

## Funding Initiative

# Symposia and Summer Schools

### Contact

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## I. Objectives

The elaboration of innovative research areas and the investigation of new research issues are among the primary objectives of the Volkswagen Foundation. Within this context, particular importance is placed upon cooperation between individual disciplines and beyond national boundaries.

Within the framework of the program “Symposia and Summer Schools”, the Foundation would like to support the development of new ideas and to promote the discussion of topics and approaches not yet dealt with in an interdisciplinary and international forum. The Foundation is particularly interested in the active participation of young researchers. In addition, the Foundation expects a significant or adequate representation of women as speakers and participants.

## II. Funding Possibilities

Support is available for events concerning any topic and is not restricted to a particular discipline. It is therefore not necessary to address a topic of one of the initiatives defined in the Foundation’s funding portfolio. Funding can be provided for symposia, workshops, small conferences and summer schools, insofar as they fulfill the criteria listed below, with adequate consideration of the conditions outlined at the beginning.

### Symposia, Workshops and Small Conferences

The Foundation provides support for such scholarly meetings which stand out due to their focus on forward-looking issues and innovative research perspectives. Besides their interdisciplinary nature, such events must also hold promise of making a significant contribution to gaining new insights. Participants are to be carefully selected on the basis of their expertise in the subject matter. The group size should permit an intensive exchange of views and ensure active individual participation. The number of participants should therefore be restricted to max. 80 persons, and in all cases the organizers must provide adequate justification for the number of persons to be invited.

The Foundation limits support to the travel and accommodation expenses of participants who are unable to finance their attendance by other means. It is assumed that costs of travel will be kept to a minimum, especially with regard to air travel. Up to € 500 can be made available for non-personnel costs (e.g. printing costs for programs). Moreover, organizers may apply for a small amount of additional funding to pay for support staff during the preparation and running of the event, as well as for uploading papers in the Internet. The Foundation will not accept applications for flat rates to cover such organizational expenses.

The Foundation does not cover the cost of honoraria, assistants and similar items, accompanying family members, any supplementary programs, or entertainment expenses; nor will it pay costs involved with the publication of papers.

Funding will not be available for events which are organized within the framework of established disciplines and research areas, which are mainly limited to a discussion of the status quo, or which serve to elucidate the current situation in a given discipline. The same holds for commemorative and tribute colloquia, congresses, annual meetings of scientific associations and similar large-scale events or parts thereof, as well as for follow-up events. Funding will not be considered either for regularly occurring meetings between largely closed groups of specific experts and for conferences which primarily bring together colleagues from partner institutions within the framework of university partnerships. For symposia taking place before or after a large-scale event, funding will only be considered for the actual additional costs occurring.

### **Summer Schools**

Funding will be available for events where new knowledge important for the further development of a particular research area will be imparted to selected young academics (doctoral candidates, post-doctoral researchers and those working towards qualifications as university lecturers) from Germany and abroad, not only in order to extend their knowledge, but also to enable them – at an early stage of their career – to develop contacts beyond national borders and individual disciplines. Experts from other countries should also be invited to participate as speakers. In order to ensure efficient working conditions, the number of participants should not exceed 60 persons, including the speakers; depending on the theme, a smaller number may sometimes be advisable. A series of summer schools comprising up to three consecutive measures which build on each other may also be eligible for support.

Besides the funding of accommodation and travel expenses (at minimum cost) of participants and speakers, financial support can be applied for to cover the cost of preparation and running of the measure, including the costs of compiling working materials, uploading in the Internet, or photocopying.

This funding offer excludes applications for summer schools dealing with themes which belong either to regular or specialty teaching programs at universities, or for measures where the work program does not clearly integrate the latest research results relating to the topic on hand. The same applies to gatherings which involve meetings between members of partner universities.

### **III. Submission of Applications and Exclusion Criteria**

Applications prepared according to the application form for the funding initiative “Symposia and Summer Schools” (available at the download centre of the Volkswagen Foundation’s homepage) should be submitted as hardcopy as well as in electronic format (preferably application and each appendix as separate pdf-files) to the Foundation’s office. Proposals should describe the event in such a way that adequate information is available for the scientific review and should follow the checklist for applying as below. Provided that English is the commonly accepted working language with regard to the research area in question, i.e. especially in the natural and engineering sciences as well as in medicine and mathematics, applications should be submitted in English enclosing a German summary, eventually.

The event should take place in Germany. In exceptional well-founded cases, the event can also be held elsewhere in Europe. If the event is organized by both German and foreign colleagues, the person in charge should be an academic from a German university or re-search institute. According to the statutes, the Foundation can only grant funding to scientific institutions.

### **IV. Deadlines for Application**

Applications containing all necessary information should be submitted early enough to allow the Foundation sufficient time for their processing. The Foundation will not, therefore, accept applications which arrive less than four months prior to the starting date of the measure concerned.

Applications from individuals for the financing of travel and accommodation will not be processed. Furthermore, the Foundation does not provide funding merely to supplement existing support granted by another funding organization; nor can it accept applications for funding which have already been submitted or will be submitted to another funding organization. The Foundation shall not be held liable for any commitments entered into before the grant letter has been received.