

ERS Forum

Kármán Conferences

Guidelines for Chairs



Kármán Conferences

A measure within the framework of the Universities of Excellence funding line

Outstanding international meetings on novel research topics can be promoted as “Kármán Conferences”. Kármán Conferences help to develop interdisciplinary topics at RWTH Aachen University and position them in a competitive international environment. They serve to promote topics from fundamental research and technology.

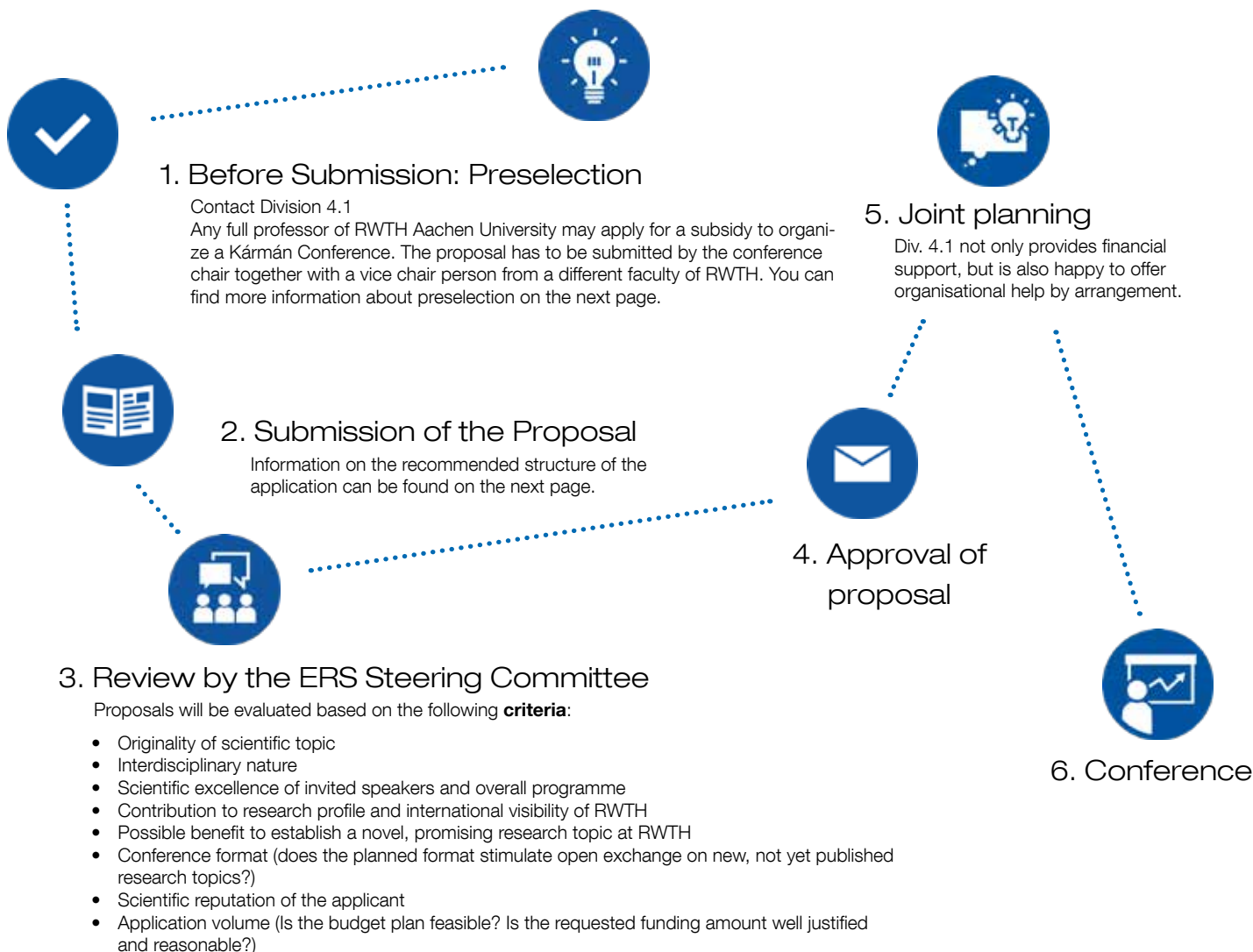
Proposals from emerging research fields that are expected to have a high impact on RWTH's future scientific profile are given priority support. Interdisciplinary topics at the interfaces of natural, engineering or medical sciences, but also humanities and economics are predestined for hosting a Kármán Conference. This is an **open call**, the submission of a proposal is possible at any time.

Measure 3:

„Internationalize Frontier Research“

”To promote and discuss frontier research topics at the interfaces of different disciplines on an international top-level, Kármán Research Conferences were established within the Institutional Strategy and will be continued.“

Application Process



Preselection

The following statements should help you to decide whether the intended conference is suitable to be supported as a Kármán Conference.

1. Meetings within a series of conferences cannot be supported, as an already established line of regular meetings is contradictory to the concept of a Kármán Conference.
2. Kármán Conferences are a „working meeting“ of a confined invited scientific community (70-100 participants) and do not aim at creating international visibility for a topic rather established, already.
3. Documentation and publication of the conference contributions is not recommended in order to foster a trusting atmosphere and open discussion of yet unpublished results from cutting-edge research.
4. Kármán Conferences follow the concept of the Gordon Research Conference Series. If you did not yet participate in a Gordon Research Conference yourself, please refer to the website to better understand the concept of the Kármán Conference: www.grc.org



ERS Steering Committee

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Proposed Structure of the Proposal

Conference Title

Conference Date and Venue (if already known)

Chair Person (applicant) & Co-Chair (from a different faculty)

Topic of the Conference

Description of the conference theme and its relevance to the respective scientific community: is it a novel, exciting topic; have others published results in this area already; does the conference make a straightforward extension or a significant step forward?

Interdisciplinarity of the scientific topic: does the topic requires the participation of at least two different disciplines; is there a research aspect for any discipline involved; are the conference contributions of each discipline ahead of the state of the art?

Impact on Research Profile of RWTH Aachen University

Contribution and expected long-term impact on the research profile and international visibility of RWTH.

Conference Program

Preliminary programme including preliminary list of keynote speakers; are the invited speakers internationally acknowledged experts; is the list of speakers and expected participants suitable to discuss the conference topic at an internationally outstanding scientific level? Further details to guarantee a successful meeting (meeting schedule, conference venue, number of participants, integration of young scientists, ...)

Cost Frame

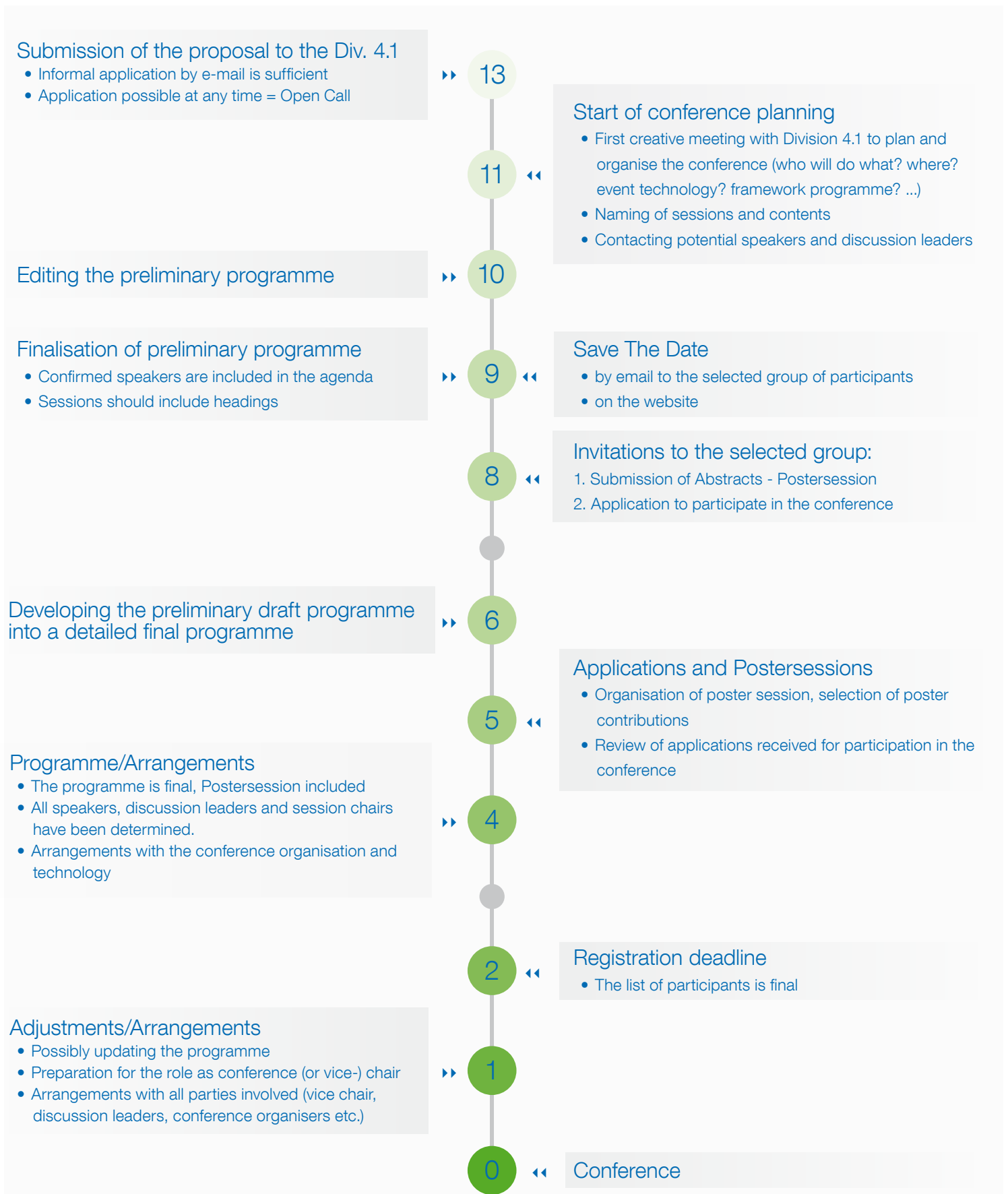
The total cost plan shall list all expected income (including the calculation of participant fees) and expenses and justify the requested grant. Estimated costs of the entire conference organisation, sum of requested funds, possible co-financing.

Photo: Martin Braun

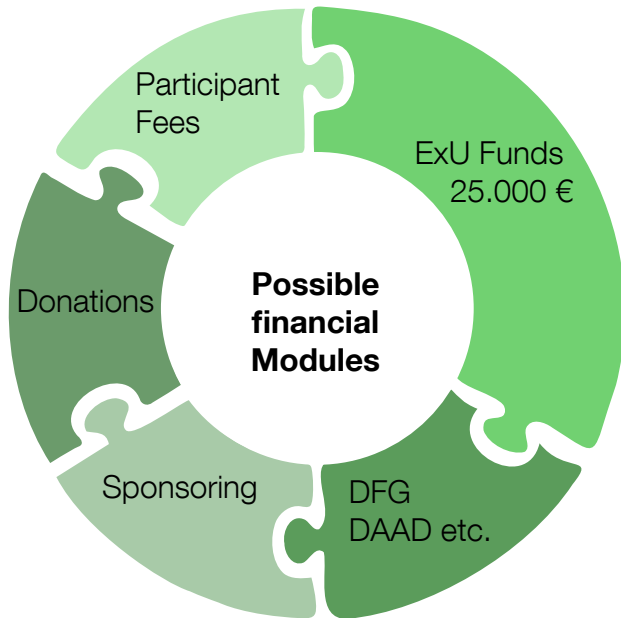


Timeline of tasks

In months before the start of the planned conference



Budget & Financing modules



The budget of ERS is provided by the excellence initiative of the German federal and state governments. For the organization of a Kármán Conference, an ERS subsidy of up to 25,000 € per conference may be requested. Up to two meetings per year will be supported.

The ExU funds serve as an instrument to attract first-class speakers and discussion leaders and to support the diversity of participants, especially the participation of young scientists.

Eligible costs are, e.g., rent for meeting venues, technical equipment, external moderation, travel costs for invited speakers, session chairs and selected attendees.

In addition, co-financing of the conference should be sought from other financial components such as funding from the DFG, DAAD, etc., as well as through the acquisition of sponsorships or donations. The collection of participant fees to cover accommodation costs, among other things, is also a possibility.

Foto: Martin Braun



Speakers and Discussion Leaders

Who to Invite?

Speakers are expected to be

- international leaders of their respective field
- be able to inspire and convey enthusiasm for their research topic

The overall selection of presenters should ensure that

- different fields are involved, with the aim of increasing interdisciplinarity and increase the diversity of disciplines
- the programme differs from conferences already held
- gender equity is given
- both established scientists and young talents participate
- depending on the topic and relevance, speakers from industry, administration and the public may be involved

It is optimal if the presenters

- stay the entire length of the conference
- are open to discuss his/her work
- approachable to junior scientists

Programme structure

Idealy some invited key note speakers give speeches to initiate discussions on which the actual focus of the conference lies. Sufficient time should be planned for informal networking (e.g. joint leisure activities in the afternoon). A possible social programme also serves to promote personal exchange.

Sample Agenda for one Day

08:45	-	09:00	Welcome
09:00	-	09:30	Speaker 1 & Discussion
09:30	-	10:00	Speaker 2 & Discussion
10:00	-	10:30	Speaker 3 & Discussion
10:30		11:00	Coffeebreak
11:00	-	11:30	Speaker 4 & Discussion
11:30	-	12:30	Paneldiscussion
12:30	-	13:30	Lunch
13:30	-	15:00	Break
15:00	-	18:00	Social Programme
18:00	-	19:00	Dinner
19:00	-	21:00	Poster Session / Speed Talks
21:00	-	22:00	A cosy end to the day



Building the Programme

Tips & Advice

- Plan generous times for discussion after presentations (at least 20 minutes lecture and 10 minutes discussion).
- Plan formats and measures for the promotion of female scientists, e.g. Discussion forum, mentoring offer, ...
- Include outstanding young talents in the programme through „short talks“ based on the submitted poster abstracts.



Preliminary Programme

It should consist of the following components

- Subtitle of the conference
- Description of the conference
- Titles of the sessions
- Names of invited speakers and key speakers

Further Hints:

- Conference Chairs should avoid being a speaker at their own conference.
- Avoid using chair and vice-chair as discussion leaders.
- If speakers are used as discussion leaders, it should only be when they themselves are not providing content at the session
- The preliminary programme should only be published once all speakers have confirmed their attendance (in exceptional cases, the addition „requested“ is sufficient).

Photo: Martin Braun

Full Programme

The final programme builds on the preliminary one and additionally contains the following information:

- Title of each talk
- Length of discussion time after each speaker
- Additional speakers and discussion leaders, if required
- Placeholder elements for presentations selected from posters or abstracts, if applicable
- Break times and social programme



Promoting the Conference



It is recommended to announce the conference to the circle of participants as early as possible, even if the programme content is still vague.

Support by Devision 4.1

- Invitations to e-mail distribution lists of the Chair
- Mailing to RWTH distribution list (internal)
- Reporting to press portals
- Establish media partnerships to place ads in scientific journals free of charge
- Use of the social media channel of the profile areas and/or RWTH Aachen University
- Development or maintenance of a web presence (either hosted on the RWTH Aachen University site or an independent one)

What Chairs can do

- Provide email distribution lists for sending invitation mailings
- Provide images for promotion activities (flyers, websites, social media posts ...)
- Send interesting posts for the social media channel
- Create a link in your own signature to the event website
- Show a slide with the key facts of the conference at meetings
- Personally address contacts from your professional (specialist) environment (mouth to mouth propaganda)

RWTH Aachen University

Division 4.1 - Research Profile and Intellectual Property Management

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