

Project Funding

Additional Funding for Science Communication

Profile area: Exploration

Deadline: August 27, 2024 (2:00 pm), **deadline for workshop registration:** May 23, 2024

Multiple crises are currently showing us the ever-increasing importance of self-mediated science communication. Also in the future, trust in and credibility of science will largely depend on how convincingly researchers communicate their knowledge to non-scientific target groups – and in turn how constructively they incorporate the questions, concerns and ideas of these groups.



area of research: All disciplines



type of funding: Innovative measures for science communication



target group: Current Grantees of the Volkswagen Foundation



up to: 150,000 EUR



up to 2 years



Current funding by the Volkswagen Foundation. Applications can be submitted up to 6 months after the end of the funded project.

1 Objectives

Multiple crises are currently demonstrating the need for fact-based science communication oriented toward the common good – not least, because of the trust it creates among target groups. This is the prerequisite for science to maintain its independence and fulfill its role in shaping the future. With the growing number of social transformation processes, there is now increasing pressure on the science system to defend its relevance and legitimacy and to have a voice in more and more arenas of discourse, including digital ones.

This poses enormous challenges for science communication – challenges that the Volkswagen Foundation also seeks to address. In particular, the increasing complexity resulting from the use of artificial intelligence (AI) and the spread of misinformation and fake news call for fact-based science communication. This funding program therefore aims to support innovative projects that not only make science and research more comprehensible and generally accessible, but above all give selected target groups the opportunity to effectively enter into dialog with science and generate new impetus with their own ideas and suggestions. The goal is not simply more science communication, but better science communication. Therefore, the Foundation emphasises the importance of applicants integrating reflections on impact criteria and measures for evaluating their communication activities into the application.

To this end, the Foundation also supports competence building in the field of science communication: Applicants are invited to participate in a workshop on the conception and implementation of science communication projects before submitting their application.

2 Scope of Funding

All researchers currently funded by the Volkswagen Foundation are eligible to apply. In the case of thematic synergies, applications can also be submitted for collaborative projects involving different grantees who are funded in different initiatives or with different projects.

Funding will be provided for innovative, especially dialogic and participatory science communication projects up to a maximum amount of 150,000 euros. The funding amount requested should be in proportion to the total budget of the main project. The Foundation encourages applicants to seek cooperation with private and institutional partners from civil society as well as with professional science communicators (e.g., press offices, specialized agencies, cultural institutions). The latter should be capable of enabling an exchange of experience and knowledge and thereby contribute to increasing the quality and sustainable success of science communication.

The Foundation also encourages its grantees to apply for the funding of science communication projects that address ethical issues in the research process.

Part of the funding offer is the participation in a pre-application workshop conducted by the National Institute for Science Communication (NaWik). The following aspects of a science communication project are addressed:

- Design and implementation of science communication projects;
- Development of criteria for measuring success/effectiveness;
- Involving practice partners in the conception, creation and dissemination of communication measures (project management);

- Cost and capacity planning;
- Difficulties and risks of science communication projects: What causes science communication to fail?

Overheads

No overheads can be applied for in this initiative.

Open Science

The Foundation is committed to Open Science ([Open Science Policy](#)). It is therefore expected that project results will be published open access and that data collected will be made available for scientific use via recognized repositories (see [NFDIs](#), [re3data](#), and [RIsources](#)). If data collection is intended, the essential information is to be presented in a data management plan ([basic data management plan](#) of the foundation or a more detailed data management plan of the respective discipline). In case no data is generated in the project, this needs to be explicitly stated in the application.

Note: For the later preparation of the project's research data, in the case of a grant, the offer '[Data Reuse - Additional funding for the preparation of research data](#)' is available.

General Information

The Foundation cannot be held responsible for any obligations entered into prior to the receipt of grant approval.

Applications that have been or are intended to be submitted in this or a similar form to another funding organization will not be processed by the Foundation. Applications that do not meet the formal requirements will not be submitted for review. The Foundation can only award funds to scientific institutions.

3 Application and Selection Procedure

3.1 Time schedule

- Workshops:
 - 3/4 June 2024, 9.00 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. (digital, in English)
 - 10/11 June 2024, 9.00 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. (digital, in German)
- Deadline for the submission of applications: 27 August 2024 (14:00)
- November 2024 - Jury meeting
- Processing time until notification of the decisions is approximately 6 months

3.2 Procedure

We recommend that all grantees who wish to apply for additional funding for a science communication project attend one of the workshops offered in advance of the deadline. The workshop will take place over two half days on the dates listed above.

Only **one person** from each project can attend the workshop. The max. number of participants per workshop is **9 persons**.

Applications submitted by the deadline will be reviewed by an external, transdisciplinary panel of researchers and practitioners according to the following criteria:

- Quality and originality of the project
- Congruence of measure(s) and selected target group
- Relevance for the selected target group
- Plausibility of impact criteria and evaluation measures
- Coherence of the intended approach in conception, implementation and dissemination of the measures

4 Application Checklist

Please submit your proposal online via the application portal of the Volkswagen Foundation and use the template linked on the website.

The following information must be uploaded as attachments (pdf files) in the application portal:

- Application to be written in German or English (template, max. 7 pages)
- CVs of the applicants (template CV)
- Personnel concept
- Budget (including brief cost justification)
- Cooperation commitments / letters of intent / offers / calculations from external partners (for corresponding cooperations)
- Miscellaneous (optional)

4.1 Electronic Application – Instructions

Please read the information about the electronic application system on the website of the Volkswagen Foundation prior to submitting your application. Information can be found in the document "[Electronic Application System – Instructions and Tips](#)". It is important that applicants register all involved parties early on in the process. Without a user profile it is not possible to invite co-applicants or to submit an application.

If you have technical questions about using the electronic application system, please contact support@volkswagenstiftung.de.

4.2 Application documents

All subsequent application documents must be submitted in German or English.

4.2.1 Proposal according to the template file

A template is available on the funding initiative website for submitting applications. Only applications in the corresponding template can be considered.

4.2.2 Budget Plan

All cost positions must be entered in the application portal. Funding can be applied for:

- Personnel costs (N.B. not to include doctoral positions)
- Remuneration for the work of practice partners integrated in the project (in the case of funding approval, this is covered by work contracts or subcontracts).
- Ongoing non-personnel costs (travel expenses, all project-related costs for events)
- One-time material costs, such as purchase of equipment, development of apps, platforms, exhibitions, etc.

4.2.3 Curriculum Vitae of every applicant

Please submit your academic CV in tabular-narrative form. A template is available on the website of the funding initiative.

4.2.4 Further application documents

In the case of cooperation with external partners such as museums, agencies, artists, associations or other institutions, please upload the relevant cooperation agreements, offers or calculations under "Miscellaneous".

5 Contact

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6 More Information

- [Website VolkswagenStiftung](#)
- [FAQs for applicants](#)
- [Application System](#)
- [Electronic application made easy - instructions and tips](#)
- [Useful Information and downloads](#)
- [Recommendations for sustainable traveling](#)
- [Influence of generative models of text and image creation in research and in the funding activities of the Volkswagen Foundation](#)

Practical tools and principles for the planning and implementation of science communication projects:

- <https://www.wissenschaftskommunikation.de/praxis/leitlinien/>
- <https://www.nawik.de/1x1/>
- <https://www.nawik.de/projekte/science-communication-basics-videos/>