

Programme document Leibniz ScienceCampi

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1. Purpose of the funding

Leibniz ScienceCampi serve to assist Leibniz institutions in forming regional networks with universities and other partners (other research institutes, commercial enterprises, etc.) in order to focus on clearly defined topics of academic and practical relevance. The aim of the collaboration is to generate critical mass and create academic centres with international visibility. This, in turn, serves to consolidate the strategic collaboration of the partners in the long term.

Leibniz ScienceCampi are intended to harness, structure and tackle innovative fields of research. Leibniz ScienceCampi are distinguished by the fact that they also facilitate high-risk research, in the sense of forging new paths in research. The funded projects must not only stand out through their particular academic quality, but also aim to be of relevance to society.

Leibniz ScienceCampi can be funded in two funding phases of four years each: the first phase is intended to provide an opportunity to pool expertise and test new ideas, while the second phase must be used to demonstrate that a ScienceCampus can implement the potential developed during the first phase.

2. Target of the funding

In a Leibniz ScienceCampus, at least one Leibniz institution collaborates with one or more universities. Leibniz ScienceCampi have no thematic restrictions, and provide great flexibility with regard to collaborative formats.

The Leibniz ScienceCampus is inherently a regionally defined model. However, collaborations beyond the immediate geographical area or state boundaries are certainly possible, depending on the circumstances.

Leibniz ScienceCampi can currently be funded over two funding phases, each lasting four years, with an annual funding volume of up to 300,000 euros.

Leibniz ScienceCampi can use the requested funds to finance both their coordinating and academic tasks.

The institutions participating in the Leibniz ScienceCampus guarantee equal opportunities, free accessibility of research results, and the promotion of junior researchers.¹ They also undertake to adhere to the rules of good scientific practice.²

The Leibniz ScienceCampus presents itself to the public within the corporate design of the Leibniz Association. The Leibniz ScienceCampus adjusts its communications to the target group.

3. Eligibility criteria

A key condition for funding is the binding agreement by the institute and collaborating universities and/or home state to provide a comparable amount of co-financing, which means that a Leibniz ScienceCampus can usually receive at least 900,000 euros per year. This is intended to guarantee sufficient overall funding. The co-financing can also take the form of material and staff contributions (provision of infrastructure and personnel).

The acceptability of the co-financing proposal is assessed during the selection process and determined on a case-by-case basis. Additional financing contributions from other participating institutions may be taken into account.

The structure of a Leibniz ScienceCampus must be defined by the partners in a specific agreement. In this agreement, the partners of a Leibniz ScienceCampus should decide on an appropriate governance model³.

¹ For guidance see the [Leibniz Guidelines on Career Development](#), the [Leibniz Equality Standards](#), the [Open Access Policy of the Leibniz Association 2016-2020](#), the [Standards for Appointments to Academic Management Positions within the Leibniz Association](#) and the [Guidelines on the Handling of Research Data within the Leibniz Association](#).

² For guidance see the [Guidelines for Good Scientific Practice](#) in the Leibniz Association.

³ In an exemplary model, the Leibniz ScienceCampus is headed by a directorate whose members are selected by the university's rectorate/executive committee and the directorates of the participating Leibniz institutions. This directorate elects the spokesperson of the Leibniz ScienceCampus. In its other tasks – especially those of quality assurance and further development – the directorate is supported by a steering committee comprising project leaders from the Leibniz ScienceCampus. A full-time coordinator is responsible for coordinating the projects and partners, and for implementing all operative tasks, including the external presentation of the ScienceCampus. An international Scientific Advisory Board supports the academic work of the Leibniz ScienceCampus.

4. Applications

Every institution within the Leibniz Association can submit applications for Leibniz ScienceCampi. Applications must be submitted by the lead Leibniz institution and it is to this institution that the approval will be sent. Extension applications from existing Leibniz ScienceCampi can be submitted after the third year of funding. New applications and extension applications are in competition with each other.

Applications can only be submitted via the Leibniz Association's online application system. The application text is uploaded in the online system. Leibniz Headquarters will provide a template for the application text. It should not exceed 10 pages (new applications) or 12 pages (extension applications), excluding the bibliography. The page limit for resubmitted applications is 10.5 or 12.5 pages, respectively, as these applications may comment on changes made in the application in the addendum. Additional documents required:

- Collaboration agreement / copy of the signed collaboration agreement;
- If no signed collaboration agreement is available, a letter of support;
- CVs and relevant publications of the project leaders;
- Written agreements from the institute(s), collaborating university and/or federal state to provide co-financing at a comparable level;
- For extension applications: Assessment of the Leibniz ScienceCampus' Scientific Advisory Board regarding the first funding period.

The application text and all documents must be submitted in English. The chairperson of the Senate Strategic Committee (SAS) will decide on any potential exceptions. The assessment of the individual sections A-D will be conducted according to a scale ranging from excellent to insufficient⁴, with individual weighting of each section.

Applications should be structured as follows:

A) Assessment of the first funding phase (only for extension applications)

- Implementation of the work programme and the milestones achieved
- Strategic further development of the work programme and the planned objectives
- Development of collaborative structures and the resulting academic and strategic added value
- Presentation of the results to date in the form of academic publications, theses/dissertations, third-party funding acquired, academic conferences, public relations and knowledge-transfer measures, patents, and other forms where appropriate
- Prospects for continuation following completion of a second funding phase
- Assessment by the Scientific Advisory Board of the Leibniz ScienceCampus⁵

B) Quality of the project and credentials of the partners

- Project summary
- Introduction to the academic field

⁴ 1= insufficient, 2=good, 3=very good, 4=excellent

⁵ The report of the Scientific Advisory Board on the first funding phase is uploaded directly in the online system. A template is provided.

- Presentation of the innovative character of the project/subject field in relation to the state of the art
- For high-risk research: special added value in the event of success
- Work programme with milestones and work packages
- Explanation of the research project's relevance in terms of its contribution to solving current academic, social, environmental or economic problems
- Presentation of the credentials of the participating researchers in their respective fields⁶
- Explanation of the involvement of partners and disciplines relevant for the success of the project
- Presentation of the participating partners' previous collaboration

C) Structural and strategic impact

- Presentation of the synergies and academic added value resulting from the network
- Presentation of the importance of the subject-matter for the location
- Presentation of the conditions at the location (e.g. existing facilities)
- Measures for further developing the partnership with the university
- Presentation of the governance structure of the proposed Leibniz ScienceCampus
- Measures for further internationalisation
- Presentation of the strategic importance of the project for the Leibniz Association
- Details concerning HR development and recruitment in accordance with the Leibniz Association's career guidelines, the Leibniz equality standards and the Leibniz recruitment standards²
- Communication concept (measures and target groups)
- If applicable, any necessary measures to protect intellectual property and ensure knowledge transfer

D) Financial planning

- Details of the financial plan⁷

5. Criteria for assessing applications

The Leibniz ScienceCampi programme provides for two consecutive funding phases. The first funding phase affords the opportunity to explore and test ideas and pool expertise, while the second phase is intended to make the most of the potential developed during the first phase.

Assessments of applications for the first funding phase should therefore take the form of an analysis of the potential of the suggested project.

⁶ The CVs of the designated members of the directorate, and of other project leaders if required, are uploaded directly in the online system. A template is provided.

⁷ The financial plan and co-financing figures are entered directly in the online system in table format.

Assessments of applications for the second funding phase should evaluate the work done to date and place greater emphasis on the strategic considerations of the Leibniz Association.

The assessments should be guided by the following criteria, on which the SAS bases its evaluation:

A) Assessing the first funding phase (only for extension applications)

(Weighting: 30%)

- Implementation of the work programme and the milestones achieved
- Strategic further development of the work programme and the planned objectives
- Development of collaborative structures and the resulting academic and strategic added value
- Results to date in the form of academic publications, theses/dissertations, third-party funding acquired, academic conferences, public relations and knowledge-transfer measures, patents, and other forms where appropriate
- Prospects for continuation following completion of a second funding phase
- Assessment by the Scientific Advisory Board of the Leibniz ScienceCampus

B) Assessing the quality of the project and credentials of the partners⁸

(Weighting: new application: 45 % extension application: 20 %)

- Academic and methodological excellence by international standards
- Innovative character of the project/subject field in relation to the state of the art
- For high-risk research: special added value in the event of success
- Research project's prospects of success: specificity of the work programme and feasibility of the project
- Relevance: contribution to solving current academic, social, environmental or economic problems
- Academic excellence and credentials of the researchers involved
- Participation of relevant partners and disciplines

C) Assessing the structural and strategic impact

(Weighting: new application: 45 % extension application: 40 %)

- Synergies in collaboration and added value through the network
- Conditions at the location and the importance of the subject-matter to the location
- Concept for further developing the partnership with the university
- Appropriateness of the governance structure
- International visibility of the collaboration and strategy for further internationalisation
- Strategic importance of the project for the Leibniz Association

⁸ When submitting the application, it is possible to indicate individual biographical circumstances to be taken into account during assessment. These include for example periods of childcare, care of dependents as well as (health) impairments and periods outside of academia.

- Aspects of HR development and recruitment in accordance with the Leibniz Association's career guidelines, the Leibniz equality standards and the Leibniz recruitment standards
- Target group-appropriate communication and knowledge-transfer measures

D) Assessing the financial planning

(Weighting: new application: 10 % extension application: 10 %)

- Appropriateness of the financial plan and co-financing at a comparable level by the Leibniz institution, the university and/or home state.

6. Reporting and quality assurance

The evaluation of the work of the Leibniz ScienceCampus and continuous quality assurance are key tasks of the governing and advisory bodies.

At the beginning of the third calendar year of funding, the funded projects submit an interim report (of no more than five pages in length, excluding all appendices), which focuses particularly on the extent to which the milestones formulated in the application have been achieved. Leibniz Headquarters examine this interim report and may submit it to the SAS for information, which may make recommendations to the project. Interim reports are also submitted to the international Scientific Advisory Board. After the end of the funding phase, a final report (of no more than five pages in length, excluding all appendices) will be submitted to the international Scientific Advisory Board and to the SAS. For extension applications, an opinion statement from the Scientific Advisory Board as well as the interim and, if applicable, final report are included in the evaluation of extension applications.

7. Procedural information

The procedure for applications, selections and funding decisions encompasses the following stages:

- The lead Leibniz institution submits an expression of interest to Leibniz Headquarters.
- The lead Leibniz institution submits the full application.
- Leibniz Headquarters assesses whether the applications are complete and meet the formal criteria.
- Leibniz Headquarters usually procures at least two written academic assessments by external, internationally accredited academic experts.
- The SAS decides which funding recommendations to make to the Senate.
- The Senate of the Leibniz Association decides whether to fund the project.

Applicants whose application has been rejected can submit a new application in the next application round.

After the first three funding years have expired, it is possible to submit one extension application for additional funding for up to four years (second funding phase). A decision on this extension application will follow the procedure described here.

The President of the Leibniz Association announces the approval decisions made by the Senate and will inform the responsible federal and home state government departments. Leibniz Headquarters provides the projects with the funds in accordance with the Senate's decisions. In terms of reporting, the funded projects provide information on the implementation of their work programmes (see also point 6. Reporting and quality assurance). As part of the overall reporting on the Leibniz Competition, the Leibniz Association submits an annual report to the Joint Science Conference (GWK) in May of each year regarding the implementation of the Strategic Networking funding programme and the approved projects. Leibniz Headquarters is responsible for documenting and evaluating all the stages of the procedure.

8. Contact for questions and advice on applying

The Leibniz Association

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