

SGC's Rapid Response Funding Call for Bilateral Collaborative Proposals Between China and Germany in COVID-19 Related Research

On March 11, 2020, the coronavirus outbreak was declared a global pandemic by the WHO. The spread and potential lasting existence of the COVID-19 pose severe threats to the world. In face of the global challenge, joint efforts of international partners, are urgently needed to accelerate the R&D activities against the novel coronavirus.

The Sino-German Center for Research Promotion (SGC), as an international research funding organization jointly set up by NSFC and DFG to promote China-Germany scientific collaboration as its core mission, strives to play an important role at the forefront of this effort by facilitating cooperation and exchanges between scientists from both countries in fundamental research on the fight against the pandemic. SGC is therefore issuing a rapid response funding call for bilateral collaborative proposals jointly submitted by Chinese and German applicants in COVID-19 related research.

I Programme Information

1. Objective

The purpose of the call is to build on the combined strengths of academic research teams between China and Germany to work together on collaborative research that will advance the understanding of the coronavirus and the illness it causes (COVID-19), in order to contribute to the global response to the COVID-19 outbreak.

2. Subjects covered

- Novel coronavirus structures, functions, key targets of infection and its evolution study
- The natural history of the virus, its transmission and diagnosis;

- Animal and environmental research on the origin of the virus, including management measures at the human-animal interface;
- Clinical characterization and management of disease caused by the virus;
- Infection prevention and control, including best ways to protect health care workers;
- Ethical considerations for research in connection with the afore-mentioned themes

3. Implementation period:

The implementation period for projects approved in response to this call will be from 1 October 2020 to 30 September 2021.

4. Eligibility of Applicants

Applicants must be researchers based at a Chinese/German university or research institution.

- Applicants from Germany must have completed their research training by obtaining a doctorate and be eligible to apply for funding from the DFG.
- Applicants from China must be a PI or participant in a NSFC research grant (ongoing or already completed) with a duration of at least 3 years. The Chinese applicant must have senior academic title of associate professor or above, and his/her support organization must have registered at the NSFC. Lindau alumni previously supported by the Sino-German Center for Research Promotion but without a NSFC research grant or senior academic title at the time of submission are also eligible to apply.

Please contact the Head Office of the Sino-German Center for Research Promotion if you have specific questions.

5. Funding Available

A maximum of 1.5 million RMB (or equivalent sum of euros) per project for research expenditure like consumables or small scientific equipment, exchange activities (including but not limited to workshops, visits or video conferences), student or scientific assistant costs and others would be provided to both Chinese and German grantees.

6. Additional considerations

Good scientific practice

In their work on the scientific project applicants are obliged to adhere to the principles of good scientific practice. Scientific results must be published in a generally accessible form following international standards.

Ethical issues

Proposals that involve experiments on animals and/or humans must be conducted in accordance with the laws and regulations applicable in China and Germany.

If ethical content involves multiple research institutes, all the institutes must provide the Ethical Approval from Ethics Committees of their own or relevant authorities as the attachment to the proposal.

For Chinese applicants, if the research involves highly pathogenic microorganism, biosafety commitment documents provided by home institutes should also be submitted together with the proposal.

Data management and transfer of materials

Collection and exchange of data and materials must be in strict compliance with the laws and regulations in effect in China and Germany.

7. Submission

All proposals need to have a specific topic and should bring together researchers especially qualified in this field. The projects should be applied for by one research team in China and one research team in Germany, each led by an applicant. The Chinese applicant and the German applicant should submit a single joint proposal after in-depth and full consultation. The proposal must be written in English, and its format and the information provided must be in accordance with the “application forms” as provided in attachment 1.

An electronic copy of application forms and relevant attachments must be submitted to the Email address: covid19@sinogermanscience.org.cn by 18:00 Beijing time, July 7th, 2020. Those submitted later than that time will be declined.

Please note that after submission of an electronic copy via email, two copies of application forms (final version) and relevant attachments for each proposal must be printed out, signed by both applicants (electronic signature allowed for German applicant) and sealed by Chinese applicant’s support organization

(依托单位), and mailed to Sino-German Center for Research Promotion (Address: No. 83, Shuangqing Road, Haidian District, Beijing, China, postal code 100085).

The hard copies of afore-mentioned proposals must be received by the SGC by July 13rd, July, 2020.

II Evaluation

Proposals will be evaluated in a peer-review process based on the following criteria:

- Academic merit and innovation points of the project
- Qualification of the applicants and the team members, their track record and the premises of previous work
- Relevance of the topic and adequacy of the proposal
- Synergy/added value of the proposed collaboration and its potential
- Involvement of early career scientists
- Anticipated achievements

III Obligation

Collaboration Agreement

As the research projects will be carried out by partners from different countries and institutions, the basis of collaboration between them, including ownership of intellectual property (IP) generated during the project and rights to exploitation, and IP management is expected to be set out in a collaboration agreement between the Principal Investigators. It is the responsibility of the Principal Investigators to put such an agreement in place before the research begins.

The full Collaboration Agreement must be available to be shared with SGC once the project is approved.

Reporting

Within four months after completion of the funding measure, the Sino-German Center expects a written project report and an accounting-of-funds report signed by both applicants by using the forms provided by the Sino-German Center.

[Attachment 1: Application forms](#)

[Attachment 2: Joint research agreement \(sample copy\)](#)

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