

Guide for the Submission of Proposals Austrian Climate Research Programme – ACRP

16th Call for Proposals

A funding programme of the Climate and Energy Fund
of the Austrian Federal Government



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PLEASE NOTE: The GBER (General Block Exemption Regulation of the EU) was adopted by the European Commission on March 9, 2023 with a change in the overhead rate (Gemeinkostenzuschlag, GKZ) for funded companies.
From September 1, 2023 onwards, companies will be able to claim 20 % overhead rate instead of the previous 25 %.
The overhead rate for research institutions will remain unchanged at 25 %.

For this reason, the Cost Guideline Version 3.0 applies to the present call which implemented this change.

ACRP only funds projects of oriented basic research. Thus, only research institutions can apply for funding and the change in the current cost guidelines has no impact on the funding of research institutions.

Preface

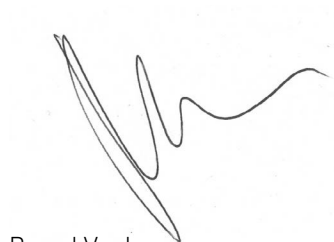
With the adverse effects of a changing climate becoming more and more evident, sound climate research provides the foundation for evidence-based transformation of society. Initiated by the Climate and Energy Fund – and established as the largest of national climate research programme of its kind – the Austrian Climate Research Programme (ACRP) continues to deliver new and valuable research findings for decision-makers at all levels, while exploring actionable pathways for policymakers, businesses, and civil society.

The ACRP encompasses all aspects of climate change relevant to Austria. It was developed in collaboration with leading international researchers to ensure high-quality research findings. Besides the creation of valuable knowledge as scientific basis for evidence-based decisions and actions, the ACRP strengthens Austria's research community and stimulates interdisciplinary collaboration.

Managed by the FFG, the 16th call of the funding programme is designed to continue the successful initiatives. This year's call focuses on the following thematic areas:

- Understanding the climate system and the consequences of climate change
- Specific support for Austria's policymakers
- Transformative change

We warmly invite you to take advantage of this opportunity to strengthen Austria's climate research by submitting your projects within the framework of the ACRP call. We wish all applicants all the best for their efforts!



Bernd Vogl
Managing Director Climate and Energy Fund

1.0 The 16th ACRP Call at a glance

The Climate and Energy Fund (Klima- und Energiefonds) is an important instrument of the Austrian Federal Government for the creation of incentives in the field of climate policy. The Climate and Energy Fund supports a broad range of research topics with the intention to help Austria to deal with climate change through adaptation and mitigation, and to contribute to building a high level of climate research competence for relevant policy areas in Austria.

Within the framework of the Climate and Energy Fund, the Austrian Climate Research Programme (ACRP) provides a conceptual and institutional basis for supporting climate research in Austria. The ACRP focuses on research on climate change and climate actions, adaptation, mitigation and their mutual interrelation. The intent is to provide scientific background for the implementation of the Austrian strategy for adaptation to climate change, the National Energy and Climate Plan (NEKP) and the Paris Agreement in Austria.

The ACRP was launched in 2008 under the auspices of the Austrian Climate and Energy Fund and is a broad policy initiative promoting high quality climate research and related research in Austria. The ACRP provides a conceptual and institutional framework for supporting climate research in Austria. ACRP activities are guided by an international Steering Committee.

The ACRP call is handled by the Austrian Research Promotion Agency (FFG).

The 16th Call comprises the following three thematic areas:

- Understanding the climate system and the consequences of climate change
- Specific support for Austria's policymakers
- Transformative change

Table 1: Key data for the 16th ACRP Call

Key data	Information
Call budget	5 Mio. EUR
Deadline for submission	Thursday, 25.01.2024, 12:00 p.m. (noon)
Application language	English
Contact person	Contact persons are listed in Chapter 6
Information online	FFG Webpage
Submission portal	eCall
Available instrument	Oriented basic research (Version 1.5)
Funding per project	Minimum 60.000 EUR up to maximum 350.000 EUR
Maximum project duration	36 months
Maximum funding rate	100 %
Cost Guideline	Cost Guideline 3.0

2.0 Scope and objectives of the programme

The ACRP focuses on climate change impacts and their solutions, adaptation, mitigation and their mutual interrelation. The intent is to provide scientific background for the implementation of the Austrian strategy for adaptation to climate change, the National Energy and Climate Plan (NEKP) and the Paris Agreement in Austria.

The overarching objectives of ACRP research are:

- to support climate policy in Austria on local, regional, national and international scales, especially on topics relevant to climate adaptation and mitigation, and their conflicts and synergies,
- to support and strengthen the Austrian climate research community and to increase the visibility of research activities,
- to fill knowledge gaps and develop scientific methods and tools.

At least one of these objectives must be addressed in the application (see proposal form, section 6.1).

Background

There is increasing scientific evidence that time is running out rapidly to achieve the Paris climate agreement goals. Meeting this challenge requires political and societal changes of dimensions far beyond the most dramatic changes of at least the last half century. These changes need to address both pillars of climate policy: adaptation and mitigation. A complete restructuring of the energy sector is required, and also changes in established governance and financial structures and procedures as well as a more systemic, smarter and faster adaptation to progressing climate change.

The growing relevance of adaptation and the need for expanding mitigation efforts are also underlined by the latest IPCC report. Climate change, however, is but one aspect of the deeper-rooted issue of systematically exceeding planetary boundaries, leading to issues such as biodiversity loss that is of no lesser urgency and importance than climate change.

These, as well as systemic societal risks, such as loss of political and economic control, form the frame within which mitigation and adaptation to climate change is viewed in the context of the ACRP. The urgency of the climate issue, the necessity to move beyond incremental change towards equitable transformative change, and the systemic embeddedness in other issues are reflected in the funding programme.

Target Areas

The scope of ACRP climate research encompasses all relevant sectors and areas of activity in Austria, such as tourism, agriculture and forestry, infrastructure and energy, water and drought/flood management, and biodiversity and human health. The financial and legal sectors and their relevance to climate policy are also included. The scope of the call extends to international climate policy for which Austrian policymakers provide input. Regardless of the thematic sector, aspects of climate change, mitigation or adaptation in Austria must be addressed in all ACRP projects.

The research programme funds projects, which address the effects of climate change over the coming decades. Therefore, global change phenomena such as demographic and economic developments, energy and land use issues, and synergies or trade-offs with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) must be taken into account.

Engineering and technical research topics are beyond the scope of ACRP and should be addressed in other funding programmes.

Target Communities

The programme primarily addresses scientific, administrative and policy communities.

Interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary project proposals, including proposals, which cover several thematic areas, are encouraged. Focused disciplinary research, especially if it is particularly innovative or useful, is also eligible. International participation to enhance international visibility and knowledge transfer to Austria is encouraged as well.

Early stakeholder involvement (e.g., community administrations, the public, governmental/international policy-makers, NGOs and industry) is encouraged at all levels, for instance, incorporating local knowledge and co-generating policy options. Stakeholder involvement is particularly important for projects within thematic areas 2 and 3.

3.0 Thematic areas

The 16th ACRP Call invites proposals in the following three thematic areas (percentages in brackets refer to indicative shares of budget that will be allocated to each area):

- Understanding the climate system and the consequences of climate change (25 %)
- Specific support for Austria's policymakers (35 %)
- Transformative change (40 %)

3.1 Thematic area 1: Understanding the climate system and the consequences of climate change

While a general understanding of the anthropogenic influence on the global climate is well-established, there remain substantial knowledge gaps about current and future climate change at regional and local scales, as well as about the consequences of climate change and related risks for ecological and human systems. This thematic area invites proposals that address these and other research gaps. A focus should be set on the societal relevance of research questions and the provision of usable knowledge for adaptation, mitigation, and transformation.

The following topics are a non-exclusive list to inspire scientific proposals. Proposals on other relevant research topics that address climate change and its consequences with a relevance for Austria are welcome as well.

- **Climate change and the climate system:** Research topics may include, among many others, gaining a better understanding of sources and sinks of emissions (including the role of forest, peat bogs and other ecosystems as sinks or sources), a better understanding of the dynamics of extreme events and their climate change attribution (particular in mountain regions), feedback loops between climate change and the impact on land surface processes, for instance, through changes in snow cover, albedo, soil moisture or evapotranspiration, and the role of global or local tipping points.
- **Consequences for ecological and human systems:** Research questions could address impacts on specific sectors (e.g., agriculture, forestry, health or transport) or address multiple impacts across ecological and human systems considering the complex interplay of compounding and cascading hazards and impacts. Proposals that look at impacts on critical infrastructure, such as the power sector and rail network, and on climate-induced migration within Europe, are also encouraged. Engineering and technical research topics are beyond the scope of ACRP and should be addressed in other funding programmes.

- **Climate risks:** Climate impacts and climate risks are not only a function of climate change and related hazards, but also of exposure and vulnerability including environmental, physical, socio-economic, and even institutional factors. Furthermore, other underlying risk drivers such as a higher risk exposure due to an expansion of settlements or a higher vulnerability to heat-related health problems due to an aging population contribute to climate risks. Research questions could analyse the contribution of non-climate factors and processes to climate risks as a contribution for adaptation and transformation research and planning.

Proposals in this thematic area should motivate the research questions and research approaches by referencing the state-of-the-art in international science, by identifying the respective research gaps and by putting the expected results in the context of international research (progress beyond state-of-the-art).

An appropriate number of scientific publications in high-ranking journals and presentation of the results at international conferences should be an important outcome for proposals in thematic area 1.

Studies that hinge on bias-corrected regional climate projections are asked to make use of the daily high-resolution (1 km) ÖKS15 projections via the [Climate Data Centre](#) of the Climate Change Centre Austria (CCCA), at least for comparison.

There will be overlaps of thematic area 1 with thematic area 2. While thematic area 1 addresses substantial gaps in scientific knowledge and research questions at the limits of this knowledge, but nevertheless with societal relevance, thematic area 2 is driven by policy needs.

3.2 Thematic area 2: Specific support for Austria's policymakers

Specific research needs arise in policymaking. Research in this field should go beyond analysis and improved understanding to provide options that address the real-life problems policymakers face. Such research must be embedded in a larger context, e.g., that of the SDGs, to avoid offering counterproductive solutions. Thematic area 2 is dedicated to such research, with an emphasis on, but not limited to the following topics needed by policymakers.

- **Major levers in climate change adaptation:** In order to achieve the most effective and successful climate change adaptation possible, it is important to identify the crucial levers and to determine which adaptation measures are particularly effective, take hold quickly and have a major impact. What are the 10 most effective key measures of climate change adaptation and the reasons for their effectiveness? In which areas are the best levers to be found (policy, infrastructure, disaster management, etc.)? What examples or analogies exist for these measures and how can they effectively be implemented in the long term?
- **Making adaptation tangible:** Adaptation is inherently qualitative, but day-to-day politics increasingly require making adaptation numerically tangible – at least with some meaningful headline indicators. The aim is to make the importance of adaptation more visible in a society that is predominantly numbers-oriented. What examples of quantitative assessments already exist and what methods do other countries use? Which are the leading indicators for this purpose and how could these be defined and applied in the Austrian context?

- **Conflicting targets:** Climate change might provoke conflicts of objectives and of interests even in Austria. Competing interests, for instance regarding fresh water resources or in land use and spatial planning are already being experienced. Which problems might arise in this context? How to overcome them in an environmentally sound and socially acceptable way? A focus on climate neutrality – an objective of highest importance – could compromise other valuable targets, e.g., the protection of biodiversity. How to promote a systemic, consistent and sustainable approach in mitigation and adaptation in Austria? Another conflicting area in this context addresses the health/mitigation nexus: clean air for human health vs. biomass burning as promoted in order to cut down CO₂ emission.
- **Social aspects:** Understanding the social aspects of climate change and adaptation policies: The goal is to gain further insight into the social aspects of climate change and adaptation measures, especially in relation to health and well-being. Will climate change affect disadvantaged groups more than the general population? Which measures should be taken in advance to efficiently counteract negative impacts? What about possible normative and ethical dimensions (e.g., burden sharing, equity issues) on different political levels?
- Achieving carbon neutrality by 2050 will be a major challenge, both technically and socially. The reduction of emissions and the development of adaptation strategies are among the primary goals of the ACRP research agenda. Nevertheless, net negative emissions and carbon dioxide removal (CDR) that leverage nature-based solutions must be part of all national decarbonization pathways. Comparative assessments of the potential ecological impact and potential costs of different CDR options are needed to provide policy-makers with a scientific basis for evaluating and deciding on future CDR strategies.

For a more complete list of research needs to support the national climate policy, visit the [website of the bm.k.](#)

3.3 Thematic area 3: Transformative change

Background: Mitigation and adaptation to climate change are embedded in broader questions of how societies can meet the SDGs and remain within a safe operating space on the planet. It is also essential to recognize the urgency of addressing climate change and its interlinkages with other existential risks. The sequence of crises over the last years has demonstrated the need for a holistic perspective by raising awareness of the interconnections, challenges and opportunities for connecting agendas at all scales.

As also recognized by the IPCC Special Report on 1.5 °C and the IPCC AR6 WGIII report, there is growing recognition that incremental change in prevailing social, technological and economic structures and procedures will not suffice to achieve the goal of limiting the increase in global temperature to 1.5 °C compared to pre-industrial levels, as aimed at by the Paris Agreement. The goal of the Austrian government programme to achieve climate neutrality by 2040 ties in with this aim. In addition, purely incremental adaptation to climate change will not be sufficient to meet the target set out by the new EU adaptation strategy, i.e., that by 2050 the EU will be a climate-resilient society, fully adapted to the unavoidable impacts of climate change.

Institutional inertia, scientific uncertainty, long periods and influential groups opposing change are some of the challenges for transforming towards a sustainable future. Measures to help trigger far-reaching change include building coalitions between the public and private sector, creating new institutional actors or coalitions, adjusting legal rights and responsibilities as well as changing ideas and accepted norms and expectations. The climate governance agenda necessitates involvement of a range of institutional and private actors and the development of diverse methods for participatory processes and citizen engagement. The research community is needed to accompany, monitor and analyse these developments and to devise scientific methods making this possible.

Understanding the mechanisms of deep-structural transformational change:

In this light, thematic area 3 calls for proposals that go beyond the analysis of incremental change and aim to address the challenges described above, focusing on understanding the mechanisms of deep-structural transformational change and exploring pathways towards systemic change. This could include research on circular economy and shifts in societal preferences.

Focus on systems: We invite project proposals that focus on critical systems, such as energy, mobility, housing, food and industry. We also invite project proposals focusing on systems enabling or challenging sustainable transformations, such as the financial system, legal and governance structures, health systems and the labor market. It is encouraged to submit project proposals that address sustainability challenges in a broad sense, including questions of social cohesion and just transformation, addressing underlying values in society and cultural change.

Proposals in which holistic scenarios towards climate neutrality are developed are particularly encouraged, as this would enable an integrative assessment of the costs and benefits of different pathways. Interactions with the global biodiversity crisis should also be considered.

Research requirements in this field include basic research in the social, political and economic sciences as well as transformational research with strong involvement of stakeholders. The challenge for the scientific community is to improve and enhance analyses and analytical tools for evaluating long-run perspectives of economic and social development (and their intermediate milestones) while also exploring technological and social innovations that can enable truly transformative and sustainable structures and systems. Developing equitable, responsible, resilient, environmentally friendly and socially inclusive pathways is essential for Austrian and international climate policy.

Thinking outside the box: Project proposals under thematic area 3 should clearly outline the specific challenge to transformation that is being addressed and how the project can contribute to transformative change in science and practice. We encourage project proposals that follow a “high-risk-high-gain” rationale: Achieving transformative impact requires thinking outside the box, introducing (disciplinary) research topics and approaches that are so far understudied in climate research or combining different disciplinary perspectives and knowledge from practice in innovative transdisciplinary research designs. We therefore particularly call for project proposals:

- from single disciplines addressing blind spots (e.g., legal or financial aspects),
- with systemic perspectives, linking different societal sub-systems or topics,
- following a transdisciplinary approach, integrating knowledge from different disciplines as well as practice (e.g., action and participatory research, real-world labs and experimental approaches, citizen science etc.),
- **understanding interlinkages between climate change and SDGs (e.g., related to biodiversity, air and water quality, food and energy security, human health) and addressing compound effects of multiple crises.**

4.0 Administrative information and formal requirements

4.1 Formal requirements

Submission via eCall

- **Project proposals (including optional supplementary attachments) must be submitted by the deadline via eCall using the proposal form of the current call.**

The form must be filled in completely.

- Each applicant and each member of the consortium must register in the eCall in order to participate in the submission of a proposal. It is recommended that all project partners register in the eCall as early as possible. Partner applications must be completed, before the consortium lead can finalize the submission.
- Proposals can address issues within one single thematic area, or can cover several thematic areas. The most relevant thematic area must be indicated in the application form and in the eCall.
- Costs of the applicant and all project partners must be entered via eCall before the deadline.

Submission language

The proposals have to be submitted in English.

Funding per project

The minimum funding per project is 60.000 EUR (incl. overhead costs). The maximum funding per project is 350.000 EUR (incl. overhead costs).

Consortium structure

Projects of oriented basic research can be submitted by individual applicants or as cooperative projects involving several consortium members.

Resubmission and follow-up Projects

- In both, in the eCall and in the proposal form, it must be stated whether the proposal is a follow-up project or a resubmission.
- In the case of a resubmission, it is recommended that the reviewers' suggestions for improvement are integrated into the revised proposal. In section 6.3 of the proposal form, it should be briefly explained how the suggestions of the reviewers were taken into account.
- Funding for follow-up project proposals from earlier ACRP Calls will not be considered until the final report of the prior project has been evaluated and accepted.

4.2 Relevant documents for the 16th Call

- Guide for the submission of proposals – Austrian Climate Research Programme (present document)
- [Guidelines for projects of oriented basic research \(version 1.5\)](#)
- [FFG Cost Guideline \(version 3.0\)](#)
- [Proposal form \(Download via FFG website\)](#)

4.3 Eligible organisations

For all submissions to the 16th ACRP Call, the requirements of the [Guidelines for projects of oriented basic research](#) apply.

Institutions of research and knowledge dissemination (research organisations) are eligible for funding.

- Universities (universities and universities of applied sciences)
- Non-university research institutions

The following may participate but may not receive funding:

- Subcontractors: They are not participants in terms of cooperation. They provide defined tasks for project participants which are listed under the cost category "third-party costs" and are not entitled to exploit the project results.

National and international businesses and other practitioners as well as individual researchers from Austria can be listed under the cost category "third-party costs" as subcontractors of the applicant or of one of the project partners. Consortium partners must not be subcontractors at the same time.

- Other participants: These are persons or institutions (including businesses) that do not receive funding, but are mentioned in the funding contract, including the scope of their participation. Their rights and duties are also stipulated by contract. Their participation needs to be justified in the application.

Project partners can include foreign research organisations as long as full publication of results is guaranteed and if the transfer of research tools such as models or data is ensured.

Grants paid to consortium partners from outside Austria must not exceed 20 % of the total funding amount.

International organisations can also act as subcontractors. In total, the financial resources for international organizations (funding for international partners and cost for international subcontractors) must not exceed 30 % of the total project funding.

It is recommended to clarify the eligibility of the planned applicants and the project partners with the FFG at an early stage of the proposal preparation. Contact details can be found in Chapter 6.

4.4 Budget

Up to 5 Mio. EUR of funding are available for research projects.

4.5 Costs and funding

The current version of the [FFG cost guidelines](#) applies to this call.

In-kind contributions (cash funds, provision of personnel and/or infrastructure) by the individual applicant or consortium partners is possible. The applicant is asked to describe any in-kind contributions in the proposal form in chapter 2.6.4.

Third-party costs are costs for (research) activities carried out by individual researchers or organisations other than the consortium partners (contractors). In contrast to the specifications in the [guidelines for oriented basic research](#), third-party costs in ACRP projects may not exceed 50 % of the total estimated costs.

Overhead costs are added at a fixed rate of 25 % to the personnel costs, costs of infrastructure use, costs of materials and travel costs. The overhead costs are added automatically in the eCall.

Eligible costs can be covered up to 100 %.

4.6 Intellectual property rights

All research results obtained in ACRP-funded projects must be easily accessible free of charge. Source materials including data, models, open source software, and other analyses that produced results, or are themselves outputs of ACRP-funded projects, must be made available upon request for a minimum period of 7 years.

The exploitation rights are owned by the individual applicant or the consortium submitting the proposal. However, it is expected to publish the research results – preferably open access – and to ensure that the results are accessible for use by the targeted research and policy communities.

The [Climate Data Centre](#) run by the CCCA is the central data respiratory for all climate-relevant data. Researchers are advised to make their data available to the Climate Data Centre, in particular researchers who cannot ensure the availability of their data for a minimum period of 7 years after completion of the project. The applicant is responsible for obtaining information on supported data formats and data protection options from the Climate Data Centre.

Consortium agreement

Successful applicants are expected to establish intellectual property rights and specify the procedure for publication of their results in a consortium agreement before concluding the funding agreement. Concluding such a consortium agreement is a prerequisite for the provision of funding (see [Guidelines for projects of oriented basic research](#)). While the details of such an agreement are left to the discretion of the project partners, the Climate and Energy Fund emphasizes that the rights of individual project partners should be safeguarded.

4.7 Dissemination

It is expected that project results are published in scientific media, especially books and journals. Publications, data and software resulting from ACRP-funded projects should be published open access. Access to the project output must be ensured for the scientific, business and policy communities, preferably in open access media. The open access dissemination strategy should be outlined in a dedicated section of the proposal form (see section 5.4).

Despite the inherent uncertainties of publication processes, research proposals should state the anticipated publication strategy, preferably in peer-reviewed, international journals and via other dissemination channels (such as books, newspapers, broadcasting, social media, etc.).

4.8 Funding decision and legal basis

The final funding decision will be made by the Board of the Climate and Energy Fund on the basis of the funding recommendations of the Steering Committee. The funding decision of the 16th ACRP Call is expected in May 2024.

The legal basis for the call is the Guideline for the Austrian Research Promotion Agency to promote research, technology, development and innovation to address societal challenges ([FFG-Missionen-Richtlinie](#)) which shall be applied accordingly.

All EU regulations are to be applied as in force.

4.9 ACRP activities, reports and duties

4.9.1 ACRP activities

Throughout the project, principal investigators and partners are expected to contribute actively to the ACRP activities and to enhance communication and integration within the climate research community. Workshops engaging external experts and/or the Austrian and international climate research communities will be organised (potentially also in cooperation with the CCCA) to provide guidance to projects and to integrate Austrian research nationally and internationally.

Project consortia are required to give an oral presentation at the “Austrian Climate Day” (Österreichischer Klimatag), typically around half-time of the project. In this presentation, the consortium lead (ideally the principal investigator) gives an integrated overview of the project’s progress and preliminary results. The Steering Committee, which is responsible for the ACRP quality control, will be present at the dedicated ACRP sessions and will give feedback. The preparation of a complementary poster and its presentation at the (same) Austrian Climate Day is also mandatory. Final payment will only be authorized after a successful project presentation at the Austrian Climate Day.

4.9.2 Regular reporting

The applicant or the consortium lead has to report to the FFG on a regular basis (interim and final activity reports). In contrast to the specifications in the [Guidelines for projects of oriented basic research](#), a reporting period can comprise a maximum of 15 months. In addition to reporting to the FFG, the Climate and Energy Fund requires a publishable project summary at the start of the project, and a publishable interim report to be submitted together with the interim activity report(s) to the FFG. Further information is available on the [website of the climate and energy fund](#).

Among other things, the interim evaluation(s) will be used to evaluate the progress of early dissemination activities and the preparation of publications.

Interim and final evaluations may be performed by international experts at workshops or elsewhere, if requested by the Steering Committee. If deemed necessary by the Steering Committee, additional material can be requested as a basis for evaluation, e.g., manuscripts in preparation for publication or interim reports. Negative evaluations might have financial implications and can lead to early termination of the project. Negative feedback may also be taken into account in subsequent ACRP project funding decisions. To ensure early exposure of ACRP-funded project outputs to the scientific community and to the peer review process, the publication of partial or preliminary results at scientific conferences is encouraged.

4.9.3 Final deliverables at the end of the project

The final deliverables from the research projects must be submitted to the FFG within three months after the end of the project. The final deliverables include:

Activity report

This report contains a description of the achievement of objectives, the work carried out and explanations of the costs incurred. The report template can be found on the [FFG website](#).

In addition, the following elements need to be presented in this report:

- Publications, submitted manuscripts, or manuscripts in preparation for submission to peer-reviewed journals. If manuscripts are not finalised, a final deliverable will include draft manuscripts and an updated publication strategy.

- Proven usefulness of research for science and policy communities. The ACRP aims at providing research results to support evidence-based policy decisions. This can be achieved through advancing the scientific knowledge basis and/or by directly informing policy decisions. Thus, the final deliverable should indicate how the research results are translated for and diffused to the scientific and policy communities, and other stakeholders. Deliverables could include science- and policy-relevant presentations, policy briefs, documentation of media interactions and/or of policy-oriented workshops, etc.

Publishable report

The publishable report is to be filled out according to the template for the [Endbericht Studien – Programmlinie Forschung](#) of the Climate and Energy Fund and must be submitted to the FFG.

5.0 Formal process

The FFG has been commissioned by the Climate and Energy Fund to manage the ACRP.

This section provides a brief overview of processes from the submission of project proposals to their evaluation. Further details are given in the [Guidelines for projects of oriented basic research](#). In this document, you will also find the call milestones from the opening of the call to the start of the project (see page 23).

5.1 Submission

The submission deadline is **January 25th 2024, 12:00 p.m. (noon)**. The proposal, all (optional) supplementary documents and the cost plan have to be submitted via [eCall](#). There will be no possibility of submitting research proposals and/or supplementary documents after this deadline.

Proposals must be submitted using the proposal form of the open call. The form must be filled in completely.

All relevant documents are available for download from the [website of FFG](#).

After successful submission, applicants will receive an automatically generated confirmation of receipt.

5.2 Formal check

In the formal check the proposal is examined for formal correctness and completeness. The formal criteria can be found in the relevant documents for the 16th Call (see chapter 4.2.).

If the formal criteria are not met and the deficiencies cannot be corrected, the proposal will not enter the subsequent steps of the procedure.

5.3 Evaluation process

After completion of the scientific evaluation by international experts, the proposals are assessed by the independent international Steering Committee of the ACRP.

When selecting the projects to be funded, the Steering Committee takes into account the evaluations by the external reviewers (based on criteria set out in Table 5.4 b) and its own assessments of the proposals. The Steering Committee also evaluates the fit of the project idea to the thematic area and assesses the relevance of the project for the call. The Steering Committee is entitled to move proposals between thematic areas.

The Steering Committee will strive toward achieving an appropriate balance of funded projects with regard to:

- single-discipline and multi-discipline impact research,
- interdisciplinary, integrated assessments,
- policy-oriented studies.

The target is also to achieve the following distribution among the thematic areas:

- Understanding the climate system and the consequences of climate change (25 %)
- Specific support for Austria's policymakers (35 %)
- Transformative change (40 %)

This targeted budget distribution may be adjusted to take account of the quality of the proposals.

5.4 Evaluation criteria

The evaluation criteria reflect the ACRP's emphasis on scientific excellence, implementation of results and international collaboration.

The evaluation criteria for research projects are "Quality of the project", "Suitability of project participants", "Benefit and exploitation" and "Relevance to the Call". The weighting factor depends on the thematic area selected:

Table 5.4 a: Weight given to the different criteria

Criteria	Thematic area 1 & 3	Thematic area 2
Quality of the project	50	40
Suitability of project participants	20	20
Benefit and exploitation	20	30
Relevance to the Call	10	10

A more detailed description of the criteria is given in the [Guidelines for projects of oriented basic research](#) and in Table 5.4 b below.

Table 5.4 b: Description of evaluation criteria “Quality of the project”, “Suitability of project participants”, “Benefit and exploitation” and “Relevance to the Call”

Criteria	Thematic area 1 & 3	Thematic area 2
Quality of the project	Total: 50	Total: 40
Degree of innovation	20	16
Approaches and risks	10	8
Quality of planning	10	8
Gender aspects	5	4
Sustainability	5	4
Suitability of project participants	Total: 20	Total: 20
Skills and qualifications	8	8
Resources	8	8
Gender balance	4	4
Benefit and exploitation	Total: 20	Total: 30
Benefit for the target group and impact on sustainability	8	12
Benefit for the project participants, exploitation strategy and publications	12	18
Relevance to the call	Total: 10	Total: 10
Call objectives and call topics	7,5	7,5
Incentive effect	2,5	2,5

In addition to the listed evaluation criteria, the adequacy of the costs in relation to the planned activities and results is assessed.

The publication record that emerged from previous ACRP projects of the project leader (specifically of the PI) and the proven usefulness of previous research projects for research and policy communities are also taken into account by the Steering Committee when evaluating proposals.

The scientific community needs to critically reflect its own role in climate change and unsustainable behaviors. Therefore, applicants and all project partners are expected to address climate-friendly solutions regarding operational aspects, such as travel, participation in meetings, use of consumables, in their submission.

5.5 Contract

The projects proposed for funding receive a funding offer. The project should start within six months after the final funding decision.

After funding has been granted, the Climate and Energy Fund reserves the right to publish the following information: name of the applicant, approval of project funding, the funding rate, the granted funding, and the title and summary of the project.

Modalities of payment

The declaration of acceptance of the contract concluded between the Climate and Energy Fund represented by FFG and the applicant must be announced to the FFG via eCall.

The mode of further payments depends on the duration of the project and the proven project progress.

For the final payment at the end of the project, the final reports and final cost accounting are required. The final funding installment is authorized only after approval by FFG's auditing department on the basis of a positive evaluation of the final activity report and cost accountings.

In contrast to the [Guidelines for projects of oriented basic research](#), the following reporting intervals and payment plans apply to the present call:

Table 5.7: Payment of funding rates in % of total amount of funding

Duration of the project (months)	1 st maximum funding rate (project start)	2 nd maximum funding rate (1 st interim report)	3 rd maximum funding rate (2 nd interim report)	Maximum final funding rate (final report)
up to 30	50	40	–	10
from 31 to 36	30	30	30	10

6.0 Contacts

6.1 Programme owner and call responsibility

Klima- und Energiefonds (Climate and Energy Fund)

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6.2 Management of the Call

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General information, the guide and the application form can be found on the [website of the Austrian Research Promotion Agency \(FFG\) Programme Management Office](#).

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