

Submission Guideline

Full Proposal

Synthetic Biology

Life Sciences Call 2024

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ATTENTION: An “Applicant Response Phase” has been introduced into the evaluation of full proposals in this Life Sciences Call 2024. Please see Section 7 of this document for important details.

1. About this document

This document is a guide to using WWTF’s Funding Portal. It is intended for applicants who have been invited to submit a full proposal in the Life Sciences Call 2024. For further information regarding the thematic scope of the call, funding guidelines, as well as references to WWTF policies, please also consider the following documents:

<u>Call Specifications</u>	Detailed information about the call
<u>WWTF Funding Guideline</u>	General Guideline for WWTF funding activities
<u>Guideline for Good Scientific Practice</u>	Guidelines from the Austrian Agency for Research Integrity
<u>Open Science Policy</u>	Open Science Policy of WWTF
<u>Gender Equality Strategy & Plan</u>	Gender Equality Strategy & Plan of WWTF
<u>Reporting and Accounting Guideline</u>	Reporting and accounting specifications for funded projects

2. General information

All proposals must be submitted electronically via the [WWTF’s Funding Portal](#). The Funding Portal will save your entries and changes automatically. You can pause data entry at any time. All information will be available again upon your next login.

All sections of the proposals must be written in English. The length of the full proposal is determined by upload and character limits (including spaces) in the Funding Portal.

Please note that the full proposal will be assessed by **experts in the specific topics of the proposal**. These experts will provide written assessments to the jury panel, whose collective expertise covers a range of topics in this call.

3. Login to the WWTF Funding Portal

1. Go to <https://fundingportal.wwtf.at/>
2. Login with your credentials
3. You will see an overview of your proposal(s) and role(s)

The screenshot shows the WWTF Funding Portal interface. At the top, there is a blue navigation bar with the WWTF logo and the text 'Funding portal'. To the right of the logo are links for 'CALLS', 'MY PROPOSALS & ROLES', 'MY PROFILE', and 'LOGOUT'. Below the navigation bar, the page is divided into two main sections: 'My proposals' and 'My roles'. Both sections are for 'LIFE SCIENCES 2024'. In the 'My proposals' section, there is one proposal entry for 'LS24-001 Title of project'. It has a red 'B' icon next to the title and a red 'A' icon next to a 'Short Proposal' button. A status indicator shows 'Submitted on Mar 28th, 2024'. In the 'My roles' section, there is one role entry for 'LS24-001 Title of project'. It has a red 'C' icon next to the title and is described as 'Principal Investigator and Coordinator (approved and complete)'. A status indicator shows 'updated: Mar 4th, 2024'.

- A) Click on “Short Proposal” to download a PDF of your submitted short proposal
- B) Click on the project title to edit the full proposal (see [Section 4](#))
- C) Click on your role to edit your specific role in this proposal (see [Section 5](#))

4. Full proposal

The full proposal is comprised of five sections:

The progress bar shows five sections: 'Basic Information', 'Personnel and Institutions', 'Project', 'Budget', and 'Signatures'. 'Basic Information' and 'Personnel and Institutions' have green checkmarks, indicating they are complete. 'Project', 'Budget', and 'Signatures' have red exclamation marks, indicating they are incomplete.

A green checkmark indicates that the information in the section is complete.

A section with a red symbol indicates that it is incomplete. Within the marked section, click on the red symbol beside the individual fields to highlight the parts requiring attention.

A proposal can only be submitted once all sections are complete.

4.1 Basic Information

- Please note that the name, acronym, nominated scientific disciplines, project duration and type of project (regular WWTF Project or Joint Project) can **no longer** be changed.

- **Keywords:** These will help the WWTF identify appropriate reviewers for your proposal. Keywords may still be edited or added.
- **Suggested peer reviewers:** Applicants must suggest **five** international peers whom they deem qualified to review the proposal. To enable the selection of a balanced set of reviewers, please provide key words or phrases to describe the reviewers' fields of expertise. Suggested reviewers must be based outside of Austria and have no conflict of interests with project applicants. Persons with whom the project applicants have worked together (joint publications, research cooperations, etc.) in the last five years will not be considered. Please note that the WWTF will determine if suggested peers will be contacted for reviewing.
- **Excluded peer reviewers:** Applicants may, without stating any reasons, exclude up to three individuals from reviewing their proposal. These names will not be visible to external peer reviewers.

4.2 Personnel and Institutions

- Please note that the addition, removal, or substitution of core team members (PI&C, co-PIs) are **not** permitted at this stage.
- **Further partner institutions:** Collaborating institutions beyond those of the core team members can be added. Please note that every person involved in the project must be linked to an institution in order to allow indication of time commitment and salary in the "Budget" section. A signature will be required from the authorizing persons at the core team members' institutions **and** at all further partner institutions. A maximum of **five** different institutions (including those of the core team members) is permitted.

4.3 Project

This is the main section of the proposal that requires elaboration of the project's scientific content.

- **Lay summary:** Please provide a description of your proposed research that is suitable for the general public. This will primarily be used by WWTF for communicating your work to non-experts for fundraising and public relations purposes (*1,000 characters*).
- **Scientific abstract:** This will be used for approaching reviewers for your project. The abstract has been taken automatically from the short proposal, but may be edited for the full proposal. (*2,000 characters*)
- **Work programme:** Please use the template provided for download in the WWTF Funding Portal. The headings in bold are mandatory, while sub-headings are recommendations. Please use a common font type (such as Arial, Source Sans Pro) and font size 11pt. Line spacing should be between 1.3 and 1.5. Please do not add any headers or footers (such as page numbers, proposal number, title of proposal), since this information will be added automatically to the file upon upload of the PDF. You may include figures, tables, etc. to improve the scientific presentation. Upload the completed document as a PDF (max. 15 pages including figures).

1-page graphical summary, including depiction of how the proposal fits the scope of the call

1. Introduction

- a. Subject of the research
- b. State of the art and key scientific challenges

2. Hypotheses, objectives and impact

- a. Research questions and/or hypotheses, including explanation of how these fit into synthetic biology
- b. Objectives of the project
- c. Scientific impact and contribution

3. Research plan and methods

- a. Preliminary data and/or results relevant to the project (if available)
- b. Research plan, including milestones and deliverables
- c. Research methods
- d. Innovativeness

4. Project management and feasibility

- a. Data management (including protocols, data sharing, dissemination, etc.)
- b. Feasibility and risk management

5. Project team

- a. Roles and expertise of key personnel
- b. Collaborative elements of project, including interdisciplinary aspects

6. Key references

- **Data management:** In case of funding, a data management plan must be stepwise developed over the runtime of the project. At the full proposal stage, we encourage applicants to consider and briefly address the following points as appropriate:
 - What kind of accompanying metadata and documentation will help others identify, discover, reuse and/reproduce the research data?
 - How will data for sharing and preservation be selected?
 - When will data be shared?
 - In which repository will data be archived? How long will data be retained?
 - What persistent identifiers (e.g., DOI) and usage licenses (e.g., CC BY) will be used?
- **Ethical considerations:** Indicate if the approval of an ethics committee or institutional review board is necessary. If so, please describe the potential ethical aspects and upload the ethical approval(s) as a single PDF. There is no page limit for the approvals, but the document may not exceed 10 MB. If no ethical aspects are identified, please provide a brief explanation. (500 characters)

Please note that **potential sex/gender aspects of the research topic** and **gender balance in the research team** should be considered throughout the application (see “[Call Specifications](#)” document, Section 9). These should be described where appropriate in the relevant sections.

4.4 Budget

Please note the following guidelines for the budget:

- **Maximum 15% difference** between the budgets of the short and full proposals is permitted.
- For personnel costs, an annual 6% p.a. increase in salary over the lifetime of the project has been pre-programmed. This is intended to assist with planning only, and actual salaries should be paid according to institutional or collective agreements.
- Non-personnel costs **should not exceed 40%** of the total requested budget.

Personnel costs

- Core team members are automatically listed.
- Click “Additional person” to individually add all persons who will work on the project. Please provide their name or select “is N.N.” if the role is to be filled (e.g., PhD candidate, Post Doc). Indicate the affiliation and staff category of each person using the dropdown menu. If an affiliation is not listed, return to the section “Personnel and Institutions” (see [Section 4.2](#)) and add the respective institution.
- Specify if the person will be financed by WWTF or contribute on an in-kind basis, and indicate their yearly time commitment to the project for each year. A mixture of WWTF and in-kind financing is permitted.
- For persons to be partially or fully financed by WWTF, enter the annual salary that corresponds to 100% employment in the first year of the project. The total funding requested for each person will be automatically calculated.

Non-personnel costs

- Add rows to provide a concise overview of all non-personnel costs directly related to the project. Please select the institution and cost category from the dropdown menus. If an affiliation is not listed, return to the section “Personnel and Institutions” (see [Section 4.2](#)) and add the respective institution.
- Costs for basic infrastructure (rent, telephone) are **not** permitted. Costs for larger equipment essential for the project may **only** be requested on a *pro rata* basis that also takes into consideration the proportion of time that the equipment will be used for this project.
- WWTF strongly encourages open access publications. Costs for Article Processing Charges (APCs) may be requested.
- Costs for data management purposes (e.g., curation, storage) are eligible.

Budget per region

- The share of the budget allocated to the regions “Vienna” and “Other” will automatically be shown for WWTF projects, and to the regions “Vienna”, “Lower Austria” and “Other” for Joint Projects.
- For regular WWTF projects, at least 80% of the requested funding must be allocated to the region “Vienna”. Up to 20% may be allocated to other partner(s), including partners in Lower Austria.
- For Joint Projects, the budget allocated to the region “Vienna” must be at least 51%. The share of the budget allocated to the region “Lower Austria” may range from 21% to 49%. Up to 20% may be allocated to any further partner(s) located in other regions (“Other”).

Cost overview

- Enter the overhead rate for each institution. WWTF permits a **maximum of 20%** overheads costs. Please consult each institutions’ research services to ensure compliance with all institutions’ internal regulations.

Explanation of cost planning

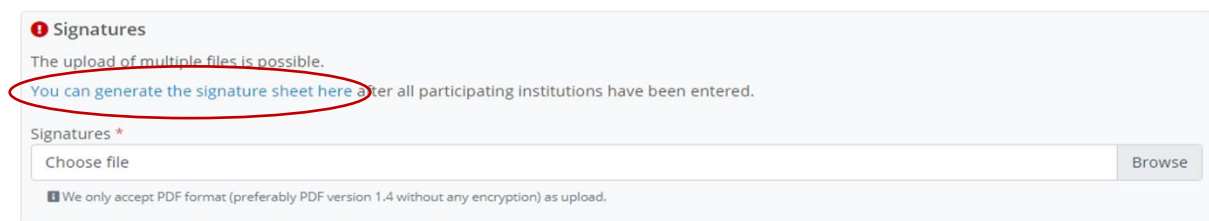
- Please provide an explanation of cost planning principles, also indicating access to equipment or resources that are already available.

Disclosure of other applications for funding

- If you have applied for funding for this project (or parts thereof) at other organisations, please indicate this here. This will not impact the evaluation of this proposal.
- Please note that WWTF does **not** permit double funding.

4.5 Signatures

- **Authorizations:** Submission of the proposal requires the signatures of the authorized persons at **all** participating institutions. This includes the host institutions of the core team members, as well as all further partner institutions. Please encourage your collaborators to contact their institutional research services regarding the person mandated to sign the proposals, and allow sufficient time to obtain their signature.
- Once all participating institutions have been added in the “Personnel and Institutions” section, the signatures sheet can be generated. Download the PDF using the link “You can generate the signature sheet here”.



The screenshot shows a web form titled "Signatures" with a red information icon. Below the title, there is a message: "The upload of multiple files is possible." followed by a link: "You can generate the signature sheet here" which is circled in red. Below this is a text input field labeled "Signatures *" with a "Choose file" button and a "Browse" button. At the bottom, there is a note: "We only accept PDF format (preferably PDF version 1.4 without any encryption) as upload."

- WWTF accepts physical, scanned, and electronic signatures. Please note that electronically signed PDFs should not be merged.
- The upload of signature sheets is only possible when the names of all signing persons has been entered into the system.
- Please ensure signatures are dated. Undated signatures and re-use of signatures from the short proposal will **not** be accepted.

Multiple signature forms may be uploaded.

5. Role in project

Contact details, CV, and information about your role in the project have been automatically transferred from the short proposal to the full proposal.

To update your contact details or CV, first go to the “My Profile” tab.



- Please ensure your contact details are up to date.
- To update your CV, delete the previous document and reupload a new CV as PDF. Please use the correct template for this call (“wwtf_cvtemplate_project.docx”).

Under the “My Proposals & Roles” tab, click on your specific role to update and edit information.

- Click on “Refresh from Profile” to import the current data from “My Profile”.
- Edit “Roles and responsibilities within project” and “Specific competencies for the project” if relevant.

6. Submitting the proposal

Once all sections are complete, as indicated by green checkmarks ✓, the proposal can be submitted. The “Submit proposal” button is at the bottom of the “Signatures” section. The coordinating PI will receive an automatic confirmation email when the Funding Portal receives the completed submission.

No changes are possible after the project has been submitted. After the indicated deadline, submission is no longer possible. Unsubmitted proposals will be excluded from the ensuing evaluation process.

All eligible submitted full proposals will undergo written evaluation by at least three external reviewers.

7. Applicant Response Phase

WWTF has introduced the “Applicant Response Phase” for the first time in the Life Sciences Call 2024. Based on the feedback of the jury and applicants to this step, WWTF will evaluate this process and may continue, modify, or discontinue this step in future project calls.

The purpose of the applicant response phase is to allow the team to **correct any factual errors or conceptual misunderstandings in the external peer reviews**. The jury will be asked to take into consideration eligible evidence provided in the applicant response when evaluating and selecting full proposals to recommend for funding.

All steps of the applicant response phase will proceed over the WWTF Funding Portal.

7.1 Dates

The Funding Portal will be opened for **7 calendar days between November 14 – 26, 2024**, for the applicant response phase. Applicants will be informed of the precise dates in early November.

7.2 Process

- All core team members will receive an email notification when the Funding Portal is open for the applicant response phase. All applicants are therefore strongly advised to regularly check their email during the indicative dates above.
- For 7 calendar days, all core team members will have access to the anonymized reviews for their proposal and be able to edit the response. **Only the PI&C can submit the final applicant response.**
- Submission of a response to the reviews is optional.
- Applicant responses will be provided to the jury panel after they have received the external reviews and prior to the full proposal jury meeting to select projects to recommend for funding. The applicant responses will not be shared with the external reviewers.
- **Disclaimer:** Please note that, in the exceptional circumstance that submission of a review is delayed and received by the WWTF only after the conclusion of the applicant response phase, this review will still be provided to the jury. The WWTF will inform the jury that the applicants did not have the opportunity to respond to this review.

7.3 Scope

In the applicant response, the core team should **directly address the errors and misunderstandings in the reviews** in a constructive manner. As much as possible, applicants should refer to parts of their full proposal that already address these aspects. Only where necessary and appropriate, are new references to external peer-reviewed publications permitted. In these cases, in addition to providing the DOI, applicants should clearly specify the section (e.g., page number, figure, table) of the publication that supports their response. Please note that the applicant response can only be provided as text; insertion or attachments of other file types (e.g., images, graphs, additional documents) are **not** possible.

The applicant response must not be regarded as an opportunity to extend the full proposal. Elaboration upon aspects of the full proposal with more detail is not permitted. New information, including new research results and methods from the applicants, will also not be considered. Furthermore, the response should not include references to any new publications, awards or appointments of the applicants that have occurred since the submission of the full proposal. **Both the scientific workplan and CVs will be assessed as at the time of the full proposal submission.** The jury panel will be informed to ignore content in the applicant response that fails to observe these guidelines.

The applicant response should be clearly presented, objective and concise. A limit of **3,000 characters** (including spaces) applies for all teams. Applicants are therefore advised to only include eligible information in response to an error or misunderstanding raised in the reviews.

DO:

- Directly identify and address factual errors and misunderstandings in the reviews.
- Refer to parts of the full proposal that already support the response wherever possible.
- Be constructive, objective, clear and precise.

DO NOT:

- Attempt to use the applicant response to extend, elaborate or modify the full proposal.
- Present new information regarding the scientific workplan or applicants' CVs.
- Provide subjective or unsubstantiated comments in the response.