

Call for Proposals

No. 37

12 May 2021

National Research Data Infrastructure: Funding of Consortia

2021 Call for Consortia Proposals (Round Three)

The German federal and state governments reached an agreement in November 2018 to establish a national research data infrastructure (NFDI). Based on a research-driven process, the NFDI aims to systematically manage research data collections, provide long-term data storage, backup and accessibility, and network the data both nationally and internationally in accordance with the FAIR principles. With this third call, the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG, German Research Foundation) invites proposals for further NFDI consortia.

Consortia are groups of users and providers of research data that come together for the purpose of long-term cooperation. They may include state-funded and state-recognised higher education institutions, non-university research institutions, departmental research institutions, academies, and other publicly financed information infrastructures. Generally organised by research domain or method, their aim is to improve and safeguard access to and use of research data in their relevant area, thereby contributing to sustainable data management.

The NFDI will develop its full effectiveness when it grows as a networked structure. Basic services that guarantee the provision of basic infrastructure for potentially all consortia will contribute largely to this networking and long-term interoperability. The provision of basic services is therefore essential to the success of the NFDI. As it is relevant to all consortia, the implementation and quality assurance of such basic services should primarily be initiated by the subject-oriented consortia.

If a basic service cannot be provided by subject-oriented consortia, stakeholders or facilities that are not part of a consortium will be able to assume responsibility for such services and request funding for this purpose. The realisation of such services should ideally take place within the framework of strategic partnerships with subject-oriented consortia or prospective consortia. Proposals are expected to be closely aligned with the needs of the subject-oriented consortia, and applicants must document this accordingly. Applicants are also expected to consult with the Directorate of the National Research Data Infrastructure Association. Please refer to the website of the NFDI Association linked below for more information. The results of these consultations must be documented in the proposal.

The German federal and state governments envisage funding up to 30 consortia. A total of up to €85 million is available per year to fund the consortia in the final development phase; this amount

includes a 22 percent programme allowance for indirect project costs. The amount available to fund direct project costs thus totals approximately €70 million annually. As a rule, an individual consortium may receive between €2 million and €5 million, which includes the programme allowance for indirect project costs and €1.6 million to €3.9 million for direct project costs. Taking this range into account and on the basis of the 30 consortia grants envisaged, an average of €2.32 million will be available for direct project costs per consortium.

When preparing your proposal, note that important information on the development of the NFDI can be found in the November 2020 statement by the NFDI Expert Committee.

Deadlines and Proposal Submission

Proposals for NFDI consortia can only be submitted within calls. This third of three calls for proposals is now open, with an anticipated funding start of 1 October 2022. Proposals can initially be submitted for a funding period of five years.

To support the collaborative networking process that is essential to establishing the NFDI's cooperative framework, all applicants must submit letters of intent, which will be published on the DFG's website. A binding letter of intent serves as advance notification of proposal submission and is required as part of the proposal process. Please note that in this binding letter of intent, all applicant and co-applicant institutions, the spokesperson and all co-spokespersons, and all participants must be named definitively and in full. It is not possible to make changes or additions at a later date. Please give appropriate consideration to diversity when composing the members of your consortium.

The **binding letters of intent** must be sent to the DFG Head Office by **6 August 2021** via e-mail to nfdi@dfg.de. Please complete your binding letter of intent according to the template provided.

The deadline for the **submission of proposals** is **1 October 2021**. Proposals must be submitted via the DFG's [elan](#) portal. The entire proposal and review process will take place in English.

To support the networking process, another **NFDI conference** is planned. The conference will be held on **8 July 2021** as a webinar. The main purpose of the NFDI conference is to foster dialogue and networking among all consortia, particularly between prospective consortia and existing consortia and those recommended for funding. Further details about the conference can be found in the Information for Researchers No. 38 and on the DFG website.

Further Information

Detailed information on proposal submission, including eligibility requirements, type and scope of funding, the review and decision-making process, etc., can be found in the NFDI programme guidelines: www.dfg.de/formulare/nfdi100

The statement by the NFDI Expert Committee from November 2020 can be found at: www.dfg.de/download/pdf/foerderung/programme/nfdi/stellungnahme_nfdi_201112_en.pdf

A list of funding criteria for NFDI consortia, supplemented by short explanatory notes, can be found at: www.dfg.de/formulare/nfdi120

For information on preparing your binding letter of intent, see:

www.dfg.de/formulare/nfdi10

Detailed instructions on preparing your NFDI consortium proposal and a proposal template can be found in the following document:

www.dfg.de/formulare/nfdi110

In addition to submitting the proposal electronically, the applicant institution must send to the DFG a printed and signed copy of the compliance form generated after the proposal is uploaded in elan. This form must be submitted by regular mail by 31 October 2021.

The heads of all co-applicant institutions and all co-spokespersons are required to download the NFDI General Compliance Form (DFG form NFDI 130) from the DFG website and print and sign them (one form per co-applicant institution). This form should not be sent to the DFG. The template can be downloaded at:

www.dfg.de/formulare/nfdi130

For more information on the programme and to download the documents listed above, visit:

www.dfg.de/nfdi/en

For information on the NFDI conference, visit:

www.dfg.de/nfdi/conference2021

and

www.dfg.de/foerderung/info_wissenschaft/2021/info_wissenschaft_21_38 (in German only)

The website of the NFDI Association, available in German only, provides additional information on the work of the Association:

www.nfdi.de (general information)

www.nfdi.de/neuigkeiten (latest news)

You can reach a DFG programme contact for questions regarding proposal submission and with regard to the selection process at the following number:

Phone +49 228 885-3500

Alternatively, you can send us your inquiry via e-mail:

nfdi@dfg.de

For fundamental inquiries about the NFDI, you may also contact:

Dr. Ulrike Eickhoff, phone +49 228 885-2254

Dr. Anne Lipp, phone +49 228 885-2260

Dr. Johannes Fournier, phone +49 228 885-2418

nfdi@dfg.de

Frequently asked questions on the NFDI can be found under the link below:

www.dfg.de/download/pdf/foerderung/programme/nfdi/faq_nfdi_en.pdf