



Guidelines for budget planning when applying for GRC funding

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General principles

The responsibility for budget planning lies primarily with the applicants. During the application review process, budget reductions may be made, which will form the basis of the final decision. Moreover, the allocated funds are earmarked for a specific purpose. This means that the funds granted may only be used in accordance with the submitted budget. Minor reallocations within budget categories are often unavoidable and are generally permitted without further approval. However, significant reallocations of the requested budget items must be discussed and approved by the Graduate Campus Coordination Office.

Please ensure transparency when submitting your application. Include a comprehensive budget with your documents, which also covers costs not requested for funding and explains how these will be financed. If you have access to other sources of funding or are planning to apply for funding elsewhere, please indicate this in your application.

What should be included in the global budget?

The global (or total) budget must clearly show the funds requested from GRC and provide transparency about all sources of funding and cash flows. The budget document and/or supplementary text should specify how funds and resources are allocated to the (sub)activities, explain why the activity cannot be financed through other means, and indicate the extent to which other stakeholders (e.g., department chair, research group, institute, faculty, or internal/external UZH collaborations) contribute financially or materially to the project.

To ensure that your global budget includes all relevant information, you may use the following questions as a guide:

- Is the proposed activity self-contained or part of a larger project?
- Is the proposed activity part of an academic appointment or a scientific qualification project (e.g., dissertation, habilitation)?
- Is the project self-initiated and independent, or embedded within work conducted as part of a collaboration, research group, institute, or departmental project?
- What proportion of the project's total costs is covered by the amount requested from GRC?
- What other sources of funding are available or have been applied for?
- Are any parts of the overall project already funded?
- What intellectual, material, and/or financial contributions are being made by the individual stakeholders involved in the project?
- What material and financial contributions are being made by the institute and/or faculty?

Please attach this global budget as an additional document to your application.



Accurate cost entry in the GRC tool

The official online entry form in the GRC tool allows you to record the planned expenditures for personnel and material (non-personnel) costs. Below, you will find guidance for budgeting within these two categories, as well as some general tips for successful event planning:

- A. Personnel costs
- B. Material costs

A. Personnel costs

When entering a request into the GRC tool, you can enter expenses to individuals as "academic personnel costs" in two categories for your budget:

- Compensation: Early career researchers / student employees / experts / study participants
- Expenses: Travel / accommodation / representation expenses

Expense allowances

Personnel expenses that arise within your independently managed research project and cannot be covered by other sources may be requested as part of a GRC Grant. For each employment relationship included in your project, you must provide a detailed cost breakdown, which should generally list social security contributions separately. Applicants are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the relevant regulations and reference values and for making this information transparent in the application. Personnel expense allowances may cover:

Early career researchers

Applicants may, in certain cases, request financial compensation for themselves for the period of a project grant from the GRC. Such costs must be closely tied to the proposed, independently managed activity and be thoroughly justified. A detailed research plan, budget, and clear cost calculations with justification are mandatory. After the activity has been completed, the accountability report must document the effective implementation of the plan and compliance with the approved budget.

Student employees

Funding may be requested for the temporary or hourly employment of student assistants within the framework of a self-managed research project. A detailed research plan and budget, including a clear calculation and justification of costs, are mandatory. After completion of the activity, the accountability report must document the effective implementation of the plan and adherence to the approved budget.

Experts

Compensation of academic or non-academic experts is possible in justified cases. The following provisions must be strictly adhered to:

1. Compensation may only be given to external experts (outside UZH).
2. Compensation for academic staff may only be awarded at peer level, i.e. to doctoral candidates, postdoctoral researchers and private lecturers who do not currently hold an



academic position. Academic staff who are employed may only be compensated for services that do not fall within the usual scope of their academic employment (such as organizing a workshop; however, compensation does not apply to a simple lecture).

3. A clear demonstration of the expert's relevance and expertise related to the planned activity is mandatory.

4. A maximum of CHF 600 per person per day (this corresponds to a maximum rate of CHF 75 per hour and includes all work involved in preparation and follow-up) may be paid.

Volunteers

Within the framework of a self-managed research project, it is possible to apply for funding to conduct studies or experiments. A relevant calculation and justification of the costs, as well as a detailed research plan and budget, are mandatory. The effective implementation of the plan, including compliance with the costs, must be documented in the accountability report after the activity has been carried out.

Expenses

When budgeting your expenses, consider possible program changes. For example, if an invited person must unexpectedly cancel their attendance, you should be able to fund a possible replacement with the same funds. Anticipated and requestable expenses include:

Travel

Travel and accommodation expenses may be requested, regardless of academic degree, for guests who actively contribute to the event—typically by being listed in the program with a presentation. As a rule, only economy class (air) or 2nd class (rail) tickets are eligible. Exceptions require a well-substantiated justification. Average ticket prices, as indicated by providers, may be used as a reference.

Train travel or other sustainable mobility options are preferred over air travel. For journeys of less than 10 hours, train travel is mandatory—even if the ticket price exceeds that of a low-cost flight. If compatibility with the event program requires an additional overnight stay when traveling by train, these costs may be included in the budget. Such expenses must be clearly shown in the budget and substantiated in the final statement of accounts. Efficient travel planning should already be considered at the program design stage. Please also consult our guidelines on sustainability.

Accommodation

Overnight stays within the range of 150 - 200 CHF per person and night can be requested. Attention should be paid to moderately priced offers. You can obtain concrete information by consulting the published prices of hotels that come into question or by obtaining a non-binding offer. In doing so, clarify whether the hotel in question offers preferential conditions to UZH.

In addition, when choosing a hotel, make sure that your external guests can get to the venue as easily as possible and without additional expense. Should the guests nevertheless be dependent



on local public transport to reach the event location, single or day tickets from the VBZ can be budgeted for.

Representation expenses

In general, no representation expenses are approved. It is assumed that the expenses of academic guests - beyond the basic travel and accommodation costs - are covered by their home institution. Similarly, no meal expenses can be requested for guests.

As a rule, budgeted costs for gifts are not approved. If gifts are indispensable in certain situations, this must be justified and kept within moderate limits. As a rule, they should not exceed the amount of CHF 25.

B. Material costs

When entering a proposal using the GRC tool, you can also enter the expenses for material costs for your budget. The following categories are available for this purpose:

- Material costs / Operating costs
- Publication costs
- Event costs: Catering / Conference materials, printed matter and giveaways / Guest selection / Travel efficiency and synergies / Programme design / Sustainable catering

Material costs / operating costs

Operating and material costs incurred as part of the requested activity are eligible for reimbursement through the GRC. Operating costs may include laboratory expenses, rental or fees for necessary equipment or software services, as well as costs for data collection, analysis, digitization, or modeling. Living and food expenses are excluded. A detailed calculation and justification of costs are mandatory. After completion of the activity, the accountability report must document the effective implementation of the plan and adherence to the approved budget.

Publication costs

The possibility to finance publication costs is strictly limited to costs arising from the publication of one's own research results (publications, data, code), such as fees for APCs or the digital or analog printing and publication of articles, brochures, or book projects.

Please note that funding for open access publications can only be provided by the GRC in well-justified exceptional cases. It is the applicant's responsibility to demonstrate why the existing funding options offered by UZH and the SNSF are not suitable for the requested funding. Please consult the [UZH information on financing open access publications](#) and the [list of journals](#) for which UZH members do not incur any costs.

In the event of funding by the GRC, Platinum/Diamond Open Access and Green Open Access (immediately accessible or only a very short embargo, version of record) are the preferred options (see [Open Science Policy](#), p. 7). Gold Open Access can only be funded if the two above options are



not available. The relevant calculation and justification of costs are mandatory. Effective compliance with the cost calculation must be documented in the accountability report.

Event costs

The requested funds must be proportionate to the scope and nature of the activity as well as to the number of participants. Please provide an estimate of the expected number of attendees; this, together with the number of invited speakers, will serve as the basis for determining the amounts that can be budgeted for catering or conference materials.

In general, events should take place locally in Zurich, preferably on UZH premises, to maximize the participation of early career researchers at UZH. In exceptional, well-justified cases, travel funds for UZH participants may be requested if the planned activities take place outside UZH. Such requests must include a detailed justification in the original application.

Catering

The calculation of the amounts for catering is based on the compensation of a coffee break per half day and a one-time conference dinner.

For the estimated total number of participants, CHF 10 per half day, CHF 20 per day and person can be estimated. For the number of invited speakers and early career researchers involved in the organization, a one-time conference dinner of 40 CHF per person can be requested.

This is a basis for calculation. The funds can also be used differently. For example, instead of a conference dinner, an apéro can be planned for all participants. However, the calculation of the contributions remains the same.

Pay attention to ecologically sustainable nutritional principles when providing meals. For example, avoid meat, products from extensive farming, and long transport routes for break catering or apéros. Avoid disposable tableware and bottles as much as possible. Ask your caterer about the possibilities of resource-saving catering. [ZfV](#) also offers appropriate [catering](#) options. Avoid food waste and organize the reuse of surplus where appropriate. The Sustainability Team offers guidelines for [sustainable catering](#), as well as a list of caterers with information on their offerings regarding aspects of sustainability upon request to info@sustainability.uzh.ch.

Conference materials, printed materials, and giveaways

The possible contributions for conference material depend on individual needs and the type of event. However, they should be kept within the limits of what is indispensable.

Reduce printed event notices and materials to the bare essentials. Refrain from using giveaways.

Selection of guests



When selecting and requesting guests, consider their travel routes. Keep in mind that regional networks are also advantageous for further cooperation.

Travel efficiency and synergies

For longer trips, applicants are encouraged to explore possibilities for extending the stay. For example, additional meetings, networking opportunities, or workshops with the guest before or after the main event can increase the efficiency and impact of the visit. Where applicable, such synergies may also be supported through matching funds and co-financed in the application.

Program design

When planning the program, consider the travel schedules of your guests and other participants. For instance, schedule the event so that guests can arrive conveniently by train.

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