

## **BMFTR / DLR-PT Addendum for T-AP Call for Proposals 'Preparing for Tomorrow – Societies and Strategies in Times of Transition'**

**Federal Ministry of Research, Technology and Space**

**Announcement**

**Guideline**

**for the funding of research projects  
on the topic**

**'Preparing for Tomorrow – Societies and Strategies in Times of Transition'**

**as part of the Trans-Atlantic Platform for Social Sciences and Humanities Call for Proposals: 'Preparing for Tomorrow – Societies and Strategies in Times of Transition'**

of 24 June 2026

### **1 Funding objective, purpose of the grant, legal basis**

#### **1.1 Funding objective**

Social challenges have grown increasingly diverse and complex in recent years. At the same time, disruptive changes are unfolding at an unprecedented pace. To address these present and future challenges, expertise in the humanities and social sciences has never been more critical to keep pace with constantly changing requirements and anticipate future developments. The humanities and social sciences offer essential knowledge for orientation and action under changing social conditions and in situations of uncertainty. The Federal Ministry of Research, Technology and Space (BMFTR) therefore provides sustainable support for research in the humanities and social sciences on how to tackle social challenges.

To adequately address the demand for knowledge in tackling global challenges, in addition, stronger international cooperation among the humanities and social sciences in Germany is essential. The BMFTR also provides funding opportunities to support this.

BMFTR's funding activity within the Trans-Atlantic Platform for Social Sciences and Humanities (T-AP) pursues the goal of strengthening and promoting international research collaboration and thus the international integration of the German scientific community. T-AP is a network of European, North and South American as well as South African research funding organisations whose objective is to facilitate trans-Atlantic joint research projects tackling the social challenges of the 21st century in areas of strong potential for international collaboration.

This national funding scheme is related to the joint T-AP call for proposals 'Preparing for Tomorrow – Societies and Strategies in Times of Transition'. The joint T-AP call is backed by research funding organisations from a total of eight countries from Europe, North and South America and South Africa. The English language applicable version of the joint T-AP call is published on the T-AP website (<https://www.transatlanticplatform.com/funding-opportunities/preparing-tomorrow>). Relevant information and documents (including a detailed description of the scope of content, eligibility requirements, application process and timeline) can be found there. In addition to the joint call, each funding organisation involved in it has published respective national requirements (so-called National Addenda). Funding is subject

to the general requirements of the joint T-AP call for proposals (siehe <https://www.transatlanticplatform.com/funding-opportunities/preparing-tomorrow>) and the specific requirements of the respective funding organisations. This guideline (National Addendum) applies specifically to potential applicants from Germany who wish to apply for funding from BMFTR.

In the current global context of socioeconomic and technological transformations and crises, but also unforeseen opportunities, the objectives of this guideline are to advance knowledge and tools to help society anticipate future developments, respond to emerging challenges, and support a resilient and inclusive future for all.

Knowledge and better understanding is expected to be gained on the basis of innovative comparative or encompassing studies conducted jointly with the international project consortium partners. Research results and gained knowledge are intended to be reflected in first and foremost publications, beyond that, in conference talks and other activities that communicate findings to academic audiences. In addition, publications or other activities to enable knowledge transfer or knowledge exchange are expected. Moreover, the guideline aims at strengthening the internationalisation of German humanities and social sciences and specifically contributing to transdisciplinary and multi-perspective research collaboration. Factors of internationalisation include increasing the participation of researchers from German research institutions in international project consortia, their integration into multilateral research networks, and the publication of their research findings in international publication media such as journals and books, academic repositories, data repositories, or other collections of scientific articles including blogs.

It is expected that the research results will be communicated to the general public. It is thus essential that the instruments and formats to be used in knowledge transfer are listed.

## 1.2 Purpose of the grant

With its grants awarded under the Trans-Atlantic Platform call for proposals 'Preparing for Tomorrow – Societies and Strategies in Times of Transition' (T-AP 'Preparing for Tomorrow' Call), BMFTR aims to fund excellent individual research projects at German institutions which, as part of a research collaboration with international project partners, investigate the following key questions:

- How can we strengthen society's ability to anticipate and engage with emerging challenges and opportunities—and understand their complex interrelations?
- How can we design and implement effective strategies for planning and responding to uncertainty that foster international collaboration on issues of global significance?
- What kind of futures do we envision for human life? How do we want to shape it, and what direction should our societies evolve in response to past crises and future trends?
- The results of the funded project may only be used in the Federal Republic of Germany or the EEA and Switzerland.

## 1.2 Legal basis

The Federal Government awards grants in accordance with these funding guidelines, sections 23 and 44 of the Federal Budget Code (BHO) and the administrative regulations adopted thereunder as well as the 'Guidelines for Grant Applications on an Expenditure Basis (AZA/AZAP/AZV)' and/or the 'Guidelines for Grant Applications on a Cost Basis by Commercial Enterprises (AZK)' of the Federal Ministry of Research, Technology and Space (BMFTR). There is no legal entitlement to a grant. Rather, the grant awarding authority makes its decision at its due discretion within the scope of the budget funds available.

## 2 Object of funding

The object of funding is individual research projects of German higher education and research institutions belonging to international project consortia which address these research questions:

- How can we strengthen society's ability to anticipate and engage with emerging challenges and opportunities—and understand their complex interrelations?
- How can we design and implement effective strategies for planning and responding to uncertainty that foster international collaboration on issues of global significance?
- What kind of futures do we envision for human life? How do we want to shape it, and what direction should our societies evolve in response to past crises and future trends?

These questions can be explored from a wide range of disciplinary, methodological, theoretical, and applied perspectives within the social sciences and humanities.

As a partner within the international project consortium, the individual research project should address one or more of the following objectives:

1. Strengthen conceptual frameworks and (descriptive, explanatory, or normative) theories related to foresight, crises, and collective response strategies.
2. Identify and/or assess interventions, strategies, and governance structures aimed at enhancing resilience, prevention, and preparedness for future crises and opportunities.
3. Provide empirical case studies illustrating how past and contemporary regional collectives perceive future opportunities and risks, and how they prepare for them.
4. Investigate how disruptive technologies and new media shape both the emergence and perception of future opportunities and crises.

A more detailed description of the content frame (type of research that can be funded, the context, the overarching aims, the basic scope and the overarching themes) can be found in the joint T-AP call (<https://www.transatlanticplatform.com/resource/blob/392820/pdf-t-ap-preparing-tomorrow-call-scope-en.pdf>).

BMFTR provides funding solely for research projects conducted by universities, research institutions, museums, libraries, and archives in Germany. At the same time, these individual German research projects must be partners within international project consortia that fulfil the requirements and detailed instructions specified in the T-AP international 'Preparing for Tomorrow' Call on how to apply (see 'Overview of the call, application form and instructions, and assessment procedure', see <https://www.transatlanticplatform.com/funding-opportunities/preparing-tomorrow>).

## 3 Funding recipients

Eligible applicants comprise higher education institutions, non-university research institutions, museums, libraries, and archives that can make research contributions and meet the funding purpose and the funding requirements. Participation by researchers in small fringe subjects is welcomed.

Only non-economic activities of the above-mentioned organisations are supported. At the time of disbursement of a grant awarded, applicants are required to have an organisation in Germany serving the non-economic activities of the funding recipient (e.g. higher education or research institution).

Research institutions that receive basic funding from the Federal Government and/or the *Länder* can, under certain conditions, be granted project funding supplementary to their institutional funding to cover additional project-related expenditure or costs if they explicitly describe the relationship between the project applied for and the basic-funded activities in the funding application or clearly differentiate between the two.

Concerning the conditions for when state aid is or is not deemed to be involved and the extent to which funding can be provided without constituting aid, please consult the Union Framework for State Aid for Research, Development and Innovation (R&D&I Framework).<sup>1</sup>

#### 4 Special prerequisites for funding

The T-AP 'Preparing for Tomorrow' Call operates through a coordinated funding model, whereby each funding organisation supports its own national institution or research project within an international project consortium. The formal requirements and conditions (including application form and instructions as well as assessment procedure) can be found in the T-AP joint international call (<https://www.transatlanticplatform.com/funding-opportunities/preparing-tomorrow>). To receive funding from BMFTR, applicants must meet the requirements of the T-AP joint call for proposals and those of these guidelines.

All grant recipients, including research institutions as specified in Article 2 (number 83) of the AGVO, shall ensure that no indirect aid is granted to companies within the consortium. To this end, the provisions of section 2.2 of the FuEu Union Framework must be complied with.

#### 5 Type, scope and rates of funding

Funding will be awarded in the form of non-repayable project grants. Funding of up to €400,000, including a flat-rate project grant (*Projektpauschale*), can be applied for per project. Grants are generally awarded for a minimum period of 24 months and a maximum of 36 months.

The basis of assessment for grants to research institutions that fall within the scope of commercial activities is the eligible project-related costs. These can be financed on a pro rata basis, taking into account the requirements of state aid law (see appendix). According to BMFTR principles, an appropriate own contribution to the eligible costs incurred is required.

Grants for higher education institutions, research and science institutions and similar institutions that do not fall into the category of economic activities are calculated on the basis of the eligible project-related expenditure (in the case of the Helmholtz centres and Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft, eligible project-related costs), which can be awarded up to 100% coverage in individual cases, taking legislation on state aid into account.

In the case of non-commercial research projects at higher education institutions and university hospitals, a flat-rate grant (*Projektpauschale*) amounting to 20% of total expenditure funded by the BMFTR will be awarded in addition to the eligible expenditure.

The BMFTR's regulations governing applications for expenditure-based grants (AZA) and/or cost-based grants (AZK) provide the basis for determining the expenditure/costs eligible for funding.

As a general rule, grants can be provided to cover expenditure and costs for:

- Personnel
- Student and/or research assistants
- Award of contracts
- Material expenses
- Funding to hold or participate in workshops and conferences, and for effective publication of the project results

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<sup>1</sup> Commission communication 2022/C 414/01 of 28 October 2022 (OJ C 414 of 28 October 2022, p. 1).

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– Travel expenses

Funding is available for expenses and costs aimed at making the planned research process or results accessible to the public during the funding period and engaging in dialogue with society. Science communication is defined as the accessible, dialogue-oriented communication of research and scientific content to target audiences outside the scientific community.<sup>2</sup>

CO2 compensation payments for business trips are eligible for funding as expenditure or costs in accordance with the Guidelines for Grant Applications on an Expenditure Basis (AZA/AZAP/AZAV) or the Guidelines for Grant Applications on a Cost Basis (AZK).

## 6 Other terms and conditions

Notification of award for grants on a cost basis will include the *Nebenbestimmungen für Zuwendungen auf Kostenbasis des Bundesministeriums für Bildung und Forschung an gewerbliche Unternehmen für Forschungs- und Entwicklungsvorhaben* (NKBF 2017) (Auxiliary Terms and Conditions for Funds Provided by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research to Commercial Companies for Research and Development Projects on a Cost Basis).

Notification of award for grants on an expenditure basis will include the *Nebenbestimmungen für Zuwendungen auf Ausgabenbasis des Bundesministeriums für Bildung und Forschung zur Projektförderung* (NABF) (Auxiliary Terms and Conditions for Funds Provided by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research for the Promotion of Projects on an Expenditure Basis).

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 grants on an expenditure basis.

For the purpose of conducting progress reviews within the meaning of Administrative Regulation No. 11a pertaining to section 44 of the Federal Budget Code (BHO), funding recipients are required to provide the BMFTR or reviewing institutions with the data necessary for the progress review without delay. The information will be used exclusively for the purposes of supporting research and any subsequent evaluation; it will be treated confidentially and published in anonymised form, so that it is not possible to trace it back to any individual persons or organisations.

The BMFTR supports the compatibility of family life and academic career progression within its funded projects. For scientists in early career stages, sensible and necessary project adjustments resulting from family-related absences at universities or institutionally funded research institutions are approved with minimal administrative effort. In particular, extensions of the project duration and, where applicable, additional funding for catch-up periods corresponding to the duration of the family-related absence may be considered. A brief, written justification sent via email from the project lead to the relevant project management agency is sufficient. The prerequisite for such an adjustment is that the early-career researcher contributes to the achievement of the project's objectives.

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<sup>2</sup> See also BMFTR's toolkit (FAQ) on Knowledge Exchange, [https://www.bmftr.bund.de/SharedDocs/Publikationen/DE/1/668936\\_Wissenschaftskommunikation\\_in\\_der\\_Projektfoerderung.html](https://www.bmftr.bund.de/SharedDocs/Publikationen/DE/1/668936_Wissenschaftskommunikation_in_der_Projektfoerderung.html).

Funding recipients are expected to ensure open electronic access (open access) if they publish the results of the research project in a scientific journal. This can be done by publishing the article in an online journal that is accessible to the public free of charge. If the article does not initially appear in an online journal that is accessible to the public free of charge, the article should subsequently be made accessible to the public online free of charge, following a reasonable embargo period where appropriate (secondary publication). The embargo period for a secondary publication should not exceed twelve months. The BMFTR expressly welcomes open access secondary publication of scientific monographs resulting from the project.

Funding recipients are required to plan and present suitable science communication measures relating to their research process and results.

Grant applications must confirm the existence of a research data management plan describing the lifecycle of the data collected during the project. Wherever possible, recipients should make project data—including information on instruments, methods, anonymisation, and documentation—available in a reusable format to a suitable institution, such as a relevant research data repository or data centre. This should occur after initial use (e.g., following a scientific publication) to ensure long-term storage for replication and potential secondary analysis by other researchers, in accordance with good scientific practice. Repositories should adhere to current data publication standards (FAIR Data principles), support data description via metadata and vocabularies, and assign persistent identifiers (e.g., DOI, EPIC handle, ARK, URN). The data is archived and documented within these repositories or data centres and, where appropriate, made available to the scientific community upon request.

## 7 Procedure

### 7.1 Involvement of a project management organization, application documents, other documents and use of the electronic application system

Preliminary remark: A Call Secretariat has been established at the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG) to coordinate and manage the T-AP joint call for proposals including the electronic application system and review process. Applications of international project consortia (different to applications for national funding of individual projects within a consortium) must be submitted online on the ELAN portal hosted by the DFG. The use of this application system is mandatory because the outlines of the international project consortia must be submitted through a centralised system managed by the Secretariat for the T-AP call 'Preparing for Tomorrow'. For further details concerning the application submission of proposals for joint research projects, see the T-AP joint call for proposals, 1.6.2. 'Application submission' (<https://www.transatlanticplatform.com/funding-opportunities/preparing-tomorrow>), see 7.2.1. All documentation, such as the T-AP call for proposals 'Preparing for Tomorrow – Societies and Strategies in Times of Transition Call for Proposals', the general guidelines including regulations for application process and for communications between the call secretariat (DFG) and applicants can be viewed at the aforementioned website.

The BMFTR has currently entrusted the following project management organisation (*Projektträger*) with implementing the national part of the funding measure:

DLR Projektträger  
Gesellschaft, Innovation, Technologie  
Geisteswissenschaften und Kulturelles Erbe  
Heinrich-Konen-Str. 1  
D-53227 Bonn

Beauftragt durch:



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

It is strongly recommended that the *Projektträger* be contacted before submitting a formal application. In addition, answers to frequently asked questions can be found at:

[https://www.geistes-und-sozialwissenschaften-bmfr.de/files/T-AP\\_Preparing4tomorrow\\_FAQ.pdf](https://www.geistes-und-sozialwissenschaften-bmfr.de/files/T-AP_Preparing4tomorrow_FAQ.pdf) .

Grant application forms, guidelines, guidance sheets, information and auxiliary terms and conditions are available online at

[https://foerderportal.bund.de/easy/easy\\_index.php?auswahl=formularschrank\\_foerderportal&formularschrank=bmbf](https://foerderportal.bund.de/easy/easy_index.php?auswahl=formularschrank_foerderportal&formularschrank=bmbf)

or can be obtained directly from the above-mentioned project management organisation.

The 'easy-Online' electronic application system must be used to generate formal funding applications after positive external review of the respective joint proposal and as requested by the DLR Projektträger, see 7.2.2 (<https://foerderportal.bund.de/easyonline>). It is possible to submit the application electronically via this portal, either using the TAN method or a qualified electronic signature. Additionally, submitting applications in paper form remains an option.

#### 7.2 Two-phase application procedure

The application procedure consists of two phases.

##### 7.2.1 Submission and selection of project proposals

In the first phase of the application procedure, the lead principal investigator of a planned collaborative project must first submit a 'Letter of Intent to Apply' in English on behalf of the research team

by 8<sup>th</sup> July 2026

online using the ELAN application system (hosted by the DFG) or in written format. Submission must be in English as the project outlines will be evaluated by international experts. In accordance with the T-AP 'Preparing for Tomorrow' Call for Proposals, the submission deadline serves as a cut-off date. It may not be possible to consider applications received after the above date. Information on the 'Letter of Intent to Apply' and on the submission procedure are available at:

<https://www.transatlanticplatform.com/resource/blob/392182/pdf-t-ap-preparing-tomorrow-call-overview-application-assessment-en.pdf> .

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In the first phase of the application procedure, the lead principal investigator must then submit a joint proposal for a collaborative project in English on behalf of the international project consortium

by 28<sup>th</sup> October 2026

online using the ELAN application system (hosted by the DFG) or in written format. Project proposal templates and the application system can be accessed at:

<https://www.transatlanticplatform.com/resource/blob/392182/pdf-t-ap-preparing-tomorrow-call-overview-application-assessment-en.pdf> .

In accordance with the T-AP 'Preparing for Tomorrow' Call for Proposals, the submission deadline serves as a cut-off date. It will not be possible to consider project proposals received after the above date. The information needed for project proposals can be taken from the T-AP 'Preparing for Tomorrow' Call for Proposals (including regulations and templates); this can be accessed via the T-AP website: <https://www.transatlanticplatform.com/resource/blob/392182/pdf-t-ap-preparing-tomorrow-call-overview-application-assessment-en.pdf>.

In conjunction with the T-AP Call Secretariat, the national funding organisations participating in the T-AP 'Preparing for Tomorrow' Call for Proposals will check the submitted project proposals for compliance with the formal requirements (including compliance with national regulations). Project proposals that do not meet these requirements will be rejected. Details concerning the eligibility check can be found in the T-AP 'Preparing for Tomorrow' Call for Proposals guidelines on the website <https://www.transatlanticplatform.com/resource/blob/392182/pdf-t-ap-preparing-tomorrow-call-overview-application-assessment-en.pdf> as well as in the respective national regulations (for BMFTR applicants, see 3. above).

Project proposals that meet the formal criteria will be reviewed, evaluated and ranked by international experts according to the evaluation procedure, criteria, and scoring matrix set out in the T-AP 'Preparing for Tomorrow' Call for Proposals, No. 3.

After the expert ranking, representatives of the funding organisations participating in the T-AP 'Preparing for Tomorrow' Call for Proposals will officially put together the list of projects - recommended by the experts panel(s) - to be funded. In determining the list, the guiding principle will be scholarly merit as suggested by the ranking of the expert panel.

National partners involved in a collaborative project proposal selected for funding will be informed in writing by the national funding organisations and the respective national application procedures will then be carried out.

For project partners from Germany whose proposal is selected for funding and who intend to apply for BMFTR funding, a second procedural phase begins (see 7.2.2).

The project proposals and any other documents submitted in the first phase of the procedure will not be returned.

#### 7.2.2 Submission of formal funding applications and decision-making procedure

In the second phase of the procedure, the German project partners of those research collaborations whose proposal is selected for funding and who intend to apply for BMFTR funding are invited to submit a formal funding application for their individual project (i.e. the German sub-project within the collaborative project).

The 'easy-Online' electronic application system must be used for drafting formal applications (<https://foerderportal.bund.de/easyonline/>). It is possible to submit the application electronically through this

portal using the TAN procedure or with a qualified electronic signature. Alternatively, applications can still be submitted in paper form.

The formal funding application must include a project description in German, giving a brief outline of the collaborative project and a more detailed description of the German sub-project. It should be no more than twelve pages in length.

The formal applications must meet any topic-specific or funding-related requirements and/or evaluators' recommendations for the implementation of the project. The formal application must include the following information which is supplementary to the project proposal:

- A detailed financing plan
- A detailed work plan including planning of project-related resources (in person months) and an indication of when which development steps are to be achieved (including the main intended results mentioned under No. 1)
- A detailed description of the utilization of results (referring to intended results mentioned under No. 1 including instruments and formats to be used in knowledge transfer and/or knowledge exchange)
- Reason for funding requirement

The applications received will be reviewed and evaluated according to the following criteria:

- Eligibility for funding
- Need for and appropriateness of requested funding
- Plausibility of the details of the financial plan
- Quality and information content of the utilization plan, also in terms of the objectives of this funding measure
- Fulfilment of any requirements resulting from the first phase of the procedure and compliance with the financial framework recommended for funding in this phase

A funding decision will be taken after final consideration on the basis of the above criteria and evaluation.

### 7.3 Relevant regulations

The approval and payment of and accounting for the funds as well as the proof and examination of the proper use and, if necessary, the revocation of the award and the reclaiming of the funds awarded are governed by sections 48 to 49a of the Administrative Procedure Act (VwVfG), sections 23 and 44 of the Federal Budget Code (BHO) and the related general administrative regulations, unless the present funding regulations allow for deviation from the general administrative regulations. The *Bundesrechnungshof* is entitled to carry out audits in accordance with section 91 of the Federal Budget Code (BHO).

## 8 Validity

These funding regulations will enter into force on the day of their publication in the Federal Gazette (*Bundesanzeiger*) and remain valid until 31<sup>st</sup> December 2032.

Bonn, 22 June 2026

Federal Ministry  
of Research, Technology and Space

Ulrich Scharlack