Guidelines

for Reviewing Proposals in the State Major Instrumentation Programme

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I. What Are We Asking You to Do?

We are asking you to provide a written review that will serve as a basis for the funding decision regarding the attached proposal that has been submitted as part of the State Major Instrumentation Programme (“Großgeräte der Länder”).

- **First, please make sure that you feel you have the necessary scientific expertise.**
  If you do not feel that you have the expertise required to evaluate the subject matter, please return the proposal as quickly as possible. In this case we would be grateful if you would assist us by suggesting other possible reviewers.

- **Please examine whether circumstances exist that could be interpreted as your having a conflict of interest.**
  For more information on apparent conflicts of interest, see section IV.3.

- **Please treat the documentation confidentially and do not make it available to third parties.**

- **Please base your assessment on the proposal documents you have received.**
  You may additionally refer to the publications cited in the proposal; however, the bibliography of cited works and the manuscripts are not per se the subject of the review.

  If instrumentation will be used for research purposes, the proposal must also include an overview of the most important publications by the working group from the last five years in accordance with the Supplement on Research.

  Please consider the list of publications in your assessment.

- **If you have any questions about the proposal, please contact the DFG Head Office exclusively.**

- **Please limit your review to two pages or less.**

- **Please provide a clear recommendation as to whether you believe the project should be funded.**

II. What Criteria Should You Use?

1. Use of the Proposed Instrumentation

Is the acquisition necessary considering the existing equipment?

- Opportunities for using existing equipment
- Adequacy of the number of people who will be using the instrumentation
- Should the instrumentation also be made available to other individuals and/or working groups?

2. Choice of Vendor and Instrumentation, Features and Costs

Are the selected product, features and price appropriate? Have follow-up costs been calculated realistically?

- Necessity of the proposed features and performance class
- Necessity of the proposed accessories
- Sufficient market research
- Calculation of operating and other follow-up costs (e.g. repairs, personnel)

3.1 Justification of the Necessity for Use in Research (only if instrumentation will be used for research purposes)

Do the researchers' scientific activities and proposed projects justify the acquisition?

- Soundness of the preliminary work
- Quality of publications and the results obtained to date
- Scientific significance

3.2 Justification of the Necessity for Use in Teaching and Training (only if instrumentation will be used for teaching/training purposes)

Is the instrumentation necessary and adequate for teaching and training?

- Sufficient information regarding the number and type of courses and the university lecturers/teachers
- Adequate justification for the didactic necessity of the proposed instrumentation, its features and performance class

3.3 Justification of the Necessity for Use in Medical Care (only if instrumentation will be used in medical care)

Is the instrumentation necessary and suitable for medical care?

- Sound justification for procuring the proposed instrumentation (including features and performance class) with regard to proposed examination and treatment programmes
- Sufficient data on the numbers of patients, examinations and treatments

3.4 Justification of the Necessity for Use in a Library (only if instrumentation will be used at a library)

Do the numbers of borrowers and loans and the library's collection justify procurement of the instrumentation?

- Sufficient data on the library collection and the number of borrowers and loans
- Have the DFG's recommendations on equipping university libraries with local library systems (AHLB recommendations) been observed?

3.5 Is the IT system suitable and necessary for the proposed use? (only for IT systems)

- Adequacy of volume, features and performance class
- Sufficient information on the existing and proposed IT strategies
- Integration into the university's general IT strategy
- Have all necessary resources, i.e. those that go beyond the scope of this proposal, been secured (in the sense of a full-cost analysis)?

III. What Happens with Your Review?

As a rule, each proposal is evaluated independently by two reviewers. On the basis of these reviews, the DFG Head Office prepares an award recommendation.

The documentation is then sent to members of the Committee on Scientific Instrumentation and Information Technology, a decision-making body elected by the DFG Joint Committee. It is responsible for the quality of the review process and for making the recommendation as to whether the major instrumentation should be procured.

All reviewers participating in the process will be informed of the final decision.

The DFG will anonymise reviewer comments and share them with the applicants. These anonymised comments will also be made available to the other reviewers taking part in the review process. Please note that the DFG Head Office may shorten reviews as necessary.

IV. What Else Is Important?

1. Confidentiality

All proposals submitted to the DFG, the correspondence with reviewers, the reviews, and the identity of the reviewers and other participating committee members must be treated confidentially. We ask that you not identify yourself as a reviewer to the applicant or to any third party. This entails that the responsibilities of a reviewer may only be undertaken personally and may not be delegated to third parties.

The scientific content of the proposal may not be exploited for personal and/or other scientific purposes.

2. Obligation to Observe the Principles of Good Scientific Practice

The **principles of good scientific practice** must also be observed during the review process. A violation of these principles can result in a charge of scientific misconduct. In particular, any infringement against the principle of confidentiality as per IV.1. is considered scientific misconduct. In cases of suspected scientific misconduct the proceedings

of the DFG's **Rules of Procedure for Dealing with Scientific Misconduct** (Verfahrensordnung der DFG zum Umgang mit wissenschaftlichem Fehlverhalten – VerfOwF) are applied.

3. Conflicts of Interest

The DFG Head Office is not able to investigate all circumstances that could be interpreted as a conflict of interest. Therefore, the DFG relies on your assistance so that, if necessary, another reviewer may be found at an early stage to participate in the written review process.

Should circumstances exist that may be interpreted as conflicts of interest, please inform the responsible DFG division before submitting your written review. If you submit a written review to the DFG without first having contacted the DFG about a possible conflict of interest, the DFG assumes that, to the best of your knowledge, no apparent conflict of interest exists. If, after submitting a written review, or during or following a meeting, you realise that there may be – or may have been – an apparent conflict of interest, you should also contact the DFG Head Office immediately.

The DFG Guidelines for Avoiding Conflicts of Interest (DFG form 10.201) can be found at

www.dfg.de/formulare/10_201

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