

# Global Issues – Preventing Pandemics: the Role of Human-Environmental Interactions

## Frequently Asked Questions

v. 2, 7 Oct. 2021

### 1. Please note:

All applicants (main and co-) need to be registered in the Volkswagen Foundation's [electronic application system](#). The main applicant registers first and can then invite the co-applicants through the application system. Project partners who do not apply for a budget on their own do not have to register.

The terms researcher, applicant and partner are used synonymously. The applicant in Germany is the main applicant (according to the logic of the Foundation's application system, not implying any hierarchy between the applicants).

### 2. How do you distinguish between “High Income countries“ and “Low and Middle Income Countries”?

We use the World Bank classification:

<https://datahelpdesk.worldbank.org/knowledgebase/articles/906519-world-bank-country-and-lending-groups>

### 3. How do you categorize “Upper-Middle Income Countries”?

We merely distinguish between two categories “High Income Countries” and “Low and Middle Income Countries”. All “middle income countries” (classified as such by the World Bank) fall under the second category, no matter whether they are lower or upper middle income countries.

### 4. What is meant by “European Countries”?

“Europe” is defined geographically, including the EU countries, Switzerland, Norway, Liechtenstein, Great Britain, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, Albania, North Macedonia, Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova and Russia. These countries cannot participate as the two essential LMIC partners in this call (they may be included as partner no. 4 or 5). This call is meant to connect different world regions and is not Europe-specific.

### 5. Is it possible for someone based at a university in a High Income Country outside Europe to apply?

Yes, researchers based at universities in any High Income Country (classified as such by the World Bank) can be part of this call as partner no. 4 or 5. However, as stated in the “Information for Applicants” each team may consist of up to five researchers, consisting of (at least) one based in Germany and two based in LMICs. The number of partners in LMICs has to at least match (or outnumber) those in HICs.

### 6. We plan a network of three partners with two partners based in the same Low and Middle Income Country (LMIC). Is such a consortium eligible to apply?

No, it is not. Bringing together various partners from at least three different countries is the idea behind this call, notably to strengthen networks among LMICs.

**7. Is a network of four or five partners preferred?**

No, it is not. The Foundation's interest is supporting really good-working cooperations, which sometimes are easier to achieve with a lower number of researchers participating. The number of partners involved should always be motivated by the research question. The available amount of funding does not depend on the number of researchers participating.

**8. Is nationality a relevant category when applying for funding?**

No, it is not. Anyone can apply if s/he is affiliated to an academic institution in a country addressed by the call.

**9. Does the Foundation offer any help in finding academic or non-academic partners?**

No, the responsibility for identifying potential cooperation partners lies with the researchers.

**10. Is it possible for a researcher to be part of more than one project/working group in this call?**

No, it is not. Multiple applications, whether as main or as co-applicant, are not admitted.

**11. Is there a limit regarding the number of applications from one institution?**

No, there are no restrictions regarding the number of submissions made by one institution (but: for the individual researcher, see question above).

**12. What are the basic requirements to be eligible to apply?**

Every applicant must at least hold a PhD (or have equivalent academic experience; in case of doubt, please contact the Foundation) and must be affiliated to an academic institution (at the latest by the time when starting the research project).

In case a member of the research consortium is currently not employed at a university or research institution, a letter by the institution the researcher plans to work at needs to be included (at the stage of full proposals only) in which the institution confirms its willingness to manage the grant and provide work space for the researcher. In the pre-proposal, the respective researcher should only mention the institution s/he intends to pursue the research project at.

**13. Are NGOs and think tanks eligible to receive funding?**

Usually, direct funding is not possible as grants can only be awarded to universities and research institutions. Criteria for being classified as a research institution include the following: The institution 1) pursues science and research according to its statutes, 2) employs academic staff, and 3) produces scientific output (scientific articles, monographs etc.). In case of doubt, please contact the Foundation well ahead of applying. (Details on the legal status, statutes, trustees and boards, charitable/ non-profit status, budgeting, auditing of the institution to be funded as well as an annual report are helpful information.)

**14. How can stakeholder involvement be financed?**

Specified costs for (non-academic) stakeholder involvement can be included in the recurring or non-recurring costs.

**15. Is it necessary to submit a detailed budget and work plan for the project itself (2<sup>nd</sup> stage) with the 1<sup>st</sup> stage application?**

No. The 1<sup>st</sup> stage applications (pre-proposals) should give details about the project's motivation and research idea, but only include a short outline of the work plan and a rough overview of the budget. For the budget of the project itself please use the template provided on the website and upload as enclosure "budget".

Please note that there is also a form for a budget to be completed in the electronic application system by each applicant (with boxes for the different cost positions): For the pre-proposals, please use this form only to apply for the preparatory funds (in case you require these; up to 10.000 EUR) and upload a short explanation how to use these funds as enclosure "justification of budget").

In case you are invited to submit a full proposal, we will give detailed information on questions regarding the budget.