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Forschung wirkt.

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**RESEARCH DATA INFRASTRUCTURES  
CALL 2024  
CALL GUIDELINE**

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## 1 KEY FACTS AT A GLANCE

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Total funding of EUR 1.3 million is made available under this Call as part of the Research Data Infrastructure initiative supported by “Fonds Zukunft Österreich”.

Table 1: Key points of the Call

Key points	Information
<b>Short description</b>	<p>This Call supports projects for the acquisition and establishment of research data infrastructures (use types: “non-economic use” and “economic use”) for basic research and for applied research in the context of national implementation of the <b>EU Missions SOIL and WATERS</b>.</p> <p>The projects must make a <b>direct contribution to one of the two EU missions and its objectives</b>. Each project must be assigned to one of the two EU missions (call topics) in eCall.</p>
<b>Funding amount</b>	max. 650,000 EUR per project
<b>Eligible total project costs</b>	min. 200,000 EUR per project
<b>Funding rate</b>	<p>“Non-economic use”: <b>max. 90%</b></p> <p>“Economic use”: <b>max. 50%</b></p>
<b>Eligible costs</b>	Cost for the acquisition of research data infrastructure capitalised in the fixed asset register (see <a href="#">section 3.6</a> )
<b>Duration (years)</b>	<p>max. 3 years</p> <p><b>Latest project start: 01/12/2025</b></p> <p>Projects must start on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the month.</p>
<b>Type of application</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Individual application or</li> <li>– Consortium</li> </ul> <p>A maximum of 2 funding applications may be submitted per applicant organisation and use type (for details see <a href="#">section 3.4</a>)</p>

Key points	Information
<b>Eligible organisations</b>	<p>The following are eligible in the "<b>non-economic use</b>" category:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Research and knowledge dissemination organisations</li> <li>– Universities (universities and universities of applied sciences)</li> <li>– Non-university research institutions</li> <li>– Technology transfer institutions, innovation intermediaries and other research-oriented organisations (e.g. dedicated associations, operators of R&amp;D infrastructure)</li> </ul> <p>The following are eligible in the "<b>economic use</b>" category:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Research and knowledge dissemination organisations</li> <li>– Undertakings</li> </ul>
<b>Language</b>	English (see <a href="#">section 5.1</a> )
<b>Total budget</b>	1.3 million EUR
<b>Funding provider</b>	Fonds Zukunft Österreich
<b>Submission deadline</b>	02 April 2025, 12:00 (CEST)
<b>Contact</b>	<p><b>R&amp;D Infrastructure Funding Team:</b>            Joachim Haumann, +43 57755-2412, <a href="mailto:joachim.haumann@ffg.at">joachim.haumann@ffg.at</a>            Katrin Wlcek, +43 57755-2411, <a href="mailto:katrin.wlcek@ffg.at">katrin.wlcek@ffg.at</a>            Astrid Stakne, +43 57755-2406, <a href="mailto:astrid.stakne@ffg.at">astrid.stakne@ffg.at</a>            Lisa Eberlein, +43 57755-2414, <a href="mailto:lisa.eberlein@ffg.at">lisa.eberlein@ffg.at</a></p> <p><b>Mission Management Unit:</b>            Sascha Ruhland +43 57755-4020, <a href="mailto:sascha.ruhland@ffg.at">sascha.ruhland@ffg.at</a>            Elisabeth Thompson +43 57755-4018, <a href="mailto:elisabeth.thompson@ffg.at">elisabeth.thompson@ffg.at</a></p>
<b>Online information</b>	<a href="http://www.ffg.at/ausschreibung/forschungsdateninfrastrukturen_2024">www.ffg.at/ausschreibung/forschungsdateninfrastrukturen_2024</a>
<b>Submission portal</b>	<a href="https://ecall.ffg.at">https://ecall.ffg.at</a>

In the event of inconsistency or discrepancy between the German language version and the English translation of this Call Guideline the German language version shall prevail.

## Diverse teams

Teams which are diverse in composition offer a range of perspectives, encouraging them to be more innovative and productive. A team which is diverse, in terms of gender and background, etc., can raise the quality of projects and consequently their research, products and services. The impacts of project outcomes on people are taken into account by considering the various demands of a product in its use or manufacture. Teams which include a variety of perspectives, experiences, worldviews and skills are key to developing effective solutions for society and the economy.

The FFG offers support through funding. Information is available on the website: [https://www.ffg.at/gleichstellung#Foerdermoeglichkeiten\\_Vielfalt](https://www.ffg.at/gleichstellung#Foerdermoeglichkeiten_Vielfalt)

## 2 OBJECTIVES OF THE CALL



### 2.1 General objectives of the Call

This Call under the FFG's Research Data Infrastructures 2024 initiative is designed to provide funding for research data infrastructures in the context of national implementation of the EU Missions **SOIL** and **WATERS** and seeks to achieve the following objectives for Austria:

- Create a foundation for excellent basic research and applied research and innovation activities at research and knowledge dissemination organisations and undertakings in the context of achieving the goals of the EU Missions;
- Improve the international position of Austrian research activities;
- Encourage shared use by research and knowledge dissemination organisations and undertakings (improved efficiency and capacity utilisation, additional benefit through new collaborations);
- Enable multidisciplinary and interdisciplinarity in research and development (funded research data infrastructure is used by several research groups and for different research/innovation activities through interdisciplinary approaches in shared use and open access to additional users);
- Contribute to achieving the goals of the EU Missions.

The Call provides funding for the following categories of use:

- **“Non-economic use”**  
Research data infrastructure at research and knowledge dissemination organisations that enables pioneering scientific research and high-quality education in future-oriented research fields as part of non-economic activities.
- **“Economic use”**  
Research data infrastructure at research and knowledge dissemination organisations and undertakings that supports companies in particular in developing innovative products, processes or services in future-oriented technology fields.

The projects must make a direct **contribution to one of the two EU missions and its objectives** and must be assigned to one of the two call topics in [eCall](#).

The funding initiative is financed by contributions from the National Foundation for Research, Technology and Development / Austria Fund.

## 2.2 Call topic: EU Mission SOIL

The objectives of national implementation of the EU Mission **SOIL** (“Healthy Soils”) include:

- Quality-assured knowledge transfer to enhance soil expertise;
- Pooling knowledge about soils to enable research and dissemination of research results, for the purposes of education and more generally;
- Improving accessibility to relevant information and communication about soil;
- Increasing the quantity, importance and visibility of soil research;
- Strengthening synergies in soil research, soil science and soil expertise through exchange and networking;
- Supporting activities designed to reduce land consumption and sealing, to maintain and improve soil quality as well as the diversity of soil functions, and to appoint and establish soil ambassadors;
- Developing a coordinated soil monitoring system in accordance with the EU Soil Monitoring and Resilience Directive currently under discussion.

Expanded, new, and additional **research data infrastructures** are needed to implement these goals. EU Mission Soil will provide funding for projects designed to create research data infrastructures that address the following topics and tasks:

- Establishing a central SOIL information, research and knowledge database (including an overview of soil research, such as relevant, usable project results).

Merging, linking and developing soil-relevant information systems and data (e.g. on erosion, carbon, biodiversity, land consumption).

## 2.3 Call topic: EU Mission WATERS

The objectives of national implementation of the EU Mission **WATERS** (“Protect and Restore our Waters”) include:

- The long-term enhancement of knowledge about water and water management among the population.
- Strengthening citizen participation and thus improving social discourse.
- Dealing with conflicts of use in the water sector, developing integrative approaches to water management (e.g. increasing the proportion of water bodies in good ecological status) and using research and development to protect and restore rivers and floodplains.
- Research and development on the topics of aquatic biodiversity and securing water resources (e.g. drought risk management plans).

Expanded, new, and additional **research data infrastructures** are needed to implement these goals. EU Mission WATERS will provide funding for projects which create research data infrastructures that address the following topics and tasks:

- Closing data gaps in water research and, in particular, closing survey gaps of spatial and temporal data (for rivers, floodplains, groundwater, river-ocean continuum or on the topics of sediment budget, river morphology, periglacial and glacial domains).
- Linking data from relevant (research) programmes and research infrastructures (especially eLTER-RI, Danubius-RI), including standardisation and synchronisation according to FAIR data standards.

Creation of data concepts for long-term research (over and above WFD monitoring) to support digitisation and data availability in accordance with the action plan.

## 3 BASIS OF FUNDING

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### 3.1 What are research data infrastructures?

Research data infrastructures are systems and facilities that support the collection, management, storage, provision, analysis and exchange of research data. They include both technical components (such as computing resources and databases) and organisational structures (such as data management policies, processes and services) which are designed to ensure the quality, interoperability and sustainability of research data. The key features of research data infrastructure include:

- **Data management:** The infrastructure must provide strategies and tools for the effective management of research data. This includes storage, metadata management, data quality assurance, version control, and documentation.
- **Accessibility:** Research data should be accessible to the relevant stakeholders (researchers, institutions, or the public), in accordance with data protection and security regulations. This involves the use of various access methods including open repositories, data portals, and specialised platforms.
- **Interoperability:** The infrastructure must allow research data to be exchanged between different systems and disciplines to promote integration and shared use. This is achieved by means of standardised formats, interfaces and protocols.
- **Long-term retention:** The research data infrastructure must ensure that data is retained over the long term, and beyond the duration of the research project. This is achieved by means of data backup and archiving strategies.
- **Sustainability:** Infrastructure should be future-proof by ensuring regular updates to reflect evolving technological, legal and scientific requirements.

Research data infrastructures promote research, knowledge exchange/dissemination, technology and innovation development, interdisciplinary collaboration, and provide a wide range of users with access to data.

Funding is available for research data infrastructures projects of the following **types of use**:

- **"non-economic use"**
- **"economic use"**

A comparison of the two types of use is shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Comparison of the two types of use

Key points	Non-economic use	Economic use
<b>Goal</b>	Enable <b>pioneering scientific research and high quality education</b> in future-oriented research fields as part of non-economic activities.	Support the <b>development of innovative products, processes or services</b> in future-oriented technology fields
<b>Use of funded research data infrastructure</b>	<p><b>Nearly exclusively for non-economic activities</b></p> <p>Economic use is admissible as a purely ancillary activity</p> <p>See <a href="#">section 3.2.2</a></p>	<p>– No limitation</p> <p>See <a href="#">section 3.2.2</a></p>
<b>Eligible organisations</b>	<p>– Research and knowledge dissemination organisations</p> <p>See sections <a href="#">3.3</a> and <a href="#">3.4</a></p>	<p>– Research and knowledge dissemination organisations</p> <p>– Undertakings</p> <p><u>Note:</u> Projects submitted by undertakings (including as consortium members) fall into the "economic use" category without exception.</p> <p>See sections <a href="#">3.3</a> and <a href="#">3.4</a></p>
<b>Eligible costs</b>	<p>Costs for the acquisition of the research data infrastructures capitalised in the fixed asset register</p> <p>See <a href="#">section 3.6</a></p>	<p>Costs for the acquisition of the research data infrastructures capitalised in the fixed asset register</p> <p>See <a href="#">section 3.6</a></p>
<b>Funding rate</b>	<p>max. 90%</p> <p>See <a href="#">section 3.5</a></p>	<p>max. 50%</p> <p>See <a href="#">section 3.5</a></p>
<b>Match funding</b>	<p>The funding <b>does not constitute state aid</b> within the meaning of the Commission Framework for State aid for research and development and innovation 2022, OJ 2022/C 414 of 28.10.2022 (hereinafter: Commission Framework). Match funding from public sources is therefore permitted.</p> <p>See <a href="#">section 3.7</a></p>	<p>The funding <b>constitutes state aid</b> within the meaning of the Commission Framework for State aid for research and development and innovation 2022, OJ 2022/C 414 of 28.10.2022 (hereinafter: Commission Framework). Match funding from public sources is therefore not permitted.</p> <p>See <a href="#">section 3.7</a></p>

## **3.2 What should be taken into account regarding the use of the research data infrastructure?**

### **3.2.1 Open, non-discriminatory access**

Research data infrastructures must be open to several users and access must be granted under non-discriminatory and transparent conditions. This means that at least 10% of total annual capacity must be made available for use by other organisations.

“Other organisations” are taken to mean organisations other than the applicant organisation or consortium members.

### **3.2.2 Planned use**

The research data infrastructure may be used for economic or non-economic activities (see also Commission Framework).

#### **– Use for economic activities**

When using the funded research data infrastructure for economic activities, it must be ensured that such use does not constitute indirect aid. This means that use for economic activities must be at full cost including profit margin or at market price in order to avoid indirect aid.

#### **– Use for non-economic activities**

Non-economic activities of research and knowledge dissemination organisations within the meaning of the Commission Framework include:

- Education
- Independent research and development, including in cooperation, if this involves “effective collaboration”
- Knowledge dissemination and knowledge transfer

#### **“Non-economic use” category:**

Research data infrastructure of the “non-economic use” category must be used **nearly exclusively for non-economic activities**. Economic use is admissible as an ancillary activity if:

- its scope is limited, i.e. it does not exceed 20% of total annual capacity of the research data infrastructures, and
- the financing, costs and revenues of each type of activity is accounted for separately on the basis of consistently applied and objectively justifiable cost accounting principles, and
- it is directly related to and necessary for the operation of the research data infrastructures, or it is intrinsically linked to the main non-economic activity, i.e. it involves the same input (e.g. material, equipment, personnel, investment capital) as the non-economic activities.

### 3.2.3 Usage strategy

When submitting an application via [eCall](#), a plausible usage strategy must be presented in the content description. The strategy must cover the entire useful life of the research data infrastructure.

The key points of the usage strategy include in particular:

- Management of use (including personnel and resource plan)
- Demand and capacity utilisation
- Shared use by third parties (i.e. organisations other than the applicant organisation or members of the applicant consortium)
- Terms and conditions for transparent and non-discriminatory access by third parties
- Calculation of usage fees (process for calculating full costs including profit margin or market price)
- Calculation of start-up and follow-up costs (operating costs, maintenance costs and replacement investments)
- Sustainable financing concept
- Presentation of ownership structure for the planned research data infrastructures
- If applicable: planned conditions for preferential access for co-financing organisations.

## 3.3 Who is eligible for funding?

Legal entities, partnerships and sole traders that are not part of the Austrian federal administration are eligible to receive funding.

The following organisations are eligible for funding in the "**non-economic use**" category:

- **Research and knowledge dissemination organisations** (see definition in [section 8.5](#))
  - [Universities](#)
  - Universities of applied sciences
  - Non-university research institutions
  - Technology transfer institutions, innovation intermediaries and other research-oriented organisations (e.g. dedicated associations).

The following organisations are eligible for funding in the "**economic use**" category:

- **Research and knowledge dissemination organisations** (see definition in [section 8.5](#))
  - [Universities](#)
  - Universities of applied sciences
  - Non-university research institutions
  - Technology transfer institutions, innovation intermediaries and other research-oriented organisations (e.g. dedicated associations).
- **[Undertakings](#)**

**The following applies additionally:**

- Applicants must be legal representatives of the submitting organisation.
- Linked organisations (e.g. parent companies and subsidiaries) are considered and treated as one organisation or consortium member. According to the [SME definition](#), an enterprise is considered to be linked if a holding exceeds the threshold of 50%.
- Co-financing organisations (see [section 3.7](#)) must **not** be entered as “Partners” in [eCall](#).
- Consortium members must not simultaneously act as subcontractors. Subcontractors are not consortium members. They provide specific services for consortium members and are not entitled to use the project results.

**Not eligible to participate:**

Organisations which have substantially contributed to the evaluation or design of a funding measure related to this specific Call in the past three years on behalf of the FFG or the funding authority, are not allowed to participate in this Call in any way for reasons of incompatibility.

If this concerns different units of an organisation, a participation in this specific Call must be coordinated with the FFG Call Management. In any case, the organisation must demonstrate that there is no conflict of interest.

The FFG reserves the right to exclude applicants due to incompatibilities.

### **3.4 What are the requirements for funding applicants**

The research data infrastructure may be acquired by **one organisation alone or by a consortium**. Collaboration within the consortium and the rights with respect to the findings/results obtained using the research data infrastructures shall be specified in a legally valid cooperation agreement (consortium agreement) prior to the start of the project. More information and a model consortium agreement is available at [www.ffg.at/Konsortialvertrag](http://www.ffg.at/Konsortialvertrag).

The **funding recipient must have ownership** of the research data infrastructure **from the start-up date**. The ownership rights with respect to the research data infrastructures must be defined in [eCall](#), in the content description under “usage strategy”.

The **establishment or branch** of the organisation which owns the research data infrastructure must be situated in **Austria**. The project location of the research data infrastructure must be situated in Austria.

**A maximum of 2 funding applications** can be submitted **per applicant organisation and type of use**. Each organisation may thus submit no more than 2 applications in the "economic use" category and 2 applications in the "non-economic use" category. Partner applications are not subject to any restrictions in this respect. Applicant

organisations that are linked to each other are considered as one applicant entity. According to the [SME definition](#), an enterprise is considered to be linked if a holding exceeds the threshold of 50%. Please observe the eligible organisations for the different types of use ([section 3.3](#)).

### 3.5 How much funding is granted?

Funding is granted in the form of **non-repayable subsidies**. The funding rate depends exclusively on the type of use of the research data infrastructure and is shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Funding rates

Type of use	Funding rate
<b>Non-economic use</b>	max. 90 %
<b>Economic use</b>	max. 50 %

If the project receives additional funding from other funding institutions this must be stated in the application. The cumulative funding must not exceed the state aid limit under European law (see General Block Exemption Regulation of the European Commission: COMMISSION REGULATION (EU) No 651/2014 of 17 June 2014 declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the internal market in application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, OJ L 187/1, 26.6.2014, as amended by REGULATION (EU) 2023/1315, OJ L 167/1, 30.06.2023, hereinafter GBER).

### 3.6 What costs are eligible?

Eligible costs must be allocable directly to the project. This means that:

- they are incurred additionally to the normal operating costs during the funding period,
- they are in accordance with the funding contract,
- they can be evidenced by receipts.

The earliest possible date for the start of the project (start of the funding period) is after submission of the application for funding and must be entered in [eCall](#). The latest possible start of the project is on 01/12/2025.

Work (e.g. acquisition of the research data infrastructures) may not be started until the start of the funding period in accordance with the funding contract. ‘Start of work’ shall be the earlier of either the start of assembly of the research data infrastructure, construction work relating to the investment, or the first legally binding commitment to order equipment, or any other commitment that makes the investment irreversible.

Details on cost recognition can be found in the [Cost Guidelines \(version 3.1\)](#).

**The following provisions apply in addition to the [Cost Guidelines \(version 3.1\)](#):**

- Only costs that have been stated in the application will be recognised.
- Funding is granted exclusively for research data infrastructure acquisition costs (investments). These include:
  - costs for the acquisition of research data infrastructure with the purpose of undertaking research and development. These may include:
    - i) investment costs in tangible and intangible assets. According to the General Block Exemption Regulation (GBER), this includes facilities and resources that are used by the scientific community to conduct research in their respective fields. This definition covers scientific equipment or sets of instruments, knowledge-based resources such as collections, archives or structured scientific information, enabling information and communication technology-based infrastructures such as grid, computing, software and communication, or any other entity of a unique nature essential to conduct research. Such infrastructures may be ‘single-sited’ or ‘distributed’ (an organised network of resources). The infrastructure acquisition may concern individual pieces of equipment or a set of different components.
    - ii) Both new and used facilities and facility parts may be contributed, which subsequently pass into the ownership of the funding recipient. Used facilities will be valued on the basis of the documented acquisition or manufacturing costs, less deductions for previous use (remaining book value), if applicable. It is not possible to contribute facilities or facility parts that have already been fully or partially funded.
  - costs that are directly related to the acquisition of the research data infrastructure and have been capitalised in the fixed asset register.
- The costs for the acquisition of the research data infrastructure (investments) must be recorded at its full acquisition value.
- The application of overhead is not possible.
- The costs must be capitalised in the fixed asset register for accounting purposes. The fixed asset register must be presented during the audit of the final accounts.
- Funding for non-Austrian consortium members must not exceed 20% of the total funding.

The following costs are **not eligible**:

- Replacement investments for renewal of basic equipment of the research data infrastructure
- Acquisition costs for real estate and immovable assets
- Building investments that go beyond necessary adaptations and building equipment (e.g. supply lines)
- Costs that are not considered as eligible costs based on EU law.

### **What should be taken into account when acquiring research data infrastructure(s)?**

All required permits and licences must be obtained and all official directives and statutory provisions (national and EU law) adhered to in the research data infrastructure acquisition process.

Procurement in FFG projects is subject to stringent regulations. Further information can be found on the [FFG website – Procurement in funded projects](#).

## **3.7 What are the requirements for match funding for research data infrastructure?**

### **Economic use**

Funding represents state aid within the meaning of competition law (the relevant date is the date on which the funding is granted; a change to 'non-state aid' at a later date is not possible). This means that the funding recipient is **not entitled to receive additional public funds** (e.g. from the global budget/performance agreement for universities or from other funding programmes, e.g. of regional governments).

The remaining share (min. 50 %) must be covered by internal funds which do not qualify as public funds (e.g., income from contract research or research services) and/or by applicant or co-financing organisations.

### **Non-economic use**

The remaining share may be covered either by funds qualified as private (e.g. financing by companies, income from contract research or research services) or by public funds. Since the funding does not represent state aid, the funding recipient may receive additional public funds (e.g., from the global budget/performance agreement for universities or from other funding programmes, e.g. of regional governments).

### **The following applies to both types of use:**

If the funded research data infrastructure is to be used in another funded R&D project of the funding recipient, the capitalised costs of acquisition or production may not be charged a second time as depreciation or machine hours, i.e. multiple funding in other funded R&D projects must be avoided.

### **Co-financing organisations**

Organisations co-financing at least 10% of the research data infrastructure (cash contributions only) may be given preferential access under more favourable conditions up to the equivalent of the cash contribution provided by the co-financing organisation. The extent of such preferential treatment (including priority access) shall be calculated on the basis of regular full costs, including a profit margin,

or market prices. The conditions under which preferential treatment is granted must be made publicly available.

### **3.8 What are the responsibilities of the consortium leader?**

The consortium leader has the following responsibilities throughout the project duration:

- project management
- communications with the funding agency and the consortium members
- examining the reports and accounts provided by the consortium members

In your capacity as consortium leader you undertake:

- to manage and distribute the funding yourself,
- to communicate any changes in due time,
- to provide accounts and reports in accordance with the funding contract. This also applies to monitoring reports to be submitted beyond the funding period (see [section 3.12](#))

The consortium leader shall ensure that the consortium concludes a legally valid cooperation agreement before the start of the project, which contains all provisions required by point 28 of the Commission Framework.

The consortium leader also confirms that:

- the costs included in the accounts can be clearly attributed to the project,
- the project costs and content are used in accordance with the approval.

### **3.9 May the consortium include members from outside Austria?**

A consortium may include members from outside Austria if these are not economically linked to the Austrian organisations in the consortium. Even consortium members from outside the EU may receive funding

The following conditions apply:

- The non-Austrian consortium members create benefit for the Austrian consortium members and/or Austria as a business and research location;
- This benefit is explicitly indicated in the application for funding;
- Funding paid to non-Austrian consortium members does not exceed 20% of the total funding amount;
- The evaluation committee recommends providing funding to the non-Austrian consortium members;
- The non-Austrian consortium members provide evidence of their credit rating and liquidity prior to conclusion of the agreement. They are subject to the same conditions as the Austrian consortium members;

- The non-Austrian consortium members accept the FFG's obligation and entitlement to audit the project as specified in the funding contract and submit relevant documentary evidence in German or English.

Alternatively, non-Austrian organisations may cover their costs from own funds and/or from funds provided by their home country.

Non-Austrian organisations may also be involved as subcontractors or as [co-financing organisations](#).

### **3.10 What rules apply with respect to exploitation rights?**

Exploitation rights relating to the project results belong to the funding recipient organisation and/or the consortium. Collaborations between undertakings and research and knowledge dissemination organisations shall be subject to the provisions of section 2.2.2. "Collaboration with undertakings" of the Commission Framework.

This document stipulates that the exploitation rights are to be allocated to the research and knowledge dissemination organisations in a manner which adequately reflects their work, contributions and respective interests. If the rights are assigned to the participating undertakings, the research and knowledge dissemination organisations shall receive compensation equivalent to the market price.

### **3.11 Is research integrity ensured?**

Funding may only be granted to applicants who demonstrate scientific integrity during both the application phase and project execution.

The FFG is a member of the Austrian Agency for Research Integrity (OeAWI, see <https://oeawi.at/en/statutes-3/>) and is thus committed to safeguarding good scientific practice.

If a lack of scientific integrity or misconduct is suspected in the course of the evaluation process or project reviews, the relevant documents may be forwarded to the OeAWI Commission for Research Integrity, which will then decide whether to initiate an independent investigation procedure and, if necessary, will carry out any necessary investigations.

If the investigation reveals a lack of scientific integrity or misconduct (e.g. plagiarism), the application must be rejected for formal reasons. If funding has already been granted, the funding must be reduced, retained or reclaimed.

### 3.12 What is done to monitor the use of the funded research data infrastructure?

If public funding is provided for a research data infrastructure for economic or non-economic use, EU Member States are required to put in place a monitoring system including claw-back mechanisms.

**Note for "non-economic use" category:**

This is designed to ensure that the applicable funding intensity will not be exceeded as a result of an increase in economic activities (with reference to the originally planned values).

**The following applies to the monitoring process:**

- The monitoring begins upon start-up of the funded research data infrastructure. The FFG must be immediately notified of the start-up of the funded research data infrastructure via an [eCall](#) message. The depreciation period must also be indicated in the message.
- An annual monitoring report must be submitted from start-up throughout the depreciation period of the funded research data infrastructure. If the research data infrastructure consists of several components, the longest depreciation period shall apply.
- The monitoring report must be submitted within one month of the end of the monitoring year and sent to the FFG as an attachment via [eCall](#). The monitoring report presents details on the economic and non-economic use and also compliance with the access regulations for the consortium and third parties.

The following additional rules for research data infrastructure use must be observed from start-up to the end of the depreciation period:

- Open, non-discriminatory access (see [section 3.2.1](#)).
- Rules for co-financing organisations (see [section 3.7](#))
- No multiple funding for other funded R&D projects (see [section 3.7](#))
- Rules for usage (see [section 3.2.2](#)).

## 4 SUBMISSION PROCEDURE

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### 4.1 What is the procedure for submission?

Applications must be submitted electronically via [eCall](https://ecall.ffg.at) before the deadline (<https://ecall.ffg.at>).

The **application** must be submitted via [eCall](https://ecall.ffg.at) by **02 April 2025, 12:00 noon (CEST)**.

**Important:** Funding applications for consortium projects can only be submitted once all consortium members have completed and submitted their partner applications via [eCall](https://ecall.ffg.at)!

How does it work?

- Complete all menu items in [eCall](https://ecall.ffg.at)
- Enter **Project Description** consisting of content description, description of participating organisations, work plan, and costs and funding in [eCall](https://ecall.ffg.at):
  - Content description ([eCall](https://ecall.ffg.at)) presents the project content.
  - Description of participating organisations ([eCall](https://ecall.ffg.at)) describes the expertise of the applicant organisation or individual consortium members.
  - Work plan ([eCall](https://ecall.ffg.at)) presents the work packages and associated costs as well as project management elements such as a time management plan (GANTT chart), deliverables, milestones, results.
  - Costs and funding ([eCall](https://ecall.ffg.at)) describes all cost categories for each participating organisation. The sums for each work package are automatically displayed in the work plan.
- Upload the **required attachments** (see [section 4.2](#)).
- Finalise the application in [eCall](https://ecall.ffg.at) under menu item "Finalisation" and click "**Submit application**".
- Upon successful submission, a **confirmation of submission** will be sent automatically by email.

**Not necessary:**

Additional postal submission of a duly executed copy

**Not possible:**

- Uploading or amending individual parts of the application form after submission
- Revising the online application after submission

The application documents must be submitted by the applicant organisation or consortium leader or by duly authorised representatives. The FFG may request

evidence of the power of representation. If you are unable to provide such evidence the FFG reserves the right to reject the application for formal reasons.

Detailed information can be found in the [eCall Tutorial](#).

## 4.2 What documents are required for submission?

The following tables list the call documents as well as all documents required for submission. Please use the templates and call documents provided in the [Download Center](#):

Table 4: Overview of call documents






Call documents	
	Call Guideline (this document)
	<a href="#">Cost Guidelines (version 3.1)</a>

Table 5: Overview of mandatory annexes

Mandatory annexes	
	<b>CV</b> of at least the <b>project manager</b> (no template)
	<b>Letters of Interest (LOI)</b> of at least two organisations interested in using or co-financing the planned research data infrastructure (no template)
	<u>Note:</u> LOI of organisations that are linked to the applicant organisations (for definition see <a href="#">section 3.3</a> ) do not count for this minimum requirement.
	If application is submitted by a university (university, university of applied sciences):  <b>Letter of Commitment (LOC)</b> signed by the Rector's Office or Management (template)
	<b>Financing overview</b> – presentation of start-up and follow-up costs (operating costs, maintenance costs and replacement investments) and associated financing concept (template)
<b>eCall</b>	<b>Mandatory master data:</b> Annual accounts of the past two years

### **4.3 Is it necessary to mention other projects?**

Applicants are required to list additional projects related to the proposed project in order to facilitate the evaluation. The results and expertise obtained from these projects must be presented.

Relevant projects include:

- previous projects whose results provide the basis for the proposed project,
- ongoing or completed projects (of the previous 3 years) that are thematically related to the proposed project,
- project applications that are thematically related to the call,
- project applications that are related to the submitted project.

Multiple funding of costs that have already been funded is not permitted. The proposed project must therefore be clearly differentiated from thematically related projects that have already received funding.

### **4.4 How will confidential project data be used?**

The FFG processes the personal data of funding applicants and funding recipients provided by the data subjects as part of the application for funding, data collected by the FFG for the purpose of concluding the funding contract, and data generated by searches in the transparency portal according to Sec. 32 (5) of the Transparency Database Act (TAB 2012) for the following purposes:

- Processing of the funding application and assessment of whether the general and specific funding requirements have been met,
- Conclusion of the funding contract and (if a funding contract has been concluded) compliance with the relevant contractual obligations, including but not limited to administration of the funding payments and monitoring of compliance with funding requirements,
- Compliance with statutory obligations, including but not limited to reporting obligations and control purposes in order to avoid double funding (i.e. Sec. 38 in conjunction with 18, 27, 28 ARR, as well as Sec. 12 FTFG and Sec. 9 FFG-G).

The legal basis of processing is therefore Art. 6 (1) (b) GDPR, i.e. performance of a contract, and Art. 6 (1) (c) GDPR, i.e. compliance with legal obligations.

The personal data will be disclosed to the following institutions in compliance with legal obligations:

- The ministries as FFG owners, other contracting authorities for the management of funding measures (e.g. other federal ministries, regional governments, KLIEN)
- Third parties, which may include the Court of Audit, EU bodies, and other federal or regional funding agencies.

External experts may also be involved in the evaluation of projects in individual cases. National and international experts are given access to the submitted documents as part of project evaluation – see [section 5.2](#). Such experts act as processors in the name and on behalf of the FFG and are required to take technical and organisational measures to ensure data security and data confidentiality. Project content and results may only be published (e.g. on the website or in social media forums) with the consent of the funding recipient (Art 6 (1) (a) GDPR) unless the FFG has a legal obligation to do so.

The FFG must also obtain the consent of the data subject for any other data use exceeding these provisions.

The FFG is under a legal obligation to maintain secrecy about all company and project information pursuant to Sec. 9 (4) of the Austrian Research Promotion Agency Act (FFG-G, Federal Law Gazette BGBl. I No. 73/2004).

The FFG will ensure a level of protection appropriate to the risk in terms of confidentiality, integrity, availability and resilience of the systems by implementing technical and organisational measures within the meaning of Art. 32 GDPR that are sufficient and appropriate for protecting the data against accidental or unlawful destruction, loss and unauthorised access.

Further information about ensuring the confidentiality and security of personal data during the course of the project is available in the [eCall Tutorial](#).

## 5 EVALUATION AND DECISION

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### 5.1 What is the formal check?

The formal check serves to examine the application for formal correctness and completeness.

The FFG will communicate the result of the formal check within 4 weeks of submission via an [eCall](#) message:

- If the formal criteria are not met and the deficiencies cannot be corrected, the application for funding will not enter the subsequent steps of the procedure.
- If the deficiencies can be corrected, you may rectify these problems within a reasonable period of time.

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.

Table 6: Check list for the formal check of funding applications

Criteria	Items checked	Can deficiency be corrected?	consequence
<b>The correct language was used.</b>	The application must be in English This applies to the following <a href="#">eCall</a> menu items: – content description, – description of participating organisations – work plan).	<i>no</i>	Rejection for formal reasons
<b>The applicant organisation is entitled to submit an application.</b>	see <a href="#">section 3.3</a>	<i>no</i>	Rejection for formal reasons
<b>The project does not exceed the max. duration.</b>	max. 3 years project duration	<i>no</i>	Rejection for formal reasons
<b>The project location meets the specified requirements.</b>	The project location of the research data infrastructure must be situated in Austria (see <a href="#">section 3.4</a> ).	<i>no</i>	Rejection for formal reasons
<b>Eligible total project costs are above the minimum limit.</b>	min. 200,000 EUR	<i>no</i>	Rejection for formal reasons
<b>The mandatory annexes have been submitted.</b>	see <a href="#">section 4.2</a>	<i>yes</i>	Rectification via <a href="#">eCall</a> after submission
<b>The applicant organisation has not exceeded the maximum number of applications per use type.</b>	A maximum of 2 funding applications may be submitted per applicant organisation and use type (see <a href="#">section 3.4</a> )	<i>yes</i>	Withdrawal of applications (reduction to maximum number of applications)

## 5.2 What criteria are used to evaluate applications for funding?

Applications for funding are **evaluated** according to **four criteria**:

1. Quality of the project
2. Suitability of funding applicants
3. Benefit and exploitation
4. Relevance of the project

The projects are evaluated by awarding points in each criterion. Projects which do not reach the stated threshold value for a certain criterion will be rejected.

The following tables show the evaluation criteria, including the relevant sub-criteria.

In the following tables of this section, the term "R&D infrastructure" refers to research data infrastructure (see [section 3.1](#)).

## 5.2.1 Evaluation criteria for economic use

Table 7: Evaluation criteria for economic use – Quality of the project

<b>1. Quality of the project (threshold = 18 points)</b>	<b>max. points</b>
	<b>30</b>
<b>1.1 Innovation content</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– To what extent does the innovation content of the project exceed the current state of the art in technology/knowledge at national, European and international level?</li> </ul>	<b>max. points</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– What is the added value of the project in comparison with existing infrastructures?</li> </ul>	<b>12</b>
<b>1.2 Planning</b>	
What is the quality and efficiency of planning?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Are the work packages and the associated division of work adequate for the goals of the project?</li> </ul>	<b>max. points</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Have the risks in the work packages been adequately addressed and corresponding measures put in place?</li> </ul>	<b>6</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Have all relevant aspects been taken into account in establishing the R&amp;D infrastructure (time schedule, cost plan, resource plan, etc.)?</li> </ul>	
<b>1.3 Usage strategy</b>	
Has the usage strategy been clearly presented with regard to the following points?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Management of use (incl. personnel and resource plan)</li> <li>– Demand and capacity utilisation</li> <li>– Shared use by third parties (i.e. by organisations other than the applicant organisation or members of the applicant consortium)</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Terms and conditions for transparent and non-discriminatory access by third parties</li> </ul>	<b>max. points</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Calculation of usage fees (process for calculating full costs including profit margin or market prices)</li> </ul>	<b>12</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Calculation of start-up and follow-up costs (operating costs, maintenance costs and replacement investments)</li> <li>– Presentation of sustainable financing</li> <li>– Presentation of ownership structure for the planned R&amp;D infrastructure</li> <li>– If applicable: planned conditions for preferential access for co-financing organisations</li> </ul>	

Table 8: Evaluation criteria for economic use – Suitability of funding applicants

<b>2. Suitability of funding applicants (threshold = 9 points)</b>	<b>max. points</b>
	<b>15</b>
<b>2.1 Expertise</b>	
– To what extent do the consortium members possess the necessary qualifications and resources to ensure the successful implementation of the R&D infrastructure acquisition and the usage strategy?	<b>max. points</b>
– If applicable: To what extent does the implementation of the project by the selected consortium present an added value?	<b>9</b>
<b>2.2 Gender balance</b>	<b>max. points</b>
– Does the composition of the project team reflect the aim to improve the gender balance in the sector?	<b>6</b>
<b><u>Further information on gender aspects</u></b>	

Table 9: Evaluation criteria for economic use – Benefit and exploitation

<b>3. Benefit and exploitation (threshold = 18 points)</b>	<b>max. points</b>
<b>30</b>	
<b>3.1 Cooperative research and innovation activities</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– How will the additional opportunities that are created by the new infrastructure influence prospective future research and innovation activities, especially in cooperation with companies (quantitatively and qualitatively)?</li> </ul>	<b>max. points</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Can results with a high degree of innovation and novelty be expected?</li> </ul>	<b>12</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– How will they be exploited?</li> </ul>	
<b>3.2 Development potential</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– What is the development potential of the consortium members in terms of the following points?               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Connectivity to existing innovation fields and key areas of innovation</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<b>max. points</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Contribution to advancement of innovation fields and key areas of innovation</li> </ul>	<b>6</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Potential for new opportunities for collaboration with industry and with research institutions and universities</li> </ul>	
<b>3.3 Gender-specific topics</b>	
If the contents of the prospective future research and innovation activities or their results relate to individuals:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– To what extent have gender-specific topics been taken into account in the planning process?               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Quality of the analysis of gender-specific topics</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<b>max. points</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Consideration of gender-specific topics in the methodological approach taken in the project</li> </ul>	<b>6</b>
<u>Further information on gender aspects</u>	
Projects in which content and focus have no gender relevance according to this analysis will score full points in this sub-criterion.	
<b>3.4 Sustainability</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– What are the impacts (positive and negative) of the prospective future research and innovation activities in terms of sustainability (social, ecological, economic), in particular concerning climate neutrality?</li> </ul>	<b>max. points</b>
<u>Further information on sustainability aspects</u>	<b>6</b>
Research activities producing overall (net) negative contributions/effects will score 0 points in this sub-criterion.	

Table 10: Evaluation criteria for economic use – Relevance of the project

<b>4. Relevance of the project (threshold = 15 points)</b>	<b>max. points</b>
	<b>25</b>
<b>4.1 Relevance</b>	<b>max. points</b>
– How relevant is the project in terms of achieving the objectives and topics of the call?	<b>10</b>
<b>4.2 Demand</b>	<b>max. points</b>
– Are the arguments justifying the acquisition conclusive? (demand analysis, taking into account the size, type and availability of existing resources in Austria and Europe)	<b>5</b>
<b>4.3 Location</b>	<b>max. points</b>
– Has the impact on Austria’s position as a location for innovation been described plausibly?	<b>5</b>
– What impact will the planned research and innovation activities have on the visibility of Austria as a location for innovation in an international context?	
<b>4.4 Incentive effect</b>	<b>max. points</b>
– How would you judge the incentive effect of the funding? To what extent will the funding help to implement the project in the first place or complete it in a shorter timeframe, and/or make it more ambitious, and/or increase its scope?	<b>5</b>

## 5.2.2 Evaluation criteria for non-economic use

Table 11: Evaluation criteria for non-economic use – Quality of the project

<b>1. Quality of the project (threshold = 18 points)</b>	<b>max. points</b>  <b>30</b>
<b>1.1 Innovation content</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– To what extent does the innovation content of the project exceed the current state of the art in technology/knowledge at national, European and international level?</li> <li>– What is the added value of the project in comparison with existing infrastructures?</li> </ul>	<b>max. points</b>  <b>12</b>
<b>1.2 Planning</b> What is the quality and efficiency of planning? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Are the work packages and the associated division of work adequate for the goals of the project?</li> <li>– Have the risks in the work packages been adequately addressed and corresponding measures put in place?</li> <li>– Have all relevant aspects been taken into account in establishing the R&amp;D infrastructure? (e.g. time schedule, cost plan, resource plan, etc.)?</li> </ul>	<b>max. points</b>  <b>6</b>
<b>1.3 Usage strategy</b> Has the usage strategy been clearly presented with regard to the following points? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Management of use (incl. personnel and resource plan)</li> <li>– Demand and capacity utilisation</li> <li>– Shared use by third parties (i.e. by organisations other than the applicant organisation or members of the applicant consortium)</li> <li>– Terms and conditions for transparent and non-discriminatory access by third parties</li> <li>– Calculation of usage fees (process for calculating full costs including profit margin or market prices)</li> <li>– Calculation of start-up and follow-up costs (operating costs, maintenance costs and replacement investments)</li> <li>– Presentation of sustainable financing</li> <li>– Presentation of ownership structure for the planned R&amp;D infrastructure</li> <li>– If applicable: planned conditions for preferential access for co-financing organisations</li> </ul>	<b>max. points</b>  <b>12</b>

Table 12: Evaluation criteria for non-economic use – Suitability of funding applicants

<b>2. Suitability of funding applicants (threshold = 9 points)</b>	<b>max. points</b>
	<b>15</b>
<b>2.1 Expertise</b>	
– To what extent do the consortium members possess the necessary qualifications and resources to ensure the successful implementation of the R&D infrastructure acquisition and the usage strategy?	<b>max. points</b>
– If applicable: To what extent does the implementation of the project by the selected consortium present an added value?	<b>9</b>
<b>2.2 Gender balance</b>	
– Does the composition of the project team reflect the aim to improve the gender balance in the sector?	<b>max. points</b>
<a href="#">Further information on gender aspects</a>	<b>6</b>

Table 13: Evaluation criteria for non-economic use – Benefit and exploitation

<b>3. Benefit and exploitation (threshold = 18 points)</b>	<b>max. points</b>
<b>30</b>	
<b>3.1 Research excellence</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– How will the additional opportunities that are created by the new infrastructure influence the prospective future research activities (both in terms of quantity and quality)?</li> <li>– Can ground-breaking scientific results be expected (results with a high degree of innovation and novelty)?</li> <li>– How will the results be exploited?</li> </ul>	<b>max. points</b>  <b>12</b>
<b>3.2 Development potential</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– What is the development potential of the consortium members in terms of the following points?               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Connectivity to existing research fields and key research areas</li> <li>– Contribution to advancement of research fields and key research areas</li> <li>– Potential for new opportunities for collaboration with other research institutions, universities and/or with industry</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<b>max. points</b>  <b>6</b>
<b>3.3 Gender-specific topics</b> <p>If the content of the prospective future research activities/results relates to individuals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– To what extent have gender-specific topics been taken into account in the planning process?               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Quality of the analysis of gender-specific topics</li> <li>– Consideration of gender-specific topics in the methodological approach taken in the project</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><u>Further information on gender aspects</u></p> <p>Projects in which content and focus have no gender relevance according to this analysis will score full points in this sub-criterion.</p>	<b>max. points</b>  <b>6</b>
<b>3.4 Sustainability</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– What are the impacts (positive and negative) of the prospective future research activities in terms of sustainability (social, ecological, economic), in particular concerning climate neutrality?</li> </ul> <p><u>Further information on sustainability aspects</u></p> <p>Research activities producing overall (net) negative contributions/effects will score 0 points in this sub-criterion.</p>	<b>max. points</b>  <b>6</b>

Table 14: Evaluation criteria for non-economic use – Relevance of the project

<b>4. Relevance of the project (threshold = 15 points)</b>	<b>max. points</b>
	<b>25</b>
<b>4.1 Relevance</b>	<b>max. points</b>
– How relevant is the project in terms of achieving the objectives and topics of the call?	<b>10</b>
<b>4.2 Demand</b>	<b>max. points</b>
– Are the arguments justifying the acquisition conclusive? (demand analysis, taking into account the size, type and availability of existing resources in Austria and Europe)	<b>5</b>
<b>4.3 Location</b>	<b>max. points</b>
– Has the impact on Austria’s position as a research location been described plausibly?	<b>5</b>
– What impact will the planned research activities have on the visibility of Austria as a research location in an international context?	
<b>4.4 Incentive effect</b>	<b>max. points</b>
– How would you judge the incentive effect of the funding? To what extent will the funding help to implement the project in the first place or complete it in a shorter timeframe, and/or make it more ambitious, and/or increase its scope?	<b>5</b>

### 5.3 How is the evaluation procedure organised?

National and international experts will review the submitted documents in accordance with the criteria mentioned in [section 5.2](#).

The evaluation committee will make a funding recommendation based on the written reviews.

It is possible to exclude reviewers (individuals) stating the reasons. This can be done in [eCall](#) using the menu item “Project data”.

FFG experts examine the financial potential of the companies involved, including credit rating and liquidity. Where necessary, they may request additional documents without which the examination cannot be completed. Undertakings in difficulty are not eligible for funding. The decision as to whether an undertaking is considered to be 'in difficulty' is made based on the definition contained in the GBER, which provides the European legal basis of the present funding scheme.

Recommendations and requirements can be defined as part of the evaluation process. Recommendations are non-binding remarks and opinions of the evaluation

committee, which are designed to support the consortium in implementing the project.

Requirements are binding – see [section 6.2](#).

## 5.4 Who makes the funding decision?

The FFG Management will make the funding decision based on the funding recommendation provided by the evaluation committee.

# 6 THE FUNDING PROCEDURE

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## 6.1 How is the funding contract concluded?

In the event of a positive funding decision, the FFG will send the applicant organisation or consortium a data view via the [eCall](#) system, which shows the key details of the funding contract (e.g. amount of funding granted, amount of eligible costs, start and end date of the funding period, reporting obligations and possible binding requirements) and is valid for a specified period of time.

If the consortium accepts the data view within the specified period, the FFG will prepare the funding contract and send it to the applicant organisation or consortium.

The consortium must return the duly signed funding contract within the specified period to make it legally valid. There shall be no entitlement to funding until the signed contract has been returned.

## 6.2 How are requirements taken into account?

Requirements may be imposed in the course of the review.

Two types of additional requirements are possible:

- Requirements that must be met prior to the conclusion of the funding contract.
- Requirements that must be met by the funding recipients in the course of the project.

Requirements shall form an integral part of the contract.

### 6.3 Procurements for the project

If you plan or carry out procurements for your FFG project, the relevant regulations must be strictly observed. Further information can be found on the [FFG website – Procurement in funded projects](#).

### 6.4 How are the funding instalments paid?

The first instalment of 50% of the approved funding amount will be paid once the imposed requirements have been met and the funding contract has been signed, however, not earlier than one week before the start of the funding period. Payments are made to the bank account of the funding recipient organisation or consortium leader. The final 50% instalment of the approved funding amount will be paid upon submission of the final account, fulfilment of all requirements and following a cost audit. Payment of the first instalment does not imply recognition of costs.

### 6.5 What reports and accounts are required?

- A final report and the final accounts must be submitted within 3 months of the conclusion of the project, via the [eCall](#) reporting function.
- If the project is aborted during the project term, a final report and final accounts must be submitted. The FFG is entitled to reclaim money if the funding already paid exceeds the eligible costs.
- A monitoring report must be submitted annually from the date the funded research data infrastructure is put into operation until the end of the depreciation period in accordance with the provisions specified by the funding agency (see [section 3.12](#)).

The reports and accounts must meet the following requirements:

- They must include a description of the activities of the entire consortium and the cost statements of all consortium members.
- Reports must be prepared using the [eCall](#) system.

#### **Support of public relations:**

The funding recipients agree to work together with the FFG and the responsible departments of the responsible ministry to support PR work, if required. This includes in particular the provision of non-confidential project information and images for electronic dissemination portals and other media purposes.

### 6.6 How is the on-site audit carried out?

In addition to the reports, the FFG may carry out an on-site audit during or after the end of the project.

The original receipts and associated documentation of payments (e.g. account statement) must be made available for the FFG's audits. The audits will be announced in due time.

## 6.7 How should changes be communicated?

Any changes to contractual points such as project content, consortium, costs, deadlines or funding period must be requested and substantiated:

- via [eCall](#) message,
- in the final report.

Please upload the relevant documents as an attachment to the [eCall](#) message. Any modifications to the contract parameters require the approval of the FFG.

**Immediate notification is required for:**

- substantial changes to the project,
- changes to the consortium, including withdrawal, new ownership structure or insolvency proceedings.

The following changes must be communicated in the **final report**:

- cost reallocations between consortium members.

## 6.8 Can the funding period be extended?

If the project goals have not yet been achieved and the approved level of costs has not been exceeded, the funding period may be extended for up to 1 year on a cost-neutral basis.

The following requirements must be met:

- The funding recipients are not responsible for the delay;
- The project is still eligible for funding;
- An application for extension has been submitted via [eCall](#) message within the approved funding period.

## 6.9 What happens after the conclusion of the project?

Following the conclusion of the project, the funding recipient organisations will submit a final report and final accounts. The FFG Project Controlling & Audit Division will check whether the funding has been used appropriately. The audit will establish the final eligible costs.

You will receive the result of the audit in writing:

- In the event of a **positive** result, the appropriate use of the funding will be confirmed and the final instalment paid.
- In the event of a **negative** result, procedures may be initiated to secure repayment of funding.

Funding details: The specified final instalment will be transferred once the originally planned costs have been reached. If the project is underspent the level of funding will be reduced accordingly. The funding amount may also be reduced for scientific, formal or legal reasons.

For more information about eligible costs, see the [Cost Guidelines \(version 3.1\)](#).

Please note that even after the end of the project, the funding recipient organisation or consortium leader must ensure that an annual monitoring report is submitted in accordance with the provisions of the funding agency until the end of the depreciation period of the funded research data infrastructure (see also [section 3.12](#)).

## 7 LEGAL BASIS

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This Call is based on the Guideline of the Austrian Research Promotion Agency for the Funding of Research, Technology, Development and Innovation aimed at active and transformative RTI funding ([FFG-Offensiv-Richtlinie](#) 2024-2026).

The Call is also subject to the following legal provisions:

- COMMISSION REGULATION (EU) No 651/2014 of 17 June 2014 declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the internal market in application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, OJ L 187/1, 26.6.2014, as amended by REGULATION (EU) 2023/1315, OJ L 167/1, 30.6.2023
- Framework for State aid for research and development and innovation 2022, OJ C 414, 28.10.2022

All EU regulations are applicable as amended.

## 8 FURTHER INFORMATION

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This section contains information and services which you may find useful in connection with funding applications or funded projects.

### 8.1 FFG Project Database

The public access [FFG Project Database](#) provides the opportunity to publish brief information about funded projects and an overview of the project partners involved. This enables you to present your project and your project partners to the interested public. The database can also be used to search for cooperation partners.

Once funding is granted, the applicants are informed via the [eCall](#) system that they can publish specific brief information about their project in the FFG Project Database. The information will only be published if active consent is given in the [eCall](#) system.

More information can be found on the [Project Database page on the FFG website](#).

### 8.2 BMK Open4Innovation Platform

Additionally, the [open4innovation](#) and [open4aviation](#) platforms of the Federal Ministry for Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology (BMK) offer a knowledge base for companies, researchers etc. (community support, detailed information, success stories, etc.).

### 8.3 Open Access publications

Research results obtained with the aid of public funding are to be put to the best use to provide maximum benefit to science, business and society. The Open Access principle should therefore be followed where possible for peer-reviewed publications produced with the support of FFG funding. The principle is "as open as possible, as closed as necessary", which also applies in European funding schemes.

### 8.4 Handling of project data – data management plan

A data management plan (DMP) is a tool that supports the efficient and systematic management of all data generated throughout the duration of a project.

DMPs can be created, e.g., using the free tool [DMP Online](#). The [Guidelines on FAIR Data Management](#) of the European Commission also provide assistance in this respect.

A data management plan describes

- the data that should be collected, processed or generated within a project
- how these data are handled in the project
- what methods and standards are applied
- how the data are stored and updated over the long term, and
- whether it is planned to make datasets available to third parties for reuse (i.e., open access to research data)

It is sensible to ensure public access to research data which provide the basis for peer-reviewed publications and whose publication is necessary to reproduce and verify the published results.

In the event of publication, the data should be "findable, accessible, interoperable and reusable". Storing data in established and internationally recognised repositories is recommended in order to ensure broad access (see also the [re3data website](#)).

## 8.5 Glossary of the Call Guideline

### Incentive effect

Funding may only be granted if it has an incentive effect, i.e. the funding must change the behaviour of the funding recipients in such a way that they engage in additional activity which they would not carry out without the funding or would carry out in a restricted or different manner or at another location.

The following criteria may be used as evidence for the incentive effect the funding has:

- Implementation: the funding enables the project to be implemented in the first place
- Acceleration: the funding accelerates implementation
- Scope: the funding increases the size of the project
- Range: the funding makes the project more ambitious through:
  - a more radical innovation approach
  - higher risk
  - new or extended collaborations
  - long-term strategic orientation

## **Research and knowledge dissemination organisations**

A restricted definition of the Commission Framework shall apply:

*"Research and knowledge dissemination organisation" or "research organisation" means an entity (such as universities or research institutes, technology transfer agencies, innovation intermediaries, research-oriented physical or virtual collaborative entities), irrespective of its legal status (organised under public or private law) or way of financing, whose primary goal is to independently conduct basic research, industrial research or experimental development or to widely disseminate the results of such activities by way of teaching, publication or knowledge transfer.*

### **Universities**

The smallest organisational unit that can participate on behalf of a university is the university institute or a comparable organisational unit pursuant to Sec. 20 of the University Act 2002 (UG). The participating organisational unit (institute or comparable unit) must be duly authorised according to Sec. 27 UG. Subordinate organisational units (e.g. working groups) are not eligible to act as a consortium member.

### **Undertakings**

An undertaking is any entity engaged in an economic activity, regardless of its legal status.

## 8.6 Milestones of the call (up to first instalment)

Figure 1: Milestones of the call

