Application guideline

Requirements

Eligibility for a research grant

- Basic or applied research project
- Applicant must be a permanent employee of a university or other permanent research entity
- Applicant is the principal investigator and therefore responsible for directing the grant and his/her employing institution must agree to manage the grant
- The application has to establish why you wish the project to be funded by Velux Stiftung and why your project is not eligible for other funding sources. Projects that are eligible to be funded by other sources such as a national governmental funding agency (for example by the Swiss National Foundation, National Institute of Health…) will not go into peer-review and will not be funded. The project application therefore needs to establish a convincing argumentation why no sufficient alternative support can be obtained.

Funding areas

- Daylight - Use of natural daylight and its effects on humans and nature
- Healthy Ageing
- Ophthalmology
- Please check if your project idea complies with the definition of our funding areas.
- Excellent research projects outside the strategic funding areas above but within the foundation’s legal purpose, are not funded or sent to peer-review.

Funding criteria

- Originality and novelty, out-of-the-box thinking – at best the study achieves more than the incremental development of a single discipline
- Scientific excellence
- Impact potential consisting of relevance, potential for change and transfer potential (assuming the scientific goals of the project are achieved):
  - Relevance
    - Your project addresses an important problem or critical barrier to progress in the field
    - Your research question has significance outside a single field and is able to excite people working in different disciplines
  - Potential for change
    - Accelerating research / enabling a breakthrough by
- removing obstacles like bottlenecks
- causing a change of mind in the research community
- introducing new methods and approaches e.g. through interdisciplinary bridges

- Enabling / accelerating implementation of research by
  - closing knowledge gaps for hands-on problems
  - raising awareness and acceptance in user groups
  - implementing an application

- Does the project create leverage? (e.g. through a high degree of innovation, by involvement of other partners, causing additional funding, rising awareness etc.)

○ Transfer potential / dissemination

- Is there a potential to disseminate the results inside and outside academia?
- Does the proposal include a viable dissemination plan that is appropriate for the scope of the project and targets the intended audience?
- Will project results raise awareness and be used within the discipline/ in other disciplines/ in the broader society?
- Is there a potential that the results of the project are applied and multiplied in- and outside academia?
- Are there clear and understandable criteria to determinate the impact of the project?

More details on the dissemination plan and output categories:
Assuming your project is successful, please list the activities you are planning to generate impact with the results. From the following list, use only the relevant categories for the potential of your particular project and be as specific as possible.

- Dissemination activities in academia
  Describe here planned publications, presentations at scientific events (conferences, workshops, seminars), training of students, organisation of a scientific gathering on the topic of the research project (conference, symposium, seminar, workshop). In case of success would the results allow further research, new collaborations, in which direction, with which partners?

- Tools / services available for the scientific community
  Please list the tools and services produced in the project that will be made freely available for the research community (e.g. datasets, code, analysis tool, developed software, guideline / protocol, establishment of a database, of a service facility, of a platform or collaboration network…).

- Knowledge dissemination to professionals & public outreach activities
  List your planned contribution to guidelines and recommendations as well as activities to transfer the gained knowledge outside academia. Specify which audience you are planning to target.

- Tools, applications, services for the public
  Mention here whether your plan to file a patent, create a device or a software application for the public or professionals, or to found a start-up company.
- **Other planned activities**
  Further planned transfer activities in the project.

For details read the **Funding Criteria**.

**Exceptional funding**

- (Convertible) Loan
- Mezzanine capital
- Equity

Please contact us beforehand if this is a relevant option for your project.

### Exclusion criteria

Projects that fulfil one or more of the following criteria are not sent out for external peer-review and will not be funded:

- Projects **outside the strategic funding areas**: daylight research, healthy ageing, and ophthalmology. Please make sure you have read the pages on funding areas and know what we do not support within the funding areas.

- Projects that are **eligible to be funded by other sources** such as national governmental funding agencies (for example by the Swiss National Foundation, National Institute of Health...). The project application therefore needs to establish a convincing argumentation why no sufficient alternative support can be obtained. Having too many running grants with a governmental funding agency is not sufficient to bypass this criterion.

- Projects that **do not formally conform** to the application template of the foundation, or that do not contain enough details to be thoroughly evaluated by an external expert.

- Projects that **do not propose a concrete set of output measures to promote transfer** to relevant target group(s), i.e. do not convincingly show how the project results will contribute to an envisioned outcome.

- Projects that only contribute to an **incremental progress** in the field of research. With a limited budget the foundation focuses on projects that make a difference.

- Projects which have been **previously rejected** are not allowed for resubmission. Newly submitted projects based on the same concept or project idea than rejected ones also fall into this category.
Procedure

Project conditions

- Project length: 1 – 4 years
- Height of request: approx. CHF 50’000 – CHF 100’000/yr., higher amounts possible depending on project goals
- The foundation does not cover overhead nor other indirect costs (see recommendation of the Association of Swiss Grant-making Foundations)
- Covered project costs: Research staff costs (salaries, doctoral students, teaching replacement) and associated research costs (consumables, equipment, conference and travel costs, publication costs etc.). Equipment costs may be included, but justification (function and necessity) for each item is needed. The foundation does not cover the costs of maternity/paternity leave, sick leave, force majeure like war, natural disaster, epidemics, pandemics, etc.
- Currency: use the local currency of the PI’s institution for the project budget.

Collaborations

- The foundation welcomes international and interdisciplinary collaborations.
- The approved amount will be paid out to the PI’s institution which is responsible to distribute the funds to his collaborators and compile the necessary reports.
- In case your project has an interdisciplinary approach that involves several of our funding areas, we ask you to define the main funding area. The main funding area is defined by where your project results will contribute to change.

Please contact us in case of uncertainties - we are happy to answer your questions.

Application procedure

- **Next deadline:** please refer to our website for the latest information
- In general, there are two board meetings per year: usually in March and in November
- Read the relevant documents carefully, prepare your application that consists of:
  - A. Application form
  - B. Impact potential statement
  - C. Research proposal
  - D. CVs
  - E. Potential reviewers (to be handed in separately)
  - F. Data Protection Policy consent of each co-PI (to be handed separately)

➔ You find the application form and template here
➔ Each co-PI should print the Data Protection Policy consent form available here, and sign on the printed version. Please send us a scanned copy of the signed document as PDF for every co-PI.
• Submit section A – D as one pdf file - and section E and F as a separate pdf files by email. After a formal check, you will need to send one copy of section A – D by post.
• By submitting your application the PI explicitly confirm having read, understood and accepted the Data Protection Policy of the foundation.
• Velux Stiftung will first assess your application’s strategic fit to the foundation’s impact orientation and funding area. We also check if the application fulfils any of the exclusion criteria.
• If the application passes this initial assessment, scientific excellence is evaluated through external peer-review. Please be aware that scientific excellence is necessary but not sufficient to receive funding.
• All decisions on project applications are taken by the foundation board.
• A rejected application cannot be re-submitted.

Competitive Assessment: Peer-review process

If your application qualifies for external peer-review:

• Your application documents are sent to one or two independent international experts.
• In specific cases, we allow black-listing two names.
• In some cases, we give the applicant the opportunity for a rebuttal/reply.

After approval

• In case of approval: Funding agreement and project start within six months

Reporting

• Annual scientific and financial interim reports, final scientific and financial report at the end of project, evaluation report two years after the end of the project
• Annual scientific reports include outcome tables which should be cumulative
• Templates for reports are available in the Download Center
• Compliance of reports with application is conditional for the next instalment of the grant
• Changes in the project plan or budget must be approved by the foundation in advance

Conditions of payment

• Separate project account with university
• A maximum amount in CHF is confirmed in the funding contract
• Annual instalments
• Compliance of interim report with budget and application
• Deduction of unused amount from the next yearly instalment. In case the unused,
budgeted item is used in the subsequent year the deviation will be balanced.
• 10% of the grant or at least CHF 20’000 will be kept until the final report is approved.

**Intellectual Property**
• Remains with applicant
• In case of open use: no consequence
• In case of commercial use: repayment of the grant after deduction of cost possible
• In case of a spin-off: convertible loan or equity is possible

**Communication**
• The PI provides pictures which can be used by the foundation for its communication and are free of third-party rights.
• The foundation must be acknowledged as VELUX STIFTUNG.
• For logo and acknowledgement regulation see Download Center

**Legal**
• Only Swiss law is applicable
• Swiss courts are applicable