

The German-Israeli Water Technology Cooperation Program

CALL FOR JOINT PROPOSALS for 2023

1. OBJECTIVES OF FUNDING AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK

1.1 OBJECTIVES OF FUNDING

Within the framework of the German-Israeli cooperation in Water Technology Research, the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and the Israeli Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST) invite proposals for bilateral R&D projects.

The research shall focus on solutions to the water problems in Israel and its surrounding area and/or Germany. The research should be multidisciplinary and be applicable to the needs of the water sector. In addition to scientific partners, projects should preferably include industrial partners as well as related stakeholders.

Qualifying scientific applicants in this framework may receive R&D grants, respectively, from BMBF and MOST according to the applicable national funding procedures and regulations.

1.2 LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Projects can be funded under the terms of this call and of the agreements concluded between BMBF and MOST. In this respect, the general regulations for funding, including the consideration of intellectual property rights formulated by the Ministries for all BMBF-MOST research co-operations, will be applied also to this field.

Germany: In addition, for the German partners to be funded under this call, the standard BMBF-guidelines for grant applications on expenditure or cost basis, respectively, must be followed in addition to the general regulations.

Israel: All procedures and activities under this Call or the Israeli projects approved hereunder, including the eligibility of institutions via which applications must be filed, are subject to the standard MOST Procedures Regarding International Collaborative Scientific Projects and Scholarships Funded by MOST and to the MOST Standard Contract for Scientific Projects (both documents referred to hereinafter as "the standard terms").

Applicants are required to familiarize themselves with the standard terms before filing an application under this Call; filing an application constitutes a declaration that the applicant has done so and agrees to be bound by the provisions thereof.

Submitting a proposal does not automatically entitle applicants to a grant. Rather, grants will be awarded to proposals selected after the parties to this call have assessed the proposals according to the criteria set out in paragraph 9 of this call.

It is the intention of the parties issuing this call to fund research proposals selected hereunder for the three-year duration of the project. However, MOST funding must be approved on an annual basis, with the funding for the second and third years to be approved in accordance with the provisions of the research contract. The parties to this call reserve the right not to fund a second or third year of work for scientific-professional, administrative or budgetary reasons.

This call is subject to cancellation in the event of unforeseen budgetary constraints.

2. SUBJECT OF RESEARCH

Research projects will be carried out in the following research areas:

- Biotechnology for water treatment processes
- Water reuse in agriculture

Each submitted research proposal needs to indicate specifically to which of the above research areas it is related.

The **objectives of the German-Israeli Water Technology Cooperation Program** are as follows:

- To improve the water situation in Israel and the surrounding area and/or Germany. Transferability of the results to comparable regions should preferably be ensured.
- To facilitate access to new markets for Israeli and German enterprises in the water and environmental sector.
- To support and strengthen bilateral and multilateral cooperation in the water sector as well as cooperation between science and industry.

Each submitted research proposal needs to indicate how it addresses the above-mentioned objectives of the German-Israeli Water Technology Cooperation. In particular, the proposals need to specify the interaction between German and Israeli research groups (e.g. using a block diagram or PERT network diagram) and how integration will be managed and maintained during the project (e.g. governance structure, joint workshops).

Priority will be given to projects based on novel ideas and potential industrial applicability. It is recommended that working groups include academic partners, industrial partners and end users.

3. ELIGIBILITY

Proposals that do not meet the following preconditions will be automatically rejected and will not be passed on to the scientific committee for review and evaluation.

1. The proposed project must be submitted by Israeli researchers and German researchers to be carried out in close cooperation.

2. Each joint research team must be led by a Principal Investigator (PI) from each country.

Israel:

The PI must be affiliated with an academic institution or a research institute ("Affiliated Institution"), or be a professor emeritus who continues working on research in affiliation with the Affiliated Institution. An Affiliated Institution is determined as follows:

- i. An accredited institution of higher education in Israel, according to the Council for Higher Education Act, 1958.
- ii. A Research Institute which is a non-profit organization.
- iii. A Research Institute which is a government company or a governmental unit.

For the purposes of this call, a "Research Institute" means a research institute which a significant portion of its activity is the advancement of cutting-edge scientific knowledge, which possesses appropriate infrastructure and equipment, and which employs researchers who, inter alia, publish articles related to their research in leading scientific journals in the world, and who present their research at international symposia.

A researcher who intends a sabbatical leave in the first year of the project cannot be approved as a principal investigator (PI) of the research proposal. A PI who intends a vacation or absence of more than three months should request permission from MOST in advance (through the relevant R&D Authority). A substitute to the PI will not be approved in the course of the first year.

Special eligibility provisions for Israeli Researchers:

1. In compliance with MOST's Procedures Regarding Scientific Projects Funded by MOST ("[MOST Regulations](#)"), an Israeli PI that has or will have an active grant from any of MOST's international cooperation programs, whose funding will be concurrent to the funding of this program, is not eligible to apply. No parallel funding is allowed in the international cooperation program. A researcher who is not eligible to submit a proposal as PI due to an active grant may submit one additional proposal in the international cooperation program as Associated PI, if he does not have an active grant in the international program in which he acts as Associated PI.
2. A researcher who has submitted a proposal for any MOST international cooperation call for proposals to be funded in the 2024 calendar year, **may not submit another proposal for any other MOST international cooperation call for proposals in 2024.**
3. Researchers should be advised that after a proposal has been submitted, the status of the members of the research team as PI and/ or Associated PI may not be changed for the purpose of compliance with the eligibility requirements listed above, It will be clarified that, the aforementioned limitations regarding changing the status of the members of the research team include the addition of a PI and/ or Associated PI who, at the time of submission, was defined as an external consultant or were not listed in the proposal and/or research group.

Germany:

Research proposals may be submitted by German-based commercial companies, institutions of higher education, non-university research establishments as well as public institutions at municipal, state or federal level. The participation of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) is expressly welcome.

For Both German and Israeli Applicants:

The application must include a research plan in one of the areas of research specified in this call, which will be carried out in Israel by at least one senior researcher who is a permanent employee of the applying institution or on track for tenure in the applying institution.

The project proposals must include a detailed description of the joint work-plan as well as a calculation and justification of the budget, for both the Israeli and German teams.

Additionally, applicants are referred to the general project terms found at https://www.bmbf.de/bmbf/en/international-affairs/worldwide-networking/israel/territorialklausel.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=1

Joint German-Israeli Cooperation is Obligatory

The proposed project **must be prepared and carried out jointly by the Israeli and the German project partners**. For this purpose, BMBF and MOST will consider providing a grant that covers the travel expenses for one short visit of one of the potential research partners to either Israel or Germany, for the purpose of preparing the joint proposal. Such grants will not exceed 1,500 Euro.

Potential research partners interested in such a travel grant may submit their informal request by e-mail to the relevant contacts in Germany or Israel (see paragraph 11).

4. REGIONAL COOPERATION

Israeli partners may include researchers from neighboring states and areas in their proposed research teams if the relevance of the expected project results may be increased thereby.

5. DURATION OF PROJECT

The research should be planned for a period not exceeding three years.

6. BUDGET

The overall BMBF/MOST budget for the Israeli participation in this call for proposals is up to EURO 1,000,000 of which MOST will contribute up to EURO 250,000 (equivalent to 1,000,000 NIS based on the conversion rate of 4 NIS/ 1 Euro), subject to the approval of the State budget and the availability of funds. Within each call of the German-Israeli water technology research cooperation, typically 3-5 projects are funded.

In Israel:

Please see full funding provisions on MOST [Procedures Regarding Scientific Projects](#) Funded by MOST ("[MOST Regulations](#)"). All activities and funding pursuant to this Call must be in accordance with MOST Regulations unless otherwise specified.

Proposals submitted to MOST must include a detailed project budget for the Israeli team. The maximum budget size for the Israeli team for each project proposal is limited to 250,000 Euro (equivalent to 1,000,000 NIS based on the conversion rate of 4 NIS/ 1 Euro) for a duration of 3 years.

In Germany:

Funds for German partners will be awarded as non-repayable project grants. The grants can be spent to cover the cost of staff, materials, and equipment. No funding can be provided for building investments.

Grants for universities, research and science institutions and similar institutions are calculated on the basis of the eligible project-related expenditure.

German research institutes which are already part of a government based funding scheme may receive project related funds only under specific circumstances and are advised to contact the Project Management Agency Karlsruhe in advance of submission.

Grants for German commercial companies are calculated on the basis of the project-related costs eligible for funding, up to 50% of which can as a rule be covered by grants, depending on the project's nearness to application. In the case of collaborative research projects, the European Union's Community Framework allows differentiated rules on extra percentage points for small and medium enterprises (SMEs), which may result in a higher rate of funding.

7. KEY DATES

Final date for submission of proposals: March 13th 2024 at 15:00 (local time).

Please note the instructions and deadlines for specific phases of the submission process listed below (pre- submission in Israel: March 6th 2024 at 15:00 local time (Israel)).

8. GUIDELINES FOR THE SUBMISSION OF JOINT RESEARCH PROPOSALS

All proposals must be submitted in both Germany and Israel. If only one partner organization receives the proposal, it will not be considered for funding. The proposal should be written in English.

The basis for a proposal is the “Joint Research Part”, jointly written by the project partners in accordance with the application form. The application form is **obtainable at the MOST website (www.most.gov.il)**, from the Research Authorities of the universities in Israel and from the **website of the German-Israeli Cooperation (www.cogeril.de)**. The use of the updated forms is obligatory.

The submission process differs in both countries and proceeds as follows:

Submission instructions for Israeli research teams:

- a) The Israeli PI shall submit the proposal through the Science Forefront system, at <https://kf.most.gov.il>.

In order to apply for the first time, the applicant needs to fill an "account request" at the Science Forefront system. The request should be approved by the Research Authority of the Affiliated Institution. Once approved, the applicant will be notified by email that the account is active. The approval process may take time and therefore should be done well in advance of the application deadline.

- b) **Mandatory Pre-submission:** The Principal Investigator must pre-submit the proposal via the Science Forefront system by **March 6th 2024 at 15:00 local time (Israel)**. **The online system will be closed for pre-submissions after the said date and hour and no pre-submissions will be accepted after that time. Israeli researchers who have not pre-submitted their proposals by March 6th 2024 at 15:00 local time (Israel) will not be allowed to submit their proposal.**
- c) A proposal that has been pre-submitted can be edited by the PI, in coordination with the Affiliated Institution, until the final joint submission deadline.
- d) The Affiliated Institution must submit the proposal not later than by the final submission date, **March 13th 2024 at 15:00 local time (Israel time)**. Proposals that are not submitted by the Affiliated Institution through the Science Forefront system by this time, **will not be accepted.**
- e) For the application, the required data is entered into the Science Forefront system. The Joint Research Part (according to the application form) and the associated files are uploaded as an attachment.
- f) After successful submission, the output file (Research Proposal) from the Science Forefront system must be downloaded and sent to the German partner for submission on the German side (see instructions below).
- g) Please be advised that as technical problems are possible, and the submission process may take a significant amount of time, **it is strongly recommended to fulfil the above steps well in advance of the applications deadlines.**

Submission instructions for German research teams:

- a) The German PI shall submit the proposal through the Easy Online system at <https://foerderportal.bund.de/easyonline>. The provision of an abstract in German language and indicative budget figures are required.
- b) The German partner receives the final Research Proposal Form as the output of the Israeli "Science Forefront" Online system from the Israeli Partner and shall submit it as an attachment ("Projektskizze") through the electronic submission system „easy-Online“ in Germany

9. INSTRUCTIONS FOR WRITING THE JOINT RESEARCH PART OF THE PROPOSALS

The project proposals are composed of the form "Joint research part" plus the accompanying mandatory documents.

The Joint research part should be up to 10 pages including figures (not including abstract and bibliography) and include the following sections (Font: Times New Roman 11; line spacing: 1.5):

1. Abstract (max 1500 characters including spaces) (1) Objectives, (2) methods and plan of operation, and (3) significance (uniqueness, innovative aspects) of the proposed research.
2. Description of the subject of the proposal.
3. The scientific and technological background.
4. Objectives and expected contribution to the objectives of the water technology program.
5. Relevance to the research areas listed in the call
6. Methodology and plan of operation.
7. Potential applicability for industrial partners, stakeholders, problem owners and end users.
8. Brief account of each partner's contribution to the proposed research.
9. Preliminary (unpublished) results relevant to the proposal.
10. Bibliography Relevant bibliography on the research area. The five most relevant items for the proposed research should be marked with an asterisk
11. Budget Overview

The mandatory documents will be uploaded as **attachments** and designed as follows:

1. **CV:** A short CV for each researcher involved in the research of up to 2 pages each, including: personal statement (brief description of why the investigator is well-suited for the role on the proposed project); list of ongoing and completed research projects from the last three years that the investigator wishes to highlight; citation of up to five publications or research products that highlight the investigator's experience and qualifications for the proposed project; positions, scientific appointments, and honors (**only last 5 years and relevant to the topic of proposal**).
2. **Additional authorizations needed depending on the type of research** (e.g. Helsinki Committee, animal experiments) shall be submitted along with the proposal. In case the required authorization is still not available at the time of submission, a statement in free text should be attached including the researcher's commitment that if their proposal is approved, the required authorization will be submitted as soon as possible.

Israel only instructions (Additional data for the Science Forefront system):

- a) Short abstract (up to 1500 characters in Hebrew and English).
- b) Applicability up to 1000 characters in Hebrew.
- c) Importance of the research up to 500 characters in Hebrew/English
- d) **Budget request** - enter the requested budget in NIS.
The budget of the researcher from abroad must be entered in a general way in the section designated for this purpose.
- e) Please specify 5 researchers from Israel with expertise in the field of the proposal, who could serve as potential external reviewers.

- f) Other Sources of Support Related to Proposed Research by Israeli Principal Investigator(s): Additional supports received for the proposed research must be detailed in a separate (attached) document in accordance with the published format, and this is in addition to the questions that exist in the advance of science system.
- g) Do not add additional documents beyond what is specified above and in the attached guidelines for submission to the Science Forefront system.
- h) **Letter of intent** from the project partners in both countries affirming their intent to collaborate on the proposed research (As attachment).

Germany only instructions (Additional data for the Easy Online system):

- Provision of an abstract in German language (up to 1500 characters)
- Contact details for the German PIs
- Budget requested

10. EVALUATION AND SELECTION

Evaluation of the project proposals will be based on the following criteria:

- Relevance to the topics and objectives as mentioned under section 2 of this call
- Originality and novelty
- The soundness and scientific quality of the proposed approach
- The adequacy of the facilities
- The capability of the investigator(s) to carry out the proposed research
- Added value for the German-Israeli cooperation
- Potential applicability for industrial partners, stakeholders, problem owners and end users

The proposals will be pre-evaluated and rated by international external reviewers. In accordance with the procedures of the Cooperation Program, all the proposals will be evaluated for final ranking by the Joint German-Israeli Program Committee.

The number of proposals to be approved by Ministries under this call will be determined after evaluating the project proposals in view of budget requirements and constraints.

Applicants of proposals, which are positively evaluated and which complement one another, may be requested to collaborate and prepare a joint project proposal.

If a joint German-Israeli research proposal is recommended by both ministries under this call, the **German partner** will be requested to **file a full proposal** with detailed budget justification **according to the national German regulations** for their part of the work-plan in the joint project. Approval of the joint German-Israeli research proposal hereunder is subject to the approval of the German partner's full proposal by BMBF. Use of the electronic application system "easy-online" is obligatory for the application to BMBF only in this second stage of the application process.

11. CONTRACTS

Upon approval of a research grant by the official authorities in Germany and in Israel, a research contract will be signed between MOST and the institution of the Israeli principal investigator (example of the contract can be found on the MOST website – www.most.gov.il).

12. CONTACT INFORMATION

Additional information can be obtained from the following contact persons:

In Germany on behalf of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF):

Dr. Leif Wolf

Project Management Agency Karlsruhe (PTKA)

Karlsruhe Institute of Technology

Hermann-von-Helmholtz-Platz 1

76344 Eggenstein-Leopoldshafen

Tel.: ++49-721-608-28224

Fax: ++49-721-608-928224

E-mail: leif.wolf@kit.edu

Internet: www.ptka.kit.edu; www.cogeril.de

In ISRAEL:

On Scientific matters:

Dr. Moshe Ben Sasson

Scientific Director Water, Agriculture and Environment

E-mail: mosheBS@most.gov.il

On administrative matters:

Israeli researchers should consult administrative matters directly with the Research Authority at their Affiliated Institution. The Institution will contact the Ministry in case of necessity.

Representative of the International Division for this CFP:

Ms. Shani Edri

Head of Department

Division for International Relations

shanie@most.gov.il

MOST website: www.most.gov.il

13. YOUNG SCIENTISTS EXCHANGE PROGRAM (YSEP)

Young scientists are encouraged to participate in the exchange program that was initiated by BMBF and MOST in the framework of the German-Israeli Water Technology Cooperation Program. This is an open call for young Israeli and German scientists for a training period in the partner country for up to 6 months, but not less than 1 month. Funding will be provided to cover all necessary expenses of the applicant's visit abroad, according to the provisions of the YSEP.

Applications for YSEP must be submitted in accordance with the terms and information provided on the following websites:

www.cogeril.de

www.most.gov.il

Bonn, December 2023
Dr. Rainer Müssner,
Federal Ministry of Education
and Research (BMBF)

Jerusalem, December 2023
Dr. Moshe Ben Sasson,
Ministry of Science and Technology
(MOST)