

Call for proposals

Top Citizen Science (TCS) 2017

Sparkling Science expansion projects

Start of call
6th November 2017

Submission deadline
15th January 2018

Version: 9th November 2017

WELCOME!

OBJECTIVES OF THE FUNDING INITIATIVE

On behalf of the Austrian Federal Ministry of Science, Research and Economy (BMWFW) and in coordination with the Austrian Science Fund (FWF), the OeAD has issued a call for grant proposals for Top Citizen Science Expansion Projects with a total of € 250,000 in grants available. Researchers can submit proposals for the expansion of OeAD-funded Sparkling Science projects¹ which are suitable in terms of content and methods and which are to be expanded to include "citizen science" components. Citizen science includes all activities of persons who do not primarily work in the field of research²; in this context, it is understood as the active involvement of citizens and their knowledge, resources and commitment in scholarly research and the generation of new scholarly insights. Citizen science addresses all people regardless of age, gender or social background as well as people with highly specialised knowledge or specialist expertise ("knowledge communities"). In line with the policy of the Sparkling Science programme, young target groups are to be addressed in any case.

Depending on the extent of their expertise and/or their commitment and/or resources contributed, citizens may be involved in the following categories:

- Crowdsourcing: Involvement of citizens in data collection and/or processing
- Distributed intelligence: Involvement of citizens in data analysis and/or interpretation
- Participatory science: Involvement of citizens in the advancement of methods, instruments and/or products
- Collaborative science: Involvement of citizens in problem definition, development of research questions and/or quality criteria

Citizens may be involved during various stages of planning and executing a research project; please note that 1) this involvement does not have to span all of the stages of a project as listed below, and 2) the type of involvement can change in the course of a project. This involvement may concern the following stages:

- Agenda (definition and identification of topics)
- Data creation (data generation/collection)
- Investigation (research work)
- Dissemination (science communication)

Important: The involvement of citizens as mere "research subjects" or "data sources" (e.g. as subjects, survey respondents, etc.) without making use of their expertise is not a component of citizen science as defined for the purposes of this initiative.

¹ Similarly, FWF expansion projects can be submitted in conjunction with FWF-funded projects, for which a total of € 250,000 in funding is also available.

² GEWISS (2016): Green Paper - Citizen Science Strategy 2020 for Germany. [online] URL:

http://www.buergerschaffewissen.de/sites/default/files/assets/dokumente/gewiss_cs_strategy_english.pdf

The Sparkling Science main projects that serve as a basis for these expansion projects ensure the quality of the research underlying the proposals submitted in this initiative. An assessment of the quality of the TCS expansion projects submitted with regard to the expected generation of additional research insights and additional effects such as social impact and the like will be carried out in the course of a review procedure handled jointly by the FWF and OeAD.

The purpose of the funding initiative is to promote the involvement of citizens in research projects. In this initiative, citizens should be encouraged to contribute to generating research results and insights on the basis of their expertise, curiosity and willingness to participate – without sacrificing the excellence of the research work. In the course of the expansion project, new opportunities for involvement should be offered on the Internet by the end of 2018 at the latest. The involvement of citizen scientists holds the potential to generate new research questions and to develop new approaches to research fields, to expand the competences of researchers and to accelerate innovation processes. The involvement of citizens in research projects does not have to generate added value in all of the categories listed as examples above, but it must have the potential to generate substantive additional research insights in each project. In addition, the funding initiative is designed to contribute to communicating research processes and the work of researchers to the population, thus helping to dismantle existing barriers between science and society.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Principal investigators in ongoing Sparkling Science projects

OVERALL SCHEDULE

Start of call	Monday, 6 th November 2017
Submission deadline	Monday, 15 th January 2018
Announcement of funding decisions	by May 2018
Earliest possible project launch	July 2018

ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

All principal investigators currently running a Sparkling Science project which will not yet be completed at the time when decisions on TCS expansion projects are issued. The content and methods of the expansion projects must be designed in such a way that citizens can make a substantial and visible contribution to the attainment of research objectives.

DURATION

The duration of funded projects is generally limited to two years. However, extensions are possible in justified cases (without additional costs).

REQUIRED APPLICATION CONTENT³

1. Project content

- a. Brief description of the main project (i.e. the Sparkling Science project serving as a basis for the TCS expansion project; no more than 2 pages):
 - Page 1: Web link to main project, project number, project content, objectives, duration, cooperation partners and funding amount
 - Page 2: Status of research work
- b. Description of additional TCS expansion project:
 - Positioning of project in relation to state of the art in international research and CS activities
 - Description of TCS expansion project objectives (and reason[s] for choosing the "citizen science" approach⁴)
 - "Additional value of TCS expansion project":
 - Compatibility with main project: To what extent is the TCS expansion project a meaningful expansion/complement to the main project?
 - Insights to be gained: What additional substantive research insights – which cannot be gained without the participation of citizens – will the expansion project generate?
- c. Methods, work plan and time schedule
 - Description of methods in the TCS expansion project
 - Description of the planned use of technologies (e.g. databases, apps, blogs, websites)
 - Work plan and time schedule (including links to main project)

2. Information on interaction with citizens and planned handling of data

- a. Definition and selection of target groups addressed⁵ (number of citizens involved, target environments, etc.)
- b. Description of planned participation methods
- c. Description of communication plan for the envisaged target groups (including support and feedback for citizens involved, etc.)
- d. What are potential benefits of the project for the citizens?
- e. How will the quality of the data be ensured? (e.g. training sessions, manuals, etc.)
- f. Data protection/privacy issues⁶

3. Research team

- a. Please describe all persons involved in the implementation of the TCS expansion project and provide evidence of their academic and/or communications-related qualifications with regard to TCS (CVs, publication lists, information on any previous

³ Please note that links to websites will serve only as additional information for reviewers, meaning that the most relevant information on the project must be included in the project description itself. URLs in the project description or in annexes will be disregarded if a login/password is required in order to access the content.

⁴ Literature and tools related to Top Citizen Science: e.g. at www.zentrumfuercitizenscience.at/en/literature-videos-strategy-papers

⁵ Citizen scientists must be informed about all important project details in the form of informed consent to be able to make a qualified decision about the project participation.

⁶ Please note that the new EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) will apply as from May 25, 2018 and the new Austrian Data Protection Act will enter into force on this date. More information can be found at <https://www.digital.austria.gv.at/data-protection-act>.

activities in citizen science, science communication, open innovation, science education and the like).

- b. Where applicable: Description of cooperation arrangements (national and international)
- c. Organisational chart of research team and envisaged target group(s)

4. Broader effects expected

- a. Dissemination of research results: planned publications (use of open access channels), events, web presence, media communications, etc.
- b. Description of potential effects on other research disciplines and/or effects of planned TCS activity on society (social impact, positive effects on public perception of science and research, etc.)

5. Costs

Budget broken down by category (based on template). In line with Sparkling Science programme policy, 20 % in overhead costs can be added to direct personnel costs. In addition, 10 % of the total costs are to be covered by the organisation's own contributions.

6. Ethical issues

Where ethical issues have to be considered in the proposed research project⁷, all potential ethical, security-related or regulatory aspects of the proposed research project and the planned handling of those issues must be discussed in a separate paragraph. Applicants must also provide a brief explanation in cases where no ethical issues have to be taken into account.

MAXIMUM GRANT AMOUNTS

Maximum grant amount

€ 50,000

LEGAL BASIS

As a basis for the preparation of applications, the legal provisions applicable to the Sparkling Science funding programme also apply to this funding initiative. Information on eligible costs can be found in the [“Special Guidelines on Cooperation between Schools and Research Institutions in the Sparkling Science Programme – 3rd Programme Stage”](#).

HOW TO APPLY?

The application documents must clearly indicate the objectives and target groups to be reached as well as the measures and costs involved in implementing the project, who is to be involved in implementation (including any cooperation partners) and the time frame in which the project is to be carried out. The project may be implemented in the form of a single activities or a series of activities, and it may also lead to the establishment of a lasting institution, such as special long-term TCS activities.

All parts of the application are to be written **in an 11 pt. font size with line spacing 1.5. Applications are to be prepared in English; in addition, a one-page project abstract in German is required.**

⁷ For orientation purposes, applicants may wish to review the document "[Ethics for researchers](#)" published by the European Commission or "The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity". In cases of uncertainty, researchers can also contact their more experienced colleagues or the person/department responsible for ethical issues at their respective research institution.

The following application documents must be submitted **in writing** and **in duplicate**:

1. Completed application form including
 - a. A two-page description of the main project (DIN A4, no more than 6000 characters including spaces)
 - Page 1: Web link to main project, project number, project content, objectives, duration, cooperation partners and funding amount
 - Page 2: Status of research work
 - b. One-page academic description of the expansion project in English (DIN A4, no more than 3000 characters including spaces)
 - c. Two one-page abstracts for public relations (PR) work: one in German and one in English (DIN A4, no more than 3000 characters including spaces per abstract) should contain: 1) project title, 2) content of research project, 3) hypotheses, 4) methods, including the target groups and ways for them to take part, 5) how are young people being involved? and 6) an explanation indicating what is new and/or special about the project. The language of the PR abstracts should be comprehensible to non-specialist audiences and contain as few technical/specialist terms as possible
2. Completed budget plan
3. Free-form information:
 - a. Competence profiles of the persons involved in the project, with relevant past projects and publication lists (no more than 3 DIN A4 pages per person). For all persons involved in the implementation of the TCS expansion project, applicants are to provide evidence of their academic and/or communications-related qualifications with regard to TCS (CVs, publication lists, information on any previous activities in citizen science, science communication, open innovation, science education and the like).
 - b. A detailed description of the TCS expansion project (DIN A4 with consecutive page numbers) consisting of:
 - Project description: no more than 20 DIN A4 pages including all tables and figures with no more than 9,000 words (including headings, footnotes, captions, etc.), but not including the table of contents
 - Bibliography relevant to the project⁸ and a list of abbreviations (no more than 5 DIN A4 pages)
4. To submit if necessary: form for resubmission
Overview of all changes made to the newly submitted proposal and statement on evaluations and suggestions of the panel.

⁸ Reference lists must include all authors, complete titles, journal/publisher, year and page numbers. For publications with more than 20 authors, an "et al." reference can be used.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND DEADLINES

a. FOR SPARKLING SCIENCE EXPANSION PROJECTS

The application must be received by the OeAD's Center for Citizen Science by **15th January 2018**, (date of postmark: 15th January 2018). The application must be:

- completed in its entirety and bear the signature of the person authorized to sign as well as the stamp of the applicant's organisation
- submitted in duplicate (two hard copies)
- submitted in electronic form (on a CD or USB stick)

Applications can be submitted in person (at the reception desk, 1st floor, Monday to Thursday from 8:00 am – 5:00 pm, Friday from 8:00 am – 3:00 pm) or by post.

b. FOR FWF EXPANSION PROJECTS

All information on FWF submission requirements can be found on the FWF website at <http://www.fwf.ac.at/en/research-funding/fwf-programmes/top-citizen-science-funding-initiative/>.

CONTACT

a. FOR SPARKLING SCIENCE EXPANSION PROJECTS

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b. FOR FWF EXPANSION PROJECTS

FWF (Austrian Science Fund)
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A-1090 Vienna

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CONSULTATION

The staff of FWF and the Center for Citizen Science will be glad to advise you by telephone or in person (please make an appointment) at the following times:

Monday to Thursday 9:00 am – 4:00 pm
Friday 9:00 am – 1:00 pm

All advisory meetings and project plans will be kept strictly confidential.

ANNEX FOR THE ASSESSMENT PROCEDURE:

Notes and questions for the members of the Top Citizen Science (TCS) expert panel

As equal opportunities and equal treatment are key priorities in the Top Citizen Science funding initiative, the evaluation of proposals must not account for any criteria extraneous to research and citizen science (e.g. age, gender, etc.) to the applicants' disadvantage.

On the basis of the defined requirements for proposals, panel members are to consider the following aspects of each application in their decisions:

1. Quality of the project

- a. Quality of additional TCS expansion project:
 - How is the expansion project positioned in relation to state of the art in international research and CS activities?
 - Are the TCS expansion project's goals described clearly?
 - Quality of "Additional value of TCS expansion project":
 - Compatibility with main project: To what extent is the TCS expansion project a meaningful expansion/complement to the main project?
 - Insights to be gained: What additional substantive research insights – which would not be possible without the participation of citizens – will the expansion project generate?
- b. Methods, work plan and time schedule
 - To what extent do you consider the methods envisaged for the TCS expansion project and the planned use of technologies to be appropriate?
 - Are the work plan and time schedule clearly defined and appropriate?

2. Quality aspects – Interactions with citizens and handling of data

- a. Are the definition, planned selection procedures, scope, qualifications and the like suitable for the target group addressed?
- b. What is your assessment of the communication plan for the envisaged target group as well as the planned methods of involvement?
- c. What is your assessment of the added value and personal benefit that citizens can derive from this project?
- d. Will the quality of data be ensured appropriately?
- e. How would you assess the applicant's consideration of data protection/privacy issues?

3. Quality of research team

- a. How would you assess the composition and qualifications of the research team, in particular with regard to their experience with citizen science?
- b. How would you assess the quality of the existing and planned cooperation arrangements (national and international)?

4. Broader effects expected

- a. How would you assess the dissemination strategies described?
- b. What potential effects can the planned TCS activity be expected to have on other research disciplines and/or social areas (social impact, positive effects on public perception of science and research, etc.)?

5. Financial aspects

- a. Are the personnel, material and other costs appropriate? Can you suggest any reductions that would not endanger the success of the project?
- b. Is the contribution of the principal investigator and the participating research institution(s) (infrastructure) appropriate?

6. Ethical Issues

- a. Are there ethical issues that would need to be considered? Are those issues handled adequately?

7. Suggestions

- a. What could (or should) be done to increase the project's chances of success?