

In accordance with its Funding Guidelines of 21st February 2006 (as last amended), the FWF has issued the following

Funding initiative
Top Citizen Science (TCS)
in cooperation with the OeAD and the Austrian Federal Ministry of
Science, Research and Economy (BMWFW)
Application guidelines¹

Eligible projects

In coordination with OeAD-GmbH and in consultation with the BMWFW, the Austrian Science Fund (FWF) has issued a call for grant proposals for Top Citizen Science Expansion Projects, with a total of €250,000 in grants available. Researchers can submit proposals for the expansion of FWF-funded projects² which are suitable in terms of content and methods and which are to be expanded to include "citizen science" components. Citizen science includes all activities of persons who do not primarily work in the field of research;³ in this context, it is understood as the active involvement of citizens and their knowledge, resources and commitment in scholarly research and the generation of new scholarly insights. Citizen science addresses all people regardless of age, gender or social background as well as people with highly specialised knowledge or specialist expertise ("knowledge communities"). In this context, young target groups are explicitly included.

Depending on the extent of their expertise and/or their commitment or resources contributed, citizens may be involved in the following categories:

- Crowdsourcing: Involvement of citizens in data collection or processing
- Distributed intelligence: Involvement of citizens in data analysis and interpretation
- Participatory science: Involvement of citizens in the advancement of methods, instruments and/or products
- Collaborative science: Involvement of citizens in problem definition, development of research questions and/or quality criteria

Citizens may be involved during various stages of planning and executing a research project; please note that 1) this involvement does not have to span all of the stages of a project as listed below, and 2) the type of involvement can change in the course of a project.

- Agenda (definition and identification of topics)
- Data creation (data generation/collection)
- Investigation (research work)
- Dissemination (science communication)

¹ **Please note** that all limits (e.g. on the number of pages, publications, enclosures) specified in these guidelines must be observed.

² Similarly, OeAD expansion projects can be submitted in conjunction with ongoing Sparkling Science projects, for which a total of €250,000 in funding is also available.

³ GEWISS (2016): Green Paper - Citizen Science Strategy 2020 for Germany [online] URL: http://www.buergerschaffenwissen.de/sites/default/files/assets/dokumente/gewiss_cs_strategy_englisch.pdf

Important: The involvement of citizens as mere "research subjects" or "data sources" (e.g. as subjects, survey respondents, etc.) without making use of their expertise is not a component of citizen science as defined for the purposes of this initiative.

The FWF-funded main projects that serve as a basis for these expansion projects ensure the quality of the research underlying the proposals submitted in this initiative. An assessment of the quality of the TCS expansion projects submitted with regard to the expected generation of additional research insights and additional effects (e.g. social impact and the like) will be carried out in the course of a review procedure handled jointly by the FWF and OeAD.

The purpose of the funding initiative is to promote the involvement of citizens in research projects. In this initiative, citizens should be encouraged to contribute to generating research results and insights on the basis of their expertise, curiosity and willingness to participate – without sacrificing the excellence of the research work. In the course of the expansion project, new opportunities for involvement should be offered on the Internet by the end of 2018 at the latest. The involvement of citizen scientists holds the potential to generate new research questions and to develop new approaches to research fields, to expand the competences of researchers and to accelerate innovation processes. The involvement of citizens in research projects does not have to generate added value in all of the categories listed as examples above, but it must have the potential to generate substantive additional research insights in each project. In addition, the funding initiative is designed to contribute to communicating research processes and the work of researchers to the general public, thus helping to dismantle existing barriers between science and society.

Who is eligible to apply?

The call is open to all principal investigators currently running an FWF-funded project⁴ which will not yet be completed at the time when decisions on TCS expansion projects are issued (end of project: 30th June 2018 or later). Applications for TCS expansion projects may only be submitted by individual natural persons. Applications from institutes, institutions or companies are not permitted.

The applicants and persons mentioned in the application must possess the relevant qualifications, sufficient available capacity and the infrastructure necessary to carry out the project submitted. All of the persons involved in the TCS expansion project must be duly mentioned in the application. The applicant is required to confirm that all persons involved in the TCS expansion project as well as those involved in the main project serving as a basis for the TCS expansion project, including the principal investigator, consent to the submission of the expansion project. Where international research projects carried out in various countries (e.g. projects under the D-A-CH Agreement) serve as the basis for the TCS expansion project, only the principal investigator in Austria is eligible to apply.

What types of funding can be requested?

In general, the FWF's fundamental rules apply to this funding initiative. For each underlying project, only one application can be submitted for a TCS expansion project, which must be described precisely. The maximum amount of funding is **€50,000 per application (including general project costs in the amount of 5%)**. Please note that exaggerated costs may represent a reason for rejecting an application, even one that is considered excellent in terms of content.

⁴ Projects within the Schrödinger programme, Stand-Alone Publications programme or the Science Communication Programme are not eligible as underlying research projects.

Funding may be requested for expansion project-specific costs which are related to the underlying research project. The principal investigator in the underlying project must be involved in the TCS activities. In the execution of the TCS expansion project, it is generally assumed that the researchers involved in the underlying project will contribute to the development and implementation of the TCS component(s). The infrastructure of the host research institution (e.g. for public relations and science communication, which universities and large research institutions generally have at their disposal) should be used in order to realise the TCS expansion project. Funding for support from external persons (e.g. for the purchase of specific services not available at the university or research institution) is permitted but requires adequate justification.

Projects submitted under this funding initiative are to be **no longer than two years in duration**. Projects may be extended as long as no additional costs are incurred.

The rule prohibiting double funding also applies to this call, meaning that projects submitted to the FWF must not be funded (or not completely) by another agency or within the framework of another FWF programme. Multiple applications with substantial identical parts must not be submitted in the same programme category or another category.

How should applications be submitted?

Applications are to be submitted to the FWF by **15th January 2018** (submission deadline; date of postmark).

The application documents must clearly indicate the objectives and target groups to be reached as well as the measures and costs involved in implementing the project, who is to be involved in implementation (including any cooperation partners) and the time frame in which the project is to be carried out. The project may be implemented in the form of a single activity or a series of activities, and it may also lead to the establishment of a lasting institution, such as special long-term TCS activities.

All parts of the free-format application, the abstracts and the enclosures must be submitted in 11pt type, line spacing 1.5. **All applications are to be prepared in English.**

A complete application must include the following parts:

- 1 One-page academic project abstract** in English, with a maximum length of 450 words (DIN A4) or, if the electronic application system is used, 3,000 characters (including spaces);
- 2 Two one-page abstracts** for the FWF's public relations (PR) work: one in German and one in English. These abstracts are also subject to the limit of 450 words (DIN A4 format) or 3,000 characters (including spaces) and should contain the following information: 1) project title, 2) content of research project, 3) hypotheses, 4) methods, including the target groups and ways for them to take part, and 5) an explanation indicating what is new and/or special about the project. The language of the PR abstracts should be comprehensible to non-specialist audiences and contain as few technical/specialist terms as possible;
- 3 Brief description** of the main project (i.e. the FWF-funding project serving as a basis for the TCS expansion project; no more than **two** pages):
Page 1: Web link to main project, project number, project content, objectives, duration, cooperation partners and funding amount
Page 2: Status of research work
- 4 Completed forms** (required: application form, form "cost breakdown"; optional: form for 'national research partners', form for international cooperation arrangements);

- 5 Attachment listing the names (and contact details) of all co-authors** who have made substantial scientific/scholarly contributions to the application, either in its conception or composition. A brief description of the nature of each contribution should be included. In cases where no co-authors are involved, it is necessary to indicate this explicitly in the attachment;
- 6 Free-form application** (DIN A4, printed on one side only, with consecutively numbered pages, unbound) composed of:
- Project description: **no more than 20 pages** including all tables and figures, with no more than **9,000 words** (including headings, footnotes, captions, etc.), but not including the table of contents;
 - Bibliography relevant to the project⁵ and a list of abbreviations (**no more than five pages**);
 - Academic curriculum vitae (CV; no more than three pages per person) and a list of publications for each person involved in the project; persons involved in the project include the principal investigator, research personnel⁶ (where already known) to be employed in the project and funded by the FWF, and any national project partners;
 - Both national and international cooperation arrangements essential to the project can be evidenced by means of collaboration letters (no more than three letters, each no longer than 1 DIN A4 page). These letters are to be inserted at the end of the proposal file.
- 7 Enclosures** (see Appendix I).

Applications can be submitted on paper (accompanied by a data medium) or online at <https://elane.fwf.ac.at>

a) Submission on paper with data medium:

One copy of the **complete** application (see above) is to be submitted on paper and in electronic form on a **data medium**.

The following files must be stored on the **data medium** (no protected files; signatures not required):

- **One-page academic project abstract** in English (format: Word for Windows, no formulas or special characters);
- **Two one-page abstracts** for the FWF's PR activities, one in German and one in English, each in a separate file (format: Word for Windows, **no** formulas or special characters);
- **In one file** (format: PDF; do not use scanned files): completed application form, completed cost breakdown form, attachment listing all co-authors, free-format application including a project-related bibliography, academic CVs and publication lists for all persons to be involved in the project, plus any collaboration letters;
- **Enclosures** (see Appendix I), each in a separate file (PDF format).

The submission of a copy of the application on an electronic data medium serves to simplify and accelerate the review process. In the electronic versions of application documents, no signatures are required. Files must be named as specified below and their size must be kept as small as possible. The total size of all files submitted on the electronic data medium must not exceed 5 MB.

⁵ Reference lists must include the following information: All authors, complete titles, journal/publisher, year and page numbers. For publications with more than 20 authors, an "et al." reference can be used.

⁶ Where known project employees completed their medical studies in Austria, the corresponding CV must indicate the curriculum (*Studienplan*: N, O, Q, etc.) in which the degree was earned; see also the current version of "Personnel Costs and Salaries – Graduates of Medical Studies in Austria" at <http://www.fwf.ac.at/en/research-funding/personnel-costs/>

File naming requirements

1. Required files

- **Abstract_eng.docx** (= academic abstract in English)
- **PR_Abstract_deu.docx and PR_Abstract_eng.docx** (abstracts for public relations purposes in German and in English, each in a separate file)
- **Proposal.pdf**, consisting of: 1.) completed application form (including the National research partner[s] form, if necessary), 2.) Cost breakdown, 3.) Attachment listing all co-authors, 4.) Free-format application, including a project-relevant bibliography, and 5.) academic CVs and publication lists for all researchers involved in the project and any collaboration letters.

2. Enclosures (as necessary; see Appendix I. Section 6)

- **Annex_Offer.pdf** (offer for equipment with acquisition cost (including VAT) per item from €1,500 or higher, in one file)
- **Annex_Coop.pdf** (FWF form[s] for international cooperation arrangements, in one file)
- **Annex_Overview_Revision.pdf** (for resubmissions: overview of all changes made in the resubmitted application)
- **Annex_Revision.pdf** (for resubmissions: responses to the expert panel's suggestions in a separate file for each panel suggestion; Annex_Revision_A.pdf / Annex_Revision_B.pdf)
- **Annex_Reviewers.doc** (list of reviewers who should not be contacted)

b) Online submission (<https://elane.fwf.ac.at>)

In order to submit applications online, users are first required to register at the address shown above. All necessary forms are to be filled out online, and additional documents such as the free-format application, etc. can be uploaded as files; for additional information, see the instructions for the submission of electronic funding applications at the address shown above.

1. Required forms:

- Application form
- Cost breakdown
- Academic abstract in English
- Attachment listing all co-authors

2. Optional forms (to be filled out as necessary):

- National research partner form
- International cooperation form

3. Required file uploads

- **Proposal.pdf** (consisting of the free-form application including a project-related bibliography, academic CVs and publication lists of all researchers to be involved in the project, plus any collaboration letters)
- **PR_Abstract_deu.docx and PR_Abstract_eng.docx** (=project abstract for PR purposes in English and German, each in a separate Word file)

4. Optional file uploads (general annex)

- **Annex_Offer.pdf** (offer for equipment with acquisition cost per item from €1,500 including VAT or higher, in one file)
- **Annex_Overview_Revision.pdf** (for resubmissions: overview of all changes made in the resubmitted application)
- **Annex_Revision.pdf** for resubmissions: responses to the expert panel's suggestions in a separate file for each panel suggestion; Annex_Revision_A.pdf / Annex_Revision_B.pdf)
- **Annex_Reviewers.pdf** (list of reviewers who should not be contacted)

Once the application has been completed, a PDF cover sheet can be generated. This cover sheet must be signed, stamped and sent to the FWF by conventional mail. The application is not officially considered to be "submitted" until the FWF receives the signed/stamped cover sheet before the deadline (based on the date of the postmark). Alternatively, the signed/stamped cover sheet can be scanned in, signed using the applicant's qualified electronic signature⁷ (e.g. using an Austrian citizen's card [*Bürgerkarte*]) and sent to the FWF by e-mail (office@fwf.ac.at). Please note that a signed/stamped version of the cover sheet without a qualified electronic signature will **not** suffice.

All applications that are received by the FWF before the deadline and meet the application requirements in terms of content and form will undergo the review process.

Please note: Applications that are incomplete or do not meet the FWF's formal requirements (especially those regarding length and formatting) will be returned. Any problems identified in such applications are to be remedied by the applicant within **no more than ten calendar days** after delivery of the notification from the FWF. If the applicant fails to do so, his/her application will be rejected by the FWF Executive Board without review, meaning that it will not undergo further processing and cannot be resubmitted without substantial revisions. Please note that applications can no longer be changed once the submission deadline has passed. Any changes made in response to a list of problems identified by the FWF Office must be based solely on the items listed by the FWF.

Procedure

The following specific rules apply:

- Applications will be **reviewed** by a panel appointed jointly by the FWF and OeAD.
- This panel will include only established international experts in the field of citizen science. The panel will handle the selection of submitted proposals for funding. The applications submitted will undergo an open, competitive selection procedure; no quotas will apply (e.g. for specific disciplines, locations, etc.).
- The expert panel will serve in the capacity of an evaluation body that can issue approval suggestions with recommendations or conditions. Where an application is rejected, the panel will be required to classify the application using the FWF's standard reasons for rejection (C1-C5)⁸. In the case of a rejection, the panel may issue a recommendation (to the applicant) that the application should be resubmitted – in identical or revised form – in the next round of the call. In the case of a "C5" rejection, the panel may also rule that the application cannot be approved and should not be resubmitted in its current form.
- The **assessment criteria** for the approval of grants can be found in Annex II (Questions for the panel members).
- On the basis of the expert panel's suggestions/recommendations, the FWF Board will issue the official funding decisions. The applicants will be informed of the decisions in writing.

⁷ e.g. <http://www.digital.austria.gv.at/>

⁸ For a description of the FWF's standardised reasons for rejection, please refer to the [General Principles of the Decision Procedure](#).

The project description⁹ must address the following points:

1 Project content

- Brief description of the main project (i.e. the FWF project serving as a basis for the TCS expansion project; no more than two pages):
Page 1: Web link to main project, project number, project content, objectives, duration, cooperation partners and funding amount;
Page 2: Status of research work;
- Description of additional TCS expansion project:
 - Positioning of project in relation to state of the art in international research and CS activities;
 - Description of TCS expansion project objectives (and reason[s] for choosing the “citizen science” approach)¹⁰;
 - Additional value of TCS expansion project":
 - Compatibility with main project: To what extent is the TCS expansion project a meaningful expansion/complement to the main project?
 - What additional substantive research insights – which cannot be gained without the participation of citizens – will the expansion project generate?
- Methods, work plan and time schedule:
 - Description of methods in the TCS expansion project;
 - Description of the planned use of technologies (e.g. databases, apps, blogs, websites);
 - Work plan and time schedule (with links to main project schedule);

2 Information on interaction with citizens and planned handling of data

- Definition and selection of target groups addressed (number of citizens involved, target environments, etc.);¹¹
- Description of planned participation methods;
- Description of communication plan for the envisaged target groups (including support and feedback for citizens involved, etc.);
- What are potential benefits of the project for the citizens?
- How will the quality of the data be ensured? (e.g. training sessions, manuals, etc.);
- Data protection / privacy issues¹²;

3 Research team

- Please describe all persons involved in the implementation of the TCS expansion project and provide evidence of their academic and/or communications-related qualifications with regard to TCS (CVs, publication lists, information on any previous activities in citizen science, science communication, open innovation, science education and the like).
- Where applicable: Description of cooperation arrangements (national and international);
- Organisation chart of research team and envisaged target group(s);

⁹ Links in the project description or in enclosures will be disregarded if a login/password is required in order to access the content.

¹⁰ Literature and tools related to Top Citizen Science: e.g. at <https://www.zentrumfuercitizenscience.at/en/literature-videos-strategy-papers>

¹¹ Citizen Scientists must be informed about all important project details in the form of informed consent to be able to make a qualified decision about the project participation.

¹² Please note that the new EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) will apply as from May 25, 2018 and the new Austrian Data Protection Act will enter into force on this date. More information can be found at <https://www.digital.austria.gv.at/data-protection-act>.

4 Broader effects expected

- Dissemination of research results: planned publications (use of open access channels), events, web presence, media communications, etc.;
- Description of potential effects on other research disciplines and/or effects of the planned TCS activity on society (social impact, positive effects on public perception of science and research, etc.);

5 Financial aspects

Information on the research institution:

- Available personnel (not financed by the FWF; usually the principal investigator and national research partners);
- Available infrastructure;

Information on funds requested:

- Planned budget and information on the amount of the principal investigator's and research institution's own contributions.
- Where personnel costs are requested, the applicant is to provide information on the type of position(s) applied for, descriptions of duties, the extent and duration of employment in the project (see also "What types of funding can be requested?");

Brief and concise reasons are to be provided for the material costs requested (equipment, materials, travel and other costs). If equipment is requested, applicants must specify why this does not constitute part of the available infrastructure (see also Appendix I.3).

6 Ethical issues

Where ethical issues have to be considered in the proposed research project,¹³ all potential ethical, security-related or regulatory aspects of the proposed research project and the planned handling of those issues must be discussed in a separate paragraph. Applicants must also provide a brief explanation in cases where no ethical issues have to be taken into account.

Curricula vitae (CVs) and publication lists

For all researchers involved in the project (i.e. the principal investigator, known researchers on the project staff to be financed by the FWF, and any national research partners), the following information must be provided:

Research staff

Academic curriculum vitae (no more than three pages per person)

- Personal details, address and web site;
- Main areas of research;
- Description of academic career and positions held to date (with brief description of reasons for any career breaks);
- (where applicable) Highest academic prizes/recognition received (no more than five in each of the following categories: most important invitations to present at academic conferences; most important academic prizes/awards received; most important peer review activities, editorships and/or memberships in academic organisations);

¹³ For orientation purposes, applicants may wish to review the document '[Ethics for researchers](#)' published by the European Commission or '[The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity](#)'. In cases of uncertainty, researchers can also contact their more experienced colleagues or the person/department responsible for ethical issues at their respective research institution.

- (where applicable) Most important research projects funded in the past (no more than five);¹⁴
- (where applicable) Information on past activities in the field of citizen science in the last five years;
- (where applicable) Names and institutions of key international cooperation partners in the last five years.

Publication lists¹⁵

- List of all published or accepted scholarly publications (journals, monographs, anthologies, contributions to anthologies, proceedings, research data, etc.) in the **last five years**, broken down into a) peer-reviewed publications and b) non-peer-reviewed publications;
- Separate listing of the **ten most important scholarly publications** in the researcher's entire career to date;
- (where applicable) Evidence of past activities in the field of citizen science in the last five years;

Other personnel:

Curriculum vitae (no more than three pages per person)

- Personal details, address and web site;
- Main areas of activity;
- Description of professional career and positions held to date (with brief description of reasons for any career breaks);
- (where applicable) Highest prizes/recognition received (no more than five in each of the following categories: invitations to present at conferences; prizes/awards received; editorships and/or memberships in organisations);
- (where applicable) Past reference projects (no more than five);
- (where applicable) Information on past activities in the field of citizen science in the last five years.

¹⁴ Please indicate only those (peer-reviewed) research projects in which the applicant is/was the main person responsible for the project in terms of both planning and execution. For each project, please provide the following information: Project title, funding agency, project duration (from/to) and amount of funding granted.

¹⁵ Publication lists must include the following information: All authors, complete titles, journal, year and page numbers. For each publication, either the DOI address (Digital Object Identifier – see <http://www.doi.org/>) or another persistent identifier (see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Persistent_identifier) should be indicated; for publications with more than 20 authors, an "et al." reference can be used. In addition, the publications should be freely accessible in line with the [FWF's Open Access Policy](#). This requirement applies to all publications from ongoing or completed FWF projects.

APPENDIX I: Explanations and definitions: Top Citizen Science funding initiative

1 Eligibility criteria

1.1 *Projects in the field of citizen science, based on ongoing FWF projects*

The FWF-funded main projects¹ that serve as a basis for these expansion projects ensure the quality of the research underlying the proposals submitted in this initiative.

1.2 *Double funding not permitted*

Any other grants relating to the subject of the application that have been requested from or awarded by the FWF or other funding agencies (e.g. the EU, OeNB, government ministries, etc.) must be mentioned (see application forms).

2 Eligible project-specific costs

2.1 *Personnel costs*

The application should include all persons, in addition to the staff already available, who will be required for the TCS expansion project and will work only to the agreed extent on the proposed project.

The available legal categories of employment are contracts of employment for full-time or part-time employees (DV) and reimbursement for work on an hourly basis (GB). In addition, a part-time contract of employment (50% contract of employment for student assistants) may be requested for researchers who have not yet completed a master's or diploma (Diplom) degree programme in the relevant subject area.

The current FWF salary scale ("[Personnel Costs and Salary Scale](#)" or, for graduates of medicine in Austria, "[Personnel Costs / Salaries for Graduates of Medical Studies in Austria](#)";) indicates the salaries that may be requested for research personnel. For other personnel, the rates listed below are to be applied on a pro rata basis. The FWF grants an annual increase to compensate for inflation; this adjustment is applied automatically to all those contracts of employment in TCS projects which are valid at the time the increase is effected.

The reasoning for the personnel requested should contain the following information:

- A description of the nature of each employee's work;
- Each employee's extent of employment (NB: Part-time contracts are permitted). Please note that the extent of employment for PhD student positions must not exceed 75% (i.e. 30 hours per week).

For each research position to be funded by the FWF where the person who will fill the position is known at the time of application, an academic curriculum vitae and a publication list must be submitted.

FWF employee responsible for legal questions:

Ms. Ulrike Varga (Tel.: +43-1-5056740-8841, e-mail: ulrike.varga@fwf.ac.at), in particular for questions relating to contracts of employment, independent contracts for work and services, marginal employment, and residence permits for project employees from outside the European Economic Area.

¹ Similarly, OeAD expansion projects can be submitted in conjunction with ongoing Sparkling Science projects.

2.2 Applications from independent researchers

TCS expansion projects can also be submitted in conjunction with main projects headed by independent researchers.

The FWF defines an “independent researcher” as a principal investigator whose salary is to be paid from the funding provided for the project. Such arrangements are possible in cases where the applicant’s main residence has been in Austria for at least three of the past ten years at the time when the application is submitted, and/or if the applicant has been working continuously as a researcher in Austria for at least two consecutive years preceding the submission of the application.

This restriction does not apply to

- a) researchers who have received grants under the Lise Meitner Mobility Programme and who submit applications for funding to continue their research in Austria following completion of their Meitner projects;
- b) researchers who can provide evidence at the time of application that they will be employed (at least 50% employment; not funded by the FWF) at an Austrian research institution for the planned duration of the project in question. In such cases, the application must be accompanied by a confirmation from the researcher’s employer.

All applicants are permitted to request funding (or partial funding) for their own salaries regardless of whether they have a fixed-term or indefinite contract of employment when the application is submitted. However, the FWF can only provide funding for researcher's salary under the following conditions at the time when the funds are actually used:

- a) The researcher must not have an existing contract of employment or any regular income exceeding the minimum living wage in Austria.
- b) If the researcher is in part-time employment, the amount of the researcher's salary will be adapted to reflect his/her actual extent of employment in the FWF project.

For researchers who are self-employed at the time when the funds are used for their salary, the personnel costs or salary amount to be requested must not exceed 50% of the full rate for independent researchers.

Income in addition to full-time employment (e.g. resulting from lecturer contracts) is allowed either up to 5 hours per week or up to the legally defined limit for marginal part-time employment (geringfügige Beschäftigung), provided that these additional occupations serve to further the principal investigator’s career.

The FWF must be informed immediately (even prior to a funding approval) of any changes in the extent of employment.

Salary levels to be requested by independent researchers (prorated in the case of part-time employment):

Independent researchers may request payment at the post-doctoral level (by means of a grant or research subsidy [Forschungssubvention]) irrespective of their academic qualifications (i.e. a completed higher education degree is not required). Independent researchers with a doctoral degree and at least two years’ post-doctoral research experience at the time when the application is submitted and those who have previously successfully led an FWF-funded project may request payment as senior post-docs. The following supporting documents must be provided (hard copies only): a copy of the PhD certificate and written confirmation from a third party that the applicant has at least two years' post-doctoral research experience. This confirmation is not required in cases where two years of post-doctoral study have been funded by the FWF; if this is the case, applicants are to mention such experience in a cover letter.

If an independent researcher is to work at a research institution that is subject to the 2002 Universities Act (UG2002) or that has concluded a corresponding agreement with the FWF, the salary to be requested is that for a post-doc or, where appropriate, a senior post-doc contract of employment. In all other cases, a grant for an independent researcher (research subsidy / *Forschungssubvention*) should be requested (see "[Standard personnel costs and salaries](#)" or "[Personnel costs / salaries for graduates of medical studies in Austria](#)").

In order to ensure that applications are submitted correctly, however, applicants should obtain information from the FWF (Gerit Oberraufner, +43-1-505-67-40-8606) gerit.oberraufner@fwf.ac.at.

2.3 Equipment costs

Equipment may only be requested if it is specifically required for the project concerned and if it does not constitute basic equipment (i.e. part of an institution's infrastructure). "Infrastructure" is considered to include equipment and components that should be available in a modern research institution in the relevant discipline in order to permit basic research at an internationally competitive level. Please note that if such components are requested nonetheless, the FWF will first examine carefully whether it is possible to perform leading-edge basic research in such an environment and how it was possible to undertake the preliminary experiments related to the project.

In this context, "equipment" includes scientific instruments, apparatus, system components, self-constructed devices (generally assembled from smaller pieces of equipment and materials) and other tangible fixed assets, as well as intangible assets such as licences, industrial property rights and licences derived from such rights, whose acquisition cost per item (including value-added tax [VAT]) exceeds the amount specified in Article 13 of the Austrian Income Tax Act 1988 (Einkommenssteuergesetz – EStG; Federal Law Gazette No. 400/1988), which is currently €400 (including VAT, unless the research institution is entitled to deduct VAT).

The applicant must enclose an offer from a supplier for each piece of equipment whose acquisition cost (including VAT) is €1,500 or higher with the funding application.

For items of equipment which are required specifically for the project and whose cost (including VAT) is €24,000 or higher, applicants must confirm with their signatures on the application form ("Affirmation of applicant") that they have verified that no comparable equipment that could be used or shared is available within a reasonable distance, and that the possibility of (co-)financing by third parties and any interest in shared use have been explored. Applicants must also confirm that they are aware of any possible costs that could arise as a result of use, service, maintenance and repairs.

Note: The principal investigator is to instruct his/her research institution to order the equipment and effect payment accordingly. In all equipment purchases, the research institution's procurement guidelines are to be observed. Each item of equipment is to be recorded in the institution's inventory and the acquisition costs are to be reimbursed in accordance with the relevant agreement between the research institution and the FWF.

FWF employees responsible for questions relating to equipment:
Contact person in the relevant [specialist department](#) at the FWF

2.4 Material costs

This category encompasses consumables and smaller pieces of equipment where the cost per item is below €400.00 including VAT.

The calculation of requested material costs should be justified with reference to the project schedule, work plan and experiment plan. Experience from previous projects should be taken

into account.

2.5 Travel costs

Funding may be requested for project-specific travel and accommodation, field work, expeditions, etc. Applicants are to provide a detailed travel (cost) plan broken down by project participant. This plan must indicate when (in which year of the project), where, for what purpose and for how long a specific project staff member (or members) will be travelling.

Travel expenses for researchers from other Austrian and foreign institutions can only be granted in exceptional cases and require detailed justification.

The calculation of travel and accommodation costs should be based on the federal regulations governing travel costs (RGV). The current RGV rates applicable to travel in Austria and abroad are provided in the following document:

www.fwf.ac.at/fileadmin/files/Dokumente/Downloads/bgbl.pdf.

For longer stays, a transparent and appropriate budget should be prepared; in general, this budget will be lower than the costs calculated on the basis of RGV rates.

Funding for the presentation of project results at international conferences should not be requested; the costs associated with attending such conferences should be covered by the "General costs" item (see 2.2.7).

2.6 Other costs

- Independent contracts for work and services (costs for performance of clearly defined and limited tasks assigned to individuals, provided that such arrangements are justified and economical).
- Costs that cannot be included under personnel, equipment, materials or travel costs, for example:
 - Coverage of costs for the use of research facilities, e.g. costs incurred due to the project-specific use of available equipment (project-specific "equipment time") or large research facilities; in any case, offers from potential suppliers must be submitted. Where the costs exceed EUR 10,000 (not including VAT) over the entire term of the project, each offer must be accompanied by the corresponding calculation basis for costs from the research institution involved in the project. This calculation must include information on the nature and scope of the services for which project-specific costs are incurred (according to internal charging procedures, e.g. based on usage days or hours, or based on the number and type of measurements/analyses performed, etc.) as well as a confirmation indicating that the offer does not include any infrastructure-related costs such as equipment depreciation, supplementary charges for overhead, costs of research premises, etc.;
 - Costs for laboratory animals required by and used in the project;
 - Costs for project-specific work carried out outside the applicant's research institution (e.g. for analysis work performed elsewhere, for interviews, for sample collection, for preparation of thin slices etc.). Offers from potential suppliers are to be submitted to the FWF;
 - Costs for the disposal of hazardous waste;
 - Costs for fees paid to test persons;
- When planning project budgets, please observe the [FWF's Open Access Policy](#), including Section VI, "Open Research Data". In other words, it is necessary to allocate the necessary funds over the project's duration to ensure the preparation, archiving, open access and later

use of research data in repositories (depending on the research field).

2.7 General costs (see application forms: Cost breakdown)

This category includes the costs of conference travel, dissemination activities (web site), etc., as well as smaller, unforeseen costs necessary for the project, such as repairs, student assistance, etc.

General costs should be included in the application forms in the appropriate field and are to be calculated as 5% of the total other funding requested. No justification for general costs needs to be included in the written project description.

3 Ineligible costs

3.1 Infrastructure costs

This category includes all facilities that are required for the normal operations of the research institution (such as buildings, installations, communication facilities, scientific equipment considered part of infrastructure, etc.).

3.2 Contracts for work and services (independent work contracts) immediately after a contract of employment

The FWF's policies prohibit the conclusion of large-scale independent work contracts (i.e., exceeding the legally defined limit for marginal part-time employment [geringfügige Beschäftigung]) immediately after a contract of employment.

3.3 Dissemination activities

Funding for publication costs cannot be requested in FWF applications for research projects. However, the FWF does provide additional funding for [peer-reviewed publications](#) upon request up to three years after the end of an approved project.

4 Cooperation arrangements and national research partners

4.1 National and international cooperation arrangements:

All forms of research collaboration directly related to the project are considered to be cooperation arrangements. Such arrangements are expected to create added value for the project and must work to the advantage of all parties involved.

The FWF assumes that the costs arising from scholarly collaboration at each research institution will be borne by the respective cooperation partner.

In the course of such arrangements, funds can only be transferred to a cooperation partner (including partners abroad) in cases where they cover clearly defined and limited work assignments or services (as mentioned in Section 2.6) and where such assignments or services are directly necessary in order to carry out the Austrian project.

This rule does not apply to [cooperation arrangements with researchers and scientists from developing countries](#).

All cooperation arrangements (national and/or international) planned within the proposed TCS expansion project should be detailed in the free-format application. In the case of individual cooperation arrangements, it is necessary to specify the persons with whom project members will cooperate as well as the object of the planned cooperation arrangement(s), i.e. their specific contribution to the project. Each of the planned international cooperation arrangements on an individual basis (even within the framework of international programmes such as COST, EUREKA, or EU framework programmes) should be included with all relevant information in the

"International cooperation arrangements"² form.

Contact persons for international cooperation arrangements:

Beatrice LAVAL (Tel: 01/ 5056740, ext. 8703, E-Mail: beatrice.lawal@fwf.ac.at)

Dr. Christoph BÄRENREUTER (Tel: 01/ 5056740, ext. 8702, E-Mail: christoph.baerenreuter@fwf.ac.at)

Dr. Reinhard BELOCKY (Tel: 01/ 5056740, ext. 8701, E-Mail: reinhard.belocky@fwf.ac.at)

4.2 National research partner:

National research partners are persons who work at a different research institution and who will consume resources at that research institution in the form of personnel, equipment and/or other costs in the course of the project. These costs are settled between the research institution and the FWF and need not be invoiced to the project's principal investigator. For such partnerships, applicants are to fill out the "National research partners at other research institutions" form. The form must also be signed by the head of the research institution in question or by a person authorised to sign for the institution.

5 Forms

The structured part of the application consists of the application form, cost breakdown and supplementary forms.

All required forms must be completed in their entirety. In order for the application to be legally binding, the FWF requires a copy of the "Applicant's confirmation" and the "Confirmation of the applicant's research institution" and (where applicable) a copy of the "Confirmation of the national research partner(s)" and the "Confirmation of the national research partner's (partners') research institution" with the original signatures and, if required, an original stamp (seal).

5.1 Attachment naming all co-authors

All persons who have made substantial contributions to the application, either in its conception or during its writing, should be named. A brief description of the nature of each contribution should be included; where there are no co-authors, applicants should state this explicitly on the form.

6 Enclosures

The project description and the application forms (one original on paper and one on an electronic data medium) should be accompanied by the following enclosures, where applicable:

- The form for international cooperation arrangements assists the FWF in interpreting the application. This form should be completed as necessary and included with the enclosures;
- Bids/offers for requested equipment for each piece of equipment whose acquisition cost (including VAT) is €1,500 or higher (an offer from a supplier for each item requested, German language acceptable);
- Bids/offers for any relevant items requested under "Other costs";

6.1 Revision of rejected applications

- In cases where a project is revised and resubmitted after previous rejection by the FWF, the applicant must indicate that it is a resubmission (e.g. in a footnote) at the beginning of the free-form proposal.
- The applicant must enclose a statement commenting on the expert panel's suggestions and

² Only those international cooperation arrangements which are discussed in the free-format project description are to be indicated on the International cooperation arrangements form.

criticism, and a statement detailing the changes made on the basis of the panel's feedback. These statements will be forwarded to the expert panel.

In cases where no substantial changes are made in a revised and resubmitted application, the application may be rejected by the FWF Executive Board without review.

Please note that the FWF will disregard any enclosures above and beyond those described.

Please also note that applicants confirm with their signatures on the application forms that the electronic and hard-copy versions of the application are identical.

7 Processing of applications

A **formal check** of the application is undertaken by the FWF Office. Incomplete applications or those which do not comply with the FWF's regulations or which contain formal errors (in particular those which exceed the permitted length) will be returned. If the rectifiable problems identified are not remedied within a reasonable period of time (ten calendar days), the FWF's Executive Board will reject the application without review.

The remainder of the procedure is described in Section 1 of the application guidelines (p. 6).

Proposal bans: Applications that are rejected for reason "C5" will be barred from resubmission for at least 12 months from the date of the decision and cannot be resubmitted during that period.

Applications that have been submitted three times and rejected under grounds for rejection C3 or C4 (= original application and corresponding new planning (see point 6.1)), are also blocked for 12 months (from the decision date); this does not affect applications rejected under C1 or C2.

8 Additional information

The FWF would like to draw attention to the fact that applicants are required to comply with all valid legal provisions (e.g. Austrian law relating to the equal treatment of disabled persons) and safety provisions, and to obtain any permits required for their research (e.g. from the Ethics Commission, the Commission for Animal Experimentation, the Department for the Protection of Ancient Monuments, or the corresponding authorities abroad).

The [Guidelines for Good Scientific Practice](#) published by the Austrian Agency for Research Integrity (OeAWI) must be observed in any case.

Where a breach of these standards is suspected, the case will be investigated by the ombudsperson of the research institution responsible or by the Austrian Agency for Research Integrity. The FWF reserves the right to suspend any procedures related to applications or ongoing projects partly or entirely until such investigations have been concluded.

9 General remarks

Applicants should be aware that in the event that funding is granted, the German and English project summaries for public relations (PR) purposes as well as the amount of funding provided and (subsequently) the summaries of the final project report will be published on the FWF's web site. The principal investigator should ensure that these summaries are written in such a way that they do not lead to restrictions on any possible patent applications that might arise from the project.

In the presentation and publication of all project results, grant recipients are to comply with the requirements regarding the acknowledgement of FWF funding and with the FWF's open access policy.

APPENDIX II: Notes and questions for the members of the Top Citizen Science (TCS) expert panel³

In all of its programmes, the FWF actively supports equal opportunities and equal treatment. The review of an application must not put the applicant at a disadvantage for non-scientific/non-scholarly reasons such as age, gender, etc. For example, the assessment of research proposals should not be based on the applicants' actual age, but instead on the individual circumstances relating to the duration of their scientific/scholarly careers and previous research achievements. The FWF endeavours to ensure equal opportunities for all applicants and thus takes into consideration any unavoidable delays in the scientific/scholarly careers of applicants, such as gaps in publication activity or less time spent abroad (e.g. due to longer qualification periods, time spent raising children, long-term illness etc.). When preparing your review, please keep in mind that your comments in Section 1 will be forwarded in their entirety to the applicant (without including your name).

It is the FWF's duty to ensure the best possible use of public-sector funds in the field of basic research. On the basis of the project application requirements defined by the FWF,² reviewers should be able to provide brief comments on the following aspects of each application.

1 Quality of the project

- Quality of the TCS expansion project:
 - How is the expansion project positioned in relation to state of the art in international research and CS activities?
 - Are the TCS expansion project's goals described clearly?
 - Quality of "Additional value of TCS expansion project":
 - Compatibility with main project: To what extent is the expansion project a meaningful expansion/complement to the main project?
 - New insights: What additional substantive research insights – which would not be possible without the participation of citizens – will the expansion project generate?
- Methods, work plan and time schedule
 - To what extent do you consider the methods envisaged for the TCS expansion project and the planned use of technologies to be appropriate?
 - Are the work plan and time schedule clearly defined and appropriate?

2 Quality aspects – Interactions with citizens and handling of data

- Are the definition, planned selection procedures, scope, qualifications and the like suitable for the target group addressed?
- What is your assessment of the communication plan for the envisaged target group as well as the planned methods of involvement?
- What is your assessment of the added value and personal benefit that citizens can derive from this project?
- Will the quality of data be ensured appropriately?
- How would you assess the applicant's consideration of data protection/privacy issues?

3 Quality of research team

³ Information on the FWF's corporate policy and the application guidelines for TCS expansion projects can be found on the FWF website (www.fwf.ac.at/de/ueber-den-fwf/leitbild/)

- How would you assess the composition and qualifications of the research team, in particular with regard to their experience with citizen science?
- How would you assess the quality of the existing and planned cooperation arrangements (national and international)?

4 Broader effects expected

- How would you assess the dissemination strategies described?
- What potential effects can the planned TCS activity be expected to have on other research disciplines and/or social areas (social impact, positive effects on public perception of science and research, etc.)?

5 Financial aspects⁴

- Are the personnel, material and other costs appropriate? Can you suggest any reductions that would not endanger the success of the project?
- Are the contributions of the principal investigator and the participating research institution(s) (infrastructure) appropriate?
- Where necessary: Suggestions for improvement (i.e. higher efficiency in terms of costs and benefits) with regard to the equipment requested.⁵

6 Ethical Issues

- Are there ethical issues that would need to be considered? Are those issues handled adequately?

7 Suggestions

- What could (or should) be done to increase the project's chances of success?

⁴ "General project costs," i.e. 5% of the other costs requested, are awarded automatically and do not need to be justified or commented on by reviewers.

⁵ Please note that the FWF does not fund basic infrastructure. Nevertheless, we would be very grateful for your opinion on the importance of such infrastructure components for the execution of the project.