

# International Research Training Groups

## Notes on Writing IRTG Progress Reports

- Renewal Proposals for 4.5 Years -



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## A. Introduction

These mandatory notes specify the form and the required content of the progress report that constitutes part of the renewal proposal for an International Research Training Group. In compiling this proposal, please follow the guidelines for renewal proposals (DFG form 1.301FAe).

While the renewal proposal should explain the plans for the second funding period, the progress report should provide a concise summary of the activities and results from the first 4.5-year funding period. Please take into account that the reviewers have no access to the original initial proposal. Your renewal proposal and progress report should therefore be self-explanatory and direct references to the initial proposal should be avoided.

Ten copies of the proposal and the progress report must be submitted to the DFG Head Office. One of these copies must be hole-punched but not stapled; the other copies should be hole-punched and stapled once. You should also save the report, together with the renewal proposal, onto CD-ROMs which should be included with the copies of the proposal (the proposal, appendices to the proposal and report should be saved as three separate PDF files without password protection or any document reading, copying or printing restrictions).

One copy of the proposal and the report must be sent to the responsible state ministry.

Please formulate the report in an informative yet concise manner. This will provide the DFG reviewers with a good basis for returning a balanced and appropriate assessment. In doing so, please note the following mandatory points:

- The report – not including cover page, table of contents and appendices – must not exceed 40 pages in length (DIN A4, Arial 11pt or similar font, single-spaced, printed on both sides).
- The following additional information should be appended to the report: overview lists of the persons funded by the International Research Training Group and their activities within the framework of the IRTG, individual reports by the doctoral researchers, a list of their publications, and, where applicable, reports on any sabbaticals funded by the RTG (see explanations in the appendix). Other than these elements, the appendix may not include any additional information.

**Reports that exceed the allowable length will not be accepted.**

- The report must address all the items specified in the template and include all section numbers and titles. Please avoid repetition and refer instead to the relevant report or proposal section(s).
- The report must be prefaced by a table of contents including page numbers.
- Complete all tables/charts provided and augment the report with additional charts and graphics where appropriate.
- The report may be written in German or English.

## **B. Report Template**

**<Title>**

<German university/universities>

<Foreign partner institution>

<Spokespersons for the first funding period>

First funding period: <day month year> to <day month year>

<Today's date>

# 1. General Information

## 1.1 Title in German and English

Please state the title of your International Research Training Group in German and English.

## 1.2 Participating researchers

Please name the spokespersons and all researchers (from both partner institutions) who have participated since the start of the IRTG, giving their full names and titles (position and institute) as well as precise work addresses, telephone numbers, fax numbers, e-mail addresses, websites (if applicable), and relevant subject areas. This information should be presented in a table.

Please explain any changes in the group of participating scientists and academics between the submission of the initial proposal and submission of this renewal proposal.

Last name, first name, academic title	Chair/department, work address	Telephone number, fax number, e-mail address, website	Research area

## 1.3 Reporting period

Please list the funding period covered by the report.

## 1.4 Number of doctoral and postdoctoral researchers, qualifying fellows and research students

Please provide the following information for all locations:

- The number of doctoral and postdoctoral researchers, qualifying fellows and research students funded by the Research Training Group (including the type of funding – position or fellowship – and the level of funding – position salary or fellowship amount);
- The number of doctoral and postdoctoral researchers participating with funding from other sources.

## **2. Integration of Reviewers' Comments**

If you were informed of any requirements, advice or recommendations from the review of the initial proposal, please comment on these. Describe whether and how these have been implemented during the first funding period. If you did not receive any specific recommendations, this section may be omitted.

## **3. Research Programme**

Please summarise the research activities performed to date and the scientific findings achieved during the first funding period. Please describe how the central research idea was implemented during the first funding period and, if applicable, how it evolved. What thematic networking – particularly between the partner locations – has taken place within the International Research Training Group? In particular, please describe the scientific added value which has resulted from the international cooperation.

Reports on the individual projects carried out by the doctoral researchers from all participating partner institutions, the postdoctoral researchers and, on the German side, where applicable by the qualifying fellows, as well as by any research students should be included in Appendix 2 in accordance with the templates provided (see the explanations in the appendices).

## **4. Qualification Programme**

### **4.1 Qualification programme**

Please describe the IRTG's current qualification programme and its implementation. The description of the qualification programme must include the following information:

- A table of all IRTG-specific courses held at one of the locations or jointly, including type, duration, frequency, contents, target group, instructor, and whether participation was compulsory for IRTG members;
- a chart listing any complementary courses from the institutes' general programmes or other programmes,
- where applicable, list and describe any training in the rules of good scientific practice offered within the framework of the qualification programme (cf. DFG form 2.22, available in German only),
- where applicable, a list of training courses held on key skills
- where applicable, training courses held on research involving animal experiments,
- where applicable, a description of the special programme elements of any qualification phase preceding the doctoral phase for qualifying fellows,
- where applicable, the methods used to integrate research students into the qualification programme,
- a description of how the transition from the current generation of doctoral researchers to the next was handled.

## **4.2 Visiting researcher programme**

Please explain the programme implemented and append an overview of the visiting researchers invited, together with a brief outline of their activities relating to the International Research Training Group and the length of their stay.

## **4.3 Research visits to the partner institution and additional qualification measures**

Please comment particularly on visits made by doctoral researchers to the relevant partner institution abroad. Describe how these visits were coordinated, the role they played in the research programme and how they were integrated into the doctoral phase.

Please describe additional measures that were offered and employed to further the scientific and professional qualification of doctoral researchers, such as research visits to other universities and internships at cultural institutions or businesses.

# **5. Supervision and Career Advancement, Gender Equality, Organisation and Quality Management**

## **5.1 Announcement and selection procedure**

Please provide information on the methods used to recruit candidates for the Research Training Group. Describe the criteria used to select suitable candidates and the admission procedure. Describe the number and quality of the applications received and provide an assessment of these. Please describe any joint selection committees and processes used.

## **5.2 Supervision strategy and career advancement**

Please describe the individual supervisory strategy developed by the IRTG for the individual doctoral researchers. Your explanation should address the following issues:

- How were advisors for individual candidates chosen?
- How was supervision designed and organised? Were the supervisory structures successful? Did joint or committee supervision take place?  
How were both international partners involved in the supervision of doctoral researchers? Was a joint supervision strategy implemented and if so, what do you consider the added value of this concept? Did any problems occur on account of the joint supervision? How was adequate supervision ensured during researchers' visits to partner institutions abroad?
- How was the doctoral researchers' scientific independence supported? Did the IRTG help plan lecture trips and visits abroad? Were participants encouraged to publish? How were doctoral researchers introduced to and integrated into the national and international scientific network?
- Were regular progress checks arranged and, if so, how were they carried out? Were performance reports issued?
- Were any agreements (such as supervision agreements) made between the Research Training Group/advisors and the doctoral researchers which stipulated the rights and obligations on both sides?



If, during the first funding period, start-up funding was made available to researchers who completed their doctorates within the framework of the IRTG, please explain how these individuals were selected to receive such funding, what supporting measures were undertaken by both the Research Training Group and the university (equipment, etc) to foster their scientific independence, for example by supporting the creation of their own independent proposals. Please also explain how their careers have developed since.

In the appendices, please provide detailed descriptions of how many persons received funding, the duration of the funding period and the form (position/fellowship and/or direct project costs) in which the funding was provided (see Table 1f).

### **5.3 Gender equality in science and academia**

Please describe the measures already adopted by the university and/or other participating institutions to promote the equality of men and women in science and academia, to promote the career advancement of women and the compatibility of scientific work and family. Explain how the IRTG has benefited from existing structures and programmes and what additional measures have been adopted by the Research Training Group.

### **5.4 Organisation**

Please describe the organisational structure of the Research Training Group as it developed during the first funding period and the specific modalities of management. Please describe, for example, the decision-making processes which were established, how and by whom the qualification and visiting researcher programmes were organised, and what opportunities doctoral researchers were given to help shape the RTG.

Please detail how cooperation between the partners was organised. You should also describe the rules according to which doctoral degrees were granted, which institution awarded them, and whether joint doctoral degrees were awarded.

### **5.5 Additional aspects of quality management**

Additional quality management aspects include, for example, the collection and usage of data within the Research Training Group, the criteria used to evaluate the success of the results to date, targeted measures and, where appropriate, any changes that have been made in order to optimise the joint research and qualification programmes. Please comment on these points.

## **6. Environment of the International Research Training Group**

Please describe the scientific and structural environment of the International Research Training Group at all partner locations, taking into account the following aspects:

- the IRTG's integration to date into the German university's scientific environment and infrastructure, e.g. networking and cooperation with other coordinated funding programmes, such as Collaborative Research Centres and Research Units, clusters of excellence and federal, state and EU programmes,
- networking and cooperation with non-university research institutes,

- the positioning of the Research Training Group compared to other programmes for promoting young researchers and structured doctoral training programmes at the same German location, in particular compared to graduate schools funded under the Excellence Initiative or any cooperation between these programmes and the RTG,
- how the RTG fits into the existing academic structure, in particular with regard to current exam regulations; if the RTG plans to implement an additional qualification phase for fellows with a BA degree or a degree from a university of applied sciences at the German side, please provide more information on this scheme,
- the structural and scientific effects of the Research Training Group on academic structures, doctoral degree regulations, the creation of core research focus areas, etc. at the German university.

International Research Training Groups are university training programmes established for a specific time period. The German university is expected to provide core support, including appropriate office and laboratory space and equipment. Additionally, the German university is called upon to provide active support for the IRTG, for instance by:

- furnishing additional direct project funding and coordination funds,
- funding short-term extension grants for completion of theses in instances where the maximum funding period has been exceeded or after the IRTG has finished,
- providing childcare facilities,
- supporting doctoral researchers from abroad,
- considering the involvement of professors in the International Research Training Group when assigning teaching loads and awarding performance-related funds.

Please provide a description of all such supportive activities provided by the German university.

## **7. Summary and Outlook**

Finally, please provide an interim report of the first funding period. Please summarise your experiences during the first funding period and how you have used or will use these to further the development of the International Research Training Group. Comments or suggestions for future improvements of the IRTG funding scheme would be appreciated.

## Appendix 1 to the Report

The appendices to the report should only contain the components listed in the following sections. Please use the templates provided for all overviews and individual reports.

- **Appendix 1:**  
A list of all doctoral and postdoctoral researchers, qualifying fellows and research students from both the German and the partner institution who have participated in the International Research Training Group to date. If, during the first funding period, start-up funding for researchers who completed their doctorates within the RTG programme was available, please give detailed information on the number of persons who received such funding, for how long and in what form (fellowship/position and/or direct project costs) such funding was provided.  
Please use the tables provided for this purpose in Appendix 1 and provide the requested information. The information in the tables should be completed in chronological order, beginning with the date on which the person entered the Research Training Group.
- **Appendix 2:**  
Individual reports by all doctoral and postdoctoral researchers (from both the German and the partner institutions and independent of their funding arrangements) who participated in the IRTG during the first 4.5-year funding period.  
Please categorise these reports into contributions from IRTG-funded and associated doctoral researchers and IRTG-funded and associated postdoctoral researchers, and sort them according to the date of admission into the RTG. The reports should, as a rule, be three pages in length and are not to exceed five pages. They should be structured according to the template provided in Appendix 2.  
  
If applicable, the appendix should also include short individual reports by the DFG-funded research students and qualifying fellows on their activities in the IRTG.
- **Appendix 3:**  
Overviews of research stays by (post)doctoral researchers at their respective partner universities, on their participation in conferences and on other research stays or internships at other institutions (such as other research institutes, cultural institutes or businesses, etc.) both at home and abroad (see Appendix 3).
- **Appendix 4:**  
A separate, complete list of all publications by doctoral and (where applicable) postdoctoral researchers.  
The names of the (post)doctoral researchers should be marked and the list should be divided into two categories for the German side: (post)doctoral researchers who received IRTG funds and those funded by other sources.  
When compiling and structuring the publications list, please adhere to the information on structuring the biographical sketches of the participating researchers given in DFG form 1.301FA; however, the maximum of five publications per person does not apply here.
- **Appendix 5:**  
If replacement costs for one or more research sabbaticals for participating professors were financed by the Research Training Group during the first funding period, a report on the project and its results must be included here.



Template 1b: Doctoral record / IRTG doctoral researchers (from Germany) funded by other sources

Name	Thesis title	Supervisors	Field of study; university and degree date (diploma, MA, etc.)	Start of doctoral training <sup>2</sup>	Member of IRTG (from – to)	(anticipated) Date of doctoral degree	Grade	Occupation following doctorate and/or current employment	Cf. individual report on page

Template 1c: Doctoral record / Doctoral researchers at partner institution

Name	Thesis title	Supervisors	Field of study; university and degree date (diploma, MA, etc.)	Member of IRTG (from – to)	(anticipated) Date of doctoral degree	Grade	Occupation following doctorate and/or current employment	Cf. individual report on page

<sup>2</sup> Please provide the date on which the doctoral researcher considers that he or she began his or her doctoral research. This date may differ from the date of entry into the Research Training Group or from the date on which the researcher began receiving financial support from the IRTG.









## Appendix 2: Template for Individual Reports

### Template 2a: Individual Reports by Doctoral Researchers

Project number:
First and last name of doctoral researcher:
(Working) title of doctoral project:
Name of supervisors:

#### 1. General information:

Member of IRTG: <i>Example: 01.10.2005 to 30.11.2008</i>
Funding: (type and duration): <i>Example: IRTG fellowship (01.10.2005 - 30.09.2008); research assistant at the Institute for Nuclear Physics (01.10. to 30.11.2008)</i>
Start of doctoral training <sup>3</sup> and (anticipated) date of doctoral degree <sup>4</sup> :
Commencement of studies; subject; university and degree date (diploma, MA, etc.) etc.:
Where applicable, please note any circumstances which could have affected your scientific work <sup>5</sup> :
Occupation after leaving the IRTG, if applicable:

#### 2. Description of doctoral project and research results achieved to date:

The initial hypothesis and aims of the project, the current project status, a description of results achieved to date and, if applicable, information on the anticipated work schedule, networking with other IRTG projects and integration of stays abroad into individual research work; optional: references on the state of the art<sup>6</sup>

#### 3. Comments on the qualification programme and supervision strategy:

To what extent were the courses helpful to you and your work? Was their scope appropriate? How were you involved in the design or organisation of the programme? What could still be improved/expanded upon? How was the supervision structured? How would you rate your stays at the foreign partner university; what skills did you acquire there? Any other comments?

Participation in the following IRTG events:
Stays at the partner university and other research stays or internships at other research institutions both at home and abroad:
Participation in conferences, congresses, etc., both at home and abroad:

#### 4. Individual publications:<sup>7</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Please provide the date on which the doctoral researcher considers that he or she began his or her doctoral training programme. This date may differ from the date of entry into the Research Training Group or from the date on which the researcher began receiving financial support from the IRTG.

<sup>4</sup> If the individual concerned has abandoned work on their thesis or has left the RTG, please note these circumstances and the reasons here.

<sup>5</sup> To ensure that scientific achievements are appropriately assessed, we recommend that you note any circumstances which may have affected your scientific work. Inform the reviewers about any long-term illnesses, disabilities or periods of maternity or paternity leave.

<sup>6</sup> See footnote 9 on the following page.

<sup>7</sup> See footnote 10 on the following page.

## Template 2b: Individual Reports by Postdoctoral Researchers

Project number:

First and last name of postdoctoral researcher:

(Working) title of research project:

### 1. General information:

Duration of IRTG membership:

*Example: 01.05.2005 to 30.11.2007*

Funding (time and duration):

*Example: research assistant at the Institute for Nuclear Physics, funded by the Volkswagen Foundation (01.05.05 – 31.12.05); Postdoctoral position in the IRTG (01.01.06 – 30.11.07)*

Subject; institution; start date of doctoral programme; degree date

Commencement of studies; subject; university and date of degree (diploma, MA, etc.)

Any circumstances which may have affected your scientific work<sup>8</sup>:

Occupation after leaving the IRTG, if applicable:

### 2. Description of individual research project and research results achieved to date:

Initial hypothesis and aims of the project, current project status, description of results achieved to date, where applicable information on the anticipated work schedule, networking with other projects; optional: references on the state of the art<sup>9</sup>

### 3. Description of individual IRTG-specific tasks:

E.g. in the qualification programme and supervision strategy

Participation in or organisation of IRTG-related events:

Research stays at the partner university or at other research institutions at home and abroad:

Participation in conferences, congresses, etc., at home and abroad

### 4. Individual publications:<sup>10</sup>

<sup>8</sup> See footnote 5.

<sup>9</sup> The presentation of the project should be able to stand on its own and be understandable, coherent and assessable without the need to read additional documents. For a more comprehensive presentation of the current state of the art, additional papers (by the participating researchers and/or others) may be cited here. To the extent that these documents are non-published works by the participating researchers, they must be submitted on CD together with the proposal. On the day of the on-site review, additional publications and manuscripts may be made available to the review panel. However, the review will be based only on the proposal itself; it is up to the reviewers' discretion whether they read any additional documents.

<sup>10</sup> The format of the list of publications should follow the rules for biographical sketches of participating researchers according to the Guidelines and Notes on Preparing Renewal Proposals for Research Training Groups (DFG form 1.30fa); however, the maximum of five publications per person does not apply here.



