

**SCIENTIFIC & TECHNOLOGICAL COOPERATION (WTZ)
AUSTRIA / BULGARIA
CALL FOR APPLICATIONS FOR JOINT PROJECTS 2025-2027**

CLOSING DATE: 10th January 2025 – 12 noon (17:30 bulgarian time – for Bulgarian partners)

The programme for Scientific & Technological Cooperation (WTZ) is carried out in the frame of international agreements with selected partner countries with the aim to stimulate international research.

Thematic areas

Open to all scientific disciplines and thematic areas, including social sciences as well as humanities.

Target group

AUSTRIA:

- **Researchers** at higher education institution (minimum requirement PhD degree) and researchers at non-university research institutions in areas of basic research (minimum requirement Master degree)
- **PhD/Doctoral students** as team members only (Bachelor and Master graduates are not eligible for funding)

Project applications submitted by early-stage researchers¹ as well as project applications with involvement of PhD/doctoral students and/or female researchers will be prioritized².

Please note: Only new project partnerships can be funded under this programme. Follow-up applications of already funded partnerships are not eligible.

A maximum of two projects can be submitted per Principal Investigator.

BULGARIA:

Applicants eligible to participate in this project selection procedure are only the following entities:

- 1) Accredited universities as defined in Art.85 para.1, p. 7 of the Higher Education Act, which are accredited by NEAA to grant educational and scientific degree "doctor";
- 2) Research organizations, according to §1, p. 1 of the Additional Provisions of the Act on Promotion of Scientific Research and Innovation and Research organizations as defined in Art. 47, para 1 of the Higher Education Act, which are accredited by NEAA to grant educational and scientific degree "doctor".

Detailed eligibility conditions are described in the GENERAL GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES FOR EVALUATION OF PROCEDURE "CALLS FOR PROJECTS IN PROGRAMS FOR BILATERAL COOPERATION" and the Appendix 'Specific conditions' for Austria, available at the web site of BNSF: www.bnsf.bg.

Funding

Funding will be provided for the **mobility of researchers to carry out bilateral research projects**.

Funding mode: The sending side covers the travel expenses as well as the accommodation costs of its researchers.

¹ *Researchers with an experience of up to 10 years after their PhD/Doctoral degree; recognized career breaks will be taken into account (e.g. due to family or health reasons or occupation outside the academic sector).*

² *These project applications will receive additional points during the evaluation process and hence a better overall score.*

Project duration: 1st July 2025 until 30th June 2027

Please note: Research stays in both countries are obligatory.

Funding will be provided for activities within the scope of these guidelines only.

In accordance with the Austrian University law, UG 2002 §26 (5) the funding will be transferred to an account managed by the institution. The reimbursement of all project-related expenses will be handled by the Austrian Principal Investigator.

AUSTRIA:

Funding amount: min EUR 5.000, max EUR 9.000, per project over two years

Eligible costs:

- **Travel expenses:**
up to max EUR 1.200 Travel costs (economy class) will be reimbursed based on submitted invoices.³
- **Accommodation expenses:**
EUR 120.- per working day for up to 12 days OR
EUR 1.440.- per month for long-term stays between 12 days and 3 months maximum
- **Project related material costs: max. EUR 3000.-** as part of the granted maximum budget based on submitted invoices.⁴

BULGARIA:

The total sum up to **50 000 BGN per project** can be applied for.

The costs for mobility can be calculated as follows:

- Travel expenses: for Bulgarian researchers travelling to Austria (actual cost of the trip in economy class)
- Accommodation and per-diem expenses: according to the Decree on business trips and specializations abroad (last amendment State Gazette 106/22.12.2023)

Other eligible costs for the Bulgarian team are described in the Appendix 'Specific conditions' for Austria.

Application process and content

It is up to the applicants to find suitable partners in the respective country.

Applications must be submitted both in Austria to Austria's Agency for Education and Internationalisation (OeAD) and in Bulgaria to Bulgarian National Science Fund by using <https://enims.egov.bg/>. Only applications submitted in time in both countries are eligible for funding.

³ Journeys of up to seven hours must be by bus or train. A subsidy for private car usage is only possible in exceptions and in accordance with the OeAD.

⁴ Only project-specific material costs will be reimbursed, that are essential to carry out the research project and that go beyond the resources made available from the research institution's infrastructure. Infrastructure or basic equipment of research institutions cannot be funded.

AUSTRIA: Electronic application only [web-link](#)

Content:

- Brief academic CV of Principal Investigator incl. academic status (early-stage researchers) and language skills
- Abstract
- List of relevant publications of the last 2 years on the Austrian side
- Project description including methodology (3 to 5 A4 pages)
- Brief description of the partner institutions (incl. reason of choice of cooperation partner)
- Brief description of the project tasks of ALL project members (Austrian and partner incl. their academic status phd students/researcher and their competence in Austria) and project timeline (template)
- Further cooperation perspective
- Brief description: monitoring, exit strategy, added value for home institution and Austria
- Detailed budget plan (template)

BULGARIA:

Project proposals should be submitted as described in GENERAL GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES FOR EVALUATION OF PROCEDURE "CALLS FOR PROJECTS IN PROGRAMS FOR BILATERAL COOPERATION" and the Appendix 'Specific conditions' for Austria. Documents for the call are available at the web site of BNSF: www.bnsf.bg.

Evaluation criteria in Austria:

- **Scientific quality** of the proposed research project incl.
 - Feasibility of the joint research plan
 - Adequacy of the scientific method
 - Qualification of researchers **(max. 25 points)**

- Perspective for **further joint cooperation activities** **(max. 10 points)**

- **Added value for the institution and Austria, monitoring, exit strategy** **(max 5 points)**

- Project applications will receive up to 10 points additionally,
 - Either if **submitted by early-stage researchers² (+10 points)**
 - Or if **involving doctoral students (+5 points) and/or female researchers (+5 points)** **(max. 10 points)**

Maximum score: 50 points

In Bulgaria eligible project applications will be evaluated as described in GENERAL GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES FOR EVALUATION OF PROCEDURE "CALLS FOR PROJECTS IN PROGRAMS FOR BILATERAL COOPERATION" and the Appendix 'Specific conditions' for Austria.

Funding decision

Based on national evaluations in Austria and in Bulgaria, a joint shortlist will be prepared. The **funding decision** will be taken by the Austrian – Bulgarian Joint Commission on Scientific and Technological Cooperation and **announced presumably by** end of June 2025.

Reporting and publications

In Austria scientific and financial reporting on the project is obligatory:

- **Brief project progress report after one year** via the OeAD online tool as a precondition for further funding!
- **Final scientific and financial report** no later than 6 weeks after the end of the project incl.:
 - Output of the projects compared with the objectives and aims of the application
 - Short, concise summary comprehensible to lay persons⁵
 - Financial report

Joint publications resulting from these cooperation projects have to mention the support from the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research and Bulgarian National Science Fund.

Intellectual property

The project partners must take adequate steps to ensure protection and sharing of the intellectual property that could result from the joint projects.

Closing date for applications

Applications must be submitted before **10th January 2025 – 12 noon (17:30 in Bulgaria)** to be eligible for funding.

Further information

In Austria	In Bulgaria
OeAD - Austria's Agency for Education and Internationalisation Ms Isabella Scheibelreiter Ebendorferstraße 7 A-1010 Vienna Tel. +43 (0)1/ 53408-472 Email: wtz@oead.at Website: www.oead.at/wtz	Bulgarian National Science Fund Mrs. Lyudmila Sotirova Alexander Stambolijski blvd. 239B 1309 Sofia Tel. (+359) 884 222 393 e-mail: l.sotirova@mon.bg website: www.bnsf.bg

⁵ This short report will be distributed to researchers within OeAD's WTZ-funding programme in similar disciplines to increase networking in the sector of international cooperation.