

BILATERAL RESEARCH INITIATIVE AUSTRIA – PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA / MOST

Call Guideline for Austrian Applicants

2nd Call for Transnational Cooperative R&D Projects

Deadline:

Austria, FFG: February 15th 2022, 12:00 Central European Time

MOST/China: December 23rd 2021, 16:00 Beijing Time

Contents

Tables	3
1 Key facts at a glance	4
2 Motivation	6
3 Call Topics.....	7
4 Requirements.....	8
4.1 General requirements for the Austrian-Chinese consortium.....	8
4.2 National requirements for submission of proposals.....	9
4.3 Application and evaluation procedure	10
5 FUNDING CRITERIA.....	12
6 Call Documents	15
7 Legal Basis	16
8 Additional Information	17
8.1 Project Database	17
8.2 BMK Open4Innovation	17
8.3 Handling project data – data management plan	17
9 Further Funding Options	19
Imprint.....	20

Tables

Table 1: Call overview	4
Table 2: Timeline	5
Table 3: Call Criterion „Quality of the project“	12
Table 4: Criterion „Suitability of the applicant / project partners“	13
Table 5: Criterion „Benefit and exploitation“	13
Table 6: Criterion „Relevance to the Call“	14
Table 7: Overview of national call documents	15

1 Key facts at a glance

This call for Austrian-Chinese cooperative R&D projects is jointly supported with funding managed by the Austrian Research Promotion Agency (FFG) on behalf of the Austrian Federal Ministry for Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology (BMK) and funding managed by the China Science and Technology Exchange Center (CSTEC) on behalf of the Ministry of Science and Technology of the People's Republic of China (MOST). The call promotes the bilateral collaboration in application oriented research and development projects. A funding budget of **EUR 1.3 MIO** is available for Austrian partners. **The present Call Guideline applies only to Austrian project partners.** A corresponding [announcement of the Chinese call for proposals](#) has been published by MOST on their website.

Table 1: Call overview

Key facts	Information
Funding instrument	Cooperative R&D project
Research category	Industrial research or experimental development
Topics	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Green building and building energy efficiency.2. Urban sustainable development and recycling of resources3. Intelligent transportation within the context of an urban environment
Funding amount	min. 100,000 EUR to max. 500,000 EUR for total project duration
Funding rate	max. 85%, dependent on organisation (see Technical Guidelines for Cooperative R&D Projects at transnational level)
Duration	max. 36 months
Cooperation	Yes, required
Total call budget	1,300,000 EUR
Funding provider	BMK
Submission deadline	Proposal via FFG eCall: 15.02.2022, 12:00 C.E.T
Language	English
Contact	Anita Hipfinger E: anita.hipfinger@ffg.at T: +43 (0)57755-5025
Information on the Web	https://www.ffg.at/2-call-most

The full set of application documents must be submitted in Austria via eCall (<https://ecall.ffg.at>) by the submission deadline.

All proposals from the Chinese partners should be submitted to MOST online via their services.

Table 2: Timeline

Selection procedure Austria	Schedule
Submission deadline	15.02.2022, 12:00 C.E.T.
Formal check	February/March 2022
Evaluation	March/April 2022
Funding decision	from April 2022

Please note:

If the application does not meet the formal requirements for project submissions in accordance with the conditions and criteria of the respective funding instrument, and if the deficiencies cannot be corrected, the application will be excluded from the further procedure and will be formally rejected without exception in accordance with the principle of equal treatment of applications. The FFG's eCall system provides support in this respect, but the ultimate responsibility for compliance with the formal requirements still rests with the applicants. A detailed check list specifying the conditions and criteria of the relevant funding instrument and the call can be found at the beginning of the relevant application forms (Project Description).

2 Motivation

The aim of the call for cooperative R&D projects (later referred to as projects) is to support the jointly identified research topics with mutual interests and scientific excellence based on the existing cooperation agreement between the Austrian Federal Ministry for Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology (BMK) and the Ministry of Science and Technology of the People's Republic of China (MOST). The purpose of this call is to foster the joint research cooperation between Austria and China and improve the visibility of the successful collaboration between the two parties.

Projects funded in the framework of this call are intended to intensify scientific and applied research cooperation between Austrian and Chinese research organisations and companies in order to give new impulses for excellent research between the two countries. **Moreover, research partners shall create a base for possible further commercial collaboration.**

The special focus of the projects lies in the expected scientific and applied research achievements, know-how transfer, as well as in the promotion of excellent young scientists, post-docs and PhD students in the framework of the projects. The participation of female scientists is particularly welcome.

The goals of this call are to:

1. Strengthen the **innovation potential of national companies** by improving the industry's access to research competences at universities and research organisations
2. **Begin or extend business collaborations** with Chinese partners beyond the project
3. **Build up research competences** in at least one of the relevant topics stated in section 3 of this document
4. Increase European and **international collaborations and networks** and foster cooperations to solve **interdisciplinary challenges** in research
5. Build up close **collaboration between Chinese and Austrian partners**, leading to **commercialization opportunities** that will enhance international relations and trade.

3 Call Topics

This call aims to support transnational cooperative R&D projects in the field of Smart City Technologies falling into the research categories 'Industrial Research' or 'Experimental Development'. Projects are expected to contribute to the development of resilient and sustainable cities with high energy and resource efficiency and a high quality of life, as well as to the adaptation and optimisation of urban infrastructure. Projects must be innovative and must aim to develop new technologies or to significantly improve existing technologies, products or processes that in their parameters exceed the existing state of the art.

The cooperative R&D projects must focus on one of the call topics listed below but may also address more than one of these areas:

1. Green building and building energy efficiency

This area can incorporate green or low carbon building, building energy efficiency and sustainability of buildings throughout their life cycle.

2. Urban sustainable development and recycling of resources

This area can include the technologies related to circular economy, such as waste and water management and innovative technologies and solutions for urban sustainable development to achieve the carbon neutrality.

3. Intelligent transportation within the context of an urban environment

This addresses innovative technologies and solutions that may include a wide range of applications (sensing, analysis and communication technologies) for the development and progress of intelligent transportation within urban environments, to improve traffic management, reduce environmental impact and increase benefits.

4 Requirements

4.1 General requirements for the Austrian-Chinese consortium

This call shall bring together research capacities from Austrian and Chinese research institutions and companies. The Technical Guidelines for Cooperative R&D projects at transnational level apply to this call. Cooperative R&D Projects are defined as being carried out by at least two consortium partners working together on a common R&D project. The special characteristics of this call and deviations from the relevant guidelines are described below.

The following criteria must be met:

- The consortium shall consist of at least one Chinese company and one Austrian company partner. Participating Chinese companies should match at least equivalent investment to funds from the government.
- The cooperation between the Chinese and Austrian cooperative units should be basically balanced.
- Collaborative research projects will be supported for a period of max. 3 years.
- The consortium can also involve research organisations in addition to the obligatory company partners.
- Individual companies account for a maximum of 70% of the eligible project costs, with shares of affiliated companies counting as one company.
- Research institution(s) bear(s) at least 10% and a maximum of 80% of the eligible costs (relates to the total share of Austrian and Chinese research institutions).
- Researchers of both countries should contribute equally to the competence of the partnership. In the partnership, researchers of the participating organisations work on a defined research project, which is divided into coordinated work packages designed to reach a common research goal. The proposal provides sufficient level of skill, equipment and manpower capabilities necessary to work on the defined research project.
- The project shall be **managed jointly by an Austrian and a Chinese Applicant**.
- Research institutions shall be entitled to **publish the results of the research** carried out by the respective institution(s).
- The results of the research shall be shared by the participating Austrian and Chinese researchers.

- All Austrian and Chinese partners involved in the project have to conclude a **Consortium Agreement on issues such as intellectual property rights, liability and confidentiality**. Specifically the following must be included:
 - The applicant must ensure that the bilateral projects submitted are not aimed at developing weapons or violence-promoting products.
 - The applicant must ensure that the bilateral projects submitted are not aimed at gambling of any kind (i.e. games in which the outcome is determined exclusively or predominantly by chance).
 - Any other commercial and/or export restrictions currently in place must be observed.

The payment of funding depends on compliance with these requirements. This **Consortium Agreement**, signed by all partners, has to be provided to FFG before the respective **national funding contract** is signed.

Funding will be provided to each partner by the corresponding national funding agency according to the respective rules.

- Austrian partners and Chinese partners may cover their costs by own funds and/or grants provided by Austria or China.

4.2 National requirements for submission of proposals

The following requirements shall apply to submissions by Austrian participants **in addition to** the general requirements specified in Chapter 4.1 (above):

- Austrian applicants must demonstrate how the cooperative R&D project builds either a gateway to the Chinese market or a basis for further business activities in China. This has to be addressed in proposal chapter 5.1 Relevance. In addition, applicants must **submit a draft marketing concept** (max. 2 pages). Letter(s) of intent (LOI) for collaboration can optionally be submitted as well.
- Furthermore Austrian applicants must show the contribution the project will make **to increasing the added value in Austria**. This has to be addressed in proposal chapter 5.1 Relevance.
- The provisions of the Technical Guidelines for Cooperative R&D Projects at Transnational Level have to be met.

The following provisions apply in deviation from the Technical Guidelines for Cooperative R&D Projects at Transnational Level:

- In the course of the assessment, points will be assigned to each criterion. Projects not reaching the stated threshold value for a certain criterion will be rejected. If **zero points** are reached in one of the sub criteria of the **criteria "Relevance to the Call"**, the project will be rejected as well.
- At least one Austrian company must participate in the Austrian-Chinese consortium.
- The amount of funding requested by the Austrian partners must be **between 100,000 EUR to max 500,000 EUR**.
- Companies are eligible to apply if they have a permanent establishment or branch (according to Council Directive 2011/96/EU of 30 November 2011, in conjunction with Art. 11 (5) a GBER, No. 651/2014 of 17 June 2014) in Austria at the time of submission of the application and payment of funding.
 - Art. 2 (b): 'Permanent establishment' means a fixed place of business situated in a Member State through which the business of a company of another Member State is wholly or partly carried on in so far as the profits of that place of business are subject to tax in the Member State in which it is situated by virtue of the relevant bilateral tax treaty or, in the absence of such a treaty, by virtue of national law;
 - Art. 3 (1) Definition of parent company and subsidiary.
- The **EUR-CNY conversion rate** of the European Central Bank ECB at the date of submission shall apply. This can either be the reference date specified in the proposal or the conversion rate provided by the ECB on a monthly basis. The rate must be specified in the Joint Proposal. The conversion rate shall apply for the duration of the project and for all reports related thereto.
- The **participation and financing of additional international partners** in the consortium shall be **excluded** in this bilateral call in deviation from the provisions of the Technical Guidelines. Organisations from outside Austria or China may be involved as sub-contractors of Austrian partners.

FFG will check whether the Austrian project part is properly allocated to the research category of 'Industrial Research' or 'Experimental Development' based on the Joint Proposal. This may involve a reduction in the funding rate.

4.3 Application and evaluation procedure

The full set of **Austrian application documents must be submitted electronically** to FFG via eCall within the Austrian submission deadline.

Chinese partners are asked to submit their applications to MOST. Rules for submission and funding are communicated by MOST.

Each proposal must follow the regulations of the respective agency. Proposals failing to fulfil all formal requirements and unilateral applications will be rejected. The **content** of the proposals submitted to FFG and MOST **must be consistent**. A **common short title** must be chosen for the Austrian and the Chinese proposal.

The Austrian proposal must indicate **all Austrian and all Chinese project partners**, must clearly **lay down the division of work** between the partners and must indicate all Austrian and Chinese project costs.

The proposals will be **evaluated by the respective funding agencies** involved following the respective national evaluation procedures and criteria. A project will be recommended for funding if both involved funding agencies achieve a positive evaluation result.

BMK will take the funding decision for the Austrian project partners. MOST is responsible for the funding decision for the Chinese partners.

5 FUNDING CRITERIA

Table 3: Call Criterion „Quality of the project“

1. Quality of the project (threshold = 18 points)	Max. points 30
1.1. How well are the state of the art (level of knowledge/technology) and/or the commercially available products and services described and how plausible is the assessment?	6
1.2. What is the level of innovation beyond the state of the art and/or existing products and services and how high is the associated risk?	13,5
1.3. What is the quality of planning based on the following criteria? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Transparent structure of work packages – Transparent presentation of costs – Transparent description of work packages according to the scope of work – Adequate relationship between costs and work plan – Adequate scope of project management – Provisions for risk management – Realistic implementation of plan (duration, deadlines, milestones, results) – Clarity and coherence of cooperative relationships – Efficient distribution of tasks among the consortium partners 	6
1.4. If the project relates to people: To what extent have gender-specific topics been taken into account in project planning? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Quality of the analysis of gender-specific topics – Integration in the methodical approach of the project <p>Information: If a person or a group of persons are subject of a research project or if the results of a research project affect people, an according research design is necessary. In case the justifiable conclusion of analysis of gender relevance results in no gender relevance in its content, full points have to be given.</p>	4,5

Table 4: Criterion „Suitability of the applicant / project partners“

2. Suitability of the applicant / project partners (threshold = 12 points)	Max. points 20
2.1. Does the consortium have the scientific, technical, economic and management skills required to achieve the project goals?	8,5
2.2. To what extent do the consortium partners have the required qualifications and resources to ensure successful implementation of the cooperative project?	8
2.3. Does the composition of the project team reflect the aim to improve the gender balance in the sector?	3,5

Table 5: Criterion „Benefit and exploitation“

3. Benefit and exploitation (threshold = 18 points)	Max. points 30
<p>3.1. What is the benefit for those applying the project results and the exploitation potential? Different dimensions are relevant depending on the research category:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – For all research categories: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – communication of benefits to the relevant target group has been documented in a transparent manner – Benefits, advantages or USPs have been described quantitatively and qualitatively and are plausible – For projects of industrial research (IR) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Knowledge increase in the relevant scientific-technical target group – For projects of experimental development (ED) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Users, markets and market segments have been specified and substantiated by turnover figures – Turnover potential of the innovation or added value of market growth in relation to the planned project costs – Resources required to bring the results to the market 	11
<p>3.2. What is the impact or strategic significance of the project results for the organisations involved? For example by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – increasing R&D capacities on a long-term basis – securing or extending their R&D position – expanding existing R&D activities to include new fields of application – development of R&D platforms – opening up new business fields etc. 	9

3. Benefit and exploitation (threshold = 18 points)	Max. points 30
<p>3.3. How complete and transparent is the exploitation strategy based on the following criteria?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Quality of exploitation and dissemination strategy for the scientific results – Quality of exploitation strategy for the economically relevant results – If people are affected by the exploitation of the project results: Consideration of gender-specific issues in exploiting the economic potential – Adequate protection strategy or strategy for ensuring a competitive edge – Exploitation skills – either in house or via existing contacts and collaborations in relation to – dissemination and exploitation of project results (IR) 	10

Table 6: Criterion „Relevance to the Call“

4. Relevance to the Call (threshold = 12 points)	Max. points 20
4.1. To what extent does the project address the call topics?	8
4.2. To what extent does the project contribute to achieving the goals of the call?	8
<p>4.3. To what extent does the funding influence the project positively in one or more of the following dimensions?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Implementation: the funding enables the project to be implemented in the first place – Acceleration: the funding accelerates implementation – Scope: the funding increases the scope of the project – Range: the funding makes the project more ambitious through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – a more radical innovation approach – higher risk – new or extended collaborations – long-term strategic orientation 	4

6 Call Documents

The full set of Austrian application documents must be submitted via eCall as part of the electronic application. The cost plan must show the project costs broken down to work package level. This also applies to accounts rendered as part of the reporting process. Applicants are requested to use the specific templates provided for the submission of their projects. The funding conditions, application procedure and funding criteria are described in the corresponding Technical Guidelines and Call guidelines (present document).

Table 7: Overview of national call documents

Additional documents for Austrian participants		Documents in detail
National Call Documents	Call Guideline for Austrian Applicants (present document, Version 1.0) Technical Guidelines for Cooperative R&D Projects at Transnational Level	
Application form	Project description Declaration on SME status (if required) ¹	
General Cost regulations	Cost Guideline 2.1 (eligibility of costs in FFG projects)	
Download	www.ffg.at/2-call-most	

¹ If there is no information available in the Austrian Business Compass (e.g. for associations and start-ups), a Declaration of SME Status must be provided upon submission of the proposal. In the template provided by the FFG, applicants must (as far as possible) categorise their business for the last three years according to the SME definition.

7 Legal Basis

This Call is based on the RTI Guideline for the Promotion of Industrial/Technical Research, Technology Development and Innovation (RTI – Guideline 2015) Thematic RTI Guideline. The Thematic RTI Guideline was extended to December 31, 2021 on the basis of the extended state aid basis of the European Commission (extension regulation, VO (EU) 2020/972 of July 2, 2020).

The company size shall be established in accordance with the corresponding SME definition specified in EU competition law. For more information visit the [SME website of FFG](#).

All EU provisions shall be applicable as amended. Research and development services shall be subject to the exemption provision of Sec 9 (12) of the Public Procurement Act (BVerG 2018).

8 Additional Information

This section contains information about services which you may find useful in connection with funding applications or funded projects.

8.1 Project Database

- The public access [FFG Project Database](#) provides the opportunity to publish brief information about funded projects and an overview of the project partners involved. This enables you to present your project and your project partners to the interested public. The database can also be used to search for cooperation partners.
- Once funding is granted, the applicants are informed via eCall that they can publish brief defined information about their project in the FFG Project Database. The information will only be published if active consent is given in the eCall system.
- For more information see the [FAQs to the Project Database](#).

8.2 BMK Open4Innovation

The [open4innovation platform](#) of the Federal Ministry for Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology (BMK) offers an additional knowledge base for companies and researchers (community support, detailed information and success stories).

8.3 Handling project data – data management plan

A data management plan (DMP) is a tool that supports the efficient and systematic management of all data generated throughout the duration of a project.

DMPs can be created e.g. by using the free tool [DMP Online](#). The [Guidelines on FAIR Data Management](#) of the European Commission also provide assistance in this respect.

A data management plan describes

- which data are collected, processed or generated within a project
- how these data are handled within the project
- what methods and standards are applied-how the data are stored and updated over the long term and
- whether it is planned to make datasets available to third parties for reuse (i.e., open access to research data)

In the event of publication, the data should be "findable, accessible, interoperable and reusable". Storing data in established and internationally recognised repositories (see the [re3data website](#)) is recommended to ensure broad access.

9 Further Funding Options

FFG offers a broad range of funding options and support for the participation in international programmes.

The following overview shows further international funding options related to this call. For further information please contact the FFG experts indicated below.

European Programme:

HORIZON EUROPE – the next EU Framework Programme (2021-2027);
Initial Information at <https://www.ffg.at/Europa/Horizon-Europe>

Digitization, Industry & Space

Contact: DI Gerald Kern

T: +43 (0) 57755-4301, E: gerald.kern@ffg.at

Health

Contact: Dr. Astrid Hoebertz

T: +43 (0) 57755-4104, E: astrid.hoebertz@ffg.at

Climate, Energy and Mobility

Contact: Dr. Michalis Tzatzanis

T: +43 (0) 57755-4405, E: michalis.tzatzanis@ffg.at

Civil security for society

Contact: DI Jeannette Klöckl

T: +43 (0) 57755-4401, E: jeannette.klonk@ffg.at

Imprint

Media owner, publisher and editor:

Federal Ministry for Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology

Radetzkystraße 2, A-1030 Vienna

Responsible for the Programme:

Federal Ministry for Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology

Department of Innovation and Technology – Staff Group Technology Transfer

Mag. Dr. Gernot Grimm

Mag. Alexander Unkart

Programme Management:

Austrian Research Promotion Agency (FFG)

Thematic Programmes

Sensengasse 1, 1090 Vienna

Authors:

Mag. Dr. Anita Hipfinger, BSc (FFG)

Mag. Alexander Unkart (BMK)



**Federal Ministry for Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and
Technology**

Radetzkystraße 2, 1030 Vienna

bmk.gv.at