

Information for Applicants: Submitting interim reports

In accordance with its funding principles, the Volkswagen Foundation expects interim reports (IR) for projects with a longer duration and final reports for all funded projects.

IRs are submitted as part of what we call 'interim reporting campaigns', i.e. all projects from a given call for proposals are asked to prepare an IR at the same time.

All reports are submitted via the Volkswagen Foundation's electronic application system.

Motivation and objective

The overarching aim of interim campaigns rounds is to review our own funding practice so that we can continue to develop targeted funding opportunities for a broad variety of academic disciplines in the future. The Foundation's aim is not to assess the success of individual projects, but to be able to track their progress. Through the campaigns, we wish to monitor the overall impact of our funding practice and identify areas for improvement in our funding programmes and procedures.

What is covered in the interim report?

The questions in the IR are divided into two parts:

- The first part consists of 8 standard questions on key scientific outputs; it also enquires about any changes that may have been made during project implementation. Some of the standard questions are put to each project participant (PI/Co-PI) individually. The Foundation collects this standard data for all its funded projects.
- The second part contains additional questions specific to each funding initiative, tailored to the particular characteristics of the specific initiative.

All questions can be viewed in the electronic application system before they are answered so that it is clear what information must be provided when filling them out. A table of contents in the electronic application system provides an overview of the question categories and makes navigation easier.

How much time should be set aside for the IR?

The IR is kept as concise as possible to avoid an excessive time commitment. It takes 30 to 60 minutes to complete.

The Foundation has deliberately chosen not to include detailed textual descriptions of the project content. The IR therefore consists mainly of questions that can be answered by ticking answer options. However, free-text fields also provide the opportunity to add explanations.

When is an IR requested?

IRs are requested approximately halfway through longer-term projects. The Foundation is well aware that not all findings and outcomes will have materialised by this stage. A 'No' in response to questions about outputs is therefore entirely legitimate.

The final reports to be submitted upon completion of the projects will later provide the opportunity to present the findings and impacts in full.

IRs are collected on a campaign basis; that is, grant recipients are asked by their supporting funding team to submit an interim report within a deadline of approximately 6 weeks. Only after this request has been made are the reports made available for submission on the electronic application system. The supporting funding team will be happy to answer any questions regarding the IRs.

How is an IR submitted?

Grant recipients who are asked to submit an IR as part of a reporting campaign will first receive an email containing a link to the electronic application system. You may need to register first. Projects can be found under 'My Applications' in the electronic application system. The document icon can be used to access, edit, save and submit the report forms. After submitting the IR, the submitter will receive a confirmation email containing a PDF of their IR content.

Technical support can be requested at webportal@volkswagenstiftung.de. Please note that, as part of the transition to new grant management software in 2025, the old five-digit reference numbers have been replaced by new project numbers.

Who is required to submit an IR?

IR forms are usually submitted for each funded project. Where there are several project participants in a project, a joint IR form is submitted, to which all project participants are invited to contribute.

Using the 'Share' icon on the Foundation's electronic application system, additional project members can also be invited to complete the IR if required.

**Many thanks in advance for your interim report.
We look forward to your findings and results!**