

Guidelines

for the Review of Draft Proposals for Research Units

- Applicable to draft proposals submitted after 1 October 2018 -



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

Funding for a Research Unit enables outstanding researchers to collaborate closely on specific medium-term projects whose anticipated findings could not be achieved within individual grant programmes. A Research Unit typically has fewer than ten projects which are coordinated to enable work on a common research topic. The majority of the research projects should be university based.

A Research Unit is made up of project leaders and project members. One researcher assumes the role of spokesperson. This person should be a full-time university teacher.

Applicants must first submit a draft proposal to the DFG, which then undergoes review. If successful, the DFG will invite the applicants to submit an establishment proposal.

The total duration of funding is generally eight years; the first funding period is usually four years. Continued funding may be applied for with a renewal proposal (see the Guidelines for Research Units programme – DFG form 50.04).

www.dfg.de/formulare/50_04

Please note:

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

www.dfg.de/formulare/10_20

The review should not exceed two pages in length.

II Structure of the Review

1. How would you assess the **quality of the project**, especially with regard to originality and the anticipated contribution to knowledge?
Is funding as a group likely to produce a significant benefit compared to the funding of individual projects? Does the research question require a funding horizon of at least eight years?

2. To what extent do the **objectives and work programme** of the unit as a whole as well as those of the individual projects convincingly reflect clear working hypotheses and an appropriately distinct topic? Please comment on the strengths and weaknesses of the planned investigations. Are the methods and timetable appropriate, and is there a suitable concept for handling research data?
3. How would you evaluate the soundness of the preliminary work, the quality of publications (please refer to the Guidelines for Publication Lists – DFG form 1.91) and the **qualifications of the applicants** – in general and in relation to the project as a whole and the specific individual projects? Please also comment on the extent to which the spokesperson of the Research Unit meets the requirements in terms of his/her scientific track record, experience in leading projects, including third-party-funded projects, and integration and leadership skills.
4. How would you assess the **work and the research environment**?
 - Is/are the host institution(s) suitable for the implementation of the project, particularly in terms of the necessary equipment and facilities?
 - Please also comment on the following aspects in relation to the Research Unit as a whole:
For single-location Research Units: Can structural effects be expected in the local area? For multi-location Research Units: How is the collaboration between the participants to be supported and organised?
5. How would you evaluate the **measures to support researchers in early career phases**? Are there doctoral programmes within the faculty?
6. Are **diversity** and **equal opportunity in the research system** taken into account? What measures are envisaged to integrate women researchers and/or to provide funding opportunities for participating female researchers? What family-friendly provisions are available?
7. Please provide a **clear recommendation** as to whether the applicants should be invited to submit an establishment proposal. Is the cost estimate included in the draft proposal reasonable?