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# **START Programme of the Austrian Science Fund**

Mario Mandl | FWF



## START programme – development

- 1996 first call and first projects
- 2007 commitment to submit an ERC-StG/CoG, 2014/2015 only ERC StG

### Figures

- 146 START projects (about 155 Mio. EUR)
- Average number of applications per call: ~ 85
- Proportion of female applicants: about 25 %, independent applicants about 55 %
- Approval rate 6-8 %
- 32 START grantees also received an ERC grant

## START programme - aims

- target group: young, top-quality researchers from any discipline, no quotas
- creation or expansion of independent research groups
- financial security for a period of six years
- qualification for leading research positions in Austria or abroad

## programme requirements (I)

- PhD or MD, between two and eight years after doctorate (extensions possible), reference date 20<sup>th</sup> September 2019
- applicants with outstanding track records
  - applicants must show that they the capacity to be independent researchers (e.g. should already have acquired competitive third-party funds independently)
  - at least one year of international experience is desirable

## programme requirements (II)

- letter of recommendation from the head or group leader of the hosting research institution
- commitment to submit an application with the same content under the next call of ERC Starting Grants
- Option for women: may submit a similar downsized version of the START application as Elise Richter application

## START programme – submission

- call: once a year, call July 2019, deadline for submission 20<sup>th</sup> September 2019
- bottom-up, non-profit oriented research projects in any field
- eligibility: individual researchers (“natural persons”) with the required qualifications performing their research in Austria
- amount: € 0.8 Mio to 1.2 Mio for six years; interim evaluation after 3 years
- number: around 6-7 START projects every year
- beneficiary: individual researcher

## START programme – decision process

- evaluation of full proposals
- eligible applications are subjected to international peer review
- at least 3 reviews for each application
- hearing with potential Prize winners, shortlist of START candidates (around 15) usually 3 weeks before meeting
- all decisions are taken by International Jury, 13 internationally renowned scientists  
(<http://www.fwf.ac.at/en/about-the-fwf/organisation/start-wittgenstein-jury/>)

# START programme and ERC

Further information and contact:

<http://www.fwf.ac.at/en/projects/start.html>

Programme management:

Mario Mandl (Tel.: +43-1-505 67 40-8605, E-mail:

[mario.mandl@fwf.ac.at](mailto:mario.mandl@fwf.ac.at))