

## COMET Fact Sheet

### COMET-Centres (K1) – 5<sup>th</sup> Call

Competence centres have been implemented in Austria since 1998 in order to build up key research competences through science-industry cooperation and to provide a network of high quality research hubs.

In 2008, COMET was established as an innovative successor to the earlier competence centre programmes. The motivation behind extending COMET beyond 2016 is to develop new expertise and encourage greater internationalisation as a sign of excellent cooperative research. Bundling these competences within a single centre and defining promising/emerging fields of research via science - industry collaboration shall stimulate new research ideas, encourage technology transfer, and strengthen the innovative capacity of companies. This should initiate new product, process and service innovations. COMET is playing a key role in strengthening Austria as a research and business location.

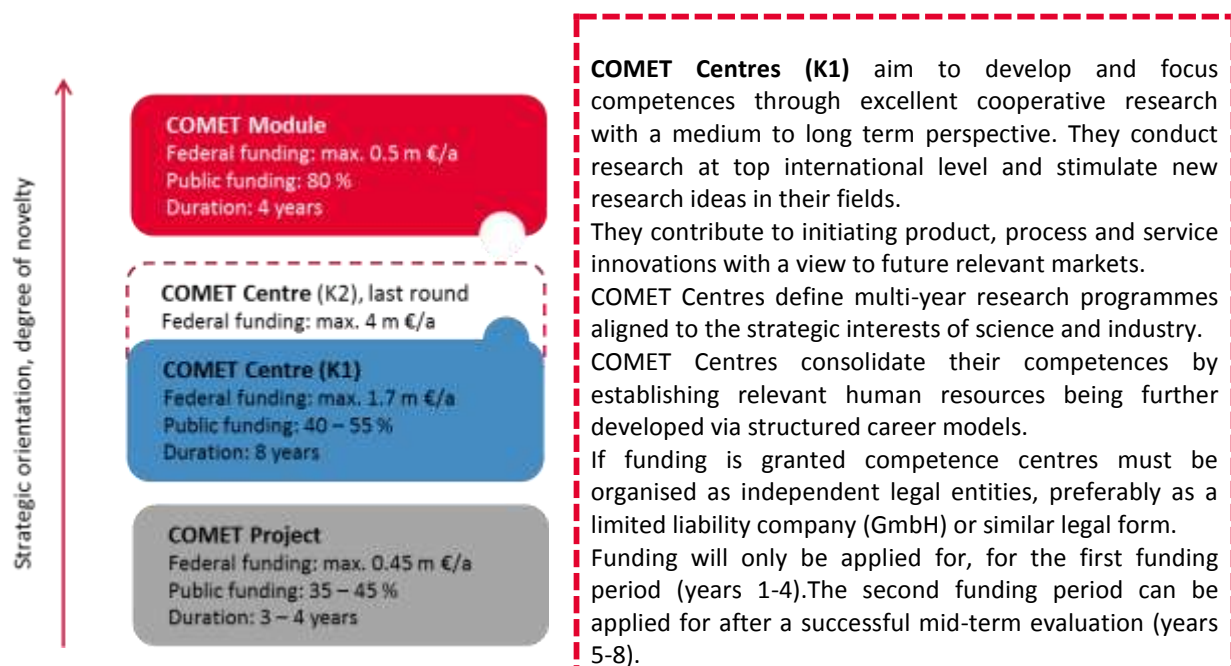
COMET is an internationally recognised best-practice model and belongs to Austria's most successful technology policy initiatives. Today, some 1,500 researchers from **science and industry** work at more than 20 centres on **jointly defined research programmes**.

#### > Focus and Target Groups

The programme in general addresses existing competence centres as well as new consortia, whereas the 5<sup>th</sup> Call for COMET Centres (K1) primarily addresses new initiatives. At the core is a research programme jointly defined by industry and science.

**The COMET Programme has three programme lines** which are scaled according to their target, ratio of public funding, size of consortium and duration. All three lines are thematically open. However, each application must have a defined topic.

COMET Centres have to involve at least five company partners. In case funding is granted, the centres have to be implemented as separate legal entities.



## > Evaluation

The evaluation of COMET Centres is based on a one stage procedure including a hearing of each consortium.

Evaluation Process	
<b>External evaluation</b> Austrian Science Fund (FWF) / Christian Doppler Research Association (CDG) <b>Written evaluation by international peers</b>	<b>Internal evaluation</b> Austrian Research Promotion Agency (FFG) <b>Written evaluation by experts from FFG</b>
<b>Hearings</b> with experts having centres specific thematic expertise (approx. 3 international peers, 1-2 FFG experts) and 2-3 panel members as observers	
<b>Funding recommendation by the panel</b> consisting of 7 voting members: 3 nominated by FFG, 3 nominated by CDG/ FWF. The chair person will be nominated by the ministries.	
<b>Decision on funding by the federal ministers</b>	

**Written Evaluation:** The applications are evaluated by experts of the Austrian Research Promotion Agency (FFG) as well as by external experts (international peers). The international peer review is coordinated by FWF and CDG.

**Hearings:** The main objective of the hearing is to answer any questions arising during the external and internal written evaluations and to obtain additional information from the applicants. The results of the hearing will be summarized and made available to all panel members. Each hearing takes 4 hours (0.5 h presentation of the consortia, 1.5 h discussion and 2 h closed session).

**Panel:** The panel is recommending which applications should be funded. Applications by existing competence centres which are not recommended for funding are evaluated by the panel whether they qualify for a phasing out period.

Time Schedule 5th K1 Call	
<b>Start of 5<sup>th</sup> K1 Call</b>	4 <sup>th</sup> December 2017
<b>Deadline for applications</b>	4 <sup>th</sup> May 2018
<b>Hearings</b>	13 <sup>th</sup> - 15 <sup>th</sup> November 2018 in Vienna at FFG
<b>Panel</b>	28 <sup>th</sup> November 2018 in Vienna at FFG

After half of the centre's duration (in the fourth year) a mid-term evaluation is foreseen. Funding for the second period (year 5-8) depends on a positive outcome of the mid-term evaluation.

Evaluation Criteria (K1)	evaluated by
<b>1. Quality of the project</b>	
1.1 Scientific quality of the research programme	external experts
1.2 Quality of planning	internal by FFG
<b>2. Suitability of the applicant / project partners</b>	
2.1. Quality of the consortium from a scientific perspective	external experts
2.2. Quality of the consortium in terms of the company partners	internal by FFG
2.3. Organisation and Management	internal by FFG
<b>3. Benefit and exploitation</b>	
3.1. Economic relevance of the research results	internal by FFG
3.2. Benefit and exploitation at the centre	internal by FFG
<b>4. Relevance to the call</b>	
4.1. Development of human resources	internal by FFG
4.2. Internationalisation	external experts & internal by FFG
4.3. Incentive effect of funding	Internal by FFG

## > Facts & Figures in COMET

In total three calls for COMET Centres (K2), four calls for COMET Centres (K1) and seven calls for COMET-Projects have been launched so far:

- 2007 and 2009: COMET Centres (K1 and K2) and COMET Projects
- 2008, 2011 COMET-Projects only
- 2013 COMET Projects and COMET Centres (K1)
- 2015 COMET Projects and COMET Centres (K1)
- 2016 COMET Centres (K2)
- 2017 COMET Projects and COMET Centres (K1)

So far 5 K2 Centres, 21 K1 Centres and 54 COMET Projects with the total volume of about 1.79 billion EUR have been funded.

The total volume consists of approximately EUR 566 million of federal funding, approximately EUR 283 million of regional funding, EUR 90 million from scientific partners and 856 million EUR from company partners.

## > 5<sup>th</sup> COMET Centres (K1) Call 2017:

- The available budget for federal funding is approx. EUR 20,4 million
- The Austrian provinces support COMET with additional funding (at a 2:1 ratio federal/provincial funding)
- Max 3 COMET Centres (K1) can be funded

<http://www.ffg.at/comet>

COMET is operated by the Austrian Research Promotion Agency (FFG) on behalf of the Federal Ministry for Transport, Innovation and Technology (BMVIT) and the Federal Ministry of Science, Research and Economy (BWF).