

Submission Guideline

Short Proposal

Synthetic Biology

Life Sciences Call 2024

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1. About this document

This document is a guide to using WWTF’s Funding Portal. It is intended for applicants who wish to submit a short 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:

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

2. Essential information

All proposals must be written in English. The length of the short proposal is determined by character and upload limits in the Funding Portal. Please write precisely and address the required criteria, while also providing sufficient detail to allow an evaluation by international peers. Please note that the short proposal will be assessed by a jury panel with various expertise covering a broad range of topics in the call.

All proposals must be submitted electronically via the [WWTF’s Funding Portal](#).

WWTF is currently implementing a new Funding Portal that will fully replace the previous Submission System.

- In case of bugs and problems, do not hesitate to contact the call manager. WWTF welcomes your feedback on the usability of the new system. The Funding Portal also includes a “Report a Bug” button to report errors.
- All entries are saved automatically. In case a “Save” button is not visible, please be assured that your data will have automatically been saved.

- The system constantly validates and saves data in the background. If it appears that your entries have not been accepted, please refresh the website. This should resolve the problem.
- WWTF aims to expand the system’s features in due time to streamline the online application process. We ask for your patience if not all features are ready.

Please note the following important changes compared to the previous Submission System:

- The new Funding Portal allows you to manage your personal information independently of proposals and calls. If you are involved in multiple proposals or apply in a future call, you can use this saved personal information. You do not need to re-enter all information each time.
- The previous Submission System allowed one account for each proposal. The new Funding Portal allows for the following options:
 - All core team members i.e., coordinating PI (PI&C) and co-PIs can edit the proposal. However, only one person can edit the proposal in the Funding Portal at any time.
 - Administrative staff (e.g., project assistants) can also create a proposal and invite PIs. Only in this case can a proposal be edited by both PIs and administrative staff (i.e., administrative staff cannot be invited to an existing proposal).
 - Please note that only the PI&C can submit the proposal.

3. Register at WWTF Funding Portal

1. Go to <https://fundingportal.wwtf.at/>
2. Go to “Register” in the top menu
3. Enter your registration data (* indicates mandatory fields)
4. You will receive an email to confirm registration.

Please note that registration is not limited to PIs of a project. Research support and administrative staff may also register to check the requirements for submitting a proposal, to create proposals and invite core team members on behalf of PIs, or to provide administrative support.

If you are a PI, please register and complete your profile as early as possible, as information from your profile will be used in creating the proposal (e.g., your institution in the budget section).

4. Login

1. Go to <https://fundingportal.wwtf.at/>
2. Login with your credentials

5. Create a new proposal

1. Go to “Calls” in the top menu
2. Under “Running calls”, select the “Life Sciences 2024 – Synthetic Biology” call
3. Click “Create new proposal”. You can create multiple proposals. However, **please note that each researcher may participate as PI&C or co-PI in a maximum of two proposals.**
4. Once created, you will find all your proposals under “My Proposals & Roles” in the top menu. You can delete proposals at any time. Proposals that are not submitted will be deleted automatically after the submission deadline.

6. Invite PIs and enter information about PIs

In the short proposal, WWTF requires information only about the researchers in the project’s core team, i.e., the PI&C and up to two co-PIs. Further researchers beyond the core team may also take part in the project, either funded by WWTF or with in-kind contribution. Information about these further researchers will be required in the full proposal.

To provide the information required in the short proposal, the PI&C and potential co-PIs will need to be invited to the proposal.

Step 1: Invite the PI&C and co-PIs

1. Within your proposal, go to the tab “Personnel and Institutions”
2. Invite a “Principal Investigator and Coordinator” by providing their contact information.
 - If you are the PI&C, please click “I am the Principal Investigator”. You can then invite co-PIs to this proposal.
 - If you are not the PI&C, he/she will need to be invited to the proposal. The invited PI&C will receive an email with the invitation to the proposal. He/she can login with an existing account or register as a new user. You and the PI&C can then invite further co-PIs to the proposal.

Step 2: Complete your “Profile”

The PI&C and all co-PIs must complete “My Profile”. If you are creating a project on behalf of others and are not part of the Core Team, you do not need to provide this information.

1. Go to “My Profile” in the top menu to fill out or update your profile. This information needs to be entered only once and can then be used for multiple proposals or in future calls.
 - Please upload or update your CV based on the template provided. See Section 6.1. for more details.

- Should you have multiple affiliations, these can be added in your profile. Different affiliations may then be used for different proposals.

Step 3: Complete your “Role”

1. Go to “My Proposal & Roles” in the top menu. Under “My Roles”, click on your role below the title of the proposal.
 - Please update your personal information by clicking on “Refresh from profile”. The system will check if there is new information in “My Profile” and update this section accordingly.
 - Enter data in the respective text fields, i.e., your scientific expertise and your role in the project. Please note that the information entered here should be specific to the project. If you are participating in multiple proposals that requires different subsets of your expertise, please adapt this section accordingly for each proposal.
 - Select the affiliation with which you want to apply for the proposal. Please note that an authorization signature will be required from this institute.
 - Check the box under “Affirmation” to confirm acknowledgement of and compliance with guidelines from WWTF and additional relevant organisations.

As the Funding Portal automatically relays entered information about the PI&C and co-PIs into subsequent parts of the proposal, we recommend that the core team members fill out these sections as early as possible (e.g., institutions of the core team members are automatically added to the budget).

6.1 Curriculum Vitae and List of Publications

Please use the **CV template** provided. Do not exceed 2 pages for the CV, as the system will not accept the upload of documents longer than 2 pages.

- List all items in reverse chronological order.
- For each of the selected publications (max. 10), provide 1-2 sentences outlining the relevance of the publication for the proposal.
- If possible, please also provide a link to a more detailed list of your publications. This may be your institutional website, personal website, an ORCID profile, Google Scholar profile, etc.
- Describe additional qualifications or skills that are relevant for the success of the project. These may extend beyond scientific skills to experience in leadership, supervision, Open Science, etc.

7. Fill out a short proposal

To continue with the short proposal, return to the “My Proposal & Roles” tab and click on the title of the proposal. The short proposal is comprised of six chapters (each under a tab):

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



Figure 1: Chapters of the short proposal

A chapter with a **red alert symbol** (🚫) indicates that it is incomplete. Within the marked chapter, click on the red symbol(s) beside individual sections to highlight the fields requiring attention. A **green checkmark symbol** (✅) indicates that the information in the chapter is complete.

Please note that the symbol might not refresh immediately when the information in a chapter is complete. Clicking on another chapter and returning to the completed chapter should refresh the symbol.

7.1 Basic Information

This chapter contains basic information about the proposal, including title, scientific disciplines involved, keywords, duration, and type of project (i.e., regular WWTF Project or Joint Project). Fill out fields as required.

Please note:

- Scientific Disciplines: Fields will be suggested as you type. WWTF uses the ÖFOS classification system of Statistik Austria.¹
- Joint Project: Please indicate if this proposal is a Joint Project, i.e., includes co-PI(s) from Lower Austria, who receive >20% of the total budget. For details regarding team composition and budget distribution conditions for Joint Projects, please refer to the “Call Specifications” document for this call.

7.2 Personnel and Institutions

This chapter contains information about the main parties in the project. Ideally, information about the PI&C and co-PIs have already been entered (see Section 6). However, this information can be changed at any time.

¹ See https://data.statistik.gv.at/web/meta.jsp?dataset=OGDEXT_KLASSDB_OEFOS2012_1 for more info.

- **Co-PIs** can be added to the project. Please note the maximum of three PIs in the core team.
- **Additional partner institutions** beyond those of the core team members can be added under “Further Partner Institutions”. (The institutions of the PI&C and co-PIs are automatically added by the system.) Entering an additional institution provides the option of allocating budget to this institution in the “Budget” chapter. This may be important in case of collaboration with researchers at institutes other than those of the core team members. Authorising signatures are not required from these further partner institutions in the short proposal phase.
- A maximum of **five different institutions** may be involved in the proposal. This includes the institutions of the PI&C and co-PI(s).

7.3 Project

This chapter contains the bulk of the scientific information regarding the project. Fill out the following fields (*please note that the character limit includes spaces*):

1. **Abstract:** Provide a concise scientific abstract of the project. *(1,500 characters)*
2. **Introduction, background, and state of the art:** Provide a broad scientific introduction to the topic of the project. Describe the state of the art in this research field. Include preliminary data from your own team if applicable. *(2,000 characters)*
3. **Research questions, objectives, and/or hypotheses:** Specify the biological, biomedical, or clinical question(s) to be addressed in the context of the state of the art. Outline how the project’s scope traverses biological scales. *(2,000 characters)*
4. **Methodology:** Describe the methods to be used and how these approaches address the design and construction approaches of synthetic biology. Provide sufficient information about the innovation, interdisciplinarity, suitability, and feasibility of these approaches with respect to the project’s objectives. *(3,500 characters)*
5. **Scientific impact and contribution:** Outline the project’s anticipated contribution to its research field. If relevant, describe how the methods developed in the project could benefit broader life science research. Briefly explain how the data, resources and technology developed in the project will be managed and shared with the scientific community. *(2,000 characters)*
6. **Potential ethical aspects:** Outline the potential ethical aspects of your proposed project. These may include, but are not restricted to human participants, human tissue, human embryonic tissue, personal data, animals, environmental safety, and artificial intelligence. Please indicate if ethical approval is required for the project. If no ethical aspects are identified, please also provide a brief explanation. *(800 characters)*

Please note that the inclusion of figures and tables is not possible in the above sections of the short proposal. These elements can be included in the full proposal phase.

- **Project Schedule/Overview:** Upload a 1-page visual representation (e.g., Gantt chart, flow chart) to provide an overview of the milestones to be achieved during the project. Indicate the time periods and specify the respective PIs responsible for each milestone.

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 “Gender aspects in the application phase”). These should be briefly described where appropriate in the relevant sections. Further details will be required in the full proposal phase.

7.4 References

In this chapter, up to 15 key references relevant for the project can be added. *Please note that these references should focus on the content of the proposal and is not your personal publication list.* The latter should be included in the CVs of the core team members.

- The system can import publication data from external databases, e.g., by DOIs. For PubMed, use the number of pubmed.gov. For arXiv, use only the numbers without “arXiv:”. *Please note that this service is beta and thus does not always work perfectly. We are working on improving this feature.*
- Please use a uniform reference style. If you import references through the database lookup, use the style of the imported reference for the references entered manually.

7.5 Budget

The short proposal requires only an overview budget for each participating institution. All institutions added in the chapter “Personnel and Institutions” will be automatically listed in the budget table. All figures are in € (the previous Submission System used k€).

- Enter the sum for personnel costs at each institution. Please consider that, in the full proposal, you will be required to enter the annual gross costs (employer and employee costs = gross costs) of all individual researchers. If you are unsure about the annual gross costs, please consult your institutional research service. Due to projected inflation rates, the full proposal system will automatically calculate a 6% p.a. increase in salaries over the lifetime of the project.
- Enter the total non-personnel costs for each institution. For details about eligible costs, please refer the “Call Specifications” document.
- Up to 20% overhead costs may be claimed. Please consult your institutional research service also in this regard.

The system will automatically calculate sums and ratios of the budget.

- Based on the information provided, the share of the budget allocated to the regions “Vienna” and “Other” will be shown for WWTF projects and to the regions “Vienna”, “Lower Austria” and “Other” for Joint Projects.
- For “regular” WWTF projects, at least 80% (i.e., $\geq 80\%$) of the requested funding must be allocated to the region “Vienna”. Up to 20% (i.e., $< 20\%$) may be allocated to other partner(s) (including partners in Lower Austria).

- For Joint Projects, the budget allocated to the region “Vienna” must be $\geq 50\%$. The share of the budget allocated to the region “Lower Austria” must be between 20–50% (i.e., $>20\%$ and $<50\%$). Up to 20% (i.e., $<20\%$) may be allocated to further partner(s) located in other regions (“Other”).
- The proportions of the budget allocated to personnel and non-personnel costs are also shown. Please note that, in this call, non-personnel costs should not exceed 40% of the total budget.
- The system will display an alert if the inserted amounts exceed the permitted funding distribution across regions or cost types.
- Please note that changing the proposal between “WWTF Project” and “Joint Project” types will reset the budget table due to differing budget distribution requirements.

In the case of an invitation to submit a full proposal, there should not be significant changes in the requested budget compared to the short proposal. Exceptions are permitted but require justification.


8. Signatures

Submission of the proposal requires the signatures of the authorized person(s) at the host institutions of the PI&C and co-PIs (“Authorization”). *Please consult your institutional research services regarding the person mandated to sign the proposals and plan sufficient time to obtain their signature.*

- Enter the name of each authorized person in the online form. This information will be included in the PDF to be signed.
- Download the PDF using the link “You can generate the signature sheet here”.
- Signatures may be provided in various formats:
 - Add a scanned or physical signature, and upload the form; or
 - Insert an electronic signature (e.g., A-Trust, Handysignatur) and upload the form. Please note that electronically signed PDFs cannot be merged into a single document.

Unlike proposals in the previous Submission System, signatures from the core team are no longer required in the new Funding Portal.

9. Submit the proposal

Once all chapters are marked with , the proposal can be submitted. The “Submit proposal” button is at the bottom of the “Signatures” chapter. The PI&C 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 deadline, submission is no longer possible. Unsubmitted proposals will be excluded from the ensuing evaluation process and deleted shortly after the submission deadline.

You can access your submitted proposal on the page “My Proposals and Roles”.