

LS26 - Targeted Prevention

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LS26 Targeted Prevention / Key Facts

This call is open to research projects that have the potential to promote disease prevention and/or increase the number of healthy life years in a defined human population.

Call scope

Projects must identify a specific risk population, define a disease/health condition, and develop an actionable mechanism for intervention. Scientific innovation and its value in addressing an open research gap in prevention research must be clearly demonstrated. In addition, projects must outline a pathway to implementation that allows for the assessment of the feasibility and impact of the proposed work. Project teams must demonstrate scientific expertise in relevant research disciplines, as well as further expertise from relevant stakeholders. Budget may be allocated for non-academic stakeholders as appropriate.

Who can apply?

Projects are led by a "core research team" of up to three principal investigators (PIs). The core research team consists of:

- A coordinating PI (PI&C), who must be based at a university or research institute in Vienna
- Up to two co-PIs, who may be based anywhere globally (i.e., Vienna, Austria, internationally)
 - Co-PIs outside of Vienna may receive a maximum total of 20% of the total budget
 - Co-PIs affiliated to institutions in Lower Austria may receive a maximum total of 49% of the total budget in [Joint Projects](#)

Project duration

24-48 months

Funding

- Call budget: € 7.5 million
- Project budget: € 400,000 to € 750,000 (up to € 800,000 for Joint Projects)
- Personnel and non-personnel costs may be claimed
- Maximum 40% non-personnel costs
- Up to 20% overhead costs

Timeline

- Call opening: March 3rd, 2026
- Short Proposal deadline: May 5th, 2026, 2pm CET
- Full Proposal deadline: October 6th, 2026, 2pm CET
- Applicant response phase: between February 8th - 19th, 2027 (exact dates TBD)
- Expected funding decision: late March, 2027
- Project start: latest September, 2027

Process

- Two-stage selection process
- International jury
- International peer review
- Application via [WWTF Funding Portal](#)

Info event

- Online information session about the call: March 17th, 2026, 10am - 12pm CET
 - Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84627777408>
 - Webinar ID: 846 2777 7408

LS26 Targeted Prevention / Call Specifications

This repository contains key information for the LS26 Targeted Prevention project call

LS26 Targeted Prevention / Scope of the Call

The aim of this call is to enable innovative and impactful research that has the potential to promote disease prevention and/or increase the number of healthy life years in a defined human population. Projects should seek to improve a specific health condition or the prevention of a specific disease by developing targeted interventions for that population.

Key requirements

Please consider the following key requirements for all projects in this call:

- Projects must identify a specific **risk population** (e.g., genetic background, demographic/socioeconomic group), define a **disease or health condition** (e.g., cardiovascular, mental, infectious), and develop an actionable **mechanism for intervention** (e.g., pharmaceutical, lifestyle, social, policy-based).
- Projects must demonstrate **scientific innovation** (e.g., new biological mechanism, screening technology, method of engaging target population) and the **value** of this innovation in addressing an open research gap in prevention research.
- Projects must outline a **pathway to implementation** that allows for the assessment of the feasibility and impact of the proposed work (e.g., inclusion of consultations with target group, co-development frameworks, health economic considerations)
- Project teams should demonstrate **scientific expertise** from relevant research disciplines, as well as further expertise (e.g., on lived experience, implementation barriers, etc.) from **relevant stakeholders** (e.g., patient groups, advocates, practitioners, policymakers). Budget may be allocated for non-academic stakeholders as appropriate.

Proposals must fulfil all requirements to be considered within the scope of the call. Should any single requirement not be addressed, the proposal will be deemed out of scope and not further evaluated.

Further considerations

This call takes an inclusive approach to prevention, both with respect to the the health conditions to be addressed and the modalities of intervention. While "targeted prevention" shares thematic elements with biomedical/clinical and public health research, the focus of this call is the development of evidence-based preventative interventions that are innovative and impactful for a particular risk group. In addition to fulfilling all key requirements, please also consider the following:

- This call is open to research focusing on **diverse aspects of health and disease**, including physical, cognitive, mental, social well-being, etc.
- Research focusing on **primary or secondary prevention** and covering the entire lifespan is within the scope of this call.
- This call encourages research that considers various **intervention modalities**, including clinical, pharmaceutical, behavioural, environmental, social, and policy-based approaches.
- Research should go beyond improving understanding of the aetiology or epidemiology of diseases and encompass the **development and piloting of interventions** for their prevention.
- This call encourages projects that aim to develop interventions for populations that are **underrepresented, marginalised or disproportionately** affected by a health/disease condition. However, research focusing solely on health disparities (e.g. the social determinants of health) does not fulfil the requirements of this call.
- Projects should ensure appropriate **involvement of the risk populations** and relevant **data** from these populations. Applicants must consider ethical and legal requirements, the quality and quantity of data required for sufficiently powered studies, and the timeliness of acquiring data.
 - Based on recent experience, WWTF considers gaining access to data from health insurance institutions in Austria to be extremely difficult, even when an initial commitment to data access has been provided. Negotiations with these organisations regarding data access may exceed the project's timeframe.

Outside of scope

The following types of projects are deemed to be outside the scope of this call:

- Projects that focus solely on **data collection or establishing registries** without also involving research into improving health or disease prevention for the target population.
- Projects that aim solely to **evaluate** existing health promotion or disease prevention measures, and which do not develop and/or pilot improved interventions.
- **Health services research** (e.g., evaluating the effectiveness of health policies, identifying gaps in the healthcare system, or improving electronic health records systems) that does not focus on a defined population or include ways to improve health or disease prevention for that population.
- Projects focused on **general health literacy** or attitudes towards medical research (e.g., scepticism about science), which do not focus on a defined target population or specific interventions to improve health or disease prevention for that population.
- Purely **biomedical or preclinical research** (e.g., dissection of risk or protection factors) that do not extend to the development of an intervention strategy in a target population.
- Projects that primarily aim to develop **treatments** (e.g., curing, controlling or alleviating symptoms) or **tertiary prevention** interventions (e.g. reducing complications or facilitating rehabilitation) once a disease has been established.

LS26 Targeted Prevention / Structure of the Call

This call follows a two-stage selection process, consisting of a short proposal and full proposal phase.

- **Short proposals:** Applicants provide a short description of the project's background, objectives and methodology, along with a budget overview.

Short proposal deadline: May 5th, 2026, 2pm CET.

- **Full proposals:** Short proposals selected by the jury are invited to submit an extended full proposal that includes more detailed descriptions of the proposed work and the budget. Applicants will have the opportunity to respond in writing to the external reviews of the full proposal.
 - The decision regarding which short proposals will progress to the full proposal phase is expected in early July 2026.

Full proposal deadline: October 6th, 2026, 2pm CET.

Applicant response phase: between February 8th - 19th, 2027.

Applicants invited to submit a full proposal will be notified of the exact dates in late January 2027.

- The funding decision for the full proposals is expected in mid-March 2027.

LS26 Targeted Prevention / Roles of Applicants

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

A project's **core research team** may comprise **up to three Principal Investigators (PIs)**: one PI&C and up to two co-PIs.

All members of the core research team should have an academic background.

- Core team members may share equal management and scientific responsibilities in the project.
- The core team must demonstrate an excellent scientific track record and 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 or co-PI) **in a maximum of two proposals** in this call. If a PI is involved in three or more proposals, WWTF will only accept the first two proposals submitted. Participation in other past, ongoing or funded WWTF projects does not affect eligibility to apply for this call.

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

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

Up to two **co-PIs** may also be included 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](#).

Additional project partners and collaborators may be included in the research team and allocated budget. In the short proposal phase, only the names of the additional institutions are required. At the full proposal stage, the individual collaborators at these institutions can be added by name.

- Depending on their intended roles and contribution to the project, **non-academic stakeholders** should be integrated into the project as appropriate (e.g., inclusion as project partners, conducting joint workshops or consultations, etc.) . Up to 10% of the budget may be allocated to costs associated with non-academic stakeholders.
- 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 based outside of Vienna may receive up to 20% (i.e., <20%) the total requested funding.
- For Joint Projects, project partners in Lower Austria should receive between 20 - 49% of the total budget. Additional partners from outside Vienna and Lower Austria may receive up to 20% of the total budget.

LS26 Targeted Prevention / 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.

Please note the following conditions regarding team composition and budget allocation in Joint Projects:

- To incentivize the cooperation, the total maximum funding amount for a JP consortium is € 800,000 (i.e., an additional € 50,000 compared to the maximum for a regular WWTF project).
- 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%. If the Lower Austrian share is $\leq 20\%$, the project is considered a regular WWTF project and is not eligible for the higher maximum funding amount.
- 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 from outside Vienna and 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., $\geq 50\%$).
- In the context of WWTF funding activities, regional branches of Viennese institutions (e.g., BOKU, VetMed, AIT) located in Lower Austria are considered as Vienna-based.

Conversion between JPs and regular WWTF projects is not possible between the short and full proposal phases, nor at any later point.

LS26 Targeted Prevention / Structure of the Proposal

The content and structure of the proposal are defined and specified in the Submission Guidelines as well as directly in the [WWTF Funding Portal](#). We encourage you to create a proposal in the Funding Portal to view the details of the proposal. Creating a proposal does not create any obligations towards WWTF. Incomplete and unsubmitted proposals will be deleted after the deadline for submissions.

Applicants invited to submit a full proposal will be provided with an additional submission guidelines specifically for the second phase. An overview of the main parts of the short and full proposals is provided below:

Short Proposal	Full proposal
Scientific abstract	Lay summary and scientific abstract
Project description (about 3 pages): outline of the main scientific research idea and approaches, presented as text only (i.e. no figures permitted).	Project description (about 15 pages): elaboration of the research idea and approaches (mandatory template is provided, which allows for figures, tables, etc.)
Project core team: CVs and roles in the project (mandatory template is provided)	Project team and further collaboration partners: CVs of all core team members (mandatory template is provided) and roles in project of all team members
Budget overview by main categories	Detailed budget
Brief statement regarding ethical aspects	Ethical approval OR detailed description of ethical aspects, including feasibility and timeline for ethical approval
Signatures: from the authorizing persons at the institutions of the core team members	Signatures: from the authorizing persons at all participating institutions

Please note that the short proposal will be evaluated only by a jury panel acting as high-level generalists. In contrast, the full proposal will be evaluated by reviewers with specific expertise in the proposal's topics. Therefore, ensure that you provide an appropriate level of scientific detail at each stage, to enable the respective audience to evaluate the proposal.

LS26 Targeted Prevention / Eligible Costs

All costs that are directly attributable to the project and are regarded as commonly required in the respective research 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 majority of the project's budget should be allocated to personnel costs for researchers working on the project.

- Eligible forms of employment contracts include full-time, part-time and marginal employment contracts ("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 in accordance with the "Kollektivvertrag" (collective agreement) of the Austrian universities or 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 Funding Portal's budget calculation of salaries automatically includes a 3.5% p.a. increase for the duration of the project (full proposal budget only).
- Applications for personnel costs must fall under one of the following categories:
 - **Senior personnel:** highly qualified scientists, usually permanently employed
 - **Postdoc** or equivalent qualification, including senior postdocs
 - **PhD student** or equivalent qualification level
 - **Diploma student:** Bachelor or Master students
 - **Office/Technician:** administrative staff 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 are contractually obliged to acquire third-party funding to co-finance 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.

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 outright 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 for larger equipment essential for the project may only be requested on a pro rata basis, taking into account the duration of the project and the proportion of time that the equipment will be used for the project. Funding by WWTF in project calls is not intended to cover investment in general and larger infrastructure.
- **Consumables:** Costs for project-related expenses such as 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](#).
- **Workshops/conferences:** Costs for organizing events, workshops, and conferences, as well as for hosting invited speakers, are eligible. This also includes costs for single or recurring events with non-academic stakeholders.
- **Other costs:** Third-party costs, (e.g., external studies, 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 40% of the overall budget.

Indirect costs (overheads)

WWTF pays a maximum of 20% overhead.

Overheads are calculated as a percentage of the project's direct costs (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 the sum of direct and indirect costs.

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

Please consider [WWTF's Recognition of Costs in Funding Guidelines](#) (*in German only*). Please use your preferred translation program to translate the guidelines into English.

LS26 Targeted Prevention / Gender Aspects in the Application Phase

WWTF's Gender Strategy and Gender Equality Plan must be considered throughout the application. Please refer to [WWTF's guidelines and instructions](#), in particular the chapter regarding the proposal phase.

LS26 Targeted Prevention / Good Scientific Practice and Ethics

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.

- As a member of the Austrian Agency for Research Integrity (OeAWI), WWTF is committed to their standards for good scientific practice. Applicants must therefore comply with [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 current and future calls.

Use of AI in Proposal Writing

WWTF recognizes that the use of generative AI (genAI) tools is pervasive and can facilitate proposal writing, for example by improving written language. However, substantial use of genAI tools 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 genAI 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.

WWTF does not permit the use of AI for forming judgements or making decisions during the review and evaluation processes.

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 short proposal, applicants must 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.

If concerns be raised, WWTF may require the verdict of an ethics committee even if the project team has not identified any potential ethical issues regarding their proposed work.

- Upon invitation to submit a full proposal, applicants must provide a more detailed description of the ethical aspects of 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 not yet 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 6 months after funding approval, 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 necessary ethical approvals will be taken into account when the full proposal is evaluated. Insufficient demonstration of the ability to obtain ethical approval in 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 that of the proposed project, a statement confirming that the approval will cover the planned research must be provided in the Funding Portal.
- 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, the proposal must include a clear statement from a core team

member confirming that they are authorised to conduct the planned research within the scope of the 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”) as part of their application. The above also applies for extensions.

Non-compliance will result in the proposal being rejected on formal grounds.

LS26 Targeted Prevention / Open Science

WWTF requires compliance with its [Open Science Policy](#). This document outlines the rights, roles and responsibilities of WWTF, researchers, and research organizations.

LS26 Targeted Prevention / 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., PI&C and co-PIs), may access and edit the proposal. **Only the PI&C can submit the proposal.**
- The proposal structure and steps for completing the application in the WWTF Funding Portal are described in more detail in the Submission Guidelines, which will be made available in March 2026.
- **Signatures of the authorized signatory at participating institutions** (“authorizations”) are required in the application process.
 - In the short proposal phase, signatures are only required from the authorized persons at the institutions of the **core team members**.
 - In the full proposal phase, authorizing signatures from **additional partner institutions** are also required.

Please contact your institution’s research services department well in advance to find out about your institute’s internal processes and timelines.

- Applications must be written in **English**. Submissions in other languages will be formally rejected.

LS26 Targeted Prevention / Evaluation Criteria

Main evaluation criteria

- **Scope:** Is the project within the [scope of the call](#) as described in this document?

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

The key evaluation criteria for the proposals are **scientific excellence and innovation**, **relevance and impact**, and **the pathway to implementation** of the proposed work.

- **Scientific excellence and innovation:** To what extent does the project demonstrate scientific novelty in its proposed approach? What is the additional value of this innovation for addressing the specified research gap? Is the project's overall approach scientifically excellent and appropriate for achieving its aims?
- **Relevance and impact:** To what extent does the project contribute to advances in targeted prevention research? How has the team ensured the relevance of the project's aims, methodology and anticipated outcomes for the specified risk group? What potential does the project have to improve the health and well-being of this group? How great an impact is this project likely to have on the health of this group?
- **Pathway to implementation:** Does the project present a pathway to implementation that will facilitate its intended impact? To what extent have factors relevant for implementation been addressed?
- **Team composition and excellence:** Do the applicants demonstrate the scientific expertise and potential to conduct the proposed research? Does the team include an appropriate combination of expertise, bringing together researchers from complementary scientific fields as required? Have additional relevant stakeholders with the necessary expertise been included as appropriate?
 - Please note that scientific excellence and track record will be assessed according to academic age. 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.

Further evaluation criteria

- **Feasibility:** Given the competences of the research team, the suggested methods, the timeframe, resources and budget, can the project achieve its goals?

- **Consideration of gender aspects:** The relevance of potential sex-specific and gender-related aspects of the proposed project should be considered and explained throughout the proposal. Please consider [WWTF's guidelines regarding sex and gender in research](#).
- **Open Science.** Does the proposed work adhere to [WWTF's Open Science Policy](#)?

Please note that the short proposal will be evaluated by a high-level jury panel only, whereas the full proposal will be evaluated by experts in the project's specific fields. An appropriate level of scientific detail should therefore be provided at each stage to allow the respective audience to evaluate the proposal.

LS26 Targeted Prevention / Selection and Decision Processes

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, the jury comprises 6-12 outstanding international experts who have no current affiliation with an Austrian institution and no other known conflicts of interest.
- Jury members are selected by WWTF according to their expertise in the topic of the call.
- The names of the jury members will be published on the WWTF website once the formal funding decision has been finalised by the WWTF Board of Directors.

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 full 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 short proposals

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

- The jury decides at a meeting whether to invite a short proposal to the full proposal stage. This usually takes place 1-2 months after the short proposal submission deadline.
- All applicants will be informed of the outcome in a timely manner. Unsuccessful applicants will receive a short jury statement explaining the decision. Successful applicants will be invited to submit a full-length proposal.

Evaluation of full proposals

- All full proposals submitted in accordance with the guidelines are checked again for formal aspects. Proposals which do not meet the formal requirements will be rejected at this stage.
- The information provided in the full proposal must be consistent with and extend the information in the short proposal. Any major deviations from the short proposal must be explicitly justified. If these deviations cannot be satisfactorily explained, the proposal may be rejected by the jury at this stage.

Eligible full proposals will undergo a **review process**.

- WWTF will obtain a minimum of two written reviews (usually three or four) for each proposal.
- Reviewers are international experts in the topic(s) of the proposals. WWTF does not contact reviewers based in Austria.
- WWTF aims for diversity in the cohort of reviewers for a call (gender, age, countries).
- All reviewers will be checked by the WWTF office for potential conflicts of interests with the applicants. As a rule, reviewers should not have close professional relations to any of the applicants in the project team. In practice, this excludes reviewers who have published with the applicants within the last five years or who have had a collaboration in a research project in this timeframe. In case of very close cooperation with the applicant(s) over a longer period of time, the reviewer will also be excluded. Joint publications in edited volumes/proceedings, 'community papers' with more than 30 authors, and common attendance at workshops and conferences do not constitute a conflict of interest. Additionally, reviewers are asked to disclose any potential conflicts of interest.
- Reviewers will be asked to provide their assessment of the proposal via a standardised online questionnaire.
- The expert reviewers remain anonymous to the applicants.
- Jury members will nominate reviewers. In addition, in the full proposal submissions, applicants are asked to suggest five experts whom they deem qualified to review the proposal. WWTF office will check the reviewers for potential conflict of interests. WWTF office is free to choose/not to choose any of the suggested experts.
- Applicants may also exclude up to three persons without stating any reasons. Reviewers on the negative list will not be contacted.

Full proposal jury meeting

The jury will convene about 3-4 months after the submission deadline of the full proposals to select full proposals to recommend for funding. Additional members may be added to the jury if

supplementary expertise is needed to cover the topics of the proposals. At least two jury members will be assigned to each proposal to act as rapporteurs.

- The jury's evaluation is based on the full proposals, the external reviews and the applicant's response to the reviews. The arguments put forward in the reviews will be carefully weighed against the jury's own expertise.
- The result is a recommendation for each project: "to be funded" or "not to be funded".

Formal funding decision

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

- Applicants will be promptly informed of 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 their project was not selected for funding.

WWTF does not permit rebuttals of recommendations by the jury panel or decisions by the WWTF Board of Directors.

LS26 Targeted Prevention / Funded Projects

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 formal start of the project may be **no later than 6 months** after the formal funding decision. Please note that WWTF does not require all team members of the funded project to begin by the project's start date. However, WWTF expects grantees to nominate a formal starting date for their project that is no later than 6 months after the notification of the funding decision.
- The PI&C will be provided with the necessary contractual documents.
- 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 constitutes a project according to §27 of the Universities Act 2002. The institution will then authorize the respective PI&C to sign for the full scientific and financial responsibility of the project.

Monitoring and reporting

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](#).

LS26 Targeted Prevention / Submission Guideline / Short Proposal

This section is a guide to using WWTF's Funding Portal. It is intended for applicants who wish to submit a short proposal in the Life Sciences 2026 Call.

LS26 / Short Proposal / Register & Login

All proposals must be submitted electronically via the WWTF's Funding Portal.

Registration

1. Go to <https://fundingportal.wwtf.at/>
2. Go to "Register" in the top menu
3. Enter your registration data (*indicates mandatory fields)
4. You will receive an email to confirm registration

If you are a PI, please register and complete your profile as early as possible because your profile information is used in the other parts of the proposals (e.g., your institution).

Please note that the person who initially registers must not necessarily be the PI&C of the project. The PI&C and co-PIs can be invited to the proposal at a later time.

Administrative staff (e.g., institutional grants office, project assistants) can also create a proposal and invite PIs. Only in this case can a proposal be edited by both PIs and administrative staff (i.e., administrative staff cannot be invited to an existing proposal created by a PI). This allows research support and admin personnel to first check the requirements for submitting a proposal and provide support from their own account during the submission process.

Login

1. Go to <https://fundingportal.wwtf.at/>
2. Login with your credentials

LS26 / Short Proposal / Creating a new proposal

The Funding Portal will save your entries and changes automatically. You can pause data entry at any time. All information will be available again upon your next login.

1. Go to “Calls” in the top menu
2. Under “Running calls”, select the “Life Sciences 2026 - Targeted Prevention” call
3. Click “Create new proposal”.
4. Once created, you will find all your proposals under “My Proposals & Roles” in the top menu.

You can create multiple proposals. However, please note that each researcher may participate as PI&C or co-PI in a maximum of two proposals. You can also delete proposals at any time. Proposals that are not submitted will be deleted automatically after the submission deadline.

LS26 / Short Proposal / Information about PIs

In the short proposal, WWTF requires information only about the researchers in the project's core team (i.e., the PI&C and up to two co-PIs). Further researchers beyond the core team may also take part in the project, either funded by WWTF or with in-kind contribution. Information about these further researchers will be required in the full proposal.

Step 1: Invite the PI&C and co-PIs

1. Go to the tab "Personnel and Institutions" in the proposal
2. Invite a "Principal Investigator and Coordinator" by providing their contact information.
 - **In case you are the PI&C**, please click "I am the Principal Investigator". You can then invite further co-PIs to this proposal.
 - **In case you are not the PI&C**, you will need to invite them to the proposal. The invited PI will receive an email to accept the invitation. The invited person can login with an existing account or register as a new user. You and the PI&C can then invite further co-PIs to the proposal.

Step 2: Complete your "Profile"

The PI&C and all co-PIs must complete "My Profile". If you are creating a project on behalf of others and are not part of the Core Team, you do not need to provide this information.

1. Go to "My Profile" in the top menu to fill out or update your profile. This information needs to be entered only once and can then be used for multiple proposals or in future calls.
 - Please upload or update your [CV](#) based on the template "wwtf_cvtemplate_project.docx".
 - Should you have multiple affiliations, these can be added in your profile. Different affiliations may then be used for different proposals.

Step 3: Complete your "Role"

1. Go to "My Proposal & Roles" in the top menu. Under "My Roles", click on your role below the title of the proposal.
2. Update the personal information by clicking on "Refresh from profile". The system will check if there is new information in "My Profile" and update this section accordingly.
3. Enter data in the respective fields:

- Staff category (*select from dropdown*)
- Scientific expertise (*key words*)
- Role and responsibilities within the project (*500 characters*)
- Specific competencies for the project (*500 characters*)

Please note that the information entered here should be specific to the project. If you are participating in multiple proposals that requires different subsets of your expertise, please tailor the information regarding your role and competencies according to the specific project.

1. Select the affiliation with which you want to apply for the proposal. Please note that an authorization signature will be required from this institute for the proposal.
2. Check the box under “Affirmation” to confirm acknowledgement of and compliance with guidelines from WWTF and additional relevant organisations.

As the Funding Portal automatically relays information entered about the PI&C and co-PIs into subsequent parts of the proposal, we recommend that the core team members fill out these sections early (e.g., institutions of the core team members are automatically added to the budget).

LS26 / Short Proposal / CV and List of Publications

The CV template provided in the Funding Portal must be used. Please use the following template: "**All other calls: wwtf_cvtemplate_project.docx**"

- List all items in reverse chronological order.
- For each of the selected publications (max. 10), provide 1-2 sentences outlining your role in the work and the relevance of the publication for the proposal.
- If possible, please also provide a link to a more detailed list of your publications. This may be your institutional website, personal website, an ORCID profile, Google Scholar profile, etc.
- Describe additional qualifications or skills that are relevant for the success of the project. These may extend beyond scientific skills to experience in leadership, supervision, Open Science, etc.

Do not exceed 2 pages for the CV, as the system will not accept the upload of documents longer than 2 pages

Different CVs in case of the submission of two proposals

Applicants have the possibility to submit two proposals. This may necessitate slightly different versions of the CV (e.g., publications specific to the proposals).

In case you wish to provide two different CVs for two proposal, the following procedure is recommended:

- Under "My Profile", upload the CV for Proposal A
- Go to "My Proposals and Roles"
- In the section "My roles", click on "Principal Investigator and Coordinator" of Proposal A
- In the page that opens, click on the green button "Refresh from Profile"

This imports the CV from your profile to Proposal A, and only to Proposal A.

- Go back to "My Profile" and delete the existing CV.
- Upload the new CV for Proposal B
- Go to "My Proposals and Roles"

- In the section "My roles", click on "Principal Investigator and Coordinator" of Proposal B
- In the page that opens, click on the green button "Refresh from Profile"

Proposal A and B should now have different CVs.

LS26 / Short Proposal / Overview of Chapters

To view and edit your proposal, go to the tab "My Proposals and Roles" in the top right menu and click on the title of your project.

The proposal is comprised of six chapters, each under a separated tab:

- [Basic Information](#)
- [Personnel and Institutions](#)
- [Project](#)
- [References](#)
- [Budget](#)
- [Signatures](#)

A chapter with a **red alert symbol** indicates that it is incomplete. Within the marked chapter, click on the red symbol(s) beside individual sections to highlight the fields requiring attention. A **green checkmark symbol** indicates that the information in the chapter is complete.

Please note that the symbols might not refresh immediately even if the information in the chapter is complete. Changing to another chapter and going back to the other will refresh the symbol.

LS26 / Short Proposal / Details of Chapters

Please note that the inclusion of data figures and tables is not possible in the body of the short proposal. These elements can be included in the full proposal phase.

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](#).
- 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](#).

Personnel and Institutions

This chapter contains information about the main parties in the project. Ideally, [information about the PI&C and co-PIs](#) have already been entered. However, this information can be changed at any time.

- **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).

Project

This chapter contains the bulk of the scientific information regarding the project. When formulating your proposal, please consider the [scope](#) and [evaluation criteria](#) of this call.

Please note that the character limit includes spaces

Abstract *(max. 1,500 characters)*

Provide an overall summary of the project. Clearly state the research questions and aims, and outline the methodological approach. Describe the research's most innovative aspects, as well as its potential impact and contribution.

Proposal

Background and state of the art *(max. 2,000 characters)*

Provide a broad scientific introduction to the topic of the project. Describe the state of the art, as well as current challenges and research gaps in this field.

Research questions, objectives, and/or hypotheses *(max. 2,000 characters)*

Outline the research questions to be addressed in the project. Define the risk population and the health/disease condition to be targeted. Describe how the research objectives align with the development of a preventive intervention.

Methodology *(max. 3,500 characters)*

Describe the methods to be used in the project to address the research questions and to develop a preventive intervention. Provide sufficient information about the innovation, suitability and feasibility of these approaches. Outline how the project includes the relevant scientific and non-academic expertise to achieve its objectives.

Pathway to implementation *(max. 2,500 characters)*

Outline a structured roadmap for integrating the intervention to be developed in the project into broader practice. Depending on the scope of the proposed project, for example, this pathway may range from initial implementation, monitoring and/or evaluation of a pilot intervention to measures that facilitate its integration into standard practice. Please note that the full implementation process may extend beyond the duration of this project. While full details of the implementation process are not required, the most relevant factors should be identified and discussed (e.g. stakeholders, key steps and their timeline, required resources) to demonstrate the intervention's feasibility and impact.

Contribution and impact *(max. 1,500 characters)*

Describe how the proposed work will promote health or prevent disease in the target population, while also contributing to research in this area. Briefly explain how the data, knowledge, resources and/or technology developed during the project will be managed and shared with the research

community.

Please note that **potential sex/gender aspects of the research topic** and **gender balance in the research team** should be considered throughout the application (see [here](#)). These should be briefly described where appropriate in the relevant sections. Further details will be required in the full proposal phase.

Project Schedule / Overview

Upload a 1-page visual representation (e.g., table, Gantt chart, flow chart) to provide an overview of the milestones to be achieved during the project. Indicate the time periods and specify the respective PIs responsible for each milestone.

Ethical considerations (*min. 100 characters, max. 800 characters*)

Outline the potential ethical aspects of your proposed project. These may include, but are not restricted to human participants, human tissue, human embryonic tissue, personal data, animals, environmental safety, and artificial intelligence.

Please indicate if a formal ethical approval is necessary to conduct your research project in your institution. We advise reaching out to your institutional ethics boards prior to submitting your proposal. More detailed information regarding the ethical aspects of your proposed work and the timelines for ethical approval are required in the full proposal. Should your proposal be selected for funding, the submission of the required ethics votum for carrying out the work is a prerequisite for the funding contract. Further details about ethical requirements are available [here](#).

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.

Use of generative AI (*max. 800 characters*)

Please describe if and how GenAI has been used in developing your research proposal. Please find further details [here](#).

References

In this chapter, up to 15 key references relevant for the project can be added. Please use a format recognised in your field and apply it consistently to all references.

Please note that these references should focus on the content of the proposal and is not your personal publication list. The latter should be included in the CVs of the core team members.

Budget

The short proposal requires only an overview budget for each participating institution. All institutions added in the chapter “Personnel and Institutions” will be automatically listed in the budget table.

1. Enter the sum for personnel costs at each institution. Please consider that, in the full proposal, you will be required to enter the annual gross costs (employer and employee costs = gross costs / “Brutto-Brutto-Jahresgehalt”) of all individual researchers. If you are unsure about the annual gross costs, please consult your institutional research service. Due to projected inflation rates, the full proposal system will automatically calculate a 3.5% p.a. increase in salaries over the lifetime of the project.
2. Enter the total non-personnel costs for each institution. For details about eligible costs, please see [here](#).
3. Enter the overhead costs for each institution. Note that up to 20% overhead costs may be claimed. Please consult your institutional research service also in this regard.

The system will automatically calculate sums and ratios of the budget.

- 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., $\geq 80\%$) 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 $\geq 50\%$. The share of the budget allocated to the region “Lower Austria” must be between 20-50% (i.e., $> 20\%$ and $< 50\%$). Maximum 20% (i.e., $\leq 20\%$) may be allocated to further partner(s) located in other regions (“Other”).
- 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 40% of the total budget.
- The system will display an alert if the inserted amounts exceed the permitted funding distribution across regions or cost types.
- Please note that changing the proposal between “WWTF Project” and “Joint Project” types will reset the budget table due to differing budget distribution requirements.

Explanation of Cost Planning (max. 750 characters)

Outline details about the planned allocation of resources as requested in the budget.

In the case of an invitation to submit a full proposal, there should not be significant changes in the requested budget compared to the short proposal. Exceptions are permitted but require justification.

LS26 / Short Proposal / Signatures

Submission of the proposal requires the signatures of the authorized person(s) at the host institutions of each of the PI&C and co-PIs (“Authorization”). Please consult your institutional research services regarding the person mandated to sign the proposals and plan sufficient time to obtain their signatures.

1. Enter the name of each authorized person in the online form. This information will be included in the PDF to be signed.
2. Download the PDF using the link “You can generate the signature sheet here”.
3. Signatures may be provided in various formats:
 - Scanned or physical signature
 - Electronic signature (e.g., A-Trust, Handysignatur). Please note that electronically signed PDFs cannot be merged into a single document.

Upload of signatures from PIs in the core team is not required.

LS26 / Short Proposal / Proposal Submission

Once all symbols in all chapters are marked by **green checkmarks**, the proposal can be submitted. The “Submit proposal” button is at the bottom of the “Signatures” chapter.

Before submitting the proposal, you can download and check all sections of the complete proposal by clicking on the "PDF" button at the bottom of the page. Please note that the links to the authorising signatures may not function, but WWTF will have access to the uploaded pages.

The PI&C will receive an automatic confirmation email when the Funding Portal receives the completed submission. Please check your emails after hitting the submit button. **If you do not receive a confirmation email, please get in touch with the Call Manager.**

You can access your submitted proposal as PDF on the page “My Proposals and Roles”.

No changes are possible after the project has been submitted. After the indicated deadline, submission is no longer possible. Unsubmitted proposals will be excluded from the ensuing evaluation process and deleted shortly after the submission deadline.

LS26 Targeted Prevention / WWTF Contacts

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 regular office hours.

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