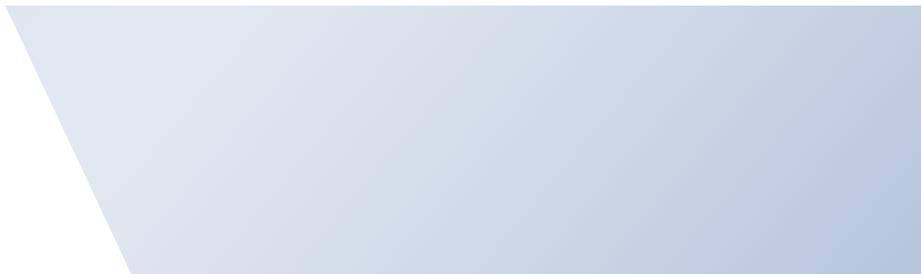


RTI Pact 2024–2026



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Preamble

As required by the Research Financing Act, the Austrian federal government has adopted a Pact on Research, Technology and Innovation (FTI Pact) for the period 2024–2026. The RTI Pact operationalises the targets and fields of activity of the RTI Strategy 2030 and defines strategic research and innovation priorities. These priorities will subsequently be implemented by the Ministries through performance and funding agreements with the central institutions in line with their respective statutory mandates and through further measures as necessary.

1 Strategic priorities and measures to achieve the objectives for 2024–2026

Research, technology and innovation (RTI) provide answers to the crises of our day and age and are the solution to securing our future. Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, the pandemic, problems with the supply chain, the climate and energy crisis, as well as currently, the issue of inflation and the lack of trust in science and democracy, are presenting Austrian society and the economy with extreme challenges that need to be overcome. These include transforming the energy system to renewable energy, maintaining competitiveness, overcoming the shortage of skilled workers, ensuring an efficient, high-quality healthcare system and developing effective solutions to protect the climate and environment as well as increasing trust in science and democracy: RTI plays a central role here. Instruments such as the Recovery and Resilience Facility, the European Research Area and Horizon Europe, mean that strategic targets for RTI and other policy areas, such as foreign, health and agricultural policy, are playing a greater role than before. The European Union has a central role to play here via its research, technology and innovation policy.

The RTI Pact establishes the definition of cross-departmental research and innovation policy priorities as a fundamental principle of Austrian RTI policy. This is intended to improve the coordination of implementation activities and the achievement of objectives while avoiding duplication of effort. Under the provisions of the Research Financing Act, the RTI Pact is the link between the RTI Strategy, funding and the institutions responsible for practical implementation. It adds a new, integrative element to the Austrian RTI landscape, creating a stable and dependable framework for the actors and groups concerned. The RTI Pact 2024–2026 is the second RTI Pact and builds on the experience gained from the RTI Pact 2021–2023. The present RTI Pact is the first to conclude performance or funding agreements with all the central research institutions and research funding agencies for the entire three-year period of the Pact. In the area of research funding in particular, this means some changes:

- Reform and streamlining of governance structures for research funding as stipulated by the Research Financing Act to provide improved and leaner processes and clear structures for interactions between federal ministries and research funding agencies;

- Revision and optimisation of the programme and instrument portfolios of the funding agencies with the aim of providing straightforward and transparent access for funding applicants as well as larger programme lines while also maintaining programmes for experimental formats;
- In the area of basic research, the focus is on funding for individual projects in an open-topic area, while in applied research mission-oriented priorities will also play a role.

The strategic priorities of the RTI Pact 2024–2026 will also be implemented indirectly via the university objectives and fields of activity prioritised in the relevant Austrian National Development Plan for Public Universities which corresponds closely with the objectives of the RTI Strategy 2030.

In 2025, at the halfway point of the RTI Strategy 2030 that was adopted at the end of 2020, an external evaluation of the progress made up to that point will be carried out on the basis of the defined goals and indicators.

The fields of activity defined in the RTI Strategy 2030 are set out below:

1.1 Fields of activity for Objective 1: Become an international innovation leader and strengthen Austria's position as an RTI location

The key fields of activity for Objective 1 ("Become an international innovation leader and strengthen Austria's position as an RTI location") are:

1.1.1 Expand research and technology infrastructure (RTIS) and facilitate access

Appropriate research and technology infrastructures are a key factor for strengthening the long-term position of Austria as a location for science and innovation. In view of the high cost of RTIS, it is particularly important to ensure that procurement is coordinated and oriented to the relevant needs and users.

Providing targeted support for research and technology infrastructure makes a key contribution to securing Europe's technological sovereignty, increasing productivity in key technologies in the long term and enabling a European leadership role in research and globally competitive sectors.

Research and technology infrastructures include appropriate test environments, experimental laboratories, pilot production facilities and demonstration systems. They are essential to speed up the development, testing and successful market launch of inno-

vations. The increasing complexity of research questions demands solutions based on data infrastructure, high performance computing, secure transmission using a quantum communication infrastructure and comprehensive data management for the calculation, analysis, storage, transfer and accessibility of data.

Measures:

- Coordinated procurement, cooperative use and needs-based expansion of research, technology and data infrastructures (including international participations), such as the Vienna Biocenter Vision, high performance computing and Euro-HPC, Gaia-X, EOSC, test environments, mobility laboratories and pilot production facilities. Expansion of high-performance infrastructures (including GPU clusters) for use at the interface between science and industry;
- Implementation of the Austrian Research Infrastructure Action Plan 2030;
- On the basis of the research infrastructure database, which is to be further developed, access to research infrastructures in Austria that are open for collaboration as well as future developments will be made visible;
- Utilisation of registry data and statistical micro-data made available by the Austrian Micro Data Center (AMDC) or related funding initiatives;
- Financing of research infrastructures and corresponding research projects through NextGeneration EU or using EU programmes and funds, transnational funding schemes, ERDF funding and national instruments;
- Active and coordinated participation in the European Strategy Forum on Research Infrastructures (ESFRI) roadmap to strengthen the internationalisation of research and to utilise infrastructures;
- Application by Austria to include MEDem in the ESFRI roadmap and to locate the headquarters in Austria.

1.1.2 Use and develop Europe for Austria: Increase participation in EU missions, EU partnerships and Important Projects of Common European Interest (IPCEIs)

Integrating RTI in Europe is one of the keys to solving the major social and economic challenges and to safeguarding Europe's position in the world. Since 2021, decisive steps have therefore been taken at European level to further intensify cooperation. Austria's aim is to contribute to resolving common European concerns and, in doing so, to support its own concerns. To this end, European developments are being taken up and national recommendations for action are being developed and implemented.

RTI makes a significant contribution to achieving societal goals. In connection with the digital and green transformation, Europe's technological sovereignty or the five missions of Horizon Europe, RTI is the catalyst at the interface to sectoral policies. Building on existing mission-oriented priorities, Horizon Europe (2021–2027) and other relevant EU programmes will be used to optimum effect by corresponding Austrian initiatives.

Under Horizon Europe approximately 29 billion euros will be awarded in the form of European partnerships. These are long-term networks of RTI actors engaged in research on the most pressing social, economic and environmental questions facing society. The European partnerships require co-financing from EU funds and national resources (private and/or public).

The European Institution of Innovation & Technology (EIT) brings together innovation-oriented organisations from business, education and research to create innovative solutions to the major issues facing society (e.g. digitalisation, health, raw materials). Horizon Europe has earmarked just under 3 billion euros for the EIT, which will be used mainly to systematically develop thematic European Knowledge and Innovation Communities (KIC).

The Austrian RTI system stands to benefit from the fact that cooperation in the European Research Area has been placed on a new footing. The European Pact for Research and Innovation adopted in 2021 sets out principles and priority fields of activity that provide orientation for Austrian activities. From 20 action areas listed in the ERA Policy Agenda, Austria will implement new measures in those areas that will further strengthen the performance of the Austrian RTI system and thus also increase the visibility and effectiveness of the European Research Area in Austria. These measures will take the form of an Austrian ERA Action Plan (ERA-NAP 2023–2025).

Measures:

- Targeted support for institutions and applicants involved in Horizon Europe programmes with the aim of further increasing the quality and scope of Austrian participation in all three pillars of the EU Framework Programme;
- In light of the implementation framework for the EU missions in Austria and subject to the overall budgetary options, the strategic relevance for the Austrian RTI system and in compliance with quality assurance standards, the central institutions will be integrated in the development and implementation of the national action plans for the five EU missions. This will take place primarily within the framework of existing funding, programme and project portfolios;
- Coordinated joint implementation of the EU partnerships within the funding programmes of the FWF and FFG during the period of the RTI Pact, taking into account the strategic relevance for the Austrian RTI system and in compliance with quality assurance standards;
- Austrian coordination of the partnerships Driving Urban Transitions (DUT) and Clean Energy Transition (CET);
- Support and funding for the participation of Austrian consortia in the EIT KIC;
- Preparation for the next EU Framework Programme by evaluating the current and previous programme (in the period 2024–2026);
- Implementation of the 13 ERA-NAP 2023–2025 initiatives;

- Implementation of the European Innovation Agenda and support for participation in the European Innovation Council (EIC), in particular with a view to strengthening fast-growing, tech-based companies in Austria (scale-ups);
- Participation in EU instruments to bolster European resilience and thus to strengthen Austria as a research and production location (e.g. IPCEI, measures within the framework of the Chips Act, etc.);
- Increased focus on smart specialisation to strengthen the coordination of research policy activities between the federal government and the provinces;
- Participation in the Digital Europe Programme (DIGITAL) with the aim of building capacity (R&D, knowledge transfer) in key areas of digitalisation;
- Use of the international RTI network EUREKA to promote transnational R&D collaborations in the field of business-oriented applied research;
- Use of, or contribution to, the European Green Deal, in particular with a view to mobilising research and innovation.

1.1.3 Promotion and strategic targeting of internationalisation

Teaching and research targeted at internationality are key factors for academic excellence and are essential for the successful positioning of higher education institutions, research institutes and companies engaged in research in our global knowledge-based society.

Higher education institutions in particular are already educating future leaders by imparting a global outlook, European awareness and an eye for sustainable development. In doing so, they are making a significant contribution to the societal and economic position of a small but competitive country. For companies, internationalisation is important to gain access to the best expertise worldwide and to new markets.

Measures:

- Continuation and optimum utilisation of participations in international organisations such as ESA, EUMETSAT, CERN, EMBL, ESO, F4E/ITER, IEA and Mission Innovation are of crucial importance;
- Strengthen the international networks of Austrian scientists by establishing an online portal for science and research;
- Enhance the appeal and visibility of Austria as a research location by supporting virtual and physical networking throughout the world;
- Targeted development and expansion of bilateral and multilateral research and innovation cooperation based on values and principles in RTI and with an awareness of potential security risks;
- Expansion and establishment of international technology firms and flagship companies, start-ups and scale-ups, supported by appropriate instruments.

1.2 Fields of activity for Objective 2: Focus on effectiveness and excellence

The key fields of activity for Objective 2 (“Focus on effectiveness and excellence”) are:

1.2.1 Promote excellence in basic research

Excellent, open-topic basic research ensures future scientific breakthroughs. Researchers break new ground and deliver the expertise that is needed to overcome current and future challenges. This benefits the economy and society in equal measure.

In order to secure the development of new sources of value creation and employment, internationally competitive excellent research must be carried out in Austria, not only now but also in the long term. This is the only way that solutions to the challenges of the future will be developed.

In recent years, health and medical research has been especially important: notwithstanding the major successes that have been achieved, health research continues to face an abundance of challenges in the 21st century. Excellent health research guarantees the development of new approaches to prevention, innovative diagnostic and therapeutic methods as well as high-quality, safe and effective drugs and medical products.

Measures:

- The continuation of the funding programme “excellent=austria” by the Austrian Science Fund is central to strengthening Austria’s position as a top international science location and to establishing and consolidating cross-institutional structures;
- Performance agreements with universities and the central institutions for basic research specified in the Research Financing Act will place a stronger focus on excellence and the appropriate competitive mechanisms for the allocation of funds;
- Further development and the use of new and innovative instruments and measures to promote excellent, high-risk research, as well as the strategic use of participatory open innovation and citizen science methods to identify research questions with societal relevance and to strengthen trust in participatory processes, science and democracy;
- Cooperation in particular between non-university research and universities in the call for “Projects for digital and social transformation in higher education” until 2024, as well as the continuation of Quantum Austria projects within the framework of the performance agreements with the universities 2025–2027;
- Creation of new collaborative calls for universities to cooperate with non-university research institutes that also address the cross-cutting issue of “digitalisation” or the green and digital transformation;

- Creation of and support for institutional scope for high-risk basic research;
- Implementation of non-commercial clinical research.

1.2.2 Support for applied research and its impact on the economy and society

Accelerating the digital, green and sustainable transformation of the economy and society requires a technology-focused RTI policy that is based on competitive and resilient companies. This will safeguard jobs, prosperity, and technological sovereignty in the long term.

Applied research provides a functioning, permeable and progressive RTI ecosystem, which

- drives forward the development of key technologies;
- produces innovative solutions and business models;
- increases the RTI intensity and expertise of the corporate sector;
- activates and networks innovation actors and broadens the innovation base;
- supports business start-ups and attracts investment;
- increases employment in RTI and business revenues;

The definition of innovation used in the targeted support for entrepreneurial innovation is broad-based, encompassing not only technological innovations, but also societal, social, creative, sustainable and organisational innovations, which reflect the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

This support should cover the entire innovation chain (from the initial phase through to the start-up and scale-up phases) and should be needs-oriented (grants, preferential loans and guarantees, incubator services, protection of intellectual property, provision of venture capital, non-monetary support).

It should be made easier for SMEs to embark on research and innovation, and their RTI activities should be intensified. Likewise, industrial and research-intensive flagship enterprises should receive continued support to step up their R&D activities. The network-based transfer of technology and knowledge will improve corporate innovation capacity and the impact of innovation.

Austria's appeal as a location for research-intensive companies and its technological sovereignty will be further enhanced to reduce dependence (including for raw materials) and to attract new investment and employment opportunities to Austria.

The excellent collaborative research performed in Austria will be stepped up, all the way through to commercial and social utilisation of R&D results.

The green and digital transformation is regarded as an opportunity for an open and competitive national economy. Innovative (key) technologies, as well as new business and operator models and the skills of employees in the private sector will receive targeted support. In this context, an important role is played by flagship initiatives such as the newly established interdisciplinary and translational Institute of Digital Sciences Austria.

A core principle is openness in terms of content and towards different technologies, in particular with regard to those which, depending on the application, are most effective and contribute to climate neutrality.

As part of the Transformation Offensive, industry, first and foremost technologically-oriented flagship companies, will receive support to help with their sustainable transformation. This will be implemented by means of funding in 3 tracks, of which tracks 1 and 3 in particular are addressed within the framework of the research budgets:

1. Research and technology development funding (application-oriented research, development of innovative technologies, networking of science and industry);
2. Location promotion and investment support (transition of research activities into production and practice, modernisation and digitalisation processes);
3. Qualification measures (especially for skilled and key workers).

The Transformation Offensive serves to improve competitiveness, build resilience, reduce supplier dependencies and increase technology (skills) leadership. It predominantly uses existing funding schemes and instruments. There will be a focus on attracting new businesses to Austria and on expansion investments. Key areas here are above all the automotive, semi-conductor and life science sectors.

Measures:

- Specifically combining collaboration between science and industry with practical training at universities, universities of applied sciences and at technical colleges (upgrading skills and reducing the shortage of skilled workers);
- RTI location and value creation chains: Creation of relocation packages to encourage foreign tech companies to establish and expand competence centres in Austria or to induce multi-nationals to set up domestic headquarters and system-relevant production in Austria; Establishment and expansion of world class applied research institutes;
- The Technology Offensive for applied research and technology development set out in the RTI Strategy 2030 will be continued. Core areas are: Open-topic RTI formats, with their radar function for early developments and new approaches; cooperation between science and industry; support for start-ups, further development of the venture and growth capital market; digitalisation and digital key

technologies (AI, cybersecurity, etc.); innovative production and material technologies; life science sector;

- Strengthening of key sectors and value creation chains in key technologies, such as: Digitalisation (artificial intelligence/robotics, high-performance computing, Industry 4.0 and 5.0, etc.), the electronics and semi-conductor industry; advancing the development of a quantum technology eco-system in Austria focusing on cost-effective implementation and commercial exploitation as well as national and international networking; mechanical engineering, new materials, nano-technology, advanced manufacturing, additive manufacturing; innovative and alternative vehicle and mobility technologies as well as associated simulation, measuring, testing, drive and manufacturing technologies (complete vehicle); innovative and sustainable energy technologies; the life science sector (funding, location marketing, innovation protection, financing of new technology-oriented companies);
- Drive forward public procurement promoting innovation (PPPI) by means of target-group-specific expansion of the services offered by the PPPI Service Centre and continuation of established support and funding instruments; creation of reference markets;
- Stronger focus on radical and disruptive innovations that significantly change a market or the business activities of companies in this market; greater scope for unexpected innovations;
- Continue to support/drive forward start-ups and spin-offs: Support with transferring research results to industry; foster an innovative mindset in society; provide special support for female researchers and entrepreneurs; improve framework conditions for spinning off new businesses; promote interdisciplinary collaboration between spin-offs;
- Increase the visibility of innovative companies, founders and successful entrepreneurial role models;
- Innovation labs and experimental spaces for the development and testing of new solutions, technologies, products and services, as well as (digital) innovation hubs as the interface between research and business;
- Utilise the contribution of the creative industries to solve societal challenges of our age. Cooperation, a division of roles and open innovation - between organisations, companies, science and business - is required here. Continue to drive innovations with impact potential, focusing on new business models as well as creative, social and societal innovations throughout the entire business cycle;
- Promote the practice-oriented generation and transfer of knowledge, for example on issues with a relevance to the climate and digitalisation, from universities to decision-makers and actors in administration, business and civil society.

1.2.3 RTI for achievement of climate and energy targets

The climate emergency is one of the great societal challenges of our time. Moreover, the current energy crisis and Europe's dependence on fossil fuels requires plans to rapidly phase out oil and gas and to diversify energy supplies and to save energy. Achieving climate neutrality by 2040 and completing the green transition, requires research, technological development and integration as well as systems innovation, including appropriate frameworks (regulation, norms, standards, incentives). The mission-oriented and transformative RTI policy will be continued over the next three years. Targeted use of the entire set of applied, inter- and transdisciplinary RTI instruments will be made in conjunction with implementation and investment instruments at the national and European level, e.g. within the framework of the EU missions. This requires close networking with public agencies and stakeholders to attract new innovation actors, to expand the innovation eco-system and to ensure the impact of RTI.

The mission and transformation-oriented focus of RTI represents a fundamental approach. Due to the complexity of the issues, RTI has to be transdisciplinary, open with regard to the range of technologies, problem-, solution-, and implementation-oriented and also experimental in character. While involving the relevant stakeholders and civil society throughout the entire innovation cycle, RTI activities must be focused more strongly on solution modules that promise a broad impact contribution with both speed and scale. Continuous monitoring with appropriate impact indicators at all impact levels (technology development, system integration and transformation) can realise a high transformative potential.

Measures:

- Sustainably establish GeoSphere Austria as the national competence centre for climate research and public services by concentrating geological, geophysical, climatological and meteorological expertise as well as national and international cooperations;
- Focus RTI funding initiatives on sector-specific national and European strategies (e.g. mobility master plan, circular economy strategy, EU Green Deal, space exploration strategy, aviation strategy, hydrogen strategy, AI strategy, EU missions, Climate and Transformation Offensive) in order to make a major contribution to their implementation and thus follow a whole of government approach;
- Build and place a selective focus on mission- and transformation-oriented RTI priorities by means of funding programmes for the targeted application of the circular economy and production (RTI for sustainable material consumption, energy and resource-efficient production, circular value-creation, and green production technologies), mobility transition (climate-friendly, digital transport technologies, testing of solutions), energy revolution (RTI for 100% renewable energy, energy efficiency and system solutions) and climate-neutrality in towns and cities;

- Promotion and targeted use of key technologies for the mobility transition, energy revolution and circular economy as well as digital technologies for climate protection and sustainability;
- Development of space technologies that support a green and digital transformation (space-based data, products and services) as well as aviation technologies for climate-neutral and sustainable aviation;
- Consideration of green budgeting (analysis of research expenditure in terms of its impact on the climate and the environment);
- Support for RTI projects to prevent conflicts between climate action goals and other environmental policy priorities;
- Support for RTI projects aiming to change behaviour in a social, economic and spatial context, including the necessary legal and administrative innovations;
- Greater consideration of sustainability, climate and environmental protection as evaluation criteria in relevant RTI funding programmes;
- Protection and management of natural resources (that reflect nature-based system solutions);
- Monitoring, evaluation and learning processes to assess the systemic (climate) impact of innovations;
- Increase the impact of climate- and environmentally relevant technologies through public procurement of innovations (PPPI), technology transfer and exports (internationalisation of technology), as well as real-world laboratories and experimental environments;
- RTI projects for a sustainable and innovative transformation in key industries, creation of a strong hydrogen ecosystem for the implementation of the hydrogen strategy.

1.3 Fields of activity for Objective 3: Focus on knowledge, talents and skills

The key fields of activity for Objective 3 (“Focus on knowledge, talents and skills”) are:

1.3.1 Develop and promote human resources

A high-quality education system is of particular importance for a society whose prosperity depends on its innovation capacity and high technological standards. The objectives here are to leverage existing potential and make better use of the opportunities available. This means exploiting our educational reserves and increasing the proportion of women in employment.

Enthusiasm for scientific investigation, research and innovation needs to be stimulated at an early age, creating an understanding of the important role played by these activities in tackling the great societal challenges. Above all, an interest in natural science, technology, climate protection and the green and digital transformation must be nurtured.

The STEM subjects, entrepreneurship education and a coordinated gender equality policy throughout the RTI system are of key importance to enable even more young people to shape society positively in a manner that is pro-active, entrepreneurial, innovative and sustainable. In this way, a broad base of well-educated individuals will be created to deliver excellent performance throughout the innovation system and to retain them (at the location), for example, by stimulating greater interest in STEM professions and increasing implementation of the tenure track model.

Measures:

- Implementation of the 10 Point Plan to increase trust in science and democracy with a raft of measures to deepen understanding of democracy and science;
- Strengthen science and entrepreneurship education, e.g. by including it in syllabuses, expanding university programmes directed at children and young people as well as targeted support measures, such as collaborations between research and education, and school competitions to develop creative and innovative ideas throughout the education system;
- Broaden the entrepreneurship base by providing young people with targeted, individual support on the path to owning their first business;
- Support women in science and technology to open up attractive career pathways, in particular as regards the selection and filling of management positions, as well as the establishment and expansion of targeted support programmes;
- Give greater consideration to gender and diversity criteria in the evaluation/review of funding applications;
- Measures to stimulate interest in the STEM sector, make STEM training and study programmes more attractive in order to increase the number of new course enrolments with a focus on female students; in particular within the framework of a STEM master plan, in which STEM initiatives at federal, provincial and regional level are to be coordinated and networked along the education chain;
- Incentivise the establishment and expansion of self-organised, regional STEM networks, in particular through a nationwide award with a STEM Regions label;
- Strengthen a transdisciplinary approach in university teaching in accordance with the concept of STEAM education, which advocates integrating the arts and humanities into STEM study courses, and teaches the ability to deal with digital applications in a creative way;
- Promote qualifications that will be needed in the coming years and encourage young innovators (especially in the STEM sector, Skills Initiative, youth competitions, etc.);
- Cooperation between the central institutions: Identification and networking of thematic research priorities in cross-institutional alliances for international positioning with the interdisciplinary and translational Institute of Digital Sciences Austria;
- Creation of a structured doctoral training programme at the interface of science and industry, as well as expansion of the graduate school at ISTA and the

strengthening of existing structured and collaborative internationally competitive doctoral programmes;

- Cut red tape at the Innovation Foundation for Education and provide attractive financing options with the aim of tapping into private-sector funding for education;
- Build personnel capacities to design frameworks and develop solutions for achieving climate goals (e.g. for cities pioneering climate neutrality);
- Implementation of measures resulting from the Just Transition Process (in terms of employment structures, qualification requirements, etc.).

1.3.2 Support researchers and students in developing an international outlook

Internationalisation is a cornerstone for tackling the increasingly grave global challenges society is facing. The expansion of international relations, networking and knowledge transfer are essential prerequisites for positioning Austrian higher education institutions more strongly as global players. The National Higher Education Mobility and Internationalisation Strategy 2020–2030 (HMIS 2030) pursues an integrated approach to internationalising study programmes and teaching which encompasses all levels and areas of a higher education institution. The fundamental goal is to enable all members of a higher education institution to acquire the international and intercultural skills that enable them to make a key contribution in a globally networked labour market.

Measures:

- Integration of international and intercultural aspects into the curricula and the teaching/learning environment, reflecting a comprehensive understanding of the internationalisation of courses and teaching and taking account of the aims of HMIS 2030;
- Active participation in international mobility programmes (in particular Erasmus+) and a STEM initiative to increase the number of STEM graduates who have completed periods of study abroad;
- Increased expansion and further development of international collaborative projects, innovative alliances and networking activities, inter alia by participating in European Universities Alliances within the framework of the EU's Erasmus+ scheme and developing joint study programmes to safeguard the synergy-oriented development of higher education and research within the framework of the European programmes;
- Support for networking (physical and virtual), cooperation and provision of information to Austrian scientists and researchers working abroad to promote an international outlook in research and teaching, brain circulation and to strengthen ties with Austria; increased provision of information about Austria as a higher education and research location for Austrian scientists and researchers;
- Enhance the visibility of Austria as a location for science and research (inter alia, by putting a stronger focus on reputation and creating beacons with a critical mass) and attractive framework conditions in order to attract international talent.

2 Central research institutions and research funding institutions

The Research Financing Act defines ten, and from 2023 eleven, central federal government institutions with which this Pact will be implemented largely via performance and financing agreements. On 1 January 2023, the Federal Institute for Geology, Geophysics, Climatology and Meteorology (GeoSphere Austria – GSA) is scheduled, as a new and the eleventh institution, to become the federal government's pivotal competence centre for data and information relating to the geosphere. It will make an essential contribution to tackling the key challenges of the 21st century.

The priorities of the three-year RTI Pacts are allocated to the institutions by means of negotiations and discussion between them and the relevant Ministries. Implementation follows with each institution working in areas relevant to its own statutory mandate. Under the terms of § 8 Research Finance Act, (FoFinaG) monitoring of the central institutions will be provided by the annual Research and Technology Report.

- Austrian Institute of Technology (AIT)
- Austria Wirtschaftsservice (AWS)
- Christian Doppler Research Association (CDG)
- Institute of Science and Technology Austria (IST Austria)
- Austrian Research Promotion Agency (FFG)
- Austrian Science Fund (FWF)
- Ludwig Boltzmann Gesellschaft (LBG)
- Austrian Academy of Sciences (ÖAW)
- OeAD – Agency for Education and Internationalisation
- Silicon Austria Labs (SAL)
- GeoSphere Austria (GSA)

3 Other instruments/ institutions

In addition to the central research institutions and research funding agencies, the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research (BMBWF), the Federal Ministry of Labour and Economy (BMAW) and the Federal Ministry for Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology (BMK) also rely on other institutions to support their activities in research, innovation and technology. To enable them to utilise additional technological and strategic expertise, to involve the key actors in each field of activity, to ensure international compatibility and to respond to trends and circumstances, the ministries collaborate on specific issues with various experienced and skilled organisations, including the following:

- Austrian Business Agency (ABA) – targeted campaigns to promote Austria as an RTI location, and for the recruitment and retention of specialist professionals
- Austrian Cooperative Research (ACR) – targeted support for companies (particularly SMEs) with their innovation and digitalisation projects
- Austria Tech
- Complexity Science Hub
- Documentation Centre of Austrian Resistance (DÖW)
- Fraunhofer Austria Research (FhA)
- Institute for Human Sciences (IWM)
- Joanneum Research
- Austrian Society for Environment and Technology (ÖGUT)
- Platforms such as Industry 4.0
- Salzburg Research
- Vienna Wiesenthal Institute for Holocaust Studies (VWI)

Ultimately, the BMBWF is responsible for the strategic management and (co-)organisation of the entire higher education sector. The interaction between all the organisations that shape the research, technology and innovation location is especially important in an international context. In addition to the central institutions, the 74 higher education institutions play key roles that are designed to complement one another.

4 Budget

The Research Financing Act stipulates that the RTI Pact covers the global budget 31.03, the Budget Chapter (UG) 33 and the Budget Chapter (UG) 34. For the purpose of strategic direction and management, the budgetary priorities defined therein are specified in the performance and financing agreements between the relevant minister and the agencies and central research institutions responsible for implementation. Furthermore, all institutions work on the tasks allocated to them in accordance with their statutory mandate, which is also reflected in the budget of the RTI Pact. Austria's international memberships and participation in international and European research infrastructures and other measures for implementation of the RTI Strategy or other research policy initiatives or strategies are likewise financed by the same budget.

Based on the Medium-Term Budgeting Framework Act (BFRG) for 2023–2026, the federal government has allocated a sum of 5,048.673 million euros; which is broken down as follows:

GB 31.03 = 2,581.040 million euros

UG 33 = 690.288 million euros

UG 34 = 1,777.345 million euros

