

Discovery Project Call

Research Opportunities for the Next Generation

Call opens: June 15, 2024

Call closes: July 30, 2024, 23:59

Submission: via e-mail as a single **pdf** document to quantA@uibk.ac.at

1 Purpose

Quantum Science Austria (**quantA**) is a Cluster of Excellence (COE) funded by the FWF and six partner institutions. It has a framework research program, which is implemented through a number of COE-internal programs. One of the main implementation components are **Discovery Projects**. Discovery Projects are small, short-term projects in the field of quantum science that seek to break the barriers erected by conventional thinking. Because unconventional goals and approaches often originate from younger scientists, this program is reserved for them.

Discovery Projects attempt to achieve a near-term research goal with unconventional means, elucidate a research question off the beaten path, or develop a new method towards a longer-term goal. The project must fit into the framework research program and contribute to the scientific goals of **quantA**.

2 Project structure

Discovery Projects have a single central research objective or question to be addressed with a defined methodology. They last for a maximum of 24 months and may ask for a budget of up to € 150000, which may be used for any legitimate research expense subject to the rules of the FWF, the consortium agreement, and the hosting partner institution.

Discovery Projects from this Call need to begin by June 30, 2025 at the latest.

3 Who can apply?

Quantum scientists from the participating institutions who do not hold a permanent position are eligible to apply. This includes untenured Assistant Professors, postdocs, and senior PhD students, whose supervisor must confirm that their graduation is imminent. The project can only start after the formal submission of the PhD thesis. Proposals have a single PI, but are encouraged to be collaborative in nature. At any time, a person may be PI on no more than one Discovery Project and it is not possible to be the lead PI of a Core Project at the same time. The position of the PI can be funded from the Discovery Project.

Important: Prospective applicants who do not hold a tenure-track position need to have a local host, i. e. a quantum researcher with a permanent position at one of the participating institutions who must ensure that the project can be carried out.

4 Costs and additional information

Any positions will be funded at FWF or KV salary levels (whichever applies), PhD positions are for 30 h/week. Note that purchases of major equipment are not foreseen from FWF funds.

Please use the attached spreadsheet template to list calculated costs.

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)

- PI, including contact information
- Statement of current employment

2 Scientific aspects (max. 5 pages)

- a. State-of-the-art (1 page)
- b. Vision of the project and alignment with quantA (1 page)
- c. Implementation of the project with methodology, risk management, and budget justification (2 pages)
- d. Qualification of the PI for the project (1 page)

3 Statement by local host in support of the application (max. 1 page)

4 Statement of expenditures (use provided Excel sheet template)

6 Evaluation

- Those proposals that are formally correct (formal criteria fulfilled, within the scope of the CoE, proposer is eligible, duration and budget appropriate) will be sent out for review to a panel of experts who will be asked to give points according to a set of criteria and to write brief reviews, unclosing a funding recommendation. A ranking will be established based on these points and reviews. Based on this ranking, the Board of Directors of the CoE will formally decide on the funding or the rejection of a proposal.
- Projects can start immediately after positive decision, but no later than June 30, 2025.
- Applications are evaluated according to the following criteria: scientific quality, scientific innovation and potential for breakthrough results, synergy with the host group, as well as new ideas and approaches. Collaboration is encouraged, but not necessary.

7 Implementation

Where possible and appropriate the hosting institution will create a separate account for the allocation and use of funding for each Discovery Project. Should this not be feasible, the hosting institution shall help the PI setting up a proprite solution to keep track of expenses. Brief final reports will be due within two months after the end of a project. These reports will form an integral part of the overall CoE reporting.

For questions, please refer to the Board of Directors member of your institution, host institution or to quantA@uibk.ac.at:

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