FAQ

Application

What is the project proposal supposed to look like?
The project proposal is supposed to be a description of the grant proposal you plan to submit to a third-party funding agency at the end of the Focus period. It should be no more than 3 pages long and the description should be concise, specific, and understandable by non-experts in your field. It should contain the following information:

- The third-party funding program you plan to apply for and why.
  Please state the exact funding institution and program. The project idea should already be concrete enough to result in a successful proposal at the end of the 12 months of the Focus funding.
- Your current work, planned research cooperation projects and goals.
- A description how the Focus-funding will contribute towards the realization of your project and how it will increase your chances for third-party funding.

How and where do I apply?
Please send the completed application form as well as all necessary documents by e-mail to fokus@grade.uni-frankfurt.de. The application should be sent as a single excel file.

Are there templates available for the time table/planned allocation of funds? How detailed does the financial plan have to be? What should it include?
There are no templates available. Please illustrate what you will use the Focus funds for. The application should clearly point out why you need these funds. The time table should show projects and work during the time of the Focus program as well as the planned submission of your grant application and start of project.

Are there templates available for the verification of the institutional support? Who has to sign the verification?
Please use the following template or use it as a guideline:

„I hereby confirm that [Dr. ........] will be employed by/receive a scholarship from the Institute/Centre/Department of ........ during the period of Focus funding stated in the application [month/year – month/year]. She/he will be given access to a work space and the infrastructure necessary to prepare the third-party funding proposal. ”

The letter should be signed by the Dean or the head of the institute/department. The purpose of this letter is to confirm that you are a member of Goethe University and that your working group supports your application. It is not supposed to be a letter of recommendation.
What are the Focus funds to be used for?
The funds are free to use as long as they serve for the development of your grant proposal to be submitted; e.g. assistants, small equipment parts and consumption items, travel cost for conferences, organization of workshops, publication costs etc. up to a maximum of EUR 10,000; the funds are not to be used to finance the applicant’s own position.

Who can apply?

How are the 6 years after the PhD being counted?
Important is the year you received your PhD as well as the year the Focus program is advertised. You are welcome to apply if your PhD certificate is dated within the 6th year before the Focus application deadline. Parental leave is taken into account (up to 2 years per child).

I have not yet received my PhD Certificate. Am I eligible to apply?
If you have successfully finished your PhD defense before the application deadline and are able to present a written confirmation, you are welcome to apply for the Focus program.

I am a junior professor. Can I apply for funding?
Yes, provided you are not on a tenure-track.

I have already submitted a grant proposal that got refused. Can I still apply for Focus?
Yes.

Process
Selection board and procedure
• The selection board is set up on an interdisciplinary level comprising Junior and Senior Professors of Goethe University. Chairperson is the Vice President in charge of Early Career Researchers.
• We will contact you once we received your application and inform you about missing documents - if applicable.
• The applications will be forwarded to all selection board members in preparation of the selection board meeting.

Assessment criteria
• Academic independence of planned grant proposal.
• Precise goals, feasibility and chances of success of the project.
• Originality and novelty of the project.
• Goal-oriented use of the funds applied for (project reference, benefit).
• Quality of preliminary work.
• Research work, publications and - if applicable - submitted grant proposals so far.
Early Career Researchers in Focus
Track A|B

- International experience, research in an international context.

Decision
- You will receive a letter within approx. 2 months after the application deadline informing you whether your application was successful and the funds granted.
- The funds are available approx. 2-3 months after the application deadline.

Do I always receive the full amount of the Focus funding?
No, it is a competitive procedure. The selection board may cut funds applied for if the application is not sufficient or the funds are not seen as necessary.

After the decision

When does the application workshop and coaching take place?
Scheduled dates for the workshop will be announced by GRADE after the results of the Focus applications have been announced. After the workshop, you can set up an appointment with the trainer for an individual coaching session.

How is the application workshop organized?
During the workshop an experienced Research Consultant will inform you about the most important support resources and will talk about the main facts when submitting an application.

Do I have to inform GRADE when I submit my grant proposal?
Yes please, we would be happy if you informed us about it.

What happens if I am unable to submit my grant proposal within the 12 months after the beginning of the Focus funding?
Reasonable delays may happen. Please contact us so that we can discuss what the next steps should be.

Further questions? Please contact:
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