

## Funding Area 2: Network Formation and Knowledge Transfer

RESEARCH NETWORK | INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM | NETWORKING PROJECT | TRANSFER PROJECT

### Networking project - Guidelines for Applications

These guidelines are intended as a guide for preparing an application for funding a networking project. They provide information on the different ways of interpreting the funding format, and explain the basic requirements to be met when submitting an application. These guidelines are based on the DSF funding objectives and criteria, which are set out in the Funding Concept "*Research Innovation, Network Formation and Knowledge Transfer. Bringing new impetus to peace and conflict research*"<sup>1</sup> and are the determining factors for the evaluation and decision-making process.

#### NETWORKING PROJECT

Funding amount: €10,000

Applications for funding of networking projects can be submitted to DSF without a deadline. They should be submitted with a reasonable lead-time to the planned start of the project.

The aim of the funding offer is to initiate networking projects addressing disciplinary or interdisciplinary topics in the field of peace and conflict research. The DSF supports scientific cooperation and networking in research and teaching. The projects in the form of e.g. research colloquia, networking and specialist conferences are intended to provide impetus to strengthen the interdisciplinary discourse in the research field, to bring together different research strands, also with neighbouring research fields, and to identify new research topics. Furthermore, they should contribute to supporting institutional exchange in research and teaching and to integrating young academics into the research discourse.

The call is thematically open, and is aimed at researchers from different stages of their career, and from different disciplines and specialisations. Networking projects offer design flexibility. This also includes conference concepts based on a call for contributions. The DSF supports presence and hybrid formats.

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<sup>1</sup> The DSF Funding Concept is available at <https://bundesstiftung-friedensforschung.de/foerderkonzept/>

## **Application requirements**

Applications for funding can only be submitted by researchers who belong to or are directly affiliated with a higher education institution, a non-university research institution or a scientific institution recognised as a non-profit organisation<sup>2</sup>. It is not possible to provide direct financial funding to private individuals.

The minimum requirement for submitting an application is having completed a doctorate. Exceptions can only be made for researchers who can demonstrate that they have been engaged in scientific activities for many years and have published relevant articles in the field of research.

The Foundation only accepts applications for project funding submitted by scientific institutions within Germany. It generally only approves funding to domestic institutions. However, this does not exclude the possibility of using funding for international scientific cooperation.

Institutions that receive DSF funding are required to ensure that the funding is administered professionally.

## **Basic requirements**

DSF only funds networking projects that are thematically related to the research field of peace and conflict research. Relevance shall be adequately substantiated in the application for project funding.

For the application, a structured and comprehensible project concept must be submitted to the Foundation, which provides a comprehensible and sufficient basis for the professional assessment of the project. Care should be taken to ensure that the objective and relevance of the project, the classification of the topic in the state of research and development, as well as the information about the project structure, the speakers and participants are all given appropriate consideration. Furthermore, it should be examined in which form the project results can be made accessible for research discussion and, if necessary, for knowledge transfer.

In the case of funding, the Foundation assumes that the organisation receiving funding will provide the infrastructure and basic equipment required to implement the proposed project. Overhead costs may not be claimed.

Co-financing of the project is generally possible. Corresponding applications and commitments must be included in the application to DSF, stating the amount of funding. The cost items for which DSF funding is requested must be clearly identified in the overall cost plan.

The organisation receiving funding assumes the role of employer for the duration of the project; it is therefore responsible for the proper management of labour costs.

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<sup>2</sup> Where applicable, relevant supporting documents shall be enclosed with the application.

## Funding criteria

When assessing applications for project funding, the Foundation distinguishes between four core criteria and four additional criteria<sup>3</sup>:

Adequate consideration must be given to the *core criteria* – scientific relevance, quality of the project design, specialist qualifications of the project team, and potential for knowledge transfer – in all project proposals. Their fulfilment is a prerequisite for a positive funding decision.

Not all of the four *additional criteria* – promotion of early career researchers, national and international research collaboration, interdisciplinary orientation, and diversity – have to be met, depending on the project design. However, the applicant should assess how significant the additional criteria may be to the project when preparing the concept.

The Foundation expects applications to contain statements on the relevance or non-relevance of each criteria. The fulfilment of additional criteria has an impact on the overall assessment of applications for funding.

## Costs eligible for funding

DSF provides funding for project-related labour and material costs.

Personnel funds can be used to provide organisational support for the preparation, follow-up and implementation of the networking project. This includes, in particular, expenses for student assistants and other work services (e.g. translations). As a rule, labour costs should not exceed 10 to 15 percent of the requested funding amount. Exceptions are hybrid and online formats.

The payment of lecture fees or expense allowances from DSF funding is not possible. Exceptions are lecture fees for freelance speakers. The appropriateness and the awarding of lecture fees must be justified in the application.

Material costs include expenses for flights/travel and accommodation (overnight stays, hospitality) of the speakers, the moderators, the active scientific participants and those involved in the organisation of the project. The current rates of the Federal Travel Expenses Act (BRKG) shall apply to the calculation of travel expenses.

For the calculation of hospitality costs, the rates of the DSF listed in *Appendix 1* of this guide shall apply.

The DSF grants subsidies for material costs incurred directly in the preparation and implementation of the networking project and which do not constitute a reasonable contribution by the participants themselves. These include e.g. consumables, conference documents, in justified cases also room rentals and the rental of technical equipment as well as specific expenses for hybrid and online conferences (e.g. licences for online tools), provided that these can be assessed as proportionate.

The budget items must be adequately justified in the application's accompanying text. Funding requirements shall be calculated according to the principle of proportionality. The Foundation reserves the right to adjust cost estimates.

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<sup>3</sup> See the conceptual definitions in the Funding Concept.

The overviews in *Appendices 1a/b* provide information on possible uses and the underlying cost estimates.

### Application documents

To process applications for project funding, the Foundation requires texts and documents in German or English. These should be either entered directly into the system or uploaded as attachments via the DSF's digital funding portal. Please note that the system does NOT have a footnote function. Therefore, the Harvard citation style must be used. The bibliography can be added at the end in the text field.:

- COVER LETTER | A letter from the applicants to the Foundation
- SUMMARY/ABSTRACT | A separate one-page summary of the project (max. 1,800 characters including spaces)
- LONG VERSION | A presentation of the concept for the networking project (Topic and objectives, state of research, structure of the conference, information about the contributors, remarks regarding the cost plan, list of references<sup>4</sup>) with approx. 10 pages (max. 20,000 characters including spaces)
- COST PLAN | An additional cost breakdown

Supplementary attachments to be uploaded to the system as PDF files:

- If available, graphics, tables, or similar elements to supplement the project's content presentation
- CVs of the applicants and project team members (max. 2 pages each)<sup>5</sup>
- List of project-relevant publications by the applicant (publications, max. 2 pages)<sup>6</sup>
- Cost estimates for third-party services, cooperation agreements, etc.

A suggested outline is included as Appendix 2 to these guidelines.

The application must be submitted to the Foundation exclusively via DSF funding portal.

### The evaluation and decision-making process

Applications for funding of networking projects are not reviewed externally. The decision on funding is made by the DSF Board.

In the event of a positive decision on the award of funding, the Foundation reserves the right to issue a final approval only after a written statement has been submitted on the points of criticism and follow-up questions.

Post-qualification of a networking project in the current application process is not possible.

A rejected application for project funding may be resubmitted once in a revised version as a new application.

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<sup>4</sup> The reference list of research literature can also optionally be added as an appendix (maximum of 2 pages).

<sup>5</sup> The two-page CV should contain only information directly relevant to the application regarding professional expertise. A list of presentations, memberships, etc., is not required.

<sup>6</sup> A complete list of the applicant's publications must not be attached to the application.

DSF approves funding to the applicant's research institution. This entails the compulsory recognition of the Foundation's approval regulations by the management of the institution and the project owner. Further details can be found in the approval regulations for networking projects.

Osnabrück, March 2026

## APPENDIX 1A | Networking project: Information on drawing up a cost plan

*When drawing up the cost plan, the following points must be observed:*

- DSF does not assume any overhead costs of the organisation receiving funding. It assumes that the infrastructure (e.g. Conference rooms and technology, access to software licences) is provided by the organisation receiving funding as its own contribution. For this reason, any material costs listed that count as part of a re-search institution's basic equipment require special justification.
- If labour and material costs have been calculated incorrectly, the Foundation will not allocate additional funding.
- Lump sums with no mention of a specific intended use will not be granted.
- Individual cost items should be rounded up to the nearest €10.
- Please note that a cost plan with the necessary explanations must be included in the long version of the application.

*Rates for hospitality expenses:*

- The Foundation will cover the costs of hospitality for
  - speakers,
  - presenters and
  - those directly involved in the organisation (e.g. student assistants).
- The following grants can be applied for per day towards the costs of hospitality:
  - For one meal (half day)
    - maximum of €25 per person and day
    - additional: maximum of €5 per person and day for conference drinks
  - For two meals (whole day):
    - maximum of €50 per person and day
    - additional: maximum of €10 per person and day for conference drinks

## APPENDIX 1B | Networking project: Information on drawing up a cost plan

COST ITEM	INFORMATION	REMARKS
<b>LABOUR COSTS</b>		
Student assistants	Hourly rate (including ancillary wage costs) Duration of employment Monthly working hours	
Contracts for work and services with third parties	Scope of services, remuneration and basis of assessment	Justify the appropriateness of awarding the contract. Attach tenders if applicable
Fee contracts (e.g. translations)	Basis of assessment	Attach tenders if applicable
<b>TRAVEL COSTS</b>		
Flight and travel costs for speakers, moderators and persons actively involved in the project (e.g. panellists)	Target number of participants Breakdown into expected individual items (travel/accommodation costs) Local transport costs	
Accommodation costs for speakers, presenters and panellists	Type of accommodation, Hospitality costs	The applicable rates of the BRKG apply. Hospitality costs are based on the <i>rates for hospitality expenses</i> .
<b>MATERIAL COSTS</b>		
Conference rooms and technology, access to software licences (hybrid and online formats)	Justification why not available through the basic equipment of the funded institution	
Consumables and conference materials, communication	Lump-sum amount	

## APPENDIX 2 | Networking project: List of possible bullet points in the long and short version of the application<sup>7</sup>

**Short version (summary of the project)**, a separate 1-page (approx. 4000 Zeichen incl. spaces)

- Topic, objectives and expected project results
- Scientific relevance of the project and classification in the state of research
- Concept and structure of the project
- Selection of participants
- Application volume

### **Long version of the application for project funding**

(approx. 10 pages; max. 20,000 characters including spaces)

#### *a. Detailed presentation of the research project*

- Topic, objectives and expected outcomes
- Relevance and classification in the international state of research
- Concept and structure of the project
- Selection and listing of speakers and participants
- Expertise of the project team and own preparatory work
- Exploitation of results and intended publication format
- Potential for knowledge transfer (possible target groups and transfer formats)
- Schedule and work plan
- List of relevant research literature
- Detailed cost plan (see also Excel file as a download) stating information about the institution's own contribution / justification of individual items in the application text, Excel file with numerical values additional
- Declaration that the application, or a similar application, has not been submitted to any other funding body (date and signature)

#### *b. Appendices*

- Information on the applicants in the form of a CV and a list of own publications relevant to the project (maximum 4 pages)

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<sup>7</sup> This list is a non-binding outline suggestion. The order and choice of points may vary depending on the application.

- Draft for the project schedule
- Other documents such as short biographies of speakers, call for contributions  
Cost offers for third-party services (please keep to the essentials)