

# VRG26 / Interim evaluation

One of the main objectives of the VRG programme is to enable recipients to pursue a career path that leads to a full professorship. In Austria, this typically occurs via a career position, in accordance with UG2002 (for organizations that fall under the UG2022). Obtaining a full professorship is, however, not part of the VRG program rationale, since it requires either an open external appointment procedure or an internal call for applications for a certain number of dedicated positions.

Therefore, VRG leaders are expected to advance to Associate Professorship within the duration of the Vienna Research Group. Upon starting work at the host institution, VRG leaders are offered a qualification agreement („Qualifizierungsvereinbarung“, „QV“). Depending on the institution, this either happens immediately upon entry to the university, or after a few months (WWTF asks for a maximum of 3 months upon start of the work contract, until the QV is offered and signed). Once a QV has been signed, the VRG leader is listed as an „assistant professors“. These positions are temporary.

In the QV, the criteria for promotion to associate professorship are defined. After a certain period of time (depending on the institution and the individual agreement between host institution and VRG leader), usually 2-4 years, an interim evaluation of the VRG leader's performance is carried out at the host institution.

From WWTF's perspective, there are different scenarios for the interim evaluation:

## **Scenario 1: Evaluation of the QV involving external experts**

WWTF wishes to be involved in this process, as stipulated in the contract. This is typically done by WWTF appointing an external reviewer. As soon as the QV review process is initiated, the host institution approaches WWTF regarding the nomination of a reviewer.

## **Scenario 2: Evaluation of the QV with predominantly formal internal assessment.**

If the university's evaluation process does not include external reviews, WWTF will conduct its own, moderate, evaluation after 3-4 years runtime of the project. WWTF's evaluation can take place at a later date than the QV evaluation by the host institution.

## **Scenario 3: Interim evaluation by the WWTF without a QV agreement.**

If there is no QV agreement (e.g. if the VRG leader starts as associate professor or higher), WWTF will conduct its own, moderate, evaluation after approximately three to four years.

The evaluation step usually takes place between year 2-4 of a VRG grant. Earlier dates are possible. In case of a negative result in the interim evaluation, the funding of the group will be discontinued after a “phasing out” period (max. 1 year).

