. Exceptions are permitted but require an explanation. A cost planning tool (spreadsheet) is available in the submission system to calculate personnel, non-personnel and overhead costs. Please do not submit the exact budget calculations or the spreadsheet in the short proposal phase.

Note: All items marked with an asterisk (*) cannot be changed after the short proposal stage.

Project Summary/Abstract (max. 1500 characters)

This part must provide a complete project summary. Clearly state the research question and the aims of the team as a whole. What are the innovative aspects of your proposal?

Short Proposal:

Introduction, background, and state of the art (max. 2500 characters)

What is the state of the art of the proposed research? What are the research questions and the scientific challenges the project wants to address?

Research questions, objectives and hypotheses (max. 2000 characters)

What is/are the goal/s the project wants to achieve? What are the research questions and hypotheses? Provide an outline of the scientific approach that will be used to reach your objectives. The objectives should be achievable within the duration of your project. State background information, preliminary data and associated research experience.

Expected results, novelty, and relevance (max. 2000 characters)

Which aspects of the proposed project are especially innovative? Describe the scientific relevance of the proposed work for the field of Information and Communication Technology and the timeliness of the research.

Methods and feasibility (max. 2000 characters)

Specify the methodology you intend to use in order to answer your research questions and to reach the objectives. Describe the basic working principles and concepts and why the chosen approach/ specific mix of approaches is the most suitable for the addressed research question.

Potential to span across disciplines and to build bridges to application fields (max. 1000 characters)

What kind of potential (medium-term) application is addressed in the proposal? In which kind of fields is an application possible? Which different disciplines are working together within your research project?

Role of team members (max. 1000 characters)

Each team member should describe his/her role in accomplishing the goal of the team as a whole. Which collaborative elements are essential for the project to succeed; what makes the team more powerful than the sum of the individual contributions? Which partnerships across facilities and institutions in Vienna will result out of this project? A team member's contribution should be integrated into the overall plan and should not appear merely as a resource.

Potential medium-term economic / societal benefits (max. 500 characters)

Illustrate what the prospective benefits of your project are and when they are to be expected. Also outline what niche your project's results might fill, possibly referring to what the respective economic or societal needs are.

Potential ethical aspects (max. 500 characters)

If applicable, information should be given with respect to the ethical approval. Is an ethical approval available covering the prospective use of data and the planned analysis? If not, state whether an additional approval is required.

Key references (max. 10 citations, max. 1250 characters)

Indicate up to 10 of the most relevant background literature for the proposal.

Schedule and Project Overview (1 page Gantt chart, PDF upload)

Upload a Gantt chart to indicate an overview of milestones to be achieved during the project period. Specify the time periods and the respective PIs responsible for each milestone.

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Affirmations and Authorization

Affirmations are the signatures of the core project team members (max. three). Additionally, WWTF requires collecting the signatures of the authorized person(s) of all participating institutions to which the persons signing the "Authorization" are affiliated in case of funding.

Multiple copies may be used for signing. Scanned pages are accepted. **Please upload one PDF containing all the required signatures.**

A hard-copy print-out version of the propsal is not required.

In Case of Funding

The **Formal Funding Contract** will be 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 immediately but should **not start 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's Home Institution. The PI is then responsible for the distribution to the partner institutions (if applicable).

WWTF monitoring during the runtime of the projects includes annual online reports delivered by the PI to WWTF with an overview on the scientific results achieved, personnel employment and funding spent as well as project outputs. WWTF office also makes site-visits to learn about the project progress and working environment of the personnel employed. WWTF offers the possibility to adapt the work plan according to project needs.

After the project has ended a comprehensive final report must be submitted online. WWTF may organize an **ex-post evaluation** by international peers ("Evaluation Day") for all projects funded within a specific call.