Guide for Writing a Short Proposal

Digital Humanism Call 2020

24. April 2020

Version 1.2 (revised 18.6.2020 – correction of error re. character limits of ethics textbox)

1. Digital Humanism – a new topic

Based on many intense discussions and bottom-up activities of the Vienna research community over the last year, WWTF aims to introduce Digital Humanism with this call as a new sub-theme in its "Information and Communication Technology" priority to trigger new interdisciplinary collaborations between the social sciences and humanities (and art-based research) and the technical-oriented ICT domain (computer sciences, data science, etc.).

As Digital Humanism is (dominantly) a new topic for the Vienna research community, WWTF supports attempts for new collaborations between SSH and ICT. The main vehicle for this is a virtual Matchmaking Platform. In case that you look for collaboration partners, exhibit your expertise or want to pitch a project idea, please use our [platform](#).[1]

For more information about the wider initiative of Digital Humanism in Vienna, please go to our [website](#).[2]

2. Relevant call links

- **Call information and details:** https://www.wwtf.at/programmes/information_communication/#ICT20
- **Matchmaking Platform:** https://call-digital-humanism.b2match.io/
- **Online System for submitting a project proposal:** https://funding.wwtf.at/user/login/
- **Information on the topic of Digital Humanism (in a wider sense):** https://www.wwtf.at/digital_humanism/

3. Supporting excellent science in Vienna and Lower Austria

Vienna as an innovation area does not end at the city limits, and a "Vienna Innovation Area" is important and useful in our efforts to be one of the most important European research and innovation centres. This includes the networking of research communities. WWTF has well developed tools for competitive research funding in Vienna. There is a strong desire from researchers in Vienna and Lower Austria for stronger cooperation. A new 2020 agreement enables this cooperation between research institutions in Vienna and Lower Austria in the WWTF competitions. It is a valuable gain for all involved parties.

In a framework initially limited to three years, the Province of Lower Austria dedicates a maximum total of € 3 million in fiduciary support to WWTF, i.e. up to € 1 million per year. This is

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[1] https://call-digital-humanism.b2match.io/
[2] https://www.wwtf.at/digital_humanism/

also the maximum amount of project funding that can go to Lower Austrian project partners as part of cooperation projects per year.

Both sides can decide whether or not the opportunity for these cooperation projects should exist for a specific call. After three years, the continuation and its design will be decided.

3.1. Specifics of Joint Projects (JP) between Vienna and Lower Austria

WWTF now also accepts joint projects between Viennese and Lower Austrian universities and research institutions in its regular project calls. The aim is to receive applications in which the partners cooperate on equal terms.

The incentive for cooperation projects is a slightly higher total maximum funding amount which consortia applying for a Joint Project can request (+ € 50.000 compared to the regular maximum funding amount).

The Vienna share (at least 51% of the project sum) is paid by WWTF from its own resources, while the Lower Austrian share (49% maximum) is financed from the Province of Lower Austria.

In summary, a JP differs from a standard WWTF project in the following points:

- The maximum funding volume for a JP is € 50.000 more than the funding volume of a regular WWTF project, i.e. in total € 450.000.
- The PI and Coordinator has to be affiliated to a university or non-university research institution in Vienna. At least one Co-PI has to be affiliated to research institutions in Lower Austria.
- The budget allocated to partners in Vienna has to be at least 51% of the total budget; the share of budget going to partners in Lower Austria has to be higher than 20% and can be 49% at most (collaborations with partners in Lower Austria up to 20% are not considered JPs but can be submitted as regular WWTF projects). Partners outside Vienna or Lower Austria are optional and may request up to 20% of the total budget.
- Regional branches of Viennese Institutions (e.g. BOKU, VetMed, AIT) located in Lower Austria are considered as Vienna-based for the purpose of our funding activities.

The Lower Austrian project partner has to comply with the Lower Austrian Culture Promotion Act 1996 and the directives issued on the basis thereof (Richtlinien für Förderung nach dem NÖ Kulturförderungsgesetz 1996).[3]

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[3] http://www.noe.gv.at/noe/Kunst-Kultur/Richtlinien_zum_Noe_Kulturfoerderungsgesetz_1996_3.pdf

4. Relevant call facts

4.1. Principal investigator and institutional eligibility

The **Call Fiche** including contact information of the WWTF call managers is available at https://www.wwtf.at/programmes/information_communication/#ICT20

For the overall framework of WWTF funding, you may consult the respective guidelines (please note that the relevant points for submitting a project are also listed here).[4]

The **Principal Investigator and Coordinator (PI)** of a WWTF project must have a Viennese home institution to which the project is affiliated to. This includes researchers moving to Vienna who will have a Viennese affiliation and workplace in case of funding. Project **partners** outside of Vienna may receive up to 20% of the total funding applied for. Partners outside Vienna are optional. For partner in Lower Austria, see 4.1. above.

For **universities**, WWTF projects are treated according to §27 of the Universities Act 2002. Therefore, authorizing signatures from the university / scientific institution acting as hosting institution are required for the submission. In case of funding, the host institution will be the formal contract partner for WWTF while the PI has the scientific and financial authority and responsibility for the project. Please note, that Core Team members share equal managing and scientific roles in the projects, however for legal and administrative reasons, WWTF needs a main PI to be defined in the online system and later on, in the contract in case of funding.

4.2. Eligible costs

WWTF funding may be used for all project-related costs; however, the main focus should be on funding scientific personnel. Everybody employed through a WWTF-funded project should receive a fair contract with at least a minimum wage according to the "Kollektivvertrag" (collective agreement) of the Austrian Universities or – for staff employed at non-university institutions – according to the standards of the Austrian Science Fund (FWF, available online). The maximum employment is set to 100%. When planning the budget, use full-time equivalent (FTE) salaries and be aware that the PhD salary listed by FWF is for a 75% position.

Personnel costs cannot be claimed for permanent senior staff that is fully financed by the institution. Exceptions are made for institutions whose basic institutional block funding is less than 40% of the overall budget of the organisation. In these cases, permanently employed senior staff may claim up to 20% of their annual salary from WWTF.

The personnel categories are:

- *Senior Personnel:* highly qualified scientists, usually already permanently employed
- *Post Doc:* or equivalent qualification, including Senior Postdocs
- *PhD Student:* or equivalent qualification

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[4] https://www.wwtf.at/upload/Anlage4_WWTF_Richtlinien_ab_01_01_2011.pdf

- ***Diploma Student:*** Bachelor or Master students
- ***Office/Technician:*** office staff or technical staff (proportional funding only)

The funding by WWTF under this scheme is not intended to cover investment in general infrastructure, however *pro rata* depreciation rates for the project duration are fundable for **equipment** necessary for the project. WWTF funding also covers **materials,** consumables and software (as well as small devices up to 1,500 € each), **travelling costs** (incurred for attending project related scientific events and meetings), **publication costs** (including costs for patent filing and open access publication), **workshops/conferences** and **other project related costs**. However, non-personnel costs must be balanced, as WWTF focuses on funding people, and should not exceed the limit stated on the call fiche for non-personnel costs.

WWTF pays a **maximum of 20% overhead**. Overhead ("indirect costs") is calculated as 20% of the direct costs of the project. The total funding volume is calculated as direct + indirect costs. Applicants are required to comply with the overhead regulations of the involved institutions.

4.3. Ethics and good scientific practice

Compliance with the rules for good scientific practice including the appreciation of ethical aspects in research is mandatory even at the proposal stage.

If the approval from the ethics committee/institutional review board is required for the planned project this has to be clearly stated at the short proposal stage and the approval ("Votum") **has to be submitted online with the full proposal (PDF upload).**

The approval by the ethics committee has to be specific for the planned WWTF project; therefore, the title of the project should be the same as on the approval (minor deviations are possible). If the title of the approved research differs significantly from the proposed project, the PI has to include a statement (in the online submission system) confirming that the approval covers the planned research.

Should it not be possible to have a final approval before the full proposal deadline due to reasons which are beyond the control of the applicant, such as constraints imposed by the local ethics committee, the applicant must explain the reasons in the provided textbox in the submission system and send the preliminary approval the call manager at the latest two months after the full proposal deadline.

If the main applicant for the ethical approval is not the PI or co-PI/Core-Team Member of the WWTF proposal, a clear statement has to be included in the online proposal whereby the PI or co-PI/Core-Team Member confirms that he/she is authorized to conduct the planned research within this ethical approval.

If the planned research is covered by an existing approval, the applicants have to submit the extension of the approval ("Verlängerung der Gültigkeit des Votums"). The above also applies for extensions.

Non-compliance will result in the rejection of the proposal on formal grounds and will therefore not be further processed or sent for evaluation.

4.4. Open access

Please also consider WWTF's open access policy [available online](#).[5]

5. Evaluation process and funding criteria

Project calls follow a **two-stage evaluation process**: in the first stage, a short proposal is submitted describing the key objectives and motivation for the proposed work. In the second stage, the applicants of successful short proposals are invited to submit a full proposal. Short proposals may be submitted at any time from the opening of the call until the deadline.

Please consult for https://www.wwtf.at/programmes/information_communication/#ICT20 up-to-date timelines.

5.1. Formal eligibility check by WWTF

The proposals will be screened for formal eligibility by the WWTF office to check if the following criteria are met:

a. Eligibility: the PI must be affiliated to a Viennese university or non-university research institution; the research institutions of the applicants must be eligible for this type of funding. For JPs, at least one co-PI must be affiliated to a Lower Austrian university or non-university research institution.
b. Applicants may not be in a key role (that is, as PI, Co-PI/Core Team Member) in more than two proposals.
c. Duly submitted via the online submission system.
d. Budget: requested funding within the defined range, limits per cost category and region not exceeded.
e. All parts of the proposal completed, including the required uploads.
f. All required signatures (and stamps) uploaded.

Proposals that do not meet the key formal requirements will not be sent for further evaluation to the core team of the jury (core jury). Applicants of proposals which are deemed ineligible will be informed shortly after the submission deadline.

5.2. Evaluation of short proposals

If the proposal is not rejected for formal reasons it will be evaluated by the call's core jury. Each proposal will be assessed independently by several jury members based on the following criteria:

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[5] https://www.wwtf.at/about/policies/index.php?ID=7370#O7370

a. **Scope:** is the project within the scope of the call as described in the call specifications?
b. **Quality:** scientific originality and excellence of the proposed research project.
c. **Innovative character:** which aspects of the proposed project are especially innovative?
d. **Relevance**: does the proposed research contribute to mid- to long-term concepts to re-think digitalisation processes to be better aligned with established human values?
e. **Potential of the applicants:** accomplishments and potential of the applicants to conduct the proposed research. Young and/or female scientists are especially encouraged to apply and to act as Principal Investigators.
f. **Interdisciplinary collaboration:** teams should include an appropriate mix of expertise, bringing together researchers from complementary scientific disciplines.
g. **Consideration of gender aspects:** The relevance of potential sex-specific and gender-related aspects of the proposed projects should be considered and explained within the different sections of the short proposal. Please also refer to the document "*Including sex and gender considerations in WWTF proposals and research teams*" available online.

After an independent evaluation of the proposals, the jury will discuss the submitted short proposals. After that, all applicants will be promptly informed about the decision. Non-successful applicants will be provided with a <u>short</u> jury statement explaining the decision by mail. Successful applicants will be informed that they are invited to submit a full-length proposal. In some cases, the jury also gives feedback to the successful applicants for the full proposal.

5.3. Evaluation of full proposals

All duly submitted full proposals will again checked for formal aspects. The information provided in the full proposal must be consistent and in accordance with the short proposal, extending it by providing more details about the approach. A guide for writing the full proposal will be provided in due time. The full proposals will be evaluated by international peer reviewers (written assessment by at least three international reviewers.). The call jury will convene in Vienna.[6] The core jury is extended by additional experts if needed. At least **two jury members** are assigned to each proposal and act as rapporteurs for the proposals.

5.4. Jury meeting after the review process

This is the most significant step in the assessment. Submitted proposals will be comprehensively discussed by the jury in a meeting. The arguments brought forward in the review reports will be carefully balanced with the jury's own expertise. The result of this process is a recommendation for each project "to be funded" or "not to be funded".

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[6] This might be subject to changes given the ongoing Corona crisis. In case a face-to-face meeting in Vienna cannot be held, there will be an online meeting.

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5.5. Formal funding decision

Formal confirmation of the jury recommendation by the WWTF Board of Directors after WWTF Advisory Board recommended the projects to the Board of Directors. The WWTF Boards have always followed the recommendation of the jury. Applicants will be promptly informed about the decision.

Applicants that have submitted a full proposal will receive anonymized full text reviews and a summary of the jury discussion after the formal funding decision.

6. In case of funding

The **Formal Funding Contract** will be between WWTF and the institution of the PI (for universities according to §27 of the University Act 2002), the PI has full scientific and financial responsibility and authority. Projects may start immediately but should **not start later than 6 months** after the formal funding decision has been made. Throughout the project duration WWTF transfers the funding instalments annually in advance to the PI's Home Institution. The PI is responsible to distribute the allocated funds to the partners and partner institutions (if applicable).

WWTF monitoring throughout the duration of projects includes annual online reports delivered by the PI to WWTF with an overview on the scientific results achieved, personnel employment and funding spent as well as project outputs. During the course of the project, WWTF visits the PI and team to learn about the project progress and working environment of the personnel employed through WWTF funding. WWTF offers the possibility to adapt the work plan according to project needs. After the project has ended a comprehensive final report must be submitted. WWTF may organize an **ex-post evaluation** by international peers ("Evaluation Day") for all projects funded within a specific call.

7. How to use WWTF's Online Submission System

WWTF accepts one submission of proposal via its electronic submission system.

1. Go to https://funding.wwtf.at
2. **Register** with your email address and name: the password will be sent to you by e-mail. If you had registered in a previous call, you can login again with the given credentials.
3. **Log in**, choose the call ("Digital Humanism 2020"), and click "Create a new proposal". You can create as many proposals as you want to (e.g. to try out things). However, please not that a person can only appear on two proposals at the most.
4. **Short proposal**: fill in requested information in *online forms* and *upload requested files* (in PDF format). You can save the current status of your proposal at any time, access the system multiple times, and edit the content.

5. **Submit proposal**: the submit button becomes active only after all requested information has been filled in and uploaded (signalled by a green check mark next to the chapter title). Be aware that after the submission no more changes are possible. Proposals that have not been submitted will be deleted shortly after the submission deadline. You can delete the proposals also at any time.

Note: The submission system closes at 2 pm (Vienna local time) on the day of the deadline. The short proposal has a size limit of maximum 5 MB. No diagrams or pictures are allowed in this stage, with exception of the Gantt chart.

8.   Required structure of a WWTF short proposal

All proposals must be written in **English**. The length of the short proposal is determined by character (character count includes spaces) and upload limits in the online submission system (about 5-6 A4 pages). Please write precisely and to the point but with sufficient details to allow an evaluation by international peers.

The short proposal comprises of the following parts, which have to be completed in the online form:

8.1. Type of project

Is this a joint project with substantial funding going to partners in Lower Austria?

Please see the [specifications of a joint project](#) in section 3.1. of this guide.

Is this a Joint Project with substantial funding going to partners in Lower Austria? *
◯ Yes (Joint Project)
🔘 No (WWTF Project)

8.2. Principal Investigators and Core Team Members

Please provide details according to the online form. Required fields are marked with an asterisk.

- Year of birth and date of doctorate are for statistical reasons only and will not impact the evaluation.
- Please note the postal address is required for mailing thus provide an institutional address that allows for receiving mail.
- The "Core Team" is composed of the Principal Investigator and Coordinator (PI), and up to two Co-PIs/Core Team Members. All Core Team Members must sign the proposal (Section "Affirmations").

The details for the PI are mandatory. Additionally, you can add two further Co-PIs / Core team members. Altogether, no more than three team members may be listed in this section. The designated PI will be the sole responsible person to WWTF.

The number of persons is limited three for the short proposal phase. In the full proposal phase, you can add further persons collaborating in the project.

For each person, please indicate the region of the home institution. This is important for the calculations in the budget.

For **Joint Projects (JPs)** there are three options:[7]

For **regular WWTF projects** there are two options:[8]

8.3. Biographical sketch

The length of the biosketch is two pages. Page 1 includes a CV, page 2 provides a publication summary and lists up to ten selected peer-reviewed publications of the Core Team Member on one page. Mark publications most relevant to the proposed research with an asterisk.

The use of the CV template to be downloaded from the submission system is mandatory.

8.4. Partner institutions

In case your intended project includes more than three institutions, there is the option to add two more partner institutions (max. 5 different institutions in total). Please note, that you can indicate the institution only, and not names of collaboration partners. The purpose of this is to allow for a comprehensive cost planning. Additional team members affiliated to these institutions can be added in the full proposal phase. The additional institutions do not sign the proposal.

8.5. Basic information

It includes the **Title*** of the project, **Keywords*** and **Scientific Disciplines*.** Furthermore, the **indicative project duration** (between 2 and 4 years) has to be stated. The **indicative budget** will be automatically calculated in the table of the online system.

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[7] Branches of Viennese institutions in Lower Austria (such as BOKU or AIT site in Tulln) count as Viennese institutions.
[8] Branches of Viennese institutions in Lower Austria (such as BOKU Tulln or AIT Tulln) are considered Viennese institutions. In WWTF projects, for institutions based in Lower Austria select "Other".

Basic Information

Project ID:	will be set automatically after submission
Project title: *	
Keywords: *	
Estimated duration in months: *	
Indicative budget: (in k€):	Will be calculated below

Note: Items marked with an asterisk cannot be changed after the short proposal stage

8.6. Text items of the short proposal

Project abstract *(max. 1,500 characters, including spaces)*

This part should provide a concise project summary. Clearly state the research question and the aims of the team as a whole. Describe the most innovative aspects of your proposal and the fit to the scope of the call.

Relevance of the topic addressed including the state of the art and theoretical framework *(up to 3,500 characters, including spaces)*

What is the topic of the research project? What is the state of the art and the theoretical framework of the proposed research?

Explanation how this project relates to Digital Humanism *(up to 750 characters, including spaces)*

Please describe briefly, how your research idea relates to the call topic of Digital Humanism. Please go to https://www.wwtf.at/digital_humanism for more information on what Digital Humanism intends to be.

Research questions, hypotheses, objectives and expected results *(up to 3,000 characters, including spaces)*

What are the research questions and the scientific challenges the project wants to address? What is/are the goal(s) the project wants to achieve? Provide an outline of the scientific approach that will be used to reach your objectives. The objectives should be achievable within the duration of your project. State preliminary data and any relevant research experience.

Methodology including arguments on feasibility and ethics *(up to 2,500 characters, including spaces)*

Specify the methodology you intend to use in order to answer your research question(s) and to reach the objective(s). Describe the basic working principles and concepts, and why the chosen approach/ specific mix of approaches is the most suitable for the addressed research question. Include a short assessment on the feasibility and the ethics perspective of the approach.

Interdisciplinary collaboration *(up to 2,500 characters, including spaces)*

Each team member should describe his/her role in accomplishing the goal of the team as a whole. Which different disciplines are represented in the project and which partnerships across research groups and institutions will result from the project? Which collaborative elements are essential for the project to succeed; how will they be facilitated; what makes the team more powerful than the sum of the individual contributions? A team member's contribution should be integrated into the overall plan and should not appear merely as a resource.

Innovative character and uniqueness of the project *(up to 2,000 characters, including spaces)*

Which aspects of the proposed project are especially innovative (e.g. subject, collaborations, methodological approach)? Describe the scientific relevance of the proposed project and its timeliness.

The project's potential to include sex-specific and gender-related aspects as part of the object of research *(up to 750 characters, including spaces)*

Please depict relevant potential sex-specific and gender-related aspects of the proposed projects.

How does the project contribute to positioning Vienna? *(up to 500 characters, including spaces)*

What is the relevance of your project to position Vienna as an internationally visible place for Digital Humanism?

8.7. Potential ethical aspects

Max. 500 characters, including spaces

Please indicate if an ethical approval of an institutional review board / ethics committee is necessary. If required, information should be given with respect to the ethical approval.

8.8. Key references

Max. 10 citations, max. 1,250 characters, including spaces

Cite a maximum of 10 of the most relevant background references for the proposal. There is no required citation format, nevertheless publications should be cited in a way that allows the reader to easily retrieve the key information.

8.9. Budget

Budget

Institution	Personnel costs	Non-personnel costs	Total direct costs	Overheads	Funding applied for	% per institution
Institution 1	0.00 k€	0.00 k€		0.00 k€	0.00 k€	0.00 %
Institution 2	0.00 k€	0.00 k€		0.00 k€	0.00 k€	0.00 %
Institution 3	0.00 k€	0.00 k€		0.00 k€	0.00 k€	0.00 %
Institution 4	0.00 k€	0.00 k€		0.00 k€	0.00 k€	0.00 %
Institution 5	0.00 k€	0.00 k€		0.00 k€	0.00 k€	0.00 %
Total funding applied for per cost category	0.00 k€	0.00 k€	0.00 k€	0.00 k€	0.00 k€	
% of total direct costs	- %	- %				

The table (example above) list the main cost categories (personnel, non-personnel, and over-head costs). Please fill it out.

- Please refer to section 4 for details regarding which costs may be requested.
- A cost planning tool (spreadsheet) can be downloaded from the submission system and should be used to calculate personnel, non-personnel and overhead costs. Do not submit the spreadsheet to WWTF. It is for your use only.

8.10. Budget per region

Based on the information provided in the table "Budget", the share of budget allocated to the regions "Vienna" and "Other" will be shown for WWTF projects and to the regions "Vienna", "Lower Austria" and "Other" for JPs.

Budget per region

Region	Funding applied for	% per region
Vienna	100.00 k€	33.33 %
Lower Austria	100.00 k€	33.33 %
Other	100.00 k€	33.33 %

- For Joint Projects between Vienna and Lower Austria, the budget allocated to the region "Vienna" has to be at least 51%. The share of budget allocated to the region "Lower Austria" can vary between 21% and 49%. Up to 20% can be allocated to any partner located in other regions ("Other").
- For WWTF projects, at least 80% of the requested funding has to be allocated to the region "Vienna". Up to 20% can be allocated to any partner (including partners in Lower Austria).

The submission system will alert you if the inserted amounts exceed the permitted funding distribution between regions.

Explanation of Cost Planning *(max. 750 characters, including spaces):* Please provide a brief explanation of your cost planning at the short proposal stage. This should include explanations for the major expenditures planned within the project. A more comprehensive explanation of costs has to be submitted together with a detailed project budget in the full proposal. In the case of an invitation to submit a full proposal, there should not be any significant changes in the requested budget in comparison to the short proposal. Exceptions are possible but require an explanation.

8.11. Schedule/Project overview

One page Gantt chart, PDF upload

Upload a Gantt chart to give an overview of the milestones to be achieved during the project period. Specify the time periods and the respective PIs responsible for each milestone.

8.12. Affirmations and Authorization

Affirmations are the signatures of the Core Team members. Proposals have to signed by representatives of the institution who are authorized to sign proposals for funding. Please consult your "Forschungsservice" or similar administrative units in case that you do not know who is authorized to sign the application.

Multiple copies may be used for signing. **Please upload one PDF containing all the required signatures (can be up to 6 pages).** Any scientific content included in these pages will be ignored and not provided to the call jury.

Hard copies of the proposal or the signatures are not required. Please do not send them to us.