

ME/CFS Call 2026

Fellowships

Information Session

22nd October 2025

Benjamin Missbach
Grace Liu

W|W|T|F



WE & ME
Foundation

Agenda

- ▶ Introduction to WWTF & WE & ME Foundation
- ▶ ME/CFS Call 2026 - Fellowships
 - ▶ Important considerations for your application
 - ▶ Key facts and steps of call
- ▶ Using the WWTF Funding Portal
- ▶ Q & A

Find a match | Networking platform

- ▶ Showcase your expertise within the next weeks
- ▶ Search for and contact researchers / potential lab hosts
- ▶ In-Person Workshop on the 28th of November (starting at 1pm) at the Medical University of Vienna as part of the [Young EMERG International ME Workshop Series - Vienna 2025](#)

<https://www.b2match.com/e/me-cfs-fellowship>

Register and connect!



ME/CFS 26 – Fellowships | Call “documents”

ME/CFS Call 2026 - Fellowships

This is a call for **early career ME/CFS researchers to conduct a six month research stay** at a research organisation in Vienna or abroad.

Call Facts
This is a call for early career ME/CFS researchers to conduct a six month research stay at a re...

Call Specifications
• 16 Seiten

Submission Guideline
This application must be submitted by the early career researcher. In order to submit the proposa...
• 9 Seiten

Contact
Benjamin Missbach | benjamin.missbach@wwtf.at | Tel: +43 1 402 31 43 19 Grace Liu | grace.liu@wwtf.at



→ All relevant information can be found here:
<https://wiki.wwtf.at/books/mecfs-call-2026-fellowships>

Agenda

- ▶ Introduction to WWTF + WE & ME Foundation
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WWTF | Key facts

- ▶ Private/public non-profit research funder in Austria
- ▶ Since 2002: approx. € 265 Mio in funding (private foundation, City of Vienna)
- ▶ Funding per year: approx. €20 Mio.
- ▶ WWTF's mission:
 - ▶ Funding top scientific research in Vienna
 - ▶ Providing substantial funding for larger research projects and international research group leaders coming to Vienna
 - ▶ Running competitive calls according to highest international standards

WWTF | Funding schemes

Thematic programmes

Life Sciences (*2003)

Information and Communication Technology (*2008)

Cognitive Sciences (*2011)

Environmental Systems Research (*2017)

Funding instruments

Projects

Vienna Research
Groups

Additional Funding
Measures

Disclaimer: How is this call financed?

- Call Volume for the Fellowships: **€200,000**
- WE&ME Foundation & WWTF co-financing + Wiener Philharmoniker (Neujahrskonzert 2025)

Handling of the call → WWTF

About WE&ME



- WE&ME, formerly known as 'Tempi Foundation,' was founded in 2020 by the Ströck family in Vienna with a focus on (1) funding ME/CFS research, (2) building a better support and care system for ME/CFS patients and (3) raising awareness for the disease.
- The family has been directly affected since 2016, with 2 sons being ME/CFS patients, leading to the recognition of a shortage of ME/CFS professionals and a lack of awareness and support.
- In 2024, WE&ME has raised around 770k in donations.

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ME/CFS 26 – Fellowships | Facts

- Call Volume: 200,000 €
- Fellowships up to 40,000 €
- Duration : 6 months
- Timeline
 - Call Start: October 2025
 - Proposal deadline: 3. February 2026 – 2pm
 - Jury Meeting: March 2026
 - Funding decision: end of March 2026
 - Fellowship Start: latest 06/2026

ME/CFS Call 2026 - Fellowships

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ME/CFS 26 – Fellowships | Call Deadline

W|W|T|F

IT'S A TUESDAY

The Funding Portal will close automatically **at 2pm on 3rd February, 2026**

ME/CFS 26 – Fellowships | Scope of call

“This call is open to **early-career ME/CFS researchers** seeking to undertake a six-month research stay in Vienna or abroad. The ME/CFS Fellowship programme aims to **strengthen the ME/CFS community** by supporting excellent young scientists and **promoting the exchange of expertise**. The programme provides a stipend for fellows **to learn new methods and techniques in renowned laboratories in Vienna or abroad**. The fellowship should help young researchers **forge and strengthen international connections early in their career.**”

ME/CFS 26 – Fellowships | Scope of call II

- ▶ Support early career researchers who want to advance our understanding of etiopathogenesis, diagnostics and/or therapy of post-acute infectious diseases, namely ME/CFS.
- ▶ Fellows from all disciplines are invited, especially from
 - clinical research
 - (bio)medical research
 - computer sciences BUT
 - Also from other disciplines with other e.g. more qualitative approaches are highly welcome
- ▶ **We do not allow local fellowships** → all fellows will move internationally to or from Vienna

ME/CFS 26 – Fellowships | Scope of call III

- ▶ **Phenotypic Characteristics:** The definition of ME/CFS must be based on either of these international consensus criteria
 - [Canadian Consensus Criteria \(CCC\) or the revised CCC](#)
 - [International Consensus Criteria](#)
 - [NICE Guidelines](#) for ME/CFS
 - [IOM 2015 Diagnostic Criteria](#)
- ▶ **Other post-acute infectious diseases** can also be investigated as part of the projects. Post-exertional malaise needs to be a decisive inclusion criterion for the post-acute infectious disease to be investigated, e.g. Long Covid
- ▶ Please note that solely observational projects in clinical settings and health service research do not fit the scope of this call

ME/CFS 26 – Fellowships | Scope of call IV

Skills Development

- Build core research competencies in ME/CFS-specific experimental design, data analysis, and interpretation
- Master relevant lab techniques and strengthen quantitative and qualitative reasoning abilities

Collaboration & Network Building

- Work across different research groups to experience diverse lab cultures and methodologies
- Actively participate in ME/CFS community activities and knowledge exchange
- Foster connections between research teams to strengthen the field

Professional Growth

- Advance critical thinking, project management, and communication skills
- Develop capacity for both independent work and team collaboration

→ Research Impact: think beyond the lab bench and understand the broader impact of their ME/CFS research.

Evaluation Process

Formal check by WWTF Office

- Online submission until 3. Feb - 2pm
- All required signatures Viennese Institution & LOIs available

Jury meeting in March 2026 (6 international Jury members)

- Assessment by at least two jury members prior to meeting
- Discussion of all applications within scope
- Funding recommendation by international expert jury

Formal decision by the end of March 2026

- WWTF boards formally confirms jury recommendation
- Information of applicants about decision

ME/CFS Call 2026 - Fellowships

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Evaluation Criteria

- ▶ **Scope** ... as described in the call specifications. Applications which are not within the thematic scope will be immediately rejected by the jury
- ▶ **Academic potential** of the applicant(s)
 - Relative to academic age
 - Research potential to successfully conduct the proposed work
- ▶ **Additionality:** strategic value of the planned research stay for the applicant in acquiring otherwise unavailable expertise and enriching their career.
- ▶ **Applicant and host complementarity**

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WWTF | Open Science Policy

W|W|T|F

WWTF aims to:

- ▶ fund research guided by principle “as open as possible, as closed as necessary”
- ▶ provide funds related to the cost of OA publication and data management
- ▶ place more emphasis on Open Data by adoption of FAIR principles

→ <https://wwtf.at/funding/our-principles/downloads/open-access-and-open-science-policy>

W|W|T|F

Vienna Science
and Technology Fund

WWTF

Open Science Policy

Version 09.03.2022

- ▶ Brief explanation regarding how data and/or code generated in project will be managed and made available
- ▶ We strongly encourage to develop a data management plan in your project
(Note: if your project will be funded, details will be discussed during contracting)
 - ▶ Documentation and metadata that accompanies data
 - ▶ Ethical and legal aspects
 - ▶ Process to store, preserve and share data

WWTF | Gender Equality Plan

WWTF:

- ▶ Encourages gender-balanced teams and more female researchers to apply as PIs of research projects
- ▶ Uses evaluation criteria that account for career breaks
- ▶ Strives for gender balance in jury panels and reviewer pools
- ▶ For more details, see WWTF's Gender Equality Plan

Applicants:

- ▶ Address sex and/or gender in research content
- ▶ Can include Childcare and / or career coaching costs to the budget
- ▶ See „*Gender aspects in the application phase*“ in Call Specifications

Use of GenAI in the application process

WWTF emphasizes the importance of human responsibility for the content submitted at all stages of the application process.

- WWTF recognizes that use of genAI tools to support proposal writing
- **“Substantial use” of genAI must be declared** as such for the sake of transparency.
“Substantial use” defined in line with the European Commission’s definition:

*“[...] using generative AI as a basic author support tool is not a substantial use. However, interpreting **data analysis, carrying out a literature review, identifying research gaps, formulating research aims, developing hypotheses, etc. could have a substantial impact.**” (EC 2024: Living Guidelines on the responsible use of generative AI in research.)*

- This mainly concerns critical parts of scientific part and the work plan.
- **The applicants have full responsibility over the content of the proposal!**

ME/CFS 26 – Fellowships | Technicalities

- ▶ Max. 1 proposal per applicant
- ▶ The overall duration is limited to 6 months.
- ▶ Fellowships must start at latest in June, 2026.
- ▶ The fellowship contract will be signed between WWTF and the Viennese research institution of the outgoing/incoming grantee
- ▶ All applicants must submit a Letter of Intent (LOI)
- ▶ Up to 20% total budget may be allocated outside of Vienna
- ▶ Non-personnel costs should not exceed 30% of the overall budget
- ▶ For this call, we do not pay overheads

ME/CFS 26 – Fellowships | Letter of Intent

- ▶ Central document in your application
 - ▶ The name of the applicant
 - ▶ The name of the responsible PI at the Host Institution
 - ▶ The timeframe of the research stay
 - ▶ The expected role of the applicant within the working group and
 - ▶ The Host Lab / Working group's approach to mentorship and guidance for the duration of the fellowship
 - ▶ Signature of the responsible PI of the Host Institution

Special Track for applicants from Lower Austrian research institutions



- ▶ Government of Lower Austria dedicated up to two positions for successful applicants from lower Austria
- ▶ Submission and evaluation process is the same for applicants from lower Austria: same criteria, same boundary conditions (exchange Vienna with lower Austria)
- ▶ Applicants from lower Austria are in the same competitive process like the other applicants
- ▶ If jury recommends applications from lower Austria for funding, the fellowships will be paid by the local government → Contract will be between your institution from lower Austria and the government of lower Austria (not WWTF)

→ NOT 100% fix, but most likely this will work! Once WWTF x Lower Austria agree on the final terms, we will notify you through our website

Things to Consider

- ▶ Check the scope of our call, careful reading
- ▶ Get to know your institution's research office
- ▶ Read the guidelines → Evaluation criteria (Call Specs)
- ▶ Don't assume specific expertise of our Jury
- ▶ Polish your CV, use our template
- ▶ Pay more than lip service to gender equality & open science
- ▶ Think realistically about the budget of your proposal (feasibility!)

nature

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CAREER COLUMN | 01 September 2023

A funding adviser's guide to writing a great grant application

Mireille Consalvey draws on years of experience to present a 13-step checklist for success.

<https://doi.org/10.1038/d41586-023-02756-6>

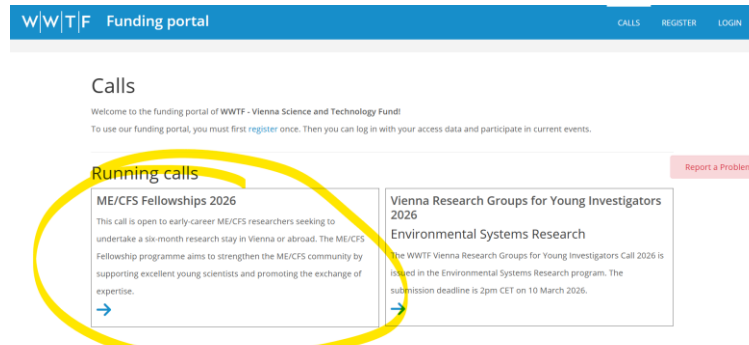


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WWTF Funding Portal

- ▶ New Funding Portal launched in 2022
- ▶ Old Submission System will be phased out



← Bug or feature!?

<https://fundingportal.wwtf.at/>

WWTF Funding Portal | Steps to submission

- ▶ Register or login
- ▶ Choose call and create proposal
- ▶ “Invite” yourself as at the applicant (→ *this is weird, but there is no other option at this point*)
- ▶ Complete “My Profile” and “My Roles”
- ▶ Chapters to fill out
 1. Basic information
 2. Personnel and Institutions
 3. Project
 4. Budget
 5. Signatures
- ▶ Submit proposal

Submission Guideline

Who should submit: applicant or host?

- Register & Login**
Register: Go to <https://fundingportal.wwtf.at/> Go to “Register” in the top menu Enter your I...
- Create a new proposal**
Go to “Calls” in the top menu Select the ME/CFS Call 2024 “Understanding ME/CFS” Call Click “...
- Invite PIs & enter information about PIs**
WWTF requires information only about the researchers in the core team of the project, i.e., the P...
- Curriculum Vitae and List of Publications**
Please use the CV template provided. This is the correct template! All other calls: [wwtf_cvtempl...](#)
- Fill out a proposal**
The proposal is comprised of five chapters (each under a tab): Basic Information Personnel an...
- Chapters to fill out**
Basic information This chapter contains basic information about the proposal, including title, s...
- Signatures**
Submission of the proposal requires the signatures of the authorized person(s) at the host insti...
- Submit the proposal**
Once all symbols in all chapters are marked by green checkmarks, the proposal can be submitted. T...
- Contact**
Benjamin Missbach | benjamin.missbach@wwtf.at | Tel: +43 1 402 31 43 19 Grace Liu | grace.liu@wwtf.at



<https://wiki.wwtf.at/books/mecfs-call-2026-fellowships/chapter/submission-guideline>

Register & login

- ▶ First register at <https://fundingportal.wwtf.at/register/>

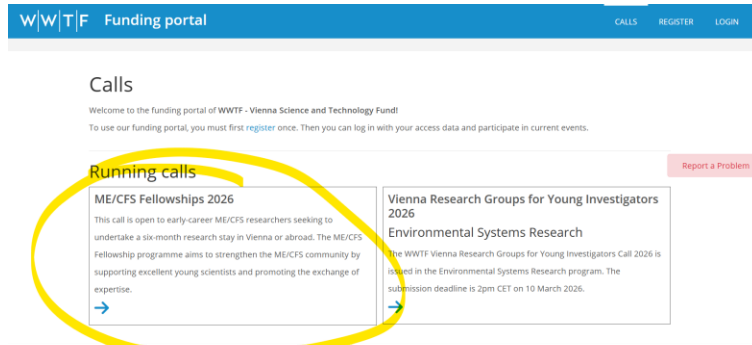
The screenshot shows the registration page of the W|W|T|F Funding portal. The top navigation bar is blue and contains the text 'W|W|T|F Funding portal' on the left and 'CALLS REGISTER LOGIN' on the right. The 'REGISTER' button is circled in red. Below the navigation bar is a 'Registration' form with a 'My data' section. The form contains the following fields:

- First name *
- Last name *
- Institution
- E-mail *
- Re-enter email *
- Password *
- Re-enter password *
- Anti-SPAM code * (with a CAPTCHA image and the text 'Please enter the code as shown' and 'Illegible?')

A 'Report a Bug' button is visible on the right side of the form.

- ▶ If you have an account in the old system, you can re-use these credentials to register

Choose call and create proposal



1. Choose call

ME/CF5 Fellowships 2026

The call "ME/CF5 Call 2026 - Fellowships" call opened for submissions on 10th October 2025. This call is open for **early career ME/CF5 researchers to conduct a six month research stay** at a research organisation in Vienna or abroad. The ME/CF5 Fellowship programme aims to strengthen the ME/CF5 community by supporting excellent young scientists and promoting the exchange of expertise.

This call is co-financed by the **WE&ME Foundation** and WWTF. A total of € 200.000 has been dedicated to this call. The maximum funding per Fellowships is € 40.000.

- Deadline for proposals: 3rd February 2026 - 2pm
- The funding decision is expected in March 2026

Further information can be found in the [Call Specifications and Submission Guidelines](#).

Early career ME/CF5 researchers and potential hosts who interested in this call are encouraged to **register and connect on the networking platform**: <https://www.b2match.com/me-cfs-fellowship>

Please do not hesitate to contact the call managers for more details:

- Benjamin Missbach | benjamin.missbach@wwtf.at | Tel.: +43 1 402 31 43 19
- Grace Liu | grace.liu@wwtf.at | Tel.: +43 1 402 31 43 12

[Create new proposal](#)

← BACK

2. Click → “Create new proposal”

Proposal chapters

- ▶ Proposal divided into 5 chapters
- ▶ Click and scroll through chapters to see proposal requirements



ME-CFS26--***: Incomplete proposal



Indicate your Host Institution and Upload LOI

ME-CFS26-***: Incomplete proposal

● Basic Information ● Personnel and Institutions ● Project ● Budget ● Signatures

Personnel and Institutions

Applicant for the ME/CFS Fellowship

● Applicant

I am the Applicant

First name * Last name *

Email address * Status
new

Invite

● Host Institution

Search Host Institution Host Institution * Region *
please select

Please search for your Host Institution in our database

● Letter of Intent

Upload your Letter of Intent *

Choose file Browse

LOI should include:
The name of the applicant
The name of the responsible PI at the Host Institution
The timeframe of the research stay
The expected role of the applicant within the working group and
The Host Lab/ Working group's approach to mentorship and guidance for the duration of the fellowship
Signature of the responsible PI of the Host Institution

Reference ID: 022648

Save

* Indicates mandatory fields
● Indicates completed sections.
● Indicates incomplete sections. Click the symbol to show fields that require attention.

- ▶ First confirm that you are the applicant
 - ▶ Data **from your profile** will be loaded
 - ▶ In order to finish this part, you need to provide data in the “**My Role**” Section
- ▶ Indicate Host Institution
- ▶ Upload LOI as PDF

You need to complete your Profile!

!DANGER ZONE!

WWTF Funding portal

CALLS MY PROFILE CALLMANAGER ADMIN LOGOUT

Profile

My login credentials

E-mail address *

benjamin.missbach@wwtf.at

If you want to change your e-mail address, a confirmation link will be sent to the new e-mail address.

Change password

New password

Re-enter new password

Current password

My data - CallManager

Gender * female male non-binary

Degree

First (given) name *

Last name *

Degree, appended

ORCID ID

<https://orcid.org>

Search affiliation

Please try to find and select your affiliation in our database

Job title *

Street address *

Zip *

City *

Country *

Phone *

[Report a Bug](#)

Please use the correct CV template

!DANGER ZONE!

✓ CV Upload

Available CV Templates:

Please use the CV template for the call in which you intend to submit your proposal

VRG: [wwtf_cvtemplate_vrg.docx](#)

all other calls: [wwtf_cvtemplate_project.docx](#)

Complete “My roles” → Click on “Applicant”

!DANGER ZONE!

My proposals

ME/CFS FELLOWSHIPS 2026

ME-CFS26-***: Incomplete proposal

created on Oct 17th, 2025 Reference ID: 022648

NEXT - NEW EXCITING TRANSFER PROJECTS 2022

NXT22-***: Incomplete proposal

created on Oct 21st, 2022 Reference ID: 006121

My roles

ME/CFS FELLOWSHIPS 2026

ME-CFS26-***: Incomplete proposal

as **Applicant** (approved, but incomplete)

updated on Oct 17th, 2025

NEXT - NEW EXCITING TRANSFER PROJECTS 2022

NXT22-***: Incomplete proposal

as **Principal Investigator and Coordinator** (approved, but incomplete)

updated on Oct 21st, 2022

Proposal | Basic Information

ME-CFS26- : Incomplete proposal

Basic Information Personnel and Institutions Project Budget Signatures

- ▶ Title and acronym
- ▶ Scientific disciplines (must add up to 100%)
- ▶ Keywords
- ▶ Project duration

WWTF Funding Portal | Error & Help

! Basic Information

✓ Personnel and Institutions

! Project

! Budget

! Signatures

Basic Information

✓ ID, Title and Acronym

Proposal ID

LS23-***

! Will be generated after proposal submission

Project title *

Test project 1

! Scientific Disciplines

This will help to categorize your proposal. Please use the [ÖFOS](#) categories.

! Provide at least one category; sum must equal 100 %

Main scientific discipline *

106052 - Cell biology

Share *

60 %

Other scientific discipline *

102019 - Machine learning

Share *

30 %

Other scientific discipline *

106002 - Biochemistry

Share *

5 %

Sum of shares should equal 100%

- ▶ Within the flagged chapter, click on the red symbol beside the section title
- ▶ Help text in red will explain problem

Proposal | Project

ME-CFS26-***: Incomplete proposal

Basic Information

Personnel and Institutions

Project

Budget

Signatures

- 1. Lay description of your Fellowship activities** (1,000 characters)
- 2. Scientific description of your Fellowship activities** (2,000 characters)
- 3. Detailed Description of your planned activities** (5,000 characters)
- 4. Workplan** (7,000 characters)
- 5. Career Aspects** (5,000 characters)
- 6. Ethical considerations** (500 characters)
- 7. Data Management** (500 characters)
- 8. Use of generative AI** (500 characters)

→ *Gender aspects should be considered throughout and explained where appropriate*

Ethics

If ethical approval has already been obtained, please upload the appropriate documents.

In case a new ethical approval is pending, an acknowledgement of receipt from the ethics committee/institutional review board must be submitted with the proposal →

The final approval (“Votum”) must be submitted to WWTF at latest before the start of the fellowship.

Proposal | Budget

ME-CFS26-***: Incomplete proposal

Basic Information Personnel and Institutions Project Budget Signatures

- ▶ Personnel + non-personnel costs = total costs
- ▶ No overhead costs for this call
- ▶ Salaries \geq minimum wage according to Kollektivvertrag or FWF standards
 - ▶ <https://www.fwf.ac.at/en/research-funding/personnel-costs>
- ▶ Non-personnel costs should not exceed 30% of total budget
- ▶ No funding of companies or industry partners
- ▶ Budget allocated outside of Vienna up to 20% of total budget

Proposal | Budget

MI-CYS26-***, Incomplete proposal

• Basic information • Personnel and institutions • Project • Budget • Signature

Budget

Notice
Non-personnel costs should not exceed 30% of the total requested budget.
The calculation will be made for the estimated duration that you indicated: 6 months.

• Personnel Costs

Name / Staff category	Funding source	Y1	Average yearly time commitment (from 0 to 100%)	Y1 salary (00%)	Funding applied for
Bergmann-Mitochondrion	<input type="checkbox"/> in-kind			0.00 %	
	<input type="checkbox"/> in-kind			0.00 %	

Total personnel costs applied for funding from WWTF

• Planning of Non-personnel Costs

Description / Institution / Cost category	Y1	Funding applied for

Total non-personnel costs applied for funding from WWTF

• Budget Per Region

Region	Requested funding from WWTF	Share per region
Vienna		
Other		

• Cost Overview

Institution	Personnel costs	Non-personnel costs	Total sum of funding applied from WWTF
University of Vienna	0 €	0 €	0 €
Total	0 €	0 €	0 €

Requested funding per cost category (%)

• Explanation of cost planning
Please provide details about the planned allocation of resources. *

• Disclosure of other applications for funding
Has this fellowship (or parts thereof) been submitted for funding consideration at other funding bodies? *

yes
 no

- ▶ Indicate your personnel and non personnel costs
- ▶ For personnel costs: type in your annual salary, the systems automatically calculates the correct numbers for 6 months
- ▶ For non-personnel costs: please indicate your amount and categories
- ▶ System automatically sums up and checks against the allowed amount
- ▶ Provide brief explanation of cost planning (*1000 characters*)
- ▶ Disclosure of other applications for funding (y/n)

Proposal | Signatures

ME-CFS26-***: Incomplete proposal

Basic Information Personnel and Institutions Project Budget Signatures

- ▶ Signatures from authorising persons from a Viennese Institution necessary
 - ▶ Check with research support, grant offices, etc. → who can sign?
 - ▶ Allow ample time
- ▶ Signature sheet can be generated once the project title and core team members' institutes have been entered
- ▶ All signature forms are accepted

Proposal | Signatures

ME-CFS26-***: Incomplete proposal

- Basic Information
- Personnel and Institutions
- Project
- Budget
- Signatures

Authorization

In signing the application form, the institution (i.e., an individual authorised and responsible for signing UG §27 projects) certifies that the information provided in the application form is, to the best of their knowledge and belief, accurate and complete. We hereby confirmed that

- the institution agrees to the employment of personnel as well as the provision of an adequate workplace, consumables and equipment and other resources, as well as in-kind contributions (if required in the call documents) as stated in the application
- For "Joint Projects": The institution in Lower Austria confirms compliance with the "NÖ Kulturförderungsgesetz 1996" and the "Richtlinien für die Förderung nach dem NÖ Kulturförderungsgesetz 1996".

Institution	Signing person *	Date, stamp, signature or electronic signature
Institution 1	NN1	
Institution 2	NN2	

Signatures

The upload of multiple files is possible.
You can generate the signature sheet here after the proposal's title and host institutions of the core team members have been provided.

Signatures *

Choose file

Upload is possible as soon as the section "Personnel and Institutions" is complete. We only accept PDF format (preferably PDF version 1.4 without any encryption) as upload.

Already uploaded:

- Is23_unterschriften.pdf [PDF, 74,10 KB]

!DANGER ZONE!
Check PDF before submitting

Reference ID: 006470

Find a match | Networking platform

- ▶ Showcase your expertise within the next weeks
- ▶ Search for and contact researchers / potential lab hosts
- ▶ In-Person Workshop on the 28th of November (starting at 1pm) at the Medical University of Vienna as part of the [Young EMERG International ME Workshop Series - Vienna 2025](#)

<https://www.b2match.com/e/me-cfs-fellowship>

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Q & A

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