

VRG27 / Key Facts

Scope

This call is issued within the WWTF Vienna Research Groups for Young Investigators programme, in the area of Information and Communication Technology, under the theme “AI/ML for Vienna”. The focus is on two parallel tracks:

1. “Foundational AI/ML Research” track: candidates who advance the theoretical or methodological foundations of AI/ML in their own right
2. “Advancing discipline(s) with AI/ML” track: candidates from any other discipline (e.g. life sciences, physics, environmental sciences, social sciences and humanities...) who develop or advance AI/ML concepts or methods to address open questions in their own field.

In both cases, the proposed work of the future research group is expected to make genuine methodological contributions to AI/ML or to the respective discipline via the development or advancement of AI/ML tools and concepts, rather than merely applying existing tools, and to demonstrate the ambition to advance the state of the art. Engagement with Vienna's broader AI/ML research community is encouraged.

Applicants will be asked to select their evaluation track. Positions are allocated separately to each track, and applications are evaluated and ranked only against other applications within the same track. Please note that "For Vienna" in the call title refers to the location of the future research group, the topics chosen to be researched do not have to be specifically based on the Vienna region.

Who can apply?

VRG candidates are researchers in their post-doc phase, who apply together with an established scientist from a Viennese university or research institution.

- Researchers who can apply for this call are up to eight years after PhD, counting backwards from the submission deadline of this call. Care duties may extend this period by up to four years.
- At the time of application, VRG candidates must be based at home institutions outside of Austria. Specifically, this means the VRG candidate (i) must not have an employment contract with an Austrian institution in the timeframe between three months before the submission deadline to the submission deadline, and (ii) must have been employed at a foreign research institution for at least two years in the last three years before the submission deadline.

Project duration

A Vienna Research Group typically runs 6-8 years.

Funding

There are € 7.2 million reserved for this call. The max. budget per research group is € 1.8 million, up to four research groups can be funded.

Timeline

- Submission deadline: 2 March 2027, 14:00 CET
- Review phase 1 decision: mid of April 2027
- Review phase 2 decision: end of July 2027
- Hearings: September 2027 (exact dates tbd, candidates will participate online)

Process

- Submission of a full proposal until the deadline stated above via the [WWTF Funding Portal](#) (submission possible starting November).
- In case you are invited for participation in the hearing, the participation is mandatory to be considered for funding.

Information session

- 21 January 2027, 2pm-4pm CET online via this [zoom link](#)

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