

# Second Core Project Call

Call opens: December 11, 2023

Call closes: **February 18, 2024 23:59**

Submission: via email as a single word document to [quantA@uibk.ac.at](mailto:quantA@uibk.ac.at)

## 1 Purpose

Quantum Science Austria (**quantA**) is a Cluster of Excellence (COE) funded by the FWF and the six partner institutions. It has a framework research program defined in the proposal, which is to be implemented through a number of COE-internal programs. The main implementation components are the collaborative, inter-institutional Core Research Projects. Core Research Projects are collaborative projects that work towards a set of innovative objectives that are in accordance with the research questions of one or more of the three COE Research Areas. Characteristic of Core Research Projects is that they need synergies and essential input from more than one group to be accomplished.

## 2 Project structure

Core Research Projects can run for an initial 2.5 years. In competition with new proposals they may apply for an extension of another 2.5 years to fill the first 5-year funding period of the COE in the respective call. One important criterium for an extension will be evidence of collaborative research. An application can request PhD and/or postdoc positions either for the entire 2.5 years or less, as is justified for the proposed research, see section 4.

## 3 Who can apply?

Quantum researchers (PIs) with a permanent or tenure-track position at one of the six partner institutions are eligible to apply. Two PIs at two different participating institutions form the minimal consortium; one PI must be declared as the Lead PI and will be the main contact for management and reporting purposes. While there is no maximum number of PIs, we recommend that PIs keep the projects to a manageable size. One person can only be Lead PI of one Core Project and receive funding in at most two other Core Projects. Given the limited funding, PIs are encouraged to only submit their most ambitious proposals. Note that for non-permanent quantum researchers, a dedicated call for Discovery Projects is foreseen.

## 4 Costs and additional information

The PhD and postdoc positions will be funded at FWF or KV salary levels (whichever applies), PhD positions are for 30 h/week. Both types of positions include funds for consumables and travel, currently planned at € 8 500 per position and year, to be spent on any legitimate expense of the project. Note that purchases of major equipment are not foreseen from FWF funds.

The COE funding agreement stipulates that 60 % of the total funds are provided by the FWF and 40% are to come from the institutions. It is thus necessary that proposers verify the compatibility

of their requested resources with the respective site leaders (BoD members, see table below). Where appropriate, proposals may identify specific institutional contributions.

We expect to be able to fund from FWF and institutional contributions up to 45 PhD student and 15 postdoc positions in total throughout the first five-year funding period of the COE.

Board of Directors:

UIBK	Gregor Weihs
ISTA	Johannes Fink
JKU	Armando Rastelli
UNIVIE	Markus Aspelmeyer
ÖAW	Francesca Ferlaino
TUW	Jörg Schmiedmayer

## 5 Proposal structure

Use the supplied template (**keeping 11 pt font size, 15 pt line spacing, and 2 cm margins**) to describe

### 1 Formal information (max. 1 page)

- Lead PI and other PIs
- Resource request per institution (number of positions and duration only) and short justification
- Approval of compatibility with institutional contributions by respective site leaders

### 2 Scientific aspects (max. 2 pages)

- a. Scientific innovation and importance
- b. Collaboration and synergies
- c. Alignment with COE research program
- d. Approach, methods, work plan, risks

## 6 Evaluation

- Evaluation by the BoD as set out in the COE proposal.<sup>1</sup>
- Second week of March, 2024: decision on approval and the level of funding
- Projects can start immediately
- Applications are evaluated according to the following criteria: scientific quality, scientific innovation and potential for breakthrough results, as well as the quality of collaboration and synergies. Collaboration is highly encouraged

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<sup>1</sup> The proposals will be evaluated by at least three members of the BoD who do not have a conflict of interest. Proposals that are outside the scope of the research program as described above will not be considered. The remaining, eligible proposals will be ranked by scientific quality, their level of scientific innovation and potential for breakthrough results, as well as the quality of collaboration and expected level of synergy. If there are too many conflicts of interest to arrive at a ranking, the BoD may invite external experts to review and rank the proposals and to arrive at funding decision. In either case the BoD approves the funding of the top-ranked proposals subject to the available budget.