

How to get funding

after your PhD

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Welcome



Graduate and
Academic Career
Development Centre
(GrACe)

grace-bielefeld



Today...

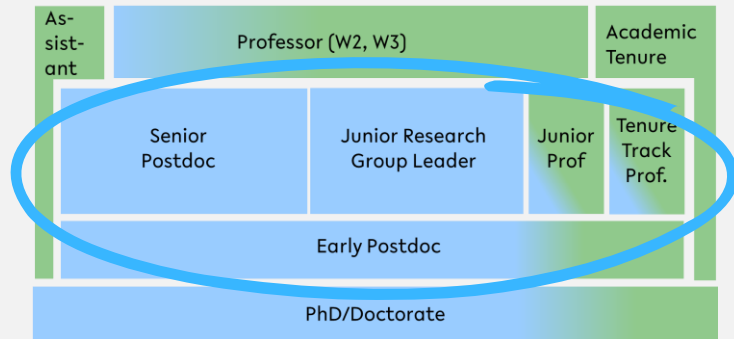




Why?

1.

Career paths at universities



Typical career options in the Germany academic system

Early Career Researchers

80% third party- funded

Number refers to Germany

2.



Your academic portfolio

scientific
achievements

position in the
scientific community

critical skills

bonus skills

Publications	International cooperations	Leadership	Acquisition of funding	Committees
Habilitation/ equivalent achievements	Talks	Independence	Supervision	Science communication
Prizes	Mentors	Your passion	Teaching	Science management

More about career paths and skills/experiences needed to become postdoc & professor: talk on 17.11.2026

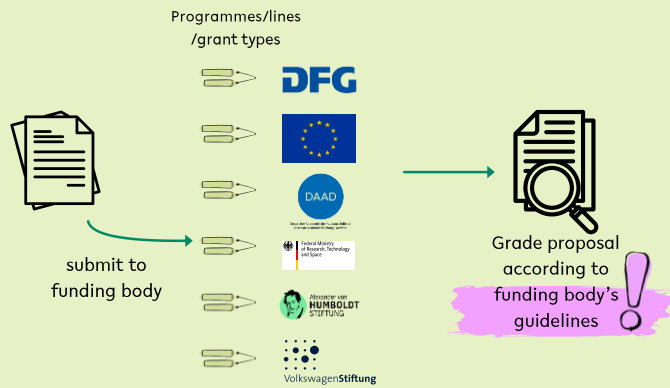


How?

Your proposal

Funding body

~2 reviewers



Read the reviewers' guidelines if publically available! They tell you what they are looking for and grading.

Quick excursion: Reviewers

Limited time.

Only human. Do not annoy them.

Not necessarily from your exact field.



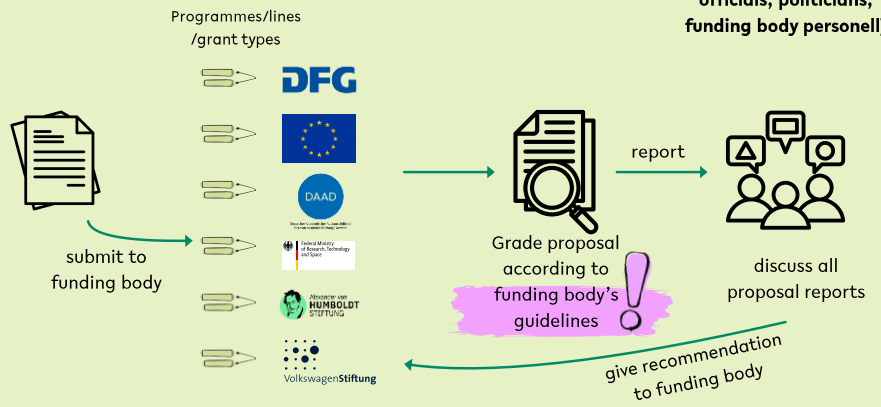
Make text easy to understand, easy to follow and information easy to find. Write for the correct audience. Double check that you have everything included.

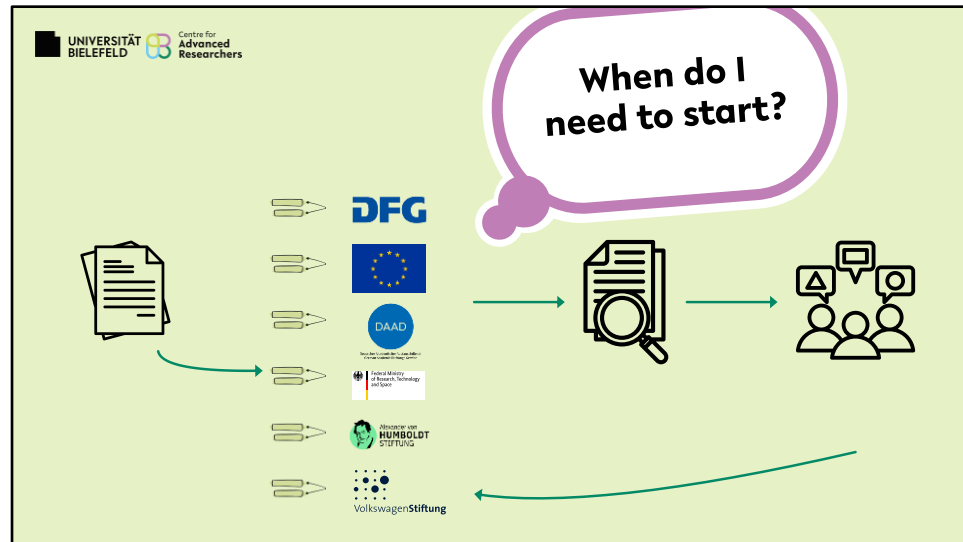
Your proposal

Funding body

~2 reviewers

Panel of reviewers
(sometimes + Ministry
officials, politicians,
funding body personell)





More than a year in advance

Funding body

Programmes/lines
/grant types



Where do
I apply?

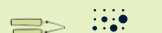
**Choose
wisely** !

Track record

Learn
something new?

Funding body

Programmes/lines
/grant types



Career stage

Societal
impact

Transfer into
industry?

High risk,
high gain?

There's help



... individual advice at the university:
FFT (Department for Research Administration
and Technology Transfer)

Info session on
funding bodies:



... ELFI: database of funding options
(use from University network or via VPN to get all
filter/search options!)



... overview of main
funding bodies at
research-in-Germany.org



**Ask your network about
options in your field!**



What?

...goes into a grant application?

Today...

Why, why do
I have to
write grants?

Writing
the grant

Try it
yourself

What goes into a
grant application?

Help @
Uni Bielefeld

I can do this!



Elements of a grant application

Abstract

State of the art

Aims/research questions/hypotheses

Innovation/new contribution

Methods & time schedule

Own contribution so far

Cooperations and academic integrations at your location

Your qualification

Budget & resource planning

Impact/transfer

Elements of a grant application

Abstract

What makes a good
first impression

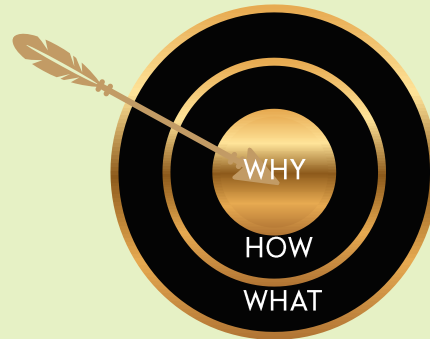


Join at menti.com

Code: 141 857 68

Elements of a grant application

Abstract



Golden Circle approach by Simon Sinek: create interest in the audience first, then go into detail

WHY: why is this interesting/really needed/super cool?

HOW: strategy and method

WHAT: milestones, timeplan, deliverables

Elements of a grant application

Abstract

State of the art

What's the
knowledge gap?



Structured,
critical synthesis

**Direction
of field**



Elements of a grant application

Abstract

State of the art

What's the
knowledge gap?



Elements of a grant application

Abstract

State of the art

What's the
knowledge gap?

Why are you the
perfect person
to to so?

Why is your project
perfect to fill the gap?



Elements of a grant application

Abstract

State of the art

Aims/research questions/hypotheses

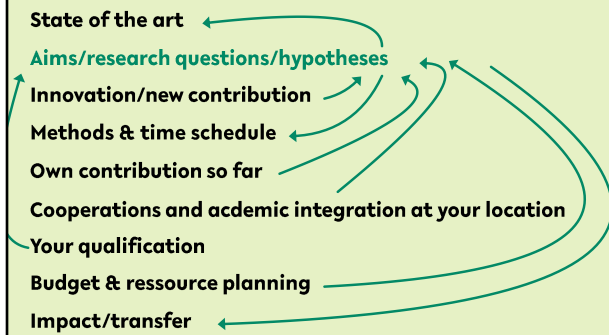
Crystal
clear

Obviously
needed

Base and heart of
entire proposal



Elements of a grant application



Everything in proposal leads to aim/research question/hypotheses or is derived from it

Elements of a grant application



**Weave
your text**



Interconnect your sections. Weave red threads throughout text

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Level of **technical details**: get
feedback from your **network**

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at your location

Is this
doable in the
grant period?

Is this
doable
for you?

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CV

Publications

Third party funding (grants)

Quick excursion: Highlighting the highlights

Clear
structure

Your position
in author list

What's more relevant to reviewers: paper title or journal?

Candidate name Paper title paper title paper title paper title
title paper title paper title paper tit Journal

Co-author, **candidate**, co-author, co-au
title paper title paper title paper title pa

Candidate name	Paper title paper title paper title paper title paper title paper t	paper title paper title paper title paper
title paper title pa	<i>Journal title journal title journal title journal title journal title</i>	

Co-author, candidate Paper title paper title paper title paper title paper title paper title paper title paper title paper title paper
title paper title paper title, pap Journal title journal title journa

Quick excursion: Highlighting the highlights

- Even standardised CV templates (here: DFG) give you
- quite some
 - **formatting opportunities**

Curriculum Vitae

Your academic curriculum vitae serves to present your personal profile. It helps DFG's reviewers and committees in conducting their review and evaluation of your academic achievements and qualifications. The DFG Head Office refers to the curriculum vitae to check you are eligible to apply as well as to see whether there may be any conflicts of interests on the part of reviewers and committee members. All the following details are required unless anything

CVs: qualifications, title formatting, in ...ing no less than 1.2

A photograph must not be attached to the curriculum vitae. Please name the document CV_PubList_ "person's last name". The text in grey or red font provides you with information when preparing your CV. Please remove these texts completely after filling in the CV.

Additional information is available under www.dfg.de/efc_cv

Personal Data in table form only

Title	
First name	
Last name	
Current position	<i>If applicable, specify the end of the contract term</i>
Current institution(s)/title(s), country	
Identifiers/ORCID	<i>ORCID ID: Applicants who have an ORCID ID are asked to provide it. Applicants who do not have an ORCID ID are invited but not obliged to create one.</i>

Qualifications and Career mixture of table/free text

Please list the stages of your (academic) career including qualification stages. Please indicate position, institution and duration in each case. If you wish, you can also describe the academic content of each activity.

If you are currently pursuing a doctorate, please indicate the status of your doctoral studies.

Stages	Periods and Details
<i>School, country</i> <i>required only for the Walter Benjamin Programme</i>	<i>If you spent some or all of your school years abroad, please provide detailed information on times and locations.</i>
Degree programme	Subject, period, place, country (including changes in subject area, if applicable)
Doctorate	Date, supervisors/mentors, subject (subject in red/italic, institution(s), country)

Elements of a grant application

Abstract

State of the art

Aims/research questions/hypotheses

Innovation/new contribution

Methods & time schedule

Own contribution so far

Cooperations and academic integration at y

Your qualification

Budget & ressource planning



... individual advice at the university:
FFT (Department for Research Administration
and Technology Transfer)

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Budget & resource planning

Impact/transfer

Choose your
funding body
wisely !

Scientific impact

Economic impact

Social impact

Dissemination/Open Science

Today...



Writing

One message, one sentence.

Connect sentences. Connect paragraphs.

Why - How - What:

true for entire text,

true for paragraphs,

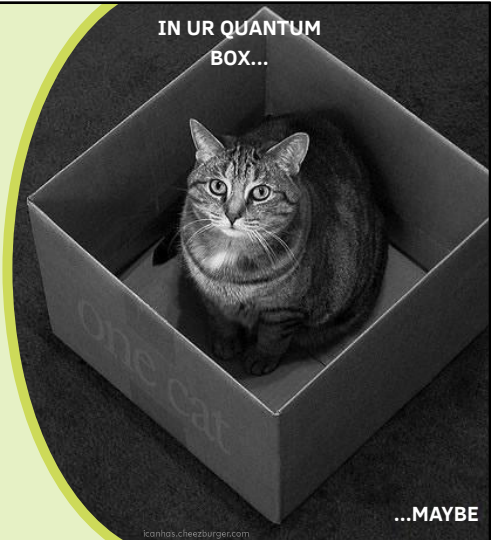
true for each sentence!



Writing

"We'll use this super complicated method, which I am describing here with a ton of jargon until you loose sight of how this sentence started, in order to show that cats simply love to sit inside boxes, the reasons for which are still a mystery."

"Mysteriously, cats love to sit inside boxes. In order to illustrate this, we use historical examples from Schroedinger to internet memes."



Writing: Good news!

Writing Week
7 - 9 Sept

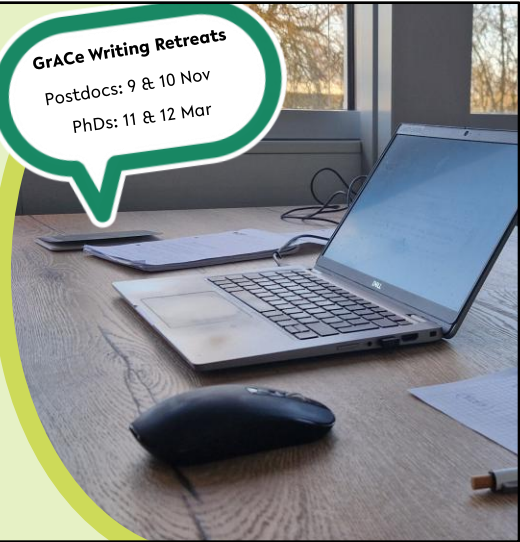


University's Writing Centre

GrACe Writing Retreats

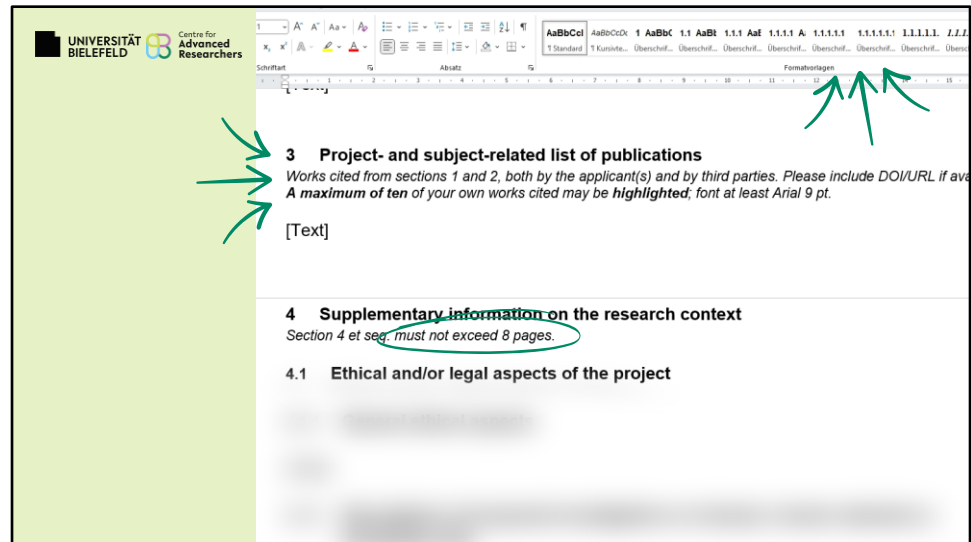
Postdocs: 9 & 10 Nov

PhDs: 11 & 12 Mar



**Writing: Read the
manual**





In addition to manual/proposal instructions: Carefully read instructions in the template & use the sets



Contact the funding
body!

If unclear, check the FAQ. If still unclear: : ask FFT. If still unclear: it's absolutely ok to ask the funding body!

Using AI

Check funding body's guidelines

Know what you are doing.

Halucinations?

Data protection?



Using AI

Check funding body's guidelines

Know what you are doing.

Halucinations?

Data protection?

**Generic style and
overconfidence?**



PEP
courses



Using AI

deepl:

International students and PhD candidates face particular challenges due to a **lack of knowledge and professional networks relating to the German labour market**.

ChatGPT 5.2:

International students and doctoral researchers face structural barriers when entering the German labour market, particularly due to **limited familiarity with its institutional frameworks** and a lack of access to professional networks.

Using AI

deepl:

International students and PhD candidates face particular challenges due to a **lack of knowledge and professional networks relating to the German labour market**.

To address this, specifically, we are introducing the Career Roadmap, a structured programme supported by continuous individual counselling and two specially developed digital logbooks.

ChatGPT 5.2:

International students and doctoral researchers face structural barriers when entering the German labour market, particularly due to **limited familiarity with its institutional frameworks** and a lack of access to professional networks.

To address these challenges in a targeted and sustainable manner, the project introduces the Career Roadmap: a structured, step-by-step programme that integrates continuous individual counselling with two purpose-designed digital logbooks. **This combined approach provides both personalised guidance and systematic skills documentation, thereby enhancing employability and facilitating a successful transition into the German labour market.**

Today...



Try it
yourself

Help @
Uni Bielefeld

I can do this!

Getting you started

Pick one of two funding options from DFG Individual Research Grants (Sachbeihilfe)

- **Basic Module:** direct project costs (e.g. equipment, lab consumables, conference travel, student assistants, PhDs)
- **Module Temporary Positions for Principal Investigators:** your own postdoc position

<https://www.dfg.de/en/research-funding/funding-opportunities/programmes/individual/research-grants>

<https://www.dfg.de/en/research-funding/funding-opportunities/programmes/individual/research-grants/forms-guidelines>

Getting you started I

Think of your future grant proposal.

In the DFG template, mark the paragraphs in sections 1-3, 4.1.1, 4.12, 4.5, 4.6

Do I know what I'd put in here?

no idea | rough idea | key points pretty clear | nearly sorted

How do I fill the gaps?

e.g. ask peers | ask wider network | online search | contact FFT |
contact funding body

Getting you started II

Make notes

**What is your research question/
hypothesis?**

Why does it fill an important gap?

What are my contributions so far?

Who are or could be relevant collaborators?

What would strengthen my application?



Today...

Why, why do
I have to
write grants?

I can do this!
Help @
Uni Bielefeld



Help @ Uni Bielefeld



FFT: Funding bodies,
programmes,
technical details



Peer Review
Network for
postdocs



University's
Writing
Centre



Bielefeld Fund for
Young Reserachers
(BNF)

Today...



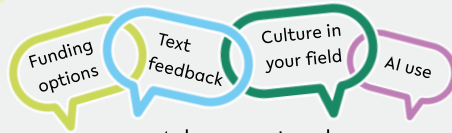
Take home



Know
your
audience.



Weave
your
text.



Ask your network.

Use all information available
on funding body,
funding programme
and review criteria.



Take care

...and good luck!



Contact us at graduatecentre@uni-bielefeld.de

