

WISSENSCHAFT ZUKUNFT PREIS 2024

FUNDING GUIDELINES

MASTER / DIPLOMA THESIS

AND

DISSERTATIONEN / PHD-THESIS

VALID FROM OKTOBER 2023



DEADLINE: 26 FEBRUARY – 12 APRIL 2024

SUBMISSIONS: preise.einreichsystem.at

GESELLSCHAFT FÜR FORSCHUNGSFÖRDERUNG NIEDERÖSTERREICH M.B.H.

A-3100 St. Pölten, Hypogasse 1, 1. OG
T: +43 2742 27570-0
E: office@gff-noe.at

LG St. Pölten
FN 363476 z
www.gff-noe.at

WISSENSCHAFT • FORSCHUNG
NIEDERÖSTERREICH



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PREFACE

The Wissenschaft Zukunft Preis (in the following text abbreviated to "WZP") of Gesellschaft für Forschungsförderung Niederösterreich (GFF) is awarded annually.

The WZP is open to all topics, has no age restriction and covers all scientific disciplines. The WZP exclusively awards academic theses rated "very good" (or equivalent) with a reference to Lower Austria.

Awards are given to

- **Master/Diploma theses**
- **Dissertations/PhD theses.**

1 OBJECTIVE

The WZP is intended to highlight and reward high-quality scientific achievements by academics at the beginning of their scientific careers. This prize is intended to be an additional motivator for the award winners to continue working and researching in the respective scientific field.

2 PRIZE MONEY

- Master/Diploma thesis € 1.500,-
- Dissertation/PhD thesis € 3.000,-

Three Master/Diploma theses and two Dissertations/PhD theses will be awarded.

The prizes will be awarded at the Lower Austrian Science Gala in autumn 2024.

3 REQUIREMENTS FOR SUBMISSION TO THE WZP IN THE CATEGORY MASTER-/ DIPLOMA THESIS AND DISSERTATION/PHD-THESIS

- There is no age restriction.
- There is no thematic restriction. Papers from all scientific disciplines can be submitted.
- Submission is only possible online. The submission must be complete, on time and formally correct.
- There must be a comprehensible reference to Lower Austria. See chapter 7 "Evaluation criteria".
- Theses must meet the following criteria:
 - a) The thesis was assessed as "very good" (or equivalent).

- b) The course of study in which the thesis was written - a UAS course of study or university course of study at an Austrian or European university - must already have been successfully completed.
 - c) The submission, or thesis, can be written in German or English.
 - d) The thesis must not be older than three years. The earliest approval date is therefore 2021.
 - e) Only theses from a first degree program (e.g. first master's thesis, first doctoral thesis/dissertation) are accepted.
- Theses from university and technical college courses are not eligible for funding.
 - Theses with a blocking notice will not be accepted.

4 SUBMISSION PROCESS

Submission to the WZP is only possible online via preise.einreichsystem.at and must be made by the deadline.

The submission period runs from **February 26 to April 12, 2024** (24:00).

REQUIRED SUBMISSION DOCUMENTS

A fully completed online application includes:

- Personal data and information about the study or the scientific topic worked on.
- Fields for questions a) to d) are to be completed directly in the application form:
 - a) Please describe your research motivation.
 - b) What (scientific) results and findings did you come to in your thesis? What is special about it and how novel are they?
 - c) What links do the results and findings you have presented open up for future scientific questions or practical implementations?
 - d) Please describe the reference and/or relevance of your research for Lower Austria.
- Executive summary of the thesis.
- Assessment report, certificate or a document documenting the assessment of the thesis with "very good" or an assessment equivalent to this.
- Confirmation of positive completion of studies for the submitted thesis.
- Curriculum vitae.
- List of publications:

- a) for Master/Diploma thesis if available.
- b) for Dissertation/PhD thesis mandatory.
- The complete thesis in electronic form.
- Listed cooperations with companies in Lower Austria must be proven with a confirmation from the company.

5 REVIEW PROCESS

All timely and complete submissions are subject to a three-stage judging process.

Stage 1 Review of submissions for formal completeness by GFF: All required documents must be completely uploaded by the end of the submission deadline.

- Formally complete submissions with relevance to Lower Austria will be activated in the submission system for review by the jurors.
- Formally incomplete submissions or submissions without reference to Lower Austria will be excluded. The submitters will be informed by e-mail about their elimination from the evaluation process.

Stage 2 Evaluation (mid-April to mid-May):

Each juror makes a pre-selection among all submissions approved by GFF: they select the most promising 5 Master/Diploma theses and 5 Dissertations/PhD theses. This is done on the basis of the answers given in the application form (see questions a to d in chapter 4) and the executive summary.

The remaining 5 Master/Diploma theses and 5 Dissertations/PhD theses per juror will qualify for the jury meeting and will be fully reviewed by the respective juror in preparation for this. This "full evaluation" is based on the evaluation criteria 2 to 4 (see pages 6 and 7). Points as well as short justifications will be awarded.

Stage 3 Jury meeting (End of May):

The 5 best-ranked submissions per submission category and juror will be discussed in the jury meeting and the award winners will be determined jointly by all jury members. Three Master/Diploma theses and two Dissertations/PhD theses will be awarded.

6 SCIENCE GALA

In October 2024, the official announcement of the award winners and the award ceremony will take place at the Wissenschaftsgala of the Province of Lower Austria.

7 EVALUATION CRITERIA

CRITERIA 1: IS THERE A REFERENCE TO LOWER AUSTRIA? → YES/NO EVALUATION

The reference to Lower Austria is given if at least one of the four criteria listed below is fulfilled. If none of the four criteria is met, the submission is eliminated from the evaluation process. **Residence** in Lower Austria of a submitting person **is not relevant** for the assessment of the relevance to Lower Austria.

- The thesis was written at a Lower Austrian research facility / in the course of studies in Lower Austria.
- The research dealt with in the thesis is directly related to Lower Austria.
- The thesis was written in the context of a cooperation with companies in Lower Austria.
- Part of the study was carried out in Lower Austria. This means that at least 50% of the surveys, questionnaires, etc. were carried out in Lower Austria.

CRITERIA 2: ORIGINALITY AND INNOVATION OF THE THESIS

Potential points	Criteria
0 - 3	How new is the topic/question of the thesis, or, has a topic area that has rarely been addressed before been addressed?
0 - 3	The topic/question addressed is important for a positive future development (in the respective research area).
0 - 3	What (scientific) findings did the thesis produce and how novel are they?
9	Maximum points achievable

CRITERIA 3: QUALITY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE METHODS OF THE THESIS

Potential points	Criteria
0 - 3	How are the concept and objective operationalized by the methodology?
0 - 3	Are the methods appropriate with respect to the thesis question?
0 - 3	Are the formulated research questions or hypotheses adequate and conclusive?
9	Maximum points achievable

OPTIONAL, CRITERIA 4: FREE EVALUATION → AWARDING UP TO 4 POINTS

Here, supplementary comments as well as evaluations can be listed which have not been covered or not sufficiently covered by the criteria so far and which are to be particularly positively highlighted and evaluated in connection with the thesis.

Up to **4 extra points** can be awarded.

8 COPYRIGHTS AND DATA PROTECTION

The submitters must be creators of the submitted works and thus authors within the meaning of § 10 para. 1 of the Copyright Act, BGBl No. 111/1936, as amended.

The personal data will be processed, if necessary, for the duration of the entire business relationship (including any necessary data transfer to external jurors) as well as beyond that in accordance with the statutory retention and documentation obligations within the framework of the currently applicable Austrian Data Protection Act (DSG) and the European General Data Protection Regulation (DSGVO).

9 FINAL PROVISIONS

These guidelines do not constitute a legal claim to the granting of a subsidy, either in terms of the reason or the amount.

The place of jurisdiction for all disputes arising from the granting of funding is the Regional Court of St. Pölten.

These guidelines shall enter into force on 30.10.2023 and shall apply to the WZP 2024. Amendments and the current version shall be published on the GFF website.