

## Research Cooperation Lower Saxony – Israel

(As of October 11, 2022)

Next deadline: **March 1, 2023, 12 pm CET**

Proposals from the

**Natural Sciences, Mathematics, and Engineering Sciences**

### I. Objectives of the funding program

The Ministry of Science and Culture of Lower Saxony and the Volkswagen Foundation allocate grants for joint research projects between researchers at universities or research institutions in Lower Saxony and in Israel<sup>1</sup>. In continuation of existing cooperation efforts applications from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem or the Technion – Israel Institute of Technology – in Haifa are especially welcome.

The objective of this program is to promote outstanding scientific high-risk – high-gain cooperation projects. The cooperation has to be justified coherently and explained in its design. To set impulses for new collaborations and to enable possibly long lasting academic exchange, the program explicitly addresses scholars and scientists at an **early career stage**.

The funding program addresses different disciplines (Humanities and Social Sciences; Life Sciences and Medicine; Natural Sciences, Mathematics and Engineering Sciences) in different years. The current call for application invites proposals from the **Natural Sciences, Mathematics, Engineering Sciences**.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For a list of eligible institutions please see the FAQs on this [website](#).

<sup>2</sup> excluding Biological and Life Sciences, Medicine

It is possible to apply for interdisciplinary projects, involving expertise from e.g. the humanities, social sciences or natural sciences. The thematic and/or methodological focus of such projects has to lie in the disciplines addressed in the given year, though. This focus has to be substantiated by the applying consortium.

## **II. Funding conditions**

Funding is provided for scientifically outstanding projects which follow a truly original idea and for which the additional benefit of a cooperative approach can be clearly accounted for from a scientific point of view. This requires an objective that enables the project participants from both countries to favorably combine their competencies and research experiences. The joint scientific work including e.g. research visits and/or the organization of joint events is therefore of particular importance. The set-up of new cooperations within the framework of this funding programme will be given priority.

Applicants must hold a PhD (or equivalent). As the program is aimed at scientists and scholars at an early stage in their careers, preference will be given to applicants who have defended their PhD within the last seven years<sup>3</sup> (from the deadline).

## **III. Type, duration and volume of funding**

All direct costs for personnel, consumables, equipment and travel necessary to conduct the project may be applied for. The maximum grant is up to 300.000 EUR for a maximum funding period of three years. Overheads cannot be covered.

Applications for funding of the own position are excluded. If funding for PhD students is applied for, positions have to be calculated according to at least 0.65 % TV-L 13 for a period of three years (for positions at an institution in

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<sup>3</sup> Periods of childcare will be acknowledged; for details please see the FAQs on this [website](#).

Lower Saxony)<sup>4</sup>; deviations have to be justified. In order to facilitate the collaboration further, it is possible to apply for joint post-doctoral positions (100% TV-L 13). In Israel, an equivalent salary applies according to local standards.

#### IV. Application

Applications have to be submitted by the lead applicant in Lower Saxony online via the Volkswagen Foundation's [electronic application system](#)<sup>5</sup>

up to **March 1, 2023, 12:00 pm CET**.

In this call, **multiple applications** by one applicant are **ineligible**.

Applications must contain the following information and documents:

Applicants must complete the relevant **forms** posted on the Application Portal, provide details on the applicants, the recipient of funds (academic institution in Lower Saxony), title, time frame, costs (one budget for the Lower Saxon applicant and one for the Israeli co-applicant), as well as a legally binding declaration.

#### **Attachments (PDF-Files only):**

1. Cover letter (optional)
2. **Proposal description** in English; please use the **template** available as download on the website of the [Volkswagen Foundation](#) (max. 38.000 characters incl. spaces for the project description + references)
3. **Justification of the budget**
4. **Short CVs**, including the 10 most important publications (max. 2 pages / applicant); links to ORCID, research gate, google scholar or similar profiles – if existing – are welcome
5. **Copy of doctoral degree award/PhD certificate** (from both applicants)

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<sup>4</sup> Please calculate according to the Ministry's personnel rates for academic staff (see [website](#), download column on the right). The Foundation's personnel rates (as specified in the electronic application system) are not applicable here.

<sup>5</sup> For practical information on the electronic application system see page 5.

6. **Data management plan** (if applicable)
7. **Statement of the recipient of funds**, i. e. the academic institution in Lower Saxony (please use the – German – **form** available as download on the website of the [Volkswagen Foundation](#), sign it (applicant in Lower Saxony) and upload as “institutional statement”)

The applications will be reviewed comparatively by a **review panel**, there will be no written reviews for the individual applications. In case the reviewers identify more projects being clearly eligible for funding than funds are available, the Foundation may introduce the instrument of a lottery to determine which of these projects will receive funding.

A funding decision can be expected about 8-9 months after the deadline. Please note that due to the comparative review no detailed feedback on the proposals will be provided.

**Applications once rejected (by the Volkswagen Foundation or other funders) cannot be re-submitted, neither in revised form. Applications submitted to other funders cannot be submitted to the Volkswagen Foundation concurrently.**

**Please also consider the related FAQs on the [website](#) of the Volkswagen Foundation.**

## **Electronic Application Made Easy – Practical information**

The Volkswagen Foundation will only accept proposal outlines and applications via its electronic application system [portal.volkswagenstiftung.de](https://portal.volkswagenstiftung.de). Please note that only registered users of the electronic application system have access to application data, can submit applications and receive corresponding e-mail messages. Hence, it is required for applicants with project responsibility to register oneself or to ask a co-worker to register in his/her name with the proper e-mail address.

### **Please follow the next steps to compile and submit your application:**

1. If you are a new user please **register** at the application portal with your name, your e-mail address and your own password. When registering you will be asked about your work address details. Subsequently, you must **activate** your account using the link sent by e-mail. If you already have a user account you can immediately **log in** using your e-mail address and password.
2. Click on “**new application**” to select the corresponding funding initiative (here: SPRUNG → Research Cooperation Lower Saxony – Israel), the application type (here: proposal), the grant-receiving institution in Lower Saxony, and the language.
3. As lead applicant please **invite all co-applicants**. After successful registration, they receive an authorization in the application portal to process the forms and enclosures of the selected application. In addition, **separate budget plans** are generated for your co-applicants. To agree upon a completed application, the application can be **blocked** in order to protect it from changes.
4. Having completed the first two steps – and any time later on – you can interrupt or save the application and return to it, logging in or out at any time.
5. Please check whether the **pre-filled data** on the applicant are correct. We need the **application data** (e.g. project title, duration) and the **budgets’** details; please complete the relevant forms. Please note that by

pressing the “**save**” button you do not transfer any data to the Foundation. You are able to revise all data up to the time you actually submit your application. Please don't forget to read and **accept** the **legal statement** (the checkbox can only be ticked once, by either of the applicants). If you wish you can generate a PDF of the filled-in forms for verification and for your filing.

6. Under “enclosures” you should **upload** all the items listed on the preceding page. Only **PDF** files are accepted. You can make changes to all files up to the time you actually submit your application.
7. Once your application is complete, please **submit** it **electronically**.
8. In the course of processing your application the Foundation might request additional information. Click on “**new supplement**” to upload and submit the respective files. This can also be done by both the lead applicant and the co-applicant(s).