

BRIDGE EARLY STAGE

Call Guidelines

1st Call for Proposals

Submission deadline
3 June 2013, 16.00

V1.0_valid 28/02/2013 to 03/06/2013



FFG

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1 KEY FACTS AT A GLANCE

This call invites proposals for the **FFG funding instrument “Early Stage Science Transfer”**.

Overview	
	Instrument
	Early Stage Science Transfer
<i>Brief description</i>	Funding will be granted for scientifically excellent projects of basic research conducted in cooperation between a scientific and a commercialisation partner. The project must originate in scientific research. The majority of project work (90 %) is carried out by the scientific partners. The commercialisation partners provide in-kind contributions of 10%.
Key data	
Funding amount (€)	<i>No max. funding amount</i>
Financing	-----
Funding rate (%)	90 %
Duration (months)	max. 36 months
Cooperation required	yes
Total budget	EUR 3 million
Submission deadline	3 June 2013, 16.00
Language	English
Contacts	Brigitte Robien, T (0)5 7755 – 1508, E brigitte.robien@ffg.at Cornelia Kraus, T (0)5 7755 – 1509, E cornelia.kraus@ffg.at Gabriele Küssler, T (0)5 7755 – 1504, E gabriele.kuessler@ffg.at bridge@ffg.at
Information on the Web	www.ffg.at/bridge

The full set of proposal documents must be submitted exclusively via eCall (<https://ecall.ffg.at>) by the submission deadline.

2 MOTIVATION

Basic research projects carried out at universities but directly aimed at industrial application had difficulties obtaining funding in the past. Collaborations between scientific research institutions and RTDI companies were largely restricted to contract research.

Close collaboration and regular exchange between science and industry can be beneficial for both sides and open up new perspectives. The BRIDGE Programme, launched in 2004 as a joint initiative of the Austrian Science Fund (FWF) and the Austrian Research Promotion Agency (FFG), thus set out to provide funding for projects at the interface between scientific basic research at institutes and experimental development in businesses.

BRIDGE Programme 2004-2012

The joint BRIDGE initiative, which ran from 2004 to 2012, included the Bridge Programme (FFG) and the Translational Research Programme (FWF). In these 8 years, the two programmes have proved to be internationally recognised initiatives and received a number of positive evaluations.

The Translational Research Programme run by the FWF was phased out at the end of 2012.

BRIDGE “new” launched in 2013

In view of the phase-out of the FWF programme line, the Bridge Programme run by the FFG needs to be adjusted and developed further. The main focus of this reorientation is on bringing the programme closer to basic research.

BRIDGE Early Stage was developed as a new funding instrument in the course of this reorientation process.

BRIDGE Early Stage

This funding instrument is designed to provide funding for scientifically excellent basic research projects which are carried out by consortia of partners involved in scientific research and industrial commercialisation.

The integration into the international scientific community will substantially contribute to a positive evaluation.

The projects are allocated to the category of **industrial research**.

2.1 Goals

BRIDGE Early Stage focuses specifically on the funding of cooperation projects at very early stages of industrial research.

Funded projects are to build on the basic research of scientific institutes and taken closer to potential commercialisation through collaborative research with businesses.

The projects carried out as part of concrete research collaborations are to enable an effective exchange of research results and expertise. Another aim is to foster communication between science and industry, opening up new perspectives for both partners. The funding of collaborative projects is designed to facilitate mutual access to each other's expertise and help companies overcome their apprehension towards (basic) research.

The programme will thus provide a foundation on which innovative Austrian companies can build their R&D strategies in line with the Austrian research, technology and innovation policy goals.

The BRIDGE Early Stage programme has the following objectives:

1. To further develop and transfer basic research findings to industrial application and to initiate and extend research collaborations between science and industry.
2. To intensify research performance in the field of high-level scientific research and to integrate companies into international networks at very early stages of industrial development.
3. To use the existing human resource potential for industrial research by facilitating the transfer of experts from scientific to industrial research (intense involvement of doctoral students and post-docs in projects).

3 CALL TOPICS

The call is open for all topics and scientific disciplines.

4 LEGAL BASIS

At the national level, the programme is based on the Guidelines of the Austrian Research Promotion Agency for the Funding of Research, Technology, Development and Innovation (FFG Guidelines) pursuant to Sec. 4 para 2 of the Austrian Research Promotion Agency Act (FFG-G) issued by the Federal Minister for Transport, Innovation and Technology on 16 May 2008 (GZ BMVIT-609.986/0005– III/I2/2008) and the Federal Minister of Economy and Labour on 9 May 2008 (GZ-BMWA-98.310/0032-C1/10/2008).

At the European level, the programme is based on the COMMUNITY FRAMEWORK FOR STATE AID FOR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT AND INNOVATION (2006/C 323/01) as amended.

(Link: <http://www.ffg.at/Allgemeine-Richtlinien>)

5 FURTHER FUNDING OPTIONS

The FFG offers a wide range of funding options and support for participation in international programmes.

The following overview lists relevant funding options related to the present call. Please contact the FFG staff members listed below for further information.

Relevant FFG funding options	Contact	Link
Intelligent Production Topic-specific funding of research and development projects for companies, research institutions etc.	Mag. Katharina Gugler T ++43 (0)5 7755 – 5081, E katharina.gugler@ffg.at Mag. Alexandra Kuhn T ++43 (0)5 7755 – 5082, E alexandra.kuhn@ffg.at	www.ffg.at/intelligente-produktion
General Programme Funding of open topic development projects for companies, applications can be submitted at any time	Karin Ruzak T ++43 (0)5 7755 – 1507, E karin.ruzak@ffg.at	www.ffg.at/basisprogramm
Talent: FemTech Dissertations	Mag. Gabriela Christler T ++43 (0)5 7755 – 2302, E gabrieela.christler@ffg.at	www.ffg.at/femtech-dissertationen
Finding Talent: Researchers – career grants	Mag. Christine Kreuter T ++43 (0)5 7755 – 2709, E christine.kreuter@ffg.at	www.ffg.at/karriere-grants/ausschreibung
International funding options	Contact	Link
EUREKA Programme independent mechanism for the funding of national project parts	Dr. Olaf Hartmann T ++43 (0)5 7755 – 4902, E olaf.hartmann@ffg.at	http://www.eurekanetwork.org/in-your-country

6 APPLICATION GUIDELINES

BRIDGE Early Stage projects are defined as projects funded under the FFG funding instrument “Early Stage Science Transfer”.

The basic **requirements, funding conditions and procedures** for the submission of such projects (BRIDGE Early Stage projects) are explained below.

7 REQUIREMENTS AND FUNDING CONDITIONS

7.1 What are “Early Stage Science Transfer” projects?

Open topic

The BRIDGE Programme is an open-topic programme, i.e. the projects submitted are not subject to any thematic restrictions.

Basic research

Early Stage Science Transfer projects are defined as scientific research projects at a very early stage of industrial research, which have their **origins and basis** in scientific research carried out at university institutes or research institutions.

The **project** must involve high-level scientific research with a commercialisation perspective. This means that the companies involved (as potential commercialisation partners) must be able to adequately contribute their expertise to the project.

Cooperative

The projects must be designed as collaborative projects carried out by at least one scientific research institution and at least one company acting as commercialisation partner. The majority of the work must be carried out by the scientific partner.

In order to ensure the scientific quality and basic research character of the project, (a maximum of) **90 %** of the overall project costs must be incurred by the scientific partner.

At least 10 % of the overall cost must be met by the participating companies in the form of in-kind contributions. These contributions must provide a substantial benefit to the project!

International

Applications for Early Stage Science Transfer projects must have an international component underlining the integration of the project into the international scientific community. **Scientific** integration into an international environment will be rated positively in the evaluation process.

Connections to the international scientific community may take the form of collaboration with a **foreign scientific institute acting as a project partner** (see 7.7.5). Alternatively, the project may also involve loose connections with foreign partners without integration into the project.

Duration

The duration of Early Stage Science Transfer projects is limited to a **maximum of 36 months**.

7.2 Does my project fit into the programme?

The decision as to whether a project should be submitted for funding depends primarily on how far the **research work has progressed towards commercial exploitation**.

Early Stage Science Transfer projects are, by definition, situated at a very early stage of industrial research. This implies that the basic research carried out in the project **must not lead to direct commercial exploitation**.

Upon successful completion, however, the project may result in development work which may subsequently lead to commercially exploitable results.

The following rule of thumb can be used as **guidance**:

There should be **a period of at least 5 years** between the project and the production of commercially exploitable results.

For a definition of “Industrial Research” see Annex I.

7.3 What demands are placed on the consortium?

The consortium must consist of **at least one scientific partner** and **at least one commercialisation partner**. The number of partners is not limited.

The scientific partners must have the right to publish the results of their work conducted in the course of the project.

The **consortium** appoints one partner as consortium leader. This partner submits the application for funding and serves as contact point for the FFG.

The collaborative character of the project will be underlined by the mandatory conclusion of a **Consortium Agreement** specifying the partners’ rights and obligations.

7.4 Who should act as consortium leader?

The consortium lead can only be taken by a scientific partner based in Austria.

7.5 What are the responsibilities of the consortium leader?

The consortium leader is responsible for the entire project management and receives the funding.

The consortium leader is responsible for communications with the funding agency and the project partners for the entire duration of the project. This includes checking and submitting the reports and financial accounts of all partners in the consortium on the basis of the data and information provided by the consortium partners. The consortium leader confirms to the FFG that

- the costs included in the accounts are relevant to the project, i.e. they can be clearly attributed to the project.
- the project is fully in line with the funding contract in terms of costs and content and that any alterations have been notified in good time.
- the reports and financial accounts are complete and have been prepared in accordance with the funding and programme guidelines.

7.6 What are the responsibilities of the commercialisation partners?

The companies involved participate in the project according to schedule and account for their share in the costs (in-kind contributions).

Companies will also be subject to inspection and evaluation by the FFG.

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

7.7.1 Who is eligible for funding?

Any legal entities that are not part of the federal administration are eligible for funding.

7.7.2 Who can act as a scientific partner?

Scientific partners participating in BRIDGE projects must be research institutions in accordance with the Community framework for state aid for research and development and innovation (2006/C 323/01).

The scientific project partners must provide evidence that they are qualified to carry out **high-level scientific research** in the area relevant for the project. These can be universities, universities of applied sciences, research institutions or R&D companies.

R&D companies may only participate as scientific partners if they cannot exploit the project results within the framework of their normal business activities and if they meet all requirements for research institutions.

Scientific cooperation partners must provide evidence of their **qualification** in the field of scientific research and in relation to the project specific basic research in the application. Relevant previous projects funded by the Austrian Science Fund (FWF) or the EU must be shown.

7.7.3 Who can act as a commercialisation partner?

Commercialisation partners are usually Austrian companies that are able to **further develop** and **exploit** the project results within the framework of their normal business activities.

It is possible, in principle, for the industrial cooperation partners to **apply** project results within their own company without intending to exploit them commercially. The possibility or intention of exploiting the results commercially within the consortium will however be rated positively in the evaluation.

Professional unions and associations do not qualify as commercialisation partners; such associations have access to other funding options in the field of cooperative research.

7.7.4 Are Competence Centres also eligible to apply for funding?

COMET and K Centres may in principle submit applications for funding.

The project must, however, address a **new research topic (“Non-K area“)** (clear distinction from the existing research programme must be evidenced); if possible, companies should not already be part of the Competence Centre.

Newly established cooperations will stand a better chance in the evaluation process.

7.7.5 Can partners from outside Austria participate?

Consortia with foreign scientific partners are possible and will be rated positively in the evaluation as a sign of international cooperation.

If research institutions from outside Austria participate in a project, however, it must be ensured that **total foreign participation does not exceed 30 % of the overall project cost**.

Foreign organisations may also be involved as subcontractors.

7.8 How much support is granted?

Early Stage Science Transfer projects will receive funding of **up to 90% of the total project costs**. Funding will only be granted for the costs of the scientific project partners (corresponding to a 100% funding rate for scientific partners).

No funding will be provided for the costs of industrial partners

7.9 What costs are eligible?

All costs and expenses attributed to the project are eligible, provided they result directly, actually and additionally (to the normal operational costs) during the duration of the funded research activity.

The period when **costs may be recognised** corresponds to the **contractual project period**, which commences with the start date and ends with the conclusion of the project.

Detailed information on eligible and non-eligible costs are given in the “Guidelines for the Accounting of Project Costs in Funding Applications and Reports”, or **Cost Guidelines**, available at <http://www.ffg.at/Kostenleitfaden>.

Partners involved in **Early Stage Science Transfer projects** may not simultaneously be listed as subcontractors in the cost category “third-party costs”.

The following **deviating and/or supplementary provisions** apply in addition to the Cost Guidelines (V 1.3):

1. Costs of post-docs and doctoral students can be charged at the **applicable FWF rates** (<http://www.fwf.ac.at/de/projects/personalkostensaetze.html>) (40 hrs/week permitted for doctoral theses).

2. Personnel of universities and outsourced research institutions

University employees are paid from the global budget of the university and are thus not regarded as federal employees. Outsourced research institutions are also responsible for their own budget. The general provisions concerning the calculation of personnel costs thus also apply to universities and outsourced research institutions. Up to a maximum of **300 hours/year at a maximum hourly rate of € 70** can be charged for **university professors with a full-time** employment contract.

3. Patent costs

Costs incurred by participating SMEs in the course of patent application can be claimed as part of their in-kind contribution. Costs for patent maintenance and patent costs for universities are not eligible for funding.

4. Personnel costs

Participating shareholders of **small enterprises** for whom no personnel costs are available can be charged at an **all-in rate** of max. € 35 per hour or max. € 58,800 per year (including allowance for overhead costs).

5. In general, all costs must be allocated to individual **work packages** (with the exception of patent costs).

7.10 What points should be considered in regulating the rights to the results?

Intellectual property rights relating to the project results belong to the consortium.

There are no special provisions for the allocation of the intellectual property rights within the consortium. The regulations of the Community framework for state aid for research and development and innovation (2006/C 323/01), in particular Section 3.2.2., must be observed. According to this provision, any intellectual property rights and access to the results must be allocated to the different partners of the collaboration so as to adequately reflect their respective interests, work packages, and financial and other contributions to the project.

The cooperation between the partners and the allocation of intellectual property rights should be regulated in the course of the application process, and in any case prior to the commencement of work (see 10.5.1 Consortium agreement).

Irrespective of the regulation of intellectual property rights, the scientific partners must be granted the **right to publish** the research results.

7.11 What criteria are used to assess applications for funding?

Each Early Stage Science Transfer project will be evaluated by at least **2 international scientific reviewers** and at least **1 FFG reviewer** in terms of its technological and scientific content. **FFG financial experts** will additionally assess economic aspects relating to the commercialisation and financial viability of the project within the consortium. The evaluation will be carried out according to the following criteria.

7.11.1 Assessment criteria

The application will be evaluated according to the following **four main criteria**:

- quality of the project
- qualifications of the funding applicant/project partners
- economic potential and exploitation
- relevance of the project to the objectives of the call

The following table specifies the relevant **sub-criteria** and the questions used to assess them. In the course of the assessment, points are assigned to each criterion.

Funding criteria – explanations	
1. Quality of the project	
Innovation content in relation to the state of the art	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the state of the art (level of knowledge/technology) presented in an adequate and comprehensible form? • How do you rate the innovation content of the application in relation to the current level of research/knowledge?

Scientific excellence, originality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the scientific project exceed average standards? • Does the project provide scientific added value and can thus act as a model for similar projects?
Suitability of methods, quality of problem solving approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the goals described clearly? • How do you rate the quality of the problem solving approach? • Are the methods used for attaining the project goals adequate to the task and in accordance with the current state of knowledge? Can the goals be achieved better/faster with other means?
Suitability of cost and work plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the time and work schedule well structured, transparent and realistic? • Are the project partners well integrated with regard to their capacity and their expertise? Can the work be carried out within the specified time horizon? • Are the planned costs adequate and plausible? Is the infrastructure to be acquired necessary for the project?
2. Economic potential and exploitation	
Commercialisation potential/benefit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential customer benefit – what is the market potential for the project results (time horizon at least 5 years)?
Market experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the commercialisation partner already gained experience in the target market?
3. Qualifications of the applicants/project partners	
Qualification of the researchers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the researchers' qualifications in the subject area? Can they provide evidence of previous scientific work and publications?
Technical project management and implementation skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do the consortium partners have the organisational expertise required for the project and has this expertise been adequately presented in the funding application? • What are their implementation skills?
Project resources (personnel and technical equipment)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the personnel resources and technical equipment sufficient for the implementation of the project?

4. Relevance of the project to the programme	
Bridge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are the planned project activities in accordance with the research category (very early stage of industrial research)? • Does the project involve basic research initiated by the scientific partners or can it be described as contract research?
Future perspective/structural effects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the composition of scientific partners and companies provide for collaboration in the longer term? • Will the project lead to an effective and sustainable knowledge transfer (including at personnel level) for the future benefit of both partners?
Quality of cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the partnership been newly established or have there been longstanding relationships between the company and the institute? • Is the project integrated into the international research environment? Will there be an intensive exchange with international partners?
Gender relevance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have gender aspects (e.g. different patterns of use, physical differences) been taken into account in project planning? Can positive effects be expected? • Is the composition of the project team balanced in terms of gender mainstreaming? • Are there improvements to the gender ratios normal for the field? [gender balance should be taken into account equally for men and for women.]

7.12 What documents are required for submission?

Project applications may only be submitted electronically via **eCall** (<https://ecall.ffg.at>). As **part of the electronic application**, the following documents must be attached **by the consortium leader using the eCall upload function**:

- Project description: **scientific proposal** – upload as pdf file
- Cost plans (per partner): **financial part of the proposal** – upload as Excel file
- Cumulative cost plan– upload as Excel file
- Breakdown of overhead costs (if over 20 %) with corresponding documentary evidence

Attachments of industrial partners in eCall master data:

- Extract from commercial register (not older than 1 year)
- Financial statements (balance sheet and profit and loss account) of the 3 preceding financial years

Please observe the **submission deadlines!** No modifications, eCall uploads etc. will be permitted after the submission deadline.

7.13 Is it necessary to mention other projects?

The application for funding must list those projects that have received or are receiving public funding from Austria and/or the EU. All current and completed projects must be listed as well as all projects for which funding has been requested if their content is related to the call for applications or to the project submitted. This requirement serves to ensure that the current project is clearly separated from other projects that have already been funded or that are underway or for which funding has been requested.

The complete and comprehensive presentation of all support received or requested in the thematic field does not reduce the chance of receiving funding under the current call. It rather serves to prevent the risk of double funding and proves the consortium's expertise in the area.

These projects must be mentioned in the scientific part of the funding application (project description).

There are basically **no restrictions on the number of projects that can be submitted or carried out simultaneously**. The size and capacity of the institution will however be assessed in relation to the projects submitted in the course of the project evaluation.

7.14 Scientific integrity

Funding may only be granted to applicants who show high scientific quality both in the application and during the course of the project. To ensure that the scientific quality is appropriate, the FFG is a member of the Austrian Agency for Scientific Integrity – OeAWI (<http://www.oeawi.at/en/statutes.html>).

By its membership, the FFG supports the observance of the rules of good scientific practice. During the formal checks on applications and in the event of suspected scientific misconduct the FFG may forward details and any necessary supporting documents to the OeAWI's Commission for Scientific Integrity. The OeAWI will decide whether to initiate an independent investigation and, if necessary, will undertake the investigation.

If the review reveals details that prove that the scientific quality of the project is insufficient or that scientific misconduct (e.g. plagiarism) has taken place, the FFG may decide to request a revision of the application for funding or may reject it for formal reasons. In the case of projects that have been granted support, such cases may lead to the reduction, retention or reclaiming of financial support that has already been granted and/or transferred.

8 SUBMISSION PROCEDURE

8.1 What is the procedure for submission?

Project applications may only be submitted electronically via **eCall** (<https://ecall.ffg.at>). Applications must be **complete** and submitted **on time**, before the deadline for submission.

The application forms for the call for applications are to be used without exception. These will be made available for download via eCall.

The consortium leader must not submit the application for funding until **all partners** have **completed and submitted** their partner applications via eCall.

An application is considered to have been submitted when **it is finalised in eCall** by clicking the “Submit application” (“*Einreichung abschicken*”) button. When an application is received, an **acknowledgement** will be sent automatically by e-mail. Once an application has been submitted, it is **not possible** to modify the application or submit **additional documents** (e.g. individual parts of the application form).

It is not necessary to submit the duly executed application by post. The online submission is sufficient.

The actual submission must be undertaken by the consortium leader or by a duly authorised person. Proof that this person is entitled to represent the consortium leader must be provided to the FFG at any time on demand. If this cannot be done, the FFG reserves the right to reject the application in question for formal reasons.

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

8.2 What measures are taken to protect confidential project data?

The FFG undertakes to treat as confidential any company and project information received from the funding applicant in connection with its activity. The FFG may therefore publish project contents and results only with the consent of the funding recipient.

The names of the funding recipients, the amount of aid, the aid intensity and the industrial sectors in which the funded projects are carried out will be reported to the EU in compliance with the relevant reporting obligations.

Please note that all personal data obtained in connection with the initiation and performance of the contract the use of which is an essential prerequisite for the FFG to fulfil its legal mandate or is permitted in accordance with Secs. 7 to 11 of the Data Protection Act (DSG 2000), may be used by the FFG for the conclusion and performance of the funding contract, for fulfilling its legal mandate and for control purposes. This may mean that the data must be transferred or disclosed in particular to bodies and authorised representatives of the Federal Audit Office, the Federal Minister of Finance and the EU.

8.3 What else is important to consider when submitting an application?

8.3.1 Project start

The earliest possible date for the start of a project is **following submission** of the application for funding. The period when costs may be recognised corresponds to the contractual project period, which commences with the start date and ends with the conclusion of the project.

Until the funding decision has been made, however, there is a risk that the project will be rejected or funded under special conditions that require a modification of the original project plan. The majority of projects therefore do not start until the FFG has announced its funding decision.

8.3.2 Length of the application? German or English?

The entire application **must** be submitted in **English**. Points 1 to 3 of the project description are limited to **20 pages** for formal reasons.

The above does not apply to the summary on the eCall online form. The two fields **“Short project description”** (“*Projektkurzbeschreibung*”) and **“Economic significance/Exploitation potential”** (“*Wirtschaftliche Bedeutung/Verwertungspotenzial*”) must be completed in **German and English**.

9 PROJECT ASSESSMENT AND FUNDING DECISION

The applications will be evaluated by international and FFG reviewers in the weeks following submission. A funding decision can be expected after about **six months**.

The section “Application for Funding and Funding Administration” gives a general overview of the application and funding procedure.

9.1 What is the formal check?

The formal check serves to examine the application for **formal correctness and completeness**. The information contained in the application is not examined during the formal check.

If the formal requirements are not met and the deficiencies cannot be corrected, the application for funding will fail the formal check and will not enter the subsequent steps of the procedure.

9.2 How is the evaluation procedure organised?

The expert review is based on the criteria given in Chapter 7.11 and is undertaken by international and FFG reviewers on the basis of the documents submitted.

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

An **evaluation committee** (BRIDGE advisory board) will discuss the projects based on the expert reviews and make a recommendation for funding (including conditions and/or additional requirements).

9.3 Who makes the funding decision?

The funding decision will be made by the advisory board of the FFG General Programmes, which will pay special attention to appropriate budgetary cover for the proposal. It will base its decision on the recommendation of the BRIDGE advisory board.

The final funding decision is the responsibility of the FFG Management and will be taken on the basis of the decision by the advisory board of the FFG General Programmes, including any conditions and additional requirements.

10 PROCEDURE AFTER THE FUNDING DECISION

10.1 What if my application is rejected?

The decision to reject the application will be communicated to the applicant **by eCall immediately after the meeting at which the decision is taken.**

The consortium leader will receive a letter **by post** stating in detail the reasons for the decision to reject the application.

The letter usually provides an indication whether it is sensible to submit another funding application for one of the next calls after having fulfilled specific conditions or made changes to the project configuration.

10.2 Resubmission

Any rejected application can, in principle, be resubmitted.

Please note, however, that in this case applicants are expected to **eliminate the points of criticism** raised in relation to the original application.

All resubmitted applications will again be examined by the original reviewers and additionally by new international reviewers.

It is therefore not expedient to resubmit an (almost) unchanged application.

When resubmitting an application, applicants must additionally address the points of criticism and specify the changes made in a **separate document** (additional eCall file attachment).

10.3 Funding decision

The applicant is notified **via eCall** of whether the funding application has been accepted **immediately after the meeting at which the decision is made.**

10.4 How is the funding contract concluded?

If funding is granted, the FFG sends the consortium a draft contract (**offer of funding**) **by eCall**, which must be accepted within a specified period of time. If **all consortium partners** accept the terms and conditions listed in the draft contract within the specified period of time, a funding contract will be drawn up. The funding contract will be sent electronically via eCall and by post.

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

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

10.5 How should requirements and conditions be taken into account?

Requirements or conditions may be formulated during the assessment of the application and become an integral part of the contract. These are designed to ensure the desired project result and thus the efficient use of the funds. Such conditions and obligations may include securing match-funding, providing evidence of employment

relationships for project staff, evidence of company registration, references to cost structure, cost cuts etc.

10.5.1 Consortium agreement

A consortium agreement between the partners must be concluded prior to the start of a BRIDGE project.

The consortium leader must therefore confirm prior to payment of the second instalment that a **consortium agreement duly signed by all partners has been deposited with the consortium leader.**

The consortium agreement must meet all requirements of the call. The following issues must be regulated in particular:

Allocation of tasks, allocation of costs, project financing (acc. to funding contract), IPR and publication rights to the project results, possibility for the FFG to carry out cost audits at all project partners.

Help in the preparation of a consortium agreement is available in the form of a **sample consortium agreement**, which can be downloaded from www.ffg.at/konsortialvertrag. Use of this sample agreement is not mandatory.

10.6 How are the instalments of funding paid?

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

Subsequent instalments will be transferred according to **project progress** after a review of the **interim reports** (including **interim accounts**) and after any further requirements have been satisfied, based on the contractual instalment payment plan. If the work carried out and the costs incurred comply with the project plan and if any additional requirements and conditions are met, the subsequent instalment will be paid within the following weeks.

If the interim report indicates a **delay in project progress** or if the costs have not been incurred as planned, the payment of the relevant instalment may be postponed or the instalment reduced accordingly.

The payment of an instalment may also be postponed if, and as long as, circumstances prevail that are deemed to prevent the due performance of the contract.

The **payment of funding** during the course of the project does **not** imply **approval of the costs.**

Before payment of the final instalment, the final report and the final accounts will be reviewed. The **costs are only approved upon final approval** of the project following the audit by the FFG Project Controlling & Audit Division.

FFG instalment scheme

Project duration in months	0 - 18	19 - 30	31 - 36
Number of reports (interim reports and final report)	2	2	3

1st instalment (% of contractual funding)	50 %	50 %	30 %
2nd instalment (up to % of contractual funding)	30 %	40 %	30 %
3rd instalment (up to % of contractual funding)			30 %
Final instalment (up to % of contractual funding)	20 %	10 %	10 %

10.7 What reports and accounts are required?

An **interim report** and **interim accounts** must be submitted **via eCall** within one month of the reporting deadlines specified in the funding contract.

Within three months of the conclusion of the project a **final report** and the **final accounts** must be submitted **via eCall**.

All reports and accounts must include all the activities and associated costs of **all consortium partners** for which support is paid by the FFG.

The **templates** provided in eCall 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“ available at www.ffg.at/Kostenleitfaden.

10.8 How should changes to the project be communicated?

Any **changes to points specified in the contract** (project contents, partners in the consortium, costs, timing, funding period etc.) shall require a justified request to and **written approval by the FFG**.

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

10.8.1 Changes in the consortium

The FFG must be informed of any changes involving consortium partners (e.g. changes in ownership, bankruptcy proceedings) immediately after they become known. In the event of changes in the **consortium structure** the FFG will examine whether the overall project still meets the eligibility criteria.

10.8.2 Funding period

If the project goals have not been achieved at the end of the funding period and if the approved level of costs has not been exceeded, the funding period may be extended **on a cost-neutral basis** by up to a **maximum of one year**.

The **prerequisites** for extension are that the funding recipient is not responsible for the project’s delay and that the project is still eligible for funding.

An **application for extension of the funding period** must be submitted within the project period based on an interim report or interim accounts as the application must be examined in the context of the current status of the project and the original project plan.

Conversely, the duration of the **project may also be reduced** upon application of the funding recipient (e.g. earlier conclusion of the project, foreseeable significant cost overrun).

10.9 What happens if a project cannot be completed successfully?

If a project cannot be completed as originally planned due to technical problems or technical failure which cannot be remedied even by changes in the project configuration, the project must be **aborted** by notification to the FFG and submission of a final report and final accounts.

If the proportion of funding already paid by the FFG exceeds the corresponding proportion of project costs incurred, the excess funding must be repaid with interest.

10.10 What happens after the conclusion of the project?

After **the final report and the final accounts have been examined**, the FFG Project Controlling & Audit Division will undertake an audit to establish whether the **funding has been used for the intended purpose**. During the course of the **audit the final amount of eligible costs will be established** and examined.

The **result of the audit will be communicated to the consortium leader in writing**. If the result is positive, the FFG will confirm that the support has been used for the intended purpose; in the event of a **negative** result, procedures may be initiated to secure **repayment** of funding.

If the result is **positive** and if the level of cost initially envisioned has been reached, the final instalment specified 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 be reduced for scientific reasons, as well as on formal and legal grounds.

10.11 Are there cases where funding must be repaid?

Funding will generally not be reclaimed if a project is carried out according to schedule, i.e. if the overall costs have been realistically assessed in the funding application and have been met by the planned and documented activities and payments for other contractually accepted project costs.

Reasons for repayment include, for example, **incomplete** or **incorrect** information to the FFG concerning material circumstances, **failure to comply with reporting obligations**, **unapproved substantial changes in the project schedule**, etc. (for further details see General Guidelines <http://www.ffg.at/Allgemeine-Richtlinien>).

11 ANNEX I: What is “Industrial Research”

The research category “**Industrial Research**” is characterised by:

- especially high degree of innovation
- increased development risk
- following on from the research category “Basic Research”
- lack of market focus

Industrial Research

“Industrial Research” denotes **planned research or critical investigation to acquire new knowledge and abilities** with the goal of developing new products, procedures or services or to effect significant improvements to existing products, procedures or services. It includes the creation of parts of complex systems necessary for industrial research and in particular for the validation of the technological basis, with the exception of prototypes, which fall under the research category “Experimental Development”.

The following questions may be **helpful in allocating** a project to the category “Industrial Research”:

- Is the level of innovation particularly high?
- Will the new knowledge and abilities serve to develop new products, procedures or services?
- Will the new knowledge and abilities contribute to effecting significant improvements to existing products, procedures or services?
- Does the project exclude the production of a prototype?
- Does the project exclude direct commercial exploitation of the results?
- Is there (presently) no commercial market for the envisaged results?
- Will research institutions account for a large proportion of the costs?

12 ANNEX II: Calculation Examples

If for example the total project costs amount to € 100,000, with € 90,000 being incurred by the scientific partner and € 10,000 by the commercialisation partner, the FFG funding will be € 90,000.

This funding amount will cover 100% of the scientific partner’s costs. The company partner will bear its own costs of € 10,000 and will receive no funding.