

Information on funding for personnel

Staff concept, average pay rates, contract terms

1 Staff concept

As part of the application, a staff concept must be submitted that specifies which scientific qualifications the project staff needs to have in order to be successful. It has to be justified why specific work packages should be carried out by either PhD students, postdocs or the applicant him-/herself. In the latter case, funding can be granted for the own position or for a person taking over professorial duties (“*Lehr- / Professurvertretung*”). The amount of work delegated to each position has to be explained in light of the content and requirements of the project.

When applying for funding for PhD positions, a supervision concept and a description of available offers for PhD candidates at the respective faculty / university must be included. When applying for funding for postdoc positions or teaching / professorial substitutes, it must be outlined how a researcher on this position can develop his or her independent research profile and prepare subsequent career steps while working on the project / substituting for the professor.

You can find a [template for the staff concept](#) here. Should your staff concept change over the course of your project, you are requested to inform the Foundation.

2 Employment of research staff on permanent contracts

The Foundation allows for the employment of researchers (and other personnel) who are on permanent contracts as part of funded projects. This entails that universities can use the Foundation’s funding for the duration of the project to pay the salary of the employee involved for the hours that she / he works on the project.

3 Average pay rates for personnel

3.1 Average pay rates for research staff

The average pay rates depend on the respective pay scale classification. Personnel must be classified based on their qualifications and the project requirements.

PhD candidates funded by the Foundation are expected to be employed on 65-100% positions. The exact hours must be decided and justified based on the project needs. Standards and customs within respective disciplines are not a sufficient justification for decisions on working hours.

Usually, research staff funded by the Volkswagen Foundation should be regularly employed. **Stipends** can sometimes be granted for short research stays. If this is the case, stipends must be in line with the rules of the respective applicant's institution. Please consult the funding initiative's "information for applicants" for specific information that may apply.

The following average pay rates should serve as reference point when applying for funding for personnel at German institutions. They include non-wage labor costs such as the employer's contribution to social security as well as foreseeable / already agreed upon pay rate increases. If the person who is to be employed on a position is already known, personnel costs for this position should be estimated in coordination with the administration of the applicant's institution.

If funds for personnel need to be increased due to legal changes or changes in collective wage agreements while the project is running, this can be done either by reallocating funds within the project or by applying for additional funds.

Type of personnel	Pay scale classification	Euro/year
Professorial substitution („Professurvertretung“)	Depending on the classification of the professorship to be represented: W3 W2 W1	130,000 120,000 110,000
Partial teaching substitution (teaching buy-out)	local classification and level of remuneration	Teaching assignments / Lectureships without proper social security employment conditions are not funded
Principal investigator (PI) / Project leads, employees with habilitation, fellowship salaries for postdoctoral researchers (in some initiatives), comparable positions	TVL E 15 (or TVöD E 15) TVL E 14 (or TVöD E 14)	107,000 100,000
Postdocs, comparable positions	TVL (TVöD) E 13	90,000
PhD candidates	65 % TVL (TVöD) E 13 75 % TVL (TVöD) E 13 100 % TVL (TVöD) E 13	52,000 60,000 80,000
Research assistants (with a university degree)	University rates apply; with 19 hours per week	ca. 28,000
Student assistants	University rates apply; with 10 hours per week	ca. 12,000

In international cooperation projects, local classifications and rates apply unless the funding initiative specifies otherwise.

3.2 Average pay rates for other personnel

The average pay rates depend on the respective pay scale classification. Personnel must be classified based on their qualification and the project requirements. If the project requirements can be met with part-time employees or additional hours for already existing positions, please calculate a proportional rate accordingly.

The following average pay rates should serve as reference point when applying for funding for personnel at German institutions. They include non-wage labor costs such as the employer's contribution to social security as well as foreseeable / already agreed upon pay rate increases. Here too it holds that if funds for personnel need to be increased due to legal changes or changes in collective wage agreements while the project is running, this can be done either by reallocating funds within the project or by applying for additional funds.

Type of personnel	Pay scale classification	Euro/year
Employees with a (bachelor) degree from a(n) (applied) university that does not entitle them to pursue a PhD degree, comparable positions	TVL E 9 to E 12 (or TVöD E 9 to E 12), depending on qualifications	max. 65,400
Non-research staff with technical or administrative tasks, lab assistants, workshop personnel, comparable positions	TVL (TVöD) E 2 to E 9, depending on qualifications	max. 57,600

In international cooperation projects, local classifications and rates apply unless the funding initiative specifies otherwise.

4 Contract terms

The term of PhD candidates' first contract has to be at least three years.