ESS26 - Resilience and Crises

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ESS26 - Resilience and Crises / Key Facts

Scope of the Call in a Nutshell

This call invites researchers to submit proposals for exploratory, interdisciplinary research projects that advance the conceptualization of resilience in relation to selected crises—primarily with regard to their societal dimensions. The project must be led by a social scientist. Projects should initiate structured collaboration with other scientific disciplines and with relevant practitioner communities, and employ methodological approaches capable of anticipating potential future crises.

> This call is part of a **two-phase funding activity**. Projects funded in phase one will be invited to submit a further project proposal for larger projects once the exploratory projects are concluded (see outlook at the end of this document). The call for phase two is expected in early 2028 once all projects of phase one have finished.

Who can apply?

- An interdisciplinary team of 2-3 researchers led by a social scientist as PI & Coordinator (PI&C).
- The PI&C must be based at a university or research institute in Vienna.
- Co-PIs may be based outside of Vienna (funding limited to 20% of total budget).
- Co-PIs with an affiliation to an institution in Lower Austria may apply for up to 49% of the overall budget (Joint Project).

Project Duration

12-18 months

Funding

- Call budget: € 2 million.
- Project budget: € 50,000 to € 100,000.
- Personnel and non-personnel costs may be claimed.
- Maximum 50% non-personnel costs.
- Up to 20% overhead costs may be claimed.

Timeline

- Proposal deadline: June 17, 2026, 2pm CET
- Funding decision: 17.11.2026
- Project start: January 2027.

Process

- One-stage selection process
- Selection by an international jury (no external review process)
- Application via WWTF Funding Portal

Matchmaking Platform

The Matchmaking Event took place on March 23, 2026. For the remainder of the call until the submission deadline, the Matchmaking platform is available to find potential project collaborators:

Please go to https://www.b2match.com/e/project-call-resilience-crises, register with you profile.

Past Events

Call Info Session!

The Info Session provided an introduction to the call and the requirements for successfully submitting a proposal. WWTF will give a presentation, followed by a Q&A session.

Date: **April 24, 2026 , 10:00-12:00; online via Zoom**

Download the Presentation: Slides - ESS26_InfoSession.pdf

Foresight Workshops

As part of the preparations for the WWTF call for proposals ´Resilience & Crises WWTF, in cooperation with Fraunhofer ISI, is offering two practice-oriented workshops on foresight methods in Vienna. The aim is to give potential applicants a sound introduction to the key concepts, approaches, and methods of strategic foresight and to support you in developing future-oriented project ideas. Participants will learn to explore key influencing factors of future resilience, identify signal of change, analyze and reflect on uncertainties, develop alternative future scenarios and derive needs for action and ideas for solutions. A special focus is placed on participatory methods, stakeholder involvement, and the derivation of robust options for action and governance strategies. The workshops combine conceptual input with practical exercises and provide space for exchange on concrete needs and examples in the context of resilience research.

Two workshops with the same content will take place on the following days at the WWTF, Schlickgasse 3, Top 8 / 1090 Wien:

Wed, Apr 8, 2026, 13:00 - 16:00

Thu, Apr 9, 2026, 09:00 - 12:00

The workshop is intended to support researchers new to these methods. Participation is not mandatory in order to submit a proposal. Furthermore, the methods presented at the workshops are exemplary. Other methods may also be chosen for the proposal.

You can find the workshop materials by Simone Kimpeler of Fraunhofer ISI here: WWTF Foresight Workshop Kimpeler.pdf.

ESS26 - Resilience & Crises / Events

Call Info Session, April 24, 2026

The Info Session provided an introduction to the call and the requirements for successfully submitting a proposal. WWTF will give a presentation, followed by a Q&A session.

Date: **April 24, 2026 , 10:00-12:00; online via Zoom**

Download the Presentation: Slides - ESS26_InfoSession.pdf

PAST EVENT: Foresight and Anticipation Workshops on April 8 & 9, 2026

As part of the preparations for the WWTF call for proposals ´Resilience & Crises WWTF, in cooperation with Fraunhofer ISI, is offering two practice-oriented workshops on foresight methods in Vienna. The aim is to give potential applicants a sound introduction to the key concepts, approaches, and methods of strategic foresight and to support you in developing future-oriented project ideas. Participants will learn to explore key influencing factors of future resilience, identify signal of change, analyze and reflect on uncertainties, develop alternative future scenarios and derive needs for action and ideas for solutions. A special focus is placed on participatory methods, stakeholder involvement, and the derivation of robust options for action and governance strategies. The workshops combine conceptual input with practical exercises and provide space for exchange on concrete needs and examples in the context of resilience research.

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The workshop is intended to support researchers new to these methods. Participation is not mandatory in order to submit a proposal. Furthermore, the methods presented at the workshops are exemplary. Other methods may also be chosen for the proposal.

You can find the workshop materials by Simone Kimpeler of Fraunhofer ISI here: WWTF Foresight Workshop Kimpeler.pdf

PAST EVENT: Matchmaking and Networking Event on March 23, 2026

The Matchmaking Event took place on March 23 with about 60 participants in the Albert Schweizer Haus.

Presentation of WWTF at the event: Resilience Matchmaking Event_webpage.pdf

While the event is over, the platform is still available for matchmaking. Please go to https://www.b2match.com/e/project-call-resilience-crises, register with you profile and find project partner.

ESS26 - Resilience and Crises / Call Specifications

This repository contains all the necessary information for the ESS26 - Resilience and Crises Project Call.

ESS26 - Resilience and Crises / Scope of the Call

Introduction and general scope of the call

Societies are entering an era of increasing uncertainty where new crises emerge and familiar ones return in transformed, and probably even more damaging ways. There can be no return to the “good old times”: the past cannot be restored, nor the present preserved in its entirety. Yet many civilizational and democratic achievements remain worth safeguarding, even as crises demand new societal approaches and innovative solutions. In this context, resilience is not a fixed condition but an active practice—one that must be deliberately cultivated, continuously exercised, and critically refined. Social science research plays a crucial role in understanding these transformations and generating the knowledge, tools, and networks needed to strengthen societies’ capacity to respond, adapt, and thrive amidst uncertainty.
The objective of this call is to support exploratory, interdisciplinary research projects, led by social scientists, that advance the conceptualization of resilience in relation to selected crises—primarily with regard to their societal dimensions. Projects should initiate structured collaboration with other scientific disciplines and relevant practitioner communities, and employ methodological approaches capable of anticipating potential future crisis events.

This call is part of a two-phase funding activity. Projects funded in phase one will be invited to submit a further project proposal for larger projects once the exploratory projects are concluded.

Key Requirements

- The project’s Principal Investigator & Coordinator should come from the **social sciences** in a wide sense, as demonstrated by their scientific track record.
- Projects should address a crisis or a limited set of crises where strengthening societal resilience is crucial, and where the second phase of funding can be used to develop actionable and practical solutions with real-world impacts.
- The first funding phase's focus is on networking with other researchers and real-world practitioners, capacity building in terms of existing knowledge about crises and resilience phenomena as well as methodological approaches towards the chosen topic.
- With a view to the second funding phase, the crisis or crises should be selected in such a way that addressing them critically depends on the **generation of new scientific knowledge**, thereby ensuring that the project also results in scientific publications and academic theses.

- The chosen crisis/crises should be suitable for **collaboration with partners from other disciplines** and, in the second funding phase, also with **practitioner communities**.
  - Collaboration between at least two scientific disciplines is required to ensure an interdisciplinary approach.
- Projects should clearly demonstrate how they will engage with the societal context of their chosen crisis/crises and – as an outcome of the project – establish meaningful collaborations/networks with practitioner communities.
- Proposed projects should outline how they plan to **anticipate potential future crisis scenarios**. A wide range of anticipatory methodologies and approaches are welcome.

Main aims of the call (including funding phase two)

- **Advance the scientific and conceptual understanding of societal resilience** in the context of selected crises and beyond (relevant in particular for phase one).
- Develop and **strengthen social science-driven methodological capacities to anticipate** and analyze potential future crisis scenarios using diverse and innovative approaches (relevant for phase one & two).
- **Establishing networks with practitioners** to support strong and sustainable partnerships between researchers and societal actors to co-produce actionable knowledge and test solutions that enhance resilience in real-world contexts (building the networks is relevant during phase one funding and will be the main criteria for funding in phase two).
- **Generate new scientific knowledge** that contributes to publications, academic theses, and the broader social sciences community (relevant in particular for phase two).
- Lay the **groundwork for actionable solutions** informed by research outcomes based on interdisciplinary collaboration and involvement of practitioner communities. Address crises in a way that strengthens societal capacity to respond, adapt, and thrive amidst uncertainty (relevant in particular for phase two).

ESS26 - Resilience and Crises / Outlook for funding phase two

> Please consider the following aspects that will be crucial in funding phase two when writing the proposal for funding phase one.

Applicants of this call are encouraged to take into account the main requirements for the second funding phase from the outset. In the first funding phase, up to 20 projects will be supported. These projects will then be invited to submit a proposal for continued funding, a selected sample will go into the second phase.

- Funding for the second phase will cover a total project budget of up to €600,000–700,000 for a maximum duration of four years and thus providing resources to employ PreDocs.
- The involvement of relevant practitioners already in the application of funding phase two will be mandatory. Considerations from practical contexts should shape the proposed work program.
- Interdisciplinary collaboration must continue and may be further expanded.
- Projects funded in phase one may form a consortia for the application in funding phase two.
- Generating new empirical evidence and advancing scientific knowledge will be central in the second funding phase, ensuring that the project also results in scientific publications and academic theses.

ESS26 - Resilience and Crises / Structure of the Call

This call follows a one-stage selection process. Please note that there will be a another application process for funding phase two.

- **Proposals**: Applicants provide a description of the project’s background, objectives and methodology, along with a budget overview.

Proposal deadline: June 17, 2026, 2pm CET.

ESS26 - Resilience and Crises / Submission

> Applications must be submitted via the WWTF Funding Portal. All application information will be processed via this system.

- All core team members, i.e., coordinating PI (PI&C) and co-PIs, may access and edit the proposal. **Only the PI&C can submit the proposal.**
- The structure of the proposal and steps for completing the application in the WWTF Funding Portal are described in more detail in the Submission Guideline. There are some specifics to this call which can be found here.
- **Signatures of the authorized signatory at participating institutions** ("authorizations") are required in the application process for all partner institutions. Please contact your institution's research service in advance and inform yourself about your institute's internal processes and timelines.
- Applications must be written in **English**. Submission in other languages will be formally rejected.

ESS26 - Resilience and Crises / Eligibility and roles of applicants

The general eligibility of applicants is specified in the WWTF Funding Guideline *(in German only)*.

A project's **core team** may include **up to three Principal Investigators (PIs).** This includes a PI&C and up to two co-PIs.

- Core team members may share equal management and scientific roles in the project.
- The core team must have an excellent scientific track record that demonstrates the ability to conduct the proposed research project.
- WWTF especially encourages young and female scientists to apply as PI.
- **Each core team member must submit a CV**, which will form part of the evaluation.

> A researcher may appear as a core team member (i.e., PI&C, co-PI) **in a maximum of two proposals** in this call. In case of three or more proposals with the same PI, WWTF will accept the first two proposals submitted. Involvement in other past / ongoing / granted WWTF projects does not impact upon eligibility to apply in this call.

One PI must be designated as **PI&C** (PI and coordinator).

- For legal and administrative reasons (funding contract, reporting), WWTF requires a PI&C to be named. The PI&C will be the contact person for WWTF regarding all aspects of the project.
- The PI&C must have an affiliation at a Viennese research institution, which will serve as a legal contract partner. This also applies to researchers moving to Vienna, who must have a Viennese affiliation in case of funding.
- The PI&C should be an expert in an area relevant to the topic of the proposal. The PI&C must have an excellent scientific track record in the social sciences and a proven capability to manage projects.

Up to two **co-PIs** may also be named in the core team.

- WWTF recognizes that co-PIs may have equally significant scientific roles in the project. However, the PI&C will be regarded as the main contact person for the project.
- Co-PIs may be based in Vienna, Lower Austria or elsewhere (in Austria or internationally) in fulfilment of the requirements of regular WWTF projects or Joint Projects (see below).
- Please note that the **research team must be interdisciplinary,** which can also encompass two distinct fields from the social sciences. Please note that the two different fields should each provide distinct insights into the chosen topic.

Additional **project partners and collaborators** are permitted in the research team.

- Non-academic collaboration partners (e.g., NGOs, public authorities) may be part of the research team. However, the core team members and majority of additional team members in the proposal should have an academic background.
- Industry partners are not eligible for funding, but may partake with in-kind or financial contribution.

Research partners outside Vienna:

- For regular WWTF projects, project partners outside of Vienna may receive up to 20% (i.e., <20%) the total requested funding.
- This call operates under the "Joint Projects" agreement with the Province of Lower Austria .

ESS26 - Resilience and Crises / Joint Projects with partners in Lower Austria

> WWTF welcomes **Joint Project (JP) applications** between Viennese and Lower Austrian universities and research institutions in this call.

The aims of this initiative are to promote research cooperation between Lower Austria and Vienna on equal terms and to strengthen cooperation of research institutions in the Vienna region.

- The PI&C must be affiliated to a research institution in Vienna.
- At least one co-PI must be affiliated to a research institution in Lower Austria.
- The share of the overall funding allocated to research institutions in Lower Austria must be >20% and <50%. In case that the Lower Austrian share is ≤20%, the project is considered as a regular WWTF project.
- The Lower Austrian share is financed by the Province of Lower Austria. Hence, the Lower Austrian project partner must comply with the Lower Austrian Culture Promotion Act 1996 and the directives issued on the basis thereof. Further details will be provided in the funding contract.
- Partners outside Vienna or Lower Austria are also possible and may request up to 20% (i.e., <20%) of the total budget. However, the share of the budget allocated to partner(s) in Vienna must be at least 50% (i.e., ≥50%).
- Regional branches of Viennese Institutions (e.g., BOKU, VetMed, AIT) located in Lower Austria are considered as Vienna-based in the context of WWTF funding activities.

ESS26 - Resilience and Crises / Structure of the proposal

The content and structure of the proposal are defined and specified in the Submission Guideline as well as directly in the WWTF Funding Portal.

> We encourage you to create a proposal in the Funding Portal to see the details of the proposal. By creating a proposal, you do not enter into any obligations toward WWTF. Incomplete and non-submitted proposals will be deleted after the call deadline.

For the proposal structure, please see "Details of Chapters".

ESS26 - Resilience and Crises / Evaluation criteria

The following criteria are used in the evaluation.

Main evaluation criteria

- **Scope**: Is the project within the scope of the call as described in this document?

> Projects that do not meet the key requirements regarding scope will be rejected by the jury, regardless of scientific quality.

The key criteria in the evaluation of proposals are **scientific excellence of the project and applicants** and **interdisciplinarity**:

- **Innovative character** of the proposed research project:
  - Does the proposed research advance the scientific and **conceptual understanding of societal resilience** in the context of selected crises and beyond?
  - To what extent does the proposed project develop and strengthen social science–driven methodological capacities to anticipate and systematically analyse **potential future crisis scenarios**, including through the use of diverse and innovative research approaches?
- **Scientific excellence and academic potential of the applicant(s)**: Do the applicants demonstrate the expertise and potential to conduct the proposed research? Please note that scientific track record is measured according to academic age.
  - Does the PI&C have an excellent scientific track record in the area of social sciences?
- **Team composition and interdisciplinary collaboration**: Teams should include an appropriate mix of expertise, bringing together social sciences with other disciplines (including distinct fields within the social sciences). A clear description of the roles of the individual partners and a clear project management plan must be presented. This should demonstrate how the involved researchers and their disciplinary backgrounds will contribute to critical stages of developing and executing the project, and how communication will be fostered throughout the project lifetime.
- The extent to which the proposed project **addresses a societally significant crisis/crises** and demonstrates **clear potential to generate actionable knowledge**, practical solutions, and sustainable collaborations with practitioner communities that

strengthen societal resilience beyond academia for funding phase two.

Further evaluation criteria

- **Feasibility:** Can the project realize its goals given the competences of the research team, the methods suggested, the timeframe, resources, and budget?
- **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.
- **Open Science:** does the Proposal adhere to the principles of open science?

Other aspects:

- **Career breaks** such as for parental leave, care duties and longer illnesses will be taken into account in the evaluation of the proposals. Please indicate the time periods in the applicants' CV to allow them to be considered.

> Please note that the proposal will be evaluated by a jury panel, who will be asked to act as generalists when evaluating proposals. The proposal is intended for a jury panel with expertise covering a range of topics in the field of the social sciences. There will also be some jury members with a non-academic background (in order to assess the societal relevance and impact) as well as national jury members (in order to assess the relevance for the national context).

ESS26 - Resilience and Crises / Eligible costs

> All costs that are directly attributable to the project and are regarded as commonly required in the respective scientific fields are eligible for funding. Please also consider your organization’s internal guidelines for eligible expenses/costs.

Personnel costs

WWTF is dedicated to funding researchers. Hence, the larger share of the project’s budget should be allocated to personnel costs for researchers working on the project.

- 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 / non-university research institutions. For staff employed at institutions without a collective agreement, the minimum wage should adhere to the standards of the Austrian Science Fund (FWF salary scheme).
- Salaries higher than those stipulated in the collective agreement are possible, subject to the agreement from the host institution and justification based on qualifications of the researcher.
- Due to projected inflation rates, the budget calculation for salaries in the Funding Portal automatically includes an increase of 3.5% p.a. for the duration of the project (in the full proposal online form).
- 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 apply in cases where senior staff must acquire third party funding for co-financing their own position (e.g., non-university research institutions

and Universities of Applied Sciences). In these cases, permanently employed senior staff may claim up to 20% of their annual salary from WWTF.
- Personnel costs for non-academic partners such as NGOs can only be claimed to a limited extent. Personnel costs for partners in public authorities cannot be claimed.

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 these should be covered by the category “overhead costs”. The following categories of non-personnel costs are eligible for funding:

- **Equipment:** Smaller equipment can be purchased with funds from the grant. This includes devices up to € 1,500 each, as well as software specific to the projects. General office software is not eligible for funding. Funding by WWTF in project calls 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 are permitted. 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 science), etc. are allowed. This also includes costs for archiving research data in open repositories. Please also consider WWTF's Open Science Policy.
- **Workshop/conferences**: Costs for organizing events, workshops, and conferences as well as for hosting invited speakers are eligible. Other costs: Third-party costs, namely, for external collaboration, consulting, studies, and software development may be funded to a limited extent. In general, individuals should be predominantly funded through employment contracts at the participating institutions and not through other types of employment. Under special conditions, costs for childcare and/or career coaching for female WWTF-funded personnel may be requested to a small degree.

> Non-personnel costs should not exceed 50% of the overall budget.

Indirect costs (overheads)

> WWTF pays a maximum of 20% overhead.

Overhead is calculated as a percentage of the direct costs of the project (i.e., personnel + non-personnel costs). Please note that WWTF offers the maximum 20% overhead lump sum to compensate for all administration costs. This means that flat fees for payroll or project accounting

are not eligible. The total funding volume is calculated as direct plus indirect costs.

Applicants are required to comply with the overhead regulations of the involved institutions.

Inkinds

> In this call, inkind contributions are not mandatory.

> Please consider WWTF's Recognition of Costs in Funding Guidelines (in German only. Please use your preferable translation program to translate the guidelines into English).

ESS26 - Resilience and Crises / Gender aspects in the application phase

> WWTF’s Gender Strategy and Gender Equality Plan must be considered throughout the application. Please regard WWTF's guidelines and instructions, in particular the chapter regarding the proposal phase.

ESS26 - Resilience and Crises / Guidelines for good scientific practice and ethics (incl. AI use in proposal writing)

Good scientific practice

Compliance with the **rules for good scientific practice,** including the observance of ethical aspects in research, is mandatory. This pertains to the application process and, in case of funding, the research work.

- WWTF is member of the Austrian Agency for Research Integrity (OeAWI) and thus committed to their standards for good scientific practice. Hence, applicants must comply to OeAWI standards
- In case of suspected scientific misconduct, WWTF will employ the ombudsperson at the applicant's institution or request OeAWI to investigate the case.
- Based on the outcome of investigations by the ombudsperson or OeAWI, WWTF reserves the right to exclude the applicants and the application from the involved and future calls.

Use of AI in Proposal Writing

WWTF recognizes that the use of genAI tools is pervasive and can facilitate proposal writing, for example in relation to improving written language. However, substantial use of genAI must be declared as such for the sake of transparency.

> "Substantial use" is defined in line with the European Commission's definition: "[…] using generative AI as a basic author support tool is not a substantial use. However, interpreting data analysis, carrying out a literature review, identifying research gaps, formulating research aims, developing hypotheses, etc. could have a substantial impact." (EC 2024:

Living Guidelines on the responsible use of generative AI in research.)

This mainly concerns critical parts of scientific relevance, such as hypothesis formulation and the scientific project plan. Applicants will be required to provide statements on the use of generative AIs at both the short and full proposal stages. WWTF emphasizes the importance of human responsibility for the content submitted at all stages of the application process.

In review and evaluation processes WWTF does not allow AI to be used for the actual formation of judgments and decision-making.

Ethical aspects

Project proposals may include **ethical aspects** that require the approval from an ethics committee/institutional review board. Please consider WWTF's requirements regarding ethical aspects at the different stages of the call and, if applicable, upon the selection of a project for funding.

- In the proposal, applicants provide a brief statement regarding the ethical aspects of the project. Applicants must indicate whether a formal ethical approval is required for the proposed work.

When in doubt, WWTF may require a verdict of an ethics committee even if the projects has identified no potential ethical issues regarding their proposed work.

- If available, the ethical approval (final or preliminary) or confirmation of submission of an ethical approval should be submitted. If an ethical approval for the proposed work has yet not been granted, applicants must provide a timeline and an explanation of the feasibility of obtaining the necessary ethical approvals. In the latter case, applicants commit themselves to obtaining the required permits to commence the project in a timely manner, should it be selected for funding.
- Upon selection for funding, submission of the final ethical approvals to WWTF is a prerequisite for the funding contract. As projects must start no later than January 2027, grantees must ensure that ethical approvals are submitted to WWTF in time for the funding contract to be concluded.

Please note that the feasibility of obtaining the required ethical approval will be considered during the evaluation of the proposal. Insufficient demonstration of the ability to obtain ethical approvals within a timely manner may result in the project being excluded by the jury panel.

Please note the following requirements regarding **ethical approvals** for WWTF-funded projects.

- The approval by the ethics committee should be specific for the planned WWTF project. Therefore, the title of the project should be the same as on the approval (minor deviations are possible). If the title of the approved research differs significantly from the proposed project, a statement must be provided (in the Funding Portal), confirming that the approval will cover the planned research.
- If the main applicant for the ethical approval is not a core team member (i.e., PI&C or co-PI) of the WWTF proposal, a clear statement must be included in the proposal, in which a core team member confirms that he/she is authorized to conduct the planned research within this ethical approval.
- If the planned research is covered by an existing approval, the applicants must submit the extension of the approval (“Verlängerung der Gültigkeit des Votums”). The above also applies for extensions.

> Non-compliance will result in the rejection of the proposal on formal grounds.

ESS26 - Resilience and Crises / Open Science

> WWTF requires compliance with its Open Science Policy. This document outlines the rights, roles and responsibilities of WWTF, researchers, and research organizations.

ESS26 - Resilience and Crises / Selection and decision process

Applications must be submitted via the online Funding Portal in the specified timeframes. Submissions after the deadline will not be considered.

The core element of WWTF's decision-making processes is an **international jury** mandated to make a funding recommendation to the WWTF boards.

- Depending on the call (size, scope etc) the jury is comprised of 6-12 outstanding experts. As this call takes place within the instrument of "Ergänzende Instrumente" according to WWTF funding guidelines, some members of the jury will have an Austrian affiliation.
- Jury members are selected by WWTF according to their expertise in the call topic. They have no known conflict of interest prior to the submission deadline. For details, see section on evaluation below.
- The names of jury members will be published on the WWTF website after the WWTF Board of Directors finalize the formal funding decision.

Formal eligibility check by WWTF

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

- All required signatures from the appropriate persons are uploaded.
- All projects will be checked for plagiarism with software.
- Submission of the same or highly similar research ideas to other funding organizations, which must be explicitly declared in the proposal. Application for funding at other organizations is permitted and will not impact the evaluation. In case of funding, applicants will be asked by which organization they wish to be funded, as double funding is not permitted by WWTF.

Substantial deficiencies and missing sections in the application will lead to the exclusion of the application from further evaluation and rejection on formal grounds. The strict timeline of the call does not allow for proposals to be sent back to the applicants for amendments.

Evaluation of the proposals

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

Jury meeting

The jury will convene about 3 months after the submission deadline to select full proposals to recommend for funding. The jury may be extended by additional members in case supplementary expertise is needed to cover the topics of the proposals. At least two jury members are assigned to each proposal and act as rapporteurs for the proposals.

- The result is a recommendation for each project: “to be funded” or “not to be funded”.

Formal funding decision

The jury recommendation will be formally confirmed first by the WWTF Advisory Board and then approved by the WWTF Board of Directors.

- 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.

> Please note that WWTF does not allow the opportunity for rebuttals within this call to either recommendations by the jury panel or decisions by the WWTF Board of Directors.

ESS26 - Resilience and Crises / In case of a positive funding decision ...

Conclusion of a Funding Contract

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

- WWTF encourages projects to start as soon as possible after the formal funding decision by the WWTF Board of Directors. To facilitate a timely project start, WWTF will directly contact the PI&C shortly after the funding decision to commence the contracting process.
- The funding decision will be announced in October 2026. The formal start of the project may be **no later than January 2027**. Please note that WWTF does not require all team members of the funded project to begin by the project's start date.

> A timely and mostly simultaneous start of the projects is necessary so that all projects are roughly in the same project phase when the application period for funding phase two starts.

- The PI&C will be provided with the necessary documents for the contracts.
- The formal funding contract will be signed between WWTF and the host institution of the PI&C. In Joint Projects, the host institution of the co-PI in Lower Austria is an additional contract partner.
- For universities, this is a project according to §27 of the Universities Act 2002. The institution then authorizes the respective PI to sign for the full scientific and financial responsibility of the project.

Monitoring and Reporting of Funded Projects

Funded teams commit themselves 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 (in German only).

Please note that due to the short duration of the projects, there will only be one final report.

Community Building

WWTF is highly committed to establish a community around the topic of this call. To this end, several community building activities will be offered throughout the funding cycle. Funded teams will be invited to participate in these activities to foster collaborations between and beyond WWTF funded projects.

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ESS26 - Resilience and Crises / Details of Chapters

Chapter "Basic Information"

This chapter contains basic information about the proposal, including title, scientific disciplines involved, keywords, duration, and type of project (i.e., regular WWTF Project or Joint Project). Fill out fields as required.

Please note:

- **Scientific Disciplines:** Fields will be suggested as you type. WWTF uses the ÖFOS classification system of Statistik Austria. Please find the best match possible. Please note that WWTF uses these categories for statistical purposes only. It is not used for the assessment of individual projects. A maximum of 4 different scientific disciplines is possible.
- **Keywords:** These will help us allocate the proposals to jury members.
- **Duration:** Select a duration for the project (12-18 months).
- **Joint Project:** Please indicate if this proposal is a Joint Project, i.e. includes partners from Lower Austria with a higher share possible from the overall project budget. For details regarding team composition and budget distribution, please see here.

Chapter "Personnel and Institutions"

This chapter contains information about the main parties in the project. Please see here how to invite PIs to the project.

- **Co-PIs** can be added to the project. Please note the maximum of three PIs in the core team.
- **Additional partner institutions** beyond those of the core team members can be added under “Further Partner Institutions”. (The institutions of the PI&C and co-PIs are automatically added by the system.) Entering an additional institution provides the option of allocating budget to this institution in the “Budget” chapter. This may be important in case of collaboration with researchers at institutes other than those of the core team members.
- A maximum of **five different institutions** may be involved in the proposal. This includes the institutions of the PI&C and co-PI(s).

> Before proceeding to the Chapter "Budget", please make sure that all PIs and CoPIs have been invited (and that they filled our the Profile and Role) and that all additional partner institutions are added. The Budget tool of the online form needs this information to allocate the cost lines to institutions. If this step has not been completed, the system might miscalculate the budget.

Chapter "Project"

This chapter contains the main part of the scientific information regarding the project.

Lay Summary

- Please provide a description of your proposed research that is suitable for the general public. This will primarily be used by WWTF for communicating your work to non-experts for fundraising and public relations purposes.
- The summary may not exceed 2,000 characters.

Abstract

- It may include the following aspects: (i) wider research context & state of the art; (ii) novelty; (iii) theoretical considerations, hypotheses, research questions & objectives; (iv) methodological approaches and workplan; (v) relevance and expected outcome. The abstract should be written for the jury composed both of social scientists, other researchers with expertise regarding the call's main topics as well as non-academic experts on the topics of the call.
- The abstract may not exceed 2,000 characters.

Work Programme

- This part is the main scientific content of the proposal. Make sure that the main headings (see also template in the Funding Portal) are addressed in the document. The length of individual subchapters may be defined freely by the applicants, provided that the total length of the document does not exceed eight pages. Addressing sex and gender aspects throughout the application is a mandatory part of the proposal, which will be considered during evaluation.

The work programme comprises the following chapters:

1. Introduction and state-of-the-art

> This section should outline the scientific background and current state of the art relevant to the proposed research. Applicants are expected to clearly demonstrate how the proposed topic addresses both scientifically and societally relevant questions within the scope of the call.
> The proposal should explain the scientific importance of the chosen topic and articulate its relevance to societal challenges regarding resilience and crises. Applicants should justify the selection of the crisis or crises addressed, situating them within current scientific debates as

well as broader societal needs and policy contexts.
Applicants are also expected to position their previous and ongoing work within the existing state of the art and to explain how this prior expertise underpins and informs the proposed work programme, demonstrating both continuity and added value beyond current knowledge (Please note that this call does not require applicants to be experts in crises or resilience studies; however, they should have expertise in the domain to which the chosen crisis relates to).

2. Innovativeness and original contribution

This section should identify the key scientific challenges and gaps in the existing body of research relevant to the proposed topic. Applicants are expected to clearly articulate how the project addresses these challenges and advances beyond the current state of knowledge.
The proposal should specify in which respects the project is innovative and novel, in particular regarding capacity building. The expected contribution of the research to the field should be made explicit. Given the nature of the funding (max. 100,000 € for a short-term funding period), a huge step is not expected.
Applicants should also briefly describe the interdisciplinary approach adopted in the project and explain how the combination of diverse disciplinary perspectives and expertise within the research team contributes to the project's originality and innovative potential (see also subchapter 7).

3. Conceptual considerations

This section should present the key conceptual/theoretical frameworks guiding the proposed research. Applicants should explain how these frameworks inform the analysis of the selected crisis or crises and address the main themes of the call, such as resilience and uncertainty.
The proposal should also outline the conceptual/theoretical basis for the project's anticipatory aspects, including approaches such scenario building, and indicate how these support the analysis of future developments and uncertainties.

4. Research questions and objectives

This section should clearly and precisely define the research questions and objectives of the proposed project: Why are the selected crisis or crises suitable for the project? How will it be approached? Why are the chosen crisis or crises a suitable starting point for studying and strengthening societal resilience?
Furthermore, the proposal should explain how the research design enables the development of actionable, practice-oriented outcomes and how these are expected to generate tangible real-world impacts beyond academia (with a view on funding phase two).

5. Methodological approaches and workplan

Please provide a well-structured work plan (including work packages and key milestones). The work plan may also include a meaningful and self-explanatory visual representation.
Include a description of the methodological approaches you aim to employ, in particular with regard to anticipatory approaches as well as how you aim to reach practitioners and how you aim to create and build networks both within academia and with societal actors.

6. Expected outcomes and outlook for funding phase two

Please explain what you intend to achieve with the project. What would be the potential next steps in case your project will be selected for phase two of the funding?

7. Project team and interdisciplinary collaboration

Describe how the project team collectively, based on their individual expertise and the disciplinary backgrounds, is able to achieve the overall goals of the proposed project.
Describe the expertise and competences of the PI&C in the field of social sciences. Justify the disciplinary composition of the project team (in particular when both disciplines come from the social sciences).
How is interdisciplinary collaboration organised within the project? Please ensure that this section is consistent with the information you have provided in the "Roles" section ("Specific scientific competences for the project" and "Roles and responsibilities within the project") in the online forms of the funding portal.

8. References

The number of references is not limited. Please use a referencing style that is accepted by an interdisciplinary community.

Formal requirements

- The main headings in bold are mandatory. Please use subheadings as you see fit.
- Make sure that the layout facilitates readability of the proposal. You may use a different layout (e.g., font type), however be consistent and use a common font type (no narrow style) with good readability both online and printed. Font size should be 11 pt. Line spacing should be between 1.3 and 1.5. You may include figures, tables, etc. to improve the scientific presentation. Be careful with colored figures as the proposal might be printed out in b/w.
- Please do not add any headers or footers (such as page numbers, proposal number, title of proposal), since this information will be added automatically to the file upon upload of the PDF.
- You may use any text processors (MS Word, LaTeX, etc.)
- A final PDF of maximum 8 pages is permitted.

Ethical considerations

- Indicate if there is an ethical approval necessary as a formal requirement to conduct of your research project. Outline the potential ethical aspects of your proposed project. These may include, but are not restricted to human participants, the use personal data, but also the use of artificial intelligence. If no ethical aspects are identified, please also provide an explanation. Note that only providing a cursory statement (e.g., "no ethical aspects") will not be regarded as sufficient consideration of ethical aspects by the applicants. For more details, see here. (Max. 1,000 characters).

Use of generative AI

- Please describe if and how GenAI has been used in developing your research proposal. Please find further details here. (Max. 800 characters).

Chapter "Budget"

Please note the following guidelines for the budget:

- For personnel costs, an annual 3.5% p.a. increase in salary over the lifetime of the project has been pre-programmed. This is intended to assist with planning only, and actual salaries should be paid according to institutional or collective agreements. Please use baseline salaries according to the date you expect to start the project. (The project should start the latest January 2027.) Please contact your institutional research support services in this matter.
- Non-personnel costs should not exceed 50% of the total requested budget.
- Details about eligible costs can be accessed here.

Personnel costs

> Make sure that all institutions are added before in the "Personnel and Institutions" chapter. Otherwise the system cannot assign additional persons to institutions and thus the budget overview is not correctly displayed.

- Click “Additional person” to individually add all persons who will work on the project. Please provide their name or select “is N.N.” if the role is to be filled (e.g., PhD candidate, Post Doc). Indicate the affiliation and staff category of each person using the dropdown menu. If an affiliation is not listed, return to the section “Personnel and Institutions” and add the respective institution. Each person must be assigned to an institution for the system's calculations in the background.
- Specify if the person will be financed by WWTF or contribute on an in-kind basis, and indicate their yearly time commitment to the project for each year (full time equivalents). A mixture of WWTF and in-kind financing is permitted.
- For persons financed by WWTF, enter the annual salary that corresponds to 100% employment in the first year of the project (keep that in mind in particular for PhD candidates whose position is often calculated on a 0.75 basis). The total funding requested for each person will be automatically calculated.

Non-personnel costs

- Add rows to provide a concise overview of all non-personnel costs directly related to the project. Please select the institution and cost category from the dropdown menus. If an affiliation is not listed, return to the section “Personnel and Institutions” and add the respective institution.
- Costs for basic infrastructure (rent, telephone) are not permitted.
- Costs for larger equipment is also not permitted.

- WWTF strongly encourages open access publications. Costs for Article Processing Charges (APCs) may be requested.
- Costs for data management purposes (e.g., curation, storage) are eligible.

Budget per region

- Based on the information provided, the share of the budget allocated to the regions “Vienna” and “Other” will be shown for WWTF projects and to the regions “Vienna”, “Lower Austria” and “Other” for Joint Projects.
- For “regular” WWTF projects, at least 80% (i.e., ≥80%) of the requested funding must be allocated to the region “Vienna”. Up to 20% (i.e., <20%) may be allocated to other partner(s) (including partners in Lower Austria).
- For Joint Projects, the budget allocated to the region “Vienna” must be at least 51%. The share of the budget allocated to the region “Lower Austria” may range from 21% to 49%. Up to 20% may be allocated to any further partner(s) located in other regions (“Other”).

Cost overview

- Enter the overhead rate for each institution. WWTF permits a maximum of 20% overheads costs. Please consult each institutions’ research services to ensure compliance with all institutions’ internal regulations.
- The proportions of the budget allocated to personnel and non-personnel costs are also shown. Please note that, in this call, non-personnel costs should not exceed 50% of the total budget.
- The system will display an alert if the inserted amounts exceed the permitted funding distribution across regions or cost types.

Explanation of Cost Planning

- Max. 2,500 characters.
- Please provide an explanation of cost planning principles, also indicating access to resources that are already available.

Disclosure of other applications for funding

- Max. 750 characters.
- If you have applied for funding for this project (or parts thereof) at other organisations, please indicate this here. This will not impact the evaluation of this proposal.
- The WWTF policy on simultaneous submissions to other funding organisations does not allow double funding. If both of your proposals are funded, we will ask you to decide which funding you will accept.
- Double funding will be reviewed by the FWF. This means that the FWF will receive the list of projects and check whether a similar project has already been submitted to the FWF.

Chapter "Signatures"

- Please see general user guidelines.

ESS26 - Resilience and Crises / Support by WWTF office

WWTF aims to assist you in all matters regarding the submission process. If you do not find answers to your questions on these pages, please do not hesitate to contact us.

You can usually reach us during normal office hours.

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