



DFG

Funding opportunities for Early Career Researchers at **DFG** (German Research Foundation)

Manuel Krämer | DPG Spring Meeting, Gießen | March 13, 2024

The DFG – About us

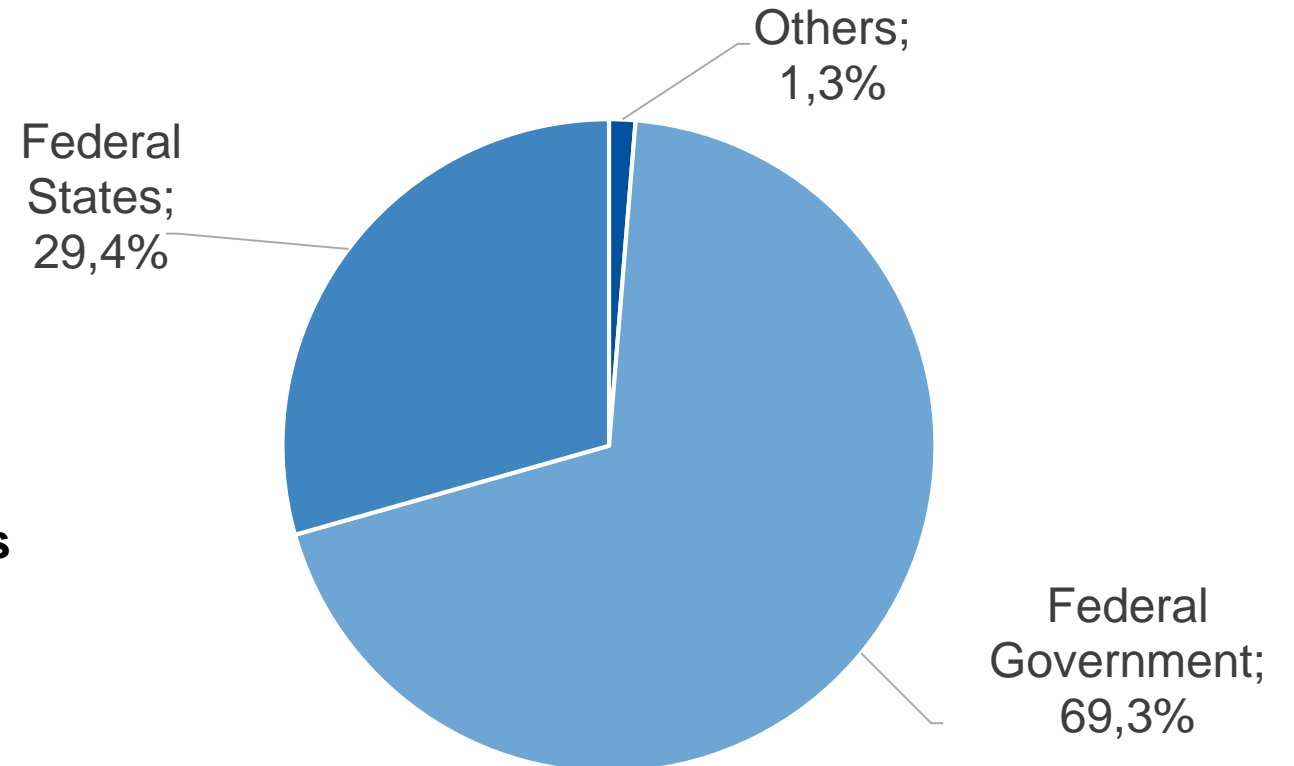
- ▶ The DFG is the largest **third-party funding** organisation for universities in Germany
- ▶ It serves **all branches** of science and the humanities
- ▶ Goals:
Promoting the advancement of science and the humanities
by funding research **projects**, research **centres**, **networks** and **infrastructure**
 - Facilitating national and international **cooperation** among researchers
 - Providing scientific **policy advice**
 - Promoting **gender equality** in the German scientific and academic communities
 - Encouraging the advancement and training of **Early Career Researchers**
- ▶ Open, bottom-up choice of **research topics** → **basic research** in any field of science/humanities

The DFG – In numbers

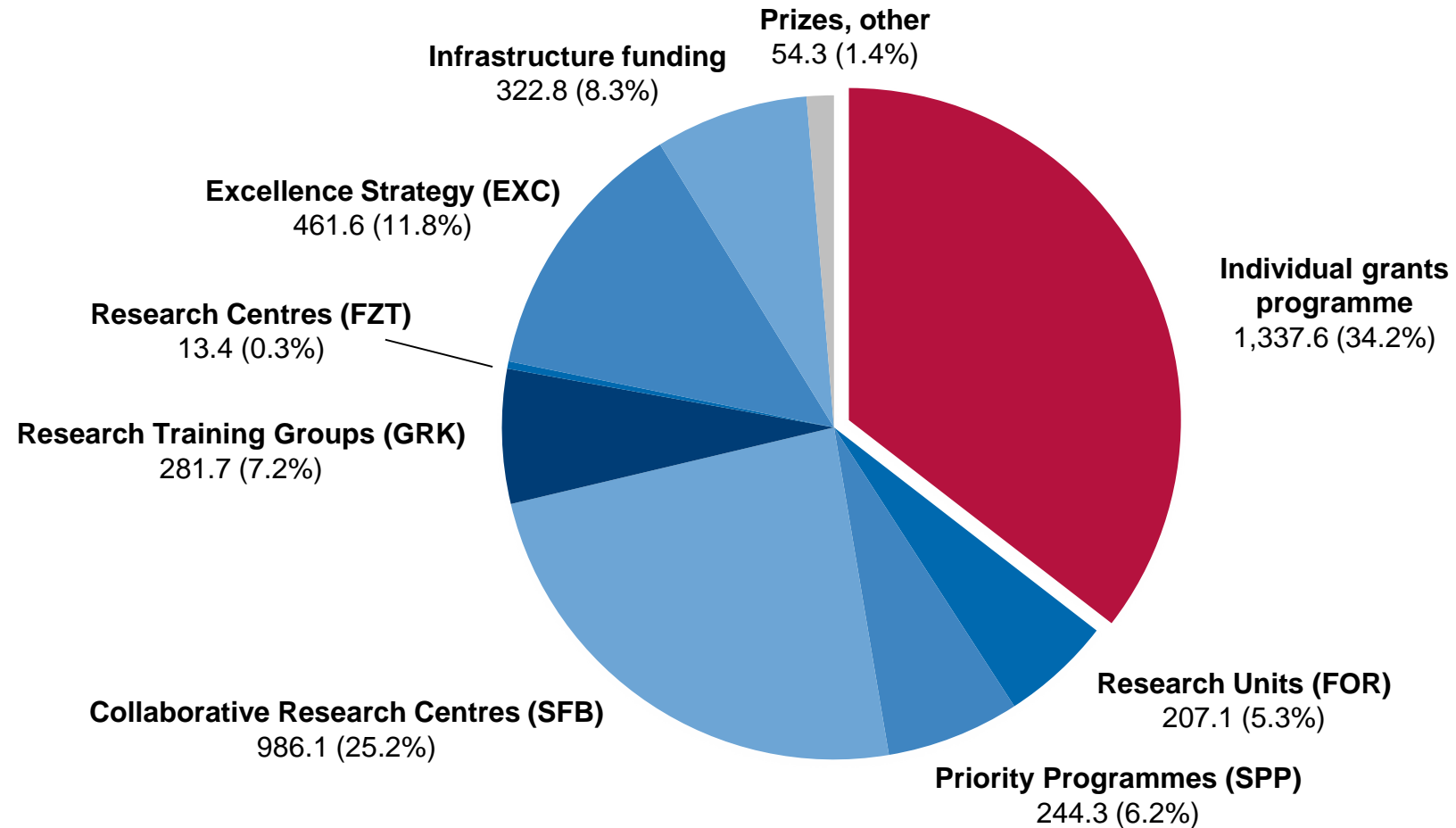
www.dfg.de/en/dfg_profile/facts_figures/statistics

In 2022:

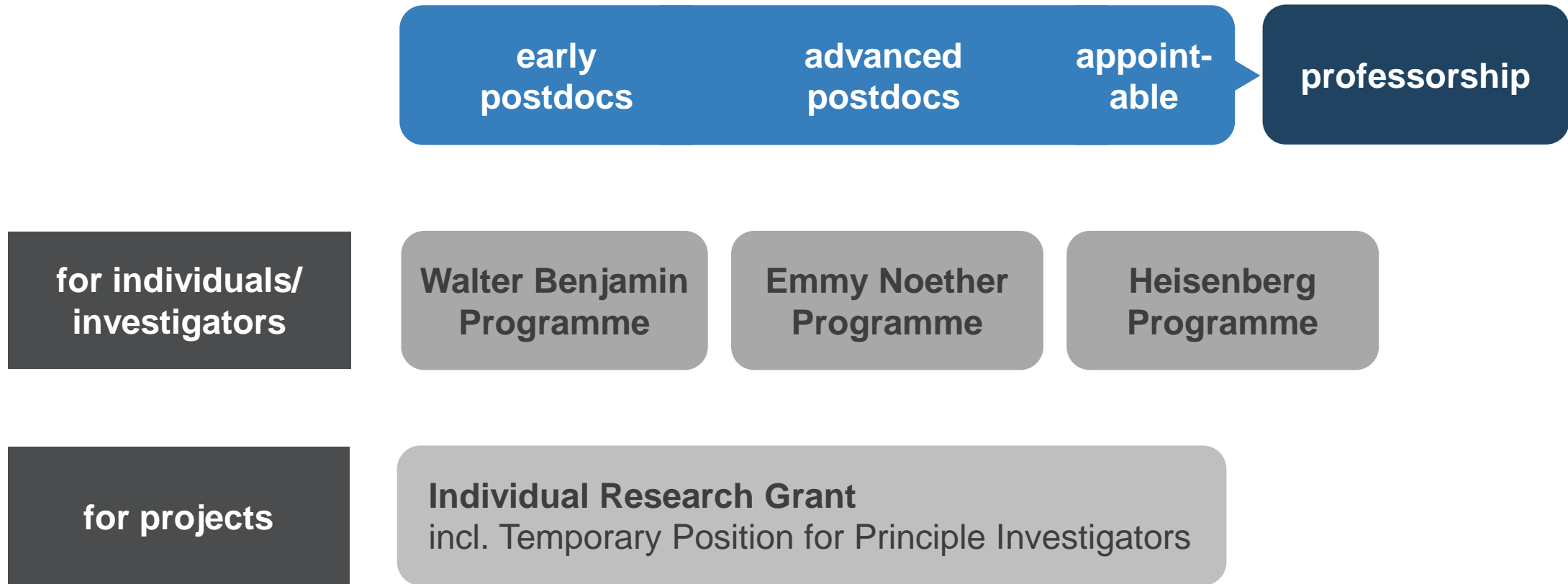
- ▶ around **31,750** projects
- ▶ total budget: **3.9 billion €**
- ▶ **22,300** funding decisions
- ▶ based on evaluations by **16,600** reviewers



Funding awarded by programme in 2022 (in Mio. € and %)



DFG Funding Opportunities for Postdocs



Walter Benjamin Programme

- ▶ For **early postdocs**
starting a research career with an **independent research project**
 - ▶ Supporting **mobility**:
applicants should move on to a new host institution,
either in **Germany or abroad** – or combining stays at different places
 - ▶ A **host researcher** agrees to advise and support the grantee
-
- ▶ Funding for **2 years**
 - **Position / Fellowship**
 - Allowance for **direct project costs**: 250 €/month
→ Your **host institution** needs to provide additional **project costs**



Emmy Noether Programme

- ▶ Path to early **academic independence**
- ▶ **Eligibility** for professorial appointment by leading one's own **independent junior research group**
- ▶ Requirements:
 - For **outstanding** postdoctoral researchers
 - Substantial **international** research experience
 - **Excellent** research project
- ▶ Application within **4 years** after doctorate (extensions for child care are granted)
- ▶ Funding for **6 years** → includes: **position** and **project funds** for junior research group
- ▶ About **60 new groups** per year (Physics: about 10 new groups per year)
- ▶ Funding rate **below 20 %**



Heisenberg Programme

- ▶ Enabling outstanding researchers to prepare for a **senior academic role** while continuing their research work
- ▶ For researchers **eligible** for **professorial appointment**
- ▶ Funding for up to **5 years**
- ▶ In Germany or abroad

- ▶ Flexible choice of **individual funding** after the proposal is approved:
 - Fellowship / Position / Professorship W2 or W3 → host university must commit to tenure track
- ▶ Flexible **research funds**: 1,000 € per month
- ▶ Fellowship and positions may be combined with a **Research Grant proposal**

- ▶ About 60 new grantees per year (Physics: about 10 new grantees per year)



Individual Research Grant (“Sachbeihilfe”)

- ▶ Individual Grants offer you an opportunity to pursue your research project **in Germany**
- ▶ Funding generally for up to **3 years**
- ▶ Flexible **funding modules**:
 - Staff
 - Consumables
 - Travel
 - Instrumentation
 - ...
 - Module **“Temporary Position for Principle Investigators” (“Eigene Stelle”)**

Preparing your proposal

- ▶ Carefully read and follow the **guidelines** and proposal **instructions**
 - Necessary information can (almost always) be found on the **DFG website** (→ in particular: **FAQs**)
 - Some programmes have **personal deadlines** (e.g. Emmy Noether Programme: 4 years after PhD)
- ▶ Questions? Ask for help → Resources at institutions / DFG (contacts can easily be found on www.dfg.de)
- ▶ Put yourself in the reviewers' shoes → funding criteria are **public**
- ▶ Seek honest criticism from **colleagues**
- ▶ Plan on a realistic **timeline**
 - Decisions take about 7.5 months (depending on programme)
 - Not plannable, depends on review process, dates of panel meetings, spikes in proposal activity, ...

If your proposal is not successful...

- ▶ Don't be discouraged
- ▶ Consider the reviewers' comments – they might give you some pointers for reworking your proposal
- ▶ Often you are eligible to resubmit