

**Federal Ministry
of Education and Research**

**Regulations
governing funding for research and development projects in the field of
"Sustainable development of urban regions"**

14 February 2017

1 Funding purpose, legal basis

1.1 Funding purpose

By 2050, 70% of the world population will be living in cities. Over 50% already do so today and the trend towards urbanization is continuing unabated in developing and emerging countries in particular. 80% of the energy and resources used worldwide are consumed in urban areas which are the source of more than three quarters of global emissions. Cities must develop to become "sustainable cities" in order to achieve the United Nation's post-2015 goals and implement the Paris Agreement.

As a rule, sustainability problems occur massively in fast growing cities and their surroundings as well as in urban regions because political, economic and civil society institutions can only gradually adapt to the challenges of urbanization. These problems include overstrained infrastructure systems as well as ecological risks such as air pollution, overburdened drinking and waste water systems and large volumes of traffic and waste. Cities are involved in a constant restructuring process to meet rapidly changing requirements.

The Federal Ministry of Education and Research intends to support R&D projects dealing with the sustainable development of urban regions on the basis of the FONA³ "Research for Sustainable Development" framework programme and pursuing the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Federal Government's Internationalization Strategy and the New Urban Agenda.

The aim of the funding measure is to develop and test locally-adapted strategies for the sustainable development of urban regions and to encourage the strategies' permanent implementation in order to improve ecological factors (emissions, energy and resources efficiency, etc.) and increase urban resilience.

1.2 Legal basis

The Federal Government will award grants in accordance with these funding regulations, sections 23 and 44 of the Federal Budget Code (BHO) and the administrative regulations adopted thereunder as well as the BMBF's regulations governing applications for expenditure-based grants (AZA) and/or cost-based grants (AZK). Applicants have no legal claim to a grant. The funding authority will take a decision after due assessment of the circumstances and within the framework of the budget funds available.

The funding under these regulations fulfils the requirements of Commission Regulation (EU) No. 651/2014 of 17 June 2014 declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the internal market in application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (General Block Exemption Regulation – GBER) (OJ L 187 of 26.6.2014, p. 1). The funding is therefore compatible with the internal market within the meaning of Article 107(3) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) and exempt from the obligation to inform under Article 108(3) TFEU.

In accordance with Article 1(4)(a) and (b) of the GBER, undertakings which are subject to an outstanding recovery order following a previous Commission decision declaring an aid illegal and incompatible with the internal market are ineligible for funding.

2 Object of funding

Initiatives for sustainable urban development and relevant public infrastructures will only have a lasting preventive and sustainable impact in industrial and developing countries if decision-makers have a sound knowledge of what is needed to take appropriate action. Research can help to understand the circumstances and preconditions under which good practice models can be applied on a more general level to solve specific problems. Technological solutions need to be developed to improve energy and resources efficiency and reduce carbon emissions and strategies must be drafted to ensure sustainable new infrastructure systems (energy supply, transport systems, etc.) as well as social innovations to manage the resulting changes in living conditions.

Application-oriented research projects in rapidly growing cities and urban regions are therefore expected to involve close cooperation between researchers and practitioners to develop and test relevant solutions and ensure their implementation by local stakeholders.

2.1 International cooperation

Funding will be provided in particular for cooperation with rapidly growing cities and urban regions in developing and emerging countries.

This funding call is initially limited to the target regions of south-east Asia and China. Further calls with a different regional focus (Africa, Latin and South America) will follow.

The partner institutions of the country concerned must be involved as equal partners in the planning process during the definition phase. The partners must cooperate on a level playing field in implementing the project. The objective is to strengthen problem-solving expertise in the partner countries.

The partners in the target region are expected to make a substantial contribution to the projects. Foreign cooperation partners in industrial and emerging countries are not eligible for funding. Service contracts with cooperation partners are also not eligible for funding.

Subcontracts may be awarded to (partly) fund the partners in cooperation projects with developing countries.

The projects are expected to establish project offices or coordination agencies in the partner cities in order to ensure strong local links.

2.2 Research topics

Funding will specifically be provided for projects which serve to increase the **resilience of cities and their surroundings as well as urban regions** under the overall objective to establish sustainable urban regions. This call therefore focuses on innovative ideas for reducing emissions in urban areas (including sustainable mobility schemes and energy-efficient heating and air conditioning systems in buildings) and developing greater urban resilience. Research activities may focus on the following areas:

- Integrated urban planning, e.g. for energy- and resource-efficient buildings, expandable and resilient infrastructure systems and sustainable mobility;
- Reduction of greenhouse gas and pollutant emissions in businesses, private households and transport operations;
- Risk management in extreme weather conditions and natural disasters in rapidly growing cities and their surroundings as well as urban regions.

The above is an exemplary list which does not exclude further problems related to urban resilience. The projects may also study topics such as governance structures and participation, training of specialist staff and the availability and management of data relevant to planning but should not focus solely on these research topics in view of the application orientation of the funding measure.

None of the proposals should lead to isolated solutions. Instead their goals for implementation should be coordinated with and integrated into existing urban development and climate protection plans. Consideration should also be given to the impact of the planned measures on the surroundings (urban-hinterland relations).

Applicants who wish to plan training measures modelled on the German dual system in order to meet relevant skills requirements in the context of the research project may submit their proposals for this project component under the following BMBF call:

<https://www.bmbf.de/foerderungen/bekanntmachung-1253.html>

2.3 Structure and focus of the projects

In order to ensure the early and comprehensive involvement of stakeholders from practice as well as the projects' flexibility and orientation to application, funding is provided for several phases, for which separate applications must be submitted.

- 1. Groundwork for the R&D phase** (18 or 24 months)
 - A Preparation phase** (duration 6 months)
 - B Definition phase** (duration 18 months)
- 2. R&D phase** (duration 4 years, evaluation of milestones after 24 months);
- 3. Implementation phase** (duration 2 years).

Preparatory projects including visits and workshops (preparation phase 1.A) may be carried out to prepare initial proposals for projects in the south-east Asia target region and involve cooperation partners in the design of the project. For details of the funding procedure see 7.2 and 7.3. Cooperation projects with the China target region do not include a preparation phase.

2.4 Scientific support, networking, transfer

A networking and transfer project will provide scientific and organizational support for the funding measure. Major objectives of the networking and transfer project are to deliver a synthesis of the results and strategies of the projects, support the transfer and application of results, promote project networking and enhance the visibility of the funding measure. This is to enable efficient and smooth communication and cooperation between the funded projects. The implementation of the networking and transfer project must be closely coordinated with the BMBF and the project management agency and will include the following specific activities:

- Synthesis of the findings from the funded projects;
- Continuous support for learning processes in the funded projects;
- Assistance with the processing of results for relevant target groups in the field of sustainable urbanization and with the development of transfer and implementation strategies;
- Analysis of the impact of locally implemented results and planning mechanisms, including the development of indicators for impact analysis;
- Development of a conceptual framework and establishment of a transfer and demonstration platform for the application of the results;
- Scientific and organizational work to promote networking between the funded projects and link them with relevant national and international communities;
- Strategy for communicating the results to relevant stakeholders for subsequent implementation and other purposes.

The planned duration covers all phases of the research projects plus 6 months for project completion.

3 Recipients of funding

Research proposals may be submitted by municipal and *Länder* institutions, by universities, non-university research institutions and business enterprises – particularly SMEs – and societal organizations such as foundations, societies and associations.

Research institutions which receive basic funding from the Federal Government and/or the *Länder* can only be granted project funding on top of their institutional funding to cover additional project-related expenditure or costs under certain preconditions.

In particular, these non-university research institutions are expected to demonstrate the relevance of the topics proposed for project funding to the institutionally funded research activities and establish a link between the two.

4 Prerequisites for funding

Funding in the research and development phase will be provided exclusively for collaborative projects in which universities or non-university research institutions cooperate with institutions and organizations in politics, administration and civil society (in the target region) and possibly industry. Applicants must be prepared to develop comprehensive solutions on a work-sharing basis as partners in a regional collaborative project. The collaboration should

be so composed as to ensure that the project goal can be achieved. German local authorities are welcome as cooperation partners.

The terms of cooperation between the partners in a collaborative project are laid down in a written cooperation agreement. Before a funding decision on a collaborative project is taken, the cooperation partners must prove that they have reached a basic consensus on specific criteria stipulated by the BMBF.

Details on funding prerequisites are contained in the information leaflet for applicants/funding recipients on cooperation between partners in collaborative projects (*Merkblatt für Antragsteller/Zuwendungsempfänger zur Zusammenarbeit der Partner von Verbundprojekten*), BMBF leaflet No. 0110: https://foerderportal.bund.de/easy/easy_index.php?auswahl=easy_formulare; Bereich BMBF → under "Allgemeine Vordrucke und Vorlagen für Berichte").

The consortium need not be fully composed in the definition phase but it must involve at least a German university or research institution and a relevant partner in the target region at the time the project outline is submitted.

5 Type, scope and level of funding

Funds will be awarded in the form of non-repayable project grants.

The basis for calculating the grants for universities, research and science institutions and similar establishments is the eligible project-related expenditure (in the case of the Helmholtz centres and Fraunhofer the eligible project-related costs), which can receive up to 100% funding in individual cases.

In the case of research projects at universities, a flat-rate grant amounting to 20% of total expenditure will be awarded in addition to the eligible expenditure.

Grants for local authorities are as a rule calculated on the basis of the eligible project-related expenditure. The contribution of own funds is desirable but not a prerequisite for the funding of local authorities involved in applications.

Grants for commercial companies are calculated on the basis of the eligible project-related costs, up to 50% of which can, as a rule, be covered by government grants, depending on the project's relevance to application. The calculation of the respective rate of funding must take account of the General Block Exemption Regulation (GBER). The GBER allows various additional payments for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), which could in some circumstances lead to a higher rate of funding. The EU's definition of SMEs applies.

Staff expenditure/costs not covered by third parties from public budgets are eligible for funding. If regular staff are assigned to the project, funding may be provided to cover the expenditure/cost of hiring a substitute who will temporarily assume the project worker's previous tasks.

Applications can be submitted for the funding of subcontracts to cover staff, equipment and travel costs of partners in developing countries (excluding emerging countries) if other means are not available.

Only the eligible expenditure or costs actually incurred can be settled in each case.

6 Other terms and conditions for funding

The *Nebenbestimmungen für Zuwendungen auf Kostenbasis des BMBF an Unternehmen der gewerblichen Wirtschaft für Forschungs- und Entwicklungsvorhaben* (Auxiliary Terms and Conditions for Funds Provided by the BMBF to Commercial Companies for Research and Development Projects on a Cost Basis – NKBF 98) will be part of the notification of award for grants on a cost basis.

Notification of award for grants on an expenditure basis will include the *Allgemeine Nebenbestimmungen für Zuwendungen zur Projektförderung* (ANBest-P) (General Auxiliary Conditions for Grants Provided for Projects on an Expenditure Basis), the *Besondere Nebenbestimmungen für Zuwendungen des BMBF zur Projektförderung auf Ausgabenbasis* (BNBest-BMBF 98) (Special Auxiliary Terms and Conditions for Funds Provided by the BMBF for the Promotion of Projects on Expenditure Basis), and the *Besondere Nebenbestimmungen für den Abruf von Zuwendungen im mittelbaren Abrufverfahren im Geschäftsbereich des BMBF* (BNBest-mittelbarer Abruf-BMBF) for the drawdown of funds.

The *Allgemeine Nebenbestimmungen für Zuwendungen zur Projektförderung an Gebietskörperschaften und Zusammenschlüsse von Gebietskörperschaften* (General Auxiliary Conditions for Project Grants awarded to Territorial Authorities and Associations of Territorial Authorities – ANBest-GK) will be part of the notification of award for funds granted to territorial authorities.

Further BMBF auxiliary terms and conditions regarding this funding measure may also form part of the notification of award of funds.

Funding recipients are expected to ensure open access if they publish the results of the research project in a scientific journal. This can be done through publication in an electronic journal which is accessible to the public free of charge. If the results are initially published in a way which does not provide the public with free electronic access, the article must be made publicly available free of charge following an embargo period where appropriate (secondary

publication). Embargo periods for secondary publication must not exceed 12 months. The BMBF expressly welcomes secondary open access publication of scientific monographs resulting from the project.

7 Procedure

7.1. Involvement of a project management agency

The BMBF has currently entrusted the following project management agency with implementing the funding measure:

Deutsches Zentrum für Luft- und Raumfahrt e.V.
DLR Project Management Agency
Environment and Sustainability
Heinrich-Konen-Str. 1
53227 Bonn

Any modifications will be announced in the *Bundesanzeiger* (Federal Gazette) or in another suitable form.

The contact person is:

Dr. Heike Bauer
Tel.: +49 (0)228 - 3821-1514
E-mail: heike.bauer@dlr.de

Applicants are advised to contact the relevant project management agency before submitting their documents. The agency will provide further information.

The International Bureau is responsible for implementing the optional preparation phase for south-east Asia:

DLR Project Management Agency
International Büro
Heinrich-Konen-Str. 1
53227 Bonn

Contact person:

Sophie von Knebel
Tel.: +49 (0)228 - 3821-1628
E-mail: sophie.vonKnebelDoebritz@dlr.de

7.2 Two-phase funding procedure

The selection procedure for the proposed preparatory work (preparation and definition phase) consists of two phases which means that outline proposals must initially be submitted (see 7.3.1 below).

Application for the ensuing research and development phase and the concluding implementation phase is a single-step procedure, that is, only full formal proposals are submitted (see 7.3.2 and 7.3.3 below).

7.3 Selection and decision-making procedure

Funding is provided for the project phases listed in 2.3 Structure and focus of the projects. Initially proposals for the 18-month definition phase will be submitted and funded following an optional six-month preparation phase for the south-east Asian target region. The selected and approved projects can be defined in greater detail in this phase. The involvement of all partners as well as the definition of common objectives and of scientific and practical methods and steps are central aspects in this effort which eventually leads to the drafting of an application for funding for the research and development phase. Before the end of the research and development phase, an application for funding for an optional implementation phase can be submitted. Particularly innovative strategies are selected for this phase.

An open and competitive procedure is applied.

The submission of proposals does not constitute a legal claim to funding.

7.3.1 Submission and selection of project outlines

In the first phase, the coordinating collaboration partner will submit a project outline.

Project outlines must be submitted in electronic form using the PT-Outline web portal.

For the online version of the project outline to have a binding effect, it must be printed out, signed and sent to the DLR Project Management Agency, which is responsible for the organization of this funding measure, by the deadline given below together with the forms generated using PT-Outline. The signature of the coordinating collaboration partner is sufficient.

Submission of outlines for the preparation phase

The application procedure for preparation projects with partners in south-east Asia (exploratory measures and feasibility studies) consists of two phases. The preparation

projects will cover periods of up to six months and receive funding of up to €40,000. Funding can be provided to cover travel and staff costs as well as other project costs.

Project proposals must be submitted in German or English (German summary is mandatory).

In the first phase, project outlines must be submitted to the project management agency in written and electronic form by

25 April 2017

at the latest using the PT-Outline tool https://secure.pt-dlr.de/ptoutline/app/urban_sea. A cover letter/introductory page must be added which includes the legal signatures of representatives of all the project partners confirming their knowledge and the correctness of the information supplied in the outline. It may not be possible to consider project outlines received after the above date.

The project description of a maximum 10 pages (Arial 11, 1.5-spaced) must be structured as follows:

- Cover page: Topic of the envisaged project, details regarding the overall cost and/or expenditure and the amount of funding requested as well as the project period (referring to the respective preparation projects), postal address, phone number and e-mail of the applicant(s);
- Summary of the project (one page maximum)
- Description of the problem: Description of the need for action taking account of prevailing regional conditions, presentation of the state of scientific and technological development and own previous work; reference of the project to the funding objectives of the call;
- Objectives, excellence and originality of the project (overall objectives of the project; deliverables of the preparation project; scientific excellence and originality of the envisaged collaborative project);
- Current situation (state of science and technology; situation in the target country; previous cooperation experience of the applicant in the target country);
- Detailed description of the methodology and work plan (methods, resources planning for the preparation project);
- Benefit and applicability of the results of the envisaged collaborative project;
- Cooperation with third parties (presentation of the cooperation partners to be involved in the project; qualifications of the applicant and of the national and international partners to be involved in the cooperation);
- Attachments (CV, list of relevant publications).

The project proposals received will be evaluated on the basis of the following criteria:

- Thematic relevance of the chosen research topic to the present funding call
- Quality and relevance of the envisaged research approach (e.g. contribution to sustainable development)
- Qualification and cooperation, qualification of the project partners and quality of the envisaged cooperation; clear added value for the German partner institution(s)
- Feasibility and success prospects, opportunity/risk assessment, prospects of success and sustainability of the project preparation measures, stakeholder involvement, applicability and transfer of results
- Economic viability and efficiency of the preparation project.

Suitable project ideas will be selected for funding on the basis of the above criteria and evaluation. Applicants will be informed in writing of the result of the selection process.

In the second phase, applicants whose project outlines have been evaluated positively will be invited to submit a formal proposal on which a decision will be taken after final evaluation. The formal proposal must include the following information in German in addition to the project outline:

- Detailed description of the planned work packages
 - Detailed work plan
 - Detailed time schedule
- Detailed financial plan

The evaluation is based on the following additional criteria:

- Quality of the detailed work plan
- Possibility of implementing the work plan within the set time frame
- Appropriateness of requested funding

Formal proposals must be drafted using the 'easy-Online' electronic application system. Guidelines, information for applicants and the auxiliary terms and conditions for the award of funding are available online at

https://foerderportal.bund.de/easy/easy_index.php?auswahl=easy_formulare&formularschrank=bmbf

It is planned to evaluate the project applications within 3 months of the submission deadline.

At the end of a preparation project, the project leader must submit a project outline for the definition phase under this call or present a detailed final report explaining why an application for project funding is not considered advisable. The conditions explained in 7.3.1 apply to the submission and selection of project outlines.

Submission of outlines for the definition phase

The project description of a maximum 15 pages (Arial 11, 1.5-spaced) must be structured as follows:

- Cover page: Topic of the envisaged project, details regarding the overall cost and/or expenditure and the amount of funding requested as well as the project period (referring to the respective definition projects), postal address, phone number and e-mail of the applicant(s);
- Summary of the project (one page maximum)
- Description of the problem: Description of the need for action taking account of prevailing regional conditions, presentation of the state of scientific and technological development and own previous work;
- Explanation of the objectives and approach pursued, indicators for the description (in quantitative or qualitative terms) of the project's success and, where appropriate, the indirect economic, social and/or political impact;
- Relevance of the project to the funding goals of the call;
- Description of the planned research activities and the work programme of the definition phase including a description of the methods which are expected to be applied or developed as well as a milestone plan;
- Planned cooperation and work-sharing: Strategy for transdisciplinary and, where appropriate, interdisciplinary cooperation, description of the envisaged collaboration structure and project management, strategy for pooling and integrating various bodies of knowledge and for handling potential conflicts;
- Expected results, application potential and envisaged utilization of results including individual utilization plans for each project partner (structure: economic prospects, scientific prospects, potential for scientific and commercial follow-up);
- Time and funding schedule for the definition phase and rough outline of the research and development phase.

The project outline must be submitted in English using the PT-Outline tool https://secure.pt-dlr.de/ptoutline/app/urban_chn. In addition, a German summary of a maximum 5 pages must be submitted.

Bibliographies and CVs can be added as annexes.

The documents must be self-explanatory and allow evaluation without further information or inquiry. Applicants are free to add further information which they consider to be significant for the evaluation of the project provided their outlines do not exceed the maximum number of pages specified. The only attachments accepted in all cases are those listed above.

The deadline for the submission of outlines for cooperation projects with China (definition phase) is

25 April 2017.

The deadline for the submission of outlines for cooperation projects with south-east Asia (definition phase) is

25 April 2018.

The submission deadline is not a cut-off deadline. However, it may not be possible to consider project outlines received after this date. Compliance with requirements concerning format and content is a precondition for consideration of a project outline.

A legal claim to funding cannot be derived from the submission of a project outline. Applicants have no legal claim to the return of their project outline.

It is recommended that the outline, in particular the presentation of the problem and possible solutions, be formulated in cooperation with the foreign partner. For this purpose, a proposal for funding of a separate preparation phase (see above) may be submitted for projects with partners in south-east Asian countries.

The assessable project outlines received will be evaluated in cooperation with external experts on the basis of the criteria listed below. Suitable project ideas will be selected for funding on the basis of this evaluation, and the applicants will be invited to submit a formal proposal. Applicants will be informed in writing of the results of the procedure.

The evaluation is based on the following criteria:

- Relevance to the topics of the call;
- Relevance and suitability of the project focus for the region;
- Scientific and technical quality of the concept and possible previous work, originality of the research approach;
- Appropriateness and quality of the transdisciplinary or interdisciplinary strategy (composition of the research team, design of the research process);
- Expertise of the applicants including experience with interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary cooperation;
- Appropriateness of financial planning.

In addition to the evaluation of the submitted written documents, the BMBF and the project management agency reserve the right to invite applicants for a personal interview and to consider the obtained knowledge in the selection.

In the second phase of the procedure, the applicants whose project outlines have been evaluated positively will be invited to submit a formal proposal for the definition phase using the easy-Online web portal <https://foerderportal.bund.de/easyonline>. The formal proposal must include the following information in German in addition to the project outline:

- Detailed description of the planned work packages
 - Detailed work plan
 - Detailed time schedule
- Detailed financial plan

The evaluation is based on the following additional criteria:

- Quality of the detailed work plan
- Possibility of implementing the work plan within the set time frame
- Appropriateness of requested funding

Funding for the definition phase will be awarded for a maximum of 18 months. The objectives are

- Creation of a suitable consortium
- Stakeholder analysis
- Binding involvement of relevant stakeholders
- Involvement of other scientific partners, as necessary in the course of the work
- Detailed definition of the problem and research idea in collaboration with all partners (including stakeholders)
- Specification and, if appropriate, review of the methodology applied
- Description of the interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary organization of project work
- Drafting of a data management strategy
- Development of a capacity-building plan for establishing the solutions in the target region after funding has ended.

A full proposal for the main phase must be submitted 12 months after the project has started. The remaining 6 months must be covered by a work plan in the proposal for the definition phase. Furthermore, the entire definition phase must be so designed that it produces exploitable results even if no further funding is provided.

7.3.2 Application for the research and development phase (main phase)

For the maximum four-year research and development phase, formal funding proposals agreed with the proposed collaboration coordinator must be submitted to the project management agency by the end of the 12th month of the definition phase.

The joint description of the collaboration project should expand on the project description for the definition phase on which it is based. In particular, the description must include information about modifications compared with the original plans and present the results of efforts to establish the collaboration as well as the results of the analysis of regional conditions. A description of the sub-project must be added for each project partner (details of the structure and scope of the proposals are provided with the approval of the definition phase).

The BMBF and the project management agency will be advised by external reviewers and experts in the evaluation and selection of proposals. The proposals received will be reviewed and evaluated according to the following criteria:

- Relevance and suitability of the project focus for the region;
- Scientific and technical quality of the concept and possible previous work, originality of the research approach;
- Appropriateness and quality of the interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary strategy (composition of the research team, design of the research process);
- Expertise of the applicants including experience with interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary cooperation;
- Systemic approach, flexibility and adaptability of the proposed solutions;
- Implementation-oriented project design, prospects for utilization and further implementation after funding has ended;
- Potential for transfer to other regions and fields of action;
- Effectiveness and efficiency of the proposed organization and management of the collaborative project;
- Appropriateness of financial planning.

In addition to the evaluation of the submitted written documents, the BMBF and the project management agency reserve the right to invite applicants for a personal interview and to consider the obtained knowledge in the selection.

Funding for projects in the main phase is provided for 4 years.

7.3.3 Application for the implementation phase

If results are achieved in the funded research and development phase which can be implemented in the short term involving German and/or local companies, applications can be submitted for a separate implementation phase of a maximum of 2 years. This phase aims to encourage the practical implementation and/or transfer of the results to other cities or urban regions. Applicants are informed about the modalities in good time before the end of the research and development phase. This is to help ensure direct follow-up funding for particularly promising implementation projects.

7.4 Application and funding procedure for the networking and transfer project

This accompanying project must cover the areas described in 2.4 above. Assessable informal project outlines can be submitted in German to the project management agency by

30 May 2017

using PT-Outline https://secure.pt-dlr.de/ptoutline/app/urban_vt.

The deadline is not a cut-off deadline. However, it may not be possible to consider applications received after this date.

If appropriate, the networking and transfer project can also be carried out by a collaboration consisting of a maximum three partners. In this case, the applicants must submit a joint project outline agreed with the proposed collaboration coordinator.

The project outline of a maximum 20 pages (Arial 11, 1.5-spaced) must be structured as follows:

- Cover page: Topic of the envisaged project, details regarding the overall cost and/or expenditure and the amount of funding requested, postal address, phone number and e-mail of the applicant;
- Summary of the project (one page maximum);
- Detailed description of the plan or components of the networking and transfer project;
- Rough outline of the work programme including a description of the methods to be used as well as a milestone plan;
- Previous experience and qualification of the project team, if appropriate, planned cooperation and work-sharing;
- Strategies for the transfer and exploitation of results (relating to the findings of the networking and transfer project);
- Time schedule and expenditure/cost estimate.

The project outlines received will be evaluated on the basis of the following criteria:

- Quality of the overall strategy for scientific support;
- Expertise and experience of the applicants, particularly with regard to the areas of sustainable urban and regional development, resilience and adaptation to climate change as well as methods of interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research, synthesis research and transfer of results into practice;
- Experience of the applicants with international research projects, also in a difficult intercultural environment;
- Effectiveness and efficiency of the proposed organization and management of the project, also with regard to minimizing the additional effort required for the research projects to be supported;
- Appropriateness of financial planning.

In addition to the evaluation of the submitted written documents, the BMBF and the project management agency reserve the right to invite applicants for a personal interview and to consider the obtained knowledge in the selection. A suitable strategy will be selected for funding on the basis of the above criteria and evaluation. Applicants will be informed in writing of the result of the selection process. Applicants have no legal claim to the return of their project outlines and of any other documents which they may have submitted in this phase of the procedure.

In the second phase of the procedure, the applicants whose project outline has been evaluated positively will be invited to submit a formal proposal using easy-Online <https://foerderportal.bund.de/easyonline>. In the case of collaborative projects, the proposals must be submitted in consultation with the proposed collaboration coordinator. The project description must not exceed 50 pages (Arial 11, 1.5-spaced). The project description must in particular expand on the work programme included in the project outline and provide a sound basis for the project components.

The proposal submitted will be reviewed and evaluated according to the following criteria:

- Coverage and qualitative development of the deliverables;
- Quality of the plan for synthesis research;
- Quality of the plan for supporting learning processes in the projects;
- Quality of the plan for supporting the transfer and implementation of the results;
- Quality of the plan for establishing a transfer and demonstration platform.

A funding decision will be taken after a final review based on the above criteria and evaluation procedure.

7.5 Relevant regulations

The approval and payment of and accounting for funds as well as proof and examination of proper use and, if necessary, revocation of the award and reclaiming of the funds awarded are governed by the administrative regulations pertaining to section 44 of the Federal Budget Code (BHO) and sections 48 to 49a of the Administrative Procedure Act (VwVfG) unless deviation is permitted under the present announcement.

8 Duration

These funding regulations will enter into force on the day of their publication in the Federal Gazette (*Bundesanzeiger*) and remain valid until 31 December 2026.

Bonn, 14 February 2017

Federal Ministry of Education and Research

Dr. Gisela Helbig