Impact Grant Research

Objective: The Impact Grant Research pilot project is designed to specifically promote the social and practical relevance of scientific research, and to strengthen its sustainable transfer to non-academic contexts. It targets WU researchers whose work has already undergone quality assurance – such as peer review, presentation at competitive conferences, or publication – and who seek to translate their research findings into socially relevant applications.

Background: As a Responsible University, we assume responsibility that goes beyond research and teaching: we are actively committed to making knowledge accessible, promoting social debate and initiating concrete change. With the Vice-Rector for Research and Third Mission and the associated Third Mission Office, we are creating better conditions for third mission activities by researchers at WU.

The Impact Grant Research is designed to encourage impact-oriented research transfers that highlight the practical and social value of scientific work. It targets WU researchers who seek to contribute their findings more actively to practice and society. The goal is to strengthen the influence of research on relevant stakeholders and multipliers through creative, targeted science-to-practice initiatives.

Maximum funding per application: Each project can be funded up to a maximum of € 10,000. Significantly smaller projects are also welcome.

This pilot project is made possible by the WU Foundation, which enables its supporters to contribute meaningfully to the advancement of WU's diverse activities in research, teaching, and third mission initiatives, thereby generating a positive impact on both the economy and society.

Requirements: We are looking for robust and solid research. Publication is not yet required, but at least one first-round peer review or presentation at a competitive conference should have taken place. (In areas where peer review procedures are demonstrably uncommon, the quality must be confirmed by experts in the field). Preference will be given to projects that have already been published in high-ranking journals appearing in the _WU Star Journal List_ or highly ranked journals in the respective departments, or are expected to be published in the near future.

What can be funded?

Funding is available for measures that go beyond traditional science communication. The following examples and the Impact Stories on the WU website serve as inspiration, but are not intended to be restrictive. Individual, creative concepts that are precisely tailored to the respective target or stakeholder group are expressly encouraged.

The following are examples of activities that are eligible for funding:

- _Citizen Engagement Projects_

Among other things, formats in which citizens actively engage in translating their research findings into innovative projects that promote public welfare and inform policy-making.

- _Proof of Concept_

For example, the concrete testing of whether an idea developed in research can be implemented in practice.

- _Continuing education programs & open educational resources_

- E.g., training of practitioners or citizens in the concrete application of research results in the respective professional context or everyday situations.

- For instance, didactically prepared digital learning modules or classes for free use, such as MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) or learning modules for WU's LearnPublic platform.

◆ *Events with a transfer character & workshops*

- Among other things, networking meetings or dialog formats with representatives from practice, politics or civil society.

- For example, events with stakeholders or target groups to jointly develop concepts for the application of research findings.

◆ *Target group-oriented media productions*

E.g., short explanatory videos or storytelling formats to convey complex content to specific target groups.

◆ *Cooperation with schools*

For instance, project days that actively involve pupils and bring research to life.

◆ *Scientific exhibitions*

For example, in museums, public spaces or online, in order to present and discuss research.

Application: only via electronic application portal.

The following documents are required:

- Brief description of the project (content, objectives, target group, approach, etc.), based on the selection criteria mentioned above; maximum three pages
- Evidence that the underlying research has undergone initial peer review, been successfully presented at a competitive conference, or – ideally – already been published; in areas where peer review procedures are demonstrably uncommon, the quality must be confirmed by experts in the respective field
- Time and cost plan
- Brief description of the person (CV and list of publications); maximum one to two pages

Decision: All submitted applications are evaluated by a jury that takes into account the perspectives of various stakeholder groups and, subsequently, ranked according to their eligibility. This approach will maximize diversity in the decision-making process and enhance its social acceptance.

The primary funding criterion is the extent to which the research's key findings and innovations can be effectively and concretely transferred into practical or societal applications. Applicants are expected to propose well-considered, creative, and feasible approaches that enable a meaningful transfer from the academic into real-world contexts. The following criteria are considered in the evaluation of the projects: relevance & need, degree of innovation, transfer potential, sustainability, implementation & feasibility, cooperation & partnerships.

Deadline: The application period ends on September 26, 2025. The selection decision is expected to be announced in the second half of November and the allocated funding will be disbursed in December 2025. All activities covered by the grant must be completed by December 2026 at the latest.

Further information: Third Mission Office: thomas.macher@wu.ac.at & romana.andersson@wu.ac.at

What is eligible for funding?

Funding may be provided for material costs – such as independent contractor agreements, printing, room rental, catering, and similar expenses – as well as certain well-justified travel expenses, depending on the nature of the funded activities. Relevant guidance can be found in the *RL Sachmittelrichtlinie*, the *RL Grundsätze für Beschaffungsprozesse an der WU*, and the *RKZ-Richtlinie*. (In individual cases, personnel costs for extending existing employment contracts may also be eligible, provided there is a valid and well-documented justification.)

Please note: Double funding is explicitly excluded.

Applications must include a detailed time and cost plan that justifies each budget item.

Each approved project requires the submission of a final report aligned with the structure of an impact story. A template will be provided for this purpose.

High-quality documentation – in the form of photographs and/or video recordings – must be ensured. These materials will be used for online communication following the completion of the activity. Applicants must obtain the consent of all individuals depicted, ensure proper copyright attribution, and confirm that the material can be used permanently.

Target group

- Doctoral students
- Post-docs
- Habilitation (venia docendi) candidates
- Senior faculty

Eligible for funding

- Fellowships
- Projects
- Printing costs
- Personnel
- Travel expenses
- Supplies and equipment
- Guest lectures
- WU in-house funding