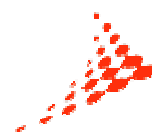
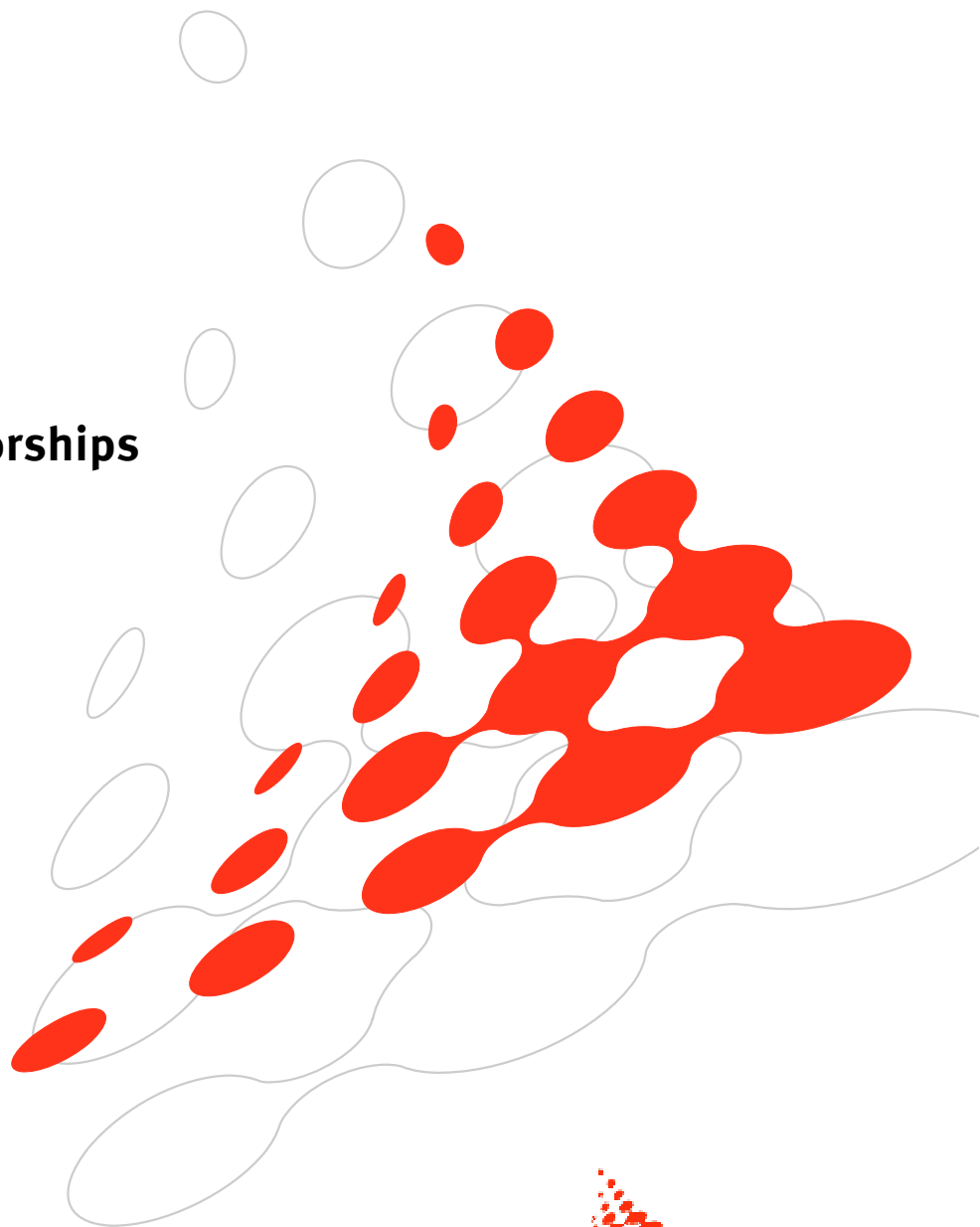


Guidelines for Endowed Professorships

Version 1.0

Valid as of 30.01.2014



FFG

Disclaimer

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this translation. Nevertheless, the FFG cannot assume responsibility for any errors that may inadvertently have occurred. In the event of any discrepancy, the German version is to be taken as valid.

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0 Preamble

The Guidelines for Endowed Professorships contain the fundamental **requirements, funding conditions and procedures** for the submission of applications for the establishment of endowed professorships.

The specific details of the call, including its goals and priorities, the budget and the deadline for submissions are specified in the Guidelines for Applicants.

1 REQUIREMENTS AND FUNDING CONDITIONS

1.1 What is an endowed professorship?

Endowed professorships are designed to attract excellent researchers to Austria. A key element of this funding instrument is that these researchers will also be integrated in an existing work environment and will have their own research group. The selection criteria for endowed professorships include the scientific excellence of the professor to be appointed and the presence of a productive environment at the appointing institution (research group/research field of the endowed professor).

The endowed professor will also be appointed university professor in accordance with Sec. 98 of the Austrian Universities Act (UG 2002). The call stipulates special requirements for the appointment. If a university is granted funding for an endowed professorship, it will be responsible for conducting the recruitment and selection procedure in accordance with these requirements. The process to be followed in the appointment procedure is specified in the Austrian Universities Act. The university is required to establish sustainable structures (i.e. structures that remain in place beyond the funding period).

The professorship must be integrated in the development plan in accordance with Sec. 98 (1) of the UG 2002 (“The subject allocation of a chair to be filled on a permanent basis or for longer than three years shall be specified by the development plan”).

1.2 What requirements must be met?

Endowed professorships receive funding under the following conditions:

- The concept submitted must present the total costs of the endowed professorship. The funds provided by the university(ies) involved as well as the contributions by the co-financing partners must be evidenced by Letters of Commitment (LOC).
- The funding period is limited to 5 years and includes the establishment of a research group in Austria in the chosen research topic (see Guidelines for Applicants).
- The Call is addressed to universities in accordance with Sec. 6 UG 2002.
- The appointment is made in accordance with Sec. 98 UG 2002.
- The person appointed must conduct research in a research topic specified in the Guidelines for Applicants (see Chapters 2.1 to 2.2).

- The person appointed must come from outside the Austrian university sector (i.e., no employment relationship with an Austrian university or other Austrian research institution for at least 3 years prior to submission of the funding application).
- The appointing university declares that the use of the funding is at the sole discretion of the endowed professor.
- The appointing university integrates the endowed professorship in the university's planning documents (development plan, organisational plans) beyond the funding period in the long-term.
- The endowed professor must have an employment contract of at least 80% with the appointing university throughout the funding period.

1.3 Who is eligible to receive funding and/or to participate?

Universities in accordance with Sec 6 UG 2002 are eligible for funding. Applications must be submitted by at least one Austrian university.

The applicant university nominates a project manager to act as contact for the FFG. The project manager is usually someone from the university management (rector, vice-rector). Universities may submit more than one funding application.

The endowed professorship must be co-financed by at least two companies or by one company and one of the following co-financing partners.

- Intermediary(ies): cluster initiatives, technology and transfer centres
- other research institution(s)
- natural persons
- foundations

The co-financing partners provide cash contributions and do not receive direct funding.

The application must present an overall financing concept for the entire funding period.

1.4 What are the duties of the university?

The applicant university receives and manages the entire funding and partner budget for the entire funding period. The appointing university provides the basic infrastructure and personnel resources and commits itself to continuing the professorship after expiry of the funding period.

The project manager of the appointing university is responsible for communication with the funding agency and the co-financing partners up to the time when the endowed professor concludes an employment contract with the university. From then on, the endowed professor will be responsible for communications with the funding agency.

1.5 How much support is granted?

The maximum amount of federal funding is EUR 2 million per endowed professorship.

Support is paid in the form of non-repayable grants and is limited to 60% of total eligible costs.

Funding will be provided at the following rates:

- Federal funding: max. 60%; max. EUR 2 million per endowed professorship
- Contribution of university(ies) involved: min. 15% (in cash or in kind)
- Contribution of co-financing partners: min. 15% (in cash)
- The remaining balance of 10% may be provided either by the university(ies) in cash or in kind and/or by the co-financing partners in cash.

1.6 What costs are eligible?

All costs attributed to the establishment of the endowed professorship are eligible for funding. This includes expenses incurred directly, actually and additionally (to the normal operational costs) during the funding period.

Costs will not be **recognised** and the funding period for the endowed professorship will not commence until the appointment procedure has been concluded and the **professor has accepted the appointment**.

The funding period corresponds with the contractually agreed term of the endowed professorship.

Detailed information on eligible and non-eligible costs are given in the “Guidelines for the Accounting of Project Costs in Funding Applications and Reports” (Cost Guidelines Version 1.3), which may be found at www.ffg.at/kostenleitfaden.

The following rules apply to endowed professorships **in addition to the Cost Guidelines**:

- Costs of internationally excellent research are eligible for funding up to the maximum amount specified in the federal salary scale. The salary may exceed this limit (international customary level of remuneration for special research expertise), but the amount exceeding this limit is not eligible for funding.
 - Administrative costs are not eligible for funding and must be included in the overhead costs.
- Third-party costs must not exceed 20% of the total costs.

1.7 What criteria are used to assess applications for funding?

The evaluation of applications for funding is based on the following **three main criteria**:

- Relevance to the goals of the call
- Quality of planned implementation
- Qualification of the applicant university(ies)

The following table provides the relevant sub-criteria and the questions used to assess them. In the course of the assessment, marks are assigned to each criterion. The maximum number of points achievable in each criterion reflects the significance of that criterion.

Funding criteria – explanations		Points	Threshold
1. Relevance to the call		35	21
Strategic relevance to achieving the call goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent does the endowed professorship contribute to reaching the three goals of the call? • Does the chosen topic relate to one of the call topics? • To what extent does the endowed professorship contribute to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • closing gaps or • building up critical masses or • establishing relevant specialisations? • Is the topic of great significance for Austrian companies? • What is the future potential of the planned research topic? 		
Incentive effect of the funding (additionality)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the endowed professorship expected to provide a significant impact on the Austrian research landscape? • Does the professorship open up a new field for Austria/the location or does it duplicate existing research approaches? • Will Austrian companies be able to exploit the expected research results on a long-term basis ? 		
2. Quality of planned implementation		35	21
Search strategy and appointment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the search strategy suitable for addressing and reaching international top researchers? • Do the qualification profile and the draft of the job description correspond with the goals of the call? 		
Gender-sensitive appointment procedure and establishment of research group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do the position announcement and appointment procedure for the endowed professorship include measures that ensure an appropriate gender balance? [This gender balance should be assessed equally for men and women.] 		
Quality of planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the time plan for the appointment procedure well structured, transparent and realistic? • Are all procedures and structures (e.g. composition of the appointment committee, selection of assessors according to Sec. 98 UG 2002) described in a clear and transparent manner? • Is the financing concept transparent and realistic? • Is the financing framework flexible enough to support the development of research and teaching capacity? 		

3. Qualification of applicant university(ies)	30	18
Infrastructure and organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the university provide a strong (complementary) scientific environment? • Do the organisational conditions ensure an attractive working environment and development perspectives for establishing a new group? • Is the existing or planned infrastructure suitable for the planned research and teaching activities? • How is the endowed professorship integrated in the development plan of the appointing institution? • Does the university provide development opportunities for the research field? 	

1.8 What documents are required for submission?

Applications may only be **submitted electronically via eCall** at the Internet address <https://ecall.ffg.at>. The following **documents** must be attached to the electronic application using the **eCall upload function**:

- **Project Description:** thematic application – upload as PDF file
- **Cost Plan:** cost tables – upload as **one** Excel file
 - **Attachments to the electronic application (PDF file):**
 - Letters of Commitment
 - Draft of the position announcement for the endowed professorship
 - Extract from the university’s development plan; including English translation (extract must be presented at the hearing at the latest).

In individual cases additional supporting documents may be requested. The funding application must be submitted in English.

2 SUBMISSION PROCEDURE

2.1 What is the procedure for submission?

The complete set of application documents must be submitted electronically via **eCall** at the Internet address <https://ecall.ffg.at>.

The application forms for the relevant call are to be used without exception (see Chapter 3, Guidelines for Applicants).

The application for funding may not be submitted until **all partner universities** (if any) have **completed and submitted** their partner applications in eCall.

An application is considered to have been submitted if it has been **completed in eCall** by clicking the “Submit” button. On successful submission an automatic confirmation of receipt will be sent by e-mail. It is **not possible to resubmit** the application or parts of it or to revise the application once it has been submitted.

Applicants are not required to send a duly executed copy of the funding application by post. The online submission is sufficient.

The application may only be submitted by the applicant university or by a duly authorised person, usually the rector or vice-rector. Proof that this person is entitled to represent the university must be provided to the FFG at any time on demand. If this cannot be done, the FFG reserves the right to reject the applications in question for formal reasons.

A **detailed tutorial** on eCall is available at <https://ecall.ffg.at/Cockpit/Help.aspx>.

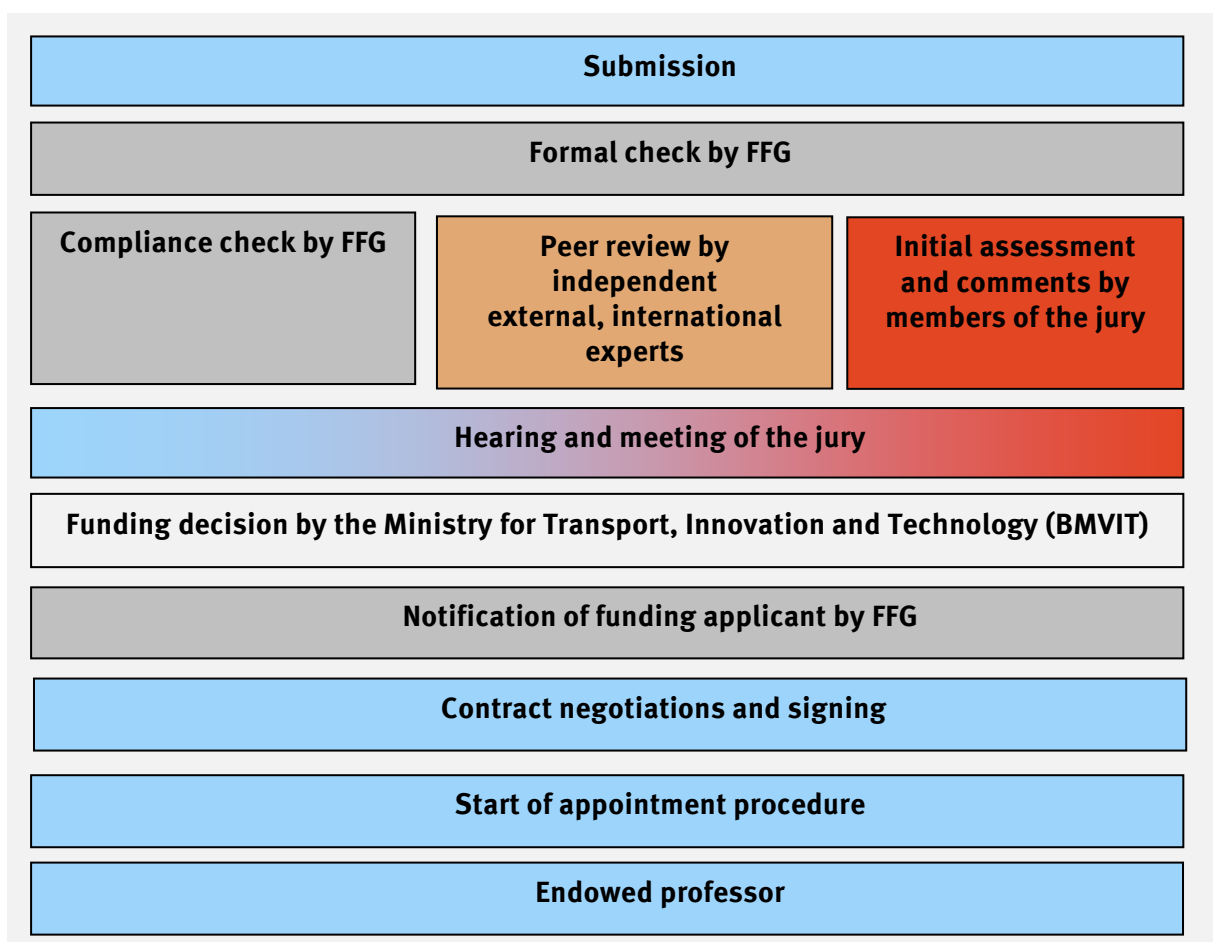
Please refer to the Guidelines for Applicants for further instructions and formal requirements for submissions.

2.2 What measures are taken to protect confidential project data?

All applications that are submitted will only be made available to the persons involved in the administration of the call. All these persons are sworn to treat the information in strict confidence. In particular, the national and international experts involved in the evaluation process must sign a declaration of confidentiality before they start their work.

3 EVALUATION AND FUNDING DECISION

3.1 How is the evaluation process organised?



- Responsibility of funding applicant
- Responsibility of FFG programme management
- Responsibility of jury
- Responsibility of external peer reviewers

3.2 What is the formal check?

During the formal check, the application is checked for **formal correctness and completeness**. The information contained in the application is not examined during the formal check; this takes place during the evaluation process. Should it transpire after the formal check that incorrect information has been given, the funding application may also be removed from consideration at a subsequent point in the procedure.

The **result** of the formal check will be communicated within **four weeks by means of an eCall message**.

If the formal criteria are not met and the deficiency(ies) cannot be rectified, the application for funding will fail the formal check and will not enter the subsequent steps of the procedure. If the formal check reveals deficiencies that can be rectified, the applicant is given the opportunity to rectify these problems within a reasonable period of time.

The relevant “**Checklist**” can be found in the corresponding project description template.

3.3 What does the compliance check by FFG involve?

The FFG programme management will check the funding application for compliance with the relevant guidelines and also review the programme-specific aspects.

The correctness and plausibility of the financing plan for the endowed professorship will also be examined.

3.4 What is the peer review?

The peer review is carried out by international experts based on the submitted documents. They assess the scientific quality of the application and its relevance to the goals of the call. The peer reviews will be made available to the members of the jury.

It is possible to **exclude reviewers** (individuals or staff of particular organisations) for justified reasons. eCall contains an entry field for this purpose.

3.5 What does the initial assessment by the members of the jury involve?

The members of the jury assess the funding applications in accordance with the criteria specified in Chapter 1.7. This assessment includes both scientific perspectives as well as structural issues. This initial assessment provides the basis for formulating questions for the hearing, which are forwarded to the applicants prior to the hearing.

3.6 How is the hearing conducted?

The hearing is conducted by the members of the jury. The applicants use the hearing to present the concept for their endowed professorship. The jury has the opportunity to ask questions based on the assessment of the funding applications in order to discuss the written project description in more detail.

The jury takes the compliance check, the peer reviews and the results of the hearing (presentation and interview) as a basis to recommend which endowed professorships should receive funding and formulates the corresponding conditions and/or recommendations.

The hearing is conducted in English. The applicants will be notified of the exact date of the hearing in due time and receive detailed information via eCall. Only applicants whose applications have exceeded the threshold value of 60 points in the written evaluation will be invited to a hearing.

3.7 Who takes the funding decision?

The funding decision is taken by the BMVIT based on the recommendation of the jury. In the event of rejection the applicant will be notified of the reasons for the decision in writing.

4 PROCEDURE AFTER THE FUNDING DECISION

4.1 How is the funding contract concluded?

If funding is granted, the FFG sends the applicant university an offer of funding in the form of a draft contract, which must be accepted within a specified period of time. If the university accepts the **funding offer**, including any relevant requirements and conditions, within the specified period of time, a funding contract will be drawn up.

The **funding contract** specifies, among other points, the funding recipients, the project title, the level of eligible costs, the amount of approved funding, the funding period, the payment modalities and the reporting requirements.

The funding contract must be duly executed and the original returned to the FFG.

Until the funding contract has been concluded, the applicants have no legal right to receive support.

4.2 How should requirements and recommendations be taken into account?

During the assessment of the application, recommendations or binding requirements may be formulated. Requirements may be preconditions for the conclusion of the funding contract or may represent conditions to be met within the funding period.

4.3 How are the instalments of funding paid?

The first instalment will be paid once the funding contract has been signed and any requirements have been met.

The payment of financial support during the funding period does not imply approval of the costs.

Before payment of the final instalment, the final report and the final accounts will be examined. The costs will be approved once discharge is granted following the audit by the FFG Project Controlling & Audit Division.

FFG instalment scheme	
Duration in months (years)	60 (5)
Number of reports (interim reports and final report)	5

1st instalment (% of contractual funding)	20 %
2nd instalment (up to % of contractual funding)	20 %
3rd instalment (up to % of contractual funding)	20 %
4th instalment (up to % of contractual funding)	20 %
5th instalment (up to % of contractual funding)	10%
Final instalment (up to % of contractual funding)	10 %

4.4 What requirements must be met prior to payment of the 1st instalment?

The funding period commences upon acceptance of the appointment by the endowed professor. Prior to this, the FFG must confirm that the endowed professor has been appointed in compliance with the concept and the co-financing partners have provided the relevant financing commitments.

For this purpose, the appointing university must send the following documents to the FFG via eCall:

- Information about the outcome of the appointment procedure (acceptance of appointment by the selected professor),
- Work plan for the entire term of the professorship agreed with the endowed professor,
- Written financing commitments by the co-financing partners including a payment plan and any exit scenarios, if required.

The FFG will confirm that the appointment is in compliance with the concept within 2 weeks of submission of all necessary documents.

4.5 What reports and accounts are required?

Within one month of the reporting deadlines specified in the funding contract, an **interim scientific report** and an interim financial account must be submitted **via the eCall reporting system**.

Within two months of the end of the funding period a **final scientific report** and the final accounts must be presented, again via the eCall reporting system.

All reports and accounts must include all partners' activities and costs attributable to the endowed professorship for which FFG funding has been granted.

The eCall **templates** are to be used in the preparation of the reports.

Detailed information on eligible and non-eligible costs are set out in the "Guidelines for the Accounting of Project Costs in Funding Applications and Reports" (Version 1.3), which can be found at www.ffg.at/Kostenleitfaden.

In addition, the funding recipient undertakes to work together with the FFG and the responsible departments to support PR work, as and when required. This relates in particular to the making available of non-confidential information and images for electronic dissemination portals and other media purposes.

4.6 How should changes to the project be communicated?

The FFG must be informed of **substantial changes** to the submitted and approved implementation plan (e.g. delays in the appointment procedure, changes in key personnel, withdrawal or admission of co-financing partners) immediately after they become known.

Before any **changes** may be made **to points specified in the contract** (dates, costs, partners, etc.), a substantiated request to this effect must be submitted to and **approved by the FFG**.

The **request** for such a change, together with an appropriate description and justification, is to be submitted via **eCall**. Any necessary supporting documentation should be uploaded as an attachment to the eCall message or sent by post.

It is possible to reallocate costs (e. g. material costs to personnel costs), if required even between partners.

Minor cost reallocations should be justified, either in a report or via an eCall message. Minor cost reallocations within the cost categories of a particular partner are taken to mean the reallocation of amounts below 15 % of the partner's total costs or below EUR 15,000. Minor cost reallocations between partners are taken to mean the reallocation of amounts below 10 % of the total project costs and below EUR 100,000.

Major cost reallocations are all reallocations that cannot be considered as minor. Major cost reallocations must be requested in advance by means of the cost reallocation table (an FFG template) and a detailed explanation and justification. In the event of major cost reallocations between partners, the consent of the partners in question must be submitted in the form of a duly signed letter, scanned and attached to the eCall message.

4.7 Can the funding period be extended?

The funding period may be extended for up to a maximum of one year, without the payment of additional support. An application for extension of the funding period must in any case be submitted via eCall within the approved funding period.

4.8 What happens after expiry of the funding period?

After a **review of the final scientific report and the final accounts**, the FFG's Project Controlling & Audit Division will undertake an audit to establish whether the support has been used in accordance with the regulations. During the course of the **audit** the **final level of eligible costs will be established**.

The **result** of the audit **will be communicated in writing to the funding recipients**. If the results are positive, the FFG will confirm that the support has been used in accordance with its regulations; in the event of a **negative** result, procedures may be initiated to secure **repayment** of support.

If the result is **positive** and if the level of cost initially envisioned has been reached, the final instalment given in the funding contract will be transferred. If the project is underspent the level of support will be reduced accordingly.

The level of support paid may also be reduced for scientific reasons, as well as on formal and legal grounds.

The FFG is entitled to examine the accuracy of the information provided by the funding recipients as well as the correct and legal use of the funds throughout the funding period and especially during the audit of the final accounts.

Any original receipts and the associated documentation of cash flows (e.g. account statements) must be made available for FFG audits and must be kept for a period of 10 years. The audits will be duly announced by the FFG.