# The First Austrian-Israeli Scientific Research Program

# CALL FOR JOINT PROJECT PROPOSALS

# For the Years 2020-2023

Within the framework of the Austrian-Israeli scientific cooperation, the Austrian Science Fund (FWF) and the Ministry of Science and Technology of the State of Israel (MOST) are glad to invite researchers and scientists to submit joint proposals for research projects carried out by scientists from both countries.

The aim of this program is to support the development of scientific and technological cooperation between Austrian and Israeli researchers and to strengthen the scientific partnership between research groups from both countries by establishing bilateral research networks, enhancing research cooperation and promoting the exchange of knowledge between Austrian and Israeli scientists.

The research shall focus on two main areas and its subtopics as detailed in Section A.

Qualifying scientific applicants in this framework may receive research grants, respectively, from FWF and MOST according to the applicable national funding procedures and regulations.

## AREAS OF COOPERATION

FWF and MOST are providing financial support for joint research activities carried out by scientists from both countries. Austrian-Israeli research teams are hereby invited to submit joint proposals for research projects in any of the following areas:

1. **Genetics’ and Epigenetics’ Contribution to Human Health-**

Genetics and epigenetics contribute fundamentally to gene function in living systems. The paradigm that genetic and epigenetic alterations are two separate mechanisms is now revised by insight into their mutual dependence. Both genetic and epigenetic elements ultimately determine normal and abnormal gene expression. This joint call for proposals focuses on the **relationship** between genetics and epigenetics in human health and disease.

1. **Heritage Science- Cultural and Natural Heritage**

Heritage science is a vibrant inter- and transdisciplinary field, straddling the natural sciences, humanities and social sciences. Broadly conceived, it deals with the world's natural and cultural heritage, and explores a wide range of issues including biodiversity and geodiversity as well as tangible and intangible aspects of history, heritage and culture. This call for proposals focuses on research in those areas, including research with practical contributions to the society, theory-building, and methods development.

## MODE OF COOPERATION

Cooperation may take the form of:

1. Joint research activities in which interdependent subprojects of a single project are conducted in Austrian and Israeli laboratories;
2. Complementary methodological approaches to a common problem;
3. Joint use of research facilities, materials, equipment and/or services by cooperating scientists;

## LEVEL OF FUNDING AND DURATION OF PROJECTS

It is the intention of the Parties to fund research proposals selected hereunder for a term of **three years**. The proposed project duration of both project parts must be identical. However, funding shall be approved on an annual basis, with the funding for the second year to be approved in accordance with the provisions of the research contracts.

It is the intention of the Parties to support **up to 6 joint projects**. The final number of projects to be funded will be determined based on such factors as merits of the proposals upon scientific evaluation and budgetary considerations.

The total maximum project funding for all research projects approved under this Call is 900,000 Euros for the Israeli side, and an estimated budget of 1,000,000 to 1,500,000 Euros for the Austrian side. The total maximum funding for an individual project on the **Israeli side** will be up to 150,000 Euros.

In accordance, research projects should be planned on a three-year basis beginning approximately at the second quarter of 2020; contracts will be signed accordingly.

**Funding for the approved projects depends on the availability of funds and the approval of the Israel State Budget and FWF Board.**

## ELIGIBILITY

1. Projects must be conducted by collaborating Israeli and Austrian scientific research teams.

2. Each research team must be led by a Principal Investigator (PI) from each country. The Israeli PI must be member of an academic or research institution or a professor emeritus who continues working on research in academic or research institution (hereinafter called the “Affiliated Institution”);

**In Israel**, the "Affiliated Institution" must be one of the following:

* + - 1. An accredited institution of higher learning in Israel, according to the Council for Higher Education Law, 1958;
      2. A Research Institute recognized as such by the Israel Science Foundation (ISF);
      3. A Research Institute which is a nonprofit organization;
      4. A Research Institute which is a government company or a governmental unit.

For the purpose of this Call, a "Research Institute" is a research institute whose significant portion of activity is the advancement of cutting-edge scientific knowledge, possessing appropriate infrastructure and equipment, and employing researchers who, inter alia, publish articles related to their research in leading scientific journals in the world, and who present their research at international symposia.

**In Austria**, the eligibility criteria for the Austrian part must be in accordance with the [FWF Application Guidelines for Stand-Alone Projects](https://www.fwf.ac.at/fileadmin/files/Dokumente/Antragstellung/Einzelprojekte/p_application-guidelines.pdf) or, in case of clinical research proposals, those of the [clinical research programme](https://www.fwf.ac.at/fileadmin/files/Dokumente/Antragstellung/KLIF/klif_application-guidelines.pdf).

3. The project may include the use of sub-contractors from the private sector, if necessary.

4. Each PI and each affiliated institution is accountable to MOST or FWF, respectively, for the execution of the project.

5. **In Israel,** Proposals for which funding is approved, which include experiments with animals, must submit the approval of the relevant Committee for Experimentations on Animals before the project can commence.

6. **In Israel,** Proposals for which funding is approved, which involve human beings, must submit the approval of the relevant IRB/Helsinki Committee before the project can commence.

## SUBMISSION OF RESEARCH PROPOSALS

The proposal must be prepared and carried out jointly by the Israeli and the Austrian project partners and should be submitted simultaneously by both the Austrian and Israeli principal investigators, to MOST and FWF with due attention to the regulations and the call deadline on each side.

**In Israel,** proposals must be prepared in English, on the appropriate "Application for Research Grant" form. Application form is obtainable at MOST website ([www.most.gov.il](http://www.most.gov.il)), the use of the updated form is obligatory.

A valid project application consists of the application form **duly filled in and signed**, together with all the necessary application documents required from each side of a joint research team, submitted respectively to FWF in Austria and to MOST in Israel. **If the applications are not duly received both in Austria and in Israel by the date and hour indicated as follows**, **the project will not be accepted**.

**Instructions for Israeli research teams:**

Israeli PIs should submit proposals in English by email using the attached "Application for Research Grant" form to the following email address: [Austria@most.gov.il](mailto:Austria@most.gov.il) (in "pdf" format duly signed, along with a **working copy in "doc" format without signatures). The proposals must effectively reach the abovementioned email address by Wednesday 31/07/2019 at 15:00 (local Israel time), and will not be accepted under any circumstances after the specified date and hour**. Proposers are hereby advised that no human answers will be available after 15:00 of the mentioned date.

Because of technical constraints, an email over 20 megabytes will not be received. If the email and its attachments exceed 20 MB, it must be split. Shortly after submitting the email, the applicants should receive an automatic reply acknowledging its receipt. If an email confirming receipt is not received, the applicant must approach MOST contact persons detailed below to make sure the email was duly received. **It is solely the sender's responsibility** to receive confirmation that the email was actually received, whether by automatic reply or personal confirmation. As technical problems are possible, **it is strongly recommended to submit the application well in advance of the application deadline**.

**Instructions for Austrian research teams**:

**In Austria**, proposals to FWF must be prepared in English according to FWF guidelines and application requirements. Applications must be submitted online at [http://elane.fwf.ac.at.](https://elane.fwf.ac.at/page/panel/loginpanel?5) All the necessary forms, scientific abstract and administrative and financial data must be filled out online. Additional documents, such as the project description and attachments can be uploaded.

The Austrian proposal must follow the [FWF Application Guidelines for Stand-Alone Projects](https://www.fwf.ac.at/fileadmin/files/Dokumente/Antragstellung/Einzelprojekte/p_application-guidelines.pdf), or, in case of clinical research proposals, those of the [clinical research programme.](https://www.fwf.ac.at/fileadmin/files/Dokumente/Antragstellung/KLIF/klif_application-guidelines.pdf) The proposal must describe the entire Austrian-Israeli project in which the connection between the two project parts and the resources to be deployed on each side should be clearly described. The project description (no more than 20 pages) submitted to FWF must include additional information on:

* A brief description of the project partner abroad along with an indication of their specific contribution to the project and/or relevant skills
* The distribution of work between the Austrian and Israeli project parts, as well as the resources to be contributed by the partners
* The scientific added value of the cooperation.

Detailed instructions are available on the FWF website and in the call document “Information for applicants”, <https://www.fwf.ac.at/en/research-funding/fwf-programmes/international-programmes/joint-projects/>

## FUNDED EXPENSES

Funding provided by this Call is intended to enhance joint collaboration between Austrian and Israeli scientists. Funding will therefore be provided mainly in support of the collaboration vectors and of the local research that is necessary for the collaboration. In any case, each budget item or expenditure for which reimbursement is requested must conform to the respective national rules of each applicant.

**For Israeli researchers**:

Funding can be provided by MOST for:

(1) Stipend or salary for graduate students, post-doctoral fellows, technicians and/or laboratory workers retained specifically for the purpose of the project for a temporary period of up to 3 years, not including salaries for permanent staff and PI's;

(2) Consumables. In case they exceed 750 Euro, a detailed explanation regarding their necessity and quantities is required;

(3) Small scale equipment needed only for the specific research project. MOST will enable purchase of computers or laptops only in special cases in which they are part of the research project or are of unique capacities needed for the specific research;

(4) Travel and visiting costs;

(5) Joint seminars and workshops;

(6) Overhead expenses up to 15% of the total amount of the research project inclusive of the funds provided on the basis of this Call.

**For Austrian researchers**:

Please refer to the Austrian Call for Proposals.

## MUTUAL VISITS

Participating researchers are encouraged to spend an extended period of time visiting their counterparts’ institutions, given that such visits are an integral part of the research collaboration. All costs for travel, accommodation, per diem and any other visiting expenses for each visiting scientist will be included in the budget of that scientist's research team. For Israelis, funding provided under this Call may only be used for visits that take place in Austria or Israel.

## PROPOSAL REVIEW

After the proposals are pre-evaluated and rated by international external reviewers, they will be jointly discussed for final ranking by a Joint Austrian-Israeli Committee. MOST and FWF will decide which and how many projects will be funded and in what amounts based on the results of the evaluation process and ranking and in view of budget requirements and other constraints.

**In Israel:**

The evaluation process will be conducted on the basis of the following criteria:

1. Scientific level and Innovation- Scientific and technological excellence, novelty and creativity of the research in light of existing knowledge and as related to this call for proposals.
2. Methodology- Are the concepts, analyses, and methodology adequately developed, well integrated, well-reasoned, and appropriate to the goals of the project?
3. Applied aspects of the proposal- Does the proposal have applied aspects? In what ways? What are the expected impacts of the study? (Development of new scientific and technological directions, new products and applications).
4. Budget Justification- Justification of the requested project budget.
5. Feasibility of the research program- The ability to implement the proposed research and access to relevant resources. Expertise and achievements of the proposers.
6. Clarity of the proposal- Clarity and quality of the research proposal itself – presentation of the topic, definition of research objectives, presentation of research methodology and detailed program of work. Justification of the requested project budget.
7. Extent of genuine collaboration between the Austrian and Israeli research teams.

## CONTRACTS, PAYMENTS AND REPORTS

1. The expected starting date for approved projects is the second quarter of 2020. The expected completion date is three years after the starting date of the approved projects.

2. **Contracts**:

Upon approval of a particular project, separate contracts will be signed in Austria and Israel respectively, between FWF and the institution of the Austrian PI and between MOST and the institution of the Israeli PI.

3. **In Israel,** in principle, the project's period is three years. However, funding must be approved on an annual basis, with the funding for the second year to be approved in accordance with the provisions of the research contract. MOST reserves the right not to fund a second year of work for scientific-professional, administrative, budgetary or policy reasons.

An application for the continuation of research funding for the second year must be submitted by the institution of the Israeli PI to MOST on the appropriate forms at least two months prior to the end of the first year of the project together with the annual scientific report.

**In Austria**, Please refer to the regulations specified on the Austrian call for proposals.

4. **Payments**:

Payments will be made by FWF and MOST to the institution of each Principal Investigator, respectively, in keeping with the provisions of the contracts referred to above, according to the regulations and practices in force in each country.

5. **Reports**:

a) Financial Reports

Financial reports will be submitted to FWF or MOST, respectively, by the institutions of each PI as specified in the research contracts.

b) Scientific Reports

Within three months after the conclusion of the project, each PI will submit a full final report to FWF or MOST, respectively, in accordance with the contract or the regulations in force in his/her country. It is recommended that the PIs will submit a joint summary of the final report to both FWF and MOST in English.

Additional interim progress reports may be required, according to the practices and regulations of each country, as specified in the research contracts.

## SPECIAL PROVISIONS REGARDING ISRAELI APPLICANTS

All procedures and activities under this Call or the projects approved hereunder, including the eligibility of institutions via which applications must be filed, are subject to the standard MOST Procedures Regarding Scientific Projects and Scholarships Funded by MOST and to the MOST Standard Contract for Scientific Projects (both documents referred to hereinafter as "the standard terms").

Applicants are required to familiarize themselves with the standard terms before filing an application under this Call; filing an application constitutes a declaration that the applicant has done so and agrees to be bound by the provisions thereof.

**Sabbatical Leave:**

Israeli researchers who intend a sabbatical leave in the first year of the project cannot be approved as a PI of the research proposal. A PI who intends a vacation or absence longer than three months should request permission from MOST in advance through the relevant R&D Authority. A substitute to the PI will not be approved in the course of the first year.

## MISCELANEOUS PROVISIONS

It is recommended that the Austrian and Israeli research teams and their Institutions shall enter into a “Cooperation Agreement”, regarding Intellectual Property rights from the output of the financed project.

## INFORMATION

Additional information can be obtained from the following contact persons:

**ISRAEL**:

**On administrative matters:**

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