

Call for Proposals

Research programme of the German Academies of Sciences and Humanities (Academies' Programme) for 2026

The Academies' Programme is the joint research programme of the German Academies of Sciences and Humanities. It is designed to enable long-term basic research in the humanities and, working from historical perspectives, legal studies, economics and social sciences. Research questions and materials in these areas which dovetail with those of certain natural sciences can also be addressed within the framework of the Academies' Programme. The central task of the Academies' Programme is the exploration, preservation and interpretation of cultural traditions of major importance for research and for societies at large.

The funded projects will be supervised by one or several academies; yet they can be carried out in close cooperation, if required also internationally, with other academies, universities and non-university research institutions.

The Academies' Programme is currently funded with approximately 70 million euros annually as part of the joint research funding provided by the German federal and state governments. These funds are currently used to finance 131 projects in 192 workplaces [www.akademienunion.de/en/research/project-database].

Researchers who have completed their doctorate and have institutional ties in Germany can apply (as individual applicants or together with one or more co-applicants) with a research project to one of the academies listed below. In terms of focus, scope and duration, the project must meet the following requirements and criteria.

Application requirements

- The project must be of transregional significance and promote the interests of Germany's research policy.
- The application is limited to projects in the above mentioned fields.
- The proposal must be outstanding in its disciplinary or interdisciplinary relevance.
- The proposal has to reflect, in theme and method, the current state of research and must have potential for innovation.
- The project must be a modular long-term project (at least 12 and at most 25 years) that can be completed within the planned overall term. Permanent tasks are not eligible.
- The annual budget must be at least 120,000 euros.
- The further qualification of academic staff, particularly those in the early stages of their careers, must be guaranteed.
- The inclusion of the Digital Humanities and the development of a respective concept are prerequisites.
- Only those projects will be considered that cannot be carried out more expediently by a university, another research institution or any other organization.

Researchers who are planning a project that meets the above requirements are requested to submit the project proposal to one of the participating German Academies of Sciences and Humanities (see below for addresses). Applicants should attend an advisory meeting with their chosen academy before submitting the preliminary application.

Information on the Academies' Programme and currently funded projects is available at:
www.akademienunion.de/en and on the Academies' websites.

Application procedure and criteria for application

The application procedure has two stages within a two-year review and selection cycle. First, a preliminary application must be submitted to the selected academy (five to ten pages, Arial 11 pt. font, 1.2 lines; if necessary, please ask the respective academy). The academy examines the preliminary application and the possibility of accepting it into its academic and organisational supervision. The preliminary application must provide the following information:

- The applicants' names and their professional and institutional affiliation,
- title, discipline and specific orientation of the project,
- intended duration as well as material and personnel resources,
- brief description of the research topic (if applicable, description of the material to be analyzed) and research method incl. initial considerations for a Digital Humanities concept,
- curricula vitae of the applicants with list of publications (no more than one DIN-A 4 page per person) and information on current projects funded by other sponsors.

Applicants of shortlisted preliminary applications will then be asked by the academy to submit a detailed application. In the case of inter-academy proposals, one academy will act as the lead institution. The applications will be evaluated by national and international peer reviewers and, if approved, submitted to the Examination Committee ("Wissenschaftliche Kommission") of the Union of the German Academies of Sciences and Humanities in spring 2025. In case of approval, the academy will take over the project at the start of funding on 01.01.2026 and will supervise it by a special commission.

The detailed application must contain the following criteria:

- The applicants' names with academic degree, position and date of birth, name of the research institution, faculty/department/institute, address, telephone, e-mail address,
- exact designation or title of the project (max. two lines) and short title,
- discipline and special research area,
- summary of the project and the research objective (max. 1 page),
- information on the current state of research and on the applicants' own preliminary work,
- description of methodology and research objective,
- information on the overall duration and modular structure of the project. The modules must be conclusive in terms of content and time.
- information on the planning of work-flow, time and budget, in particular on the number and rank of the planned positions and the amount of material resources required,
- submission of a Digital Humanities concept as well as a first draft of a data management plan, which includes particular considerations for digital long-term archiving and the provision and re-usability of the digital research data,
- brief description of the affiliation to a university or a non-university research institute,
- information on additional cooperation partners,
- information about qualification measures for young researchers as well as a long-term further qualification concept for staff,
- if applicable, information on the staff's involvement in university teaching,
- information on knowledge transfer,
- a statement as to whether an application has already been submitted or will be submitted to another academy and whether funding has been or will be applied for from other sources.

Details on the scope and formal design of new applications to the Academies' Programme are provided in a separate information bulletin.

Preliminary applications can be submitted to one of the German Academies of Sciences and Humanities until 31.01.2024. Applications that promote the diversity of research and its personnel are strongly encouraged. Applicants acknowledge that their data will be used and stored for specific purposes in the course of the application process. In this context, please see the relevant data processing instructions of the academies and the Union of the German Academies of Sciences and Humanities.

Overview of the member academies of the Union of German Academies of Sciences and Humanities and the respective contact persons

Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften

Jägerstraße 22/23, 10117 Berlin
www.bbaw.de

Dr. Anne Kern (Leiterin Referat Akademienvorhaben)
Tel.: 030 / 20370-382 | E-Mail: anne.kern@bbaw.de

Niedersächsische Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen

Theaterstraße 7, 37073 Göttingen
www.adw-goe.de

Dr. Jonas Maatsch (Generalsekretär)
Tel.: 0551 / 39370-32 | E-Mail: jonas.maatsch@adwgoe.de
Dr. Marion Freerk
(Stv. Generalsekretärin und Forschungscoordination)
Tel.: 0551 / 39370-33 | E-Mail: marion.freerk@adwgoe.de

Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften

Alfons-Goppel-Straße 11, 80539 München
www.badw.de

Dr. Johannes Bernwieser (Stv. Generalsekretär und AbtL Forschung)
Tel.: 089 / 23031-1309 | E-Mail: bernwieser@badw.de
Dr. Christopher Kast (Forschungsreferent)
Tel.: 089 / 23031-1332 | E-Mail: christopher.kast@badw.de
Dr. Benjamin Schönfeld (Forschungsreferent)
Tel.: 089 / 23031-1339 | E-Mail: schoenfeld@badw.de

Sächsische Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Leipzig

Karl-Tauchnitz-Straße 1, 04107 Leipzig
www.saw-leipzig.de

Dr. Christian Winter (Generalsekretär)
Tel: 0341 / 697 642-15 | E-Mail: winter@saw-leipzig.de

Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften

Karlstraße 4, 69117 Heidelberg
www.hadw-bw.de

Dr. Dieta Svoboda-Baas (Leiterin Referat Wissenschaft)
Tel.: 06221 / 543-546 | E-Mail: dieta.svoboda-baas@hadw-bw.de

Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur | Mainz

Geschwister-Scholl-Straße 2, 55131 Mainz
www.adwmainz.de

Prof. Dr. Claudius Geisler (Generalsekretär)
Tel.: 06131 / 577-101 | E-Mail: claudius.geisler@adwmainz.de
Prof. Dr. Roland Kehrein (Wiss. Koordinator)
Tel.: 06131 / 577-106 | E-Mail: roland.kehrein@adwmainz.de

Nordrhein-Westfälische Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Künste

Palmenstraße 16, 40217 Düsseldorf
www.awk.nrw.de

Christiane Dusch (Generalsekretärin)
Tel: 0211 / 61 734-0 | E-Mail: christiane.dusch@awk.nrw.de

Akademie der Wissenschaften in Hamburg

Edmund-Siemers-Allee 1, 20146 Hamburg
www.awhamburg.de

Claudia Raap (Geschäftsführerin)
Tel: 040 / 42 94 86 69-22 | E-Mail: claudia.raap@awhamburg.de
Dr. Elke Senne (Referentin für Forschung)
Tel: 040 / 42 94 86 69-20 | E-Mail: elke.senne@awhamburg.de

Applications can also be submitted to:

Deutsche Akademie der Naturforscher
Leopoldina – Nationale Akademie
der Wissenschaften
Jägerberg 1, 06108 Halle
www.leopoldina.org

Franziska Hornig (Generalsekretärin)
Tel: 0345 / 47239-912 | E-Mail: franziska.hornig@leopoldina.org
Prof. Dr. Rainer Godel (Leiter des Zentrums für Wissenschaftsforschung)
Tel: 0345 / 47239-115 | E-Mail: rainer.godel@leopoldina.org

Further information on submitting applications is also available from the

Union der deutschen Akademien der Wissenschaften
Geschwister-Scholl-Str. 2, 55131 Mainz
– Koordination des Akademienprogramms –

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