



Funding Guidelines of the TOOLS FOR LIFE Foundation

1. General Principles

The TOOLS FOR LIFE Foundation supports projects worldwide—in Germany, Europe, and regions outside Europe—in the areas of development cooperation, vocational training, and climate protection. The focus is on practical “empowerment” through the development of local expertise and structures to enable sustainable development, strengthen economic self-reliance, and build resilient infrastructure.

A particular focus is placed on vocational training and continuing education in the skilled trades, especially in the fields of water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) and energy. This support is provided in accordance with the Foundation’s statutory purposes.

2. Funding Areas

2.1 Training and Continuing Education (Core Area)

Vocational training is at the heart of the foundation's work. In particular, the foundation supports:

- Mentoring programs for apprentices
- Partnerships with vocational schools in developing and industrialized countries
- Construction and equipping of vocational schools
- Practical training programs in HVAC and electrical engineering
- Career guidance initiatives

2.2 Infrastructure in conjunction with training

Infrastructure projects are generally combined with educational and training programs.

Funding is provided in particular for:

- Water supply systems (e.g., wells, pumps, water towers)
- Sanitary facilities
- Photovoltaic and energy systems

At the same time, local skilled workers are being trained to ensure the long-term operation and maintenance of the facility.

2.3 Climate protection as a cross-cutting priority

Climate protection is a distinct statutory funding objective and is systematically taken into account in all areas of activity.

The foundation focuses on two key areas of activity:

a) Emissions reduction (mitigation)

- Expansion of renewable energy sources (particularly solar energy)
- Reduction in the use of fossil fuels (e.g., diesel, kerosene)
- Improvements in the efficiency of water and energy systems
- Introduction of local recycling systems (particularly for plastics)

b) Climate adaptation

- Building resilient water infrastructure in drought-prone areas
- Improving sanitation services during extreme weather events
- Strengthening local supply systems against climate risks
- Reforestation measures to stabilize soil and the water cycle

3. Eligibility requirements for project funding

3.1 The eligibility requirements are:

- the project fulfills at least one of the TOOLS FOR LIFE Foundation's objectives
- the local population is actively involved
- the applicant is recognized as a nonprofit organization
- the applicant is based in Germany or the European Union
- the TOOLS FOR LIFE Code of Conduct is accepted
- relevant project experience is demonstrated
- an appropriate level of self-funding is provided (helping people help themselves)
- the project is sustainable

Organizations outside the European Union may be eligible for funding provided they cooperate with an organization within the EU that submits the application on their behalf or is involved through a reliable European partner.

3.2 The following are generally not eligible for funding

- Purely infrastructure projects without a training component
- Short-term relief efforts without long-term sustainability
- Purely academic studies without practical relevance
- Individuals without an institutional framework
- Purely visitor programs
- Projects that, in form and purpose, would qualify for institutional funding
- Ongoing costs that are necessarily incurred even after a project is completed (electricity, rent, salaries required on a long-term basis, e.g., for teachers)
- Travel and personnel costs of the applicant organizations

4. Scope of Funding and General Conditions

- Maximum grant amount:
 - First-time projects: up to €5,000
 - Follow-up projects: ~ €15,000
- Project duration:
 - Preference is given to projects with a duration of 3 to 12 months
- Decision:
 - The Foundation's Board of Directors decides on the approval of project funding
- Legal entitlement:
 - There is no legal entitlement to project funding

5. Contact

If you have any questions, please contact:
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