

Brighter Budgeting: Smart Strategies for Successful Grant Applications

In cooperation with the Research Support

Objective

This interactive online workshop equips participants with essential skills for crafting informative, persuasive, and well-balanced grant budgets.

Participants will learn how to create budgets that align well with the overarching project goals and adhere to grant-provider specific regulations while also appealing to reviewers. They will refine their ability to describe and justify costs persuasively, thus increasing the competitiveness of their grant applications.

Description

An effective budget is more than just numbers – it is a strategic communication tool that can strengthen the persuasive power of a proposal. Successful grant applicants must ensure their budget aligns seamlessly with their research goals while adhering to funding agency regulations. This workshop focuses on best practices for budget structuring, common pitfalls in grant budgeting, and strategies for making budget justifications compelling and reviewer-friendly.

Throughout the workshop, participants will engage in hands-on exercises to develop appropriate cost categories and estimate costs realistically in order to come up with a well-balanced budget outline. Building on this preliminary work, attendees will work on fine-tuning their financial plans with persuasive descriptions / explanations and justifications, and experiment with optimizing budgeting tables. Major topics covered:

- **The art of budgeting** – How a well-organized budget strengthens a proposal's credibility
- **Best practices in cost estimations:** How to calculate expenses for personnel, travel, equipment, consumables, sub-contracting and indirect project costs
- **Common budgeting mistakes:** How to prevent under- or over-budgeting, build in natural buffers, and navigate the regulatory requirements of funding agencies and host institutions
- **Tables and labels:** How to optimize the layout of a budget and create concise and informative descriptions and justifications

Methodology

Expert input and guidance / team exercises / plenary discussion

Conditions

To be able to enjoy the full benefit of participation, attendees are expected to prepare a preliminary budget draft that they will further refine during the workshop.

Target group

This workshop is designed for individuals who are already familiar with researching calls and employing basic strategies for proposal-writing.

Ideally, attendees will be able to draw on some experience in grant-writing.

Organizational Information

Language /Format	English / Online
Target group	Advanced Doctoral Candidates and Postdocs (R2/R3) from all faculties
Date	Thursday, 23 April 2026, 10:00 – 14:00
Registration	Click here for registration

Trainer



Bettina Maria Heiss, Ph.D
Research Support, Goethe University, Frankfurt

- Serves as the Liaison Officer for National Research Funding and Early Career Researchers at Goethe University's Research Support
- Began her career as a grant-writing consultant at Heidelberg Research Service in 2013 after working as a postdoctoral researcher at Heidelberg University's Max-Weber-Institute of Sociology
- Received her Ph.D. in Organizational Communication from the Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism at the University of Southern California, Los Angeles, in 2010
- Worked as an experiential learning facilitator at USC's Marshall School of Business from 2004 to 2008

