

Guidelines for Project Funding: BLACK SEA Initiative

The Center for Governance and Culture in Europe (GCE-HSG) at the University of St. Gallen invites researchers to submit proposals for funding within the framework of the BLACK SEA Initiative. These guidelines provide essential information on eligibility, funding criteria, and the application process.

I. Eligibility Criteria

I.1. Personal Requirements

- I.1.1. Applicants must be affiliated with an eligible research institution (university, research center, or academic organization). Independent researchers or private individuals are not eligible, unless they find an institutional host that is ready to administer the finances.
- I.1.2. Applicants must document that they are scientifically active (as a teacher, researcher, author or scientific administrator) and that they have the relevant qualifications.

I.2. Scientific Qualifications

- I.2.1. Applicants must have at least one year of post-doctoral research experience.
- I.2.2. Applicants must be capable of independently leading a research project and managing any involved staff.

2. Project Scope and Duration

2.1. Topics and Research Areas

2.1.1. Projects must align with one or more of the following themes in the Black Sea region:

- Transcultural contact zones
- Digital humanities
- Security issues, conflicts, and peace processes
- Resilience, sustainability, and innovation
- Migration within and from the region
- Literature and culture of the region

2.2. Project Duration

- 2.2.1. Projects must begin by the end of 2025 and conclude by the end of 2026.
- 2.2.2. Extensions are not typically granted; therefore, applicants should ensure their timeline is realistic.

3. Funding and Eligible Costs

3.1. Budget and Funding Limits

- 3.1.1. Funding can be used for research personnel, travel, workshops, conferences, summer/winter schools, and dissemination activities.
- 3.1.2. Funding is not provided for private research, such as individual archival trips, unless explicitly tied to the larger project goals.

3.2. Eligible Costs

- 3.2.1. Personnel costs (salaries for researchers, assistants, etc.). Researchers and assistants who hold a position of at least 50% at Western or North American universities are not eligible to receive salary payments from the project funds.



- 3.2.2. Travel and accommodation for fieldwork, conferences, or collaborations. Travel funds within Europe are limited to 500 CHF per trip.
 - 3.2.3. Event organization (e.g., workshops, seminar series, summer/winter schools).
 - 3.2.4. Research dissemination, including the creation of public datasets, websites, or digital archives.
 - 3.2.5. Equipment and materials essential for the project (e.g., software, data collection tools).
4. Application Process
 - 4.1. Required Documents
 - 4.1.1. Applicants must submit the following documents:
 - Application form
 - A clear budget outline with a breakdown of costs should be included.
 - CV of all applicants, including a publication list (maximum 3 pages per CV)
 - Confirmation from the institution that will receive and administer the project funds
 - 4.2. Application Format
 - 4.2.1. Applications should be written in English.
 - 4.2.2. The application form should include a detailed description of the research project, its objectives, methodology, expected outcomes, and its relevance to the Black Sea region.
5. Selection Criteria
 - 5.1. Projects will be selected based on the following criteria:
 - Scientific quality: Originality, clarity of research questions, and methodology.
 - Relevance to the Black Sea region and connection to GCE's key research areas (2.1.1.):
Contribution to the understanding of governance, culture, or societal transformation in the region.
 - Feasibility: Realistic timeline, budget, and resource allocation.
 - Collaboration potential: Engagement with international partners and contribution to academic networking.
 - Dissemination plan: Clear strategy for sharing research results with the academic community and the public, including websites, datasets, or publications.
6. Reporting and Dissemination
 - 6.1. Selected projects are required to submit annual financial and textual reports to GCE-HSG. These reports should include a detailed breakdown of expenditures, categorized into personnel, travel, and material costs, as well as a summary of project progress and outcomes.
 - 6.2. Final project outcomes must be disseminated through academic publications, conferences, workshops, and publicly accessible platforms such as datasets, websites, or online tools.