

Procedure for awarding pilot projects

Preamble

The One Health Platform (OHP) is a statutory association of scientists from university and non-university research institutions in the field of One Health research as well as practitioners (public health services/veterinary services/environmental agencies) from all over Germany. The aim of the OHP is to promote inter- and transdisciplinary scientific exchange in the One Health field, to link national and international initiatives, to provide impetus and to create space for identifying research gaps and needs. It also aims to promote a dialogue between science and practice.

The Münster office is responsible for submitting and organising the assessment of pilot projects as part of the OHP. The funds required to carry out the projects are granted by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF)/Projektträger Gesundheitsforschung im Deutschen Zentrum für Luft- und Raumfahrt e. V., or, in the case of thematically suitable projects, by the Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL), the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection (BMUV), the Federal Ministry of Defence (BMVg), the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) or the Federal Ministry of Health (BMG).

Authorisation to apply

All members of the OHP are authorised to submit project applications and to be cooperation partners in individual projects. Persons with guest status are also authorised to participate in projects as cooperation partners. The Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) is authorised to initiate projects. Applications can be submitted by the submission deadlines announced by the office. As a rule, grants can only be awarded within Germany.

Type of projects

Pilot projects are delimitable individual projects with a high degree of originality and scientific risk character. They are trend-setting for new topics in One Health research. Pilot projects are based on an innovative hypothesis that is to be tested before, based on the results of the pilot project, further funding can be acquired outside the OHP. They are therefore intended to provide start-up funding for the applicant's subsequent research projects. For this reason, pilot projects are not a continuation of research projects that have already begun.

Pilot projects benefit from networking within the OHP and the exchange between disciplines and institutions. The new method resulting from the project or groundbreaking findings for One Health research are the added value for One Health research that arises from pilot projects.

As a rule, the project duration should not exceed twelve months. Applications with a duration of up to 18 months are permitted. Applications may only have one applicant and must have a defined and plausible time and financial framework. Co-operation partners for specific work packages must be involved via contracts. Guideline value for the maximum amount to be applied for (for 12 months): 120,000 euros (the amount must be comprehensibly justified by

the project structure and expenditure). With a duration of 18 months, this results in a maximum application sum of 180,000 euros. The project lump sum may be added to this.

Application procedure

Applications for project funding are submitted as part of the procedure described below.

1. Submission of the project application to the Münster office

Project applications must be submitted to the One Health Platform office in Münster by the deadlines set by the office in consultation with the SAB. Submission in electronic form is mandatory. The OHP application documents for pilot projects are standardised to improve the comparability and assessment of submitted project proposals. A corresponding template is available from the office or on the website www.zoonosen.net.

The planned procedure should be described in the project proposal. This should include the question to be addressed, the scientific novelty, the added value for One Health research and the networking between the relevant disciplines. The length is limited to ten pages (without attachments). An informal letter of support from the respective research institution must be attached to the application. The review process has two stages.

The office checks the documents for formal correctness. If the formalities are not complied with, the applicant will be given the opportunity to submit the relevant documents at short notice. The office is authorised to reject formally incorrect applications. The decision will be made at its own discretion.

After a formal review, the head office sends all funding applications submitted on time to the members of the Scientific Advisory Board (SAB). The members of the SAB, who are entitled to vote, review the applications and draw up a ranking list of all applications received for a project type based on a defined catalogue of criteria. Based on this ranking list, the best-ranked applications are admitted to the SAB meeting. At the SAB review meeting, the applicant presents the project in person and answers questions from the reviewers.

2. Review by the Scientific Advisory Board

The applicant will be invited by the office to a meeting of the SAB within a reasonable period of time. There, the applicant or a nominated representative will present the project application. Representatives of the funding ministries are expressly invited to the review. The voting members of the SAB discuss and evaluate the application. In justified exceptional cases, the SAB may also consult external experts to assess an application. External experts only have an advisory function and no voting rights. The following evaluation criteria apply to pilot projects:

- Expertise of the applicant and the cooperation partners with regard to the project idea and necessary prior knowledge
- scientific novelty and originality with regard to innovation and pilot character of the project applied for, existence of a conclusive hypothesis
- Appropriate balance between feasibility of the project and risk character, feasibility of third-party funding following the pilot phase
- Added value / relevance of the project or the expected project results for interdisciplinary One Health research
- Reasonableness of the time and financial framework presented

- Networking between different research institutions and specialist disciplines relevant to One Health research in the project or as a result of the expected project outcome

After reviewing the content and form of the project application, the SAB can decide as follows:

- a) The project application is generally assessed favourably and recommended for funding.
- b) The project application is rejected.

A funding recommendation for a project application is approved or rejected by a simple majority of the voting members of the SAB. Bias must be excluded.

Bias

If members of the SAB are biased, they must leave the room during the discussion and voting on the application. Bias is deemed to exist if a member of the SAB is financially or substantively involved in the planned project or if the member is employed in the same institute or working group as the applicant. The members of the SAB are also requested to truthfully declare close cooperation with the applicant in thematically similar projects or competition and, if necessary, to establish bias. Employment in the same superordinate institution alone is not a reason for bias.

In addition, voting members of the SAB may abstain from voting, e.g. if there is insufficient expertise to assess an application.

3. Final review by the project organiser/the funding ministries

For the final funding decision, the office forwards the application documents and the minutes of the SAB assessment to the funding ministry or its designated project management organisation. The necessary application form is completed and submitted by the applicant him/herself. A binding funding commitment can only be issued after the final review of the documents by the respective project organiser/the respective funding ministry. Funding is provided in the form of a grant notification issued directly to the project leader by the funding ministry or its project management organisation.

4. Follow-up applications

Follow-up applications are generally permitted. However, due to the project type description, they can only be submitted as interdisciplinary and/or transdisciplinary networking projects. Follow-up applications must be treated as new applications in the application procedure.

5. Reporting obligation

There is an obligation to report to the funding party, which can be found in the respective grant notification and is independent of the One Health Platform. The SAB is authorised to request written or oral interim or final reports on the projects. Short project reports can be presented at the annual "One Health Symposium".