



WIENER WISSENSCHAFTS-,  
FORSCHUNGS- UND TECHNOLOGIEFONDS

VIENNA SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FUND

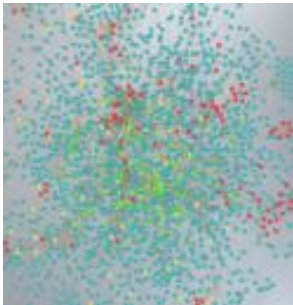
**STRENGTHENING VIENNA'S  
EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH**

COGNITIVE SCIENCES

# Vienna Research Groups for Young Investigators

## Call 2021

Contact: Donia Lasinger, [donia.lasinger@wwtf.at](mailto:donia.lasinger@wwtf.at)



# Agenda

---

- ▶ Overview WWTF
- ▶ Vienna Research Groups for Young Investigators Call 2021 „Cognitive Sciences“

# WWTF: Distinctive features

---

- The only larger Austrian private non-profit organisation in research funding
- Founded in 2001; funding activities since 2003: more than **200 m € have been awarded** (Banking Foundation, City of Vienna)
- WWTF **Mission:**
  - We fund **top scientific research** in Vienna
  - We provide substantial funding for **larger research projects** and bring younger **research group leaders** from abroad to Vienna
  - We **organise competitive calls** according to highest international standards

# The current call (I)

---

## Thematic programmes



Life Sciences (\*2003)



Information- and Communication Technology (\*2008)



Cognitive Sciences (\*2008)



Environmental Systems Research: Urban Environments (\*2017)

## Instruments

Projects

Vienna Research Groups

Additional Instruments

# The current call (II)

---

## Call 2021: „Cognitive Sciences“

- This group should address significant state-of-the-art scientific research questions in the **area of cognitive sciences incl. neurosciences** and **advance the systematic understanding of cognitive processes in humans, animals and/or artificial cognitive systems.**
- The call is open for projects that address the **phenomena of cognition** (including but not limited to perception, reasoning, thinking, behaviour). The projects **should include empirical data** (i.e. purely theoretical approaches will be excluded). Research from the fields of **(molecular) neurosciences or brain research** that investigate the neural basis underlying cognition and behaviour will also be considered. Research proposals may come from **all fields and subdomains of the cognitive sciences.** Interdisciplinary approaches and collaborations with other fields are highly welcome.

# The current call (III)

- Financed by the City of Vienna, administered by WWTF
- 12<sup>th</sup> call within Vienna Research Groups for Young Investigators Programme
- 2021: up to 2 positions with max. funding of € 1.6 million each

Life Sciences	ICT	Mathematics and ...	Cognitive Sciences	Life Sciences	Computational Biosciences	Complexity Science	Mathematics and ...	ICT	ICT – Interdisc. Data Science	LS – Comp. Biosc.	Cognitive Sciences
Funding volume: 4.5 mio. €	Funding volume: 3 mio. €	Funding volume: 3 mio. €	Funding volume: 1.5 mio. €	Funding volume: 4.8 mio. €	Funding volume: 3.2 mio. €	Funding volume: 1.6 mio. €	Funding volume: 3.2 mio. €	Funding volume: 4.8 mio. €	Funding volume: 3,2 mio. €	Funding volume: 3,2 mio. €	Funding volume: 1,6 mio. €/group
Funded VRG Leaders: 3	Funded VRG Leaders: 2	Funded VRG Leaders: 2	Funded VRG Leaders: 1	Funded VRG Leaders: 3	Funded VRG Leaders: 2	Funded VRG Leaders: 1	Funded VRG Leaders: 2	Funded VRG Leaders: 3	Funded VRG Leaders: 2	Funded VRG Leaders: 2	Positions available: 2
2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021

# Characteristics of a Vienna Research Group

---

- Typically the first “genuinely independent” group led by a young researcher. The WWTF funding (6-8 years) should enable the group members to take the next step in their career
- **Vienna Research Group leaders...**
  - assume leadership responsibility for group members
  - are independent in designing their research work and recruiting staff
  - apply for additional third party funding over the years
  - are currently based abroad and not employed in Austria at the date of application submission
  - have been employed for at least 2 years within the last 3 years at a non-Austrian institution
  - are *in general* 2-8 years after PhD (care duties may extend this period)
- **Milestones:** (i) first phase mainly financed by WWTF (4-5 years), (ii) an interim evaluation after the first phase, (iii) increased in-kind contributions of the home institution in the second phase (i.e. years 6, 6-7 or 6-8)



# Key facts

---

- The prospective host institution in Vienna must provide a **clear-cut career plan**, in particular the steps leading to a tenured position (for example the exact process of reaching a “Qualifizierungsvereinbarung” including time frames).
- The call process comprises the submission of a **concise research proposal**, followed by a **hearing** of selected candidates on **2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2021** in Vienna (if travel is possible).
- A job advertisement e.g. in a high impact journal that is relevant for the topic and/or via professional societies/ mailing lists is obligatory (for the institution) → we are happy to also put the announcement on our webpage ([www.wwtf.at](http://www.wwtf.at)).
- WWTF especially encourages Vienna-based research institutions to propose female group leaders. The **successful appointment of a woman** will be rewarded with a financial benefit for the Vienna host institution in order to support their gender mainstreaming activities.

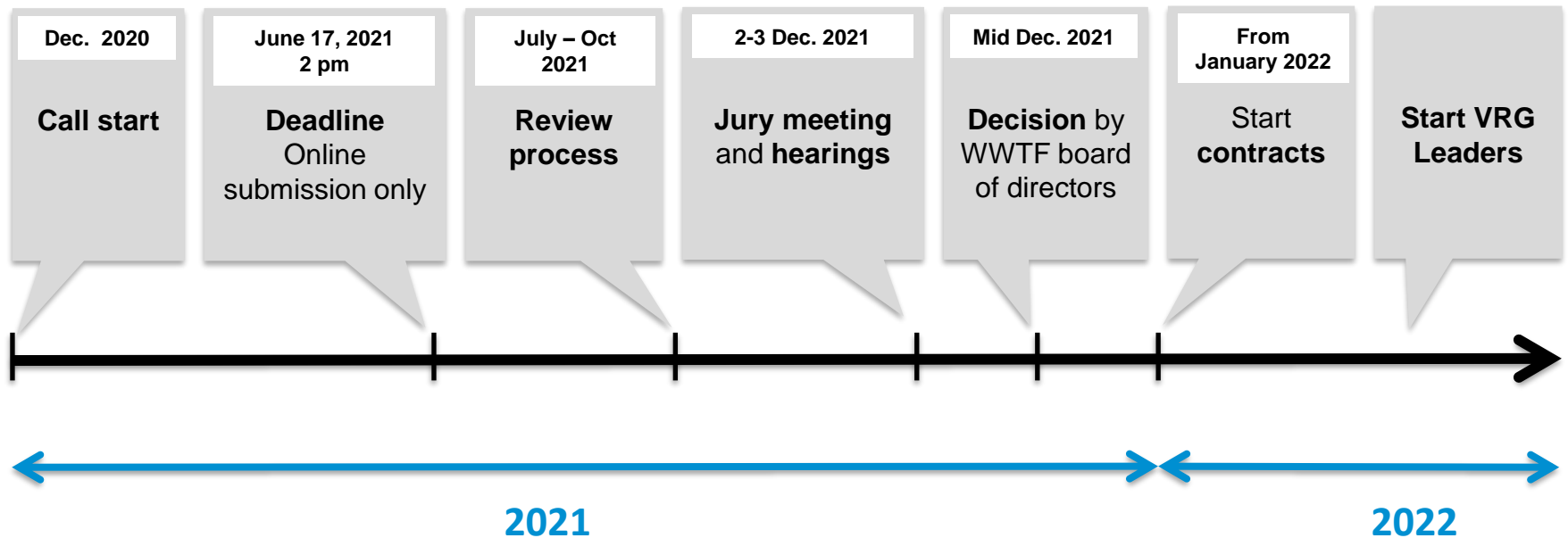
# Key facts - finances

---

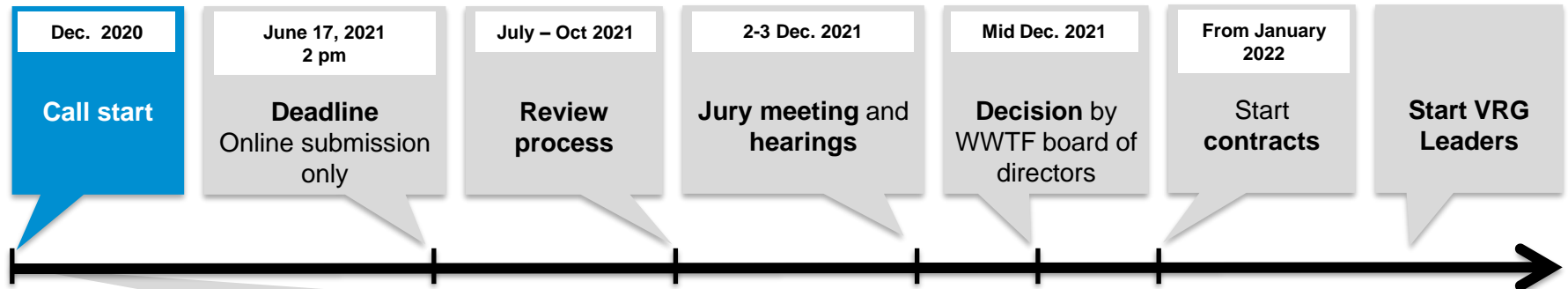
- The financial emphasis should lie on the **funding of scientific personnel** → should be balanced in relation to infrastructure/material costs
- **In-kind vs. overhead**: Basic infrastructure such as office equipment, rent, telephone, internet, basic lab equipment does NOT count as in-kind but is covered by the overheads (covered by WWTF)!
- The budget allocations with eventual partner institutions must already be specified at the application stage
- WWTF does **not** cover **any travel expenses** for candidates who are invited to the hearings. Compensation of travel expenses e.g. via FFG  
<https://www.ffg.at/career-grants> (Career grants)

# Schedule of the current call

---



# VRG jury and applicants



## VRG jury

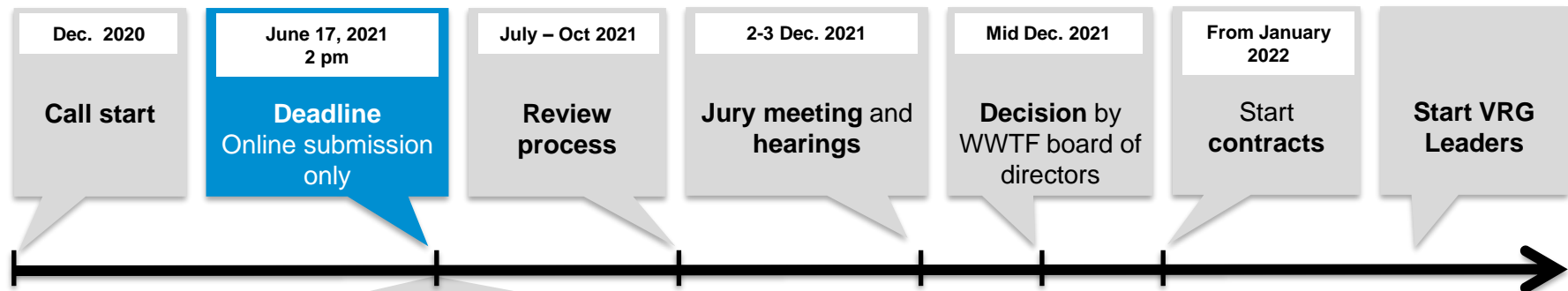
- About 6-7 excellent international scientists/experts with call-relevant expertise
- Duties within the process
  - Selecting proposals to be reviewed
  - Nominating reviewers
  - Inviting candidates to the hearing
  - Evaluating the performance at the hearing
  - Comparing assessment and formulating the funding recommendation

## Applicants

- Universities and research institutions in Vienna (via a proponent)
- Suggestion of
  - excellent young researchers from abroad<sup>1)</sup>
  - In general 2-8 years after PhD at application date (in case of care duties up to 4 years longer)
- Active search for female researches highly welcome

1) Employed at a foreign research institute for at least 2 years within the last 3 years and currently (at submission deadline) not in Austria

# Submission deadline and formal eligibility check



## Submission

- Submission via WWTF **Online Submission System** → **no hard copy required**
- No funding of private companies
  - Self funded business partners are possible and welcome
  - Project relevant services from companies can be calculated as consumables (if these services can not be provided within the projects with reasonable effort)

## Formal eligibility check

- Timely submission of proposal
- **Submission must include all relevant signatures = Proponent, Host Institution, Group Leader** (not on one page)
- In-kind contribution: >20% of total sum
- Overhead costs: the regulations of the host institutions must be observed
- Maximum number of pages (limited by characters and uploads)
- Compliance with the academic age limits
- From abroad
- Active promotion (eg. mailing lists,...)

# Review process and peer review



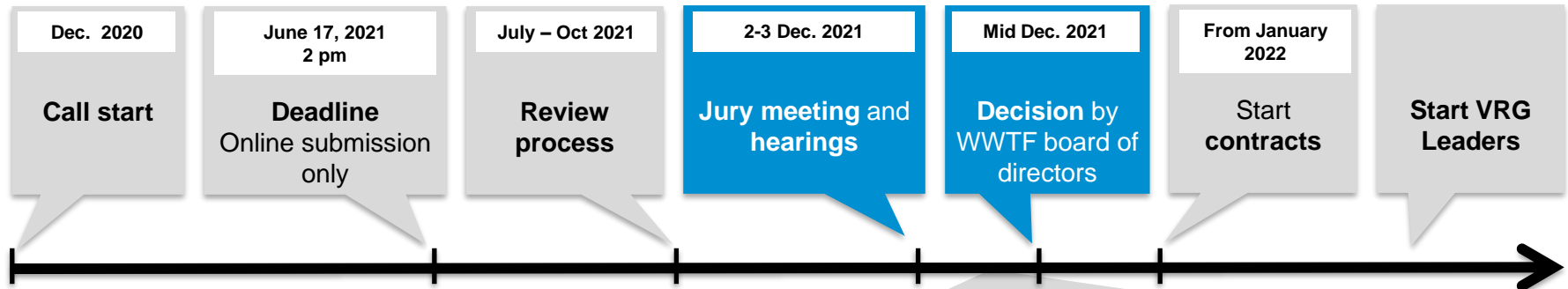
## Review process

- Proposals that lie outside the subject area as well as those that do not meet quality standards are not recommended for the review process by the jury
- Unsuccessful applicants will be briefly informed
- In case proposals are admitted to the review process: reservation of both hearing days absolutely necessary (booking of a flexible ticket)

## Peer review process

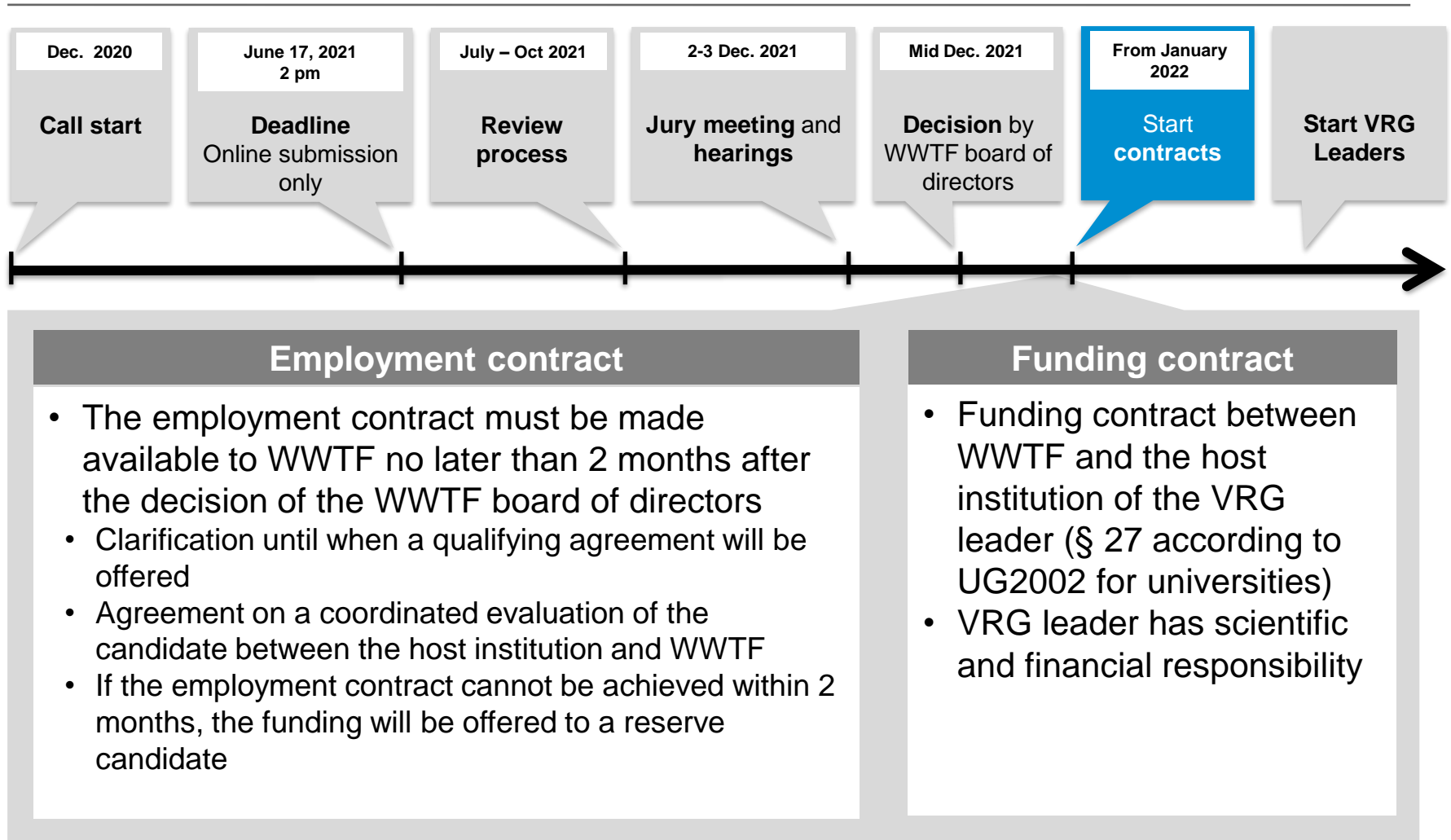
- 2-4 written reviews per proposal will be obtained
- Reviews only by international peers; remain anonymous
- Review reports form the basis of the jury's discussion for the invitation to the hearing as well as the funding decision after the hearing

# Hearing, jury meeting and decision



Hearing	Jury meeting	Decision
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invitation to hearing (selection after review process)</li> <li>• Short-presentation in Vienna (if possible)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Main evaluation criteria:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Scientific quality and potential</b> of candidates compared to the competitive international environment</li> <li>• <b>Quality of the research project</b></li> <li>• <b>Integration</b> into research environment</li> <li>• <b>Career perspective</b></li> <li>• ...</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>WWTF does not cover travelling expenses.</b> Compensation of travel expenses e.g. via FFG Career Grants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decision by WWTF board of directors</li> <li>• All applicants receive a decision letter (acceptances and rejections) with anonymous reviews</li> </ul>

# Employment contract and funding contract



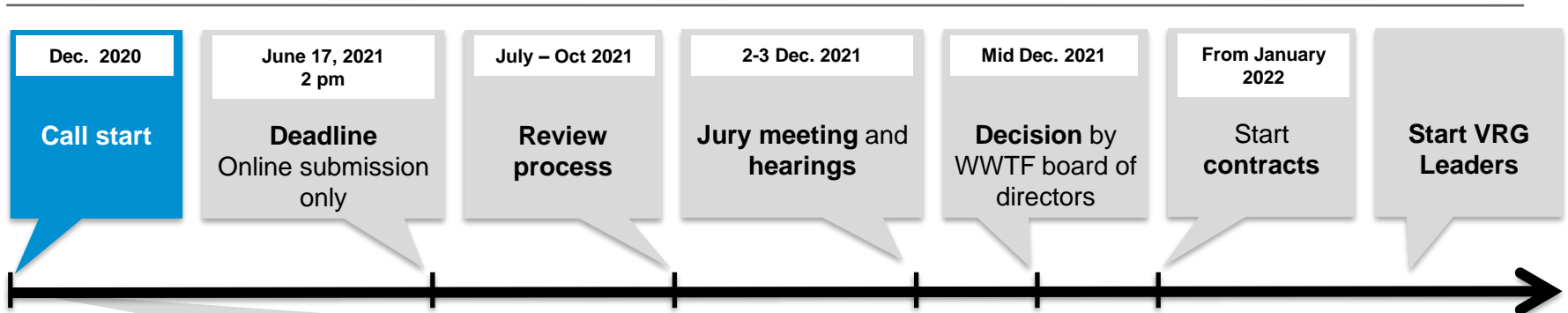


# Project start, project duration, project completion

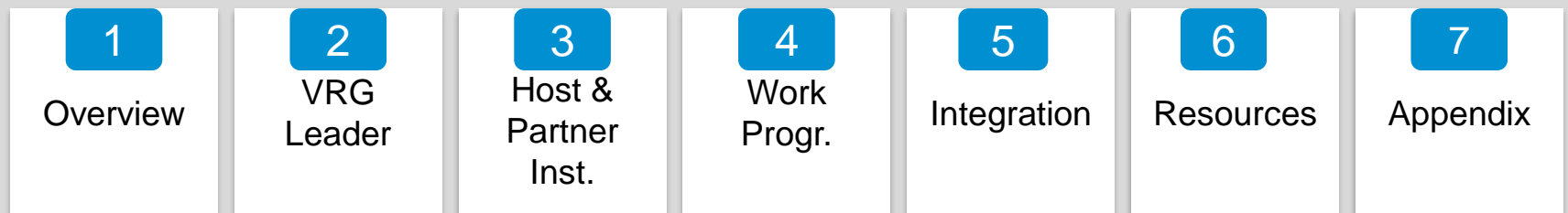


- **Project start:**
  - Latest start date: 18 months after decision by WWTF board of directors
- During **project duration:**
  - WWTF pays funding rates every twelve months in advance to the host institution
  - Short annual electronic reports to WWTF as prerequisite for payment installments
  - Site visit by WWTF
- After **project completion** :
  - Comprehensive final report

# Online submission system



- Registration with email address and name via <https://funding.wwtf.at>
- Login, select VRG-Call and click „create a new proposal“
- Fill in required data and upload documents (PDFs)
- Submit proposal (one PDF file with project number is generated automatically)
  - Only possible when the proposal is filled completely
  - No changes are possible after the submission
- A complete proposal consists of **7 parts**:



# Overview key facts

---

- Complete PDF containing all entered information is generated automatically after the submission
- Signature sheet can be downloaded at any time (basic data of “Overview” must be inserted)
- For signatures, please follow your institutional policies (contact your “Forschungsservice”)
- Signatures do not have to be all on one sheet! Max of 3 pages can be uploaded → signature pages are for WWTF office only to check formal eligibility
- Some useful rules:
  - Keep applications short and precise!
  - Use a language aimed at the scientific community
  - Ambitious but feasible
  - In English
  - Contact the research service at your institution in advance!

# Contact and consultation

---

- All documents available at [www.wwtf.at](http://www.wwtf.at)
- Personal consultation upon appointment

Donia Lasinger

[donia.lasinger@wwtf.at](mailto:donia.lasinger@wwtf.at)

T: 01/ 402 31 43 – 16

Michael Strassnig

[michael.strassnig@wwtf.at](mailto:michael.strassnig@wwtf.at)

T: 01/ 402 31 43 – 15

- WWTF office: Schlickgasse 3/12, 1090 Vienna

# Overview

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Overview	VRG Leader	Host&Part ner Inst.	Work Prog.	Integration	Resources	Appendix

- **Basic information:** title of project (proposed field of research), keywords, duration, scientific disciplines
- **Proponent and host institution** details
- **Group leader** details
- **Partner institution(s)**
- **Excluded peer evaluators** (max. 3, optional), **suggested peer evaluators** (up to 5)
  - Only visible for WWTF and jury. Note: only peer reviewers with a non-Austrian affiliation will be considered for peer review
- **Scientific abstract:** will be the first impression jury members and peer reviewers read

Note: requested funding will be displayed based on the data in section 6. A project number will be provided automatically after submission

- This section should be filled out by the envisaged VRG leader
- Details about
  - Previous career steps
  - Highlights of recent work
  - Description of (scientific) leadership potential
  - Motivation for application as Vienna Research Group Leader
  - Formal criterion „being from abroad“
- Upload CV of VRG leader
  - Page limit = 4: 2 pages biographical sketch, 2 pages of publications (max. 25 publications per page)
  - PDF format only

# Host / Partner Institution(s)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Overview	VRG Leader	<b>Host&amp;Par tner Inst.</b>	Work Prog.	Integration	Resources	Appendix

- This section should be filled out by the host institution
- Details about
  - Description of host institution (specific department or institute)
  - Motivation of Host Institution to bring the proposed Group Leader to Vienna
  - Description and relevance of partner institutions
    - Role and cash in-kind contributions must be confirmed by a Letter of Intent (LoI) in the appendix
  - (if applicable) Description of Additional Institutions with which the Group Leader intends to collaborate

- This section should be filled out by the envisaged VRG leader

Details about

- State of the art in the proposed field and scientific challenges in the next years
- Research plan

In total 6 pages; **upload as PDF**, please use template

- Relevant references (max. 20, mark the 10 most relevant references)
- Disclosure of other applications for funding
- Ethical approval necessary or not?



# Integration of group leader

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Overview	VRG Leader	Host&Partner Inst.	Work Prog.	Integration	Resources	Appendix

- Description of the Vienna Research Group Leader's recruiting process including gender management
  - Please include gender mainstreaming/affirmative actions here
- Advertisement procedures
  - The international **publication of a job announcement** and/or distribution via mailing lists/professional societies is obligatory
  - Please upload only one job announcement as an example
- Status of the group leader during the funding period
  - Please explain in detail the **steps leading to a tenure position** (for example the exact process of reaching a “Qualifizierungsvereinbarung” including time frames). These details will form the foundation of contractual elaborations in the case of funding
- Description of the interim evaluation of the group leader
- Career perspectives of the group leader after the funding period
- Integration of the group leader

- Details about
  - Description of the envisioned group
  - Description of the equipment and consumables
  - Statement of the monetary and in-kind contributions
    - Please be aware that the cash and in-kind contributions are just the contributions from the host institution. Cash in-kind contributions of potential partners (named in section 1 as additional institutions) need to be documented only in the appendix in the form of Letters of Intent covering items and amounts indicated
  - Overhead policy: max. 20% of the fundable direct costs
- Cost planning: 3 tables
  1. Personnel costs
  2. Non-personnel costs
  3. Cost overview (no data entries)


# Resources II

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Overview	VRG Leader	Host&Part ner Inst.	Work Prog.	Inte- gration	<b>Resour- ces</b>	Appendix


## Table 1 : Planning of personnel costs (in k€) - Example

### Additional persons


In order to prepare the overall budget per Partner Institution in detail in Section 2, you have to add additional persons here.

Additional person 1 

Name: *	Institution: *	Staff category *
<input type="text" value="N.N. 1"/>	<input type="text" value="-- please select --"/>	<input type="text" value="Post Doc"/>

Additional person 2 

Name: *	Institution: *	Staff category *
<input type="text" value="N.N. 2"/>	<input type="text" value="-- please select --"/>	<input type="text" value="Diploma student"/>

 add Additional person

Before you can fill in the personnel, you have to add a row for every person. Please enter the institution and the staff category. They will be automatically numbered (N.N. 1,...)

# Resources III

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Overview	VRG Leader	Host&Part ner Inst.	Work Prog.	Inte- gration	<b>Resour- ces</b>	Appendix

Table 1 : Planning of personnel costs (in k€) - Example

Name	Staff category	Funding source	Average yearly time commitment (from 0 to 100%)								Y1 salary 100% in k€	Funding applied for from WWTF in k€
			Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7	Y8		
Ms. Jane Doe	Group Leader	<input type="radio"/> WWTF	IN KIND 0	IN KIND 0	IN KIND 0	IN KIND 0	IN KIND 0	IN KIND 100	IN KIND 100	IN KIND 100	90.00	IN KIND 322.49
		<input type="radio"/> in-kind	WWTF	WWTF	WWTF	WWTF	WWTF	WWTF	WWTF	WWTF		WWTF
		<input checked="" type="radio"/> in-kind & WWTF	100	100	100	100	100	0	0	0		477.82
N.N. 1	Post Doc	<input type="radio"/> WWTF	IN KIND 50	IN KIND 50	IN KIND 50	IN KIND 0	IN KIND 0	IN KIND 0	IN KIND 0	IN KIND 0	67.00	IN KIND 103.55
		<input type="radio"/> in-kind	WWTF	WWTF	WWTF	WWTF	WWTF	WWTF	WWTF	WWTF		WWTF
		<input checked="" type="radio"/> in-kind & WWTF	0	0	0	0	0	50	50	50		120.04
N.N. 2	PhD student	<input checked="" type="radio"/> WWTF									46.00	
		<input type="radio"/> in-kind	WWTF	WWTF	WWTF	WWTF	WWTF	WWTF	WWTF	WWTF		WWTF
		<input type="radio"/> in-kind & WWTF	75	75	75	0	0	0	0	0		106.64
N.N. 3	Diploma student	<input type="radio"/> WWTF									32.00	
		<input checked="" type="radio"/> in-kind	IN KIND 40	IN KIND 40	IN KIND 40	IN KIND 0	IN KIND 0	IN KIND 0	IN KIND 0	IN KIND 0		IN KIND 39.56
		<input type="radio"/> in-kind & WWTF										
Total personnel costs applied for funding from WWTF in k€												704.50

# Resources IV

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Overview	VRG Leader	Host&Part ner Inst.	Work Prog.	Inte- gration	<b>Resour- ces</b>	Appendix

Table 1 : Planning of personnel costs (in k€)

Will be set automatically

Please avoid short term employments

Minimum wage according to the „Kollektivvertrag“ (collective agreement) or following the standards of the Austrian Science Fund FWF!

Name	Staff category	Funding source	Average yearly time commitment (from 0 to 100%)								Y1 salary 100% in k€	Fun app WW
			Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7	Y8		
Ms. Jane Doe	Group Leader	<input type="radio"/> WWTF	IN KIND	IN KIND	IN KIND	IN KIND	IN KIND	IN KIND	IN KIND	IN KIND		
		<input type="radio"/> in-kind	0	0	0	0	0	100	100	100		322
		<input checked="" type="radio"/> in-kind & WWTF	100	100	100	100	100	0	0	0	90.00	477
N.N. 1	Post Doc	<input type="radio"/> WWTF	IN KIND	IN KIND	IN KIND	IN KIND	IN KIND	IN KIND	IN KIND	IN KIND		
		<input type="radio"/> in-kind	50	50	50	0	0	0	0	0		103
		<input checked="" type="radio"/> in-kind & WWTF	0	0	0	0	0	50	50	50	67.00	120
N.N. 2	PhD student	<input checked="" type="radio"/> WWTF										
		<input type="radio"/> in-kind	WWTF	WWTF	WWTF	WWTF	WWTF	WWTF	WWTF	WWTF		
		<input type="radio"/> in-kind & WWTF	75	75	75	0	0	0	0	0	46.00	
N.N. 3	Diploma student	<input type="radio"/> WWTF										
		<input checked="" type="radio"/> in-kind	IN KIND	IN KIND	IN KIND	IN KIND	IN KIND	IN KIND	IN KIND	IN KIND		
		<input type="radio"/> in-kind & WWTF	40	40	40	0	0	0	0	0	32.00	39

Wages above Kollektivvertrag are possible and must be described.  
No additional wages for people who are already 100% employed. An increase of employment up to 100% through WWTF funding is possible.

Attention: Wage for „Studentische MitarbeiterIn“ is calculated by FWF for 20 hours and a „DoktorandIn“ for 30 hours per week

Total funding applied for will automatically be calculated including a **3% annual salary increase**

Increase in cash and in-kind contributions starting from year 5

## Resources V

Table 2 : Planning of non-personnel costs (in €)

Description / cost category / Institution	Funding source	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Y7	Y8	Funding applied for from WWTF in k€	
<div> <div></div> <div>Equipment</div> <div>Vienna University of Applied Sciences</div> </div>	<input type="radio"/> WWTF <input type="radio"/> in-kind <input checked="" type="radio"/> in-kind & WWTF	<div>IN KIND</div> <div>0.00</div> <div>WWTF</div> <div>0.00</div>	<div>IN KIND</div> <div>0.00</div> <div>WWTF</div> <div>0.00</div>	<div>IN KIND</div> <div>0.00</div> <div>WWTF</div> <div>0.00</div>	<div>IN KIND</div> <div>0.00</div> <div>WWTF</div> <div>0.00</div>	<div>IN KIND</div> <div>0.00</div> <div>WWTF</div> <div>0.00</div>	<div>IN KIND</div> <div>0.00</div> <div>WWTF</div> <div>0.00</div>	<div>IN KIND</div> <div>0.00</div> <div>WWTF</div> <div>0.00</div>	<div>IN KIND</div> <div>0.00</div> <div>WWTF</div> <div>0.00</div>	<div>IN KIND</div> <div>0.00</div> <div>WWTF</div> <div>0.00</div>	
<div> <div></div> <div></div> <div></div> </div>	<input type="radio"/> WWTF <input type="radio"/> in-kind <input type="radio"/> in-kind & WWTF	<div>IN KIND</div> <div>0.00</div> <div>WWTF</div> <div>0.00</div>	<div>IN KIND</div> <div>0.00</div> <div>WWTF</div> <div>0.00</div>	<div>IN KIND</div> <div>0.00</div> <div>WWTF</div> <div>0.00</div>	<div>IN KIND</div> <div>0.00</div> <div>WWTF</div> <div>0.00</div>	<div>IN KIND</div> <div>0.00</div> <div>WWTF</div> <div>0.00</div>	<div>IN KIND</div> <div>0.00</div> <div>WWTF</div> <div>0.00</div>	<div>IN KIND</div> <div>0.00</div> <div>WWTF</div> <div>0.00</div>	<div>IN KIND</div> <div>0.00</div> <div>WWTF</div> <div>0.00</div>	<div>IN KIND</div> <div>0.00</div> <div>WWTF</div> <div>0.00</div>	
Total for funding from WWTF in k€										0.00	

# Resources VI

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Overview	VRG Leader	Host&Part ner Inst.	Work Prog.	Inte- gration	<b>Resour- ces</b>	Appendix

Table 2 : Planning of non-personnel costs (in €)

Description / cost category / Institution	Funding source	Y1
<input type="text"/> Equipment Vienna University	<input type="radio"/> WWTF <input type="radio"/> in-kind <input checked="" type="radio"/> in-kind & WWTF	IN KIND 0.0 WWTF 0.0
<input type="text"/> Consumables	<input type="radio"/> WWTF <input type="radio"/> in-kind <input checked="" type="radio"/> in-kind & WWTF	IN KIND 0.0 WWTF 0.0

## Category:

- Equipment
- Consumables
- Travelling
- Publication costs
- Workshops/Conferences
- Other

## • Equipment:

- Devices, instruments, system components and other durable goods (providing the group leader with better infrastructure)
- Special explanation if the purchases planned exceed the amount of € 20,000.- incl. VAT
- Renting, leasing, adaptation also possible
- For purchased equipment, pro **rata depreciation rates** can be funded
- Consumables: expendable material; appliances up to € 1,500.- € excl. VAT, software
- Workshops / conferences: organized internally
- Travelling: attending project-related scientific events and invitations
- Publication costs such as open access costs
- "Other": This covers all other costs, for example service contracts (paid on a lump sum basis)

- Letter(s) of intent
  - One letter of intent - signed by the responsible director/manager/head – of each partner institution who either receive parts of WWTF funding or provide in-kind contributions (**template available online**)
  - Max. 2 pages per partner/up to 5 partners
  - Do not upload main contents concerning the work programme here
- Letter of recommendation / additional information
  - Maximum of 4 pages
- Photo of candidate
  - For internal use only
- Affirmations and Authorization = signatures
  - Max of 3 pages, i.e. one signature each by host institution, proponent and group leader; can be on separate pages