2nd Call for Pilot Foundations: Helmholtz Foundation Model Initiative Proposal preparation Instructions

Main Proposal

- See the proposal template for the mandatory structure and content of the proposal.
- Please retain the headings in the proposal template. Subheadings may be introduced as needed, but their use should be kept to a minimum.
- Please add the bibliography of references as an appendix, not in the main proposal.
- Maximum length for the proposal is 10 pages. Appendices listed below do not count into that page limit but have their own page limits.
- Proposals should be written in English language.
- All content, main proposal and appendices must be formatted in DIN A4 page size, with consecutive page numbers in the main proposal starting on the first content page.
- Please use Arial font, minimum 11pt and single line spacing. Margins should be at least 1.27 cm on all sides. In the spirit of fair competition and for the benefit of readability please refrain from tweaking font sizes, line spacing, and page margins to fit more content in the page limit.
- The use of figures and tables is encouraged where useful. Figures should be numbered and referenced in the text. Captions should be 8pt minimum.

Mandatory appendices

All appendices are mandatory unless stated otherwise. If in doubt about the content of any of the appendices, please get in touch with the information & data science team in the head office (contact details below).

1. Cited references: Bibliography of all references used in the proposal.
2. Compute infrastructure overview: Additional documentation of availability and access to adequate compute infrastructure. This could include e.g. a documentation of granted compute time for the planned project (if available), evidence of previously granted compute time, description of access through consortium members etc., or any other additional details pertinent to section 2.3 of the main proposal.
3. List of Work Packages and deliverables
   - (one page) Tabular view of work packages indicating the leading center as well as a descriptive title, work package budget and a timeline, referencing the proposal section 3.1.
   - (one page) Tabular view of the planned deliverables with references to the associated work package, the responsible project partner and the delivery month. Indicate which deliverables will be produced with, or used by, external partners.
   - (one page) Gantt chart with work packages, tasks, deliverables, milestones, dependencies etc.

4. Financial Plan
   - A breakdown of the allocated budget for each work package defining their aggregate inkind and cash contributions for the entire funding period.
   - A breakdown of the annual budget for each participating center according to type of funding (staff and expenses).
5. CVs of Participating PIs and potential candidates for intended positions: CVs should be provided that clearly reflect a proven record of expertise in the research domain, in AI/ML, and HPC for key personnel. Provide:
   - CVs of the principal investigators (2 pages each max.). List up to ten research products that are most relevant to the project. Research products could be peer-reviewed publications, but could also describe software packages, datasets, policy papers, contribution to standards, patents, etc. They could include accomplishments like entrepreneurship and sustained industry/business collaborations. Please provide evidence that allows experts outside your domain to assess relevance and impact of research products.
   - If available, CVs of prospective candidates for a specific position (2 pages max. each).
6. Confirmation of default commission: A declaration, usually a signed letter, by the CEO/board of directors of each participating center must be included, which guarantees that they are willing and able to support the project in case the central funds for 2026/27 are not available for that period. Proposals that do not provide this letter will be rejected without review.
7. Ethics and compliance assessment: An assessment on potential ethical concerns or negative societal impact. Please consult with your Institutional Review Board(s) and report the outcome. If the project involves sensitive data, describe the process of data handling and compliance. In general, it is recommended to assess the proposal according to the [NeurIPS ethics guidelines](#) and briefly report on that.
8. Signed LoS from external partner providing resources (if applicable): If your consortium includes external partners, provide a signed Letter of Support that lists the resources that are to be provided by the partner and confirms that the partner commits to providing them, in case the project will be selected for funding by the committee.

Further inquiries

For further inquiries, please contact via email:

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