



2022 Call for Research Proposals

Stage 1 Deadline: 15 February 2022

The TUM Institute for Ethics in Artificial Intelligence (IEAI) invites multi-disciplinary research proposals that involve concrete and practical solutions for issues related to ethics and the responsible use of AI.

All proposed research must involve:

- **A multi-disciplinary approach.** The project must include at least two principle investigators from both (1) medical, humanities or social science disciplines and (2) another discipline or sector that can contribute to the technical/applied knowledge as well as requirements related to the research. Alternatively, proposed projects can connect to or build off an existing project at TUM in a technical field.
- **A practical application with concrete outcomes.** In particular, proposals must contribute to broader conversations/concerns, pursuing research that can help provide tangible frameworks, methodologies, approaches or applications to help advise AI developers and practitioners on best practices. This includes, but is not limited to, policy and technical recommendations that are practical, action-oriented and/or provide tangible frameworks, methodologies, algorithmic approaches, or checklists to advise, as well as position, the actions and decisions of AI developers and practitioners in industry, government and academia.

Competitive research proposals will engage with applied stakeholders and current debates as documented in national and international ethics reports and journals. Funded teams are expected to participate in expert groups and other forums to ensure that its research priorities are up to date and relevant to the current needs of society.

We encourage in particular competitive research proposals that include external partners or TUM institutions that have matching funding.

Eligibility and Guidelines

The IEAI will fund two types of research (please indicate which you are applying for)

- **Seed Funding** (2-4 projects awarded) – maximum period 12 months, maximum budget €50,000*
- **Major Project Funding** (up to 3 projects awarded) – maximum period 36 months, maximum budget €300,000* (not to exceed €100,000 per year)

- Only complete applications, submitted within the deadline, will be accepted. All applications must be in English and submitted as a PDF via email to: ieai@mcts.tum.de.
- Each page of the application should use A4 size, with no less than 2 cm margins on all sides, with a font size no less than 11 pt. Proposals may be single-spaced.
- The TUM Principal Investigators (PIs) must have the status of professor or research group leader equivalent.

*note: budget totals should include ALL PIs/Departments who are requesting funding.

Application

The application process will take place in two stages:

Stage 1: Abstract Submission

Please submit an abstract of the proposed project, not to exceed 500 words. Please include the topic/research question to be examined, the project Principle Investigators, and any current potentially connected projects or opportunities for matching funding from other departments or external actors.

Stage 2: Full Proposal

Selected abstract submissions will be invited to submit a full proposal. To include:

Part A: Overview (Maximum 1 A4 size page)

- **Title:** The research proposal must have a title no longer than 100 characters.
- **Abstract:** Proposals must include a short abstract (250 words) written for a non-specialist audience clearly outlining the principal focus, research questions, and expected results (including expected practical outcomes).
- **List of Participants:** The names of all TUM team members (including PIs and others) together with their current titles, affiliations, a link to their online CVs and a brief description of their roles and proposed activities must be included. External partners must also be listed, together with the name, designation of the person in-charge and a brief explanation of their envisaged contribution to the research.

Part B: Project Description (Maximum 2 A4 size pages – not including Bibliography)

The project description must include:

- Background, including the context within which the proposal is placed and the work being done by the team members (especially the PIs) in the field to date
- Research objective(s) and research questions
- Description of specific research methods that will be used and why they are appropriate
- List of milestones and timeline of activities
- Expected outcomes, impact and public dissemination plan
- Potential risks (if applicable).

Part C: Budget (Maximum 1 A4 size page)

The application must include a comprehensive budget specifying amounts requested under various eligible expense heads (calculated in Euros) per relevant department or chair. **Please also indicate matching support (financial or in-kind) from other project partners.**

Eligible expenses include:

- Doctoral researchers
- Post-doctoral researchers
- Equipment (no more than 10% of the total budget)
- Project-related travel (estimates must be included)
- Funds for workshops and conferences.
- Funds for the dissemination of project findings, such as for publication in open source journals or for websites posting project-specific updates, news and interim research findings.
- Other expenses that are justified within the scope and objectives of the project. Please note, direct funding for the Principle Investigator (such as project coordination) will not be considered.

Review Criteria and Selection Process

Applications will be evaluated based on the following criteria, using the below-outlined process.

- Excellence and intellectual merit of the proposal, especially its relevance in the context of the thematic issues the IEAI seeks to address.
- Practical feasibility of the proposed research, including whether the outcomes can be realistically realized within the requested funding period.
- Appropriateness of the proposed activities, including methods employed, planned activities and budget to accomplish the stated objectives of the proposed research.
- Qualifications and experience of the PIs and other team members, including research background, expertise, skills and knowledge required to accomplish the research objectives.
- Ethics and privacy, particularly the commitment of the proposed research to meet or exceed standards for the ethical use of data, including the protection of individuals and their privacy (if applicable).
- Practical outcomes and actionable results that benefit the public, particularly the likelihood that the proposed research will advance relevant goals to which society and policy aspire.
- A practical and comprehensive plan for dissemination of research findings to the public.

Selection process

- The full proposals that meet the eligibility criteria will be submitted to the IEAI Advisory Board.
- Based on its scientific assessment, the advisory board will make a suggestion for ranking the proposals.

Grant Administration

Reporting Requirements:

- All successful teams are expected to actively participate in the activities of the IEAI, including attending group meetings, conferences and other events. In addition, presenting their findings in at least one IEAI-related event.
- Principle Investigators receiving funding agree to be listed on the IEAI website as Affiliated PIs.
- The research teams that accept the IEAI funds under this call for proposals will be required to submit a yearly project report to the IEAI and final report (including project and financial report) at the end of the research period. This is due by December 31st each year that the project runs.

Please direct any questions about the application process to [c.corrigan\(at\)tum.de](mailto:c.corrigan@tum.de)