

Guideline for Applicants

Intramural Research Funding Programs Faculty of Medicine Tübingen

(A) Objectives of the funding programs

The intramural research funding programs of the Faculty of Medicine are a strategic measure to support innovative research projects with start-up funding. A variety of targeted funding instruments are available to promote basic research and the initiation of clinical trials. The program covers all areas of biomedical research.

The research funding program **fortune** was designed to enable young researchers to establish their own research area and attain scientific independence. Particular emphasis is placed on the promotion of excellent young researchers in the sense of a career development award.

The objective of the **AKF** program (*Angewandte Klinische Forschung*, i.e. Applied Clinical Research) is to increase the number of science-driven studies in the form of investigator-initiated trials (IITs) in the central research areas of the faculty.

The decisive criterion for funding decisions in both program lines is the innovative nature of the project and its potential for the subsequent acquisition of external grants from organizations such as the German Research Council DFG, BMBF, EU and others. All applications must pass a competitive review process modeled after the guidelines of the DFG.

(B) Eligibility:

Applications may be submitted by researchers with a doctoral degree. As a rule applicants must be employed at facilities of the Faculty of Medicine of the Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen. External applicants must provide a declaration from a host department of the Faculty of Medicine that the project or applicant will be co-funded by the host institute or department. Grants for external applicants are contingent on contractually binding confirmation from the host department that it will provide follow-up financing for the applicant's position.

Applicants:

As a rule, applications are submitted by **one** responsible person. If more than one person is named as applicant, the necessity for multiple applicants must be explained. The first-named applicant is always the principal applicant and handles all correspondence in connection with the application.

Double funding and limitation of intramural support:

Applicants may not receive simultaneous funding for more than one **fortune** project at a time (exclusion of double funding).

The goal of intramural funding is to enable young faculty members to establish the scientific profile and experience necessary to successfully acquire external funding. For this reason, applicants must have acquired substantial external funding at the very latest after their second *fortune*- or AKF-funded project before further applications can be accepted.

(C) Types of applications (funding instruments):

Information about the types of application possible in the two funding lines and about the modules which can be funded is available on the homepage of the Faculty of Medicine. Detailed information about the prerequisites for each type of application may be found on a separate sheet outlining the details of the funding instrument.

(D) The review and decision process

Funding decisions are made by the Executive Board of the Faculty of Medicine on the basis of recommendations by the Extended Research Commission (*Erweiterte Forschungskommission*). Applications are evaluated by at least 2 reviewers and deliberated on in a meeting of the Extended Research Commission. The fortune commission convenes three times a year, the AKF commission twice a year. Commission dates are published on the faculty homepage. Grants are made to individuals. As soon as the applicant leaves the Faculty of Medicine Tübingen, the project is terminated.

Application deadlines

Applications may be submitted at any time. In order to allow the reviewers sufficient time for the evaluation process, complete applications should arrive at the research office of the Faculty of Medicine at least three months before the next commission meeting. Decisions on applications which cannot be fully reviewed and processed in time for one commission meeting will be postponed until the next period. Revisions and applications for extensions or bridging support must be submitted in complete form at least eight weeks before the commission meeting. The review process can only be initiated for formally complete applications.

Formal guidelines for applications

Applications may be submitted in German or in English. Please send us an electronic Version of your application as a single pdf file (with the signed accompanying letter from the head of the department). The individual components of the application must be arranged in the order found on the checklist for applicants (see intramural funding homepage).

Proposals should be structured as follows:

- **Cover sheet**

(see template Deckblatt_fortuene_en.doc or Deckblatt_AKF_en.doc)

- **Application form**

(see template Formblatt_Antragsteller_fortuene_en.doc) or
Formblatt_Antragsteller_AKF_en.doc

The application form includes a list of the applicant's five most important publications, describing the applicant's own contribution to the scientific content of each publication in a few short sentences. The listed publications must also be submitted in full text form or as an electronic file (pdf). The list must include the impact factor and rank (in percent) of the journal in the JCR subject-specific list.

- **“Requested funding” form (budget)**

(see template Formblatt_beantragte_Mittel_en.doc)

- **“Declaration of intent” from budget director**

Monies from the intramural research programs should have a sustainable impact. For this reason, we require a confirmation from the department director responsible for the budget of the unit that he or she will continue to employ the applicant beyond the end of the funding period. In addition, the department head must acknowledge the duty to complete and submit Final Report Form II (*Abschlussbogen II*) two years after conclusion of the project (see Formblatt_zur_Absichtserklärung_en.doc).

- **Accompanying letter from the head of the department / section / laboratory**

fortune applications must include a qualification concept (max. 2 pages). The qualification concept provides information about:

- the integration of the applicant in the department’s research and teaching
- confirmation of infrastructure provided for the execution of the project as well as confirmation that the project leader will be granted the necessary research leave. Where applicable, declaration of co-funding of the applicant’s position in the case of junior and PATE grants.
- the department’s qualification concept for young researchers.

PATE applications must also be accompanied by a letter of support from the host department.

- **Curriculum vitae of the applicant**

(If the applicant wishes to have personal circumstances such as parental leave, extended stays abroad, double degrees, vocational training, etc. taken into consideration when age limits have been exceeded, this information should be provided in the CV.) Publication lists may not exceed two pages; if necessary, list only the most recent publications to keep within this limit.

- **Copy of doctoral degree certificate** (for first proposals)

- For AKF applications: **Study synopsis and accompanying letter from the Center for Clinical Studies, ZKS Tübingen**

- **Synopsis of the application.**

Please describe the proposed research project (max. 10 pages; for PATE projects max. 3 pages), addressing the points listed below:

Read the description of the funding instrument carefully for any special instructions, particularly for AKF applications.

1. **State of the art**
2. **Preliminary work**
3. **Scientific objectives**

For PATE applications, also note which specific work methods you intend to learn in the course of the project and later establish in the sending department.

4. **Work program** (including work schedule and, where applicable, milestones, for example in clinical trials)

5. **Experiments involving humans or human materials**

If invasive or noninvasive experiments involving humans or human materials are planned, state the processing status of the ethics application at the local Ethics Committee. If a project is selected for funding, the funding will be held back until an unconditional ethics approval has been presented. In the case of clinical trials, project funding cannot begin until a study protocol has been presented which was drawn up in collaboration with the Center for Clinical Studies ZKS. Please note that ethics approval letters must bear a current date and must name the applicant and the project being applied for.

6. **Experiments with animals**

7. If experiments with animals are planned, the status of the applicant's animal experiment application at the regional authority *Regierungspräsidium* must be reported. If a project is selected for funding, the funding will be held back until the official permit for the animal experiment(s) is presented. Note that animal experiment permits must bear a current date and name a member of the applicant's laboratory and relate to the project being applied for.

8. **Experiments involving genetically modified organisms**

Describe the planned experiments involving genetically modified organisms and state which permits have already been acquired for their implementation.

9. **Requested funding with detailed justification**

Applicants may apply for specific modules within the intramural funding programs. Descriptions of the modules and their applicability to the various application types may be found in the detailed descriptions of the funding instruments available for download from our homepage.

Please provide a detailed justification for the funding requested in your project budget. In particular, explain the requested funding for staff and how these persons will contribute to the project in terms of expertise and the work schedule. If you are applying for part-time leave from clinical duties, please explain how this fits in the work schedule of the project.

Funding for the **principal investigator's own position** can only be granted for junior applications and PATE projects. Currently, up to 50% of the applicant's own position

can be funded. The applicant's department is expected to contribute the appropriate complementary funding. Applications for the PI's own position must be clearly justified, and the work plan must contain a detailed description of the principal investigator's contribution to the project. Research leave from clinical duties must be confirmed and ensured by the department head. Part-time leave must be justified in terms of feasibility and impact on project implementation.

Funding for equipment (*Investitionsmittel*) is only possible in exceptional cases. A substantial financial contribution by the department must be apparent, and this must be confirmed by the department head in the accompanying letter. Please include valid price quotes.

10. Description of available core support and contribution of proposing research group

Describe the resources which will be made available to the project by the department (infrastructure or financial support). This information should be confirmed in the accompanying letter of the head of the department.

11. Members of the project group

Please describe which persons are directly involved in the project. Explain who contributes which expertise and what time resources to the proposed project. Explain in particular your own contribution as applicant and project manager.

12. Collaboration with other researchers, including international cooperation

Please describe existing collaborations with researchers outside your work group or department, naming partners and institutions.

13. Detailed list of current grant funding

State the amount and overlap of other project funding with the proposed intramural funding; where appropriate, explain how the projects complement each other.

For standard applications, projects funded by external grants which received start-up funding from the intramural research funding programs must be reported using the follow-up funding report form (template

Formblatt_Drittmittlevaluation_Intramural_en.doc). A summary of each externally funded project and the corresponding grant letter must be attached.

14. Plans for continuation of the project

Please describe in particular your plans for acquiring follow-up funding.

15. Commercial exploitation potential

Please state whether your project has potential for commercial exploitation. If so, which steps have already been taken or are planned for exploitation?

16. Total duration of the project (incl. external follow-up funding)

17. Requested duration of intramural funding for your project.

The following declaration must be appended to all applications:

“If an application for follow-up funding of this project is submitted to an external funding organization or if a decision on such an application is made, I shall immediately communicate the decision of the external funding organization to the Extended Research Commission and provide the commission with a copy of the grant letter. I am aware that as soon as the proposed project receives external funding, any intramural funding is immediately terminated. I also confirm that no parallel applications have been made to the intramural research funding programs.”

➤ **Reporting duties**

Successful applicants are required to present their project at the yearly Research Colloquium of the Faculty of Medicine.

Upon conclusion of the project, Final Report Form I (*Abschlussbogen I*) must be sent immediately by the applicant to the Research Office of the Faculty of Medicine.

Two years after the project ends, Final Report Form II (*Abschlussbogen II*) is to be sent by the applicant and/or by the department head to the Research Office of the Faculty of Medicine.

(Reminders for these reporting duties will be sent by the Research Office of the Faculty of Medicine.)

Additional reporting requirements may be stipulated in the descriptions of some funding instruments; these reports must be submitted without being explicitly requested.