

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

NEXT – Law between Normativity and Reality

Profile Area “Exploration”

Funding Framework “NEXT”

Deadline: July 05, 2022, 14.00 CET



Law (interdisciplinary projects possible)



Research projects, funding of a teaching substitute



Up to Euro 350,000 Euro



Up to 2 years



Research teams involving two or three investigators (main applicant has to be a member of a German university/research institution)



Additional benefits: funding for communication of science and research



1 BACKGROUND

PROFILE AREA “EXPLORATION”

With the profile area “Exploration”, the Volkswagen Foundation aims to support creative and bold scientists in advancing unconventional ideas and venturing into previously unexplored areas of research. The overall goal is to dare taking risks, to contribute to solving major science-driven challenges with unorthodox questions and experimental approaches, and to generate new knowledge driven by curiosity.

FUNDING FRAMEWORK “NEXT“

Within the funding framework “NEXT”, the Volkswagen Foundation intends to take up new or hitherto little-researched topics and research approaches in close exchange with the scientific community. The aim is to address topics and research approaches that, on the one hand, have a high degree of knowledge potential and relevance for the future, but, on the other hand, are currently not being pursued scientifically, or not sufficiently so. The funding framework is the overarching umbrella for various calls on different thematic areas which are all intended to stimulate progress within the scientific landscape and to direct the focus to what could be “next” as the title of the framework indicates.

2 OBJECTIVES

Law as an object of legal studies always describes and generates relations of normativity and reality – its normativity has a reality and is generated, shaped and structured by the same. Legal science, on the other hand, concentrates in its research predominantly on the normative dimension of law. But if it is to do justice to a changing world as well as to increasingly complex and diverse regulatory structures and procedures, it must take a closer look at the relationship and interaction between normativity and reality. The relevance of real-world scientific findings for jurisprudence and its jurisprudential reflection was impressively demonstrated by the German Federal Constitutional Court's decision on climate protection in April 2021, which at the same time illustrates the aforementioned interaction: Here, law shapes and changes social reality and, at the same time, this reality constitutes a framework and reference point for law. At this interface between legal normativity and reality, questions of high social relevance arise, for example in the areas of sustainability or digitization.

However, it has to be noted that German jurisprudential research has become somewhat one-sided in this respect: Within the core area of legal doctrine, an examination of such real-world aspects often takes place at most via an inclusion of empirical findings for the assessment of facts or legal consequences. Systematic interweaving with theories and findings of other disciplines is rare, as is corresponding interdisciplinary research.

The Volkswagen Foundation intends to address this desideratum with the one-time call for proposals "NEXT – Law between Normativity and Reality" and promote cooperative legal science projects that are characterized by an inclusion of questions that specifically deal with the relationship between normativity and reality and make it the subject of legal science research. Essentially, such an inclusion should not consist in a mere addition of empirical findings, but in an investigation in which the dimensions of *is* and *ought* are regarded as intertwined and interacting. This intertwined investigation can be carried out purely within the legal sciences as well as interdisciplinary by including other disciplines.

Questions that show the mentioned entanglement could, for example, concern the relationship between legal regulation and predictive research results from non-legal disciplines (e.g. relevant in the context of the climate crisis or the Corona pandemic). Furthermore, the relationship between economic modeling and legal regulation of market events could be investigated, or the theoretical and practical role of political empiricism in constitutional law could be examined. With regard to empirical legal studies, it would be

possible to investigate which knowledge about reality is useful, necessary, or even dysfunctional for legislation. However, the call for papers is thematically open. Such examples should thus only serve as suggestions and illustrations.

3

SCOPE OF FUNDING AND GENERAL CONDITIONS

The call addresses teams of two or three researchers. The funding period is **up to two years** during which the total grant is limited to **350,000 euros**. The design of the budget is free and depends on the requirements of the respective project. Funding will be allocated on a lump-sum basis to enable a flexible reallocation of funds in accordance with the course of the project. Funding can be allocated to cover the following costs:

- personnel costs (own position or teaching substitute, student assistants, but no additional scientific staff);
- non-personnel costs (such as travel and conference expenses, costs arising from the involvement of project partners within Germany and abroad, research stays at other institutions, workshops, translation costs etc.);

Eligible for funding are

- researchers working in law, who are employed at a scientific institution in Germany, researchers from other fields are welcome to apply as co-applicants
- at all career levels after the PhD;
- researchers from foreign institutions are welcome to apply as co-applicants.

A timely project start is assumed. The Volkswagen Foundation intends to organize a kick-off event, presumably in spring 2023, to foster networking and exchange among the grantees. It is also planned to discuss the research results in a joint symposium after completion of the projects.

4 APPLICATION AND SELECTION PROCEDURE

The following documents should be submitted (pdf files):

- **Proposal** (max. 2.000 words, references and the bibliography are not counted)
- **Summary of the project** in German and English (max. 200 words each)
- **Short-CVs of all applicants** (max. 2 pages per applicant, please submit all CVs in one file).
- Please enter an **approximate budget plan** directly in the application system and enter the budget plans for each applicant separately. In case you apply for personnel costs, please specify whether the costs are for your own position or a teaching substitute.
- **Miscellaneous** (optional)

The applications will be reviewed by a jury of experts and evaluated with regard to their fit with the objectives of the call, the scientific quality and the plausibility of the project planned by the applicants.

Please submit your application online via the Volkswagen Foundation's electronic application system. Please inform yourself about the electronic application system prior to submitting your application. Information can be found in the document "Electronic Application System – Instructions and Tips" (see item 5). For technical questions regarding the use of the portal, please contact support@volkswagenstiftung.de.

5 CONTACT AND FURTHER INFORMATION

Further Information

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Additional Information

- [NEXT - Law between Normativity and Reality](#)
- [Application FAQs](#)
- [Volkswagen Foundation Electronic Application System](#)
- [Electronic Application System – Instructions and Tips](#)