

Call for Proposals

**Start-up Funds for the Initiation of Joint Projects within the
Framework of the Water Research Funding Programme
of the Land of Baden-Württemberg**

Funded by:



Baden-Württemberg

MINISTERIUM FÜR WISSENSCHAFT, FORSCHUNG UND KUNST

With scientific support from:



WASSERNETZWERK
BADEN-WÜRTTEMBERG

1. Funding Objectives

The scope of the Water Research Network Baden-Württemberg is to enhance the collaboration across disciplines and locations in Baden-Württemberg. The network was founded at the initiative of the Ministerium für Wissenschaft, Forschung und Kunst Baden-Württemberg (Ministry of Science, Research and the Arts of the Land of Baden-Württemberg, MWK) and is supported by the 'Water Research Funding Programme' (01.01.2016 – 30.06.2021) of the Land of Baden-Württemberg. In preparation, the MWK established a working group consisting of scientists from universities in Baden-Württemberg, which proposed support measures and structures for the Water Research Network.

A key objective of the Funding Programme is to establish a dialogue platform for water research in Baden-Württemberg: Since 2016, funds for 'connecting workshops' to further develop the collaboration of water research in Baden-Württemberg have been provided by the MWK within the framework of the Water Research Funding Programme. These workshops aimed at initiating sustainable impulses to develop future-oriented research questions and establishing new interdisciplinary cooperations. In order to continue and implement these goals, start-up funds for the preparation of joint projects in water research in Baden-Württemberg will be provided within the framework of this call for proposals.

2. Subject Matter of Funding

The funded start-up actions essentially contribute to the collaboration of water scientists across locations in Baden-Württemberg. Within the frame of the funded actions, the applicant is required to sustainably develop water research in Baden-Württemberg by means of scientific exchange. Funding will be granted for actions proposed by an applicant for the preparation of joint projects and focusing on a specific research topic covering one or more of the higher-level aspects and/or the cross-cutting issue mentioned below:

Higher-level aspect A: Material balance and water quality

In order to protect water as a resource, it is essential to be able to reliably characterize and analyze the range of substances found in the environment (from pollutants to environmental tracers, in particular stable isotopes) and have in-depth knowledge of the sources, transport routes, reaction processes, and sinks. Knowledge of these substances alone is not enough, though. It is also necessary to understand their relevance and their long-term impacts on the environment. Not least, the influence of political and economic decisions on water and material flows is a topic which requires a lot of research.

Higher-level aspect B: Natural hazards & extreme events

The changes that our natural environment and the climate are undergoing as well as the increasing complexity of modern societies pose new challenges for dealing with natural hazards and extreme events. The dynamics of physical and socio-cultural systems, and in particular, their interconnection and the way in which they synchronize and intensify each other, give rise to highly interdisciplinary questions related to water research. These are followed by questions regarding the vulnerability of both areas, opportunities for the development of scenarios and for adaptation, as well as a monitoring system and the development of early-warning systems.

Higher-level aspect C: Ecosystem functions and biodiversity

Changes in the hydrological cycle, for example as a consequence of land use decisions, have a major impact on ecosystem functions, biodiversity, and the productivity of (agro) ecosystems. The scientific foundations and limits of resilience or stability of many ecosystems are not yet well understood. Such an understanding, however, is a prerequisite for the development of effective measures. These are further questions which cannot be answered from the perspective of a single specialist discipline.

Cross-cutting issue Q: Governance of water and land use

The quality but also the hazards to ground and surface water are strongly influenced by land use decisions, which, in turn, are influenced by the general economic, political, and social conditions. In order to strengthen water governance, deeper insight into the decision-making context of companies and individuals and into the emergence, diffusion, efficiency, and effectiveness of existing water policies and institutions as well as the underlying conflict lines and power structures is required. For this purpose, water research with a focus on business management and general economics as well as on political sciences and law must be linked internally and externally with scientific and technical disciplines to enable efficient studies of these critical control issues.

3. Type and Scope of Funding

For the financial support of actions for the preparation of joint projects in the framework of the Water Research Network Baden-Württemberg, the MWK will provide a yearly budget of €30,000.

For workshops and preparatory meetings, funds to cover equipment costs (e.g. for travelling, accommodation, catering within the frame of preparatory meetings and workshops) can be requested.

In order to implement the objectives of the planned start-up actions, such as the preparation of joint project proposals, common publications and/or further activities for the preparation of joint projects, funds to cover personnel costs for postdocs up to a maximum of 2 person months, according to the Land law regulations, can be requested. The application for funds to cover personnel costs has to be justified.

A specific cooperation between higher education institutions in Baden-Württemberg remains subject to a separate written agreement regulating the subject matter of the contract, possibly remuneration, dealing with intellectual property, liability, duration etc..

Calculation of costs:

Staff cost calculations shall be based on the DFG Personalkostenrichtsatz (indicative rates for staff costs) for 2021. This document is available at:

https://www.dfg.de/formulare/60_12/60_12_en.pdf.

Funding for honoraria will not be granted.

For travel expenses, it has to be taken into account that train tickets/flight tickets can only be reimbursed for second class and economy class, respectively. The settlement of travel costs must comply with the regulations of the Land law regulations on travel costs of Baden-Württemberg.

The application for travel grants for scientists from research institutions outside of Baden-Württemberg or other institutions which are relevant in terms of the subject is possible insofar as their participation provides a substantial subject-specific contribution. Participation must be justified.

There will be neither full cost reimbursement nor overhead payments. Basic facilities at the participating higher education institutions, especially room, infrastructure and IT equipment expenses, are also excluded from funding.

In case of successful application, a funding budget for the implementation of the proposed start-up action will be granted. The granted budget depends on the amount of funds available and the requirements of the proposed action. The assessment of the funding budget will be based on the actual expenses, which have to be proven in the billing. If necessary, the granted budget may be reduced. It is not possible to increase the granted budget after completion of the funded action.

4. Prerequisites and Criteria

Content requirements:

- To promote synergies in the field of water research in Baden-Württemberg by enhancing the collaboration across disciplines and locations;
- To develop future-oriented research topics to apply for joint projects;
- To ensure the sustainability of research by creating a basis for long-term collaboration and joint projects;
- To support young scientists in water research.

For the assessment of the applications, the following main criteria apply:

- Scientific quality and degree of innovation of the research approach;
- Scientific potential: exploitability of the expected results with respect to joint project applications;
- Competences of the participating scientists;
- Degree of networking of the involved higher education institutions in Baden-Württemberg, expected synergy effects by the collaboration across disciplines and locations;
- Plausibility of the schedule and the financial planning, adequacy of the proposed funding budget in relation to the aims of the proposed start-up action;
- Consideration of gender mainstreaming aspects and equal opportunities in research.

5. Eligibility for Application

Higher education institutions in Baden-Württemberg are eligible for application. Researchers who have completed their academic training (a doctorate as a rule) are eligible to act as project leader.

6. Application Procedure

Proposals should include the following details:

- Topic, scientific objectives and overall goal of the proposed start-up action as well as classifying the topic within the context of the above-mentioned higher-level aspects and/or the cross-cutting issue;
- Detailed presentation of the scientific potential of the research approach, e.g. intended joint project applications, joint publications and/or further activities to implement the goals of the proposed action;
- Expertise of the project leader and the expected scientific synergy effects;
- Cooperation partners for the planned joint project (if necessary, in the annex);
- Description of the proposed start-up action, schedule and cost budget;
- If appropriate, justification of proposed reimbursement of personnel costs as well as travel expenses for cooperation partners who are not employed at a higher education institution of Baden-Württemberg (if necessary, in the annex).

Maximum length of the proposals: **3 DIN A4 pages** (font: Arial, size: 11), **plus annexes**. Proposals can be submitted in **English** or **German**.

The start-up action has to be carried until 30.06.2021 (according to the funding period of the Water Research Funding Programme of the Land of Baden-Württemberg).

During the evaluation process, the KIT will be advised by the Board of the Water Research Network Baden-Württemberg. After obtaining the consent of the MWK, the KIT will decide about transferring the funds, according to the criteria defined in this call. If required, the Board

can invite external experts (from research institutions outside of Baden-Württemberg) to review the proposals.

Transferring of funds from KIT to the higher education institution will be implemented by means of 'onlending the funds'. A corresponding agreement will be concluded with the higher education institution, containing the rights and obligations of the KIT and the higher education institution. Especially the regulations concerning the funding legislation must be adhered to and documented according to the guidelines of the MWK.

Proposals which do not meet the formal requirements of this call are inadmissible.

A report (max. 5 pages) must be submitted no later than three months after completion of the funded action.

Please submit proposals in electronic form (PDF format, proposal and annexes in one file) by 15 February 2021 to info@wassernetzwerk-bw.de

Coordination office of the Water Research Network Baden-Württemberg
Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT)
Engler-Bunte-Institut (EBI), Chair of Water Chemistry and Water Technology

If you have any questions on this call for proposals, please contact Ulrike Scherer:

Email: ulrike.scherer@kit.edu

Phone: 0721 – 608 48230

This call is also available on the website of the Water Research Network Baden-Württemberg: <http://www.wassernetzwerk-bw.de/english/103.php>