

Guidelines

for Reviewing Proposals under the
Major Research Instrumentation Programme
as per Art. 91b GG (Basic Law)



Disclaimer: The English translation of this document is provided for informational purposes. In the event of a discrepancy between the English and the German versions, the German text takes precedence.

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I. Programme information

The DFG provides investment funds for the proportional (50%) financing of major research instrumentation at higher education institutions under the Major Research Instrumentation Programme pursuant to Article 91b of the Basic Law (GG). The investment projects for university research are required to embody a particularly high level of scientific quality and attain a level of significance that goes beyond a specific region. The instrumentation must be used predominantly for research, i.e. the need for its procurement and use must be justified solely by its use for the purpose of scientific research. It may also be used in teaching and/or clinical care on a supplementary basis, but this is not considered when assessing necessity. (see Guidelines for Proposals under the Major Research Instrumentation Programme pursuant to Article 91b of the Basic Law – DFG form 21.1)

www.dfg.de/formulare/21_1

The DFG Head Office prepares a decision proposal based on the reviews obtained. Subsequently, all documents are sent to the members of the Scientific Instrumentation and Information Technology Committee. The latter is a body elected by the DFG's Joint Committee: it is responsible for ensuring the quality of the review process and preparing the funding decision to be taken by the Joint Committee.

Please note:

- Please consider first whether you possess the specialist expertise required. If you do not feel professionally competent, let us know as soon as possible. In this case, we would be grateful if you help us by naming individuals who might be qualified to take on the role of a reviewer.

- General Guidelines for Reviews (DFG form 10.20) are available at:

www.dfg.de/formulare/10_20

- If you have any questions regarding the proposal, please direct them solely to the DFG Head Office.
- If necessary, the Head Office will ensure that any points in need of clarification arising from your review are forwarded to the applicants and will ask you to submit your final review after a response to these questions has been obtained.

- Please limit your review to a maximum of two pages.

II. Structure of the Review

1. Qualification of applicants

Do the scientific activities and projects described by the researchers in question justify procurement?

- Applicants' track record and potential
- Soundness of the preparatory work
- Quality of publications and scientific results achieved to date, compared at the national and international level. (Please note that if the proposal contains several sections in the Research chapter (3.1, 3.2, etc), the [Guidelines for Preparing Publication Lists](#) apply regarding the proposal-related bibliography per section).

2. Scientific justification of the procurement

Is procurement and use of the instrumentation justified solely by its deployment for the purpose of research, and does it promise outstanding scientific quality?

- Originality of the planned projects
- Expected gain in knowledge (or development of new methods, for example)
- Scientific significance of the planned projects

3. Use and capacity utilisation of the requested instrumentation

Is the procurement necessary regarding the instrumentation already available at the site and the utilisation concepts proposed (e.g. core facilities)?

- Consideration of the possible uses of existing instrumentation
- Appropriateness of the number of people and working groups that will make use of the instrumentation
- Are the utilisation concepts (e.g. in connection with core facilities) convincing?
- Should the instrumentation be made accessible to other individuals or working groups?

4. Operational expertise and infrastructural environment

Are the necessary personnel and technical requirements met so as to ensure effective and productive use of the instrumentation?

- Do the people involved have (sufficient) prior experience of this class of instrumentation?
- Are sufficient (trained) staff available – also in the long term?
- Is there an infrastructure in place for preparatory work or follow-up work/analyses (e.g. data analysis and management)?
- Have specific requirements for the installation site been sufficiently taken into account (e.g. cleanroom or air conditioning)?
- How do you rate the explanations on the handling of research data??

5. Choice of vendor and instrumentation, configuration and costs

Is the selected product appropriate, including configuration and cost? Have the follow-up costs been realistically calculated?

- Necessity of the requested instrumentation and performance class
- Necessity of the requested accessories
- Sufficient market research
- Calculation of running costs and other follow-up costs (e.g. repair, personnel)

6. Recommendation

Please provide a **clear recommendation** as to whether the proposal should be approved. Take into account whether the choice of the instrumentation including all accessories is appropriate and whether this is matched by the funds requested. If you are essentially in favour of funding but it seems appropriate to you to suggest a reduction in the amount, please do so in concrete terms.