

PhD's, universities and funding strategies

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Vienna Science and Technology Fund (WWTF)

- ▶ Regional actor: strengthen scientific research in Vienna
- ▶ About 7 to 10 Million € funding per year
- ▶ Strong links with regional policy making

- ▶ Thematic Focus: WWTF uses broad thematic calls
 - ▶ Life Sciences
 - ▶ Mathematics in an interdisciplinary context
 - ▶ „SciENCE for creative industries“
 - ▶ Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

Vienna Science and Technology Fund (WWTF)

Funding strategy: Excellence and Relevance

- ▶ WWTF's strategy is defined by its intention to
 - ▶ reinforce outstanding competence in fundamental research
 - ▶ where such competence is organized in visible dimensions and
 - ▶ touches areas where there is a recognized problem affecting society and/ or economy.

Vienna Science and Technology Fund (WWTF)

Instruments

- ▶ Large projects (~ 600.000 €) for 3 -4 years
- ▶ Science Chairs: Recruitment of excellently qualified early stage researchers from abroad (1,5 Mio € for 5 years)

- ▶ We want to strengthen young researchers
 - ▶ Exposure: We want to see them on stage! (PIs)
 - ▶ We earmark money for young PIs

Do Local Authorities play a role in doctoral education? (I)

- ▶ Do local authorities and their agencies play a role in strengthening doctoral training at universities?
 - ▶ Should they?
- ▶ Austria is a federal state, Vienna is one of nine provinces
- ▶ The constitution clearly defines the competences of the federal state and the provinces
 - ▶ § 14-1 BVG: The federal state is responsible for legislation and execution in the field of the school system
 - ▶ This is a blanket clause for the federal government in all matters concerning the universities
 - ▶ Policy of Connectivity: Only pay for those affairs you are responsible for

Do Local Authorities play a role in doctoral education? (II)

- ▶ Do local authorities play a role in strengthening doctoral training at universities?
 - ▶ Should they?
- ▶ The answer depends on the legal/ constitutional framework
- ▶ Vienna's answer: (...anyhow...) We are very much interested in doctoral education
 - ▶ No substitution of federal funds
 - ▶ No substitution of initiatives set by the Austrian Science Fund
 - ▶ We cannot substitute Doctoral Programs and Graduate Schools. But Graduate Schools and Doctoral Programs are our starting point
 - ▶ → Looking for niches

Science and Education: Why regions are interested in

- ▶ Increasing Interest in the policy fields science, research, innovation
 - ▶ Barcelona and Lissabon: 3%
 - ▶ “Doctoral Education is an important link between the Bologna Process and the Lisbon Process” © M. Runacres
 - ▶ Competition Law
 - ▶ „*Science Policy is the Industrial Policy of the 21st century*“
- ▶ Not only on a national level, but also on the regional level
- ▶ Vienna: Political goal to make Vienna a top RTI location in Europe
 - ▶ Active research funding policy
 - ▶ But: Only add-on instruments to those instruments provided by the federal government

The Case of Vienna

- ▶ Austrian institutional setting in RTDI highly centralised: More than 40% of research performed in Vienna
- ▶ Number of strengths in scientific research
 - ▶ Biology and Medicine, Mathematics, Physics
- ▶ Nine Universities and a number of polytechnics
- ▶ Non-university and research labs: (Quantitative) Strengths in Social Sciences

- ▶ Lack of (fair) postdoctoral opportunities at universities

WWTF Lessons

- ▶ To sum up:
- ▶ Vienna wants to be a top R&D Location in Europe
- ▶ WWTF (as an agency closely connected to a local authority) contributes to this task
 - ▶ We want to attract young researchers to Vienna
 - ▶ We want to give young researchers postdoctoral opportunities
- ▶ WWTF is not engaged in doctoral training and in financing graduate schools

Global Competition on Talent

- ▶ The market to find the best is truly global and becoming increasingly more competitive

- ▶ Vienna: WWTF Science Chairs € 1.5 Mio
- ▶ Saudi Arabia: KAUST € 8 Mio
- ▶ Germany: Lichtenberg-Chairs, Volkswagenstiftung € 1.5 Mio
- ▶ Canada: Canada Research Chairs € 1.2 Mio
- ▶ South Africa: South African Research Chairs € 0.8 Mio

Factors in the global competition on talent

- ▶ Attractive instruments to attract people, but also...
- ▶ Quality of Life
- ▶ Attractive framework conditions
 - ▶ Career perspectives
 - ▶ Teaching work load, administration work load
 - ▶ IPRs....
 - ▶
- ▶ Attractive instruments to hold people
 - ▶ Vivid funding possibilities

Vienna Science Chairs

- ▶ We want to attract younger researchers to Vienna
- ▶ 4 Science Chairs in Vienna, calls for 4 additional positions are open
 - ▶ Bioinformatics (2)
 - ▶ Mathematics & Biology (1)
 - ▶ Quantitative Methods in Life Sciences (2)
 - ▶ Finance (1)
 - ▶ Cognition (2)
- ▶ Science Chairs, Age: 32 / 35 / 35 / 45
- ▶ Applicants, Age: From 27 to 35

High Potentials Programme at WWTF

- ▶ We want to establish postdoctoral opportunities
- ▶ In 2007, we invited Vienna based researchers to submit proposals for projects within the field of applied mathematics
 - ▶ Carefully planned programme: interviews, focus groups
- ▶ We earmarked 2 Million € for young Principal Investigators
- ▶ Who are High Potentials?
 - ▶ Postdoctoral researchers
 - ▶ Outstanding career, given their academic age
 - ▶ No age limits
 - ▶ It was up to the jury to decide
- ▶ 37 applications
 - ▶ Oldest applicant: 64, youngest applicant 32
 - ▶ Average applicant was 38 years old
 - ▶ 17 High Potential applications

High Potentials Programme at WWTF (II)

- ▶ 10 projects were funded
- ▶ 8 projects for high potentials
- ▶ Average PI is 33 years old
- ▶ Oldest PI was born 1965, youngest 1975

- ▶ High Potentials: and what now?
 - ▶ More communication with PIs
 - ▶ Training on soft (generic) skills like presentation, science communication, leadership...
- ▶ Interface between universities and WWTF with regard employment and treatment of young scientists has to be formalized: management of expectations
- ▶ Development of Instruments





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Possibilities

- ▶ Federal Governments and Universities



- ▶ Local Authorities and their Agencies



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