

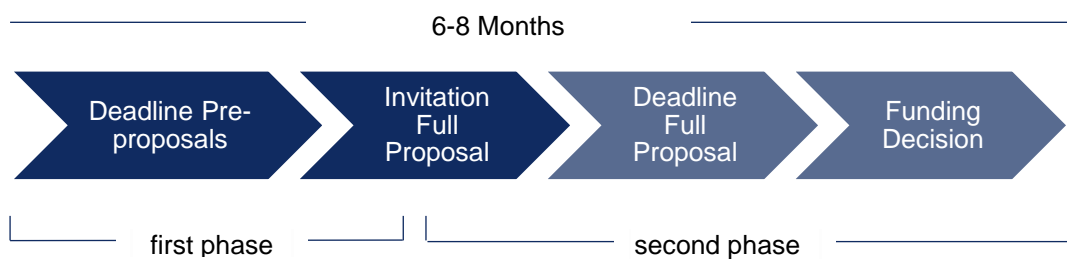
Information for Applicants 129

FUNDING INITIATIVE

PIONEERING PROJECTS: SOCIETAL TRANSFORMATIONS

Deadline: Submission anytime

-  all disciplines
-  inter- and transdisciplinary as well as (inter)national research projects
-  max. 500,000 EUR
-  max. 5 years
-  PhD holders at German universities and research institutes;
-  (inter)national research groups, inter- und transdisciplinary teams possible
-  additional benefits: funding for communication of science and research; funding for the preparation and storage of research data (data reuse)



1 OBJECTIVE

Profile Area „Societal Transformations“

In this profile area, the Volkswagen Foundation supports research that addresses diverse aspects of transformation processes. It encourages cross-border and multi-perspective approaches and aims to open up new ways of contributing toward shaping societal transformations.

Pioneering Projects „Societal Transformations“

The Foundation wants to fund research ideas which offer new perspectives on already existing as well as (largely) underresearched and/or emerging societal transformation processes. In addition, also projects are funded that develop ideas or scenarios for transformation processes preparing societies to deal appropriately with future challenges. The Foundation encourages researchers to create transformational knowledge by integrating non-academic stakeholders. This cooperation should contribute to a better understanding of transformation processes and the role of science in these processes.

2 FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

This funding offer addresses researchers of different backgrounds (natural and life sciences, technology sciences as well as humanities and social sciences) who develop research projects that produce **transformational knowledge**.

The Foundation offers experimental spaces for new methods such as explorative learning, creative research, artistic research/artistic dialogues and experiments. Researchers with are invited to establish a dialogue with non-academic actors on societal transformation processes and related research questions. The Foundation encourages researchers to develop projects that are **risky** and ‘surprising’ with regard to its research questions and its research design. All applicants should identify the relevant **actor groups for their project within and outside academia**. Furthermore, all applicants are encouraged to reflect on their research methods and possible impact of their results on the constitution of transformation processes.

International partners from academia as well as stakeholders, where appropriate and relevant, can be included in the project teams. The Foundation encourages the development of **multi-perspective projects** involving researchers from a variety of disciplines (humanities, social, life and/or technological sciences). From the perspective of the Foundation, scholars from the humanities and cultural sciences should play a central role in the research design.

Important requirements for this call are the **qualification** of the applicants for the **implementation** and **feasibility** of the project plan (including work plan and budget plan) as well as strong **concepts for data storage** (data management), **open science** and **science communication**.

The following criteria are relevant for the review process:

1. **The project aims at generating new knowledge** about (largely) unexplored or just emerging transformation processes as well as **new ideas for courses of action** and how these can be implemented.
2. The project has potential for generalizable and **transferable/scalable results**.
3. The project connects up to the current international state of the art.
4. The project integrates **different academic and non-academic perspectives** on the topic.

3 GENERAL CONDITIONS

Researchers who have completed their doctorate and are employed at a scientific institutions in Germany can submit a structured pre-proposal at any time (see Application and Selection Procedure). The **budget** should be within a range of 100.000 up to 500.000 Euro and be appropriate for the project in question. Apart from that, the chances of receiving a grant depend on the content quality of the proposal, not on its costs or size.

Otherwise, the design of the budget plan is free and depends on the requirements of the respective proposal. The duration of the project also depends on the specific necessities – as a rule, the foundation assumes that the pioneering projects will require between one and five years to complete. Each proposal must be coordinated by one person who acts as main PI. Academic partners

can be involved as co-PIs, while funding for non-academic cooperation partners can be applied for within the framework of work contracts or similar.

As part of the pre-proposal process, it is strongly recommended that specific questions be clarified with the contact persons at the Foundation without obligation and without impact on the peer review process.

4 APPLICATION AND SELECTION PROCESS

Please note that the Foundation accepts and reviews concepts only once. Modified or revised versions of projects once rejected cannot be submitted at a later date.

The funding opportunity is deliberately designed open and flexible. Whether the project is fundable is determined in a two-stage selection process.

In the first stage, pre-proposals can be submitted at any time. They will be reviewed comparatively by the Foundation and, if fitting, the research team will be invited to submit a full proposal.

In the second stage, full proposals to be submitted by a second deadline will be presented to a panel of reviewers and reviewed comparatively. The Board of Trustees of the Volkswagen Foundation decides on funding on the basis of the reviewers' recommendation.

Applications that can be submitted to other funding organizations such as the DFG, BMBF, Horizon Europe etc. have no chance of being funded.

5 NOTES FOR THE APPLICATION

A template for the pre-proposals is available on the Volkswagen Foundation website. This is the only document to be submitted and reviewed in the first stage. The pre-proposals can be written in German or English.

Please note that you will receive a list of criteria and documents to be submitted after the invitation for full proposals and that all documents of the full proposal must be submitted in English.

6 CONTACT

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For general and administrative questions, please contact:
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Please inform yourself about the electronic application system of the Volkswagen Foundation before submitting your application. Information on this can be found in the document "Electronic application system - hints and tips". Please also read the answers to the "Frequently Asked Questions" thoroughly, as they are part of the call for applications

Status: September 2022