

**Rectorate Funding Guidelines for  
Student Research Projects at the University of Münster (WWU),  
amended version of 18 April 2018**

This is a translation of the original German text and is intended for your information only. Under German law, only the official German version of the “Neufassung der Richtlinie des Rektorats der Westfälischen Wilhelms-Universität Münster (WWU) über die Förderung von Forschungsprojekten Studierender vom 18. April 2018” is legally binding. It was published in the *Amtliche Bekanntmachungen* (AB Uni; “Official Announcements”) in 2018, issue no. 41, pp. 3431 - 3435.

**Preamble**

The Rectorate will allocate a total of € 50,000 in funding from the internal Innovation Fund annually for research projects by students. The Rectorate Committee for Research Affairs (RKF) is responsible for allocating the individual funds. Each research project can receive up to € 5,000.

**I. Which projects can be funded?**

1. The following measures are fundable:
  - a) projects initiated and carried out by students from all research fields of the University. These projects must be innovative and have a sound scientific basis. Also, they must possess or be capable of achieving distinct visibility on a national or international level.
  - b) projects that can initiate and/or encourage academic partnerships and/or collaborations at a national and international level. This can include the active participation in conferences and congresses with an appropriately high visibility.
  - c) the organisation of seminars or conferences on scientific or cultural topics if they are organised by students as an autonomous project. The topics must possess a high degree of general interest and corresponding visibility.
2. Funding is only possible if the project duration is 12 months at most.
3. If the project for which funding is being sought includes a publication, then the project can only be funded if all the main editor(s) and/or main authors are persons applying for funding.
4. Doctoral projects or other projects that lead to the completion of a degree are excluded from funding. If a research project is connected to a doctoral project or a project leading to the completion of a degree, then it can only receive funding if it is clearly differentiated from them. Research projects which are connected to other required coursework

(*Studienleistungen*) can be funded if they can be shown to have an independent status that goes beyond the mere completion of required coursework.

5. Funding cannot be used for personnel or infrastructure measures. This remains the responsibility of the departments and faculties.
6. Funding cannot be granted to projects for which identical applications have been handed in to other funding institutions. However, this does not exclude the possibility of co-funding and applications which concern distinct parts of a project.
7. Funding is not possible for projects that include animal testing for which approval is required.
8. Funding is not possible for recurring (already established) projects.

## **II. Who can apply?**

1. Any student can apply who
  - a) is enrolled at the University of Münster at the time of the project application as well as at the start of the project,
  - b) has not completed a doctoral project at the start of the project and
  - c) is under the age of 28 at the time of the project application.
2. A funding application may also be made by a group of students. In this case, the conditions of sentence 1 a) to c) apply to all members of the group.

## **III. How do you apply?**

1. The written application is handed in to SAFIR (Dept. 6.1). It must make reference to the aims of the call for proposals. The application may not exceed 10 pages.
2. Applications may be handed in at any time. They are assessed and decided upon by the RKF. However, the RKF will only consider an application if it is presented in its final version at least two months before the date of the committee meeting. At least one month should be factored in between the date of the committee meeting and the intended start of the project for which funding is sought. The RKF usually meets twice per semester.
3. The application must be expressly endorsed by a WWU researcher (either a professor or senior lecturer (*Privatdozent/in*)). In exceptional cases, the endorsement by a researcher of a different university (e.g. University of Applied Sciences) may be sufficient.
4. The application should do the following:
  - 4.1 describe the scientific context of the project,
  - 4.2 describe and explain the preliminary work that has already been undertaken,
  - 4.3 describe the scientific aims (including technological aims) of the project and present a realistic schedule for its implementation including the measures intended to ensure that the aims will be met,

4.4 present a realistic, detailed financing plan. The applicant must provide at least one quote for each individual funding item.

5. With a group application, the individual contributions must be clearly defined. The application must also explain how the individual contributions are linked to each other. In their application, the group must identify a group spokesperson who will represent the project externally, coordinate its activities and be responsible for the mandatory reports. Individual contributions are not funded separately.
6. Applications can be submitted in German or English.

#### **IV. How are applications decided?**

1. The submitted applications are reviewed by SAFIR with regard to the formal requirements listed under II and III. Applicants may be given the possibility to amend their applications; applications that do not comply with the formal requirements will be rejected by SAFIR.
2. Applications that comply with the formal requirements are submitted by SAFIR to the RKF. The RKF assesses the applications with regard to their suitability for funding and makes the funding decision.
3. The applicant is informed about the RKF's decision by SAFIR.

#### **V. No academic or artistic compensation, no employee status**

The aim of funding student research projects is to support research. Funding decisions are not made with any consideration to potential compensation, employment or a statement of intent concerning future employment. The funding is not a form of employment remuneration in the sense of § 14 SGB IV and therefore does not require the students to make social security contributions.

#### **VI. Proof of progress, monitoring and reporting**

1. Within three months of the end of the project, funding recipients must submit a report which compares the goals achieved with the goals defined in the application. The report is submitted to the RKF via SAFIR. The RKF evaluates the report and the funding recipient is informed about the evaluation in writing. A record is kept of all projects funded, which are subsequently published in appropriate form.
2. All documents necessary for the final accounting have to be handed in to SAFIR within one month of the date of the last invoice. Only documents which have been personally signed by the funding recipient can be considered in the final accounting.
3. As a rule, funding may only be used as permitted by the RKF in accordance with IV 2. If circumstances arise which require a reallocation of funding, this has to be discussed with SAFIR before any payments are made.

In such cases, the following rules apply:

- a) If more money is to be spent on one item approved by the RKF and offset with less money spent on another, then the applicant need only inform SAFIR about this fact, provided the additional cost does not exceed 20% (of the item that costs less).
- b) If in case a) the additional cost is more than 20% (of the item that costs less), then this additional expenditure can only be funded if the funding recipient informs SAFIR before the money is spent and the RKF approves the additional expenditure.
- c) If less money is to be spent on an item that has been approved and the money saved is to be spent on an item for which permission has not been previously given, then this expenditure can only be funded if the funding recipient informs SAFIR ahead of time and the RKF approves the expenditure.

## **VII. Deprivation and Revocation, Right of Revocation**

1. Confirmation of funding can be withdrawn in accordance with the provisions of §§ 48 ff. NRW Administrative Procedure Law (*Verwaltungsverfahrensgesetz NRW*).
2. Confirmation of funding can be revoked, fully or partially, at any time and also retroactively and repayment of funding ordered if facts indicate that
  - a) the funding recipient(s) is/are not proceeding or has/have not proceeded with the funded project with the necessary diligence,
  - b) the funding recipient(s) is/are violating VI, in particular if the funding has not been or is not being utilised in accordance with the provisions of VI. 3,
  - c) the funding recipient(s) has/have sought additional funding for their project without first seeking the approval of the University of Münster.

## **VIII. Coming into Force**

These guidelines (in their original German version) come into force on the day following their publication in the Official Announcements (*Amtliche Bekanntmachungen*) of the University of Münster. They apply to all applications for the funding of student projects submitted after these guidelines have come into force.

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Issued (in the original German version) upon resolution by the Rectorate Committee for Research Affairs (RKF) of the University of Münster on 18 April 2018.

Münster, 29 August 2018

The Rector

Prof. Dr. Johannes Wessels

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These Regulations (in their original German version) are hereby announced in accordance with the University of Münster's Regulations on the Announcement and Publication of Orders, Decisions and Statutes (*Ordnung der Westfälischen Wilhelms-Universität über die Verkündung von Ordnungen, die Veröffentlichung von Beschlüssen sowie die Bekanntmachung von Satzungen*) of 8 February 1991 (AB Uni 91/1), as amended on 23 December 1998 (AB Uni 99/4).

Münster, 29 August 2018

The Rector

Prof. Dr. Johannes Wessels

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