

IWH EXplore

Competitive Funding for Research Projects with External Involvement at IWH – 2025 Call for Proposals –

The Objectives of IWH EXplore

IWH EXplore gives scientists the opportunity to acquire supplemental funding, in addition to the basic funding identified in the programme budget, for the development of innovative research approaches as part of a competitive process. This enables the innovative research approaches of strong researchers, which are aimed at establishing new areas of research or substantially developing existing areas of research and which expect to receive follow-up financing, particularly from third party funds, to be funded during an early development phase. A prerequisite for funding is the involvement of at least one researcher who has expertise in the respective research field and who is working at an external research institution or university at home or abroad.

Two funding lines are currently available to fund projects in which external scientists are involved:

➤ Speed Projects

➤ Seed Fund

In accordance with a respective commitment set out in the Institute's present Total-E-Quality Action Plan, IWH EXplore serves as a mechanism for promoting young female researchers. Consequently, female researchers are explicitly encouraged to submit project outlines in the frame of the two funding lines. In the event, there has to be a selection amongst equally fundable applications with a similar scientific merit due to the limited availability of funds earmarked for IWH EXplore, the attainment of the objective to promote female researchers shall be taken properly into account.

Speed Projects

The *IWH Speed Project* grant supports scientists in developing project ideas in cooperation with external scientists. These ideas can then form the basis for joint third party funding applications, research programme projects or Seed Fund projects. Innovative project ideas are preferred which have the potential of expanding the IWH research programme in the medium term. This supports the creation of new or, from a content or budget perspective, enhanced research groups or junior research groups.

Speed Projects run for a maximum of six months. They are approved by IWH's Executive Board. If required, the Executive Board can obtain an expert opinion.

The maximum funding volume for a *Speed Project* is 10,000 euros. Eligible costs include for example licensing of scientific data, travel expenses, hiring of student or scientific support staff, visits by IWH scientists to external research institutions or guest visits by external researchers to IWH.

Data acquired or generated as part of a *Speed Project* is to be made accessible via the IWH data centre to third parties for research purposes. Reasons for deviating from this regulation are to be stated in the project application.

With the exception of financing research stays at IWH, costs incurred by external researchers, research institutes or universities are only refundable if attributable to the outcome of commissioned research conducted by the respective external partner in the frame of a joined IWH EXplore project. Overheads cannot be reimbursed.

There are three deadlines for applications in 2025: 1 June, 1 September and 1 December. The applications should contain a minimum of the following:

-
- a brief account of the research question and reference to the IWH Research Programme, max. of two pages
 - reasons for selecting the external cooperation partners or reasons for working together with IWH from the perspective of the external partner
 - CV, list of publications and, if applicable, a brief account of the relevant preliminary work of the participants
 - objective of the *Speed Project* (joint publication, cooperation consolidation, development of a detailed project outline, application for third party funds etc.)
 - financial plan
-

The application process is open to all IWH postdoctoral scientists and postdoctoral scientists working at national and international research institutes or universities. Applications must be completed and submitted jointly by the project partners.

The project leaders shall submit a two to three page report to the Executive Board on the progress and results of the project no later than three months after completion of an *IWH Speed Project*. This report shall also contain proof of the utilisation of the allocated funds.

Seed Fund

Start-up funding through the *IWH Seed Fund* supports scientists in investigating new ideas in collaboration with external cooperation partners. The funding can be used e. g. to finance the positions of PhD students (50% pay group 13), scholarships, visits by guest scientists to IWH, visits by IWH scientists to external research institutes, the organisation of joint workshops and conferences, data or special software.

PhD students who are financed by the *Seed Fund* are to be given the opportunity to work at the research institute of the participating external scientists as part of the funded project.

Seed Fund Projects usually run 6 to 18 months. They are approved by IWH's Executive Board. If required, the Executive Board can obtain an expert opinion. The maximum financing volume for a Seed Fund project is 70,000 euros. *Seed Fund Projects* can be converted into IWH Research Programme projects.

With the exception of financing research visits to IWH, costs incurred by external researchers, research institutes or universities are only refundable if attributable to commissioned research conducted by the respective external partner in course of a joined IWH EXplore project. Overheads cannot be reimbursed.

The aim of *Seed Fund Projects* is to develop new collaborations with top external researchers and to expand the network of partners at cooperating universities and non-university research institutes. They are to be led by an IWH scientist and an external scientist. The projects should be suitable for producing high-level specialist publications and have the potential to receive follow-up financing through third party funding. It is expected that, during the term of the project, a project-related workshop is to be carried out where the project findings are presented and discussed.

Selection criteria include project originality, a topic in line with the IWH Research Programme, the value placed on cooperation in the project, inclusion of young scientists, the project's potential to contribute to the further development of the IWH Research Programme, the prospect of high-level specialist publications, third party funding potential and the applicants' professional qualifications.

Data generated or acquired within the framework of a Seed Fund project shall be made accessible via the IWH data centre to third parties for research purposes. Reasons for deviating from this regulation are to be stated in the project application.

The application process is open to all IWH postdoctoral scientists and postdoctoral scientists working at national and international research institutes or universities. One of the applicants may be close to completing their PhD, however, this must be completed prior to the intended commencement of funding.

Applications must be completed and submitted jointly by the project partners. Funding applications may be no longer than ten pages (Arial, 11pt, 1.5 spacing) and should contain:

-
- project partners and leaders at the external institute and at IWH
 - CV, list of publications and, if applicable, a brief account of the relevant preliminary work of the participants
 - a summary (½ page)
 - description of the research project (research question, methodology, expected results, contribution to the IWH Research Programme)
 - current state of the literature
 - work plan
 - financial plan
 - opportunities for further development of the project after termination of the *Seed Fund* funding, especially further possibilities for financing for the doctoral candidates being employed in the project
-

Applications must be made in English. There are three deadlines for applications in 2025: 1 June, 1 September and 1 December.

Project leaders shall submit a report on the progress and findings of the project to the Executive Board no later than three months after completion of an *IWH Seed Fund Project*. This report shall also contain proof of the utilisation of the allocated funds. An interim report (two to four pages in length) shall be submitted no later than one month after the end of the first project year for projects with a term of more than one year.

Please direct your project applications and inquiries about IWH EXplore to explore@iwh-halle.de.