

**This funding initiative has been finished!
An application is no longer possible.**

**Information 84
for Applicants**

Funding Initiative

Focus on the Humanities

Deadline

September 15, 2011

Contact

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1. Objectives

The funding initiative **Focus on the Humanities** jointly supported by the Fritz Thyssen Foundation and the Volkswagen Foundation offers support for research in the humanities, especially where it breaks new ground at the interfaces and overlaps with established fields of knowledge. The aim of the funding initiative is to open up new creative scope for highly qualified young researchers, as well as to make the humanities more attractive for those who have already achieved some renown and are firmly established by virtue of their outstanding work to date.

The funding initiative comprises two components:

- **Dilthey Fellowships** providing support for highly qualified young post-docs at an early stage of their research careers
- **Opus magnum** for exceptional scholars who wish to dedicate their time to working on an expansive treatise (leave of absence with funds for a teaching substitute)

2. Dilthey Fellowships

The "Dilthey Fellowships" – named after the German philosopher Wilhelm Dilthey (1833 to 1911) – offer an opportunity for young post-docs **at an early stage of their career** to investigate topics which due to their complexity or highly innovative character are known to necessitate longer planning and time horizons than usually.

The fellows are expressly encouraged to participate in university **teaching** (as a rule with two, maximum four hours a week per semester) as well as to network with the other grantees. This is facilitated i.a. by meetings of fellows organized by the foundations.

Application Requirements

- applicants must be embedded in a university or an appropriate research institution in Germany
- their doctorate must have been awarded within the past five years (periods for childrearing and care of relatives are taken into account)

Scope of Funding

The **funding** is offered for a period of **five years**. Projects may include post-doctoral dissertations (*Habilitationsschrift*).

The funding may cover the personnel costs for **the applicant** (German salary scale TV-L 14). In addition **funds** may also be provided to finance **positions for doctoral students** and for requisite **non-personnel costs**.

In addition funds may also be allocated for workshops and for **research stays in Germany and abroad**. The applicants should provide grounds and submit a breakdown of cost estimates.

The amount of funding per project is **maximum € 600,000** for the first application. This maximum amount should only be applied for in the event that costs for additional personnel are likely to arise at the outset. In general it is advisable for the project to be launched in stages.

In the event of unexpected project developments it will be possible to apply for additional funding components during the five-year period (e.g. funds for additional personnel, workshops, cooperation projects and stays abroad). As a rule, though, this should remain within the scope of the maximum funding amount (see above).

It is possible, either in initial applications or at a later stage, to apply for funding within the context of the Volkswagen Foundation's [transatlantic funding initiatives](#).

During the fourth year of funding it is possible to apply for a prolongation of up to three years. Following the first phase of funding, this prolongation entails the candidate becoming firmly established - together with her/his research - at an academic institution. A clear perspective for the researcher's position after the end of funding should be enclosed.

Online Application

Please submit applications online at <https://portal.volkswagenstiftung.de>

N.B. The **cover sheet** must be downloaded, signed, and sent by surface mail to the Volkswagen Foundation.

Application Procedure and Review

Online applications can be submitted either in German or in English by **September 15, 2011** latest. Applications must include a **binding declaration** on the part of a university or the respective research institution to the effect that they are prepared to host the applicant. The Foundation is prepared to bear the direct costs arising from research projects. It is expected, though, that the hosting institution will make a significant own contribution – for instance by providing infrastructure such as rooms, computers and assistants.

After registering online and completing all online forms, the following should be attached as PDF documents.

1. Cover letter
2. Project outline (maximum 1 page; applications in English must be accompanied by a German project outline)
3. A fictitious newspaper article describing your project (max. 1 page). This should be suitable for explaining the project to an interested layperson
4. A detailed project description (not more than 18 pages in total: Times New Roman, font size 12 pt, 1.5 spaced). **Project descriptions containing more than 18 pages will not be considered.**
 - Project description with grounds and details of objectives, innovation potential in respect of the current state of research, and the methods to be employed
 - Proposed institutional embedding and proposed recipient of funds (institute, name, address)
 - Details of participation in university teaching (2 to max. 4 hours a week per semester)
 - Notification of whether an application has been submitted to other funding organizations
5. Resume
6. List of publications
7. Doctoral Degree Certificate
8. Up to three publications

9. [Declaration](#) from the proposed institution which is to receive the funds, confirming that they will host the applicant should funding be granted (e.g. by providing a place to work) and administer any funds received.

Non-German citizens may submit applications, provided they intend to work at a research institution in Germany.

There is a two-stage selection procedure. Following a written review procedure of all the submitted complete applications, successful candidates will be invited by the Foundation to present their proposed research project in person. The final selection will take place in the spring of 2012. The final selection will be reached by a steering committee comprising external reviewers and representatives of the two foundations involved. Up to ten fellowships can be granted.

Dr. Gudrun Tegeder will be pleased to offer advice to applicants (phone +49 511-83 81 289, tegeder@volkswagenstiftung.de).

3. Opus magnum

Opus magnum is the second funding component within the initiative. The aim is to provide researchers in the humanities who have already achieved a degree of renown by virtue of their outstanding research performance with absence of leave from their normal teaching and administrative duties so that they can concentrate on an expansive scholarly treatise. The foundations will finance a teaching substitute during their absence.

Due to their exceptional quality and originality, it is expected that the grantees will exert a significant influence on research beyond their respective fields. Apart from the humanities, this funding offer also addresses neighboring fields, primarily those in the social sciences.

The initiative aims at supporting the compilation of works of fundamental significance, which

- represent first attempts to position and provide orientation to an area of research in front of the backdrop of the state of research in neighboring disciplines,
- are expected to lead to a querying of mainstream thought, shedding new light on the respective object of research and hence resulting in significant new insights,
- develop significant new hypotheses for a broad thematic area and promote discourse

- connect preliminary research results from a variety of different areas for the first time, and in so doing generate insights which would not have been possible without providing this synthesis.

Funding is not available for edited volumes, textbooks and manuals.

Requirements

- active full professor at a German university

Scope of Funding

Leave of absence can be granted for periods ranging from **six months to maximum two years**. It is assumed that applicants will be released from their duties by their university and continue to draw their salaries. The foundations undertake to finance a teaching substitute for the respective period of leave. It is a requirement that applicants are released from their duties for the entire period of funding. The substitute professor must be a suitably qualified young scholar who does not yet hold a permanent position. It is strongly recommended to calculate the proposed period of leave as realistically as possible, as it will not be possible to prolong the funding once granted.

The **annual funding amount** must not exceed **€ 100,000** [(up to € 90,000 for substitute teaching including all payroll costs) and up to € 10,000 for additional non-personnel costs (e.g. travel, research stays, literature, assistants, publishing costs)] for the holder of the professorship. Funding is **not** available for any other costs that may be incurred.

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Online applications can be submitted either in German or in English by **15 September 2011** latest. Non-German citizens may submit applications, provided they intend to work at a research institution in Germany.

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- Project description with grounds and details of objectives, innovation potential in respect of the current state of research, and the methods to be employed
- Details of proposed substitute professor
- Proposed recipient of funds (institute, name, address)
- Notification of whether an application has been submitted to other funding organizations

4. Resume

5. List of publications

The selection committee comprises experienced international representatives drawn from different disciplines. The final selection will take place in the spring of 2012 and will be reached by a steering committee comprising experts and representatives of the two foundations involved. Funding is available for up to ten successful candidates.

The Foundation must reject applications which have previously been submitted in the same or similar form to other funding organizations.

Dr. Gudrun Tegeder will be pleased to provide advice to applicants
(phone +49 511-83 81 289, tegeder@volkswagenstiftung.de)

Electronic Application Made Easy – Instruction and Tips

The Volkswagen Foundation accepts applications via its electronic application system portal.volkswagenstiftung.de. Please note that only registered users of the electronic application system have access to application data, can submit applications and receive corresponding e-mail messages. Hence, it is required for applicants with project responsibility to register him/herself or to ask a co-worker to register in his/her name with the proper e-mail address.

Please follow the six steps to compile and submit your application:

- If you are a new user please **register** at the application portal with your name, your e-mail address and your own password. When registering you will be asked about your work address details. Subsequently, you must **activate** your account using the link sent by e-mail. If you already have a user account you can immediately **login** using your e-mail address and password.
- The function **new application** starts the selection of the corresponding funding initiative (here: Focus on the Humanities).
- Now – and later on – you can interrupt the compilation of your application at any time. As required you can logout and login again.
- Please check whether the pre-filled data on the applicant are correct. Furthermore, we need application data (e. g. project title, duration) and the budget. You are asked to enter all information in the respective forms. Please note that the **save** button does not transfer any data to the Foundation. You are able to revise all data until the submission of your application. Please keep in mind to read and **accept** the legal statement. If you wish you can generate a PDF of the filled-in forms for verification and for your filing.
- Under enclosures you are able to **upload files** as required according to the checklist on the preceding page in the „Information for Applicants“. Only PDF files are accepted. Before submission all files can be exchanged for new versions.
- Once your application is complete you can **submit** it electronically to the Foundation. Additionally, a PDF generation of a **cover sheet** for print-out is required. Add your **signature** and send it by postal mail.

In the course of processing your application the Foundation might request additional information. The function **new supplement** is used to upload and submit the respective files.

Technical Support

Please contact
support@volkswagenstiftung.de
for any technical questions when
using the electronic application
system