

FAQ Funding initiative Ukraine

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Application requirements

1. Do I meet the application requirements?

The basic formal requirements for applying are:

- employees in relevant institutions, universities, research institutions, science academies, NGOs or graduates (bachelor's degree) with institutional affiliation (university, research institution, etc.),
- Ukrainian citizenship/nationality,
- permanent residence in Ukraine,
- environmentally relevant and practical topic (for the home country, the EU or globally) in the field of nature conservation, marine conservation, cultural heritage protection,
- the project is implemented in cooperation with a qualified institution in Ukraine and/or Germany.

2. What types of projects are eligible for funding?

The call for proposals focuses on projects that address specific sustainability challenges in Ukraine, including the protection and sustainable development of cultural heritage. In particular, they may include five types of projects:

- Action field analyses on selected environmental challenges,
- Development of feasibility concepts for potential projects,
- Development of monitoring techniques,
- Development of management concepts,
- Procurement of data bases

3. What are the requirements for a project?

Requirements for the project are

- Environmental, sustainability, nature conservation or cultural preservation topic of particular importance in Ukraine that makes a concrete contribution to solving the focused environmental and cultural preservation problem
- Description of the methods/analyses used: Which methods/tests are to be used, e.g. laboratory experiments, field surveys, literature research, modelling, statistics?
- The innovative character, the concrete environmental relief of the project and the existing challenges in the field of cultural property protection should be classified according to the current state of knowledge.
- The requirements for the necessary degree of innovation are also based on the external living conditions in Ukraine; the consequences of the war are taken into account in this respect. Further criteria are the exemplary nature and practical relevance of the project.

- Dissemination of results (e.g. conferences, keynotes, posters, peer-reviewed journals).

4. *Can I apply without a bachelor's degree?*

No, a bachelor's degree is a prerequisite for application.

5. *Can I apply without English or German language skills?*

The application and reporting must be in English or German. The selection interview will also be conducted in English/German. Your language skills must be sufficient for this.

6. *Can I apply for funding if I am abroad for professional purposes at the time of application?*

No, that is not possible. The only exceptions are temporary training stays.

7. *Which fields of study are given priority for funding?*

There is no priority subject area. University graduates who wish to work on a topic in the field of nature conservation/nationalparks, marine nature conservation or cultural heritage protection are eligible to apply.

8. *Is an institutional affiliation in Ukraine mandatory?*

Yes, an institutional affiliation is necessary and must be proven by written confirmation.

9. *Can a group of scientists apply?*

This is an individual grant programme. Therefore, group grants are not possible. Each scientist must apply individually.

10. *Can several people from one institution apply?*

Yes, several people from one institution can apply. However, each person must submit their own application.

11. *Do I need to have a cooperating institution in Germany?*

A cooperating institution in Germany is not mandatory. The institutional affiliation in Ukraine must be guaranteed.

12. *What is the maximum funding period?*

Funding is provided for a maximum of 12 months.

13. *What additional costs can be claimed?*

Additional project costs up to a maximum of 10,000 Euros may include: laboratory analyses, data analysis software, hardware, travel expenses. These must be listed in the separately itemised cost plan.

14. *Where can I find the cost plan form?*

The necessary form for the cost plan is available at
<https://www.dbu.de/en/promotion/moe-fellowship/foerderinitiative-ukraine/>.

Application process

1. *When is the deadline for applications?*

The deadline is 1 November 2025.

2. *What documents do I need to submit? Where do I submit the documents?*

The following documents in German or English must be submitted online (<https://www.dbu.de/en/promotion/moe-fellowship/foerderinitiative-ukraine/>) by the application deadline:

- Curriculum vitae
- Project outline with a description of the project and the cooperating institutions (max. 8 pages)
- Cost plan (e.g. for laboratory analyses, software, hardware, travel expenses),
- Time and work plan.

3. *Are there any local contact persons?*

No, please always contact the DBU directly, Dr. Nicole Freyer-Wille (n.freyer@dbu.de).

4. *Required content of the project description*

- Introduction (What is the central question to be investigated? Why is the topic important? What are the problems?)
- State of scientific knowledge (What is already known about this topic? Are there already studies on this topic? Where are the current gaps in knowledge?)
- What is the project goal? (What do I want to learn? Are there already ideas on how to achieve the goal?)
- Methods (What methods/studies/laboratory experiments, literature research, surveys, etc. are to be carried out?)
- The informative project description should be at least 8 pages long.
- In addition, a time and work plan should be provided.

5. *Can I apply without German language skills?*

German language skills are not necessary.

6. *What level of English language skills are required?*

The DBU does not have any fixed requirements regarding the level of English language skills. However, if you do not speak German or do not speak it well enough, you must have advanced English skills.

7. *Are there any DBU focus areas that could help my application?*

Only projects related to nature conservation, marine conservation, and cultural heritage protection are eligible for funding.

8. *What happens if the application documents are incomplete?*

Incomplete applications will be rejected.

9. Is there an age limit for applicants?

No, there is no age limit.

Selection interviews

1. How long does a selection interview last?

The selection interview lasts approximately 30 minutes. Applicants have 10 minutes to present their project idea, followed by a few questions from the members of the selection committee.

2. Who participates in the selection interviews?

A jury consisting of German and Ukrainian environmental experts and representatives of the German Federal Environmental Foundation participate in the selection interviews.

3. In which language are the selection interviews conducted?

The selection interviews are conducted in German or English.

4. How should the presentation be structured?

The presentation should include a brief introduction to the topic, highlight environmental problems, describe methods and suggest possible solutions. It should also include a schedule and work plan.

5. Do I have to send the presentation by email before the selection interview?

No, that is not necessary.

6. When will I find out the result?

The selection committee's decision is usually communicated one week after the selection interviews.

Funding

1. If the outcome is positive, when is the earliest start date for funding?

The earliest start date for funding is 1st February 2026.

2. How will payments be made?

Payments will be made to a private account. If the additional material resources have to be accounted for via a Ukrainian institution, a third-party account must be specified.

3. Is there social security coverage?

The granting of funding does not create an employment or service relationship between the German Federal Environmental Foundation and the recipients; therefore, contributions to social security and pension insurance cannot be covered. Child benefit or other insurance benefits are also not included.

4. What are my obligations as a recipient?

- (1) Upon acceptance of the grant, grantees undertake to:
 - a) concentrate their efforts on the project described in the research or work plan;
 - b) report on the progress of the project upon specific request and submit an evaluative final report to the Foundation at the end of the funding period without being asked to do so;
 - c) to carry out the project in Ukraine during the funding period;
 - d) to provide evidence of the expenditure on additional material resources by means of appropriate receipts.
- (2) In addition, the recipient undertakes to inform the German Federal Environmental Foundation immediately if:
 - a) the project is interrupted, modified, completed prematurely or discontinued;
 - b) changes occur in his/her personal circumstances that are relevant to the implementation of the project.
- (3) Recipients must expressly agree to all provisions of these funding guidelines by signing and returning the declaration of commitment to the German Federal Environmental Foundation.

5. Do I have to report to the DBU on a regular basis?

An interim report must be submitted after half of the funding period and a final report at the end of the funding period in German or English.