Infrastructures for Scholarly Publishing

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

The FAQs for this programme are updated regularly.

Last revised: 4 March 2021

Updates to previous English-language versions are marked in green.

Topics

DFG

Eligibility

Who is eligible to submit proposals in cases where journals published by learned societies are to be launched, further developed or transformed into open access?

➢ There are a number of options available. A proposal can be submitted by researchers from the editorial board of the journal. It is also possible for a person holding the chair of a learned society to submit the proposal in their function as an employee of an academic institution.

Eligible Content

Are there any requirements relating to the development of the infrastructures, namely are only open source projects eligible for funding?

➢ All project findings must be disseminated to the relevant community and made available for reuse free of charge, also to third parties. Disclosure of any source code produced is mandatory; in general, project results must be made available in open source in a suitable location with clear licensing. This includes comprehensive documentation according to common standards.

How narrow is the definition of the term "publication"? Are developments to link open access articles with the related open data and open methods (open software) taken into consideration? Can proposals also be submitted to establish and develop infrastructures for research data?

➢ This funding programme is generally based on a broad definition of "publication" (e.g. in the sense of enhanced publication). Relevant for submitting a proposal is whether the core area of the project is on publishing the *findings* of research. In this case, infrastructure projects can also be funded in which e.g. book chapters or journal articles are linked with open data and open methods. A separate programme exists in the LIS funding portfolio for establishing and developing infrastructures for research data (see also www.dfg.de/en/research_funding/programmes/infrastructure/lis/funding_opportunities/research_data).

Can institutional publication infrastructures be funded as part of the programme? Can the establishment of an institutional repository also be funded?

Funding in the area of Scientific Library Services and Information Systems aims to benefit the academic research community in Germany as a whole. As a general rule, the establishment of an institutional repository must be funded by the institution that operates it. Developments at individual institutions can only be funded by the DFG if they are designed as a pilot project intended for nationwide reuse by other research institutions at a later stage.

To what extent are editorial tasks eligible for funding?

➢ Editorial tasks for publication platforms or journals can be funded in the form of start-up funding. Reviewers will carefully examine how long-term funding for a journal will be ensured. Since the continued existence of the journal depends on employing editors, it must specifically be stated in the proposal how the funding for recurring editorial tasks will be ensured in the long term.

Are there funding opportunities for existing open access journals?

➢ The further development of existing open access journals may also be funded as part of the programme. In this case, it is essential that the journal reaches a new level in terms of quality with the funding. This includes e.g. optimizing the publication infrastructure which the journal is based on or optimizing the organisational form.

Is cooperation with publishers eligible for funding?

➢ Projects in all three focus areas can be carried out either independently of a publisher or in collaboration with publishers or other commercial entities. These entities are not eligible to submit a proposal. Collaboration can take place in the form of awarding a contract to a publisher as a service provider. Funds for services ,e.g. contracts awarded to third parties, carried out as part of a DFG-funded project can be requested under "Other funds" (see also https://www.dfg.de/formulare/52_01/52_01_en.pdf, section 2.5) where necessary. Two alternative offers must generally be included with the proposal. If the communication or publication platform developed within the scope of the project is to be released or produced in collaboration with a publisher or service provider, please include the relevant sections of the agreement with this partner.

As well as journals, is funding also available for establishing and (further) developing other periodicals or transforming them to open access?

➢ Yes. Establishing and (further) developing periodicals such as serials, yearbooks etc. or transforming them to open access is eligible for funding. The number of releases is irrelevant for the funding decision; it is important that the publication is released on a regular basis.

Funding

What is meant by "reasonable financial contribution"?

➢ The amount of the contribution is generally not fixed. However, reviewers will consider whether the contribution made appears reasonable in relation to the funds requested. For example, assuming a portion of the salary of staff employed by the project may be listed as a contribution. General tasks of the applicant institutions are not considered financial contributions.

What kind of funding can be applied for? Is there a limit?

➢ You can apply for funding for staff, direct project costs and funding for workshops. Projects may only apply for acquisition funding for the purpose of purchasing archive content (content backfiles). There is no upper limit defined in the programme for the amount of funding which can be applied for. The funding requested must be justified convincingly in the proposal.

Sustainability

Can the DFG support the infrastructures it funds in developing long-term prospects beyond the project period?

➢ Funding is generally awarded on a project basis, meaning that it is the responsibility of the applicants to specify in the proposal both the long-term prospects of the planned project as well as how the project results can be reused. In individual cases, these prospects can also be developed as part of the work programme of a proposal. Sustainability will also be considered during the review process.

What does ensuring the sustainability of journals include?

➢ Ensuring the sustainability of journals must always be interpreted in two ways, namely as (a) securing the technical infrastructure, including the long-term digital availability of the contents, as well as (b) securing the content-related or editorial tasks which are necessary to ensure that new content is continuously acquired.

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