

Austria – Mapping of National and Vienna Regional Funding Routes

This section maps national funding routes available in Austria together with regional funding instruments specific to the Vienna Region that are relevant to digital cultural heritage, tourism innovation and related digital transformation activities.

The schemes presented may include permanent instruments, periodic programmes, previous calls or measures that may be renewed or replaced by successor initiatives. Their inclusion does not imply that funding is currently available or that future editions will apply the same conditions. Users should always verify the current status, eligibility criteria, budgets, deadlines and application procedures through the official sources before taking action.

National

Federal Ministry of Housing, Arts, Culture, Media and Sport (BMWKMS) | Digital Cultural Heritage Funding, including “Kulturerbe digital”

Level: National

Managing authority: Government of Austria – Federal Ministry of Housing, Arts, Culture, Media and Sport (BMWKMS).

Type of support: Grants (project-based non-repayable funding).

Objective: Federal initiatives in this area support the **digitisation, cataloguing, publication and digital mediation of Austria’s material cultural heritage**, including the transfer of content to Kulturpool. *Kulturerbe digital* is a relevant previous programme within this framework.

Target beneficiaries: Cultural and heritage institutions and other eligible organisations defined in the programme rules, especially collection-holding institutions such as museums, archives and libraries.

Geographical scope / Eligibility: Eligible Austrian museums, archives, libraries and other collection-holding cultural or heritage institutions.

Access and funding conditions: Non-repayable project grants are awarded through competitive federal calls published by the ministry. Eligible costs, grant amounts, co-financing requirements and application procedures are defined in each funding round.

When to use it:

- ✓ For digitisation of cultural heritage collections
- ✓ For digital cataloguing, access and mediation of heritage assets
- ✓ For museums, archives, libraries and other collection-holding institutions
- ✓ When the project is heritage-led rather than purely technology-led

Link to official source:

Kulturerbe digital programme page: [Förderprogramm Kulturerbe digital](#)
Official application/form page: [Kulturerbe digital](#)

Federal Ministry of Housing, Arts, Culture, Media and Sport | Digital Transformation

Level: National

Managing authority: Government of Austria, Federal Ministry of Housing, Arts, Culture, Media and Sport.

Type of support: Project grants.

Objective: The programme supports the **sustainable digital transformation** of Austrian arts and cultural organisations. It may fund projects that improve digital infrastructures, processes, access, mediation and the long-term use of digital cultural content.

Target beneficiaries: Eligible Austrian arts and cultural organisations, according to the applicable programme guidelines.

Geographical scope / Eligibility: Austria. Detailed eligibility conditions are defined in each funding round.

Access and funding conditions: Project grants are awarded through dedicated federal calls. Funding rates, eligible expenditure, grant amounts and application procedures vary by funding round.

When to use it:

- ✓ For organisational digital transformation in cultural institutions
- ✓ For digital repositories, access systems and content-management processes
- ✓ For improving the visibility and reuse of digitised heritage
- ✓ When the project goes beyond the digitisation of individual objects

Link to official source: <https://www.bmwkms.gv.at/themen/kunst-und-kultur/schwerpunkte/digitalisierung/digitale-transformation.html>

Austria Wirtschaftsservice (aws) / WKO | KMU.DIGITAL

Level: National

Managing authority: Austria Wirtschaftsservice (aws), within the framework of the Austrian federal SME digitalisation support system; programme information is also provided through the Austrian Economic Chamber (WKO).

Type of support: Grants/subsidies, typically structured in modules for consulting and implementation.

Objective: KMU.DIGITAL supports small and medium-sized enterprises in Austria in planning, implementing and bringing digitalisation projects to market, thereby strengthening their competitiveness.

Target beneficiaries: SMEs established in Austria. It is a cross-sector instrument, so it may be relevant for tourism SMEs, creative SMEs and heritage-related businesses where they meet the programme conditions.

Geographical scope / Eligibility: Austria-wide. Applicants must be SMEs and comply with the specific eligibility conditions of the programme.

Access and funding conditions: Support is provided through consulting and implementation modules managed by aws. Applications are submitted through the aws funding portal, and the available modules, subsidy rates, eligible costs and maximum amounts vary by funding period.

When to use it:

- ✓ For SME adoption of digital tools and services
- ✓ For digital customer services, workflows, e-commerce or IT upgrades
- ✓ For tourism SMEs or small heritage-related businesses needing practical digital implementation support
- ✓ When the applicant is a business rather than a museum, archive or public heritage body

Link to official source:

aws KMU.DIGITAL guideline: <https://www.aws.at/richtlinien/richtlinie/kmu-digitalisierungsfoerderung-kmudigital/>

WKO programme info (KMU.DIGITAL): [KMU.DIGITAL - WKO](#)

Federal ministry info page (KMU.DIGITAL): [Förderungsprogramm KMU.DIGITAL](#)

Austrian Research Promotion Agency (FFG) | Basisprogramm / Applied R&D Funding

Level: National

Managing authority: Austrian Research Promotion Agency (FFG), under the relevant Austrian federal innovation policy framework.

Type of support: R&D grants and related innovation support instruments, depending on

the programme. Basisprogramm is one of the core national instruments for company-led applied R&D.

Objective: To support **research and development projects with commercialisation potential in Austrian companies**. This is relevant for digital heritage or tourism projects only where the project contains genuine technological innovation and structured R&D work.

Target beneficiaries: Primarily companies, including SMEs, large companies and startups; cooperation is possible depending on the scheme, but not always required.

Geographical scope / Eligibility: National. The Basisprogramm is generally implemented through recurring or continuously accessible funding procedures, subject to the applicable annual guidelines and available budget.

Access and funding conditions: Companies apply directly to FFG under the applicable programme procedure. Support is calculated on eligible R&D costs and may take the form of grants, loans, guarantees or a combination of instruments, depending on the applicant and project profile.

When to use it:

- ✓ For AI, XR, semantic enrichment or advanced digital tools for heritage/tourism
- ✓ When the project includes genuine R&D, novelty and a clear exploitation pathway
- ✓ For company-led innovation rather than standard digitisation
- ✓ When heritage or tourism is the application domain, but technology development is the real core

Link to official source:

FFG overview: <https://www.ffg.at/alle-foerderungen-und-initiativen-im-ueberblick>

FFG Basisprogramm (ministry page): <https://www.bmimi.gv.at/themen/innovation/fti-themen/iwi/ffg-basisprogramm.html>

ERDF / IBW-EFRE & JTF 2021-2027 | National and Regional Cohesion Policy Framework

Level: National framework / regional and multi-agency implementation

Managing authority: Austria's national ERDF/JTF framework is implemented through multiple funding bodies and agencies rather than a single heritage managing authority.

Type of support: Grants and programme-based support instruments, depending on the specific measure or implementing body.

Objective: The programme **supports broader cohesion policy goals such as innovation, SME competitiveness, territorial development and transition-related investments**. It can be relevant to cultural heritage and tourism when projects are place-based, investment-oriented and linked to regional development or innovation outcomes.

Target beneficiaries: Varies by call and measure, but may include SMEs, public bodies, territorial actors and other organisations.

Geographical scope / Eligibility: Austria, with allocations and implementation distributed across federal states and implementing agencies.

Access and funding conditions: Support is delivered through specific measures launched by Austrian implementing bodies, combining EU structural funds with national or regional co-financing. Funding rates, eligible costs and application procedures are defined by each measure

When to use it:

- ✓ For larger place-based investment projects
- ✓ For projects combining digitalisation with regional development effects
- ✓ For infrastructure, innovation or territorial transformation logic

✓ When the project needs ERDF-style co-financing rather than a small direct heritage grant

Link to official source:

Austria ERDF portal: [EU-Förderung für regionale Entwicklung - EU-Förderung für regionale Entwicklung](#)

Programme page (IBW/EFRE & JTF): [Programm IBW/EFRE & JTF - EU-Förderung für regionale Entwicklung](#)

Austrian Academy of Sciences | Digital Humanities and Long-Term Cultural Heritage Research Programmes

Level: National / Institutional (Austria)

Managing authority: Austrian Academy of Sciences (ÖAW). The programme was supported through the Austrian federal research and innovation framework, with funding for the first call provided by the former Federal Ministry of Science, Research and Economy (BMWFW) via the National Foundation for Research, Technology and Development.

Type of support: Large-scale, multi-annual research funding for long-term Digital Humanities projects focused on cultural heritage. It is designed more as a strategic research programme than as a standard innovation voucher or business support scheme.

Objective: To **strengthen digital humanities infrastructures and methodologies for the documentation, structured collection, preservation, provision, presentation and analysis of cultural heritage data**. The programme is intended to connect humanities, cultural studies and social sciences research.

Target beneficiaries: Primarily academic research units and researchers linked to the Austrian Academy of Sciences.

Geographical scope / Eligibility: Austria. The funding sits within the Austrian research landscape and is linked to ÖAW structures.

Access and funding conditions: Multiannual research grants are awarded through specific ÖAW programmes and calls, where available. Eligible costs, project duration and maximum funding are defined in the relevant programme rules.

When to use it:

✓ Best suited for research-driven digital cultural heritage infrastructures, advanced data curation, semantic knowledge systems, digital editions, long-term preservation and interoperable scholarly repositories, rather than market-facing tourism digitization pilots

✓ When the lead actor is an academic or heritage research institution, especially within or closely linked to the Austrian research ecosystem

Link to official source: [Digital humanities: Long-Term Projects on Cultural Heritage](#)

FWF | Austrian Science Fund

Level: National

Managing authority: Austrian Science Fund (FWF), Austria's central funding body for basic research across all disciplines, including the humanities and arts-based research.

Type of support: Competitive research grants and related academic funding instruments for individual researchers, research groups, collaborative teams, and larger excellence-oriented structures depending on the programme. Funding may cover staff, project-related costs and other eligible research expenses under the relevant scheme rules.

Objective: To support high-quality, internationally competitive research that pushes the boundaries of knowledge. FWF funding is designed to give researchers freedom to pursue **innovative research** questions in all areas of basic research, independent of

political or commercial interests.

Target beneficiaries: Primarily researchers and research teams working at Austrian university and non-university research institutions. The FWF also states that international researchers working abroad may apply under certain programmes if they intend to establish themselves at an Austrian research institution.

Geographical scope / Eligibility: National.

Access and funding conditions: Applications are submitted directly to FWF under the most appropriate competitive research programme. Eligible costs, budget structure, project duration and funding conditions vary by programme.

When to use it:

✓ For digital heritage projects with a strong research component, such as computational analysis, digital editions, advanced data modelling, semantic infrastructures, AI-supported research methods, or experimental heritage digitisation methodologies

✓ When the project is led by researchers or research institutions and has a clear scientific question, robust methodology, and expected scholarly impact

✓ For interdisciplinary work connecting cultural heritage with digital humanities, computer-supported analysis, data science, or humanities scholarship

Link to official source:

FWF homepage: <https://www.fwf.ac.at/en/>

FWF funding overview: <https://www.fwf.ac.at/en/funding>

FWF research funding / mission pages: <https://www.fwf.ac.at/en/about-us/what-we-do/research-funding>

Regional - Vienna

Vienna Business Agency (Wirtschaftsagentur Wien) | Digitalisation Funding

Level: Regional (City of Vienna)

Managing authority: Vienna Business Agency (Wirtschaftsagentur Wien), the business support agency of the City of Vienna. Funding is awarded within the framework of the agency's economic support guidelines.

Type of support: Grants (non-repayable project subsidies).

Objective: This scheme supports the **development and implementation of digitalisation projects in Viennese SMEs**. It is intended to modernise workflows and value chains, for example through digital interfaces, customer support systems, software solutions, training, and related investments.

Target beneficiaries: Existing small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) from all sectors that have been active in Vienna for at least one year. This may include tourism businesses, cultural and creative SMEs, and other heritage-related enterprises where eligible.

Geographical scope / Eligibility: Applicants must be SMEs operating in Vienna for at least one year at the time of application. Eligibility conditions and eligible costs are defined in the programme rules.

Funding Mechanism: Funding is provided through the City of Vienna's economic development framework and administered by the Vienna Business Agency. Previous or current editions have provided grants covering up to 50% of eligible costs, with support of up to €50,000 per project and a minimum project size of €10,000. Conditions should be verified for each funding period.

How to access it: Through direct application to the Vienna Business Agency via its funding portal. The agency also offers advisory support before submission.

When to use it:

- ✓ For SME-led implementation of digital tools and services
- ✓ For digital customer journeys, booking/visitor systems, CRM, workflows and data systems
- ✓ For short- to medium-term deployment projects
- ✓ When the project is implementation-focused rather than pure research

Link to official source:

Digitalisation Funding: [Digitalisation Funding - Wirtschaftsagentur](#)

Vienna Business Agency (Wirtschaftsagentur Wien) | Innovation Funding

Level: Regional (City of Vienna)

Managing authority: Vienna Business Agency (Wirtschaftsagentur Wien), under the City of Vienna's business and innovation support framework.

Type of support: Grants (project funding).

Objective: This funding line supports **the implementation of development and innovation projects by Viennese SMEs**. According to the official guideline, eligible projects may involve the development of new or significantly improved processes, products and services.

Target beneficiaries: Primarily Vienna-based SMEs, according to the programme rules. Depending on the project profile, this can include enterprises active in tourism, cultural services, digital heritage solutions, creative industries or related innovation fields.

Geographical scope / Eligibility: Regional, for enterprises established in Vienna and meeting the eligibility conditions set out in the Vienna Business Agency programme rules.

Funding Mechanism: City of Vienna innovation and business development funding,

administered through the Vienna Business Agency. Eligible costs may include development-related expenditure such as personnel, consulting and other project costs, depending on the detailed rules of the scheme.

How to access it: By applying directly through the Vienna Business Agency's funding system under the relevant innovation support line.

When to use it:

- ✓ When the project includes a clear innovation component
- ✓ For new digital heritage experiences, tourism products or prototypes
- ✓ When development work is needed, not just purchase of off-the-shelf tools
- ✓ When the applicant is a Vienna-based company building a new solution or service

Link to official source:

Innovation Funding: [Innovation Funding - Wirtschaftsagentur](#)

City of Vienna Culture (Stadt Wien Kultur / MA 7) | Cultural Funding Framework

Level: Regional (City of Vienna)

Managing authority: City of Vienna – Culture Department (Stadt Wien Kultur, MA 7).

Type of support: Grants (project funding, annual funding, and in some areas investment-related support, depending on the line).

Objective: MA 7 is **responsible for the City of Vienna's cultural funding system**. It supports a broad range of cultural fields, including lines directly relevant for this guide such as *Kulturelles Erbe* and *Bildende Kunst und Medienkunst*, as well as other cultural initiatives, film, music and research-related activities.

Target beneficiaries: Depending on the funding line, beneficiaries may include cultural institutions, heritage-related organisations, initiatives, artists, collectives and other eligible cultural actors in Vienna.

Geographical scope / Eligibility: Vienna. Eligibility depends on the specific line, the applicant type, and the applicable funding guidelines. For example, MA 7 has separate pages and rules for *Kulturelles Erbe* and for *Bildende Kunst und Medienkunst*.

Funding Mechanism: The funding is provided from the cultural budget of the City of Vienna and distributed through line-specific programmes and calls managed by MA 7. Availability depends on annual budget appropriations.

How to access it: Through the official MA 7 funding pages, where applicants can find line-specific guidelines, submission deadlines and online application procedures.

When to use it:

- ✓ When the lead applicant is a cultural or heritage organisation rather than an SME
- ✓ For heritage-related activities under *Kulturelles Erbe*
- ✓ For digital/media-art and cultural content projects under *Bildende Kunst und Medienkunst*
- ✓ For cultural digitisation, mediation, artistic digital formats or heritage engagement, depending on the specific line

Link to official source:

Vienna cultural funding overview: <https://www.wien.gv.at/kultur/foerderungen>