

## Funding of Groundbreaking Key Projects (November 2023)

### Targeted objective

With this call for applications we are looking for projects that exhibit the potential to bring forth fundamental discoveries with a groundbreaking character for an entire field of research. This can include, for example,

- proof of a causal link for which evidence thereof had been lacking until now
- the testing of a heretofore non-existent or non-workable hypothesis
- the questioning of a theory generally accepted until now
- a “proof of principle” or a “first-in-man” study of an innovative intervention approach
- clinical study bearing the potential to decisively change guidelines (with the exception of pharmaceutical Phase III studies)
- answering a new, fundamental question in an already established cohort

### Eligible applicants

The lead applicants are scientists, international leaders in their area of research who have prominently published in that field. They must be employed at a university research institute or extramural research facility in Germany, or at a university hospital in Germany. Co-applicants and co-operation partners can also be active abroad. The applicants must be able to convincingly present that their work group – even when viewed within international competition – is predestined towards solving the problem addressed.

The validation and further development of a decisive new finding can subsequently be a key project when said finding is the outcome of applicants’ own preliminary work phases.

Project managers of a currently ongoing EKFS funding project are not eligible for renewed application prior to conclusion of the project and publication of the project’s findings.

### Application submission

As a rule, only projects that have not yet been started can be applied for.

The awarding of resources takes place in a two-step procedure:

The submission of an application draft outline precedes the more complex formulation of a comprehensive application. The project idea’s potential for designation as a “Key Project” is evaluated using the draft outline. “Instructions for preparing a key project draft outline” can be found at: <https://www.ekfs.de/en/scientific-funding/funding-lines/key-projects>

A possibly ensuing comprehensive application to be made in the second step serves towards assessing experimental enactment. Instructions for the preparation thereof are sent together with the request to apply.

Only a very limited number of outstanding projects can be financed within this line of funding. Approximately 20% of the draft outlines are invited to submit comprehensive application. Of those, roughly one quarter (5% with reference to the number of draft outlines submitted) are subsequently able to be funded.

### **Resources that can be applied for**

Application can be made for both personnel resources and non-monetary resources which are necessary for enactment of the planned project and scientifically well justified.