**Funding line: Artificial Intelligence / Machine Learning of the Ministry of Culture and Science of the German State of North Rhine-Westphalia (MCW)**

**- Funding program for initial AI research projects – KI-Starter – 5th and 6th round**

**Notes on applications for junior researchers**

**I. General information on filing applications**

1. The recommendation for the funding decision will be made by a committee made up of scientific consultants and advisors and will be based both on the quality of the submitted application documents and on the project presentation delivered at the selection symposium.
A total of 10 junior researchers can be sponsored for 2 years each.
Applicants must have obtained their PhD at the latest when the funding commences. Furthermore, the PhD must normally not have been awarded more than three years prior to the start of funding. Periods of time taken up with child-raising within this deadline will be taken into account in accordance with the rulings of *Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft* (German Research Foundation, DFG).

2. Be brief! The application including all attachments should not exceed 20 pages (Arial, font size 11, line spacing 1.15, margin 2cm each) plus the list of references. It should also be possible to comprehend the application by itself, without any need to consult further literature.

3. The Ministry of Culture and Science asks you to:

- Answer all relevant questions – and only these – with an appropriate level of completeness in terms of general procedures and methods as well as your and other preliminary work.
- Stick to the defined structure of the questions.
- Submit the applications with attachments in triplicate (one original and 2 copies of the original) on DIN A4 paper (not bound) to the lead partner Projektträger Jülich. Please also enclose a copy of the entire application with all applications as a single, searchable PDF document on CD or DVD.

The application form and the template for the "Work, Time and Expenditure Plan (AZA)" are available here: **https://www.ptj.de/ki-starter**

The complete application documents must be sent to:

> Projektträger Jülich
> Business Unit Technological
> and Regional Innovations (TRI)
> Forschungszentrum Jülich GmbH
> Subject: "KI-Starter"
> 52425 Jülich

Applications can be submitted by the following three cut-off dates:

> 5th selection round:     14-Oct-2022
> 6th selection round:     26-Jun-2023

## II.    Notes on the wording and content of the application

### 1. General information

The application shall be written in English (project description and work plan, see attachments 1 and 2).

The applicant is the university providing the infrastructure for the junior researcher. The junior researcher is the point of contact for the Ministry of Culture and Science of North Rhine-Westphalia (MCW) and the lead partner for all issues relating to execution and management of the project. In the process, he or she will be assisted by the professor to whom the project is attached.

The following information about the junior researcher is required:

- First name, surname, academic qualifications
- Dissertation date (generally the date of the PhD viva)
- Employment status
- Date of birth, nationality
- Current institution, department
- Address
- Telephone/fax (office)
- E-mail address
- Personal address and telephone number

### 1.1 Allocation of the project to a main area of focus
See call for applications – Object of the funding

### 1.2 Abstract
Please summarize the main objectives of your project in German <u>and</u> in English (max. 15 lines/1600 characters).

### 2. Description of the research project (Attachments 1 and 2, max. 7 pages in total)

### 2.1 Status of the research and preliminary work
Provide a brief description of the status of the research in your field of research in relation to your project as the starting point for your work. Here, address the most important papers from other scientists and explain the contribution made by your project in the field of research.

Please also provide in particular a detailed account of your own preliminary work and explain the extent to which the project goes beyond the scope of the work you have carried out to date, in particularly of your dissertation.

### 2.2 Objectives and work plan
Describe the objectives of the project.

Provide a detailed and comprehensive list of planned work steps for the duration of the project. The scope of this section should be around half the overall application. Describe the methods used in the project. When doing this, discuss the following questions:
Which of the applied methods already exist, and which will be developed by you?
What expertise does the applying university offer for the project?

Alongside the project presentation in the peer review meeting/selection symposium, the quality of your work plan will form part of the decision basis for the grant recommendation.

## 2.3. Planned international cooperations as part of the project

Provide details of the scientists with whom you hope to cooperate.
Provide information for the following points:
- Are cooperations with other countries in place? If yes, what are they?
- Will you be carrying out part of the project abroad? If yes, in which country? Please state who you will be working together with there and how your visit – and a possible return visit – are integrated in the project plans (LOI from the partner, see attachment 8 of the application).
- Note: If projects are carried out in cooperation with other countries, the personnel expenses and material expenses for international cooperation partners – with the exception of travel expenses for the return visit to NRW – are not covered by the grant. Travel costs for the return visit of the international cooperation partner to Germany can be recognized as eligible for funding in accordance with the travel cost laws of the state of North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW).

## 3. Funds applied for (Attachment 3, template AZA)

The funding period is 2 years. The finance plan is to be presented separately for both years. Provide full details for the expenditure in terms of personnel costs, material expenses and travel costs. For your finance plan, please use the template "Work, Time and Expenditure Plan (AZA)" (max. 6 pages in total for the 2-year period).
Expenditure that is eligible for funding includes e.g.:
- Personnel costs for your own post in accordance with the German TV-L salary scale
- Where appropriate: necessary assistants
- Necessary travel expenditure in accordance with the travel cost laws of the state of North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW)
    - For conference attendance, studies, exchanges
    - To international cooperation partners; max. duration 6 months
- Necessary material resources (e.g. OpenAccess)
- Required equipment that exceeds the scope of the basic equipment

As part of the overall budget of your funding, the material expenses and travel costs are coverable.
The workplace and basic equipment will be provided by the university.

Provide details of the annual funds made available to you by the applying university or by third parties for your project.

If you as the junior researcher or the university have already applied for funding for this project, please provide details in the application form under point 8.

Note:
The maximum grant amount is limited to EUR 175,000. The university is expected to carry its own share of the costs of at least 10% of the expenditure that is eligible for funding. The maximum funding amount is 90%.
If the applied-for expenditure exceeds the maximum amount of EUR 194,444.44 (maximum amount of EUR 175,000 plus 10% own contribution), then the university's own contribution increases and the grant quota goes down accordingly.
If lower expenditure is calculated, the university's own contribution will remain at 10% and the grant quota at 90%.

### 4. Declarations and obligations (Attachments 6, 7 and 8)

a) With submission of the application, the junior researcher declares (see also attachment 6, max. 1 page) that:
  - o He/she will adhere to the principles of scientific working (see attachment 6 of the application). These principles include among other things:
    - • Maintaining professional standards
    - • Documentation of the attained results
    - • Critical investigation of findings obtained during the project
    - • Recognition of contributions made by partners, colleagues and predecessors as their work
  - o You will actively participate with your field of research in the AI strategy at federal state level and, in particular, that you will take part in the training of graduates in the state of NRW, for example through tutorials.

b) Please enclose an official declaration by the university (see also attachment 7, max. 2 pages):
  - o On the provision of the infrastructure and the association with the professorship (max. 2 pages);
  - o On the available internal funds and on avoidance of double funding for the applied-for project;
  - o That you are carrying out research on the applied-for research project as a junior researcher and that you are affiliated to a professorship at the university.

c) LOI of the foreign cooperation partner (attachment 8, max. 1 page)

### 5. Signature(s):

The application must be signed by the university and the junior researcher.

### 6. List of attachments

Refer to point 7 in the application form.

**KI-starter – timeline**

KI-Starter Künstliche Intelligenz – timeline



27.11.2019

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **5th round** | **14. October 2022** | |
| 6th round | 26. June 2023 | |

expected
**February 2022**
October 2023

expected
**May 2023**
November 2023

expected
**1. June 2023**
1. February 2024

Call KI - Starter → deadline for submission → pre-selection → selection-symposium → selection → recommendation → grant → start