

International Research Training Groups

Guidelines

and Notes on Preparing Renewal Proposals

- Renewal proposals for 4.5 years -



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A. Guidelines on Research Training Groups

Research Training Groups (RTG) combine innovative top-level research and the structured promotion of excellent young researchers. They centre on the qualification of doctoral researchers within the framework of a focused research programme and a structured training programme that prepares doctoral researchers for the complexities of the job market for scientists and academics. The programme is open to all research areas and encourages interdisciplinarity. Research Training Groups are instituted by a university or an equivalent higher education institution and may be funded for up to nine years.

International Research Training Groups (IRTG), in which German universities cooperate with research institutions in other countries to offer structured doctoral programmes, are a special component of the RTG programme.

1. Programme Goals

1.1 Research Training Groups

Excellence, innovation and internationality in research and in promoting young researchers constitute the main goals of Research Training Groups and are reflected in the various components of an RTG.

By funding Research Training Groups, the DFG supports outstanding and particularly innovative research projects. In terms of their topics or methodologies, these projects look beyond the status quo in their respective fields, or hold the promise of scientific reorientation through an interdisciplinary approach that combines subjects or institutions in a novel way. Researchers involved in an RTG must demonstrate a track record that promises such a standard of excellence. Specially qualified doctoral researchers, who are recruited internationally, are thus given the opportunity to work on their theses and produce solid findings in a challenging, collaborative research environment.

Through their research and qualification programmes, Research Training Groups train scientists and academics at different stages of their careers. A key objective is to enable the expeditious research-related qualification of doctoral researchers. As they focus on their respective core research topics, doctoral researchers also gain an overview that goes beyond their subject areas by working within the larger context of an RTG. Doctoral researchers are enabled and expected to conduct independent research early on. Re-

search Training Groups aim to accelerate the time to degree. In this way, the participation of young researchers in Research Training Groups qualifies them to compete in the international job market.

The programme aims to promote structured doctoral training, thereby making doctorates more attractive. Research Training Groups are open to new ways of promoting young researchers. They offer an opportunity for higher education institutions to experiment with new cooperative arrangements to promote young researchers — e.g. with universities of applied science, cultural institutions, or businesses — that would otherwise not be available. At the same time, the programme is strongly committed to gender equality and the compatibility of work and family for researchers.

Furthermore, the programme promotes international cooperation in the area of doctoral training and aims to enhance the appeal of German universities to doctoral researchers from other countries. Internationality is indispensable to successful research and to the future-oriented training of young researchers. The integration of doctoral researchers in the international research environment — including universities and, where applicable, non-university institutions — is therefore a key feature of Research Training Groups.

1.2 International Research Training Groups

International Research Training Groups are a programme variation of Research Training Groups. Their purpose is to encourage and deepen bilateral cooperation between German universities and universities or research institutions abroad. They promote systematic research cooperation through joint research and qualification programmes, cooperative, cross-border supervision of doctoral researchers from both partner groups, and longer-term, coordinated and reciprocal research stays for doctoral researchers at the respective partner institutions.

2. Programme Profile

Participants

An International Research Training Group is run by two small teams of professors, one in Germany and one abroad. Each team has about 5 to 10 members who have proven expertise in the IRTG's main topic and in providing outstanding supervision to young researchers. The DFG strongly recommends including postdoctoral researchers who are undergoing qualification for a career in research and education and giving them responsible positions within the RTG.

The participating researchers' complementary expertise at the various locations should provide added value to the IRTG.

As a rule, participating scientists and academics should come from a single location in the respective country. Researchers from non-university institutions and persons from non-academic organisations (e.g. businesses and cultural institutions) may be involved in an International Research Training Group if it serves the research and qualification programmes.

An International Research Training Group includes up to 20 doctoral researchers per partner institution. On the German side, 10 to 15 of these doctoral researchers are usually funded by the IRTG.

Undergraduate students who demonstrate exceptional scientific or academic talent may be included in an IRTG at any stage of their studies to promote an early introduction to research.

In appropriate cases, secondary school students can also be included in areas of the research and/or qualification programme in order to allow them early contact with science.

Research Programme

The core of an International Research Training Group is formed by an innovative research idea, which focuses on one main topic. The topic must demonstrate novelty against the backdrop of current international research and go beyond existing approaches. Interdisciplinary approaches are encouraged.

The main topic serves as the foundation of a coherent research programme. It provides a framework that ensures the inner coherence of the research programme and the qualification programme relating to it. The research programme should link its thematic and/or methodological focus areas in a manner that yields excellent topics for theses and encourages communication and collaboration between doctoral researchers.

The partners in an IRTG undertake a joint research programme. Common research interests and objectives must be reflected in a common framework and joint projects.

Qualification Programme

The qualification and supervision strategies (described below) must create a framework that enables doctoral researchers to produce independent research findings with international visibility, generally within a period of three years, and at the same time to qualify for the domestic and international academic and non-academic job market. The qualification strategy includes

- a qualification programme specific to the IRTG,
- the integration of visiting researchers,
- and any other measures that contribute, directly or indirectly, to the qualification of doctoral researchers.

The qualification programme, which is specific to the IRTG and based on the research programme, enhances and expands doctoral researchers' individual specialities; it also conveys expertise that goes beyond the researchers' subject areas and thus provides a broader qualification.

International Research Training Groups must implement suitable structures that allow participants at all locations to engage in the necessary intensive exchange. Their qualification programmes therefore include local as well as jointly held courses.

The qualification programme promotes collaboration among IRTG members and the international exchange of doctoral researchers. Longer-term, coordinated and reciprocal research visits (one or more with an overall duration of 6 to 12 months) by doctoral researchers to the respective partner institutions are a key element of the programme.

Any additional activities of the qualification strategy should support the doctoral training process without lengthening the time required to degree. The qualification strategy also includes measures aimed at ensuring the national and international visibility of the scientific results attained and the integration of young researchers into national and international research.

Supervision and Career Advancement, Gender Equality, Organisation and Quality Management

Clearly defined roles and responsibilities for all participants, a structured supervision strategy, transparent organisational structures and processes, as well as comprehensive quality management help to guarantee the desired high standard of quality in research and qualification throughout the duration of the IRTG.

Key features of International Research Training Groups are the transparent and innovative supervision structures they offer. Supervision is provided jointly through the IRTG's partner institutions, either by two researchers or by an advisory committee. It facilitates rapid and successful doctoral training and prepares researchers for their future careers. A healthy balance of intensive supervision and the encouragement of independence should be striven for. Doctoral researchers should be enabled to conduct independent research early on.

Additional quality management requirements for Research Training Groups include:

- objectives and benchmarks for success that are specific to the IRTG to ensure its ongoing quality-oriented management,
- a transparent and competitive procedure for selecting domestic and foreign doctoral researchers,
- an evaluation of the performance, time to degree, and career development of researchers who completed their doctorates within the RTG framework
- the assessment of scientific success in the international arena.

Equal opportunities for male and female researchers, as well as the compatibility of research careers and family life, are important factors in successfully promoting young researchers and must therefore be actively encouraged and promoted in IRTGs.

Environment

Integration into an active scientific and academic environment is a key prerequisite for success in International Research Training Groups. This includes the research environment, e.g. associations and collaborations with working groups and research projects at participating locations, as well as other support opportunities for young researchers, e.g. with existing structured doctoral programmes or graduate schools.

An IRTG is expected to support the medium-term scientific priorities of the host university. At the same time, the Research Training Group should, by virtue of its thematic orientation, distinguish itself in a unique way from the rest of the research conducted at this location. Research Training Groups are expected to offer added value over any other forms of doctoral training and/or structured doctoral programmes at their respective locations.

The host institution should enhance the appeal of the IRTG as a centre of scientific excellence, for example through measures that support the doctoral training process, by contributing complementary resources, and by providing incentive mechanisms for participating professors.

Close cooperation with non-university research institutions is expressly encouraged. To the extent that it serves the research and qualification programmes, persons from non-academic organisations (such as businesses and cultural institutions) should be integrated or associated. Research Training Groups should be networked with reputable international institutions in order to integrate doctoral researchers into the scientific community early on.

Under the Collaborative Research Centre programme, a “module for structured doctoral training” may be proposed. In future, Collaborative Research Centres and Research Training Groups that are based at the same location and have largely overlapping topics will no longer receive parallel funding (previously approved funds are exempt from this policy). The goal is to increase efficiency by bundling funding for closely related research projects. A thematic overlap is permissible if the Research Training Group’s topic and/or structure is sufficiently unique. For instance, the establishment of an International Research Training Group may be considered to deliver added value.

Resources

The German partner institution is eligible to apply for DFG funding. IRTG funds are to be used primarily for:

- doctoral researchers (special rules apply to medical students),
- beginning doctoral researchers with a degree from a university of applied sciences or a bachelor's degree,
- postdoctoral researchers,
- research students,
- substitutes for participating professors on sabbatical,
- research materials (consumables, small equipment, etc.),
- implementing the qualification programme (holding courses, integrating guest researchers, etc.),
- doctoral researchers' travel and visits to partner institutions,
- travel by participating researchers for the purposes of organising and managing co-operation and of organising courses which form part of the qualification programme,
- coordinating the IRTG,
- funding publications,
- measures to promote gender equality,
- start-up funding for first-time applicants, i.e. funding to encourage RTG researchers to continue their scientific careers upon completion of their doctorates.

The German host institution is expected to provide the necessary core support, including appropriately equipped office and laboratory space.

The IRTG's foreign partner institution is expected to provide basic funding for its doctoral researchers, their research, and their visits to the German partner institution.

3. Proposal Submission, Review, Decision

The maximum funding period is nine years (two 4.5-year funding periods). As for proposals to establish RTGs, renewal proposals for the second 4.5 years are written jointly by the participating researchers from both sides. One group member, who is eligible to submit proposals to the DFG, acts as a spokesperson, taking charge of the proposal process and the subsequent scientific coordination of the Research Training Group.

The mandatory format for a renewal proposal and the information it must contain are specified in the proposal template (part B of this document). When creating the report, please refer to the guidelines specified in DFG form 1.301FAe_Report.

The proposal must be submitted to the DFG Head's Office by the university/universities; one copy of the proposal must be sent to the responsible state ministry to be endorsed. The submission deadline for renewal proposals was included in the initial RTG award letter.

Renewal proposals are generally accepted twice a year; the deadlines for submission are April 1 and October 1. The biographical sketches of all researchers involved in the renewal proposal, as well as a brief summary of the research programme including details of any changes made to the arrangements described in the initial proposal, must be submitted to the DFG's Head Office three months prior to the proposal date. When compiling the biographical sketches, please adhere to the guidelines in the appendix to this document.

IRTG renewal proposals for a second 4.5-year funding period are reviewed during a site visit to the proposed host institution, during which the reviewers are asked to evaluate the results of the first funding period and the plans for the second period. They base their decision on the written information contained in the renewal proposal and the report, as well as the on-site presentation by the IRTG. Based on the results of this review, the Grants Committee, which is composed of scientists and academics as well as representatives from the responsible federal and state ministries, decides whether or not to continue the funding. A scientific member of the Grants Committee takes part in the review.

Additional information on performing on-site reviews is contained in Appendix 2 to this document. Details regarding the review and evaluation criteria can be found in DFG form 1.307e.

B. Notes on Preparing Renewal Proposals (Proposal Template)

Introduction

These guidelines describe the mandatory format of the renewal proposal and the information it must contain. In structuring the report, please refer to DFG form 1.301FAe_Report.

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

Ten printed copies of the proposal (and the report) must be submitted to the DFG Head Office. One of the copies should bear the original signatures of the designated spokespersons of both the German and the partner institutions, as well as that of the head of the German university, and be hole-punched but not stapled; the other copies should be hole-punched and stapled once. With each of the 10 printed copies, please include a CD-ROM containing an electronic version of the proposal and the report. (The proposal, appendices to the proposal and report should be saved as three separate files in PDF format without password protection or any other reading, printing or copying restrictions.)

In addition, one copy of the proposal and the report must be sent to the appropriate state ministry. The DFG must receive written endorsement of the proposal from the state ministry before the proposal can be processed.

Please make your proposal informative and present the information in a clear and well-organised fashion. This will help the DFG reviewers make a fair and objective decision. Please be sure to meet the following obligatory requirements:

- The proposal (not including the report) must not exceed 65 pages in length (DIN A4, Arial 11pt or similar font, single-spaced and printed on both sides of the paper; not including cover page, table of contents, and appendix).

The appendix must include biographical sketches for all participating scientists from both

partner institutions (see explanations on the appendix). It may not include any additional information apart from certain supplementary documents that may be required (see sections 8 and 9).

Proposals that exceed the allowable length will not be considered.

- The proposal must address all items specified in the proposal template and include all section numbers and titles. Please avoid repetition and refer instead to the relevant proposal section.
- The proposal must be prefaced by a table of contents including page numbers. Tables and charts should be included wherever appropriate.
- The report may be written in German or English.
- The listing of review criteria in DFG form 1.307e is not exhaustive. It does, however, provide a guide to the most important aspects.

Publication of Applicant and Project Data

The data necessary for processing your grant proposal will be stored and processed electronically by the DFG Head Office. If a grant is awarded, your work address (e.g. telephone, fax, e-mail, website), as well as information on the content of your research project (e.g. topic, summary, keywords, international cooperation), will be published in the DFG's project database GEPRIS and – in excerpts (name, institution and location) – in the section “Programmes and Projects” of the DFG's electronic annual report. If you do not wish this information to be published, please notify us in writing no later than four weeks after receipt of your award letter.

<Title>

<German university/universities>

<Spokesperson>

<Partner Institution>

<Spokesperson>

Proposed funding period: <day month year> – <day month year>
Submission deadline:<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 German host university/universities and participating foreign institutions

State the name of the German host university and the participating foreign institution. If several universities are participating, name them all and indicate the lead institution.

1.3 Participating researchers

Please name the designated spokespersons on both sides and all participating researchers, giving their full names and exact work addresses, telephone numbers, fax numbers, e-mail addresses, websites (if applicable), and relevant research areas. In general, an IRTG involves small teams of about 5 to 10 professors in each country. If the proposal exceeds this number, an explanation should be included. The DFG strongly recommends including postdoctoral researchers who are undergoing qualification for careers in research and education and giving them responsible positions within the IRTG.

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

The appendix must include biographical sketches for all participating scientists and academics from both partner institutions (see explanations in the appendix). Other than certain supplementary documents that may be required (see sections 8 and 9), the appendix may not include any additional information.

Researchers participating in an IRTG are expected to work at the same location within each country. If this is not the case, an explanation should be included. Please explain how the physical distances between locations are taken into account in designing the joint research and qualification programmes – or refer to the relevant sections in the proposal.

If additional researchers from the same or another university or non-university institution will be closely associated with the IRTG, information about them should also be included. Please explain why the collaboration of these associated researchers is important to the IRTG and the anticipated nature and extent of their contributions – or refer to sections within the proposal that reflect these contributions.

1.4 Summary in German and English

The key goals of the International Research Training Group, especially of the research and qualification programmes, should be outlined in a clear and concise summary not exceeding 30 lines (2,000 to 2,500 characters including spaces). This summary will be used to inform the DFG's decision-making bodies, which are composed of representatives from all disciplines, and the general public (e.g. through the DFG's annual report).

1.5 Proposal duration

The renewal proposal may be used to request funding for a further 4.5 years.

1.6 Anticipated number of doctoral and postdoctoral researchers, qualifying fellows, and research students

An International Research Training Group includes up to 20 doctoral researchers per partner institution. Doctoral researchers in the IRTG are expected to work at the participating institutions.

On the German side, 10 to 15 of these researchers are generally funded by the IRTG. **Please note that the quality standards that apply to these IRTG-funded doctoral researchers also apply to associated doctoral researchers who are funded externally.** Except for the fellowship aspect, these doctoral researchers have the same rights and obligations as those funded by the IRTG; they are subject to the same selection procedures and are also formally integrated into the IRTG.

Please specify:

- the number of doctoral and postdoctoral researchers, qualifying fellows and research students to be funded under the DFG's RTG programme;
- the expected number of doctoral and postdoctoral researchers participating on the German side with funding from other sources;
- the anticipated number of doctoral and postdoctoral researchers participating at the partner institution.

2. Profile of the International Research Training Group

In two pages or less, describe how the proposed IRTG will continue to achieve the goals specified in the guidelines (part A of this document) — excellence, innovation, internationality — during the renewal phase. Explain in particular what makes this IRTG scientifically unique, how the research programme promotes innovation, the evolution of the core research idea during the upcoming funding period and what constitutes the added value of the qualification programme. If applicable, reference may be made to the report.

Furthermore, in view of the programme's core research idea, describe the scientific criteria according to which the group of researchers participating at both partner institutions has been formed and, where applicable, how it has changed. Please also explain why the researchers involved are especially qualified to run the IRTG.

3. Research Programme

The basic requirements for the IRTG's research programme are laid out in the guidelines (part A of this document).

Please be aware that the renewal proposal requires a sustainable research programme for the entire 4.5-year funding period. If appropriate, you may make limited reference to the report.

Please describe the participating researchers' shared research goals by addressing the following aspects:

- the core research idea and the IRTG's resulting main focus;

- research goals under the joint programme and the added value expected through co-operation;
- individual core research areas or individual projects and their integrative linkage, both with each other and with the research concept at large (preferably accompanied by a schematic presentation); particular emphasis should be given to cooperation among partners regarding core research areas or individual projects;
- the current state of relevant research;
- participants' preliminary work directly relating to the research programme (reference may be made to the lists of publications included in the researchers' biographical sketches in the proposal appendix);
- potential topics for theses or a description of planned projects (where possible; where this is not possible, please provide examples);
- if the inclusion of postdoctoral researchers, qualifying fellows and/or research students is planned, explain how they will be integrated into the research programme.

Please be sure to present all sections or projects in a consistent manner.

If experiments involving humans or human material, animals or recombinant DNA are planned or any research covered by the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), please note the requirements and obligations set forth in section 9.

If research data will be systematically produced using RTG funds, describe what measures will be implemented to ensure their management, curation and long-term preservation for future use. Please note existing standards and data repositories in your field where appropriate.¹

¹ Improving the handling of research data is a priority both for national and international research organisations and for science in general. In order to enhance the long-term preservation of research data, the DFG funds projects that seek to achieve an efficient and sustained use of research data.

A list of published preparatory research must be included as an appendix. You may also list additional references on the state of the art (cf. Appendix I).

4. Qualification Programme

The general requirements for the IRTG's qualification programme are laid out in the guidelines (part A of this document). The qualification strategy includes a qualification programme specific to the IRTG, a programme for visiting researchers, and any other measures that contribute, directly or indirectly, to the qualification of doctoral researchers, such as visits abroad or internships.

Please describe potential professional avenues, within and outside academia, for researchers who have completed their doctorates within the IRTG programme, including any prospects for development in these fields during the coming years.

In the following sub-sections, you are asked to explain in detail how the measures will prepare these researchers to compete successfully in these occupational fields.

Please note that you are expected to present a detailed qualification programme, describing plans for the proposed funding period and, if applicable, how the previous programme was further developed. You may also make limited reference to the progress report where appropriate. Please indicate any changes from the first funding period.

4.1 Qualification programme

The qualification programme forms the core of the qualification strategy. It must be tailored to the research programme and support the overall objectives of scientifically qualifying doctoral researchers. It should be designed so as not to prolong the time to degree.

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, location, prospective instructor, and whether participation is compulsory for IRTG members;

- complementary courses from the universities' general programmes or other (external) programmes, if applicable;
- key skills training events, if applicable;
- training courses on research involving animal experiments, where these are planned as part of the research programme (see also 9.3);
- training courses on managing and archiving research data;
- training in the rules of good scientific practice (see DFG form 2.22, available in German only). For help in designing such training, please consult the curriculum for courses on good scientific practice provided by the ombudsman for research, available at <http://www.ombudsman-fuer-die-wissenschaft.de/curriculum.html> (in German).
- how the transition from the current generation of doctoral researchers to the next and the continuous integration of doctoral researchers throughout the funding period will be handled;
- If the IRTG will include highly qualified graduates of universities of applied science or holders of bachelor's degrees, a special strategy for their qualification and integration into the Research Training Group must be presented. In addition, a statement by the university must be included confirming that doctoral admission will be granted upon successful completion of the IRTG's (maximum 12-month) qualification phase.
- If applicable, please describe how research students will be integrated into the qualification programme.

4.2 Visiting researcher programme

Please explain how visiting researchers — from domestic or international universities or non-university institutions — who are not part of the Research Training Group will be integrated into the research and qualification programmes, e.g. by way of longer stays with the IRTG including qualification programme involvement, multi-day contributions to block seminars, one-day lecture visits, etc. Name some of the visiting researchers who will be invited; if this is not yet possible at the time of the proposal, please give examples.

4.3 Research visits to the partner institution and additional qualification measures

Please describe additional measures planned to further the scientific and professional qualification of doctoral researchers, such as research visits abroad and internships at cultural institutions or businesses.

Longer-term, coordinated and reciprocal research visits (one or more with an overall duration of 6 to 12 months) by doctoral researchers to the respective partner institution are a key element of International Research Training Groups. Please describe in particular how these visits abroad will be coordinated (e.g. purposeful integration into doctoral training stages and into the research programme overall, ensuring local supervision). The successful implementation of these research visits is a decisive criterion in evaluating renewal proposals for International Research Training Groups.

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

The personnel and organisational strategies should specify the roles and responsibilities of those involved in the International Research Training Group and describe their cooperation in selecting doctoral and postdoctoral researchers, advising doctoral researchers, and managing the IRTG in general.

Comprehensive quality management is required to guarantee the desired high standard of quality in research and qualification for the duration of the IRTG. Measures supporting this goal need to be built into various components of the personnel and organisational strategies (e.g. definition of responsibilities, a quality-based selection process, and measures to promote gender equality at all qualification levels).

You may also make limited reference to the progress report where appropriate. Please indicate any changes made since the first funding period.

5.1 Announcement and selection procedure

The Research Training Group is responsible for awarding fellowships and/or filling positions that are generally advertised internationally. The selection procedure should be both performance-based and transparent.

Selection criteria for doctoral researchers include rapid completion of higher education, with a qualifying degree and above-average results, and proven qualifications specific to participation in the IRTG concerned. Candidates should have shown self-motivation and interest in science in their careers to date, and should preferably be able to demonstrate initial experience in scientific work. The doctoral training should also fit coherently into the candidates' previous professional history and future career planning.

The selection criteria for postdoctoral researchers include successful completion of a doctorate and proven specialised and methodological knowledge which particularly qualifies them to participate in the IRTG concerned.

- Please describe the profile of the groups of doctoral and postdoctoral researchers to be targeted for the IRTG, as well as the announcement and selection procedure planned to attract these groups.
- Explain the specific procedures and criteria to be used in selecting doctoral and postdoctoral researchers.

5.2 Supervision and career advancement

A binding supervision strategy is the basis for systematic, transparent and successful doctoral training and a rapid time to degree. When detailing your plans, please keep the following aspects in mind:

- Supervision should be provided by at least two researchers or by a supervisory committee. How will advisors for individual doctoral researchers be chosen? Are there plans for joint supervision or for advisory committees with members from both partners? How will supervision be organised? Is adequate supervision ensured during visits to the partner institution abroad?

- Regular progress checks should be planned from the beginning. How, when, and by whom will they be conducted? Will performance reports be issued?
- Will agreements be made between the Research Training Group/advisors and doctoral researchers that stipulate the rights and obligations on both sides?
- In addition to providing direct thesis supervision, RTGs also aim to promote the scientific independence of their doctoral researchers. How will this independence be supported, e.g. by involving doctoral researchers in organising the RTG, through visits abroad and lecture trips, or by encouraging publication? How will doctoral researchers be integrated into the national and international research community? How will the international visibility of research findings be ensured?

Promising young scientists and academics should be encouraged to remain within the scientific system. Researchers who have completed their doctorates within the RTG should therefore be enabled to define and pursue new research topics/avenues, which can then be used as the basis for their own independent project proposals. Up to €100,000 in start-up funding for first-time applicants may be requested for each 4.5-year funding period (cf. 7.7).

If you would like to apply for start-up funding, please provide a description how these funds will be used, addressing the following points:

- the criteria used to select the recipients of this funding,
- the type of RTG support the selected candidates will receive for their research activities taking their scientific independence into consideration, for example future proposals,
- a description of the academic environment appropriate for career development during this transition phase (including equipment).

5.3 Gender equality in science and academia

The equality of men and women in science and academia and the compatibility of scientific work and family are important factors in ensuring the successful promotion of young researchers.

Please describe the measures already adopted by the host university and other participating institutions in order to achieve the following goals:

- equality (e.g.: recruitment strategies, incentives schemes, the integration of gender equality issues into the decision support system, gender sensitivity training for senior management, awards/recognition e.g. Total E-Quality/Audit berufundfamilie ["Career and Family Audit"])
- career promotion (e.g.: mentoring and coaching programmes, special continuing education programmes, exchange programmes, female career centres, programmes for female school pupils)
- compatibility of scientific careers and family (e.g.: by offering family services offices, dual career programmes and customised work schedule and job location models, or by providing assistance for individuals with particularly intensive family responsibilities, for example by providing additional staff to relieve them of their teaching commitments).

Please describe in particular the measures currently implemented to support researchers in arranging childcare (such as providing childcare opportunities for scientists and academics, providing childcare funding, providing assistance in arranging childcare, providing childcare during meetings, providing child-friendly offices, and providing childcare to cover emergencies and during holidays).

- description of additional measures.

Please describe the measures to be implemented in order to promote both gender equality and the compatibility of work and family life within the IRTG. Please explain how these complement the measures already in place. We recommend coordinating with your university's equal opportunities officer on this issue.

Specific funds may be applied for to finance measures to promote gender equality within the Research Training Group (cf. 7.2.6).

5.4 Organisation

The IRTG manages its own internal organisation. The participating researcher teams in Germany and in the partner country will each elect a spokesperson among themselves. These spokespersons will manage the IRTG and function as its official representatives. Please describe further organisational aspects, including:

- the specific modalities of management, especially regarding cooperation between the partners,
- how the coordination funds will be used,
- the rules according to which the doctoral degree will be granted, which institution will award it, and whether a joint doctoral degree is envisaged in addition to joint doctoral training,
- who will organise the qualification and visiting researcher programmes,
- what opportunities doctoral researchers will be given to help shape the IRTG.

5.5 Additional quality management aspects

Please describe additional components of the planned quality management strategy, with particular regard to the following questions:

- How will the development of the joint research programme be directed (e.g. quality-based project selection)?
- What measures are planned to optimise the qualification programme during the second funding period of the programme?
- How will relevant data (e.g. application and selection procedure statistics) be documented throughout the duration of the programme and used to initiate improvements if needed?

- What criteria will be used to evaluate the success of the IRTG (e.g. scientific success within an international context and the career development of researchers who have completed their degrees within the RTG)? What are your standards of comparison?

6. Environment of the International Research Training Group

The general requirements for the university and non-university research environment of an IRTG have been laid out in the guidelines (part A of this document).

International Research Training Groups are established for a specific time period by the German university. On the one hand, they should support the university's research priorities and foster international networking. On the other hand, the institution is expected not only to provide core support, including appropriately equipped space, but also to assist the IRTG in various other ways. The items listed below regarding the IRTG's scientific or academic environment should be clarified with the German host institution's administration. Please make particular reference to any changes made since the first funding period.

- How does the Research Training Group fit into the institution's research environment and medium-term priorities? How is the IRTG scientifically unique compared to other local research projects with related topics?

Within this context, please describe the university's research environment and infrastructure, e.g. cooperative arrangements with other coordinated projects such as Collaborative Research Centres and Research Units, clusters of excellence and graduate schools, and projects funded by federal, state, and EU programmes.

- To what extent does the IRTG fit into existing academic structures? Is it compatible with current exam regulations or will the regulations need to be modified? Are there other programmes for promoting young researchers, e.g. existing structured doctoral training programmes (also including those within clusters of excellence and Collaborative Research Centres) or graduate schools? Are specific collaborations to be established or continued from the first funding period? Has the RTG been integrated into a graduate school or is this planned for the second funding period?

- What constitutes the added value of the IRTG compared to other locally established forms of doctoral training and, if applicable, current local structured doctoral training programmes, in particular graduate schools established under the Excellence Initiative? What structural effects can be expected from the RTG?
- What additional support (material or financial) does the university provide directly for the RTG, e.g. additional funding for equipment or coordination costs, short-term fellowships to enable doctoral researchers to finish their doctoral degree after the maximum funding period has expired, childcare options?
- How does the university contribute to the IRTG's success? Are new or proven measures planned to support the doctoral training process (e.g. simplification of doctoral procedures for interdisciplinary projects, cross-departmental degree regulations, family-friendly doctoral training, support for foreign doctoral researchers)?
- The professors' contributions to the IRTG should be taken into consideration accordingly. What incentive mechanisms are implemented by the university to actively enhance the RTG's appeal as a centre of scientific excellence?
- Which associations and cooperative arrangements with non-university research institutions will be leveraged for the RTG during the next funding period?
- How will the IRTG be integrated into the international research environment? Are new cooperation projects planned?

Please also describe the local conditions at the partner institution, including:

- the research environment and infrastructure that will be available to the IRTG;
- compatibility with existing doctoral programmes and the integration of the RTG;
- other resources to be provided by the partner institution in support of the IRTG, e.g. staff, space and accommodation.

6.1 Delimitation from Collaborative Research Centres

As specified in the guidelines (part A of this document), a “module for structured doctoral training” may be proposed under the Collaborative Research Centre programme. A Research Training Group whose topic overlaps with a Collaborative Research Centre based at the same location can only be funded if the RTG’s topic and/or structure are sufficiently unique. If your IRTG relates closely to a Collaborative Research Centre, please provide a detailed description of its added value.

7. Funding

7.1 Complementary funding by the partner institution

The foreign partner must guarantee and substantiate complementary funding of the IRTG for the proposed funding period. The IRTG proposal must therefore include a detailed overview of any and all existing, requested or approved funds. Please give a tabular overview, broken down by calendar years, of the funds that the partner institution will or should have available for the following purposes:

- basic funds for the doctoral researchers of the partner institution,
- funds for visits abroad by participating doctoral researchers,
- additional funds for joint activities,
- if applicable, waiver of tuition fees for the doctoral researchers from the German partner university, etc.

7.2 Funding requested from the DFG

The German university applies for DFG funding to cover the project-specific expenses it plans to incur. Funding is granted for 4.5 years – one sum for personnel funds and one sum for direct project costs for each fiscal year. Funding is granted initially for the first fiscal year, with prospective funding for the further years. **Funding is tied to the fiscal years (= calendar years), i.e. it is not possible to transfer funds to the next fiscal year. Funds that are not used in any given fiscal year are forfeited.** With regard to accounting and the use of the funds, please refer to DFG form 2.22, available in German only.

Please provide explanations for the requested funds, referring to other parts of the proposal as applicable, and complete the table.

7.2.1 Funding of doctoral researchers

Doctoral researchers are funded by fellowships or positions. Please note the possibility of granting (reduced-rate) fellowships for medical doctoral researchers during their studies.

Please refer to the documents "Annex to DFG forms 1.30/2.22" for the level of funding for doctoral fellowships. Please note that this information is only available in German.

Positions for the RTG's doctoral researchers may be requested provided that this promotes national and international competitiveness both within and outside the academic system. Funding for 50% to 100% of a position's salary may be applied for.

Funding can be requested for up to 54 months. The maximum duration of an individual fellowship/position is 36 months.

- Please state the number of doctoral researchers to be funded, the period of funding and the level of the fellowships/positions.
- If you plan to award fellowships higher than the lowest funding level (cf. documents "Annex to DFG forms 1.30/2.22"), or if you are applying for positions, please provide specific explanations. DFG form 2.22, which is available in German only, includes further information on this issue. Applications for increased fellowships or positions instead of fellowships require specific explanations. These explanations must include the reasons why it is not possible to recruit highly qualified doctoral researchers for the IRTG on the basis of the lowest (or any) fellowship level. In this connection, the field-specific funding modalities for doctoral researchers within the professional context of the RTG, as well as in national and international comparison, are relevant.
- Please explain briefly why the stated number of doctoral researchers should be funded, referring to the research programme where applicable.

7.2.2 Funding of postdoctoral researchers

As a rule, up to two young researchers who have completed their doctorates can also participate in an International Research Training Group. This requires specific justification according to the following criteria:

The planned involvement of postdoctoral researchers in the RTG's research and qualification programmes must be described in detail. The opportunities for further qualification offered to the postdoctoral researchers within the IRTG (e.g. by a description of possible research projects), and the advantages for the RTG resulting from their participation (i.e. the passing on of specialised knowledge or methods of particular relevance to doctoral researchers' work), should be made clear.

The employment of postdoctoral researchers for organisational tasks to any significant extent is not desired. Funding should preferably be granted to researchers for whom other sources of funding are not, or not yet, available, i.e. researchers from abroad.

Postdoctoral researchers are funded by fellowships or positions. Please refer to the documents "Annex to DFG forms 1.30/2.22" (available in German only) for the level of funding. Funding can be requested for up to 54 months. The maximum duration of an individual fellowship/position is 24 months.

- Please state the number of postdoctoral researchers to be funded and the period of funding.
- Taking into account the remarks above, please describe how the postdoctoral researchers will be integrated into the IRTG and explain why these tasks or projects should be performed by young researchers who have already obtained their doctorates.

7.2.3 Qualification fellowships

Particularly highly qualified graduates from universities of applied sciences and those with bachelor's degrees may receive special qualification fellowships to enable them to “fast track” their doctorates. The IRTG must provide, as part of its qualification programme, special qualification opportunities to these students that allow them to be admitted to a doctoral programme. The legal framework for this must be available and functioning at the university. Recipients of a qualification fellowship should be able to qualify for a research-based doctorate within a maximum of 12 months. It is not possible to use these fellowships to finance the completion of another degree, such as a master's.

Please refer to the "Annex to DFG forms 1.30/2.22" (in German only) for the level of funding provided by a qualification fellowship. Funding can be requested for up to 54 months. The maximum duration of an individual fellowship is 12 months.

A doctoral fellowship may be granted following a qualification fellowship. If applicable, please consider this when calculating the number of doctoral fellowships you are applying for.

- Please state the number of qualification fellowships applied for and the period of funding.
- Please refer to the relevant areas in sections 3 or 4 of this proposal where the specific qualification programme is described, as well to the enclosed statement from the university confirming that doctoral admission will be granted upon successful completion of the qualification programme.

7.2.4 Funding of research students

These funds should be used to involve students (persons without final state or university examination, or bachelor's degree) in research early on. The proposal must clearly state how the research students are to be given the opportunity within the RTG for a directed introduction to independent scientific working practices. Please describe in detail how research students are to be integrated into the research programme and, if applicable, into any research projects already planned as well as into the qualification programme. It is not permitted to employ research students to carry out work in connection with the completion of their degree. Furthermore, they must not yet have passed the final examination for a

state or academic degree (except for bachelor's degrees). The work within the IRTG should not result in prolonging their studies. The weekly working time should therefore be 10 hours at most. If your plan differs, a justification is to be given.

The level of remuneration paid to research students is to be set according to the rates applicable at the respective university in line with the state or federal guidelines for the remuneration of student assistants (*studentische Hilfskräfte*) and research assistants (*wissenschaftliche Hilfskräfte*).

- Please state the number of research students for which you request funding. State the total amount requested, the planned number of monthly working hours and length of employment for each position, and what hourly pay rate (according to applicable state or federal law) your calculations are based on.
- Taking into account the explanations given above, please describe how the research students will be integrated into the Research Training Group – or refer to the relevant section(s) in the proposal.

7.2.5 Funding of sabbaticals (replacement funds)

The purpose of this type of funding is twofold: sabbatical funds enable a professor participating in an International Research Training Group to take time off for the purposes of research within the context of the IRTG with continued pay. They also enable the university to use programme funds to remunerate a younger researcher as a replacement.

An application for a sabbatical (for replacement funds) may only be made on the basis of an individual research project of direct relevance to the IRTG. The research project must be conducted within the framework of the IRTG. The professor taking time off for sabbatical is expected to continue his/her tasks related to the IRTG during this period.

Replacement funds for the sabbatical of one applicant for a maximum of two semesters may be requested with the IRTG renewal proposal. Further applications for sabbaticals may be submitted during the funding period.

For more information on the conditions for application, please refer to Appendix 1 of this document.

7.2.6 Funding for measures to promote gender equality

Funds of up to €15,000/year can be requested to

- increase the number of female researchers at the project leadership level,
- enable young female researchers working in the IRTG to obtain qualifications necessary for their scientific careers (in addition to their subject-specific qualifications),
- make the academic/scientific workplace more family-friendly.

The funds are approved exclusively for this purpose.

These funds can be used to finance all measures which the participating professors deem suitable for achieving the aforementioned objectives. It is recommended that applicants consult the university's equal opportunities officer.

The funds can be used, for example, to enable young female researchers to take part in mentoring or coaching programmes or to facilitate a reduced workload for project leaders with children.

Please give a brief description of how the requested funds will be used to augment existing measures (see 5.5).

7.2.7 Start-up funding for first-time applicants

Within the framework of the IRTG, up to €100,000 in start-up funding may be applied for to benefit first-time applicants. These funds are designed to support researchers who have completed their doctorates within the IRTG in developing their own independent project proposals.

Please specify the amount of funding requested and outline the planned application of said funding (positions/fellowships, funding for direct project costs, etc.) and how the total amount is to be allocated over the various financial years. Please also provide a description detailing your start-up funding strategy (cf. 5.2).

7.2.8 Other funds

For each item, please state the amount of funds required, how the funds will be used, and how the amount has been calculated.

Funds may be requested for:

- a) consumables
- b) small equipment (up to €10,000):
Please list equipment costing more than €2,500 per item separately.
- c) travel by doctoral and postdoctoral researchers:
When calculating the travel costs for visits lasting longer than 30 days abroad, please refer to the DFG rates for visits abroad on the DFG's website.
- d) travel by participating researchers to organise and implement the cooperation and to organise events comprising part of the qualification programme
- e) visiting researchers:
Highly qualified researchers who are not members of the International Research Training Group may be invited for lectures or visits. The details of their visit, including the amount of honorarium, must be in accordance with the regulations applicable at the host institution. The contract must be made by the university.
- f) third-party contracts, use of documentation services
- g) remuneration of experimental subjects
- h) special literature and project-oriented software
- i) holding meetings and workshops
- j) position announcements and application interviews
- k) language courses
- l) communication and presentation/media skills training and, where applicable, other activities related to specialised key skills training

m) publications:

For the 4.5-year funding period, publication funds of up to €20,000 can be requested and approved (cf. DFG form 2.22, available in German only).

n) coordination of the International Research Training Group:

The IRTG can apply for coordination funds to cover its various coordination duties. These can be used e.g. to fund a secretarial post, for student assistants or for work contracts. In exceptional cases a post of scientific coordinator may be requested.

The amount of funding required must be justified and is reviewed as part of the process of assessing the financial viability and plausibility of the project. The review also takes into account whether the coordination could be achieved or supported by other locally existing DFG programmes, for example a graduate school, Collaborative Research Centre or cluster of excellence, or by organisational units funded from other sources.

Table: Summary of direct project costs requested

Please remember that the funds are tied to specific fiscal years and cannot be carried over to subsequent fiscal years.

Type of funds	200X from month	200X	200X	200X	200X	200X until month	Total
Consumables							
Small equipment (up to €10,000):							
Travel by doctoral and postdoctoral researchers							
Travel by participating researchers							
Visiting researchers							
Third-party contracts, use of documentation services							
Remuneration of experimental subjects							

Special literature and project-oriented software							
Meetings and workshops							
Position announcements and application interviews							
Language courses							
Key skills training							
Publications							
Coordination							
Funding for equality measures							
Funds for start-up funding for first-time applicants							
Total							

The following expenses cannot be funded:

- personnel expenses for the scientists and academics running the group,
- travel by participating researchers, except for trips to organise and implement the cooperation with the partner institution abroad and to organise events as part of the qualification programme,
- costs incurred for buildings and furnishings or rent,
- general infrastructure, office materials, fax machines, computer equipment, miscellaneous expenses (electricity, gas, water, postage, phone, etc.)
- equipment and software expenses that are generally considered standard modern core support (in the relevant subject area),
- costs incurred for the extension or repair of equipment that was not purchased by the DFG,
- costs incurred for the use of the university's computing facilities, tuition fees at participating institutions,
- operating and maintenance costs,
- property insurance premiums,
- expenses for insurance coverage,
- value-added tax that will be fully or partly refunded by the national tax authorities.

The host institution is expected to provide core support, including appropriate office and laboratory space and equipment.

With regard to the use of funds, please refer to DFG form 2.22, available in German only.

8. Declarations

8.1 Connections to Collaborative Research Centres (*Sonderforschungsbereiche*)

If there is a topical connection between the Research Training Group and a Collaborative Research Centre (CRC) at the same location, a statement by the CRC on the intended mode of coordination between the two research groups must accompany the proposal. Please refer to the declaration to be provided in the appendix of the proposal. **Please consider the delimitation required under section 6.1.**

8.2 Collaboration with cooperation partners

If specific cooperative arrangements with other local partners (graduate schools, Research Units, etc.) are indicated under section 6, we recommend that declarations by the cooperating institutions accompany the proposal.

8.3 Cooperation with the Private Sector, Business and/or Service Industry

If your project includes close collaboration with the private sector, business or service industry, a cooperation agreement must be concluded. This cooperation agreement should include arrangements regarding terms of publication and the use and exploitation of research findings. A copy of the cooperation agreement agreed upon by all parties must be submitted together with your proposal. Please note that the agreement requires approval by the DFG. We recommend using the DFG model agreement (DFG form 41.026e).

8.4 Doctoral admission of students on qualification fellowships

If fellowships for qualification students are requested, a statement from the university must be included confirming that doctoral admission will be granted upon the successful completion of a (maximum 12-month) qualification phase in the RTG and that appropriate fast-track qualification and/or doctoral programme structures exist or will be established.

8.5 Submission to other funding organisations

If the proposal for the International Research Training Group has been submitted elsewhere, please mention this here and provide an explanation. If this is not the case, the following statement must be made: “A funding proposal for this Research Training Group has not been submitted elsewhere. If any such proposal should be submitted, the DFG will be informed immediately.”

8.6 Lists of publications

Please include the following statement regarding lists of publications and other references on the state of the art (cf. Appendix I): “This proposal is in compliance with the rules for citing publications and unpublished prior research.”

8.7 DFG liaison officer

If the proposal is being submitted by a DFG member institution, the DFG liaison officer at that university should be informed accordingly. Please note whether this has happened.

8.8 Letter of intent from the partner institution

Please include the partner university’s letter of intent to (continue to) support the planned cooperation and to provide the required infrastructure.

9. Obligations

9.1 General obligations

By accepting the grant, the university and the participating scientists agree to:

- a) adhere to the rules of good scientific practice (cf. DFG form 2.22, available in German only).

- b) use the funds granted exclusively for the direct realisation of the goals of the Research Training Group as set out in the proposal. The usage and accounting of funds must comply with the relevant DFG guidelines, in particular DFG form 2.22. Financial accounts detailing the use of the funds must be submitted to the DFG.

c) report back to the DFG on the progress of the Research Training Group at the deadlines stated in the award letter and to contribute to the annual data collection scheme for evaluation of the programme.

If one or more of the following questions are answered with YES, please note the resulting additional obligations and comment on these issues under the following headings.

Please check: The IRTG's research programme includes:

- | | | |
|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| experiments involving animals | <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no |
| experiments involving recombinant DNA | <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no |
| research covered by the Convention on Biological Diversity - CBD | <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no |
| research involving human embryonic stem cells | <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no |
| If yes: has legal authorisation been obtained? | <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no |
| experiments involving humans or human material | <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no |
| If yes: is a copy of the required approval from the responsible ethics committee included in the proposal? | <input type="checkbox"/> yes | <input type="checkbox"/> no |

If you cannot rule out the possibility that experiments will be carried out on humans or human material during the course of the RTG, please state the following: "Before beginning any experiments on humans, on identifiable samples taken from humans and on identifiable patient data as part of the Research Training Group, a statement by the local ethics commission will be obtained; the work will only be carried out if no objections have been raised."

The DFG assumes that experiments will comply with the current legal requirements. The following laws, guidelines and regulations should be noted in particular.

9.2 Experiments involving humans or human materials

Legal regulations regarding the protection of clinical trial subjects (§§ 40-42 of the *Arzneimittelgesetz*), the laws concerning medical products for clinical trials (§§ 20-23 of the *Medizinproduktegesetz*), and the German Embryo Protection Law (*Embryonenschutzgesetz*) in their current forms must be complied with. Research studies to be carried out abroad as part of the Research Training Group must also comply with the German Embryo Protection Law. The required legal authorisations must be filed with the spokesperson of the German host university.

Projects that include experiments involving human embryonic stem cells can only be funded if the authorisation required by § 6 of the Stem Cell Act (*Stammzellgesetz*) has been granted. The DFG therefore recommends contacting the approval authority stated in § 7 of the Stem Cell Act (the Robert Koch Institute in Berlin) parallel to submitting the proposal to the DFG in order to accelerate a decision on the proposal. If your proposal is successful, the funds earmarked for work with human embryonic stem cells will remain locked until the DFG receives confirmation of approval by the Robert Koch Institute.

Experiments involving humans and/or samples taken from humans and research using patient data must comply with the recommendations of the World Medical Association as laid down in the Declaration of Helsinki (entitled “WORLD MEDICAL ASSOCIATION DECLARATION OF HELSINKI - Ethical Principles for Medical Research Involving Human Subjects”) as last revised. Against this backdrop, approval from the appropriate ethics committee is required for such experiments. If, at the time of application, you are planning to conduct research requiring authorisation by an ethics committee, a copy of the ethics committee’s approval document must be submitted at the time of the review. If this is not possible, the approval must be received and filed with the spokesperson of the German university prior to beginning research work. Any modifications to the original experimental plan must be re-submitted to the ethics committee for approval. The ethics committee’s vote must explicitly relate to the project and the proposed research.

If the proposal includes specific descriptions of such research projects, please discuss the ethical and legal aspects of your research plan in a form accessible to the review board:

- treatment or experiment,
- criteria for selecting test persons,
- description of possible risks and of precautions planned,

- details of test subject information and consent procedures.

Any clinical trials planned or performed must be registered with the international metaRegister of controlled trials (www.controlled-trials.com), which then assigns each of them an ISRCTN (International Standard Randomised Controlled Trials Number). Please inform the DFG of these numbers.

9.3 Experiments involving animals

Please list the animal species to be used in your research (cf. DFG form 1.11, which is available in German only).

The rules of the current Animal Protection Law (Tierschutzgesetz), including organisational, personnel and material conditions relating to animal husbandry and experiments, must be observed. For animal experiments requiring approval by local authorities, the DFG recommends that you request the necessary approval at the latest when you submit your proposal to the DFG. Research work may start only once approval has been obtained. The required legal authorisation must be filed with the spokesperson of the German university.

9.4 Experiments involving recombinant DNA

If you plan experiments involving recombinant DNA, the legal stipulations of the Genetic Engineering Act (*Gesetz zur Regelung von Fragen der Gentechnik*), as amended, must be followed. Work may commence only once the official permissions required by this legislation and the corresponding ordinances have been granted. Should such experiments require registration with the Secretariat of the Commission for Biological Safety, the letter of confirmation must be filed with the spokesperson of the German university.

9.5 Research covered by the Convention on Biological Diversity – CBD

If the planned research programme or parts of it are covered by the Convention on Biological Diversity, please refer to DFG form 1.021e. Please confirm in the proposal that you have familiarised yourself with these guidelines and that you will carry out the projects in accordance with the principles as stipulated. Please include details of the status of preparation in the host country, as explained under section VII of the guidelines.

10. Signatures

The proposal for the International Research Training Group must be signed by the designated spokespersons of both the German and the partner universities, as well as by the head of the German university.

Appendix I: Publications and References for the Research Programme

1. List of published preliminary research relevant to the research programme:

Please list publications by the participating researchers whose topics are directly related to the research programme. Alphabetise them by the researchers' last names and indicate whether they are

- a) articles which at the time of proposal submission have been published or officially accepted by publication outlets with scientific quality assurance, and book publications;
- b) other publications;
- c) patents, either pending or issued.

Please note that the total number of items that may be listed under a) and b) combined is limited to nine for each participating researcher. When listing papers that have been officially accepted for publication but not yet published, the manuscript and the publisher's dated acknowledgement of acceptance must be submitted on CD. Manuscripts in progress and papers that have not been officially accepted for publication may not be included.

2. Additional references on the state of the art (optional):

The presentation of the research programme 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, any additional documents submitted in support of the proposal are not subject to evaluation; reviewers may read them at their own discretion.

Appendix II: Biographical Sketches of Participating Researchers

Please attach biographical sketches for the researchers involved (including those participating at the foreign partner university). In order for their scientific achievements to be appropriately assessed, we recommend that their **CVs** (date of birth, periods of academic training, periods of previous scientific work, etc.) note circumstances which could have led to interruptions of their scientific work. Examples include long-term illnesses, disabilities or periods of paternity/maternity leave. The 5-year periods given below can each be extended by 2 years per child.

The **publication lists** should contain information on the five most relevant original scientific papers published by each participating researcher. Publications lists must adhere to the following format:

Please indicate whether the publications are

- a) articles which at the time of proposal submission have been published or officially accepted by publication outlets with scientific quality assurance, and book publications;
- b) other publications;
- c) patents, either pending or issued.

When listing papers that have been officially accepted for publication but not yet published, the manuscript and the publisher's dated acknowledgement of acceptance must be submitted on CD. Manuscripts in progress and papers that have not been officially accepted for publication may not be included. Please note that the maximum total of five items per person that may be listed under a) and b) combined is to be adhered to.

Furthermore, the appendix must document any **training of young researchers** conducted by the participants within the last five years, e.g. by listing theses supervised (including, where possible, information regarding the further career development of researchers who have received their doctorates within the IRTG programme as well as their time to degree). In addition, participants — at least on the German side — should list key projects they were involved in within the last five years that received **third-party funding**, indicating projects relevant to the IRTG.

Appendix 1 to the Guidelines

Funding of Sabbaticals (Replacement Funds) in International Research Training Groups

Professors at the German university participating in an IRTG who need relief from their teaching and administrative load to conduct and manage a research project within the framework of the RTG may apply for DFG funds – via the group's spokesperson and the university – to cover the costs of a sabbatical replacement. If the application is made at a later time, please submit 5 printed copies of the proposal.

I. Eligibility Requirements

The applicant must meet the following eligibility requirements, which must be addressed in the proposal.

1. You must be a member of a Research Training Group.
2. You must belong to the teaching staff of a higher education institution in Germany and belong to the salary group C2 to C4 (W2/W3) or equivalent; research must be part of your official tasks.
3. You must be entitled to take sabbatical leave in accordance with public sector employment regulations. University sabbaticals (*Landesforschungssemester*) must be claimed before or in combination with the DFG-funded sabbatical. The DFG cannot provide funding for a university sabbatical. Please state when, and for how long, you have previously been granted university sabbaticals.
4. Paid leave must be taken and you must be completely or partly exempted from your official duties for the duration of the DFG sabbatical.

The relevant local state regulations apply to any secondary employment.

Please also list:

5. all members of the Research Training Group who have already received sabbatical replacement funds from the DFG (including dates). A maximum of 4 applications for sabbatical replacement funds can be approved per RTG funding period (4.5 years).

II. Proposal Content

Proposals for replacement funding within the framework of a Research Training Group can only be made on the basis of a personal research project. The research project must be of direct relevance to the IRTG. The expenses of the project must be covered by funds from the university or other research funding organisations.

Please describe the research project and its current status in as much detail and as specifically as possible in order to enable the reviewers to assess the research objectives and the quality of the work programme as well as any (interim) results to date.

Please provide:

- a brief description of the scientific programme and the scientific goals of the project and
- details of the work plan to be followed during the time for which the application is being made (for experimental projects: an experimental plan), as well as a detailed description of the proposed methods to be used during the project.

Please also explain in detail why it is necessary to be relieved from your normal duties to conduct the project within the context of the IRTG and to what extent you are (or were) under an exceptional teaching or administrative load.

Please describe in detail the time demands resulting from your participation in the IRTG.

III. Proposed Duration

The duration of the sabbatical should be between 6 and 12 months.

Please state the period being applied for.

IV. Sabbatical Replacement Regulations and Funding

If the sabbatical is granted, the DFG will provide your employer with funds to pay for a replacement while you are relieved of your normal tasks, up to a maximum of your normal income entitlement as applicable in the month prior to the start of the sabbatical(s) (excluding bonuses).

Please state the type of replacement planned and the associated expenses.

V. Obligations

The approval of a sabbatical in an IRTG commits you to work on the research project on which the approval was based within the Research Training Group and to continue to dedicate yourself to your tasks within the framework of the RTG.

The RTG's final report must include a report on the project conducted during the sabbatical and the results obtained.

Appendix 2 to the Guidelines

Guidelines for Carrying Out On-Site Reviews

1. Objectives and Participants

The on-site review takes place at the host university. The main purpose of the review is to provide an opportunity not only for expert reviewers, but also for a scientific member of the Grants Committee on Research Training Groups and the DFG Head Office, to get an impression of the results achieved by the Research Training Group to date, the implementation of the qualification programme, the scientific and structural impact of the RTG and the resources at its disposal. At the same time the university's administration is given the opportunity to describe how the IRTG contributes to the institution's profile and how the RTG is supported by the institution.

The task of the scientific member of the Grants Committee on Research Training Groups (rapporteur) is primarily to present the reviewers' findings to the DFG's decision-making bodies. In addition, together with the DFG Head Office, the rapporteur is responsible for ensuring that the DFG's criteria for evaluating Research Training Groups are applied during the site review.

The reviewers and the rapporteur can also advise the RTG on the future structure of the research and qualification programmes, and pass on information and recommendations for future work.

The review enables all those involved in the IRTG, including the host university, to address comments and queries to the DFG.

In addition to the expert reviewers and the Grants Committee member, one representative each from the relevant state and federal ministries may also participate in the on-site evaluation. The DFG is primarily financed by the federal and state governments, which are represented in DFG decision-making bodies and thus have an interest in seeing how their allocations are spent.

In terms of participation by the German university, the professors who formulated the proposal must be present during the on-site evaluation. The doctoral and postdoctoral researchers who – with or without the financial support of the Research Training Group – are involved in its work are also required to be attend, as are the research students funded by the RTG. It is expected that former and current RTG doctoral researchers be represented as completely as possible. It is also expected that professors from the foreign partner institution take part in the review and that the doctoral researchers from the partner university also present their work.

As structural aspects play an important part in the continuation of a Research Training Group, it is also very helpful if the university, as the applicant, is also represented by a member of its administration. In order to ensure that the attendance required of institution administrators is minimal, they should be invited specifically to attend the discussion with the IRTG in the afternoon.

Furthermore, representatives of institutions with which (continued) close scientific and/or structural collaborations are planned should also participate in the review (such as existing graduate funding institutions funded from other sources, e.g. graduate schools or integrated Research Training Groups of existing Collaborative Research Centres, non-university research institutions and other cooperation partners).

2. Suggested Schedule for the On-Site Review

The on-site review is designed as a one-day event. The following information is provided by way of suggestion and example and is based on the DFG's previous experiences in reviewing Research Training Groups. The programme elements are to be considered in the form given, but the scheduling is flexible. Please note, however, that the participation by the university's administration during the afternoon session must take place at a fixed time.

09:00 **Internal preliminary discussions by the reviewers**
(*reviewers, rapporteur, DFG Head Office staff*)

It is usually helpful if the external participants are picked up from a hotel or train station and brought to the meeting location by someone familiar with the area.

09:30 Welcome and introduction by the IRTG spokesperson

(Open to all members of the university, reviewers, rapporteur, DFG Head Office staff)

The spokesperson should give a brief introductory statement highlighting the RTG's most noteworthy findings, as well as any major changes. Particular mention should be made of current developments that were not taken into account in the written proposal. It may be pertinent to include comments on the recommendations made during the previous review.

09:45 Presentation of the Research Training Group *(Open to all members of the university, reviewers, rapporteur, DFG Head Office staff)*

The Research Training Group is responsible for moderating the presentations. As different types of presentation are usually appropriate for different disciplines, the RTG may select one of three different forms to be used by the doctoral and postdoctoral researchers when giving their presentations:

1. oral presentations,
2. poster presentations,
3. a combination of both oral and poster presentations.

Please ensure that all doctoral researchers who have spent a sufficient amount of time working on their dissertations are included in the presentation. The presentation should also include as many doctoral researchers as possible whose funding periods have come to an end. Where appropriate, research students should also be invited to participate in the presentation, and doctoral researchers from the partner university should also present their work.

Against this background, please consider the following points regarding each of the three presentation options:

Option 1: If the RTG decides in favour of giving oral presentations, please note that the reviewers should have the opportunity in the morning to select the presentations they would like to hear. A list of topics by doctoral researchers who have spent a longer period of time working on their dissertations should be sent to review members prior to the meeting for this purpose. The RTG may decide on the length of individual presentations and the ensuing discussion. Sufficient time should be allowed for at least five doctoral researchers to give their presentations.

Option 2: For poster presentations, please ensure that all doctoral researchers and, where appropriate, postdoctoral researchers, are present and available to discuss their presentations with the reviewers.

Option 3: If the IRTG elects to use a combination of oral and poster presentations, the RTG must select the presentations to be given. To give reviewers sufficient time for discussions with all those presenting their projects, please limit the number of presentations to three. The maximum total time allotted for presentations should be limited to one hour.

12:00 Discussion between doctoral researchers, reviewers and rapporteur

(doctoral and postdoctoral researchers, research students, reviewers, rapporteur, representatives from state and federal ministries, DFG Head Office staff)

Immediately following the presentation, a discussion between reviewers, the rapporteur and the doctoral researchers should be held, addressing overall developments and progress made within the IRTG (professors should not participate). The rapporteur will moderate the meeting

12:45 Lunch

Experience has shown that it is better to provide a light lunch for participants in or near the meeting room than to leave the premises for lunch. Due to the limited time available, longer distances should be avoided. Costs for the light lunch cannot be covered by the RTG's budget, but should instead be covered by either the host university or the participants themselves.

1:30 Reviewers' meeting

(reviewers, rapporteur, representatives from the DFG Head Office)

2:30 Plenary discussion involving all members of the IRTG and representatives from the university administration

(doctoral and postdoctoral researchers, research students, participating researchers, representatives from the university administration, reviewers, rapporteur, representatives from the federal and state ministries, DFG Head Office)

After the reviewers have identified open questions that need to be addressed, a meeting should be held in which reviewers can discuss these topics with members of the RTG and the university. The discussion will be moderated by the rapporteur. As not only scientific but also structural issues will be addressed, it would be particularly beneficial to include a member of the institution's administration in this element of the review. Please note that the participating official is welcome to address brief remarks to all review participants. This programme element should therefore be scheduled in advance and the schedule strictly adhered to. This discussion marks the end of the review for the majority of the participants.

3:30 Final reviewers' meeting

(reviewers, rapporteur, representatives from the federal and state ministries, DFG Head Office)

ca. 5:30 End of the review

The rapporteur and members of the DFG's Head Office will unofficially announce the reviewers' recommendation to the RTG's spokesperson. This recommendation serves as the basis for the final decision by the Senate and Grants Committee on Research Training Groups on whether funding for the RTG should be continued. The spokesperson may share the funding recommendation with other members of the Research Training Group.

3. Preparations

As frequent "changes of scenery" often result in a loss of time, we request that you provide only a limited number of meeting venues with short distances between them. A meeting room is required for the internal consultations by the reviewers, with a lecture hall/seminar room close by for the discussions with the Research Training Group. The poster presentations and light lunch should also be held close by. To facilitate our planning, please inform us of the location and meeting rooms for the review as soon as possible, and include a small map.

The final schedule for the on-site review, including the list of presentation topics where applicable, should be sent to all external participants as soon as possible, but at the latest two weeks before the meeting. We will provide you with the names and addresses accordingly. **Please clarify the agenda well in advance with the DFG Head Office.**

Since there will unavoidably be some time between the completion of the proposal and the on-site review, we request that you prepare a **handout** for the reviewers listing the current doctoral researchers (cf. the table templates in the guidelines) and an updated list of publications (cf. the notes on the appendix to the report). This handout should be provided in addition to the information provided in the proposal. In addition, you have the option to submit the latest updates of these two lists before the committee session during which the decision on this proposal is made.

Please note that providing pin-on name tags for all participants has proven useful in the past.

Finally, we request that you reserve hotel rooms for any visiting participants who intend to stay in the area overnight. We will pass on the relevant information to the participants. Please observe the applicable maximum rates of the German Travel Expenses Act when making reservations. If possible, please arrange for the hotel bill to be sent directly to the DFG. If this is not possible, the participants will pay the hotel bill directly and claim reimbursement from the DFG Head Office later.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any queries or require any further information.