

## Funding Initiative

# Between Europe and the Orient – A Focus on Research and Higher Education in/on Central Asia and the Caucasus

## Call for proposals for the preparation of structured doctoral programs

### Deadline

June 15, 2016

### Contact

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## 1. General Objectives

Through this funding initiative the Volkswagen Foundation aims to stimulate scientific and scholarly interest in current developments in Central Asia and the Caucasus, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, to provide a sustainable contribution to capacity development in these countries by intensifying cooperation between scholars and scientists in Germany and the region. From the very beginning, the Foundation has given high priority to the promotion of early career researchers and, particularly in the framework of the funding line “structurally oriented measures”, has funded training and qualification measures for young researchers.

In order to support the training of PhD students in the region even more sustainably, the Foundation is planning to advance the establishment of structured doctoral programs at universities in Central Asia and South Caucasus, in coordination with local funding organizations. It is intended to publish the respective funding offer in the winter of 2016/17. To facilitate the conceptualization of such projects and the preparation of proposals, funds may be requested within this call to develop concepts and to establish an organizational and administrative framework for structured doctoral training.

The call addresses universities in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia, as well as in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan who, in close cooperation with universities in Germany, wish to establish the conceptual and infrastructural conditions for implementing bilateral doctoral programs at their institutions. The offer is open to faculties and departments in the humanities and social sciences as well as in the natural, life and engineering sciences.

## 2. Funding Opportunities

Preparatory measures may be supported which intend to develop concepts for structured programs and to establish the respective academic infrastructure. It

#### Electronic application

Please use the Foundation's application system: **portal.volkswagenstiftung.de** for the electronic submission of your application. Please do not forget to print, sign and upload the scanned signature sheet. Instructions on the electronic application system are provided online and on the following page.

is expected that these measures are developed, submitted and implemented jointly with German partner universities. Funds for personnel and non-personnel costs (e.g. travel, workshops, consumables, and technical infrastructure if required) of **up to 200,000 EUR** may be requested for coordination of preparatory activities, initiation of contacts, identification of partners, preparation of specialist expertise and soft-skill courses, development of quality control measures etc.

### 3. Application Procedure

Proposals should be elaborated jointly by the cooperation partners and submitted in English by the German applicant in charge via the electronic application system. Details of the formal requirements are compiled in No. 4 Required Information below.

Proposals have to be submitted by **June 15, 2016**. All proposals received will be reviewed comparatively by an interdisciplinary and international expert panel in the course of summer. On the basis of the reviewers' recommendations decisions on the proposals are to be expected in September 2016.

Funding of the preparatory phase is not a prerequisite for participating in the subsequent call for structured doctoral programs which is to be published during winter 2016/17.

### 4. Required Information

Forms containing information on the applicants and their institutions (recipient of the grant) as well as on the project (title, duration and total amount requested) and its budget are to be completed in the Foundation's electronic application system. In addition, the following documents are needed as pdf-attachments:

- **Cover sheet** (signed by both partners)
- **Cover letter**
- **Summary** in English and German (max. 1 page each)
- **Project description** (max. 10 pages): rationale and objectives, work and time schedule incl. division of tasks, expected results
- **Budget justification** (for all positions and institutions involved)
- **Short CVs, list of most important publications** if applicable
- **Letters of support** from the institutions involved
- (optionally) **further appendices**

The project description must not exceed 10 pages (or 34,000 characters); the appendices should not add up to more than 10 pages altogether.

## 5. Electronic Application – Instruction and Tips

Please note that only registered users of the electronic application system have access to application data and are able to submit applications and receive corresponding e-mail messages. Hence, it is required for all applicants with project responsibility to register themselves or to ask a co-worker to register in their name with the proper e-mail address.

Please follow the five steps to compile and submit your application:

- If you are a new user please **register** in the application portal with your name, your e-mail address and your own password. When registering you will be asked about your work address details. Subsequently, you must **activate** your account using the link sent by e-mail. If you already have a user account you can immediately **login** using your e-mail address and password.
- The **function new application** starts the selection of the corresponding funding initiative (here: Between Europe and the Orient – A Focus on Research and Higher Education in/on Central Asia and the Caucasus), the application type, the grant receiving institution, and the language.
- You can interrupt the completion of your application at any time. You can logout and login again as often as required.
- Please check whether the pre-filled data on the applicant are correct. Furthermore, application data (e. g. project title, duration) and the budget are needed. The budget shall be uploaded as pdf-file under the heading “Other Enclosures”. You are asked to enter all information in the respective forms. Please note that the **save button** does not transfer any data to the Foundation. You are able to revise all data until the submission of your application. Please keep in mind to read and **accept** the legal statement. If you wish you can generate a PDF of the filled-in forms for verification and for your filing.
- Under enclosures you are able to **upload files** as required according to the required information on the preceding page in the „Information for Applicants“. Only PDF files are accepted. Before submission all files can be exchanged for new versions.

Once your application is completed you can **submit** it electronically to the Foundation. Additionally, it is required to generate a **signature sheet** for print-out. Please do not forget to print, sign and upload your **signature sheet**.

In the course of processing your application the Foundation might request additional information. The function **new supplement** is used to upload and submit the respective files.

## 6. Notes for Applicants

The Foundation can award grants to academic institutions only. It is unable to process applications that have been submitted, in identical or similar form, to other funding agencies. Furthermore, the Foundation does not pay for obligations which have been entered into prior to the receipt of a grant letter. In case an application is approved the institution represented by the applicant in Germany will become the recipient of the grant.