



NEWSLETTER No. 41

Antarctic Research with Comparative Investigations in Arctic Ice Areas

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Current application round of the SPP 1158 2025/2026

In November 2025, 44 scientific proposals were submitted to the DFG, which reflects again the high interest/demand from scientists working in polar regions.

- 9 million € requested in this application round → universities asked for 82% of the total volume
- A DFG expert committee evaluated the proposals during a meeting on 29th- 30th April 2026 in Bonn.
- The panel recommendations can be obtained from the SPP coordinator or the coordination office. Details of evaluations can be inquired from the DFG at the beginning of July, when the reviewer's reports have been received.

- 13 applications, plus a 2-year renewal of the coordination office, were recommended for funding by the DFG.

Information for Researchers, No. 52

The DFG **call for proposals** to the **SPP 1158** ("Aufforderungsschreiben") for the year 2026 will be published in mid-July 2026 at the latest. Project proposals have to be submitted **by November 2nd, 2026**. Potential changes to this deadline will be announced via email to the SPP mailing list and on the website.

When preparing your proposal, please refer to the program guidelines ([DFG form 50.05](#), section B) and follow the proposal preparation instructions ([DFG form 54.01](#)). These instructions **must be followed** when preparing the proposal; otherwise, DFG will not accept your proposal.

SPP 1158 Coordination Workshop, September 2026

The annual coordination workshop of the DFG Priority Program "Antarctic Research" will take place from **September 28th to 30th, 2026, at the TRIHOTEL in Rostock**. It targets scientists from German universities and research institutions involved in Antarctic research.

The annual coordination workshop aims to stimulate collaboration and networking between funded researchers and provide information to new applicants. Therefore, **participation in the SPP coordination workshop is mandatory** for **(1)** all currently funded projects and **(2)** all new applicants and renewal applications.

- All currently funded projects **(1)** are required to show their first research data, concept, and/or ideas as a **poster** (in DIN A0).
- Prospective new and renewal applicants **(2)** are obliged to provide a **5 min presentation**, which includes the **project idea, assignment** to one or more of the **overarching topics** of the SPP application period 2025-2030, rough **budget** information, indication for **collaboration within the SPP**, as well as **collaboration obligation** for non-university applicants.

Please consider the following points when preparing the presentation and your proposal, and also check the SPP website for more information:

- The focus of the SPP is research in **Antarctica**. Comparative studies in the Arctic are possible, but NOT as the main topic.
- The SPP aims to support researchers from **German universities**. If you work at non-university research institutions, such as AWI or MPIs, you are **obliged to collaborate with a university partner**. Please note that scientists from non-university research institutions, who are currently on a fixed-term contract and are applying for their position, are exempt from the duty to cooperate.
- The project idea must fall under at least one of the **four overarching questions** of the SPP application period 2025-2030. <https://www.spp-antarktisforschung.uni-rostock.de/forschung/antragsperioden/antragsperiode-2025-2030/>
- Please include a **modest & fully justified** budget. Please remember that the annual budget of the SPP is around 2.5-3.0 Mio €, which has to be shared between 30-40 applications/10-15 funded projects! Experiences of the last 5 years indicate: PhD students were always funded at 65% TVL13, but now can also be funded at 75% TVL13; in the case of Postdocs, consider 2 instead of 3 years; technicians will not be funded; student helpers are possible. Consumables

and travel costs are fine; investments in infrastructure (over 10,000 euros) will not be supported. Ideally, at the lowest possible cost.

- Please provide **contact details** to promote networking with other applicants and researchers with current projects.
- Please carefully address the **handling of scientific data**.
- Please carefully address the **aspects of gender equality and diversity**. The DFG review panel took both points very seriously; you should also explain your motivation behind your approach.

All these aspects are carefully scrutinized and extensively discussed by the DFG review panel. Failure to provide comprehensive and convincing information on any of the points listed above may be viewed as a weakness of the proposal and can negatively affect its evaluation.

The **registration deadline** for contributions (**talk or poster**) is **August 9th, 2026**. Please fill out the **application form (will be sent to you in a separate email in the next days!)** and send it via email to the coordination office (Dr. Julia Ehrlich and Dr. Angelika Graiff) (email: spp-antarktisforschung@uni-rostock.de).

We additionally ask **all attendees** to submit a short **project outline of their project (will be sent to you in a separate email in the next days!)** to the SPP coordination office by **September 13th, 2026**. The aim is to inform all attendees about the different new and running projects beforehand to facilitate collaboration during the workshop.

Important: *We expect you to stay for the entire SPP workshop. According to DFG SPP guidelines, active contributions and engagement with other disciplines in the frame of the overarching goals of the SPP are mandatory and are explicitly required by the DFG review panel.*

Information on:

- **Hotel:** You are responsible for your hotel reservation in Rostock! Costs of 80.00 € per night (from 2 nights, 84.80 € per night), including breakfast, can be covered.
 - ➔ On the “**List of hotels with room reservations**”, you will find information on hotels offering a limited number of rooms (115) at special rates. **Please note the expiry dates of the reserved contingents:** B&B Hotel Rostock Hafen is July 15th, 2026, Trihotel is July 25th, 2026, and Intercity Hotel Rostock is August 31st, 2026. Cancellation fees cannot be covered by the coordination office.
- **Travel expenses:** The **presenting participant** (talk or poster) can claim **travel expenses** via the SPP coordination office. The form for travel expense reimbursement will be provided to participants in due course, along with all necessary information and instructions.

!!!Further information, including:

- *Application form*
- *Project outline form*
- *List of hotels with room reservations*
- *Map of Rostock showing the venue*
- *Travel expenses form*

will send around in a separate email in the next days!!!

Virtual Blackboard and SharePoint

As you might already know from the last few years, we have set up a **SharePoint** page for the SPP 1158 on which all posters and presentations of the coordination workshop will be made public. Since we want to treat the data confidentially, we have to activate everyone individually for the website before they can log in:

<https://www.spp-antarktisforschung.uni-rostock.de/organisation/workshops/sharepoint/>.

In addition, we have created an internal SPP "**Blackboard**" on the SharePoint website, where SPP members can share planned expeditions, existing or planned samples, and experiments. The aim is to improve resource use and networking. We hope for active use of the Blackboard and are open to constructive suggestions for improvement.

A detailed instruction on how to get access to SharePoint for the first time will be sent around in the next days!

SPP 2520 Research Vessels

The application for ship time on any German research vessel takes place exclusively online via an updated submission system (<https://www.portal-forschungsschiffe.de/>). Here, the applicants can find any relevant information, such as current cruise plans, guidelines, contact persons, etc.



In September 2024, the Senate of the German Research Foundation (DFG) decided to implement the **new infrastructure priority program SPP 2520 “Research Vessels”** to fund the expedition (logistics and travel costs) and initial evaluation phase of ship expeditions on German research vessels.

- The call for proposals for projects/cruises starting in 2028 or later is expected to be available from mid/end of July 2026 under the following link: <https://www.dfg.de/de/foerderung/foerdermoeglichkeiten/ausschreibungen>
- Cruise projects that require funding via this SPP must, in the future, be submitted as a DFG grant proposal as part of the annual calls for proposals for **SPP 2520 “Priority Program”** section in ELAN.
- Details on application preparation and submission can be found under: <https://www.portal-forschungsschiffe.de/>

SPP 1158 report colloquium (Polar Conference), February 2027

The 30th International Polar Conference will take place from **February 22nd to 26th, 2027 in Bremerhaven**. Guided by the theme **“Crossing Boundaries – Poles in Transformation,”** the conference will bring together researchers from different disciplines to discuss **environmental change in polar and high-mountain systems** and its **relevance for the 5th International Polar Year (2032/33)**.

The SPP 1158 Antarctic Research Report Colloquium will again be part of the Polar conference.

All **invited speakers** (this does not apply to poster presentations!) in the report colloquium must register for the conference via the conference website. They can claim their travel expenses and ONE overnight hotel stay through the SPP 1158 coordination office. If you are entitled to compensation for travel expenses and stay for the whole conference, please make sure that you ask for two separate receipts for your hotel stay (one for the night covered by the coordination office and one for all other nights covered by yourself/other resources), as otherwise there may be problems with the respective department for travel costs. Please book “Sparpreis” if possible, for your train journey. We would also like to point out that talks and posters at national and international conferences must contain the SPP logo and the reference to the SPP 1158 "Antarctic research". Applications for travel expenses subsidies for master's students and doctoral students, as well as requests for childcare, are still possible until January 15th, 2027.

Key Dates and Deadlines

- 30 June 2026 – Publication of detailed conference information (registration, fees, accommodation)
- 30 October 2026 – Opening of abstract submission and registration

All information will be available on the conference website: <https://www.polarforschung.de>

POLARSTUNDE: Active participation of the SPP 1158

The German Society for Polar Research (DGP), the Association of Polar Early Career Scientists (APECS) Germany, and, since 2025, also the SPP 1158 “Antarctic Research” jointly invite you to get to know the “research of extremes” of German polar research in the form of short and lively lectures. <https://www.polarforschung.de/veranstaltungen/polarstunde>

The dates for lectures with SPP participation will be published at the beginning of September and announced via the SPP1158 mailing list.

- **Registration** via polarstunde@polarforschung.de (one day before the respective event at the latest!). ALL lectures will be held in German.
- The corresponding (free) Zoom link will be sent to all participants on the day of the event.

AWI Polarstern Planning Workshop, March 2026

The workshop took place from March 19th to 20th, 2026, at “Haus der Wissenschaft” in Bremen and was jointly organized by NK SCAR/IASC and AWI. It focused on AWI’s Antarctic and Arctic research strategy, future sea-going polar expeditions, and research opportunities during the transition from POLARSTERN to its successor vessel from 2030 onwards.

Upcoming SPP 1158 Topic Workshops

- “East Antarctic Ice Sheet Instabilities (EASI)” Workshop (September 16th to 18th, 2026) in Dresden
- “Structure of the Earth's Interior (in Antarctica)” Workshop (November 25th to 27th, 2026) in Hannover

For further information and registration, please contact Dr. Mirko Scheinert (Mirko.Scheinert@tu-dresden.de).

- “Standard Operating Procedures for sea-ice sampling” Workshop, across InSync expeditions and platforms, for high-quality omics data collection.

For further information and to register, please contact Dr. Jan Tebben (jan.tebben@awi.de).

Polarstern Expedition Proposals Coordinated by SPP1158

In December 2025, a main user proposal for a Polarstern expedition to the Cosmonaut Sea was submitted to the SPP 2520 “Research vessels”. A second main user proposal for a Polarstern expedition to the Weddell Sea is planned for submission to SPP 2520 by the end of this year. The contact person and coordinator for both proposals is Dr. Julia Ehrlich.

Environmental Protection Seminar/Umweltschutzseminar Antarktis

The provisions of the German "Act implementing the Protocol of Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty of October 4th, 1991" require that every expedition member who travels with a German permit in the area of the Antarctic Treaty (south of 60° S) be instructed in the environmental protection regulations. This **mandatory environmental protection training** was carried out in previous years in the form of a seminar "Environmental Protection in Antarctica" held in German by the Alfred-Wegener-Institute in cooperation with the Federal Environment Agency (UBA). **This seminar has been replaced by a [certified online training tool](#) (in German and English).**

Please also note that the certificates that participants received when attending the seminar in previous years remain **valid for life**.

CONTACT: Umweltschutz-Unterweisung-Antarktis@awi.de

Gender equality measures

If you are funded by the SPP and require, for example, childcare during fieldwork, we would like to draw your attention again to additional funding available within the framework of the SPP. Gender equality measures also include funding to organize gender-specific workshops at conferences and travel grants to attend such workshops. Please contact the coordination office for details.

Acknowledgements of the SPP 1158 for publications

Acknowledgments section of publications: *"This work was supported by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG) in the framework of the priority program SPP 1158, "Antarctic Research with comparative investigations in Arctic ice areas" by the following grant ... (grant number)."*

- In addition, if you participate in any Antarctic or Arctic review paper, etc., which is somehow related to your SPP project, please do **not forget to mention the SPP** in the acknowledgments.

Data storage

During and at the end of DFG-funded projects, results have to be made accessible to the public by open-access publications. Moreover, all data produced with funding from the DFG must be available on a **publicly accessible database** (such as **PANGAEA**) under the keyword "**SPP 1158**" (be sure to indicate the SPP 1158).

- The SPP pays an annual fee for data processing services centrally for all funded projects to PANGAEA.
- Archiving and publication of the results are mandatory and will be controlled by DFG.
- Additional option of **storing audiovisual data**: TIB- *Leibniz Information Centre for Science and Technology*.
 - ➔ Such as scientific videos, but also computer visualizations, teaching material, simulations, experiments, interviews, lectures, conference presentations
 - ➔ Free of charge on their portal (<https://av.tib.eu>)
 - ➔ It is also possible to upload the videos easily and independently via the upload form of the TIB AV portal <https://av.tib.eu/login?redirect=%2Fupload>
 - ➔ All videos in the AV portal will receive a Digital Object Identifier (DOI) and will be long-term stored.
 - ➔ Contact: Mr. Tolga Karaarslan (Email: Tolga.Karaarslan@tib.eu)

Changes in personnel

Please note that all personnel changes of funded and running projects, such as contract extensions, interruptions, parental leave, etc., require prior approval by the DFG. Please contact Ms. Bennerscheid with all relevant details (ute.bennerscheid@dfg.de). Furthermore, any personnel changes in projects must also be communicated to the coordination office, including new contact details, if necessary.

Personnel information from the coordination office

Dr. Angelika Graiff is now back from her maternity leave.

Best wishes,

Ulf Karsten, Sonja Berg, Petra Quillfeldt, Tilmann Harder, Julia Ehrlich, Angelika Graiff