



DFG

SPP 2520 „Research Vessels“

Proposal Preparation and Review Process

Kiel – June 10, 2025

Kristian Sudmann, DFG Head Office

Proposal Preparation and Submission

Types of Proposals and Proposal Structures

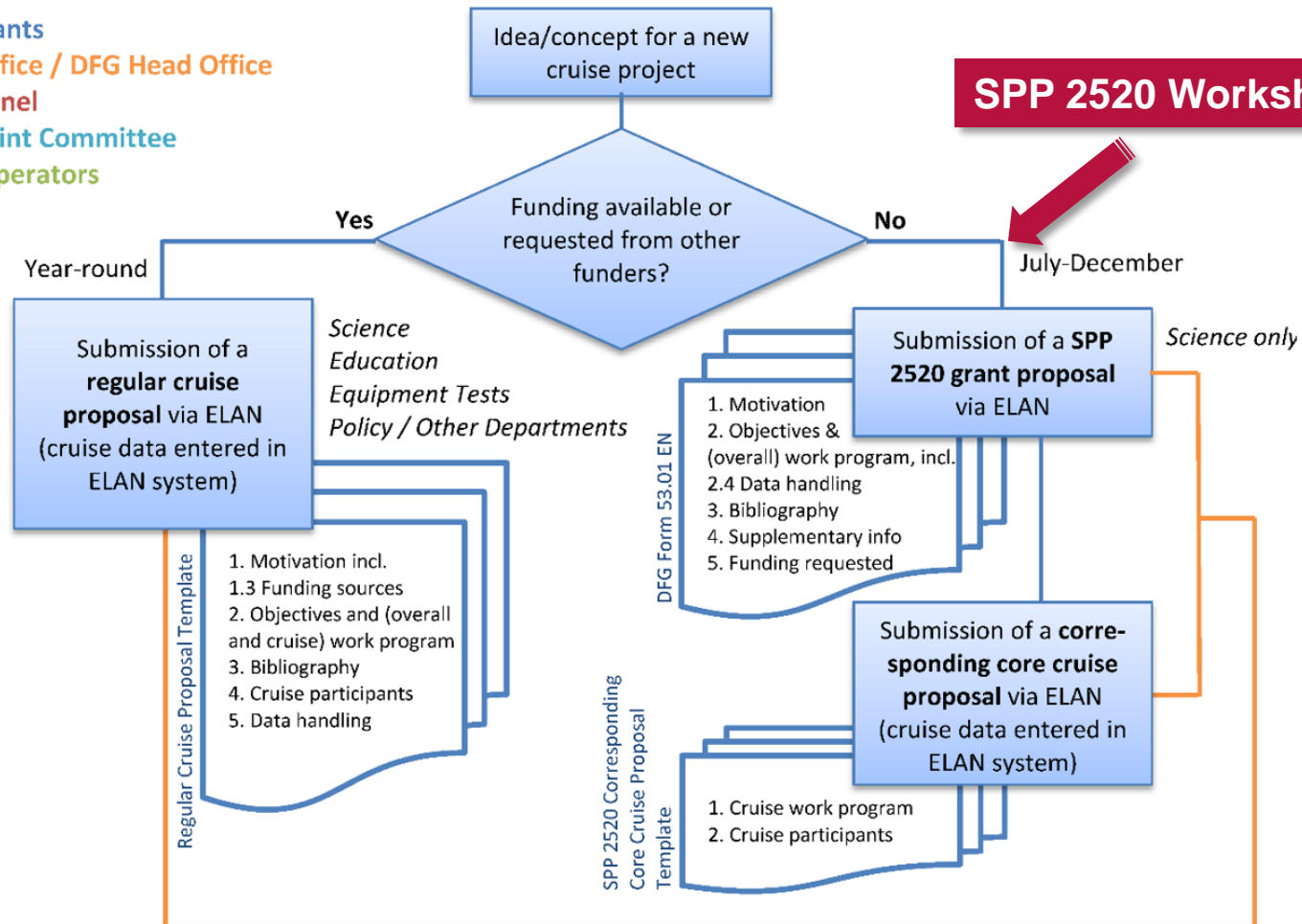
Applicants

GPF Office / DFG Head Office

GPF Panel

DFG Joint Committee

Ship Operators



Proposal Preparation and Submission

SPP 2520 Grant Proposals

New Project

Electronic proposals can be submitted for the funding instruments listed in the categories below. Electronic forms for proposals to be submitted within Research Units or proposal packages can be found under "Proposal Overview/Renewal/Full Proposal".

For all other programmes, please submit a hard copy of your proposal by mail. For more information, please see [research_funding/programmes/](#).

Completing an electronic proposal:

- Guidelines and instructions** (left column): Please read through the programme's guidelines and instructions.
- Templates** (right column): Please complete the appropriate template for your project description. If you please follow its prescribed structure.
- Electronic proposal form** (Button "Start online form"): Please complete the electronic proposal form. It must be submitted in both German and English and upload any attachments as required.

- Individual Grants Programme
- Cluster of Excellence
- Research Training Groups and International Research Training Groups
- Research Impulses
- Special Programmes for International Cooperation
- Priority Programmes**

Proposal for a new project within a Priority Programme

Guidelines and Instructions	Templates
→ Guidelines Priority Programmes	→ Project Description - P
→ Proposal Preparation Instructions - Project Proposals	→ CV with publications

Proposal to Establish a Priority Programme (deactivated until 16 October 2025)

Guidelines and Instructions	Templates
→ Guidelines and Proposal Preparation Instructions for Priority Programmes	→ Initiative to Establish a Priority Programme
	→ CV with publications

Proposal for a new project within a Priority Programme

Proposal Data

* required fields

Please select the Priority Programme to which you would like to apply. The list only contains current calls for proposals.

Priority Programme: *

– please select –

- please select –
- SPP 1006/31 - SPP 1006/31 (ICDP)
- SPP 2299/2 - Coral Reefs
- SPP 2361/2 - SPP 2361/2 Fluviale Anthroposphere
- SPP 2556/1 - LaSTing
- SPP 2575/1 - Agri-Food Chains

Programme Information	<input type="checkbox"/>
Proposal Data	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Applicants	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Participating Individuals	<input type="checkbox"/>
Participating Institutions	<input type="checkbox"/>
Concluding Information	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attach Documents	<input type="checkbox"/>

Proposal Preparation and Submission

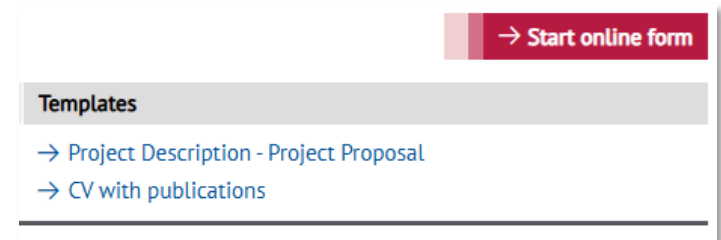
SPP 2520 Grant Proposals

- ▶ Follows structure of **DFG Individual Research Grants** (including supplementary information and budget requests from p. 18 ff.)
- ▶ **Section 2.3 Work Program:** Overarching work program of the project as a whole, including initial evaluation of data and samples;

Cruise-specific information such as

- ▶ Stations
- ▶ Profiles
- ▶ Deployment of equipment
- ▶ Calculation of work days at sea

are to be described in the „SPP 2520 Corresponding Core Cruise Proposal“



Proposal Preparation and Submission

SPP 2520 Corresponding Core Cruise Proposal

Proposal Submission | Review Process

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Completing an electronic proposal:

- Guidelines and instructions** (left column): Please read through the programme's guidelines and instructions before preparing your proposal.
- Templates** (right column): Please complete the appropriate template for your project description. If you cannot use the templates as provided, please follow its prescribed structure.
- Electronic proposal form** (Button "Start online form"): Please complete the electronic proposal form. You will be asked to provide the project title and summary in both German and English and upload any attachments as required.

- Individual Grants Programme
- Cluster of Excellence
- Research Training Groups and International Research Training Groups
- Research Impulses
- Special Programmes for International Cooperation
- Priority Programmes
- Collaborative Research Centres
- Research Units
- Clinical Research Units
- Centres for Advanced Studies in the Humanities and Social Sciences
- Scientific Instrumentation - Information Technology
- Scientific Library Services and Information Systems
- Cruise Proposals for Research Vessels (GPF-Procedure)**

Begutachtungspanel Forschungsschiffe: Research Vessels – GPF Cruise Proposal [→ Start online form](#)

Guidelines and Instructions	Templates
→ Cruise Proposal Preparation Instructions	→ Register Cruise Proposal template
	→ SPP 2520 Corresponding Core Cruise Proposal Template
	→ CV with publications

[Title (identical to title of SPP 2520 grant proposal)]

[Acronym (identical to acronym of SPP 2520 grant proposal)]

Cruise proposal for [Ship(s)] (primary use / secondary use)

[Applicant(s)]

Please name the person who is the lead author of the SPP 2520 grant proposal first. This person will be the prime contact person for the GPF Office, and generally should be identical with the designated chief scientist (exceptions need to be justified under Section 2). Please state the designated chief scientist and a deputy by indicating these roles in brackets after the respective name. If the cruise is planned without a deputy chief scientist, please provide a justification under Section 2.

1 Cruise work program

[Text (with reference to SPP 2520 grant proposal)]

1.1 Working area, stations, and profiles

Station	Location	Geographic coordinates	Water depths [m]

[Text]

1.2 Deployment of equipment

[Text]

1.3 Special requirements

[Text]

1.4 Work days at sea

Area	Station	Duration (h)	Transit (h)
Transit to Area 1			
Area 1			
Area 2			
Hours in total		=	=

[Text]

1.5 Arrival and departure

[Text]

1.6 Measures to conduct responsible marine research

[Text]

2 Cruise participants

	Name	Affiliation	Topic / Role*	Contract**
01				
02				
03				

Proposal Preparation and Submission

Regulations and CVs

- ▶ Please refer to the **Cruise Proposal Preparation Instructions** (most recent version – currently 4.0)
- ▶ **Title, acronym, and abstract** of the Corresponding Core Cruise Proposal need to be **identical** to those of the SPP 2520 Grant Proposal
- ▶ For CVs, use **DFG form 53.200** (in English) and add the following under “Qualifications and Career”:
 - **List of all cruise participations** during the last 5 years
 - **List of all cruise leads as chief scientist** during the entire academic career

Proposal Preparation and Submission

Project Duration and Funding

Please state the duration for which you request funding. Note the maximum funding period per proposal in the programme for which you are applying.

Postdoctoral Researcher or Comparable

Number	Months *	Part-Time (%) *
<input type="text" value="1"/>	<input type="text" value="12"/>	<input type="text" value="100"/>

+ New row(s)

Equipment up to EUR 10,000, Software and Consumables	<input type="text" value="12500"/>	EUR
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Travel	<input type="text" value="65000"/>	EUR
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Visiting Researchers (excluding Mercator Fellows)	<input type="text"/>	EUR
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Experimental Animals	<input type="text"/>	EUR
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Other	<input type="text" value="38000"/>	EUR
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- ▶ Applicants **are asked to apply for the maximum project duration (3 years)** in order to gain flexibility regarding cruise scheduling / reporting on status conferences
- ▶ In principle, all funding modules offered can be applied for; usual expedition costs in **basic module**
- ▶ SPP 2520 agreed to apply for positions only for **initial evaluation** (usually one postdoc for 1-2 years), otherwise the available funding might not suffice
- ▶ **Budget for expedition costs** does not need to be calculated down to the Euro in order to gain flexibility regarding price changes (but has to be realistic)
- ▶ Omission of former “updated budgets” for M/MSM

Proposal Preparation and Submission

Large Equipment

- ▶ **Double funding is not allowed** for public funders
- ▶ No items can be funded that are regarded as part of **institutional basic funding** (e.g., repair, maintenance, insurance for own use)
- ▶ Quotes and/or requested lump sums for the utilisation of large equipment should only contain **project-specific additional costs**
- ▶ This primarily includes:
 - ▶ **Travel** and **overtime** costs for ROV/AUV personnel (technicians)
 - ▶ **Transport** costs for containers
 - ▶ Cost for **insurance** in case of external use
- ▶ Please **eliminate redundant requests** (e.g., travel costs both in the equipment quote and again in the travel funds) before submission



Proposal Preparation and Submission

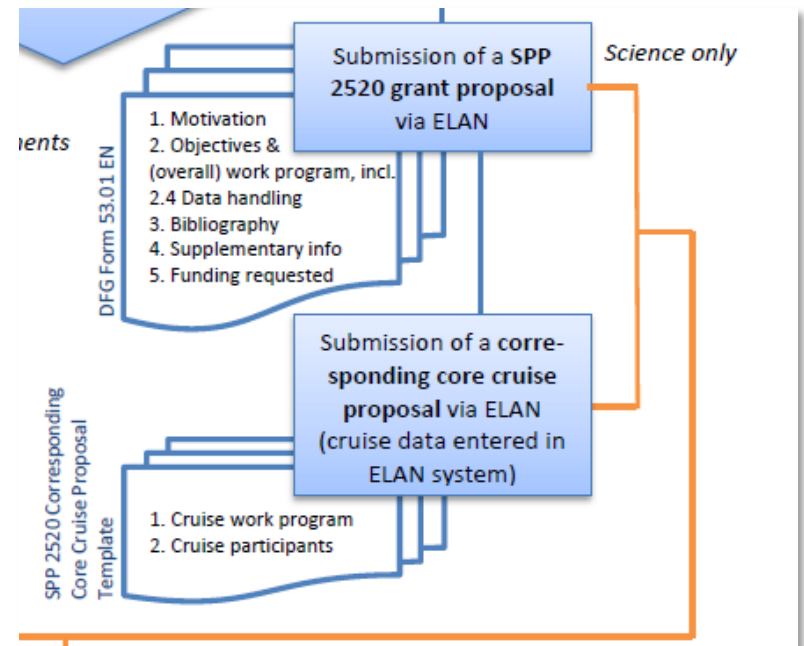
Other Aspects

- ▶ Proposals will be **forwarded to the coordinator** by DFG Head Office
- ▶ **Common errors** from the first round (SPP 2520/1):
 - ▶ Please respect the **page limits** (17+8 for the SPP Grant Proposal, 8 for the Corresponding Core Cruise Proposal, 4 for the CVs).
 - ▶ Please use and **do not delete the tables** from the Corresponding Core Cruise Proposal template (sections 1.1, 1.4, and 2). Slight modifications are acceptable.
 - ▶ Please **make all entries in ELAN in English** (even if you use the German UI version)
 - ▶ Please **do not delete the data protection sections** from the CV templates (and **do not forget the two cruise experience lists** under Qualifications and Career)
 - ▶ Please **be consistent regarding the work days at sea** in all proposal parts (SPP Grant Proposal, Corresponding Core Cruise Proposal, ELAN). Do not add the transit time from and to the harbour to the work days.

Proposal Preparation and Submission

Transition to the Review Process

- ▶ SPP 2520 proposals have **two reference numbers**
 - ▶ SPP 2520 Grant Proposal – DFG reference number for each applicant
 - ▶ Corresponding Core Cruise Proposal – GPF reference number (to be used for cruise scheduling)
- ▶ Both elements will be **reviewed as a unit**
- ▶ The GPF Review Panel will evaluate all proposals and find a funding recommendation; formally, **DFG's Joint Committee** will have the final decision



Review Process and Decision

Annual Timeline

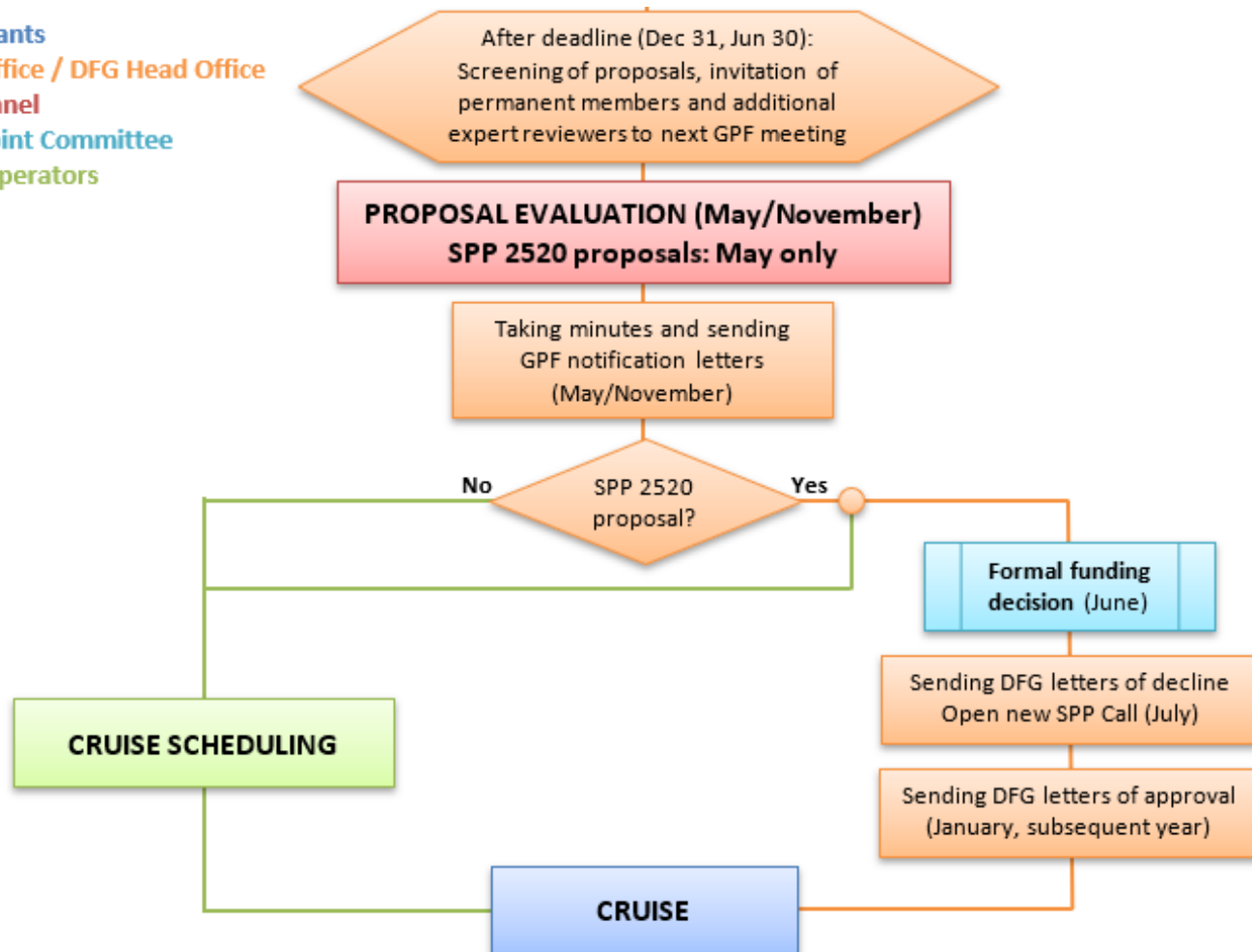
Applicants

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Review Process and Decision

Next Call for Proposals

Call for Proposals SPP 2520/2

- ▶ **Call announcement in July 2025** ([DFG, German Research Foundation - Information for Researchers](#))
- ▶ Submission deadline **05 December, 2025**
- ▶ **Formal checks and panel compilation** by end of February, 2026; provision of proposals to the reviewers
- ▶ Review panel meeting on **April 28-30, 2026**
- ▶ **GPF Notification Letters** and **DFG Decision Letters for declined proposals** will be sent out in June 2026
- ▶ **DFG Decision Letters for funded proposals** will be sent out in January 2027 (beginning of the fiscal year)

Review Process and Decision Criteria

- ▶ **Main review criteria** are the same for both Regular Cruise Proposals and SPP 2520 Grant Proposals:
 - ▶ Quality of the project, scientific merits
 - ▶ Qualification of the applicants
 - ▶ Objectives and work program (including cruise planning, ship time)
 - ▶ Working environment and resources
 - ▶ Data and sample management
 - ▶ SPP 2520 Grant Proposals only:
 - ▶ Adequacy of funds requested
 - ▶ fit into scope of SPP
- ▶ Please refer to **GPF Guidelines for Reviewing Cruise Proposals** on www.portal-forschungsschiffe.de

Review Process and Decision

Budget

- ▶ **Budget restrictions:**
currently **8.2 M€** per year
- ▶ The **funding requested** in each call should be significantly higher than the available budget (at least 10-11 M€)
- ▶ **Conversion proposals** have a bonus but can also be cut or even be declined in case of insufficient quality
- ▶ The panel will have to **prioritize** if the demand is too high
- ▶ **Resubmission** is always possible, no formal restrictions anymore



Review Process and Decision

Utilisation of the Grant

- ▶ After Letters of Approval have been sent out in January 2027, a **first drawdown of funding** is possible on the day after receipt of the letter (due to the necessary lead time utilisable for cruises starting from ~May 2027)
- ▶ **Start of the project** usually within 12 months
- ▶ If the cruise is not yet scheduled when the Letter of Approval is received, or scheduled later than mid-2028 (more than 2 years after the GPF decision):
 - ▶ Request a **delayed start of the project** (DFG form 41.45)
 - ▶ If the project has already started, request a **cost-neutral runtime extension** (also DFG form 41.45)
 - ▶ In the event of **very significant, unforeseen cost increases** compared to the time of proposal submission, which cannot be compensated for by the flexible funding, additional requests (**Zusatzanträge**) are possible **as an exception**

Review Process and Decision Reporting Duties

- ▶ Usual GPF reporting duties
 - ▶ **Cruise Report** 2 months after end of cruise
 - ▶ **Status Conference presentation** earliest 2 years after end of cruise
- ▶ In addition: **Report to the SPP coordinator** about the project results (needed for the compilation of the interim report 2030)
 - ▶ Aims, results, deviations, quality assurance, data and samples, publications, theses

METEOR-Berichte
Western boundary circulation, AMOC, Rain and Dust in the tropical Atlantic

Cruise No. M207

04.01.2025 – 11.02.2025,
Belém (Brazil) – Mindelo (Cape Verde)
WARD Tropics



Rebecca Hummels, Maria Eduarada Américo Ishimaru, Cristina Mulet-Benzo, Zoe Brunßen, Paula Damke, Ronny Engelmann, Hannah-Theresa Gaenslen, Anna Christina Hans, Lennéa Hayo, Philipp Henning, Thies Johnsen, Franz Kanngießer, Matthias Klopfer, Arne Leuzinger, Joke Lübbecke, David Menzel, Christian Rohleder, Daniel Rudloff, Marius Schulz, Annett Skupin, Tarsila Sousa Lima, Natalia Sudarchikova, Franz Philip Tuchen, Andebo Waza, René Witt

Rebecca Hummels
GEOMAR Helmholtz Centre for Ocean Research Kiel

2025