Content and Structure of the Proposal

> The application has to be submitted via https://fundingportal.wwtf.at. A **user account (and registration)** is required. You can also log-in with your ACOnet credentials.

> Proposals must be written in **English**.

Structure of the proposal

The online form consists of five chapters and describes the entirety of the proposal:

- Basic information
- Personnel and Institutions
- Project
- Budget
- Signatures

Basic information

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

> **Scientific Disciplines**: Fields will be suggested as you type. WWTF uses the ÖFOS classification system of Statistik Austria. Take those disciplines most similar to your proposed project. WWTF will use this data only for statistical purposes. It is not relevant for the evaluation of your proposal.

Personnel and Institutions

This chapter contains information about the main parties in the project. Please note that the terminology used in the Funding Portal stems from scientific research projects. In the context of this call, they have to be understood as analogies.

- **Principal Investigator and Coordinator (PI&Co):** One Person must be named as PI & Coordinator. This persons signs the funding contact and is responsible for reporting to WWTF. This person should also have a coordinating role within the project and can be either a person with scientific or technical background.
- **Two 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 and non-academic partners in the consortium.
- A maximum of **three different institutions** may be involved in the proposal. This includes the institutions of the PI&C and co-PI(s).

> To include 2 or 3 PIs or additional partner institutions in the project is not mandatory, but optional.

> For each PI, an individual CV has to be uploaded in the "Profile". Please note, that the CV template has been made for scientific staff. Please feel free to adopt the CV template for technical staff.

Project

This chapter contains the work programme. Fill out the following fields (*please note that the character limit includes spaces*):

Lay summary in German language: 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. *(1,000 characters)*

Abstract for experts: Please provide a concise project description. *(2,000 characters)*

Work programme: Please use the template provided for download in the WWTF Funding Portal. The headings in bold are mandatory.

Chapters of the work programme (PDF upload, max 15 pages incl. references):

1. Introduction, state-of-the-art and preliminary data

What exactly is the research subject, and why does it matter now for the ME/CFS or PAIS field? What are the critical unresolved challenges in the field, and how do your specific preliminary findings from the first WWTF project create a foundation that uniquely positions your consortium to address them?

2. Hypotheses and objectives

Are your hypotheses specific, testable, and clearly derived from your preliminary data? Do your objectives map logically onto the hypotheses, and are they achievable within 24–36 months?

3. Innovativeness and relevance

What is genuinely new here, in concept, methodology, or combination, compared to what the field is already doing? How will results concretely advance the PAIS/ME/CFS field, and will patient perspectives shape the research design rather than being added as an afterthought?

4. Research plan and methods

Is your cohort sufficiently powered, is recruitment realistic within the timeline, and how are sex and gender dimensions explicitly integrated into design and analysis? Does each milestone have a clear deliverable, and does the team demonstrably hold the methodological expertise required for every analytical approach proposed?

5. Consortia building and governance structure

Who are your stakeholders beyond the research team, and what concrete mechanisms ensure their sustained, meaningful involvement? How are decisions made and resources allocated within the project consortia?

6. Interdisciplinarity, project management and feasibility

What does each discipline contribute that the others cannot, and where exactly do they intersect in the research plan? What are the two or three biggest risks to project completion, what are your mitigation strategies, and how is data managed, shared, and prepared for dissemination from day one?

7. Key references

No prescription regarding number of references.

> Use the word template in the Funding Portal for filling out the application.

> Applicants can decide how much space they want to spend in each subheading.

> Upload the completed document as PDF. The **number of pages is limited to max. 15.**

Ethical Considerations: Please describe potential ethical aspects of your project (or why they contain none) and explain how you deal with them.

Gender Aspects: Please provide considerations on gender aspects in the project. More details can be found here .

Budget

- No in-kinds are required in this call.
- 20% overhead costs
- A maximum of 30% of the overall budget can go outside of Vienna.
- The personnel costs must be at least 60% of the overall funding.

The budget table to be filled out is divided in personnel and non-personnel cost.

> Please consider WWTF rules for eligible costs.

- For each person in the project a separate line in the budget table has to be provided.
- Non-personnel costs must also be detailed in the budget table. Try to aggregate cost positions in a meaningful way.

A text box is provided to explain costs.

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

> Please ensure signatures are dated. Undated signatures will not be accepted.

> Unlike proposals in the previous WWTF Legacy Submission System, signatures from the core team are no longer required in the new Funding Portal.

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